

THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE

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State of Play

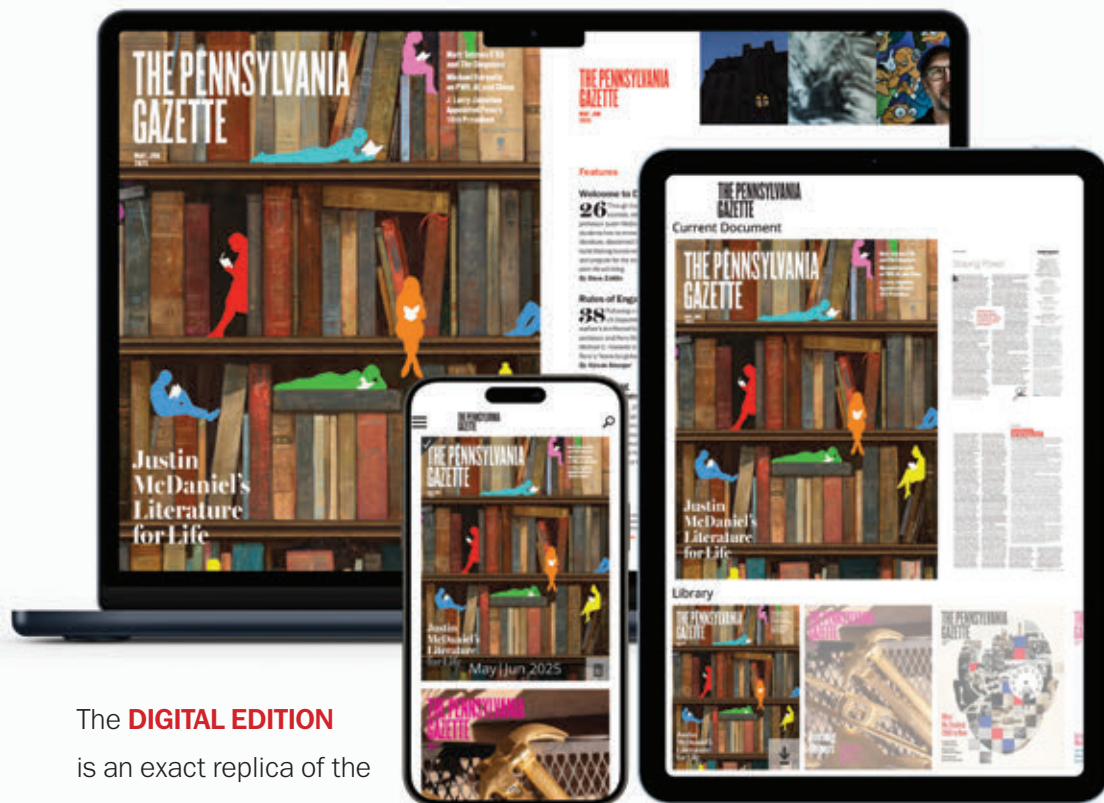
Artis Henderson C'02 W'02's
No Ordinary Bird

Measuring Progress on
Alzheimer's Disease

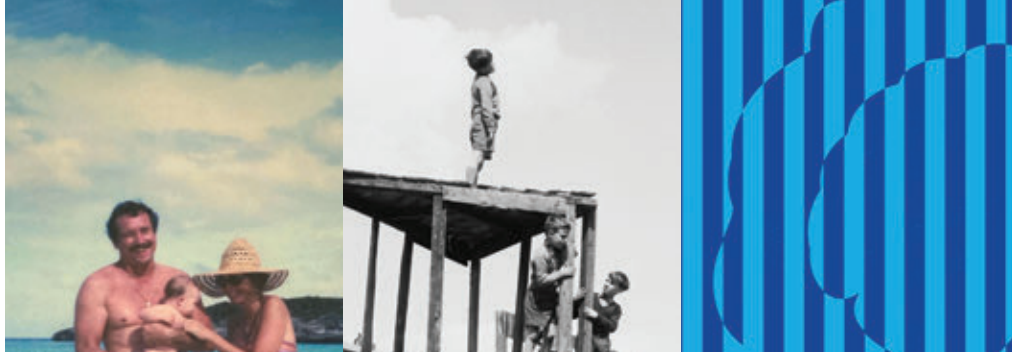
The Constitution and the Classroom



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By Dave Zeitlin

Alzheimer's Now

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By Mary Ann Meyers

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Challenging Terrain

When our older daughter Sarah was little, around the turn of this century, her preschool had events at Smith Memorial Playground in Fairmount Park. At the time the wooden slide for which the playground is famous had narrow splintery stairs separated from the slide area by chicken wire; the seesaws operated entirely on trust; and I remember in particular a metal slide, very tall and steep, situated at the midpoint of a narrow platform that was mostly open at the sides and reached by ladders at either end—inviting one nervous parent to envision horrible falls at every second. The kids loved it.

There's a seven-year age gap between our daughters, so by the time we were bringing Lily there the playground had been closed for safety reasons (according to the Smith website) and renovated with more up-to-date equipment. The kids still had a good time, but I don't remember ever having my heart in my throat watching them. (Which, as it turns out, is maybe *not* a good thing.)

Those contrasting visions came to mind as I was reading "Throwing Away the Playbook" by JoAnn Greco. Her cover story profiles several alumni and faculty of the Weitzman School of Design's landscape architecture program who are determined to return a sense of challenge, mastery, and even a little danger to a play environment where often "kids go up the stairs, across a bridge, and down a slide over and over again."

The article highlights several new projects designed by Weitzman affiliates, from large-scale efforts in FDR and Cobbs Creek parks to neighborhood playgrounds and even smaller efforts incorporated into libraries and other public spaces. It also sketches in the history of ideas about play and advocacy for more open-ended, riskier facilities—

Often "kids go up the stairs, across a bridge, and down a slide over and over again."

pioneered by London's post-World War II "adventure playgrounds" and other European practices—and the constraints faced by US designers that these new projects are meant to challenge.

Several of the landscape architects JoAnn spoke to link their design approach to childhood experiences of unstructured play in nature and the outdoors. Associate editor Dave Zeitlin C'03's story, "A Daughter's Reckoning," opens with Artis Henderson C'02 W'02's idyllic memory of flying with her father over the trees, creeks, and pastures of

her beloved childhood home in Georgia's Blue Ridge Mountains, which abruptly turned nightmarish when his plane crashed.

Henderson, who survived multiple injuries, has investigated the details of her father's secret life as an international drug smuggler and the mystery of his death in her new book *No Ordinary Bird*. Dave spoke with her about the process of writing it, her award-winning work as a conservation journalist, and how the death of her father and later her husband have shaped her path and diverted her from the "ghost lives" she might have lived.

The playgrounds feature also mentions—in the context of making facilities more inclusive for people of different abilities and ages—the statistic that by 2030 there will be more people in the US over 65 than under 16. Currently, some 7 million people in that over-65 population are afflicted with variants of Alzheimer's disease, the most common cause of dementia. While a cure still seems far off, and much about the condition remains frustratingly unclear, there are some hopeful signs of progress, as detailed by Mary Ann Meyers Gr'76 in "Alzheimer's Now."



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“Hackney Files” pro and con, help wanted, Fauré fans come forth, and more.

A Gift

Reading Trey Popp’s article “The Hackney Files” [Sep/Oct 2025] on Jared Farmer’s History Workshop class was a gift to so many of us who were at Penn in the 1990s, as we witnessed both the Water Buffalo scandal and the incident of the 14,000 stolen *Daily Pennsylvanians*, taken by a group identifying itself as the “Black Community.” I appreciated hearing that Farmer and his students revisited these events years later, with the greater perspective (and greater distortion) of history. As an undergraduate, both the Water Buffalo incident and stolen newspapers left me unsure what to think or how to react. Is stealing 14,000 newspapers the best way to protest? Why was a student columnist given a platform to spout racist and sexist ideas? Was the “water buffalo” comment racist or was there a cultural component we needed to consider? Was the University’s response appropriate or ineffective? I was lost.

As a young student I thought having strong convictions was preferable to uncertainty—it was those with strong convictions who carried favor with professors and whose voices we heard on campus. And yet here we had these two incidents where many of us couldn’t decipher our convictions. What should a decent human think, we wondered? Revisiting the events through Popp’s article, I still don’t know the right answers and this not knowing is what is wonderful about Professor Farmer’s class.

In visiting the archives, the students landed in a place that felt pretty real to what I felt at the time. Of course, Farmer’s students weren’t there—so they can’t know the frustration of having one’s study-



“Revisiting the events through the article, I still don’t know the right answers and this not knowing is what is wonderful about Professor Farmer’s class.”

ing regularly interrupted by the endless reverberations of sorority girls chanting and foot stomping, and they don’t know the icky feeling one inevitably had reading (or even just seeing) the racist and sexist comments by the *Daily Pennsylvanian* columnist issue after issue after issue.

But despite the unknowable nature of the past, these students do know what it’s like to be an undergraduate, sometimes unsure about how to interpret the chaos bubbling everywhere. And although they did not live through the history they are studying, I’m impressed by their approach to the archives, their willingness to be unsure of the answers, and their

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suspension of judgment on those of us on campus during these events. Personally, I feel both reassured and surprised that even all of these years later, the questions I had in the ’90’s about these “free speech” events are still with me.

Tara Bandman C’95, Dobbs Ferry, NY

The Right Tools to Succeed

As a working architectural historian, team lead, and manager of junior level staff, I cannot emphasize enough how much I enjoyed reading “The Hackney Files.” One of the things most surprising to me about many of the junior level historians I encounter now is their lack of ability to do non-digital research, as well as a lack of ability to quickly scan, understand, and synthesize primary source documents and materials efficiently. Being able to do so is a critical component of being a working professional historian, particularly in a consulting environment where every hour counts (and costs), and I have seen too many young historians who are ill-equipped to be able to do this.

Kudos to Jared Farmer for understanding the importance of teaching these methods to young history majors. In my professional years, I have worn many hats, from urban planner to corporate banking compliance officer and for the past 10 years cultural resources consultant, and I can assure you that having the ability to seek out information and resources, quickly digest it, and analyze and interpret it is a skill applicable in many professional careers. I can only hope others follow Jared Farmer’s example in equipping the next generation of professionals with the right tools to succeed.

Amanda Miller Stander GCP’07, Pittsburgh

Hackney Ranks at the Top

I read with great interest the article on Professor Farmer's History Workshop because I was Sheldon Hackney's provost from the outset of his administration in 1981 to 1987. During that time, I came to know President Hackney as a man of great moral courage, one who kept the University true to the principle of open inquiry as well as dedicated to the highest standards of teaching, research, and public service.

Those years were filled with turmoil, as the article chronicles. I often dealt with sit-ins in my office. But under President Hackney's leadership, his administration treated with respect all sides in grappling with tough issues of divestment in South Africa and increasing the numbers of Black students and faculty. For those interested, my memoir, *Learn, Lead, Serve: A Civic Life* (Indiana University Press, 2025) gives a full account of my years working with President Hackney.

The article is an excellent commentary on what must have been a valuable learning experience for students. But it states that "Farmer's students emerged from the class with a keen appreciation for how expediency can shape administrative decision-making." As one student said, "it is upsetting that the University never seems to take an enduring stand on any area—it simply tries to not step on anyone's toes in the moment." These are grossly unfair charges against President Hackney, who took a consistent and principled stand in dealing with each of the many controversies at the time.

No leader is perfect, of course, but having been involved with many university leaders during my years in higher education, Sheldon Hackney ranks at the top, and I know this judgment was shared by the great majority of Penn faculty, staff, and students at the time.

Unique among those leaders in my experience, he was a great teacher. His administrative style was always to ensure that all of us privileged to work with him learned valuable lessons in the process.



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It is no surprise that he won the outstanding teacher award after he stepped down as president and returned to full-time teaching in the History Department.

Thomas Ehrlich, faculty, Palo Alto, CA

Penn Required a Scalp

"The Hackney Files" glosses over the University's "maladroit handling" of the Water Buffalo incident. Penn brought disciplinary charges against the student, not because his reference to "water buffalo" was "more memorable," but because Penn required a scalp when the other students denied shouting any insults. The accused student, an observant Jew, probably took seriously the commandment against bearing false witness. Penn singled him out for telling the truth and made him the scapegoat.

Creighton Meland W'78, Hinsdale, IL

"The Hundred Dollar Scholar"

Your article on the controversies faced by President Sheldon Hackney in the 1980s and 1990s, and the current history course

based upon them, recalled my own experience with one of these issues: the Mayor's Scholarship program for Philadelphia residents. An entering freshman in 1975, I was the fourth generation of my family to be born and raised in Philadelphia, but among the first generation to go to college.

For the preliminary stage, I was summoned to an interview in a claustrophobic conference room in one of the older buildings on the Penn campus. The room was dominated by a rectangular conference table around which sat about a dozen people with their backs jammed against the walls and the windowsill. I took my seat at the head of the table, the only available space in the room. For the next 40 minutes I was bombarded with rapid-fire questions from all points around the table. The questions mostly concerned my attitudes on certain subjects, with some of the questioners almost hostile and others merely curious. I assumed that most of the inquisitors were city employees; I had to guess because many of them failed to introduce themselves.

