



LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 1976 50TH REUNION NEWSLETTER

February 2026

Reminisce. Renew. *Reunion.*

Get Ready to Celebrate Our 50th Lawrence Reunion!

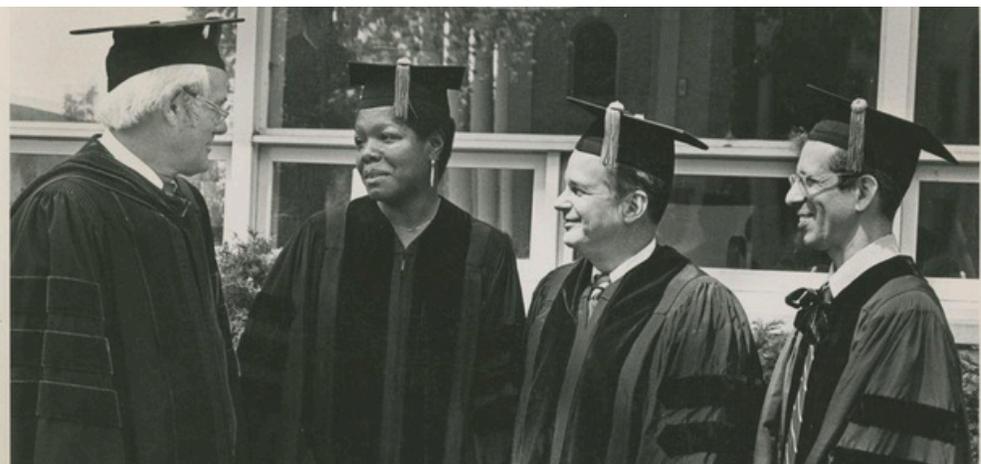
It was great to see many of you on the Lawrence Class of 1976 50th Reunion happy hour Zoom on February 17! Now it's time to continue that excitement about reconnecting with old friends in person at the June 18 - 21 reunion. This edition of our 50th Reunion newsletter can help you with that—among other topics, it contains information about registration, an update on our Class Gift and an overview of the new buildings on campus.

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



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 Danowit – 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



Maya Angelou at our graduation ceremony.

Club 76

Our class will have a social headquarters where we can reflect and reminisce and raise a glass. Stay tuned for more information as we get closer to Reunion!

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



Pat
Miller

I hope to see all of you at our
50th reunion on June 18-21.
It's going to be a good one!

I've attended all but one of our Lawrence class of 1976 reunions during the nearly 50 years since our graduation. For most of the reunions I had to drive only three hours north from Chicago, but I also traveled to Appleton from Cincinnati, New York City and New Jersey in the 1980s - 1990s.

Why make the effort to overcome the time and distance challenges of our still busy lives to come to a Lawrence reunion?

Obviously, the most important reason to return to campus is to see classmates you haven't seen for a few or many years. While I tend to spend a lot of time hanging out with close friends at reunions—including my sisters from our freshman section in Coleman dorm!—I've also found it very rewarding to talk to people I didn't know very well at school. After all, we took the same classes, read the same books, had the same professors, and trod the same ground for four years.

For example, at our 30th (I think) reunion I was chatting with David Hines, who I hadn't known very well before, and we discovered that we're both avid birdwatchers.

Now David and I are co-chairs of our 50th reunion alumni committee and we're talking about organizing a bird walk during our reunion (his great idea).

It's also nice to get reacquainted with beloved faculty members. I've been lucky to reconnect with my tennis coach Mary Poulson, Dr. John Palmquist (Geology) and my major advisor the late Dr. Ron Mason (Anthropology) at prior reunions.

Of course, it's nostalgic to walk around the campus and town to see well-known college buildings and revisit old haunts. But it's also exciting to see how the university is thriving with new facilities (a dorm with air conditioning!) and a diverse student body.

The campus has changed even more since our 40th reunion. President Laurie A. Carter is doing a terrific job of guiding our alma mater into the future and I'm eager to hear what she'll tell us at the reunion about recent developments and what's coming next.

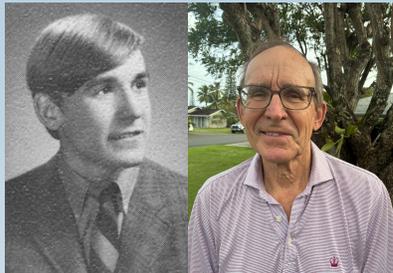
The planned activities are well worth attending—the Convocation, the concerts, the alumni college, the lunches and dinners, etc. But maybe you'll stumble upon an unplanned event that might turn out to be the highlight of the weekend.

