

Wolf Tales

*The Newsletter of
Gorton's Class of '65*



'The strength of the wolf is in the pack'

April 2022, Vol. 71

Spring has Sprung...



...And the Boys of Summer are Back

The New York Yankees welcome Yulia Holiyat, a member of the Ukrainian Children's Choir *Moloda Dumka*, to sing the Ukrainian National Anthem at Opening Day ceremonies. The next day, the Yanks saluted Yonkers' Alfred Martirano Sr. during 7th inning ceremonies honoring our veterans. Alfred was a combat engineer private in WWII and turns 100 in May.





HER ROYAL PRINCESS—Kennedy Elizabeth Smith, Susan Dratch Eaton's granddaughter, dolls up for her 5th birthday party.



A NEW GRANDSON—Holly Zulauf Rodwick's newest grandchild, Kian William Rodwick, was born April 10 at Greenwich (CT) Hospital. Everyone is happy and healthy! Kian weighed in at 6 lbs., 13 oz. even though he was three weeks early. Proud parents are Matthew and Sue Rodwick.



GO RANGERS—Riley Rose Benjamin, Phyllis Yachie Benjamin's first great-granddaughter, is Rangers' fan already after being born a month ago to Jared and Gabriella Benjamin.



SOME BROTHERLY LOVE—And a grandmother's hug. Asher, Anne Chandler and Joe Mikulsky's grandson, gives his baby sister, Melania, a hug before passing her on to Annie for a little face time.



CLASS PHOTOS—Janet Guyon Hanford and Beau made the rounds visiting classmates on their trip back from Florida. Left to right: Marc Jacobs (son of Lorna and Barry); Lorna (Reynolds) Jacobs; Janet (Guyon) Hanford and Beau; Darlene Moak; Tomm Robinson; Barbara and Jack Carey; and Barry Jacobs. In absentia: the photographer, Marc's wife, Mardia.



NEW YORK STATE OF MIND—Ann (Wright) Conway, Joan (Lawless) Kennedy and Sarah (Langley) Policelli do lunch at Santini's NY Style Deli in Virginia. Their waitress/photographer was from Latvia, making it a small world.



BABY SHOWER—Ursula (Belle) Healy joins Holly (Zulauf) Rodwick for a photo op with Sue Rodwick at a baby shower in Bronxville. Sue gave birth to a healthy Kian William on April 10 (see Page 2).



FAMILY TRADITION—Congratulations to Jackson Lawless Kennedy for being accepted at University of Virginia. His parents Angela and David, along with uncle Mark Kennedy, are UVA grads.



AHOY, (CLASS)MATIES—From left, Class of '65 buddies Tomm Robinson, Janet (Guyon) Hanford, Barry Jacobs (in front of Pirate Jack), Jack Carey and Lorna (Reynolds) Jacobs outside the Drunken Jack's Restaurant in Murrell's Inlet, SC.



YOU CAN BANK ON IT—Beau and Janet join Camille (Gigliotti) Morrone and Mike at Corolla on North Carolina's Outer Banks. Camille and Mike played hosts as they toured Kitty Hawk, the Currituck Beach Lighthouse, and northern beach where the Corolla wild horses (aka ponies) run.

David Chittick, Husband of Elen Freeston, C65

David A. Chittick, the husband of Elen Freeston C65, died at home in Copake, NY, on March 13 after a long illness. He was 73.

In addition to Elen, he is survived by his brother Richard "Ted" Chittick, his wife "Babes" and their children and grandchildren, his sister-in-law Gerry Chittick, wife of predeceased brother Peter, and their children and grandchildren and many cousins.



David was the son of Howard and Anna Wester Chittick, long-time residents of Stanfordville, NY. David graduated from Pine Plains High School, class of 1967, and attended Dutchess Community College.

He joined his father's business, Fairfax Biological Laboratory, and partnered in the business until it closed in 1994. He was proud of the business' early commercial production of a biological (non-chemical) control for Japanese beetle larvae.

As proud as he was of his work, his true love was playing the guitar. With no illusions of music as a career, he always played and found the like-minded to play along. When retired, he was able to pursue his other favorite pastime, a Triumph Spitfire English sports car, purchased new in 1975. As David always said "it's cheaper than a psychiatrist."

David was a 32nd Degree Mason and belonged to the Valley of Albany Scottish Rite, which is a branch of the Masons. He had also maintained his membership in what was the Hillsdale Masonic Lodge, which has now merged and is the Unity 9 Masonic Lodge, meeting in its newly renovated Lodge in Valatie, NY, near Kinderhook.

A memorial service for David will be held

on June 11 at 11 a.m. at Episcopal Church of St. John in the Wilderness, 261 Route 344, Copake Falls, NY 12517.

Ken Miller, C59, Retired Police Officer

Ken Miller, a member of Gorton's class of 1959, died recently, at the age of 81.

Miller joined the U.S. Army and served in Iran as a technician in cryptography. On his way back to the states, he was re-routed to Berlin for three more months during the building of the Berlin Wall.



In 1963, he joined the New York Police Department for three years before moving to Minnesota with his wife, daughter Sheree Miller Styrlund and son. He joined the Bloomington Police Department where he served 31 more years until his retirement in 1997.

He is also survived by two brothers, Joe and Jerry, and four grandchildren.

Joe Middleton, 83, Retired Teacher

Joe Nathan Middleton, a former special education teacher and dean of students at Gorton High School, died in Leesburg, FL, on March 18. He was 83.