A few weeks later I received a letter saying I was being awarded a Mayor's Scholarship of \$100 per year, about the cost of a single science textbook, and almost negligible in light of Penn's \$4,000-plus tuition (which increased 15–20 percent yearly in the inflationary 1970s) and the additional costs for fees, textbooks, weekday lunches between classes, and the hour-long commute from my parents' home in Feltonville to West Philadelphia (it was too expensive for me to live on campus). I considered myself "The Hundred Dollar Scholar." I wondered whether the paltry amount of the grant was due to disapproval of my answers to their questions, opinions of mine they disliked, the fact that I came from a local private school (only because I had won an academic scholarship) rather than a public high school, or another, unfathomable reason.

Your article mentions the lawsuit against the city, suggesting that the reason may have been that the program was grossly underfunded (like many city services), and perhaps I could only get a tiny slice of an undersized pie. At least that's what I would like to speculate.

John H. Brand C'79, Gardnerville, NV

A Helping Hand Would Have Been Welcome

Reading Caren Lissner's article about the Penn First Plus Program ["Helping Hands," Sep/Oct 2025] brought back some painful memories of my experience as a freshman at Penn. Coming from a small town in rural Pennsylvania and being the first generation in my family to attend a four-year college, I always seemed to be at least a couple of steps behind my classmates both socially and academically.

Perhaps the epitome of the gulf between me and those who seemed to belong on campus came one day prior to Spring Break. I was planning to take another dismal Greyhound bus trip home for the week and was stunned while traversing campus when I heard another

student casually tell his mates that he was planning to spend the break climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. *What!?! I didn't need to read Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*; I was living it.*

Having jumped into the deep end of the pond, I eventually came to appreciate and even enjoy my time at Penn. And I take great pride in being a graduate. But I certainly wish Penn First Plus had been available back in the day. I might not have scaled Mount Kilimanjaro, but it would have made the transition to college life considerably easier and more enjoyable.

William Babcock C'73, Philadelphia

Prudent Choice of Subject

Really enjoyed the article on John Dickinson ["The Prudent Patriot," Sep/Oct 2025], a founding father about whom I knew little. Thank you.

Walter Beh L'70, Kailua, HI

Sadder Taxi Tale

David Porter's "Student Driver" ["Alumni Voices," Sep/Oct 2025], about driving a cab in Philly for the summer while a student, brought back memories of my own experience doing the same for Yellow Cab in the summer of 1971. Being from a small New England town, I knew nothing about Philadelphia streets and there was no GPS. I picked up an elderly woman who said in a distinct Main Line accent, "The Philadelphia Hotel." "Where's that?" I asked. "My dear boy," she replied, shocked and amazed. "You don't know where the Philadelphia Hotel is?" I worried I was in the wrong job.

I got the worst cab in the fleet, and all the other cab drivers knew it as they snickered at me at the start of my shift. Stopping on an incline to get a fare, I put the cab in park, jumped out, picked up the ride's suitcase, only to turn and see the cab rolling backwards down the hill. I got the July 4th shift of 100-plus degrees and not a soul to be seen anywhere all day.

My last ride was a shady-looking guy who had me drop him off in what I re-

member as the kind of deserted warehouse area where corpses are left. A downpour hit as I was about to leave. I put on the wipers and lights ... the cab died along with my enthusiasm for being a cab driver. I remember calling in (if that was possible) and telling them "I quit." Then I abandoned the cab and walked through the downpour all the way back to my seedy, little room.

Kevin McLean C'73, San Diego

A Closer Comparison

I really wish the editors had placed the articles on page 24 and page 26 on facing pages ["Gazetteer," Sep/Oct 2025]. If so, readers would have learned how Penn faculty, staff, and students combined the absolute latest molecular medical breakthroughs to enrich the life of the infant KJ Muldoon in "CRISPR's First Custom Cure," then immediately read, in "University Announces Title IX Settlement," that the Trump administration used Penn's adherence to NCAA rules to put lives like KJ's in jeopardy.

If the editors had done that, KJ's cute face would be on the left, and the threat of no more treatments for patients like KJ on the right—a threat leveled because of who swam on which swim team a few years ago.

Jonathan Rosenblum C'91, San Diego

Musical Memories

Thank you so much for the excellent article, "The Organ Protector," profiling my friend Ray Biswanger, who has performed superbly as the longtime director of the Friends of the Wanamaker Organ, of which I am a member ["Alumni Profiles," Sep/Oct 2025]. I also noted his interest in the Curtis Organ, which resides in Irvine Auditorium at the University, which I was fortunate to play when I was a medical student at Penn.

The Curtis Organ gave me the first opportunity I had to learn to play a pipe organ. Teaching myself, I got good enough that I was able to include the organ in the annual medical school show, where I per-

formed the then-popular tune “Down-town,” originally sung by Petula Clark. Because it was a medically oriented show, the title and lyrics were changed by my classmate, the late Sylvan Green C’66 M’72, and the song was called “Infarct.”

The other article that deeply touched me was “Diminuendo for a Dream,” written by Gerald Kamens [“Elsewhere,” Sep/Oct 2025]. As it was for him, Fauré’s *Requiem* has been one of the most significant pieces of music throughout my life, entering it when I was about to be married in the early 1980s. I presented a chamber orchestra version CD to my future wife, Sharon, who loved it as well. Last year, we celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary by going to a performance of the *Requiem*. So as it has been for Mr. Kamens, this particular piece of music continues to enchant us. By the way, we have also visited the same Geneva cathedral in which the essay is set a few years ago, so his word images were all the more vivid for us.

Jonathan Kleefield M’70, Newton Center, MA

Magical Experience

Kudos for publishing the essay on Fauré’s *Requiem*. I never miss a chance to attend whenever it is being performed near home. So what a pleasure to learn that a fellow alum is also drawn to it!

Two vignettes come to mind regarding the *Requiem*:

More than 30 years ago, the *New Yorker* was doing its first profile on the famed British actor Daniel Day-Lewis. The writer arrived at his house at the agreed upon time. The actor’s sister opened the door and apologized that her brother was being detained in a back room; he was listening to Fauré’s *Requiem* and couldn’t be disturbed.

More than 55 years ago, my wife-to-be lived in an apartment just above her landlord. They had a hate-hate relationship. While visiting her one Sunday, I heard a beautiful melody wafting through the floor. Not allowing their animosity to deter me, I went downstairs

and knocked on the landlord’s door. He opened it slightly, I gingerly apologized for the intrusion, and said, “You’ve got to tell me the piece of music you are listening to.” He muttered “Fauré’s *Requiem*” and abruptly shut the door.

Fast-forward another 40 years to 2010, when I learned that St. Luke’s Church in Manhattan was performing the *Requiem*. I came up from Baltimore and took my two daughters-in-law (both Penn alumnae) living in New York to the performance. What a magical experience being with them for this gorgeous piece of music!

Barrett W. Freedlander C’62, Baltimore

Shared Admiration, One Observation

I share writer Gerald Kamens’ great admiration for Gabriel Fauré’s sublime *Requiem*. One observation in the article calls for a correction. The third movement, the “Sanctus,” does not offer praise for the dear departed. The Sanctus is a standard element of the Catholic Mass, and it offers praise to God. The Latin text of the *Requiem* reads: “Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.” In English: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and Earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.” Fauré’s *Requiem* is a prayer for God’s mercy on the deceased, deliverance from eternal damnation, and entry into Paradise. Nowhere does it address whether the deceased is anything other than a sinner.

Raymond C. Wilson L’83, Twinsburg, OH

Consistently Interesting

Thank you for a consistently interesting magazine. I found the Jul/Aug 2025 issue waiting for me on my return from my annual cycling trip in Europe even more relevant than usual.

At Auschwitz in July I saw displayed a woolen pair of toddler’s shorts, very similar to those I wore back in 1944. Seeing them in that display case drove home that the victims were never “other,” they

were part of a Europe-wide culture in which a toddler’s shorts bought in Lidice or Liverpool could have been made in the same factory in Lille or Leicester. The article “Survival Story” about Michael Katz [“Gazetteer”] brought a similar rush of empathy: If someone who had survived as much and lost as much as he had could still live a superbly productive life, what might the little boy who had worn those shorts have achieved if he had been allowed to live?

The essay “Bar Soap” was quite brilliant. One develops a close relationship with one’s bar of soap when traveling under one’s own power for weeks on end. As that bar shrinks it becomes ever more important to economize and to protect it at all costs from falling into water. My bar only just made it this year!

“The Scopes Trial at 100” and “Travels in Trashland” both demonstrate how intelligent people can deny facts that make them uncomfortable. The exponential growth built into both our economic system and our life expectations cannot last forever. The production of food and material goods and their disposal as trash both take land, sometimes large amounts of land. At some point land-use conflicts are going to become so serious that they will lead to physical conflict.

John Berry C’63, Austin, TX

Clarification

Responding to “The Hackney Files,” several readers asked why the article described the young man at the center of the Water Buffalo incident as having been born in Israel. In addition to the fact that it is not unusual for foreign-born students to have some difficulty navigating American sensitivities pertaining to language and race, the freshman’s defense at the time was that “water buffalo” was a rough translation of a Hebrew colloquialism used to describe a thoughtless or noisy person. A sentence explaining that context has been added to the online version of the article.



Where Rolling Hills Meet the Sky

My search for a final resting place. ▶

By Susan Fishman Orlins

“What time are we going to Pleasant Valley?” I asked Emily.

“Mom, I already told you we leave for the tour at 10:30. I also told you it’s called Serenity Ridge.”

“Oh right—I like that better,” I said, waiting a beat to add a quip. “Does it have a subtitle, like ‘Where rolling hills meet the sky’?”

I wasn’t entirely sure how I’d agreed to tour a “natural burial cemetery” on this otherwise ordinary morning, but presumably I’d walked into the commitment by disclosing my curiosity about green burial to my three daughters. Truth be told, I’d never been all that fixated on finding the perfect “forever home.” In an ideal world, I’d donate my body to a medical school. That seems like the more sociable way to go. It may sound wacky, but the idea of becoming a cadaver plays into the joy I’ve always gotten from being around others. So why not medical students? I wouldn’t be able to feel their scalpels. In my fantasy, I’d throw in a free copy of my self-published memoir, *Confessions of a Worrywart*. (Not for nothing was I voted friendliest girl in ninth grade.)

Alas, donating your body to medical science turns out to require filling out a frightful heap of forms—and nothing’s guaranteed. Meanwhile, neglecting to make my own arrangements could expose me to an option I like even less: being turned into ashes and cast in the ocean. Heaven forbid, so to speak.

My forebears knew where they would end up: right beside those who went before them. It was a given, something you were always aware of, the same way I always knew I was the middle child—well, at least I knew that once my brother was born. My father talked about the family plot well before his casket was hermetically sealed. My mother didn’t care at all. “Dust to dust,” she would say.

Long ago, when my Medicare years seemed impossibly far off, a cousin expressed interest in my plot, and I readily forfeited it. Like my mother I didn’t put much faith in the hereafter. Maybe

that’s why I relinquished my reservation. Though it is also true that the plot required a regular maintenance fee.

So there I was, plotless, with my daughters nagging me to plan for my remaining years and thereafter. Emily, my youngest, took the lead and made the appointment at Serenity Ridge.

Green burial had a certain ring.

Green burial had a certain ring. I didn’t mind picturing my body nestled in a fairy-tale pasture for my final rest. Some friends didn’t want to hear about it; others said it made them sad. But I’ve always been the kind of traveler who cares a good bit about where I’ll be sleeping. Even when I’m out all day, I nurse a comforting image of my bedtime quarters. And a natural, nontoxic burial promised to eventually nurture the earth, too.

There was just one problem. I wasn’t opposed to being wrapped in a soil-enriching “mushroom shroud,” but when a Google search returned an image of a corpse wrapped in white cloth from head to toe, my heart began to palpitate. I know it makes no sense, but I tend toward claustrophobia. Would it be possible to ensure a bit of air around my face?

That, among other things, was what Emily and I aimed to find out. She and I were an end-of-life team. She’d been the one who rode the overnight medical bus with me to take my mom from Florida to a nursing home in Philly. On the bus, Mom regaled us with memories of going around the corner to pick out live chickens for family dinners. And of my grandmother giving coal to less fortunate neighbors.

As the appointed hour of our tour approached, I felt increasingly curious and squeamish in equal measure about coming face to face with this candidate for my final destination.

When we parked, a butterfly greeted us. Then, as if programmed, a flock of birds flew over Serenity’s meadows, swooping this way and that. The whole vibe was that of a tune I had already requested for my memorial, “Mockin’ Bird Hill.” *Tra-la-la, tweedlee dee dee it gives me a thrill / To wake up in the mornin’ to the mockin’ bird’s trill.*

Joe Freed, a slender retired teacher, performed the tour flawlessly. He discussed biodegradable shrouds as well as biodegradable urns and caskets. (No metal allowed, though they would accept my hip replacements.) Joe pointed yonder to the Jewish section, where Howard Berg, who founded and owns Serenity Ridge, plans to have his final rest. Non-Jews who are part of Jewish families are also welcome there; otherwise the property is non-denominational. That led me to consider whether I want to be among mostly Jewish bodies—and then quickly to wonder why I would choose segregation in Mr. Berg’s neighborhood when, after leaving my parents’ Jewish bubble, I have spent six decades mingling with the other 98 percent of the American population.

Joe led us uphill with our four tour-mates to a pricey section called Inspiration Point, a small meadow ringed by trees. But I preferred the lower-level area, which was so open that it truly felt like the meadows met the sky. With its narrow road winding over hill and dale, the expansive green grass and open blue sky conjured a scene from a children’s picture book. In other words, a place I would be pleased to spend eternity.

Emily and I both really liked the married couple on the tour and agreed they would be nice neighbors for me.

