



# LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 1976 50TH REUNION NEWSLETTER

December 2025

## Reminisce. Renew. *Reunion.*

### Get Ready to Celebrate Our 50th Lawrence Reunion!

It's hard to believe that it's been almost 50 years since we graduated from Lawrence. As you know, the 50th reunion for our Lawrence class of 1976 is coming up on June 18-21 next year, and we hope to see you there. We'll be sending you three newsletters between now and then, with important information about our Class Gift, Reunion Registration, and the great events we have planned for the weekend.

We're hoping we can get at least 100 of us back to Appleton for the reunion. It will be so nice to reconnect with old friends, make new memories and see all the amazing changes that have taken place on campus over the past 50 years. We look forward to welcoming you back to Lawrence in June!

— David, Pat, Jack, Sue, Jim, Jane, John, Craig, Susan, Denise, David, Lynne, Margi, Michael, Susan, Joe, and Mary Ellyn

#### We have Goals – Let's make them a Reality!

- "50 for 50" – 50% class giving participation for our 50th Reunion – let's do this! (currently 15.10%)
- 20 Multi-year pledges (currently 6)
- 25 Legacy Circle Members (currently 21)
- 100 classmates attend Reunion – don't miss the best party of the year!

More 1976 classmates gave on Lawrence's Giving Day than any other class. We reached 52 donors and \$43,109. That's INCREDIBLE. We also more than doubled the number of donors from our class that gave last Giving Day!

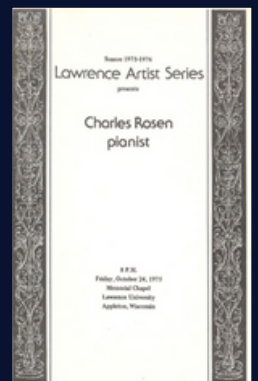
#### Class of 1976 50th Reunion Committee

David Hines (Co-Chair) – Oak Park, IL  
 Pat Miller (Co-Chair) – Chicago, IL  
 Jack Anderson – Appleton, WI  
 Sue Cook – Los Altos Hill, CA  
 Jim Cowen – Larchmont, NY  
 Jane Hansen Danowitz – Hobart, WI  
 John Davis – Neenah, WI  
 Craig Gagnon – Appleton, WI  
 Susan Hall – Glenview, IL  
 Denise Janosik – St. Louis, MO  
 David Kirchman – Lewes, DE  
 Lynne LaJone – Park Ridge, IL  
 Margi Briggs Lofton – Montpelier, France  
 Michael Meuli – Appleton, WI  
 Susan Reeves – Houston, TX  
 Joe Troy – Appleton, WI  
 Mary Ellyn Vicksta – Appleton, WI

## The LAWRENTIAN

Want to relive some Lawrence memories before coming back to campus?  
 The Lawrentian has been archived online...click here and enjoy some blasts from the past:

<https://lux.lawrence.edu/lawrentian/>



Join us at Reunion! June 18-21, 2026 | Update your contact information in the [Alumni Directory](#)

## DON'T MISS IT! WHY I'M COMING TO OUR REUNION



**Craig  
Gagnon**

Some of the reasons I'm coming to Reunion:

Brokaw. The Banta Bowl. Main Hall. The Union.  
Coleman. WLFM. The Chapel. The Phi Delt House.  
The Viking Room.

Mr. Dintenfass. Mr. Fritzell. Mr. Podair. Mr. Stanley.  
Mr. Joel. Mr. Yatzeck.

Cleo's. DeBruin's. Jim's Place. The Mark. Conkey's.  
The Hot Fish Shop.

And, from London: The Arden. Tiddles. The Pot.  
Uncle Sam's. Biba's. The Devonshire Arms. Joni  
Mitchell. The Staple Singers. The London  
Symphony. The Mousetrap. Crown Matrimonial.  
Majorca. Rome. Scotland.

But mostly, I'm coming to see Ruth, Kay, Kim, Bill,  
Jim, Carl, John, Nancy, Joey, Earl, Mary Ellyn, Robb,  
Joe, Nancy, Steve, Mary, Jill, Randy, Rob, Sue, Jack,  
Willie, Juli, Susie, Sarah, Larry, Blaine, Mattie, Barb  
and a few more that I can't recall at the moment.  
Some of these folks I know are coming. Others, I'm  
hoping will be there.

These are the people and places that meant a lot to  
me 50 + years ago. Although some are no longer  
here, most of the people are. And it will be so, so  
good to see them again. I really hope they come back  
to Appleton for what may be the last time we get to  
visit with one another. Just like the good old days.



**Denise  
Janosik**

In all honesty, my 50th college reunion was not even on my radar when I got a call asking me to consider becoming a member of the planning committee. After a little reflection, I decided it would be fun to reconnect with people and interesting to see how Lawrence has evolved over the last few decades. As I prepare to retire at the end of this year, I realize that the four years I spent at Lawrence laid the foundation for so many things that followed in my life.