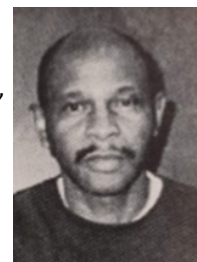
Middleton was born in 1939 to James and Joetta Peachie Middleton in Beaufort, SC, and moved to Boston, MA, where he received a track and field scholarship to Winston-Salem College in North Carolina. He was a member of the team's record-breaking performance at the Penn Relays.

He received his B.S. and became a special education teacher for three years in Sacramento, CA, before moving back to Boston where he taught for two years. He then moved to Yonkers and taught at the Hawthorne Middle School.

After a short stint with Chrysler as a district sales manager, he went back to

teaching at Gorton. He obtained a master's in special education from the College of New Rochelle and administrator's license from the state.

In addition to his role of dean of students where he was known as Kojack, he worked part-time with Yonkers Cluster Summer Day Camp; the summer Youth Employment Program; the Nepperhan Community Center; the Human Relations Department of Yonkers School District; St. Christopher's School in Dobbs Ferry; and taught at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women.



Middleton retired from the Yonkers School System due to poor eyesight and moved to Charlotte, NC, where he was active in the Winston-Salem State College Alumni Association before moving to Florida.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Shirlee Moore Middleton; a son, Damon Todd; a brother, Ronald; and three grandchildren. He was predeceased by a daughter, Sherri, and six brothers and six sisters.

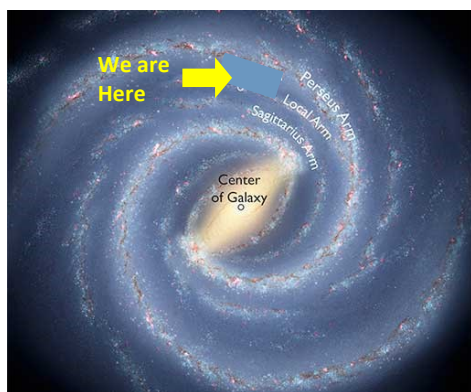
Kathleen Magill, C56; Nurse and Author

Kathleen Magill, a member of the Class of 1956, died March 7 at the age of 83.

A Yonkers resident, she earned her R.N. at Bellevue Hospital School of Nursing. She continued her studies at Columbia University where she received her master's degree and doctorate in Education.



Kathy was director of Inservice Education at Jacobi Hospital, BMHC (Bronx). Later she served as a director of nursing at a Buffalo, NY, hospital. A prolific author of nursing articles, she was a strong advocate for innovation in nursing practice. She is survived by her brother, James (Rosemary) Magill of Hopewell Junction, NY.



Priceless Memories



My Stars! Where Have You Been?

Stars are magical.

We know this, because there are so many beautiful songs and poems written about them. As children, we were encouraged to wish upon stars, look out for falling stars and warned not to let them get in your eyes. Stars twinkle and shine, soar and fall, gleam and guide and create illustrations in the sky.

I never properly saw stars until fourth grade, when I started wearing glasses. Donning those spectacles gifted me with daily access to the true spectacle of the starlit, inky, night sky along with a lifetime of magic moments.

One such moment happened late one beautiful summer night, when I was a kid. I didn't want to go to bed. Dad said he had an idea. The two of us climbed out on the fire escape and sat there, quietly staring up at the narrow space between two apartment buildings, sharing the image of a sparkling, star-speckled highway, stretch-

See **THE STARS** on Page 6

Teacher, Counselor, & Snowbird

By Lee Innocenti, C66

Al DeFlorio was our much-loved social studies teacher and guidance counselor for a few years at Gorton.

After an undergraduate degree from Manhattan College and a graduate degree from Notre Dame, Al came to Gorton for his first teaching job from 1959-1964. He had no car when he started so John Volpe, who also joined the teaching staff that year, drove Al to school every day from the Bronx where they both lived. Needless to say, they became very good friends.

After teaching only two to three years at Gorton, Principal Jim Cavanaugh assigned him to guidance counseling. By that time, Al had a master's degree in counseling from Hunter College. Recruited away by his alma mater to the admissions department, he eventually became Director of Admissions at Manhattan College (1964-1970).

By that time, Al was married to Pat (another social studies teacher in the Bronx) and they had their first child. His college position required extensive night and traveling responsibilities and, in 1970, he resigned to take a guidance counselor position at a Rockland County school district. He held the post for 26 years. Interestingly, although I lived in Rockland, we did not reconnect until five years ago.



Married in 1964, he and Pat had two children, Michael, who is a partner in a private equity firm (Wharton/Harvard graduate) and Andrea, who taught art at Parsons School of Design (Yale/Parson gradu-



Where
Are They
Now?

AL DEFLORIO

**Teacher, Guidance Counselor
Retired 2012**



Al with Lee in Florida.

ate). He has four grandchildren, twin boys (13 years old) from Michael and two girls (13- and 9-years old) from Andrea.

In 1996, Al retired from the Clarkston school district and in 2012 moved with Pat to Bronxville where he lives today. Retirement afforded much time for golf and traveling. Sadly, in 2017, Pat died from ALS.

Today, Al is a snow bird in Southeast Florida where we meet every year for lunch (except during COVID), either at my home in the Palm Beaches or in a local town.



Ukraine Concert Raises \$28,000

Ukrainian artists raised \$28,000 for humanitarian and medical aid to citizens of Ukraine in a special "Show of Caring" concert held at the Tarrytown Music Hall on March 27.

