Innocent Competition, Gustie Style

I’m not known as nor do I see myself as a greedy or competitive person. As a young child I wanted to give presents to kids at MY birthday parties instead of the other way around. When playing games with my brother like badminton or h-o-r-s-e, I’d often try to lose to protect his sensitivity at being less adept at sports than his tomboy sister. I don’t understand the Apprentice and will probably never make it big saving puppies and kittens at the humane society. The only time that a little bit of my need to win surfaces is when I play Scrabble with my sister-in-law believing it’d just be wrong for an English major-wordy-type to lose a game of Scrabble to a brilliant science-geek.

However, all innocence changes when it comes to my own, made-up, secretive Class Agent Competition.

Nobody knows this, so don’t tell. *(If I were talking to you, I’d be whispering like a golf commentator.)* Secret: I sit at class agent meetings seemingly calm while my leg anxiously bounces under the table and my eyes dart with Minnesota-nice glances at other agents while I scrupulously and secretly surmise the class giving comparison report. I don’t want to blow my amicable cover or break the class agent pledge which is: We’re all in this together as one big, Gustie family and bonded together with a pinkie swear. (I made that up just now.) But really I’m comparing numbers and analyzing percentages hoping that our class will victoriously beat the pants off the next in class participation and raising the most dollars in unrestricted money for Gustavus. *(I’m done whispering now.)*

When I’m covertly musing over where we’re at (like Scrooge at his desk,) I don’t compare us to the younger decade. We don’t fall into that decade anymore, people. We’re no spring chickens and they’re young and free. I also don’t look at the mature decades which I don’t want to admit we fall into either for fear I’d age us too quickly and our hair would turn gray. They’ve got investments and lake-homes, probably grandchildren by now. In my head, (although consciously based on overt generalizations) it just wouldn’t be fair to compare.

BUT, when it comes to the decade of classes that we fall into, I am like a barracuda. Maybe like Trump himself without the jet. I don’t know. But doggone it, I believe in us and am quite certain that we’ve got what it takes to reign victorious in my make-believe competition. *(High-five. Go team.)*

Here are our stats as of 3/31/06:
Total donors: 130 (Last year: 139)
Class Participation: 24.7%
Unrestricted S Amounts:
This year: $6,090.00
Last year: $6,939.07
Total $ Credit:
This Year: $11,349.00
Last Year: $11,275.57

We’re just a tad higher in total class participation than our neighbor classes. [The Class of 1993 has 21.9% and 1991 has 11.9% of class members giving.] Our dollar amount keeps us in the running. And anywhere we don’t compare to other classes, I simply justify it as either: A) they’re having a reunion year, B) somebody’s uncle Harvey died and gave an extra bump, or C) it simply must be a mistake.
Innocent Competition, Gustie Style

[This is public information by the way. Current totals are available online at: http://www.gustavus.edu/giving/gustavusfund/class totals/. If you click on our class year you can also see classmates who have given a gift in this fiscal year. FYI: Some of you may have recently given, but don’t yet see your name. Keep checking. Lists are periodically updated.]

I share this information with you (not only because we were asked to share it) but because of a significant amount of pride I have in representing our class when at these meetings. I want other classes to know that we feel a certain amount of uniqueness when it comes to class bond, that we have good class connection and even stronger Gustavus spirit.

Money is certainly not the only way to reflect this class spirit, but it is a way that significantly benefits Gustavus. And even if I can’t call neighbor class agents at the end of the fiscal year and require them to ante up with a (fantasy) trophy for a competition they don’t know we’re having, I’ll at least know that each of us will have done our best-depending on our life situations and financial status—at showing fellow classmates, other classes and Gustavus that our class has what it takes to shine when it comes to Alumni giving.

But remember, don’t tell. I’ve nearly got them all believing I’m no competition. I can’t wait to see their faces when they name the next dormitory after our class.

Bonded by a pinkie swear, Annie.