Another elder asked if Serenity offered biodegradable caskets in the shape of those you see standing up against saloons in old western movies. She added that she was divorced and didn’t want her ex’s name on her stone. So she planned to label her plot using a number.

I said I’d like my stone to say Granny Sooze, the moniker I most identify with.

"Can I take a toy from each grandchild—or each great-grandchild, in the optimistic case?" I asked.

"Yes, as long as it's biodegradable."

"How about a biodegradable urn with my dog's ashes?" I asked.

"Perhaps," Joe replied, "but you didn't hear that from me."

When I told Emily I wanted to reserve 11 spots just in case my children and grandies want to join me, she raised the question of John, her sister's boyfriend.

"Well," I said, "if he turns out to not be a keeper, he could be a placeholder for a different dweller to go alongside Eliza."

Right then the thought occurred to me: will my ex and I quarrel about who gets the kids?

Don't get me wrong, I assured my daughters they should feel under no pressure to join me at Serenity Ridge. Even though I forsook a spot in my ancestors' cemetery, I have always thought it a sweet idea to rest ever after beside, or—as I hear is a trend—under or over loved ones, be they in urns or otherwise. But the only person I can really decide for is myself. And aside from being more, well, serene than where my parents lie, Serenity Ridge occupies 177 acres of rolling hills rather than amid the tumult of a densely populated neighborhood in Philadelphia.

At the end, Joe handed us cards, advising if I had any further questions I could call 1-240-NATURAL.

But I was already sold. Sociable company, a stellar view, and I could even arrange a means to keep the claustrophobia at bay. The more I thought about it, the better it seemed. Indeed, I got so into the idea of Serenity Ridge that later, at home, I had a passing fancy that the food would be good.

Susan Fishman Orlins CW'67 is a journalist and author of *Confessions of a Worrywart: Husbands, Mothers, Lovers, and Others*. Currently she is debating how much of her remaining time to devote to downsizing before her final rest at Serenity Ridge.



Family Lexicon

What's my native language? In my family, it's a question that's never been easy to answer.

By Tania Gentile

My children were both fluent in Spanish before they could speak English, because I spoke to them only in my non-native tongue. When my oldest was a toddler, we made almost daily trips to Target or the Fairfax County Public Library, just to get out of the house (and so I could treat myself to a coffee I did not make at home—one of the small pleasures afforded parents of young children). Strangers often did a double take when they heard my daughter speaking to me in fluent Spanish.

Inevitably, they would ask where we were from. I struggled to answer.

I was born in Canada to two immigrants: one from the former Yugoslavia, one from England. We immigrated to the United States when I was only a year old. My husband is a native of upstate New York whose high school Spanish he is only now trying to improve, thanks to Duolingo. Although I have taught Spanish-language literature and culture since 2002, I have no family connection to Spain or Latin America. I started speak-

ing Spanish with the kids because my husband and I thought it would be good for them to learn another language. We also put them in Spanish-language immersion preschool and hired Spanish-speaking babysitters. But it was only the daily experience of parenting in Spanish that made me realize how profoundly languages other than my own had shaped my sense of self.

I was surrounded by accents and languages from a young age. Since my father only learned English in his 20s, he never quite mastered it. Among many details that have faded in my memory since his death, I remember most that he routinely confused his articles. He also pronounced his v's as w's, and "th" became "t." In high school, my cousins, sister, and I compiled a list of all the funny expressions he and our other first-generation relatives used incorrectly. They talked about putting their dirty laundry in the "clothes humper," wiped the counter with "towel papers," and referred to us cousins as sisters, since in Serbian the word for cousin and sister is the same. My mother, on the other hand, had emigrated from London to Canada at age eight, and although she dropped her English accent in public, when she spoke to her parents it came back, albeit in a rather watered-down version; it seemed her childhood accent haunted her adult speech. I asked her once, when we met a family from London on the beach and she struck up a conversation with the other mother, why she did not have an English accent with other English people, only with her parents. She looked puzzled, as though she had never realized that her voice changed when she spoke with them. When her parents died, so did her accent; I have never heard it since.

My mother, a voracious reader, often corrected my father's grammar and pronunciation. Perhaps this echoed her own need to sound English in front of parental figures who clung to their heritage and its ties to the British empire, despite their choice to leave England. By the

The daily experience of parenting in Spanish made me realize how profoundly languages other than my own had shaped my sense of self.

same token, the sound of my father's voice, heavily accented, seemed to contribute to his sense of never quite fitting in. He used to say he was always at a disadvantage because, as he put it, he "talked funny." He seemed to carry a sort of shame about not sounding quite right, which likely stemmed from the notion of acculturation that was so in vogue when he immigrated to Canada in the 1960s at the age of 26. He told me once that when he was young and out in public with his sister, they spoke Serbian in a whisper, because they did not want people to know they did not speak English. As a family, we also loved a good story about language gone wrong. My favorite was about how, while driving through the South in the '70s, my dad stopped in a gas station for coffee. After he asked several times for sugar, the attendant, who looked confused the whole time, finally came out from behind the counter and brought him some shoelaces.

With this background of accented experiences, I grew up feeling my family was inherently different from others. So when I started studying Spanish, I was determined to perfect my pronunciation. I spent the summer after seventh grade teaching myself how to roll my r's. As a family, we spoke often of the fact that my sister, born in Virginia, was the only one in the family who was American. Though

this multiculturalism was a strong source of pride for my parents, when I took up graduate studies in Spanish and Latin American literature at Penn, I suddenly became self-conscious about the fact that I have no ancestral connection to the specific identities I study and teach about. I was relieved when people in other countries with whom I spoke Spanish could not detect where I was from. Argentines thought I might be German, Colombians thought I was Spanish, Spaniards thought I was from the Caribbean, and one Puerto Rican academic thought I might be Catalan. For me, the most important thing was that no one thought I was from the United States. Why was it so important for me to pass as non-American? I don't know. Perhaps it came down to my parents telling us whenever we traveled that "we don't want to look like tourists."

When I was around three, my father, who would not let anything go to waste, painstakingly drew and cut the letters of the Serbian Cyrillic alphabet out of an old roll of linoleum flooring. They felt so big in my little hands. I can still picture the coffee can in which they resided on the floor in the basement, just under the chalkboard he brought home from a school he was demolishing. We would line the letters up on the floor, and he taught me all their pronunciations, repeating the dictate of the 19th-century Serbian philologist Vuk Karadžić, "piši kao što govoriš, a čitaj kao što je napisano" (write the way you speak, and read as it is written). This foundational truth about Serbian's phonetic transparency was the counterpart to my father's near-daily complaints about how crazy the English language is. But he also stopped speaking to me in Serbian around that time, declaring it easier to just live his life in English. To this day, I can go to Belgrade and correctly pronounce any sign, menu item, or newspaper article put in front of me. Sometimes I even trick the people around me into thinking I am from there. But then they ask a more detailed question, and the façade crumbles.

Meanwhile, my kids have inherited these linguistic experiences in ways I could not have imagined. I have many fond memories of my daughter as a toddler. One is when she put her diapers in “time out” (which worked for the diapers about as well as my time outs worked with her). Another is when she had done something she shouldn’t have (I no longer remember what) and she looked at me and pleaded, “Don’t speak English, Mama!” In that moment I realized that, to her, my language of affection was Spanish—my non-native language—and, without realizing it, I only switched to English when I was upset. From the time I was a toddler, my father spoke only his non-native language with me. Serbian was for swearing (in addition to being able to read Cyrillic, I can curse a blue streak in his language). Have I replicated that linguistic model unintentionally? Is my non-native language my love language? Is that why my daughter has so thoroughly embraced Spanish? She has perfect fluency in both languages. My son, on the other hand, has so much anxiety around Spanish, he will not speak it with me, even though he can go to summer camp in Spain and do just fine.

Recently I finished writing a book about another language, Catalan, that I can read and understand, but rarely have the opportunity to speak. I was at a party in Barcelona, and a simple question in that language—“Where are you from?”—caused me to balk. All I could think was that I would mispronounce the words, that I would sound like a tourist, that I would talk funny. Later, when my eight-year-old told me he was embarrassed because the counselors in his Catalan language camp thought he only spoke English, I realized that I was not alone. These emotions around language are all in the family.

Tania Gentic G’02 Gr’07 is the author of *Geographies of the Ear: The Cultural Politics of Sound in Contemporary Barcelona* (Copyright Duke University Press, 2025), from which this essay has been adapted with permission.



Without a Trace

Losing Chinese Camp.

By Karen Fang

“Wildfire... gutted... Chinese Camp, California...”

The words crackled through the radio as I rustled around the kitchen putting away groceries. A late-summer lightning strike had started a brush fire that quickly accelerated, as they always do in California. Although no lives were lost and firefighting crews had worked

quickly to control the spread, damage in the dusty central California town was near total. I only caught half the headline, but I already felt a sharp pang of despair. Just two months ago I had visited Chinese Camp with my 84-year-old father and 13-year-old son. I knew that the fire must have gobbled the handful of crumbling 19th-century buildings

Photo courtesy Karen Fang

that were all that remained of the town's Gold Rush history. Those buildings were some of the last physical remnants of the early history of Chinese in America. Now that history had all gone up in smoke.

For years I'd been fascinated by Chinese Camp's name, which pops up on a big green interstate highway sign along Route 120 between San Francisco and Yosemite. I often felt I was alone in this interest. Far more Yosemite pilgrims stop in nearby Groveland, a larger, much better maintained Gold Rush settlement. Groveland is a verdant town whose brightly painted jail, saloon, and old hotel sit among leafy trees, the Disneyland to Chinese Camp's all-but-abandoned ghost town. Even my brother, whose annual Yosemite trips have been drawing a large group of fellow Chinese and Filipino American friends to the area for the past 20 years, never had much to say about Chinese Camp.

"I think you'll find it disappointing," cautioned my friend David, an ardent advocate for Chinese American historical preservation. Unlike other former Old West settlements or abandoned Chinatowns, where gravestones, incense sticks, mahjong tiles, and broken teacups have sometimes been found, at Chinese Camp "there's nothing left of the original Chinese history there but the name."

David was right about the absence, but not about its effect on me and my family. The first thing we saw when we turned off the highway was a rough-hewn timber trading post bearing a large sign reading "Chinese Camp Store & Tavern" in the cartoonish "chop suey" lettering common on Chinese menus from 50 years ago. Like Groveland, the shop was cute but didn't feel authentic, and we were surprised that there wasn't an all-weather educational sign, like those sprinkled throughout Yosemite with period photographs from John Muir's treks or information about the native peoples who first lived there. So inside the trading post, browsing among the polished rocks and bottled water, we

asked directions from a petite Asian lady manning the counter. I wondered if she was a longtime resident or if it was just coincidence—or canny marketing—that she had this job, but I couldn't figure out a polite way to ask.

The lack of buildup to Chinese Camp actually heightened our wonder; however, when we rounded the corner onto a single block of uncurbed road, surrounded on both sides by dry yellow grasses baked crisp and golden in the hot Central Valley sun. On one side was an imposing two-story, brick-fronted office building with a small porch and a brass plate identifying it as a post office built in 1855. A few paces down was a pink clapboard house skirted by a collapsing picket fence. Beyond that was a squat single-story shop or workshop whose warped corrugated tin roof was held in place by spindly, unsanded beams. Across the road, set farther back and wholly enclosed by chicken wire, was a quaint saloon with pyramidal roof. Nothing moved, and the deafening buzz of insects underscored the lack of human life. Signs prohibiting entry warned would-be trespassers away from the rusted fixtures, broken floorboards, and branches poking through cracked windows.

Yet it was precisely their state of abandonment that made these 19th-century ruins so compelling, even despite the glaring absence of any allusion to the Chinese of "Chinese" Camp. "Cool!" my son exclaimed, betraying an enthusiasm rare amidst his usual teenage ennui. Immediately he whipped out his cell phone to snap selfies and call his older brother to gloat over the experience his sibling was missing.

My dad never says much, so I didn't expect the same reaction, but I couldn't help but wonder what he was thinking. Although I remember him once flaring in anger over the word "Chinaman"—then common in TV westerns when I was a kid—I wasn't sure how much he knew about the era that produced these ruins. My father came to the US from Taiwan in

The ruins evoked a dramatic reversal from welcome to erasure.

1965, one of thousands of hopefuls from east and south Asia pursuing opportunities made possible by a new Immigration and Nationality Act that welcomed those seeking higher education. Our family's American history started more than a century after Chinese Camp was settled, so it's possible that he saw no relation between this place and ourselves.

To be honest, I hadn't known much about this era either, when I first became intrigued by Chinese Camp's evocative name. I figured the town must have had something to do with Chinese miners and laborers who crossed the Pacific in the middle of the 19th century, seeking their fortune in the Gold Rush or recruited to build the Transcontinental Railroad. But what I later learned was that after the railroad was built and the ore veins emptied, those same migrants were aggressively—often violently—harassed and marginalized. Chinese were restricted to limited areas, prohibited from certain businesses and charged exorbitant licenses to work. They couldn't vote or own land, and as anti-Asian tensions increased they were often run out of town, sometimes with arson, lynching, and looters at their heels. This discrimination worsened through the 1860s and 1870s, culminating in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. The first national law to limit immigration based on race lived up to its name, drastically limiting the number and rights of ethnic Asians in the US.