More than 700 people bought tickets, donated or volunteered for the event. The show's organizer, Ukrainian pianist Irena Portenko of Dobbs Ferry, said "we had to do something and we began to plan a concert. Our intention was to raise funds to help ease the suffering and devastation caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine."

Donations may be made to the following charities: <https://unitedhelpukraine.org> and <https://razomforukraine.org>. In addition, Portenko has established a fund to help musicians made homeless by the conflict at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-support-displaced-ukrainian-musicians>.

THE STARS (from Page 5)

-ing toward the Hudson River, widening at the Palisades. It is a memory that includes an asterisk next to it.

Now, imagine the night sky disappearing! Sadly, you don't need to. It's happening. About 150 years ago, outdoor lighting was born. As a result and with the proliferation of brighter night lighting almost everywhere, only around 20% of us in the U.S. are able to see the Milky Way galaxy with our naked eyes. That means that a staggering 80% are being deprived of the ability to see the stars!

If magic and star gazing aren't high on your priority list right now, I get it. We have experienced so many stressors lately, worrying about a bunch of stars fading may seem frivolous. But consider this:

The environment is being significantly affected by light pollution. Take birds. Stars are their navigation equipment. They can literally lose their way without them. Also, artificial light reflecting off buildings can cause many to crash into them.

Birds not your thing? Well, artificial light causes marine life to struggle with depth perception and direction, can push trees to bloom out of season and make bugs fly toward the light and die. (Hey, there are many GOOD bugs and we need them).

Last point. Light pollution has an impact on OUR health, including artificial blue



STARRY, STARRY NIGHTS—The Milky Way (left) before light pollution (right).

light interfering with our ability to fall asleep, producing MORE stress, anxiety and depression. Seriously, who wants to mess around with our circadian rhythm (Google it).

Connecticut has laws in place that include outdoor lights with warmer color and shields that focus the light downward not to the side or toward the sky. They are energy efficient and therefore also cost effective. Maine has ordinances in some locations for outdoor and indoor lighting in public and private places.

These are two states actively striving to

save the darkness, while most of the rest are losing the night.

We can shine the right light on this problem. Buy warmer color bulbs, buy outdoor lights with shields, put them on timers, or make them motion-activated.

Take these small, individual steps, especially if you believe in magic and making wishes on starry, starry nights.

Yvonne Sullivan Price was queen of the '65 senior prom and is a retired school administrator.



The Eagle Has Landed

By Joe Mikulsky

I've never seen a bald eagle in California until recently—and it was perched in the tallest redwood in Henry Cowell Redwood State Park, right across the San Lorenzo River from our house.

I was sitting at our dining room table, sipping the last of my morning coffee and editing bird photos from the day before. There was a knock at the door. It was our neighbor Steve.

He excitedly told me about spotting a bald eagle across the river, a rare sighting in our area. So, I ran and got my camera (still had my long telephoto lens on it from birding the day before) and joined him in our front yard. I was still in my bathrobe and slippers.

It took a little bit to spot the eagle (I hadn't put in my contacts yet!). But, there it was. Perched about midway up the tallest redwood in the grove about a 150 yards away. So regal—what a great choice for our national bird.

Bald eagles do not get the famous white head until they are 4-5 years old and this one still had some dark feathers on its crown. After taking a few photos, I went inside to change.

Later I joined Annie who had gathered a crowd of our neighbors. We watched as the eagle sat and preened and then, after a long while, took off being chased by several crows.

Miss Braslow Was Ahead Of Her Time

Last month, I mentioned Miasarnia, a meat shop on Lockwood Avenue that sells kielbasa (a spicy pork-stuffed sausage) and pierogi (a dumpling stuffed with potato, cheese, sauerkraut or whatever didn't fit into the kielbasa).

Guess what later popped up in the local newspaper? An interview with the owner of Miasarnia (Ukrainian for "house of meat"!).

The Class of '65 calls it a "Braslow Moment," so-named in honor of the Sage of Shonnard who taught a holistic form of history. Her historic timetable, refreshed weekly on the blackboard, contained history, literature, science, cul-



Editor's Note

ture and stuff you never thought about. To her, history did not happen in a vacuum; seemingly disparate events interconnected for a reason.

This is not to be confused with the "Butterfly Effect," which proposes that a butterfly flapping its wings in Africa caused my perfectly good tee shot to veer into the woods.

Another key part of the "Braslow Moment" is that something mentioned in an email will suddenly show up elsewhere and have nothing to do with what we were talking about to begin with. You're thinking about Yonkers. You get in an elevator. It reads Otis. Bingo!

See **EDITOR** on Page 8

Argh, That's A Left Hook!

If you're ever in a fight with a pirate, you should know that his right jab isn't so bad, but watch out for his left hook. It can be devastating.



**Parry's
Ponderings**

Food For Thought

I don't usually brag about the expensive trips my wife and I take, but we just got back from the grocery store.

A Farewell to Arms

Wouldn't it have been great if the billions of dollars of weaponry that fell into the hands of the Taliban during our withdrawal from Afghanistan could have been given to the Ukrainians instead? Just sayin'.

Don Parry (C65) was awarded Westchester's Safest Teenage Driver Award and is a Vietnam War veteran.



A HOPPY EASTER—Before you say, *A Christmas Story*, it was Ryan Hanford's idea to play a joke on Janet. He borrowed the bunny suit from a teacher and skateboarded over for an egg-cellent moment.