Reunion? Already?
I know it seems impossible, but we’re embarking on a reunion year starting June 1, 2006 and culminating in a 15-year reunion celebration/weekend the first in October of 2007. (Mark your calendars. This is PLENTY of notice to find a babysitter.)

I am starting now to put a bug in your ear about helping on the Reunion Planning Committee. There are three specific areas of this committee: Giving, Communications and Events. Each of those groups will need a committee chair to assist me in the planning of the reunion. The first conference call and/or get-together for Committee members will be sometime between June-August of this year.

Please, if you have interest in making our 15 year reunion memorable, please contact me, pick an area of interest to chair, and I’ll share your names with the Alumni Office.

Reunion year classes have been known to come through in remarkable financial ways. I want the celebration to be equally as memorable. I can’t do it successfully alone and look forward to hearing from any interested classmates.

THANKS!

Class Letters (Times Eight!)
I love to write these letters. I really do. But during the reunion year, I have to write eight of them…unless of course some of you want to submit a bit of satire or nostalgia for one (or all.) If you have the itch and want to pen a few lines of poetry ala Gustavus, let me know.
**Class News**

**Lori Luther Boyle** and spouse Jeff had a son, Jonathon, on 4/26/2005.

**Renee Rasmusson Anderson** works at JWT Insurance as an account executive and lives in Woodbury, MN with her husband and three boys. Her third son, Keegan, was born 10/25/2004.

**Kirstin Lindall Gulland** and spouse Dan had a son, Carl, on 8/9/2005.

**Tonia Christopherson Hall** and spouse K. Andrew, had a son, Oliver, on 7/31/2005.

**Connha Stevenson Classon** got her master’s in teaching from the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul and is teaching at Valley Crossing Community School.

**Jennifer Quisberg Augeson** and spouse Chad had a daughter, Maya, on 9/21/05.

**Kurt Fredrick** is an assistant professor of microbiology at Ohio State University, married with a one and a half year old son, Ty.

**Jackie Lindner Bencke**, spouse Patrick with daughter, Emilie, have moved to Japan and are working as missionaries.

**Kat Sewell Drefs** is still working part-time as a physical therapist at HCMC with three and a half year old kids, T. J. and Delaney to keep her busy all the rest of the time.

**Rebecca Zins** and spouse Jeffrey Moeller are new parents to identical twins, Jonah and Ezra born 10/30/05.

**Maret Freeman** is a technical proposal writer for Berry, Dunn, McNiel and Parker. She lives with spouse Ed and daughter Helen in Portland, ME.

**Kim Hildebrand-Faust** and spouse Michael had a son, Theodore, on 1/12/2006.

**Michele Zacher Lieberman** is a teacher at the New Interdisciplinary School in NY.

**Peter Kitundu** works for Allied Insurance in Des Moines, IA.

**Todd Thoms** has been promoted to the CTO position at Student Loan Finance Corporation. (His number is blocked so those of you with outstanding loans don’t call him to beg☺)

**Bonnie Schmidt Johnson** is an RN at St. Mary’s Hospital in Rochester, MN. She has two children, Jordan (8) and Nathan (5) and is married to Kent.

**Kevin and Lisa Hardesty** have a new son, Payton, born 5/7/2004.

**Darin Zielsdorf** and spouse Monica had a second child, Natalie, 5/8/2004. Darin has a new job as vice president/business banking manager of Wells Fargo.

**Greg Robinson** now works as a finance manager for Ecolab.

**Campus News**

The Alumni Board met on campus in February and made the final selection for the Alumni Awards:

**Greater Gustavus Award:** Gustavus Library Associates, for providing financial resources for Folke Bernadotte Library, and engaging and introducing alumni and friends in the mission of the College.

**Distinguished Alumni Citations:**

**Karen Bossart Rusthoven ’66**, St. Paul, MN, founder and principal of Community of Peace Academy, St. Paul;

**Susan Semple-Rowland ’77**, Gainesville, FL, professor of neuroscience, University of Florida and director, Neuroscience IDP Graduate Program;

and **Magnus Ranstorp ’85**, St. Andrews, Scotland, chief scientist at the Centre for Asymmetric Threat Studies, Swedish National Defense College; and a Senior Honorary Research Associate and former Director of Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland.
Innocent Competition, Gustie Style


The awards will be presented on Commencement Weekend or Homecoming Weekend depending on the recipient’s schedule.