Chinese Camp, in fact, was the result of that dogged march toward Exclusion. First settled in the early 1850s by Chinese miners unwelcome at other camps, the settlement grew rapidly during the 1860s as other Chinese sought community. The town's vitality and industriousness made that imposing brick post office and its

Views

surrounding businesses a regular stop on stagecoach journeys through the area. But after the population's peak in the early 1870s, when Chinese Camp bustled with several thousand Chinese, the era's rising anti-Asian feeling worked inexorably to empty the once flourishing town of any trace of its original founders. The same dynamic played out across the country, as persecution intensified in Chinatowns throughout the west. The number of Chinese immigrants fell dramatically, and would not change again for more than 60 years—until the 1965 immigration bill under which my dad arrived.

This dual history of exclusion and persistence was precisely why the fire at Chinese Camp hit me so strongly. It wasn't just that my family and I may have been some of the last visitors to explore that long-forgotten site in Chinese American history. More poignant was the fact that Chinese Camp had sur-

vived Exclusion and 170 years of neglect and decay, only to be destroyed by wildfire. Although this climatic accident was nothing like the malicious arson of the past, the result was the same. Where once there were evocative ruins whose very silence on the eponymous Chinese spoke volumes, now there was nothing—a complete and total erasure that Exclusion originally sought to realize.

It also was hard to ignore, as three 21st-century visitors struck by these 19th-century ruins, the parallels between that past and our present. Chinese Camp briefly flowered in the middle of a roughly 60-year period, from the first Chinese arrivals in the 1820s to the start of Exclusion in 1882, in which only a few generations experienced a dramatic reversal from welcome to erasure. My father's 1965 arrival was part of a democratic immigration policy reflecting Civil Rights-era idealism, but now, just two genera-

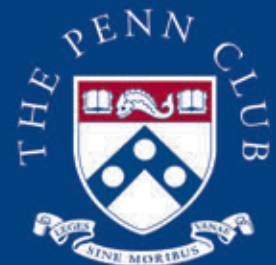
tions later, he and his children and grandchildren inhabit a dismaying new chapter of anti-immigrant xenophobia and post-pandemic Sinophobia. As the US renews racialized immigration standards amid rising anti-Asian violence at home, and many Americans celebrate a new era of nativism, we're left with uncomfortable questions. *What progress has there been, between my father's US immigration and the present day? Or, for that matter, from Exclusion until now?*

For a brief moment last summer, my father, son, and I were the Chinese in Chinese Camp. With its history now in ashes, we wonder uneasily what winter will bring.

Karen Fang C'94 is the author of *Background Artist: The Life and Work of Tyrus Wong*, which tells the story of a Chinese immigrant and future Disney legend who arrived in the US during Exclusion.

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An Hour for the Constitution

During a super-sized 60-Second Lectures program, SAS faculty weighed in on how to create a welcoming environment for discussion in a contentious time. ▶

Penn Arts & Sciences stretched the boundaries of its long-running 60-Second Lecture series to mark the 238th anniversary of the US Constitution in September—presenting four separate one-minute talks, followed by a discussion and audience Q&A moderated by Peter Struck, the Stephen A. Levin Family Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, all clocking in at about an hour. The full program can be found on the 60-Second Lectures home page. At one point, the discussion turned to ways to encourage free and open exchange of ideas in the classroom and beyond.

“As dean of the College, I worry a lot about where we are now,” Struck confessed. “I just contrast it with—if you’ll forgive me, young people in the room, for casting my mind back to when I was your age—when I walked into the campus at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. I couldn’t believe what I was able to see. I heard people saying intemperate things, strange things, things I’d never heard. Everyone’s mouth-ing off, all the time, to everybody else, and it was marvelous. I just felt like, ‘This is exactly where I want to be.’ It was like a circus of crazy ideas all over the place, and some of them were amazing. That, to me, is what a great education in the arts and sciences is all about: people speaking their minds, evidence and arguments, sharing their views, being corrected, learning from other people.

“I learn nothing in a room full of people who think like I do. I need people that have different views. And if we can’t preserve that now, I just don’t know how we move forward. ... So with that as a preamble, I wonder if you all can speak to this time and how we’re going to ensure that this generation of 18-, 19-, 22-year-

olds feels that they can speak their minds and become independent thinkers?”

“I learn nothing in a room full of people who think like I do.”

—PETER STRUCK

“If you’re a professor, it starts in your classroom,” said Emma Hart, the Roy F. and Jeannette P. Nichols Chair of American History. “I’ve only been at Penn for a few years, and this is my first teaching environment in which I’ve had to do a lecture course all myself—just me talking to my class all semester. And I don’t like it, because it invites me to talk *at* them. And so I work really hard to try and make even a lecture a dialogue between me and the students, where they’re very comfortable asking questions and disagreeing with me and saying, ‘Why did you say that?’

“Obviously, I know far more about early American history than my class, but history is a debate, and I am always trying to emphasize that to them in every single lecture.”

Karen Tani G’07 L’07 Gr’11, the Seaman Family University Professor in SAS and Penn Carey Law, cited the

“If you’re a professor, it starts in your classroom.”

—EMMA HART

need for “a culture of curiosity that is coming not just from professors, but from the entire university, and I think that could come through priorities, policies valuing debate and learning and not just credentials, and finding ways to push back against that temptation.

“Something else that I think a lot about is, do young people have a sense of political agency in the world?

I worry that part of what we’re seeing is kind of a lack of willingness to be excited about ideas and speak [comes from this]. Was there a sensation in earlier generations that they had agency in the world that might be different today, because of money in politics, because of a gerontocracy in our politics, because of other factors that we should think about? How could we make it such that people could take their ideas and do something meaningful in the world?”

“Do young people have a sense of political agency in the world?”

—KAREN TANI

Beyond creating a classroom environment that welcomes “all political perspectives” and where individuals can “speak their mind and not be criticized for doing so,”

Daniel Gillion, the Julie Beren Platt and Marc E. Platt Presidential Distinguished Professor of Political Science, pointed to the need to set an example more broadly. “We are in a very contentious political environment right now, where making statements that are just individuals speaking their mind, disagreeing probably with the status quo, has consequences that are unusual” compared to similar incidents in the past. “When you have that sort of pressure, I think it’s incumbent upon not the students but administrators to demonstrate the ability to create an environment of freedom of speech, offering perspectives, doing it con-

“We have to encourage students that there’s a space to put forth your voices.”

—DANIEL GILLION

structively. But one thing that students need to see is that administrators, others in position of power, are not—I hate to say it like this—kow-towing or giving in to a very constrained political environment that’s limiting individuals’ ability to talk and speak.”

Gillion also emphasized the need to maintain spaces for people to “offer their perspectives” publicly. Referencing “contention around where protests can take place and where individuals can offer their opinions and perspectives,” he acknowledged the need to consider public safety, “but we also have to

encourage students that there's a space for you to put forth your voices. It might not be in front of the library, but it's someplace here that's not outside the City of Philadelphia, that you can have your voice be heard. And I think that's important, creating an environment and also demonstrating that, Hey, we can put forth our voices in this particular political, contentious environment."

"The awesome thing about freedom of speech," noted Campbell Grey LPS'13, professor of classical studies, "is that I get to have my voice heard, but the person that I fundamentally disagree with also gets to have their voice heard. That's the wonderful but really difficult part of freedom of speech."

"But if I can put my Classicist hat on just for a second," he added, "the ideals that went into creating this constitution and this republic emerged fundamentally from two ancient writers, Polybius and Cicero, who were living in a world that was not in any way united. It was not in any way peaceful. It was, in fact, riven by faction. It was characterized by violence and murder. And it is the writings that those men presented to history that create this kind of idealized world of a coherent republic that functions. And I think that's really interesting—because it seems to me that it's the moments where we are most conscious of disunity that we think most carefully and coherently about the benefits of coherence and unity." —JP

Pandemic Lessons

The misfires last time.



The development of mRNA vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 was a medical and scientific marvel, but Operation Warp Speed's breakneck pace—and its name—along with miscommunications about their effectiveness combined to undermine confidence in the vaccines and the public health establishment promoting them. At the start of the pandemic, non-pharmaceutical interventions were broadly similar across the states, but election-year politics and other factors led to a sharp divergence along partisan lines about masking and closures, especially regarding schools. And there's good reason to question whether the US will do any better when the next pandemic strikes, as it almost certainly will.

Those were among the key takeaways from a Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics seminar that featured vaccine expert Paul Offit, professor of vaccinology at the Perelman School of Medicine, and Frances Lee, a professor of politics and public affairs at Princeton University and coauthor of *In Covid's Wake: How Our Politics Failed Us*.

Throughout the pandemic, Lee pointed out, governors were central figures. "Under the constitutional system, the primary responsibility for managing the pandemic rested with the states," she said. "So it was the governors, primarily, who made the really critical decisions as to when, whether, and how to impose and lift pandemic restrictions," as well as to manage the vac-

cination campaigns within their states—all in an environment of great uncertainty.

Stay-at-home orders were unprecedented at the time, and in fact ran counter to the recommendations of a 2019 World Health Organization report, which found little evidence that nonpharmaceutical interventions were effective and counseled *against* measures including "contact tracing, border closure, and quarantine of exposed individuals" to reduce the spread of a respiratory virus, she said. "So it's quite remarkable."

But the "information environment" in the spring of 2020 was a lot different than "when you had academics working on policy recommendations in the absence of crisis," Lee added. The Wuhan lockdown in China had been deemed a success by WHO, and "to a great extent, the playbook was being thrown out in March of 2020 in response to the information that policymakers were getting."

Governors needed guidance, and the federal Coronavirus Task Force became the main clearinghouse for information in 2020. "And so it was on March 16th that the White House held a press conference and recommended, in the wake of a very dire report [of potential death tolls] from Imperial College London, that governors in states with evidence of community transmission should close places where people congregate, including schools. And so you then begin to see the stay-at-home orders cascade across the states."

Among state governments, “there was a lot of uniformity around the country, initially, in the pandemic response,” Lee noted. That changed—and the fact that 2020 was an election year played a major role, she suggested.

“You had the party out of power saying that the party in power—the president in office—was doing a bad job. And of course, the pandemic would be part of that. So every piece of bad news about the pandemic would be laid at the feet of the incumbent president,” Lee said. “There’s nothing unusual in that kind of political opportunism, but you can see how that would divide the parties more deeply over the course of the summer.”

Red-state governors were also weighing the tradeoffs differently than their Blue-state peers. “Their view was that staying closed until the vaccine was available wasn’t feasible, and that we needed two weeks to slow the spread, to keep the hospitals from being overwhelmed, but that we shouldn’t try to maintain these policies for the better part of a year.”

“Out of that political environment you begin to see this hardening of partisan views. So you had Democrats beginning to view the face masks as sort of a signal of their personal virtue or morality, and also a signal of your partisan alignment, and Republicans viewing it similarly—but in less positive terms.”

While the pandemic became a very partisan issue in the US, “it’s not the case around the world,” Lee said. “Other coun-

tries didn’t see that same partisan divide around the pandemic the US featured. I think it was contingent on a range of developments that that happened. And significant among those was, I think, the fact that it was going to be a very competitive, very close, hard-fought election, and absolutely everything was going to be drawn into that fray.”

Offit recalled his experience, in December 2020, of serving on the FDA’s vaccine advisory committee looking at data for the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines, based on 40,000- and 30,000-person trials of adults, respectively. “It was unnerving in many ways,” he said. The vaccine was made a mere 11 months after the virus’s genome was sequenced. “So that’s the fastest vaccine ever made. That happened because of Operation Warp Speed, which basically took the risk out of it for pharmaceutical companies.” There was a fear that “people were taking shortcuts,” reinforced by the program’s title, which “was not my favorite,” Offit said.

But he emphasized that the effort “was an enormous success. I think it was one of the greatest scientific or medical advances in my lifetime.” In less than a year, “you had data suggesting this vaccine was highly effective—certainly at preventing what you wanted to prevent, which was to keep people out of the hospital, keep them out of the ICU, keep them from dying.”

Offit also voiced his objections to the terms “emergency use authorization” in the ap-

“Other countries didn’t see that same partisan divide around the pandemic the US featured.”

proval of the vaccines and “breakthrough infections” to describe COVID cases in vaccinated people. In the former case, he said, “the size of those two clinical trials for Pfizer and Moderna was typical of any adult or pediatric vaccine trial, and the data that you had was typical for that”; in the latter, the term made it sound like a failure rather than an expected feature. “People had the sense that this virus was just going to bounce right off of you,” Offit said, even though it was known that protection against mild disease wasn’t perfect and wouldn’t last long. “Because we were so desperate to get people vaccinated, I think early on we may have oversold this vaccine a little bit.”

Lee’s criticism was sharper. “I think that was a critical moment in science communication that has had lasting effects on trust in science agencies, because early on, the vaccine was portrayed as having the capacity of stopping transmission,” she said. That claim set up a backlash that arrived after a number of vaccinated people gathering in Provincetown, Massachusetts, got sick in the summer of 2021.

The Biden administration’s vaccine mandate for health-care workers and large cor-

porations in the fall of 2021 was another misstep. “The whole policy was based on wishful thinking—that the virus could be stopped through vaccination.” Meanwhile, thousands of people who declined to be vaccinated lost their jobs, “especially in military and working for law enforcement,” she added. “This created a lot of anger, and it was not necessary, nor did it advance public health.”

Making matters worse was the decision not to treat people who’d acquired their immunity through infection the same as vaccinated individuals, she said. Offit agreed, and he described a Zoom meeting of public health leaders where he and other advocates were overruled. “I think what happened, it was thought it would be a bureaucratic nightmare,” he said, “but I just think we again miscommunicated that. It wasn’t fair.”