EDITOR (from Page 7)

Here's another example. Joan Kennedy has a "Did You Know" article on the Cross County Shopping Center. Weeks after it was written, there was a news article about the installation of bee hive colonies in Yonkers to save the dwindling apian population.

Where? You guessed it, Cross County Shopping Center. Not only that, but now the circus is coming to Cross County as well. I haven't been there or thought about the place in 40 years!

But wait, some might say, isn't that really the Baader-Meinhof phenomenon? Then again, most of us wouldn't.

According to Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia (Go MacWarriors!), the Baader-Meinhof phenomenon was coined in 1994 when Terry Mullen wrote to his Minnesota newspaper of an "interesting" fact in his life.

(Spoiler Alert: This is about as interesting as a *Jeopardy* contestant telling Alex Trebek how he lost a shoe while hitchhik-

ing through Kansas).

According to the university, Terry was talking to a friend about the Baader-Meinhof gang, a radical left terrorist 1960's group in West Germany. Lo and behold, the next day, Terry's pal told him about a newspaper article in that day's paper mentioning the Commies with no apparent ties to current events.

As Trebek would say before seeking shelter behind his podium, "Good for you."

The Herald Statesman had its own Terry. He was a guy who would show up every year at the front desk dressed like Mr. Clean saying he was wronged by Proctor & Gamble and deserved royalties. To his credit, his T-shirt was brilliantly white.

But I digress.

A decade later, Baader-Meinhof (only remembered by *New York Times*' readers at cocktail parties) morphed into "frequency illusion," coined by Arnold Zwicky, a professor of linguistics at Stanford University ("Go Trees") and Ohio State University ("Go

Buckeyes"). In a nutshell, things that you just heard about begin to pop up out of nowhere even though they were already there. In the world of academia, coining that is, "Ka-Ching, hold my tenure," to a linguistics professor.

But to us at Gorton, that's felony theft of intellectual property. Miss Braslow deserves full formal and official recognition once and for all.

She was a member of Gorton's first graduation class and taught there for 35 years. We kidded about having the school built around her. We were close. She lived a block away. She was teaching frequency illusion before the parents of Terry and Prof. Zwicky were trying to make their illusions a reality.

But I digress. I was going to write about how to make homemade horseradish and the difference between red and white, but something popped up—call it another Miss Braslow moment.

Alex Poletsky (C65) is a retired journalist and managing editor of Wolf Tales.



Ask Janet

No Place For 'Love' Of the Sport

Dear Janet,

What is love? I've heard it's five feet of heaven in a ponytail. Really? What is it about springtime that makes people think about love?

Connie Fused

Dear Connie,

"In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

Did Alfred Lord Tennyson have romance in mind when he wrote those words in Locksley Hall or was he thinking about tennis? Not love of the game but the score.

Scoring romantic love is good. Scoring tennis love is bad. It's zero. Nada. Nil. Nothing. Like in a one-sided, unrequited love. One feels nothing for the other. Yes, sometimes love hurts.

While I was thinking about this tennis term, my mind drifted, as it often does, to other things. In this case, other sports, other terminology. Very few sports terms, like love, evoke pleasant thoughts. There's birdie in golf and Hail Mary in football.

As I thought about it, most words that came to mind are hostile, if not brutal, so I went to my computer for answers. It's not surprising that ice hockey seems to have the most.

From a long list of many hockey terms, the ones that "grabbed me" are: attacking zone; boarding; butt ending; spearing; charging;

See **ASK JANET** on Page 10



Did You Know?

Shop Till You Drop In Yonkers

In 1954, one of the nation's first open-air shopping centers, opened at the junction of the New York State Thruway and Cross County Parkway in the Kimball area of Yonkers—The Cross County Shopping Center.

Centuries before the mall opened, the land was a bartering place for Native Americans. A large rock, known then as the Trading Rock, was its center. From the Algonquin to the Dutch and later the English settlers, this was the place to do business. The center's grand opening on April 28 featured a ceremonial dedication to the Trading Rock with a plaque that bore, in part, the following inscription:

"IT IS FITTING THAT THIS SYMBOLIC ROCK BE DEDICATED TO THE CROSS COUNTY CENTER AND THE PROGRESSIVE NEW CONCEPTS OF ITS PARTICIPANTS IN THE PEACEFUL ARTS OF COMMERCE. THIS IS INSCRIBED TO THOSE WHOSE FORESIGHT, ENTERPRISE AND SERVICE MADE THIS DREAM A LIVING REALITY."

See **SHOPPING** on Page 10

SHOPPING (from Page 9)

The shopping center, situated on 72 acres, included a hospital in the middle of the mall. The original anchor stores were Gimbels, (later Stern's and still later Macy's) and John Wanamaker (later Sears and now Target).

In between the anchor stores was a mall walk with a vast assortment of retail stores, a drug store, a hardware store and restaurants such as Horn & Hardart and Wilskers Delicatessen.

Nearby was The Red Coach Grill for more formal occasions. Both Gimbels and Wanamaker's also offered their shoppers restaurants on the third level of their stores.

Starting in 2007, Cross County underwent new development and an upgrade that was completed in 2012.

The store that was once Gimbels is now Macy's. Not only is it one-third larger but it boasts a new covered parking lot that is almost as large as the store.

The stores between the two anchor stores have all been renovated and some demol-



ished.

The Cross County hospital is now a Hyatt Place Hotel with 155 rooms, indoor pool, cocktail bar, business center and fitness center.