Gustavus Alumni Directory
The 2006 Gustavus Alumni Directory will be published soon and our goal is to represent your information as accurately as possible in the printed edition. PCI: the data company, is publishing our directory and a short phone call will update or verify your information. Call toll free: 1-800-982-1589, Monday-Saturday, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CST, and Sunday, 11:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. CST. International callers dial: 1-972-386-0100, Monday-Friday CST.

Short Term Medical (STM) insurance Available
Short Term Medical Insurance can fill the temporary needs of those without health insurance, usually at a lower cost than other alternatives. Alumni and their families may apply. This is perfect for children of alumni who are graduating (even if they did not attend Gustavus) and aren’t yet covered under an employer’s health plan. Contact the program administrator at Meyer and Associates at: 800-635-7801 or www.meyerandassoc.com about this and other sponsored life, medical, auto and homeowners insurance.

Gusties In Volunteer Endeavors (G.I.V.E.)
Gusties love to serve while they are students and after they graduate. Gusties In Volunteer Endeavors (G.I.V.E.), the annual day of community service, will focus in the Twin Cities’ Phillips Neighborhood. This 1.6 square mile section of Minneapolis has 3,100 families, and 31 percent of those families live below the poverty level. This neighborhood also is home to the American Swedish Institute. Come out to help make the community a little better. To learn more about G.I.V.E. Day and to register, go to www.gustavus.edu/alumni.

MAYDAY! Peace Conference: "AIDS + Africa, the Unfolding Crisis"
The 26th annual MAYDAY! Peace Conference will be held on Wednesday, April 19. This year's topic is AIDS in Africa. The conference will feature a keynote address by Robert Gallo, co-discoverer of the HIV virus, and Marjorie Mbilinyi, social activist and professor in Tanzania. The AIDS Memorial Quilt will also be on campus for viewing. Robert Gallo is spending time on campus during March and April sponsored by the Robert E. and Susan T. Rydell Distinguished Professorship, a residency program for Nobel Laureates and similarly distinguished scholars. For more information, go to www.gustavus.edu/events/mayday/.

Gusties Gather!
Gusties around the world are called to gather on Sunday, August 6! The Alumni Board is designating this day as a way for Gusties to stay connected with each other. In research among alumni, we know that Gusties already stay in contact with many alumni, and we know
that Gusties have a strong interest in
staying connected with other Gusties and
with the College. Ever think you want
to do more to be connected with
Gustavus? Now is your chance, signup
to host a Gusties Gather! event.
Complete event check-list, host kit, and
details will be provided. Sign-up via e-
mail at <alumni@gustavus.edu> or call
800/487-8437.

Upcoming Alumni Events
MAYDAY! Peace Conference on AIDS
– April 19
Rydell Distinguished Professorship
lecture by Robert Gallo, co-discoverer of
HIV virus, professor and director of the
Institute of Human Virology – April 20
Gustavus Association of Congregations
Meeting, keynote address, "Discipleship
in Today's World: Religion and
Ecology," by Larry Rasmussen – April
22
Gusties In Volunteer Endeavors
(G.I.V.E.) Day of Community Service in
Minneapolis – April 29
Gustavus Library Associates Author Day
with Robert Alexander – May 3
Reunion for Class of 1956 and 50-Year
Club – May 26-27
Commencement – May 28
Gusties Gather! – August 6
Reunions for the classes of 1961, 1966,
2001 – October 6-8
Homecoming/Family Weekend –
October 7 & 8

The deadline for Alumni Fund Giving
for this fiscal year is May 31, 2006.
Thanks for reading. Contact me with
any questions, to let me know if you’re
interested in being on the reunion
committee or just to say hi:
1992classagent@gustavus.edu or
(651)-306-0086 ~Annie