Greater frankness on the part of policymakers and advisors “about the state of the evidence would have enabled them to switch gears more easily when they needed to,” Lee said, offering the example of the shifting guidance on face masks. “One of the repeated mantras of the pandemic was ‘We know what works against COVID-19.’ That’s what the CDC director and others would say, but they didn’t know for sure what worked against COVID-19.”

Looking to the future, “what we need to do out of this pandemic is try to do our best to learn what we can learn” about the effectiveness of the various measures taken, she

added. “So then policymakers have some guidance and some quality evidence on which to base their decisions if they are presented with this problem again—which, of course, is very likely.”

Ideally, she’d like to see a nonpartisan COVID commission formed for that purpose. “As the years go by, most people aren’t going to follow this with the same intensity that they did during the pandemic,” she observed, “so I hope that expert communities will take a close and openminded look at this.”

“I’m a little pessimistic,” said Offit, who was removed from the FDA’s vaccine advisory group in September—without explanation, though he’s been a frequent critic of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. “Are we better prepared now that we’ve had the experience with this pandemic? I think in some ways, we’re worse.” He pointed to the rise of a “medical freedom movement”—of which Kennedy is a product, he said—that takes the view of “I’m going to do what I want to do when I want to do it, and if I choose not to get a vaccine, or I choose not to get a mask, or I choose not to social distance or whatever, that’s my choice. Even if it affects somebody else, it’s still my choice.” And that’s the opposite of public health. In public health, you do care about your neighbor, you do care about the society of which you are a member. And I just feel that that tension, if anything, has moved more in the direction of medical freedom and less in the direction of caring about your neighbor.” —JP



From All Angles

Long-distance learners can get up close with the new Visual Experience Platform licensed by the Penn Museum.

One evening in early September, Megan C. Kassabaum, Penn Museum’s Weingarten Associate Curator for North America, not only offered a sneak peek at a long-awaited refresh of a key exhibition but did so by previewing a new video platform for delivering classes and lectures. “Throughout the presentation,” she explained, “I’ll be switching between *Focus* mode, where I’m in charge of what you’re seeing, and *Explore* mode, where you’re in charge of what you’re seeing, and you can use your mouse or your trackpad to zoom in.”

Kassabaum began with a rendering of the museum’s new Native North America Gallery, which opens on November 22 and reimagines the *Native American Voices: The People—Here and Now* exhibition installed more than a decade ago [“Know That We Are Still Here,” Jul/Aug 2014]. Switching

viewers’ screens to *Explore* mode, she encouraged them to virtually roam around the gallery entrance, suggesting what they should look for as they moved their cursor to the right, then zoomed in, then pulled back. Returning the screen to *Focus* mode, the curator next led viewers through some of the specific components of the exhibition, including maps, illustrations, and utilitarian objects like building tools and cooking utensils.

The interactive demonstration represented the first public presentation of the new Visual Experience Platform (VXP), a distance learning technology developed by the Barnes Foundation after the pandemic forced its array of in-person classes to move online.

The Barnes started with programs like Microsoft Teams and PowerPoint, but those fell short, says Martha Lucy, the art and educational institution’s deputy director for re-

search, interpretation, and education. “They may be fine for fields that are not especially visually oriented, but because we’re so much about close focus, we wanted something that would help the viewer get a sense of not only the details in a painting or an object but a sense of its materiality,” she says. “So we worked with our in-house tech office to develop something that would really get at that idea of experiential learning. And that’s why we’re excited to have Penn Museum be the first institution to license the technology—because so much of what they do is about investigation.”

The Penn Museum had been “looking for a way to broaden the reach of our online programming,” says Jennifer Brehm, the Merle-Smith Director of Learning and Public Engagement. “This new platform presents a great opportunity to bring in new features and methods of engagement.”

This fall, the museum’s two online offerings, *The Deep Dig*, which debuted during the pandemic with one course and 55 virtual students and has since grown to six courses and nearly 600 participants, and *Archaeology in Action*, a series of nine lectures that

typically draws 1,000 attendees, will be enhanced by the technology, allowing viewers to benefit from new perspectives—literally.

Brehm says her task mainly concerned teaching the museum's experts and content providers how to "think about conveying to laypeople the wonder and discovery of archaeology and anthropology. They're used to traditional slide presentations and lecture formats, so it was about figuring out when they should step back and encourage the audience to look on their own, to enjoy a moment of reflection, and then have a back-and-forth rhythm where *they* become the researcher and they're looking really closely for evidence and comparisons."

The Deep Dig kicked off its fall 2025 season with an inaugural VXP course, *Conserving the Great Buddhist Murals of Shanxi*, which was scheduled to stream live for four weeks in October. (Paid registrants also had access to session recordings, along with supplemental research, readings, and videos.) Adam Smith, associate curator of Asian art, presented two 90-minute sessions on the design and motifs of the two multi-panel Chinese murals dating from around the 14th century, and their trajectory to Philadelphia. Then Morgan Burgess, art and objects conservator, offered two sessions filled with inside looks at the conservation of the monumental pieces, which were deinstalled almost a decade ago.

Viewers who tuned in to Kassabaum's presentation in September were privy to a demonstration of just how the platform might get into the nitty gritty of looking at such objects. After her introduction to the new Native North America Gallery, for example, she zoomed in on a suite of images related to the conservation of a specific item to be displayed there. On the left side, viewers could make out a tag with scrawled notes: *Delaware—skin ornament worn tied at back of neck to trail down behind. Worn at Social Dance*. On the right, they saw a photo of the exhibition team reviewing a 1930s illustration of a Delaware (Lenape) tribal gathering. Kassabaum homed in on a group of women who sat separately from the men, pointing out the shawls they wore, remarking on their similarity to the one identified in the tag.

Next, she showed a photo of a student intern who had worked during the summer to help conservators figure out the material and processes involved in making such shawls. "You can see her pointing at the cloth backer of the collar," Kassabaum said. Switching to Explore mode, she encouraged viewers to "look around and see how many moth holes there are and then go back to the spot she's pointing to. You'll get a sense of how effective our conservation is." The mend, carefully made from the underside of the piece, was invisible and the fabric appeared untouched.

GIFTS

Several New Gifts Announced

A slew of gifts in September will bolster Wharton, Jewish Studies, urban research, performing arts, and more at Penn. Here's a look:

- Wharton launched its first new degree offering in 50 years thanks to a \$60 million gift from Bruce I. Jacobs G'79 GrW'86—the largest single gift in the school's history. The Dr. Bruce I. Jacobs Master of Science in Quantitative Finance will, per Penn President J. Larry Jameson, be an "innovative, hands-on graduate program [that] will further advance our University's strategic focus on data and AI while preparing our quantitative finance students and scholars to lead in a rapidly changing world." The principal and cofounder of Jacobs Levy Equity Management (along with Kenneth Levy WG'76 G'82), Jacobs has given more than \$80 million toward quantitative finance initiatives at Wharton.

- The estate of Louise A. Strauss C'82 has contributed \$21 million to Penn, including support for the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, the Rare Judaica Acquisitions Endowment Fund in Penn Libraries, and Morris Arboretum & Gardens. The gift was made in memory of Louise's father, Hilary Strauss G'56, an avid Penn supporter. Louise was a member of the Katz Center's board of advisors, following in the footsteps of her late mother, Ione Apfelbaum Strauss CW'54 ["Obituaries," Jan/Feb 2021].

- Julie Beren Platt C'79 and Marc E. Platt C'79 made a pair of leadership gifts to establish an endowed professorship in Jewish Studies and also create a program fund for graduate support in Penn Arts & Sciences' Jewish Studies Program. According to the announcement, the gifts will "strengthen Penn's faculty, foster graduate student connections and scholarship, and enhance community and international programs, advancing Jewish Studies at Penn and across the wider academic field." The Platts—Julie serves as vice chair of Penn's Board of Trustees and is also on Penn Hillel's National Board of Governors; Marc is a renowned film, theater, and television producer—have supported multiple initiatives at their alma mater over the years.

- Penn's Institute for Urban Research (Penn IUR) received a \$10 million anonymous gift to advance research, education, and policy solutions that impact cities locally and globally. The endowed funds will support one of Penn IUR's codirector positions and a postdoctoral fellowship.

- Penn Live Arts received a \$5 million gift from former Penn trustee Edward Kane C'71 and his wife Marty Wallace to support and name the 325-seat proscenium theatre in the Student Performing Arts Center, which is currently under construction along Woodland Walk and 33rd Street. Slated to open in early 2027, the Edward W. Kane Theatre will boast an orchestra pit, state-of-the-art fly system, and deep stage design suited to a wide range of performances for the 2,000-plus Penn undergrads who participate in performance groups.

Nearly as hard to detect was another challenge Kassabaum issued: scroll beyond the intern's finger and see if you can identify something called the "humility bead," a bead of a different color, purposely placed into a design to demonstrate the imperfection of the maker.

At first, it was difficult to locate. Suddenly, though, there it was: inside of a beaded flower with concentric rows of burgundy, red, and pink petals appeared just one incongruous but barely noticeable black bead. A little something extra, brought to life.

—JoAnn Greco



Collaboration and Community

With higher education “facing significant headwinds,” Penn’s Class of 2029 is called upon to unite.

“You didn’t choose Penn because you imagined that you could avoid engaging with perspectives and opinions different from your own. Or because you assumed that what you take for granted about the world would never be tested or challenged. Or because you longed for homogeneity in your social network and intellectual pursuits.”

So said Penn Provost John L. Jackson Jr. during his remarks to the Class of 2029 at August’s Convocation ceremony at Franklin Field, formally beginning the University’s 286th academic year.

“If anything,” Jackson continued, “Penn should have

stood out because it attracts so many different kinds of learners and teachers and researchers from all over the country and the world.”

As he welcomed first-year and transfer students, Jackson acknowledged that American colleges and universities are “facing significant headwinds” with many “questioning the very purpose and mission of academic institutions.” But he urged the University’s newest citizens to embrace the “distinct opportunities that Penn has to offer.”

“Aside from being Provost, I’m an anthropologist,” he said. “And I would argue, anthropologically speaking, that at a certain fundamental level,

human beings need and crave difference, even if it sometimes scares us—because that is how we learn and grow.

“My hope for you over these next four years is straightforward: that you will come to view your Penn education not as a destination, but as an exceptionally robust launching pad.”

Penn President J. Larry Jameson opened his speech by harkening back to his own college days, before which he spent a summer camping in national parks and encountered in the Great Smoky Mountains a species of fireflies called *Photinus carolinus*. Known for their synchronous flashing, those fireflies boast

several qualities that Jameson said he hopes the 2,249 students that make up the Class of 2029 will share:

- *Illumination*. “At Penn,” Jameson said, “you will have countless resources and opportunities to shine.”

- *Connection*. “Over the next several years, you will form bonds that will shape your life.”

- *Purpose*. “Embrace the unexpected. That is a key purpose of all Penn people.”

“Most fireflies blink individually, but these blink together,” Jameson said. “This is the potential I see in all of you. You each have your own rhythm and brilliance, but together you are capable of something extraordinary. At Penn, that coming together is one of our greatest strengths. We solve problems not by working alone, but by syncing up—across disciplines, backgrounds, and ideas. Collaboration is not just encouraged—it is our superpower.”

In his invocation, Charles “Chaz” Howard C’00, the University chaplain and vice president for social equity and community, also struck on the theme of community—with a metaphor about freshmen moving away from their childhood homes and into their dorms.

“These are heavy times,” Howard said. “No one should have to carry it all on their own. Moving can be exhausting, confusing, frightening, painful, seemingly impossible. But when more than one person helps with the lifting, some amazing things can happen.” —DZ

Passing of the Torch

Matt Valenti, one of the greatest wrestlers in school history, takes the keys of Penn's wrestling program.



Twenty years ago, Matt Valenti C'07 hopped into his 1994 stick-shift Honda Accord and drove 14 hours from Philadelphia to St. Louis to watch the 2005 NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships.

A standout wrestler at Penn, Valenti would likely have been competing had he not taken the year off from school to rehabilitate a shoulder injury. Instead, he watched alongside his coach, Roger Reina C'84 WEv'05, as Joe Dubuque, a wrestler Valenti had defeated the previous year ("essentially with one arm" because of his injury), win a national championship in Valenti's weight class.

At that moment, Reina asked Valenti if that made him believe that he too could win a national title. "And I was like, 'Yeah, Coach, I think I can do it,'" Valenti recalls. "And he just turned and looked at me and said, 'Then you won't.' And I was like, 'What do you mean I won't?' And he said, 'You just said you *think* you will. That means there's doubt.' I had to fortify that belief that I *would* do it, not just that I *thought* I could."

That lesson proved to be transformative for Valenti, who battled back from his injury to soar into Penn athletics lore with individual national championships in

both 2006 and 2007—the last Quaker wrestler to do so.

Now, two decades later, Valenti has taken the reins from Reina as the head coach of Penn's wrestling program, aiming to impart similar wisdom to athletes striving to reach the same mountaintop Valenti once did.

"It still feels a little surreal taking over a program from one of the legendary coaches not just at Penn but in the sport," Valenti said of Reina, who's notched more than 250 career wins over his two stints as the Quakers' head coach. "At the same time, I'm incredibly fortunate that I've taken over a program that's in a really good place with a great foundation and great culture. The hardest work has already been done, and now my job is to maintain that—and then build and grow on top of it."