Today, there are more than 80 stores,

most of which did not exist in the '50s and '60s. There are also a host of new restaurants including The Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Panera's, Five Guys, Shake Shack and Boston Market to name a few.

Joan Lawless Kennedy (C65) is a member of the Yonkers Historical Society.

ASK JANET (from Page 9)

elbowing; tripping; passing out; poke checking; roughing; and shooting.

The most violent sounding ones, "taking the face-off" and "killing a penalty," actually aren't brutal at all.

While I'm on the subject of hockey, my mind is drifting again. Over the years, I've often been amused listening to the announcers calling the hockey games with such Russian names as Andrei Markov, Sergei Federov, Sergei Zubov, Igor Larionov, Viktor Kozlov, Dimitri Minorov, Vyacheslav Kozlov, to name a few, especially when they're playing together. "It's Federov to Kozlov. Kozlov to Zubov. Zubov back to Kozlov."

You get the picture. I think it would be funny to have players named Knok Yurblov, Knok Thenetov and Take

Thefaceov. In all fairness to hockey, it isn't the only sport with words we associate with violence or negativity.

In rugby, there's maul, blindside, and scrum. Football has blitz, sack, shotgun, coffin corner kick. Lacrosse has attack/attack-men, butt/butt-end, slash. Baseball has stealing/stolen base, hit-by-pitch, pick off, strike out, sacrifice bunt or fly.

Penalties in ice hockey, roller derby, rugby and cricket are served in the Sin bin or bad box. Even the gentleman's sport, golf, has bite, choke, penalty stroke (sounds serious), punch, rough, worm burner (also in lacrosse), shotgun start, lie (unplayable, uphill and preferred).

Other terms are just down-right funny. Grubber, flea flicker, sandbagger, rub the green, yips, zoomie, de-twig; moonball, knuckleball, screwball, forkball, and doctoring the baseball. Hit a brick. Ragging

the puck. Alley oop, double dribble. Alligator arms. Fiddlestick. Garbage goal. The list goes on.

But let's get back to love and courting, and have a little "pun time" with tennis and romance. Finding your perfect match, gives you the feeling that you're all set in this game we call life. You feel like you've been dealt four aces, a great hand in poker, a great serve in tennis.

But too often one person starts to take advantage of the other, finding fault, even double-faults often to the break(ing) point. They want out. Divorce papers are served. Game over.

And so is my April article.

Janet Guyon Hanford (C65) is a former cheerleader and was voted Most Versatile by her '65 senior class.

Tell Us About Your Reunion Memories

Greetings Alumni and friends of Gorton.

As the warmer weather is setting in, it brings to mind the graduation season. June is not only the recognized graduation time, it is the time of class reunions of all numeric denominations. In some cases, a numeric milestone is not even needed as people just want to get together.

Some reunions are great, some are “non-events,” some are disasters. My class (C64) had a great 50th reunion. The event committee was well organized, communicated freely, and worked extremely hard. It paid off!

I was fortunate to attend (as a special guest) the 55th Reunion of Gorton C61. I have to admit, it was a blast! Those folks partied and had a great time, just like they



MEET THE BUNKERS—Sam Fried, Gale Donnelly and Rich Whittaker make a “sandy” while playing a round at Rich’s home course in Vero Beach, FL.



Alumni News

did at their 50th and all of their other reunions. As a matter of fact, I have no doubt they did the same in the high school years.

I wondered if most reunions ran that way, so I searched the Internet for successful reunion stories. As you might imagine, in this era of sensationalism, the focus was not on the good times, but rather the odd and quirky outcomes. There was the old boyfriend-girlfriend encounters, the high school bully meets the former victim who exacts revenge, and so on.

I did find two catching my attention that I’d like to share:

From Waiter To Classmate

My 10-year reunion was hosted at a nice hotel banquet hall and had a decent turnout—more than 100 people. There was one guy I’d known all throughout high school who was also a well-known stoner. I’ll call him Chris.

Chris walks into the banquet hall, stops in his tracks, turns around in a very slow circle and surveys the entire room. He then says, “Whoa...” and looks visibly alarmed. Once his eyes settle on me, I say, “Hey, Chris! Long time no see, man!?” He slides over to me and whispers in my ear, “This is really weird...I’m pretty sure I know every single person in this room.”

That’s when I realize he’s wearing the same clothes as the banquet hall workers.

OH MY GOD. CHRIS IS WORKING AS A SERVER AT HIS OWN HIGH SCHOOL REUNION, AND HE HAS NO CLUE WHAT IS HAPPENING.

I walk him out to the front lobby and explain it’s our 10-year high school reunion.



PIZZA AND A POSE—Yonkers Fire Chief Tony Pagano, another big fan of coach John Volpe, at A&V Pizzeria on Morsemere. Tony played football for Saunders under coach Dan Hurly.

He is mortified and beyond embarrassed. He was never contacted and didn’t even realize it had been 10-years since we graduated. He just knew he was working another catering gig in a never-ending series of catering gigs.

I make him take me to his manager and explain what’s happening. I tell the manager there is NO WAY this guy is working his own high school reunion. Awesomely, the manager agrees. We find a different suit jacket and tie for him, and I take Chris back to the party. He ended up having a good night.

Here’s Your Drunken Son

Small high school reunion with my core group of friends. This was 10 years after graduation. We all partied pretty hard in school, but mellowed out in our late 20’s. Decided to all meet up for dinner at a local bar/restaurant. Think Applebee’s, but nicer.