One reunion evening, I don't remember when, some friends and I came back to Trever to find Paul Nelson (class of 1975) leading a hootenanny in the common room. We sat on the floor and sang along for two hours.

Sometimes just a quiet moment remembering your time on campus can make you feel young again. Sitting on Union Hill thinking about when you sat in the exact spot with a guy you liked. Crossing the bridge from Trever to Main Hall and wondering how you managed to do it—so many times—in sub-zero weather. Looking up at the windows of my sophomore year room in Brokaw and thinking about when our team dropped a roll of toilet paper from the Drew Street Bridge to the ground below to measure the height for a Trivia Contest question.

Remembering all the little things—and, especially, the friends—that made your time at Lawrence so memorable, rewarding, and fun. Not to mention the great education that we could only get from such a wonderful liberal arts college.

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



David Kirchman

It's about time that I came to a reunion, having missed the first 49. How could I skip such a big one? Even my wife wants to go and see what I've been talking about all these years. (Okay, I'm also calling in a favor.)

I want to see all the new places on campus, but I also want to see if I recognize any of the old buildings, especially Brokaw Hall where I was introduced to college life and the Union, which was my favorite place to "study." I'm sure all the test tubes and glass pipettes from my time in Science Hall are long gone, as are the mainframe computer and the punch cards used in the one programming course I took. (My first job offer after Lawrence was with a computer company in Boston. Talk about a road not taken.)

Perhaps I'll get over to the gym and see where I played racquetball for the first time. Although the scar has long faded, I still vividly remember once bouncing the racket off the wall while going for the ball and whacking myself in the head.

50th Reunions don't come every year. You can't miss this one!

A better reason to come is to see people. Having lost touch with many, I want to see the few old friends I do remember and attach up-to-date faces with names and memories. I hope everyone who did the Costa Rica program will come. (Ironically, I married a tica and now spend winters in Costa Rica.)

But I'm really looking forward to meeting new people, those I didn't know (or at least remember now) while at Lawrence. I want to hear their stories and learn how life turned out for them. Then there's the current staff, maybe a professor or two, and especially the students who will be at the reunion. The new buildings give some sense of what Lawrence is like today, but it is the people who make the place and who can tell us what's really going on.

So, there are a lot of reasons to come to our reunion. But maybe the best is that it should be a great party and a fun, perhaps even memorable weekend. I can't miss this, nor should you.

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/>



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
- Make a gift through your IRA as a [Qualified Charitable Distribution](#).
- 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, 920-832-6937
 - Laurie Yingling, Associate Director of Gift Planning, laurie.l.yingling@lawrence.edu, 920-832-6843

“We treasure Lawrence’s commitment to fostering a community of scholars and artists, one student at a time, promoting both broad learning across disciplines and deep learning in a single discipline. We give because our education at Lawrence was not transactional, but about our development as people, and it opened the world to us. We hope you too will include Lawrence in your estate plans by joining the Lawrence-Downer Legacy Circle to keep this life-changing education available to future Lawrentians.”

— Margi Briggs-Lofton '76
and Michael Lofton '76

Progress update for Class Goals

- “50 for 50” – 50% class giving participation for our 50th Reunion (currently 30.8%)
- 20 Multi-year pledges (currently 15)
- 25 Legacy Circle Members (currently 22)
- 100 classmates attend Reunion – (We will share numbers in our next newsletter. Don't forget to sign up when registration opens: Thursday, April 23 at 10:00 a.m. CT!)

WHAT'S NEW ON CAMPUS?

Many of you have not been to Lawrence for some time and the campus has undergone major changes, especially in the last 10 years. The changes certainly have been much more significant than the addition of carpeting to Trever and Plantz! (Well, we did get a new library during our junior year.) We urge you to use your free time or take advantage of the campus tours at Reunion to check out West Campus, Fox Commons, and the Banta Bowl. Many of our events will be in the Warch Campus Center, which was built in 2009. You will see how this has been a game-changer for Lawrence students today. We think you will be impressed to see first-hand how Lawrence is preparing for the future!