In part due to their long-standing relationship, a unique succession plan was announced last year with Valenti joining as an associate head coach (essentially Reina's top assistant) for the 2024–25 season, before officially taking over as head coach for the upcoming 2025–26 campaign with Reina remaining as head coach emeritus. Reina then plans to retire when this season ends in March, though he will remain connected with the program as it moves forward with plans for a new wrestling practice facility in Weightman Hall, thanks to a fundraising initiative spearheaded by a \$20 million gift from former wrestler and former Uni-

versity trustee Dave Pottruck C'70 WG'72. (The Pottruck–Reina Wrestling Center is slated to open in spring 2028 after major renovations are made to a Weightman gym that hosted the first-ever collegiate wrestling tournament in 1905, as well as the adjacent Donaldson Room, which will be used for team space with a lounge, locker room, and fueling and recovery stations.)

Valenti notes that the succession plan was designed to "make sure we minimized as much disruption as possible" for the student-athletes. "And me being in an assistant role last year let them get a little feel for who I am and how I approach things, a little bit of a flavor for how I lead. And now they're getting more of who I am as a coach."

At the end of the 2025 NCAA Wrestling Championships, which was held last March at Philadelphia's Wells Fargo Center, the torch was officially passed—in the form of a challenge brick (a soft, foam-filled brick coaches use to signal a video review of a referee's call) Reina handed to Valenti in front of hundreds of Penn alumni at a post-tournament reception at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel.

It was an emotional moment for Valenti, whose relationship with Reina began 24 years ago when the longtime coach "was sitting in my living room pitching me on Penn," says Valenti, a New Jersey native who was persuaded to come to the University even though his dad had wrestled at Princeton. "And it almost feels like a dream that I get to

sit in living rooms with recruits, next to Roger, making the same pitch.”

It comes naturally to Valenti, who says Penn has “made me into the person I am today.” As a student-athlete, he burst onto the scene as a freshman starter before becoming an All-American as a sophomore in 2003–04, meaning he was “top six in the country with a bum shoulder.”

After his redshirt season, he stormed to the first of his two national championships in the 133-pound weight class with a title-bout triumph over Purdue’s Chris Fleegeer—the same person who had blown out his shoulder—at an Oklahoma City arena that was completely in Valenti’s corner. He closed his college career the following year by defeating Oklahoma State’s Coleman Scott (who went on to win an Olympic bronze medal) for the 133-pound NCAA title, finishing as the program’s career leader in wins with 137.

Valenti served as an assistant coach at Penn from 2009 to 2015, during which he helped Zack Kemmerer C’12 become an All-American at the 2011 NCAA Championships in Philadelphia. “That memory,” Valenti says, “will live front of mind for me for my entire coaching career.” But Penn had a couple of different head coaches during that stretch (Reina served as head coach from 1986 to 2005 before returning in 2017), and “the dynamics and constant change started to wear on me,” Valenti says. His love for Penn remained, however, so he transitioned into a role

with the athletic department, serving in various administrative positions for Penn Athletics for nine years. There he “learned a whole lot about the inner workings of an athletic department,” as well as other things he thinks can carry over to his new job. “I had to be on my toes at all times and be capable of adjusting on the fly,” Valenti says. “And there’s nowhere that’s more prevalent than in a room filled with 18- to 22-year-olds.”

One reason Valenti wanted to return to coaching was because of his wife, Kim Parsons Valenti, who spent years working at Penn before becoming the head gymnastics coach at Ursinus College. “I got to watch her interactions with her team, watch her impact on her team,” he says. “That was a reminder of how much I enjoyed that part of what I

did in coaching. ... That’s where my heart is at, being able to help young people become better.”

He got to experience that again last season when Penn’s CJ Composto rallied to a fourth-place All-American finish at NAAs, in front of a huge Penn crowd in Philly. Valenti called it “way more of a rush” than his own NCAA runs, which he says he can barely remember (and doesn’t like to watch on video). “You are way more stressed as a coach on the sideline than the guy on the mat actually wrestling,” says Valenti, who recalls “high-fiving and hugging” assistant coach Darian Cruz when Composto “comes walking over stone-faced and is like, ‘Let’s get ready for the next match.’”

Composto—who Valenti describes as a calm character who likes to put on Bob Marley

music in the wrestling room—returns this season to headline a group that Valenti believes can do big things. Composto can even vie to become Penn’s first national champion since Valenti—if he is convinced he can. That’s something Valenti will try to instill in the wrestler, the same way Reina once did in him.

And, for one more season, Valenti and Reina will get to do it together.

“He’s one of the best people in the world at drawing the best out of people,” Valenti says of Reina. “He knows how to encourage you to believe in yourself, to think bigger, think broader, set really big goals—sometimes goals that seem scary. I think that’s the way he’s approached program building, and it’s a testament to where the program is today.” —DZ

The Fran McCaffery Era Begins



Penn’s new head men’s basketball coach Fran McCaffery W’82 watches over his team’s first official practice of the 2025–26 season in late September. A former Penn player and longtime coach at Iowa, McCaffery was hired in March to replace Steve Donahue and restore the Quakers’ place at the top of the Ivy League. The Gazette will have more on McCaffery and his coaching staff in our Jan/Feb issue, ahead of the Ivy season.

Tossing Out the Playbook

Weitzman School alumni and faculty are prominent in a movement to make US playgrounds more challenging, stimulating, educational—and fun!—for users of all ages.

By JoAnn Greco

We all hold a certain image of a “playground” in our mind. For children of the 1960s and 1970s, it might involve skin-searing steel slides, knee-scraping concrete, and bruise-inducing monkey bars assembled from pipe fittings. For later generations, the images may be less abrasive, soaked in neon-hued plastic and vivid green artificial turf.

Today, though, your grandkids and kids are forming different memories.

In South Philadelphia, they may find their way to a destination like the Anna C. Verna Playground, a small part of a \$250 million makeover to sprawling FDR Park. As you approach this two-acre, \$5 million dreamscape, three soaring, intricately constructed, birdcage-like climbing structures beckon with infinite possibility. At the center of the playground, an array of nearly two dozen swings is positioned around a huge oval, ready to accommodate up to 30 people of all sizes.

In West Philadelphia, a new nature-themed, \$1.6 million playground has staked a claim on a patch of land in the even larger Cobbs Creek Park. It features equipment made from salvaged wood; a play surface of raised mounds and flat ground in watery blues and grassy greens; and walls that integrate puzzles, a reading nook, and other learning-oriented enhancements.

These changes are reaching smaller neighborhood playgrounds, too. Hancock Playground in North Philadelphia incorporates new ideas that allow children to frolic among sustainable landscape design hallmarks like permeable surfaces and native plants, tackle artificial hills and winding trails, and enjoy play equipment that encourages creativity and choice. Meanwhile community-centered projects from the Trust for Public Land and The Big Sandbox—a spinoff from a successful nonprofit initiative called Learning Landscapes that

began 30-some years ago in Denver—are expanding notions of what a playground can be by sprucing up the yawning asphalt expanses at local schoolyards.

All of these mold-breaking playgrounds were designed or planned by faculty and alumni of the Stuart Weitzman School of Design’s Landscape Architecture department. Whether reacting to the urban playgrounds of yore or taking inspiration from more rural experiences, these designers are “creating public spaces in a myriad of ways that reflect their understanding of the social, physical, and intellectual confidence-building value of play,” says Christopher Marcinkoski, associate professor of landscape architecture and principal of PORT, the firm behind the Cobbs Creek playground and similar projects in Boise, Idaho; Bentonville, Arkansas; and Knoxville, Tennessee. “Cities and towns are realizing that if they’re going to invest in public space, a unique play experience



The \$1.6 million nature-themed playground in sprawling Cobbs Creek Park has equipment made of salvaged wood, a play surface of greens and blues, and reading nooks and other learning enhancements.



Left and below: The two-acre, \$5 million Anna C. Verna Playground in FDR Park includes birdcage-like climbing structures and an array of different-sized swings.

is part of what will make the project successful,” he continues. “There’s a real contrast between the green plastic off-the-shelf, catalog version and the kind of projects that we and others are involved in. They inspire curiosity and joy and become part of what a place is known for, part of its identity.”

For a long time, “we’ve had a very fixed idea of playgrounds in the United States,” says Meghan Talarowski GLA’13, a playground researcher and designer whose Philadelphia-based nonprofit firm, Studio Ludo, is responsible for the FDR playground. “It’s been about platforms and posts and plastic, where a child climbs up and slides down and then does it all over again. A researcher in London calls them KFC—kit, fence, carpet. You buy the thing, lay it out on a soft pad, and you’re done. Our goal at Studio Ludo is to create places, not to check boxes. My strong belief is that everyone deserves a great place to play,” she adds. “And kids don’t get to choose where they grow up.”

When Talarowski—who’s been a rock climber since she was in her teens and has also worked as a climbing instructor—thinks of her own first experiences with play, she doesn’t remember a playground so much as bike jumping and running around in the acres of open space that beckoned just a block away from her suburban home in Northern California. “It took until I was an undergraduate and living on the South Side of Chicago near some public housing towers to understand how special having access to space and nature was,” she says. “I realized that for many children, that isn’t part of their lived experience.”

Sara Pevaroff Schuh GLA’95, founding principal of Philadelphia-based SALT Design Studios, the team behind Hancock Playground, similarly remembers spending her childhood summers on a remote island in Canada. “We had a makeshift cottage on Lake Huron with no running water or insulation,” she says. “Even into my 20s, I didn’t really



understand how much it shaped my opinions about what constitutes nature and what play is.”

Lois Brink C’76 GLA’78, founder of Learning Landscapes and the Big Sandbox, grew up in Philadelphia’s Mt. Airy section. There were “no playgrounds in my neighborhood—we played in vacant lots,” she says. But she too fell in love with nature as she spent great swathes of time

“Everyone deserves a great place to play—and kids don’t get to choose where they grow up.”

The centerpiece of Hancock Playground is a striking steel and mesh assemblage that begs to be explored. The design also made room for outdoor adult fitness equipment and new plantings of trees, shrubs, and grasses.



on a Canadian island that her family owned in the St. Lawrence River. “I know it sounds luxurious, but it was very primitive,” she says. “Things would rot away in front of your eyes and fixing them became a big piece of my play experience.”

Understanding Play

No matter where it happens, play is a vital contributor to childhood development. The United Nations even regards it as a fundamental right, along with shelter and education. And while it’s been observed that “play is the work of childhood,” many believe it hasn’t always gotten its due. “In the 1990s, there was a rush for parents to get their kids to be the geniuses of the future—and ‘play’ became a true four-letter word,” says Kathy Hirsh-

Pasek Gr’81, a psychology professor and director of the Infant and Child Laboratory at Temple University. “But what we’ve found since then is that the very definition of play—to be engaged, interactive, joyful—are the same characteristics behind how we learn and thrive. Children don’t respond well to being empty vessels that teachers pour information into.” Through play, she says, they can easily practice what she calls the “6C” learning skills—collaboration (building something together); communication (listening, writing, talking); content (learning facts or acquiring self-regulatory behaviors); critical thinking (sifting through information); creative innovation (solving problems in new and original ways); and confidence (persisting through failure).

“I’m very interested in seeing how we can translate this new science of learning, especially since kids spend about 80 percent of their waking lives outside of school,” Hirsh-Pasek continues. “This becomes particularly important for those from under-resourced environments who might not have a functional playground nearby, or even puzzles or books in their homes.” Addressing those gaps is the idea behind Playful Learning Landscapes (PLL), a nonprofit which she cofounded in 2010 to introduce fun reading and math experiences into places like libraries, laundromats, and lobbies.

The idea that play can enhance children’s development and not just be a babysitting tool has been around for a while now. Historian Susan G. Solomon

London's mid-20th century "adventure playgrounds" were set up in locations that included former World War II bombsites.

Gr'97 opens her 2014 book *The Science of Play: How to Build Playgrounds That Enhance Children's Development* (University Press of New England) with a 1965 quote from Marjory Allen, an English noblewoman and landscape architect: "Life demands courage, endurance and strength, but we continue to underestimate the capacity of children for taking risks, enjoying the stimulation of danger, and finding things out for themselves." After a tour of playgrounds in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC, Lady Allen professed herself to be "totally shocked" by what she found, the *New York Times* reported. "Children quickly tire of fixed mechanical equipment, she believes, and of the 'over-slick' play sculpture which, being immobile, is useless to the energetic young," the story continued.

Solomon's book highlights the different values that researchers claim children need to develop in order to thrive, and which go missing in most American playgrounds: risk, mastery (with the possibility to fail on the way to success), executive function (planning, problem solving), friendship (including having pals of differing ages), exposure to nature, and rough-and-tumble play. She wrote of her visits to Europe and Japan, where designers have produced playgrounds that "invest trust in young people, avoid the rigidity and predictability of traditional playground equipment [and] are cost effective, usually sustainable and accessible, and frequently unique."

Children who play in this fashion "can mature physically, emotionally, and cognitively in a way that has nothing to do with reading or school as we know it," Solomon says. "It's a different kind of learning, but a simple plastic piece that has kids go up the stairs, across a bridge, and down a slide over and over again, won't do it. Figuring out something challenging and taking a physical risk, or being able to hide, or to move things around to reconfigure them—all of that leads to creative ways of learning and thinking."



The late Brian Sutton-Smith, a world-renowned expert on play who taught in Penn's Graduate School of Education between 1977 and 1994, was an outspoken advocate of the value of play for its own sake. "Much of the modern developmental psychological emphasis is only upon the increases in 'useful' learning and cognition that play does include—literacy, numeracy, and so forth," he wrote in the *Gazette* in 2008. "Certainly learning in this more limited sense is a valuable part of play, but play has its *own* purposes that are more fundamental. Adults may sometimes be able to understand what children are accomplishing by it, but often they will not—and perhaps cannot, given how self-contained and irrational the mental worlds of children sometimes appear to be." ["To Play or Not to Play," Jan/Feb 2008.]