See **ALUMS** on Page 12

ALUMS (from Page 11)

One guy showed up already wasted, with a duffle bag full of multiple packets of weed and the bottle he started on before meeting us.

He decided we were boring, finished his bottle in the restroom and refused to come out. He ended up passing out there.

Bartender kicked him out. He came alone in an Uber and we had no idea where he lived. None of us wanted to take him to our places (he was angry, puking and belligerent), so we dropped him off at his last known address—his parents' house.

Both of them answered the door and we handed him over. It was past midnight and incredibly awkward.

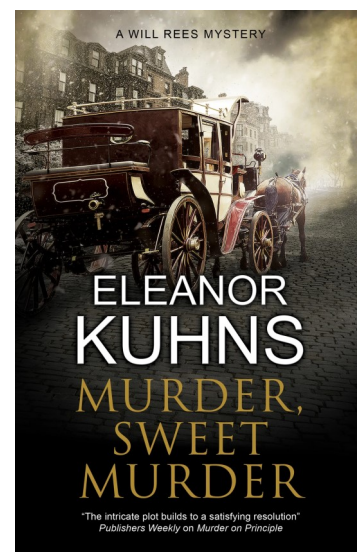
He's not invited to the next reunion.

This brings me to asking this question to you...what are your favorite memories of your high school reunion? The milestone is not as important as the actual event and what you remember as significant. June is coming upon us and many reunions will be occurring. This is the 50th Reunion for the Class of '72, the Class of '67 has scheduled their 55th reunion this June in Westchester. I'm sure other classes will have their milestone events as well.

Drop me a line at watolany@gmail.com with your favorite reunion memories, and we'll print them (in good taste of course) in upcoming issues of *Wolf Tales*. Anonymity will be honored when requested.

I have a feeling there are some great stories out there.

Bill Tolany is the president of the Charles E. Gorton High School Alumni Association and a member of the Class of 1964.



An Interview With the Author

The following is an interview with author Eleanor Kuhns, C67, by the Website ireadwhatyouwrite.com on her latest novel, Murder Sweet Murder. Her virtual book tour is under way and concludes in May.

I Read: What inspired the idea for your book?

Eleanor Kuhn: While I was researching Death in the Great Dismal, I came across a description of conditions on a slave ship. It was not appropriate for Death in the Great Dismal, or for the one that came after it (Murder on Principle) but I remembered it. I'd received several requests to write a book with Lydia's background so I put the two together.

IR: Tell us about a favorite character from the book.

EK: Lydia. She tempers Rees's emotional fits and, in my opinion, is smarter than he is.

IR: What was the most surprising thing you learned in writing this book?

EK: I learned a lot about Boston, which was not a city but a town at that time.

IR: If you were friends with a character in this book, what kinds of things would you do together?

EK: Jerusha. We are both big readers. And I respect her desire to be something other than a wife and mother.

IR: What does it mean to you to be called an author?

EK: I think of myself more as a storyteller. But that I have made a success at it makes me both humble at my good fortune and proud.

IR: How do you define success as an author?

EK: I suppose the obvious answer is getting published. But being an author also includes all the publicity and the business jobs that I have to do.

IR: Do you have any quirky writing rituals?

EK: I have to write in the early morning with a cup of coffee at my elbow. I generally write until about 10:30 when I take the dog out.

IR: What comes first for you, the plot or the characters?

EK: Since I am writing a series, most of the characters are already established. I usually work on the setting first; then the plot comes last.

IR: As an author what do you think makes a good story?

EK: I expect something exciting to happen, whether an exotic setting or a strong plot with lots of twists.

IR: What do you look for in a story as a reader?

See **INTERVIEW** on Page 13



BIRDS OF A FEATHER—Sam Fried, far right, poses with daughter-in-law Alice Bird, granddaughters Eloise and Bonnie, son Matt and Gale Donnelly at Little St. Simons Island, GA, where Sam photographed sanderlings in black & white and a dunlin roseate spoonbill. You can barely see the tip of its spatulate bill (see arrow).



INTERVIEW (from Page 12)

EK: Engaging characters and a story that keeps me reading. It doesn't have to be a thriller; the story can rely on interesting characters or a strong setting.

IR: If your book were made into a movie, which actors would play your characters?

EK: Sean Bean as Will Rees, Scarlett Johansson as Lydia.

IR: What has been your favorite reader feedback?

EK: I love it when a reader approaches me and tells me they've read my books. That still gives me a thrill.

IR: How do you interact with your readers?

EK: Pre-pandemic, I did lots of talks, which I love. Now I mainly respond to comments.

IR: What is your all-time favorite book or author?

EK: Oh man, there are so many. I love Barbara Hambly and I re-read *The Doomsday Book* by Connie Willis, every year.

IR: What made you say to yourself, "Today, I am going to write a book that I

will publish"?

EK: Like most writers, I have been writing for a long time and trying to get published. I just never gave up.

IR: How do you avoid or defeat writer's block?

EK: I am always working on something. I think it is important to write every day. As a consequence, I have never had writer's block.

IR: What difference do you see between a writer and an author?

EK: An author approaches writing as a job, with all the extra work that entails. Most of the writers I know write, but usually only when they feel like it.

IR: What is an underrated series that you think everyone should read at least once?

EK: Barbara Hambly's *Benjamin January* series.

IR: Aside from writing or reading, what are your hobbies or interests?