[West Campus, opened fall 2025](#)



[Warch Campus Center, opened fall 2009](#)



[Fox Commons, opened fall 2024](#)



[Banta Bowl, renovated 2015](#)



Make Your Plans for our 50th Reunion

In 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 April 23rd, 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.

“Your support has had a lasting impact on our school and sports programs and the student athletes who wear Lawrence jerseys today. Because of you, we are able to train, compete, and grow in an environment that values resilience and academic excellence. Thank you for helping us to carry forward the legacy of this school and program.”



Nikita Studinskyi '27 and Kylie Melonis '27

Check out student profiles at:
[Who We Are at Lawrence](#)

“We are curious and creative. We are welcoming and supportive. Our collective experiences illuminate the best of our vibrant and engaging community. We are Lawrentians.”

This is our year to make a
Big Difference
for the Lawrence
student experience
through our collective
50th Reunion Class Gift!



LAWRENCE'S GERMAN CENTER IN ENINGEN UNTER ACHALM

Ed Langer and Andy Christiansen

From 1969 until 1973, Lawrence University had a center in Eningen unter Achalm in southern Germany. Eningen, a town of about 10,000 people, is in the Swabian Alps, an area of rolling hills and forests. Eningen lies at the foot of the Achalm, a 700-foot-high hill which was the site of a castle in the Middle Ages.

Lodging and meals were at the Eninger Hof. It had eight double rooms and eight single rooms each with its own toilet and shower. The classroom and library were in an old Gasthaus, Café Hartman, a few blocks away.

Like the London Centre, classes were held four days a week. There was a week break in the middle of each term and a three-week break between terms so there was plenty of opportunity to travel.

Lawrence Professor Dorrit Friedlander taught the mandatory German classes, and Lawrence Professor Ronald Tank taught geology. Herr Uwe Horst of the University of Tübingen taught courses on Fascism, German Politics, and the Cold War. Frau Birgitta Lang of the University of Tübingen taught a course on the Romantic Movement.

Our first day of classes was Tuesday, July 3, 1973, so after lectures on the following day, we celebrated the 4th of July holiday by climbing to the top of Achalm and having a picnic.

Most of us got a 60-day Eurail pass which allowed us to travel for free on Western European trains. Students traveled as far north as northern Norway and as far south as Spain. Many of us spent at least one night sleeping on a train, especially when the youth hostels were full.

During the second term break, there was a group bus trip to Berlin which was subsidized by the West German government. When we arrived in Berlin, we had a bus tour which included a drive by of the block where Professor Friedlander lived before she and her family fled Nazi Germany. To qualify for the subsidy, we had to attend two lectures—one on life in East Germany and one on life in Berlin. All the students crossed through the Berlin Wall to visit East Berlin.

Lawrence University made the decision to close the Eningen German center in December 1973. It was sad to see the program end and say goodbye to the people we lived with so closely for six months. One positive aspect of the closing of the center was that we were allowed to take home books from the library. We each still have books on our shelves that remind us of our stay in Germany.

Ed and Andy are preparing a longer version of this history for inclusion in the Lawrence University Archives. If you have stories, syllabi and photos to share kindly email them at edlanger@att.net and andy@oldbarnvt.com.



Our hotel, the Eninger-Hof



Eningen and the Achalm



Die Drei Könige, our favorite restaurant.



Hiking in the rain: Left to right: Marilyn Sterrenberg, Andy Christiansen, DeMette Spainhour, Ed Langer, John Valentine

DISCOVER A GIFT TO LAWRENCE THAT PROVIDES YOU WITH INCOME !

A **Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)** is a great way for you to make a gift to Lawrence while providing income for you. With a CGA, you receive the comfort of knowing you are providing for you and your family, while also strengthening the development of tomorrow's Lawrentian leaders.

[Learn more about CGAs.](#)

For example, if you are 72 and give a gift of \$10,000, you would receive an annual payment of \$660 and a charitable deduction of \$3,596.

[Complete this form to receive a personalized calculation.](#)

Due to individual state compliance regulations, Lawrence does not issue charitable gift annuities in the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, Washington.



Class of 1976

We hope you enjoyed this edition of our Class of 1976 50th Reunion newsletter. We are in our reunion year and time is flying by...before you know it, June will be here! Remember, [registration](#) opens Thursday, April 23rd starting at 10:00 a.m. CT. Sign up early!

Don't miss out on any of the fun. To update your contact information, please email dev_operations@lawrence.edu

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