European countries have set the standard of what makes for exciting play

European countries have set the standard of what makes for exciting play.

ever since landscape architect Carl Theodor Sørensen noticed kids romping among rubble in Copenhagen and created the first "junk playground" in 1943. Lady Allen ran with the idea a few years later to develop former World War II bombsites and other locations into a slew of "adventure playgrounds" in London, where kids hammered and clambered away, building and tearing down their constructions with abandon.

When Talarowski found herself living in the English capital for a spell in 2015, she discovered that some 70 years later the city had continued to innovate when it came to playground design. "There was wood all over the place, huge con-

crete mountains with slides, a lot of landforms, giant tree houses, tons of sand and water play,” she says. “The play environments were so diverse and so much pushing the envelope. They also had great support for caregivers, with clean bathrooms and really nice cafes.”

Inspired by what she discovered as she wandered around town with her toddler, Talarowski—who had helped develop a research arm at OLIN during a stint with Laurie Olin’s eponymous landscape architecture firm [“Mr. Olin’s Neighborhood,” Jul|Aug 2007]—launched Studio Ludo (Latin for *I play*). She spent a few months taking videos at 16 London playgrounds and used them to document the apparent age, gender, ethnicity, and physical activity of 18,142 people. She then compared data from an American study that focused on playgrounds in New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles of similar size (.25-.75 acres) and population density (50,000-175,000 people within a one mile area) to those in London. She discovered that the London playgrounds had 55 percent more visitors, 14 percent more adults, and that children and teens were 16-18 percent more physically active. London also had the advantage when Talarowski compared costs, due in part to the use of grass and sand cushioning rather than rubber tile, and a predilection for turning boulders, logs, topography, plantings, and trees into play enhancements.

Talarowski had gained experience designing more traditional playgrounds while working for the Trust for Public Land shortly after completing her undergraduate studies in architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology. “On my first day, they gave me a box of equipment catalogs and said go!” she recalls. “There was no training on best practices or anything, but these environments are really essential for kids’ development, and I just thought we should know more. That’s why I started Studio Ludo, to share and educate and dive deep into what it is people want from their play experiences.”

“We have created a nation of overly expensive, homogeneously safe and insidiously boring play spaces.”

She ended her report with a call to action. In responding to the perceived dangers that many parents believed had plagued America’s playgrounds, the US had reached “peak safety,” she wrote. “We have created a nation of overly expensive, homogeneously safe and insidiously boring play spaces. To turn the tide, the solution is to follow London’s lead.”

Her recommendations included: *designing for all ages*, since she found just about an equal number of adults and children using the playgrounds; *thinking outside the catalog*, by using grass and stones and logs as design elements and opportunities for “loose parts play”; and remembering that *risk is a good thing*. In the lower right-hand corner of the final page, she added a few sentences that would become her mantra. “Everyone loves boulders. Sand brings out the kid inside us all. Caffeine and a bench are keys to playground success.” The *New York Times* wound up referencing the report, which was eventually published in the journal *Public Health* in a 2019 article on risky play.

After several years of practice back in Philadelphia, Talarowski undertook a new study in 2021. This time she had a client—the National Institutes of Health (NIH), who charged her with assessing the state of American playgrounds. The report, *Playground Design and Physical Activity*, compared 30 post-and-platform playgrounds with 30 innovative playgrounds—defined as “having a variety of surface types; naturalized and planted areas designed for play; open-ended structures that do not dictate play sequences; loose, movable equipment; and not comprised solely of traditional structures.” Her team found that innovative play-

grounds in the 10 cities studied attracted more than twice as many users and generated almost three times as much moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. (After controlling for playground size, population density, neighborhood poverty, and destination location, innovative playgrounds still attracted 43 percent more visitors than traditional playgrounds.)

“Risk has always been hard to sell to Americans,” says Solomon. When she was writing her *cri de coeur* for more inventive play, “landscape architects working in the US would say, ‘This is what I’ve been feeling for some time, but we’re so hemmed in by the guidelines and the municipalities,’” she adds. “That’s why Meghan’s approach, to look at what people want, is so valuable. Her data is so strong that cities are taking notice, and we’re finally seeing some play spaces—especially the bigger, destination ones—that are more helpful to kids’ development.”

As American communities start to come around, playground equipment manufacturers have responded with taller, faster play apparatus that are made of natural materials and present children with more choices and challenges. Playground guidelines, too, have been updated to reflect a broader understanding of the importance of balancing safety with the developmental benefits of play. “Designers recognize that there are certain metrics in reading and math that kids need to achieve, and we know that a lot of children in Philadelphia and other cities are behind in those metrics,” Talarowski says. “But being comfortable with sitting still comes more easily when there are opportunities to channel your energy. Innovative playground design works toward those goals by incorporating play that keeps kids engaged and challenged—in contrast to traditional playgrounds, which become dangerous precisely because kids get the hang of them so quickly and start looking to do things they’re ‘not supposed to do,’ like climbing up the outside” of a structure.

McMichael Park includes log stumps and balance beams that seem to emerge from the woods.

McKinley Park features a play structure that resembles a birdhouse and offers opportunities for hiding, climbing, and perching.



Redefining Play

Introducing calculated risk is one of the touchstones of today's forward-thinking playground designers. And the research backs them up. "Norwegian child psychologist Ellen [Beate Hansen] Sandseter has become a leading scholar of risk," says Solomon. "Her characteristics of risky play include achieving fast speeds, going to great heights, being able to get lost, and rough-and-tumble play." Sandseter has observed that children negotiate their way between truly dangerous activities and the ones that merely *seem* scary. "When they reach their own sense of equilibrium," Solomon writes in her book, "they express ... glee in having an experience for which there is not a single route or a known conclusion."

At the FDR Park playground, for example, risky play is built into the birdcage structures to allow ambitious climbers to test their limits. "The tallest tower starts with a wobbly ladder," Talarowski says. "Then it has a net spiral, which lets you get to the top quickly, but if it feels too scary you can easily retreat to try again another day. Its connected twin is intentionally a little tighter and trickier for teens and adults to navigate,

and its slide is shorter," the designer adds. "The wishbone climbers and log scrambles are non-prescriptive, so kids can use them however they want ... climbing, laying, balancing."

One of Studio Ludo's most ambitious efforts yet, the FDR Park playground taps into another hallmark of envelope-pushing playgrounds: inclusivity. Its sophisticated material palette—wood, steel, and ropes, with no bright colors—is designed to make all ages feel welcome, while the smallest, separate tower has a transfer platform to a net spiral for those with limited mobility that also allows an adult caregiver and a younger child to climb and play and slide together. "The idea of inclusive play started with providing for those with disabilities," says Talarowski, "but it's opening up to include all generations in response to the fact that we are aging as a society—by 2030, there will be more people over the age of 65 than under the age of 16. Rather than so-called 'adult playgrounds,' my goal is to give parents the chance to play *with* their children."

Nature playgrounds such as Studio Ludo's McKinley Park—a transformation of an asphalt parking lot at the end of a tree-lined street in suburban Lansdowne,

Pennsylvania, into a play space for the under-five set—are another trend. While a slide, swings, and spinners keep little ones active, opportunities for adventure play and loose parts play are everywhere, from the native plantings whose sticks and seed pods have boundless appeal to both children and birds, to boulders and logs that invite sitters and scramblers, to a focal point play structure that resembles a birdhouse and offers opportunities for hiding, climbing, and perching.

In Philadelphia's East Falls neighborhood, SALT's idyllic playground in McMichael Park seems the kind of place where the regal Grace Kelly, who grew up in a house across the street, might have felt at home. Tucked beneath a lush canopy of the park's mature trees, parents gather on strategically placed log benches to watch their kids clamber up, down, around, in and out of a rustic wood climbing structure. Other caregivers join their youngsters in jumping along a row of log stumps, or squeezing onto swings with them. Backed by a picturesque fallen tree limb, the whole half-acre site appears to emerge from the midst of the woods, at one with its surroundings.

But, as they have in London and Berlin and Copenhagen, these new ideas are

Reading nooks among the bookshelves and a climbing wall with letters in easy reach to encourage word making at the Cecil B. Moore Library in North Philadelphia.



finding their ways to less bucolic settings, too. In response to the community engagement efforts it conducted while designing Hancock Playground, for example, SALT made room for outdoor adult fitness equipment like pull-down weights, parallel bars, steps, and pavement markings for agility training. Its eye-catching centerpiece is a striking steel and mesh assemblage that begs to be explored. It too is verdant, with dozens of newly planted canopy and understory trees, shrubs, native perennials, and grasses providing shade for visitors, stormwater control for the municipality, and pollinator habitat regeneration for the environment.

Learning From Play

Lois Brink started her Learning Landscapes initiative in Denver in 1992 simply to offer her daughter a less unlovely play experience than the one that confronted them at the local schoolyard. “It was scorched earth,” she recalls. “Just a field of pea gravel with a pathetic play structure from the ’50s in the back. I thought, ‘This is it? Are you kidding me?’” She remembered her own childhood experiences and how throughout her career she had drawn heavily on her Canadian summers, relying on design elements like “boulders, constant changes in elevation, views, and perspectives.” This particular asphalt-scape was certainly not that.

She decided to take matters into her own hands, bringing her graduate students from the University of Colorado, where she was (and still is) a professor of landscape architecture, to meet with neighbors and parents to listen and develop ideas for improvement. Raising their own funds and becoming their own design-builders—Brink calls the goal “grass roots, grass tops”—the group finished its initial project in 2000. Then city and private funders grew interested and supported the redevelopment of about two dozen more schoolyards. In 2003 and again in 2008, the school district floated bonds to support reconstruction of the remaining ones. Both passed—even

though, Brink points out, 60 percent of the voters didn't have children.

Learning Landscapes eventually redesigned all 99 public elementary schoolyards in the city, marking them with gateways (to signal their openness for use by the entire community) and filling them with a mix of traditional and custom pieces, vegetable gardens, artwork, seating, shade trees, and creative learning opportunities. Equally important, "we try to instill the idea of caring for something that you helped create and that belongs to you and your community," Brink says.

In 2023, Brink released a study of the program's effectiveness, documenting a 7 percent decrease in student transfers after the Colorado schoolyards were transformed, along with statistically significant increases in students' annual progress toward state reading and math standards (by 8.5 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively). Since public schools receive state funding, Brink hopes another stat from the report—an annual average of \$1,341,777 revenue increase in Colorado state funding for 152 new students enrolled—will be impactful as she brings the program to Philadelphia, where schools narrowly escaped the chopping block this year, but budget shortfalls, dwindling enrollment, and aging built assets continue to pose an existential threat.

This spring, The Big Sandbox (TBS) celebrated its first schoolyard redevelopment at Tanner G. Duckrey Elementary in North Philadelphia—the culmination of an effort that started about 10 years ago when Brink brought her grad students to talk with the community about what they'd like to see in the space. Shortly after, more than 100 parents, students, and faculty at the K–8 grade school kicked off the project by painting 6,000 square feet of asphalt into brightly colored games, mazes, and patterns. The rest unfolded year by year, piece by piece, as TBS raised money from various sources.

"Play can be and do so much more than it's traditionally been asked to."

Next up: a trio of other North Philly elementary schools, Edward Gideon, Richard R. Wright, and James G. Blaine. Since this time state funding has been earmarked and TBS has secured the required matching amounts through federal community funds (for a total of \$1.8 million), "we're hoping to complete them much faster," Brink says. "We'd like to have all three done in 2026, so that the investment will be visible if the District starts looking at closing schools."

With Playful Learning Landscapes (PLL), Temple University child psychologist Kathy Hirsh-Pasek has looked even further beyond playgrounds to unveil a moveable feast of "third places" between home and school. A joint project of Hirsh-Pasek's lab at Temple and the Brookings Institution, where she is a senior fellow, PLL marries community involvement, learning sciences, and placemaking to bring playful experiences to everyday spaces. Since its beginnings in Philadelphia, its programs have been replicated in cities across America.

Philadelphia-based KSS Architects recently worked with PLL on a project supported by the William Penn Foundation's Literacy Rich Neighborhoods Initiative to add elements of play to the Cliveden, Wyck, and Johnson historic houses in Germantown. "Through a robust process of community engagement, we developed a narrative for the project sites, since part of what makes learning meaningful for children is connection," says Mayva Donnon GAR'04, a partner at KSS. "We spent a lot of time thinking about places that would feel fun and educational while inviting different kinds of movement." KSS designed play installa-

tions that included interactive puzzles and spinners, Little Free Libraries, multiple seating options, I-Spy elements, story starters, a weather wheel station, word games, and an audio story station, all aimed at building vocabulary, observational skills, and critical thinking.

The numbers suggest that such efforts can make a difference, says Hirsh-Pasek. For a PLL project at three supermarkets in Philadelphia and Delaware, signs prompted caregivers to ask questions of their children while they shopped. Researchers found that caregiver-child interaction increased by 33 percent and that caregivers and children spoke more about numbers—a predictor of later math ability—when the signs prompted number language.

Pevaroff Schuh and Talarowski have also collaborated on PLL initiatives. SALT is currently working on playful learning interventions at bus stops and intersections along Ridge Avenue that will include painted pavement games and free-standing play features like musical instruments, interactive history markers, and other similar ideas. Studio Ludo's project at a branch library in North Philadelphia includes a climbing wall with letters placed near hand- and footholds to encourage children to construct words as they ascend. "There are already city budgets for libraries, for sidewalks, for bus stops—so why not build right within the system?" says Hirsh-Pasek. "With loneliness and anxiety levels going through the roof, this is a great opportunity to make everyday places exceptional spaces."