EK: I am an avid hiker and gardener. I also quilt, weave, knit, and do other types of crafts.

IR: What advice would you give to a writer working on their first book?

EK: Don't give up...revise, revise, revise.

IR: What are you working on in the near future?

EK: Currently I am researching a new series, mysteries that take place in Bronze Age Crete.

IR: What is your author spirit animal?

EK: This is tough. I love peacocks but I am not at all showy.

IR: What would the title of your autobiography be?

EK: A Curious Life.

IR: Describe yourself in as few words as possible.

EK: Short, blond, with glasses.

IR: If you could have lunch with three authors, who would they be?

EK: William Faulkner and Agatha Christie. We would talk about setting. And Anne Perry. I would love to know what drew her to Victorian England.

IR: What would your dream library look like?

EK: Not just books, but lots of patrons. An active Children's Room to encourage the next generation of readers.

IR: [Best answer to this question ever!]



Lincoln Memorial.



**Tuers
De Force**

A D.C Tour At Nightfall: A Capital Idea

When Zach's elementary school class trip to D.C. was canceled due to COVID, he was naturally disappointed.

Last week, I made up for my grandson's letdown with a three-day stay and tour of our nation's capital with Alice and Zach's mom, Tricia. We took in as many of the free museums and favorite historic sites as possible in the first two days.

Included in that crunch was Arlington National Cemetery and the changing of the guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Taking a guided tram around the grounds was a great way to see its expanse and learn its history. Here's an interesting footnote about the soldiers who guard the Tomb. No soldier can have a waist line more than 30 inches and none can drink alcohol on or off duty for the rest of their lives!

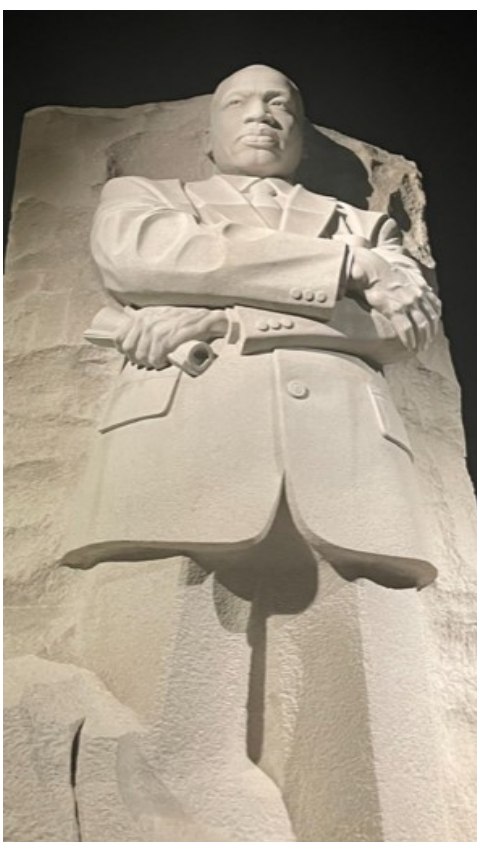
Rented motor scooters were a fun way to travel around D.C. When you were finished you could leave the Lime bikes at any one of their numerous locations in the area. On a picture perfect day, we took to sea for a ferry ride on the Potomac, a time to catch some rays and relax. While Alice and Tricia got off at the wharf to eat and shop, Zach and I stayed on the ferry and met them later.

A highlight of the stay was a three-hour night tour arranged by Tricia. I'm not a bus person, especially at night when I'm ready

See **TUERS** on Page 15



U.S. Marine Corp War Memorial
(Iwo Jima Memorial).



Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial.



Washington Memorial.

City Prelim Budget Hikes School Support

Mayor Mike Spano's proposed \$1.36 billion includes a record \$680.7 million allocation for Yonkers' schools, a \$5.7 million increase.

The executive budget stays within the state mandated tax cap with a proposed 2.93% increase in the property tax levy.

The budget contain no layoffs, adds 10 new police officers and includes capital investments for the schools and funds a new police and fire training facility.

City Breaks Ground On New K-8 School

Yonkers officially broke grounds on the school district's new Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community School located at 73 Lawrence St. The school will serve 675 students from Pre-Kindergarten to 8th grade and the local community.

Built on the site of the former St. Denis School, it's the first public school built in the city since 2000. It is expected to open in the 2023-24 school year.

The school will feature multi-functional spaces that will be accessible evenings and weekends without the need to open the



City and school officials break ground for the city's first new school since 2000.

entire school building. Special amenities include a multi-purpose gymnasium and meeting room with stage; a full-sized basketball court and locker rooms; a cafeteria and meeting room with full kitchen; and a health-care suite.

New Magnet School Set for TV, Film Arts

It'll be show time on the Hudson. Green Point Studios, in partnership with the Yonkers Public Schools, will create the district's first film and television school for grades 6-12.

The new magnet school will be located at the former Rising Ground property off Ludlow Street, Green Point's new Ludlow studio campus for Lionsgate. The magnet school will feature curriculum

that will provide students the pathway to a career in film and production. It is expected to open in 2024, with an enrollment of about 500 students.

School to be Named After Barack Obama

The name-change game continues.

Palisades Prep, formerly Commerce High School, will be renamed the Barack Obama School for Social Justice later this year. According to Mayor Mike Spano, the city is rebranding schools to reflect the system's shifting demographics.

Also, School 13 will be named The Mirabal Sisters Community School. The Mirabals were killed for opposing the Dominican Republic dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo.