As a biology major, I worked on an independent research project with my mentor, Dr LaMarca. The details of the project are hazy, but I think it involved removing the nuclei from radioactive frog eggs. What I do remember is that it made me appreciate study design, scientific method and data analysis. When I decided to go to medical school, LaMarca was disappointed because he saw a future for me in basic developmental biology research. He would be happy to know that during my 40-year career as a cardiologist, I have always been involved in some aspect of clinical research. For 25 years, I was a faculty member at St Louis University teaching medical residents and cardiology fellows. I credit my Lawrence experience for sparking my interest in both research and teaching.

Even more important than influencing my career choice, my experience traveling to Eastern Europe in the summer of my junior year, expanded my view of the entire world. It ignited a passion for traveling and experiencing new cultures that persists to this day. I am always planning the next trip. I believe my experience in the Soviet Union all those years ago, helped me with the decision to expand our family through international adoption. My husband and I traveled to Ukraine in 1997 and Belarus in 2001 to adopt our daughters. George Smalley would have been proud that I spoke Russian in the court in Minsk! I remember someone telling my parents at graduation that a Lawrence education does not prepare you for a job; it prepares you for life. I am grateful for my Lawrence experience, to the faculty that assisted in my education, and the friendships I made along the way.

I am attending the reunion in June because I am excited to reconnect with people that shared a special time in my life and anxious to see the changes on campus. I hope you will consider attending our 50th reunion and celebrating this milestone!



## EVERYTHING COUNTS FOR OUR REUNION CLASS GIFT!

One of the exciting things about our 50th Reunion is the number of options we have to contribute to the Class Gift for our 50th Reunion. Please consider how you would like to impact the future for Lawrence students. You may designate your gifts to the Lawrence Fund (Unrestricted gifts supporting the Conservatory, Athletics, Scholarships, the Library, Björklunden, and more!) or to other areas of your interest, like individual named funds.

All gifts given or pledged from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 count!

- Include Lawrence in your estate plans and join the Lawrence-Downer Legacy Circle. Please provide an estimate of your gift (the estimate is not legally binding and can be adjusted at any time.) If you already included Lawrence in your plans and have not let Lawrence know, please do! Now is the time as your estimate counts toward the Class Gift.
- Make a one-year pledge or, even better to have more impact, a multi-year pledge (three, four, or five years). Example, a five-year pledge of \$2,000/year would count as a \$10,000 gift towards our 50th Reunion Class Gift. Visit Lawrence's How to Give page to learn more about how you can give your gift.
- Make a gift online now at [lawrence.edu/give-online](http://lawrence.edu/give-online)
- Make a gift through your IRA as a Qualified Charitable Distribution. Check out our very own David Kirchman's testimonial sharing more about this giving option!
- To make a multi-year pledge or to join Lawrence-Downer Legacy Circle, please contact our Reunion Liaisons from the Advancement Office. They are here to answer your questions:
  - Chuck Demler, Director of Leadership and Planned Giving, [chuck.demler@lawrence.edu](mailto:chuck.demler@lawrence.edu), 920-832-6937
  - Laurie Yingling, Associate Director of Gift Planning, [laurie.l.yingling@lawrence.edu](mailto:laurie.l.yingling@lawrence.edu), 920-832-6843



Ana Dittel and David Kirchman

"I have always greatly valued the education I got from Lawrence, so I've donated small amounts over the years to the university and other organizations promoting liberal arts higher education. When I decided to increase my donation, having just turned 71, I realized that a qualified charitable distribution was the way to go. Along with being easy to do, a QCD saves on taxes while supporting an institution that is needed today perhaps more than ever."

— David Kirchman '76



*Then*



*Now*

**It's five-o'clock somewhere...  
The Class of 1976 is having a Happy Hour!**



You will receive a special invitation via email for this online Zoom Happy Hour event, which is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17 at 6:00 p.m. CT. Please join us with your favorite beverage and a smile — it will be wonderful to see you!



## RECALLING THE LONDON CENTRE

Michael Meuli

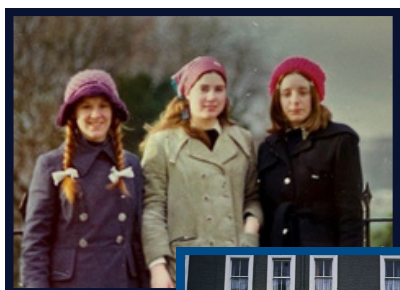
I went to the London Centre between my sophomore and junior year. We flew out of Chicago on the last day of December 1973. We flew out in a 747, which was new at the time.

I am not entirely sure why I chose to go to the London Centre, but it was an experience that I heard about when deciding to go to Lawrence. Once I was at Lawrence, I discounted going since I was Chemistry and Biology focused, and it would be difficult to take time away from the labs that were required as part of my major.

That all changed when Dr. Joel and his wife decided to go and teach science courses at the London Centre. Although our lodging was without labs, they still taught science courses that would count toward my major.

We flew across the “pond” and arrived in the early morning. Since it was the last day of the year and was a New Year’s flight, I remember being surprised and impressed by all the liquor that was served on the flight. Since I was from Wisconsin and people that were 18 or older could drink, everything was legal. Legal yes, but having common sense “No.”