TUERS (from Page 14)

for bed, but you have to make sacrifices.

Boarding at the National Archives Building on Pennsylvania Avenue with its neo-classical rotunda and columns was an especially dramatic sight in the evening. The tour gave you plenty of time to walk around and take photos.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial was a time to read his quotes and reflect on their meaning. We walked up the Lincoln Memorial's 58 steps—two for the number of terms that he served plus 56 for his age when he was assassinated.

Moving on to the White House, there was a bed of tulips in a public park so I made like Tiny Tim and tiptoed through them.

The Washington Monument and the Jefferson Memorial illuminated at night were sights to behold.

Zach and Tricia took the elevator to the top of the Washington monument the day after we arrived, with help by me. Every day was sold out but if you got to the ticket booth that opened at 8:30 a.m., you had a shot for the same-day tickets. Yes, you're correct, I was chosen to rise before the birds and stand in line. Fortunately, I snagged two tickets.

Back to the night tour.

We also saw tributes to our fallen soldiers from the WWII, Korean and Vietnam wars. Zach, especially gravitated to the WWII Memorial, hoping to see the name of his great-grandfather, Andy Murin, Alice's

dad who served as a Medic during the Battle of the Bulge, was wounded and received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

We explained to Zach that only those killed in action were enshrined and, fortunately for us, his great-grandfather survived action. Next day, on the way home, we stopped to see my niece Valentina, a junior at Johns Hopkins University, who gave us a tour of the first research college in the U.S.

Nothing beats a class trip to D.C. more than doing it with your family.

Steve Tuers was a member of Gorton's championship basketball team and is a lifelong resident of Yonkers.

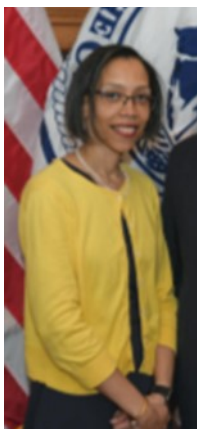
City Detective Shot During FBI Gun Sweep

A veteran Yonkers detective one week away from retiring, was shot in the stomach during an FBI anti-gun task force sting operation in the city's Nodine Hill section.

Det. Brian Menton, a 27-year veteran of the force, is reportedly recovering after emergency surgery at Jacobi Hospital in the Bronx. The alleged assailant was shot to death by an FBI agent immediately after the attack.

Menton's twin brother, James, a New York City policeman who was also part of the sting operation, helped rush his brother to Jacobi.

Thomas-Braggs Named First Female Assessor



Lynette Thomas-Braggs, a 20-year veteran of city government, has been named Yonkers' first female city assessor. She most recently served as a senior property appraiser in the assessment department.

The city assessor is responsible for overseeing the establishment of the assessed value for all property within the city's municipal boundaries. In addition to her tenure at the assessor's office, she served nine years as a clerk in the city's finance department. Thomas-Braggs fills a vacancy left by retiring assessor David Jackson. Her term will expire Aug. 31, 2026.

Driver Sentenced In Lake Ave. Crash

A Yonkers driver who sent a mother and young child hurtling into a Lake Avenue barbershop was sentenced to 2 ½-to-7 ½ years in state prison. Dubbed the "Miracle on Lake Avenue," two nearby cops and bystanders lifted the auto off the six-month old child amidst the rubble.

David Poncurak, 44, had a blood alcohol content of 0.13%, and illegal narcotics in his system. In addition to the felony conviction, he also pleaded guilty to various misdemeanors.

The woman suffered serious leg injuries and her baby suffered a fractured skull and third-degree burns to her back and foot. Both are reportedly fully recovered from the July 2021 accident.



X-County Buzzing With Anticipation

The Cross County Shopping Center is creating quite a buzz with the installation of two beehives near Macy's to help the struggling bee population.

Each colony will start with 10,000 bees and will hopefully grow to 50,000 by the peak of the season.

Cross County is also holding a contest to name the two queen bees over on its Instagram page. There will be two winners selected at random, who will receive a \$100 gift card each to shop at Cross County Center, plus four jars of locally produced honey each.

Yonkers to Add 10 To Police Department

It may not sound like a lot, but Yonkers is adding 10 recruits to its police force—the first increase to the department since 9/11.

The additional hires are part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Team initiative to encourage more casual face-to-face interactions through foot patrol and providing a sense of safety and security in targeted high crime neighborhoods.

Let There Be Light And a Greenway

Still on the planning board but coming to a neighborhood near you soon are two ongoing urban revitalization projects.

The first is the expansion of the "day lighting" project of the Saw Mill past Chicken Island to School Street. The city is also continuing to design the Yonkers Greenway, which will create a 3.1-mile recreation trail through Southwest Yonkers.

\$40,000 Raised For Hate Crime Victim

Two weeks after a vicious hate crime assault against an Asian woman in her Yonkers apartment building, more than \$40,000 has been raised on her behalf through a GoFundMe page.

Tammel Esco, age 42, was charged with a hate crime after assaulting the 67-year-old woman whose identity is being withheld to protect her privacy. According to police, she was struck more than 100 times in the lobby of her building.



The Circus Comes to Town

For the first time in its 50-year history, Flip Circus is coming to Yonkers and the Cross County Center for a limited engagement ending May 2.

The family-owned and operated circus takes place in a traditional big top and features circus acts including clowns, acrobats, jugglers, aerial acts, dancers, daredevil motorcycles and audience participation and more.