We arrived at the Arden Hotel, our foreign campus and lodging away from Lawrence. All the rooms were quite small. About 3 or 4 rooms would share a small bathroom located down the hall. We all shared a common kitchen that included a few tables, stove, and refrigerator.



Since the refrigerator was small, many of us would purchase milk, eggs and other items that needed to be cooled and stored them on our window ledge outside our room. It was winter term in Appleton, and London weather was about the same—only damp all the time.

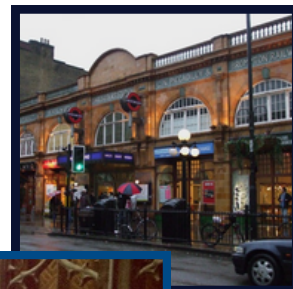
We had a large meeting room that was used for classes. Our teachers were a mixture of LU professors and a couple local professors from area universities. I believe this was part of the “incredible liberal arts” experience that we all heard about.

Class schedules were tailored to encourage us to travel and see local sites. Within a 10-week term we had classes four days a week (so we could travel over the long weekend). If we planned it correctly, we could take off Thursday afternoon and not return until Sunday. In the middle of the term we were given a week off as well. Lawrence planned this perfectly—it really gave us the opportunity to travel and see England and Europe. On hindsight, unbelievable “Big Fun.”

The Arden hotel was overseen by Miss Riley (and her cat Tiddles). I could spend this entire article talking about them but suffice it to say they were “one of a kind.” Although she had an arrangement with Lawrence for rooms and classes, in the end I don’t think she really liked students. I think we were part of the deal that she had to put up with.

When I was in London, it was in the middle of an “Energy Crisis.” Heating temperatures in public buildings were all turned down, and many businesses were not open the entire week. The entire time I was there I never saw Piccadilly Circus lit up at night. I did, however, meet Lawrence students that I hadn’t met in Appleton! Imagine the fun we had in London getting to know many of these “new classmates.”

Mostly I remember not the classes but travelling to local sites on our long weekends. I did a couple trips to Stratford upon-Avon with friends. We travelled via train and even hitchhiked on occasion (something I never told my parents).

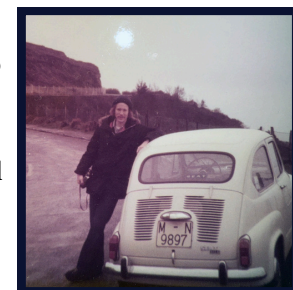


Many of us got Euro passes for train travel on the main continent which made travelling between countries fast, easy, and convenient. On the week off in the middle of the term I was able to travel with classmates to Switzerland, France, Germany, and Spain. Rooming was not really a problem, even without internet or cell phones.

On one trip to Spain we were able to rent a car and visit the Cave of Altamira. It is renowned for prehistoric cave art featuring charcoal drawings and polychrome paintings. At the time, these were completely open to visitors. No guide, ropes, fees, etc. Now it is very different—much more commercial. Although everyone tried to fit in visits to the Louvre, Venice, Amsterdam, etc., this site is something I will always remember.

That is one of the great things about the London Centre, students were encouraged to create the experience that they wanted. Even then, I knew it was a special time.

In hindsight I had no idea how lucky we were to identify what we wanted and then share that experience with classmates.



Michael Meuli



Kayla Jarppi '26 and Ellie Fiorini '26

Philanthropy ensures that students have the resources they need succeed! Students like us also get to enjoy gorgeous weekend retreats at Bjorklunden with our classmates!

Lawrence has challenged us to think and grow in ways we could never have expected. We have so much gratitude for the entire Lawrence community—of students, staff, faculty, alumni, and donors—who have made it possible for us to have such fulfilling experiences and develop into who we are today.

—Kayla Jarppi '26 and Ellie Fiorini '26

## Make Your Plans for our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion

Next June, we'll gather on campus to celebrate 50 years of memories, friendship, and the enduring spirit of the Class of 1976. Registration will open in the spring, but now's the time to make your travel plans and book your accommodations, as Appleton hotels are already filling up. Dorm accommodations in Hiatt Hall (the air-conditioned one!) will be available on a first-come, first-served basis when Registration opens. [Visit our Q&A](#) for more information about hotel options and answers to other frequently asked questions.

This is our year to make a

*Big Difference*

for the Lawrence student experience  
through our collective

*50th Reunion Class Gift!*



*Then*

We hope you enjoyed our first newsletter. Our hope is that it connected with some of your best memories of Lawrence and sparked your desire to attend our Reunion next year. There will be two more newsletters coming your way. The second will be in the middle of Lawrence's winter term while the 3<sup>rd</sup> will be closer to Reunion. In addition, we hope to increase your Reunion excitement by attending the Zoom Happy Hour in February.



*Now*

Don't miss out on any of the fun. To update your contact information, please email [dev\\_operations@lawrence.edu](mailto:dev_operations@lawrence.edu)

Or update the information directly in your profile in the [Alumni Directory](#)