Whether it's spending a few minutes to strengthen math skills at a grocery store, or two hours to flex social and physical muscles at a destination playground, "play can be and do so much more than it's traditionally been asked to," concludes Talarowski. "It's exciting to see this feedback loop of designers and manufacturers and municipalities now challenging each other to do better."

A photograph of an airplane cockpit, showing the instrument panel, yoke, and a person's hand on the yoke. The image has a vintage, slightly faded aesthetic.

A DAUGHTER'S RECKONING

For most of her life, conservation journalist Artis Henderson's late father had been kept a dark secret. Then she went on an expedition to learn about his adventurous existence as a dad, husband, pilot, remote island owner, and international drug smuggler—as well as “the accident” 40 years ago that killed him (and nearly her).

By Dave Zeitlin





The plane wasn't yet on the downward spiral that would end her father's life and change the trajectory of hers when Artis Henderson C'02 W'02 asked a question she still doesn't understand why her five-year-old brain would think to pose.

"Daddy, are we going to crash?"

Her dad, an experienced pilot at the controls of the single-engine, two-seat tandem aircraft, reassured her that everything was fine as they took a quick spin over their beautiful home in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Georgia, just as they had many times before. Like always, she loved the aerial view of the dogwood, oak, and maple trees, the creek where the salamanders hid, the herd of cattle grazing in the pasture. "This was our farm, our home, our acreage," she'd later write, "and I took unquestioning joy in its sun-dappled beauty."

Then the plane fell from the sky.

Forty years later, Artis is still trying to sift through the wreckage of that awful June day in 1985. She remembers her grandmother carrying her away from the crash site after the plane flipped upside down. (Her grandparents witnessed the crash in horror from their neighboring guest house, and her grandpa pulled her out of the plane; her father died on impact.) She can hazily recall a little bit of what came next—not the three-day coma, of course, but the pain she felt from the fractured skull and broken vertebra when she awoke. The body cast she had to wear. All of the people who came to her home "trying to make me happy" as she recovered. Why she posed that eerily prescient question about the plane crashing to her dad—around whom she always felt so secure, so *protected*—remains both a mystery and one of her few vivid memories from when he was alive.

"What made me ask?" she ponders today. "I wish to God I knew. I have no idea what made me say that."

For much of her life thereafter, Artis rarely talked about the crash. But other mysteries and burning questions have never been far from her mind—mostly about her dad, Tilton Lamar Chester Jr., who went from working as a commercial pilot for Eastern Airlines to being federally indicted for leading a drug smuggling ring based on a private island he had purchased in the Bahamas.

So the conservation journalist set out to learn more. The revelations recounted in the riveting book *No Ordinary Bird: Drug Smuggling, a Plane Crash, and a Daughter's Quest for the Truth* (September 2025, HarperCollins) provided many cathartic answers—and left some mysteries still dangling in midair. "I'm grappling with this story as much as I'm reporting

Little Artis poses with her father Lamar in the early 1980s. She often wishes she could freeze her dad during this time and tell him to leave behind drug smuggling.

it,” Henderson writes in the author’s note, where she makes clear it’s a work of non-fiction with most dialogue sourced from newspaper articles and court transcripts.

The book opens with a prologue on the plane crash that took her dad’s life, the one she learned was celebrated by federal agents and that many around town referred to, simply, as *the accident*. It ends with the haunting realization, after thousands of hours of research, that it likely wasn’t an accident at all.

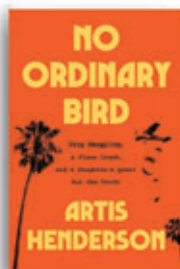
‘Memory Is Such a Strange Thing’

Henderson’s book is still a couple of months from its early September release when she logs onto Zoom to talk with me about it. Morning sunlight fills her “granny flat” (she prefers to call it a garden house) in Perth, Australia, where she’s studying marine stromatolites through the support of a 2024 Fulbright–National Geographic Award, gathering material for her next book.

But first she knows she must make the rounds talking about her current book. It’s an uncomfortable proposition for an introverted journalist often wracked with anxiety—even when she isn’t airing family secrets. “It’s like, *Oh my God, it’s in the world and people know these things*,” Henderson says, admitting to being nervous talking about it.

In its early stages, Henderson planned the book to be a less-personal account of the drug smuggling business built around interviews with non-family members. Then she tried writing it as a novel and “that was terrible,” she says. “At a certain point, it was like, *OK, it’s time*. I sort of realized I had enough material to put together a book proposal” told from her unique viewpoint as the daughter of an international drug smuggler. “The book is called a memoir, and there’s a little bit of me in it,” she says. “But I mean, most everything I learned about my dad, I learned from reporting. I knew nothing.”

Well, maybe not *nothing*. While interviewing family members to try to paint



“Most everything I learned about my dad, I learned from reporting. I knew nothing.”

a picture of his life, certain things would come rushing back to her. Like how her dad, known as Lamar, smelled after putting on the cologne from the green bottle on the bathroom counter. Or that diesel engine grease smell from his planes. “Memory,” she ponders, “is such a strange thing.”

As anyone who lost a parent when they were young can tell you, rediscovering anything about a loved one can be extraordinarily emotional. For Henderson, it was also a bizarre experience because “he was such a secret,” she says. “We never talked about him. So once I started reaching out to people, they were dying to talk to me—maybe because so much time had passed.”

The secrecy was by design. After her father died, the IRS seized almost everything that belonged to him—cars, planes, boats, their home—so Artis and her mother bid farewell to their old life and drove to Florida to begin a new one in a little house on the gulf. “Life looked nothing like when my dad was alive,” Henderson writes. “We had no money. Almost no family and friends. There were no photos of my father anywhere. My mom went back to teaching, and we never talked about our life in North Georgia, though every day I missed our house and the mountains and the clear creek hidden beneath the trees.” Soon, she writes, her dad “became a shameful secret that I tacitly agreed to hide. Secrecy built up like scar tissue, twisted and knotted. The more time passed, the thicker it became.”

As she untwisted her father’s life, she learned about his modest childhood growing up in Georgia and Florida, having been born at the tail end of the Great Depression. He was “nuts about planes,”

she writes, and joined the Navy and Air Force before becoming a pilot for Eastern Airlines in 1969. Lamar was fixated on being “an exceptional pilot.” He was daring in the air and magnetic on the ground, throwing parties in the suburban Miami home he bought for his first wife Nancy and their three young kids.

Her father’s marriage to the author’s mother, also named Artis, was the second for both of them. When they were first introduced, he brought her a pineapple he’d picked up in San Juan after a round-trip flight to Puerto Rico, looking “dashing in his Eastern Airlines uniform,” Henderson writes. “The chemistry between them was immediate.” After they married in 1973, the couple “projected a hunger for bigger things,” settling in an expensive apartment in downtown Miami. Henderson’s father, she learned, was constantly “propelled by a macho insatiability” to “feed what was eating him”—with money, with women, with power—and create a lifestyle a world away from the poverty he experienced growing up. So when Lamar was offered \$8,000—nearly a third of his annual salary—to fly his single-engine Cessna 206 plane (nicknamed “the Hulk”) to Jamaica, where it would be loaded up with bales of marijuana, and back to Miami, he agreed. Henderson writes that Artis “quietly supported him,” baking her husband a Cornish hen for his long solo journey over water. When he returned to their apartment, he recounted to his wife “everything that’d happened in the last twelve hours,” already thinking about the next smuggling run—and “a future beyond anything he had imagined before, a future where eight grand was nothing.”

What started small indeed grew. Henderson reports that in 1976 her dad flew six loads of marijuana into the US, each between 600 and 800 pounds. The operation soon grew to involve more pilots and crew members. Cash was flowing in, so he hired a money man to set up bank accounts in the Cayman Islands. In 1977 he bought a 500-acre estate in North Georgia in the foothills of the Blue Ridge

Mountains, where he built the huge house where Henderson lived the first part of her life. The next year, he used a shell corporation to buy a group of islands in the Bahamas known as the Darby Islands, to provide a secure refueling location for his planes that turned “my father’s midsize smuggling business into a major international operation” at a time when the Bahamas had become a major drug smuggling hub for Colombian cartels.

The Darby Islands also became Henderson’s second home as a young child.

Writing about a Polaroid photo from October of 1980, taken with her father in the Bahamas when she was four months old, she laments: “I want to freeze my dad in this moment, to say to him, *Enough*. I want to tell him to cash out. Leave the business. Take his money and run. But how could I explain that to a man who was at the top of his world?”

The Other Plane Crash

Three years after that Polaroid was snapped, the *New York Times* published a four-paragraph story on page 22 of its lead section of the October 4, 1983, edition:

Federal prosecutors unsealed a 36-count indictment today charging that a northeastern Georgia man led a large smuggling organization that shipped marijuana and cocaine into the United States from a base in the Bahamas.

The indictment charged Tilton Lamar Chester Jr., 45 years old, of Cleveland, Ga., and 11 others with drug offenses and with conducting a criminal enterprise in a pattern of racketeering.

Her father had been caught, and other newspapers picked up what was a juicy story amid a crackdown on drug smuggling. Henderson notes that her father didn’t mind the attention, even holding press conferences with the media while free on bond, having had to surrender his passport and pilot’s license. And between the indictment and the day he died, he still “made me feel safe and pro-

tected,” his daughter writes. “With me, he kept the worry that blanketed him at bay, allowing me those short, beautiful years of a briefly charmed life.”

But that illusion faded. After her father’s death, memories of him slipped away. Henderson became a bookish, studious kid because, she thought, “education was my way of distancing myself from what I understood to be my father’s shame.” That led her to Penn, where she was accepted into the University’s prestigious Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business. “I was so keen to just get out of there and just have this bigger life, this other life,” she says. “And Penn was my ticket to that.”

But it was a difficult transition coming from a small shrimping village in Fort Myers, Florida, where she notes a lot of people hadn’t even heard of Penn. She felt out of place and “had no idea how to dress for Philadelphia winters,” she laughs, recalling that she arrived on campus with a jacket so ludicrously puffy that someone told her she looked like the Michelin Man. Meanwhile, she tried to take up little space and avoid talking about the plane crash that killed her father and broke her back.

A study abroad program in France sparked an interest that brought her to Paris after graduation, where she taught for a year. Then she moved back to Florida, took a job in a senator’s office, and met an Army pilot from Texas named Miles Henderson, whom she married in 2006. “He was smart and funny and humble and a little bit country,” Artis says. And when she first took him to meet her mother, her mother surprised her by saying, “He is so much like your father.” Was it pure coincidence, since at the time Artis knew next to nothing about her dad? Or was something else stirring beneath the surface?

Either way, another pilot had flown into her life. And soon, another tragedy in the air would follow.

In her first book, *Unremarried Widow: A Memoir* (Simon & Schuster, 2014), Hen-

Artis Henderson, seen here at Carbla Beach in Shark Bay, spent eight months in Western Australia this year researching marine stromatolites.

derson richly recounts falling in love, the challenges of living on Army bases, the poetic letters the two exchanged after Miles was deployed to Iraq, and the fateful day she came home to find two soldiers in dress uniform sitting with her mother in a darkened living room. “I imagined my soul draining out of me like liquid mercury, disappearing into the ether of my suddenly intangible existence,” she writes. “I hesitated on the top step and thought about turning and walking back down to the garage. If I stayed on the far side of the door, the soldiers could not tell me what they had come there to say. If they didn’t say it, it wouldn’t be true.”

But it was true. On November 6, 2006, a little more than four months after getting married, Miles Henderson was killed in Iraq when his Apache helicopter crashed. In military parlance, that made Artis an “unremarried widow,” a term used for the spouse of a service member who died on active duty and has not remarried.

The grief that followed was overwhelming. She leaned on other Army widows for support, including the wife of the veteran pilot who’d been at the controls of the helicopter when it crashed, likely due to bad weather. She at times let her anger consume her—anger at the war, the world—and shut out her mother, even though she “had a road map for this grief.” Eventually they managed to find solace in their shared loss. And Henderson soon charted her own course, deciding to become a writer and attending Columbia University’s Graduate School of Journalism, where the seeds of *Unremarried Widow* were planted. But every day was a challenge.

“My husband’s death was like a terrible storm,” Henderson writes in *No Ordinary Bird*. “It came in and wiped me out, down to the concrete slabs. If I hadn’t lost my father in a similar way, then perhaps I would have been able to rebuild my life after my husband died. But two traumas of that magnitude, separated by twenty years, made it impossible. So I recreated a semblance of a life—a good life, even. I



went to graduate school, I became a journalist, I reported in West Africa, I lived in New York. I sold my first book. I traveled widely. I had friends and lovers. But the life I was craving, a life filled with deep connections? No. I rebuilt what I could using pieces of corrugated tin, scraps of lumber, a blue tarp for a roof. I pulled this shelter over myself, and I waited for the next storm, the one that would come in and wipe it all away again.”

What Could Have Been

Artis Henderson thinks about her “ghost lives,” the ones that don’t exist but could have. What would her life have been like had her dad survived, quit drug smuggling, and avoided prison? Would she have spent her entire childhood in the bucolic mountains of North Georgia? What if her husband had returned home from Iraq after the war? “I think we would have had a very normal, very happy domestic life,” she says from her flat in Perth. “But who knows, right?”

“So I mean, where do you go? You have these two traumas, and then—well I

“You have these two traumas, so where do you go? I guess you go to Australia. In a way, it’s given me permission to have this other life.”

guess you go here. I guess you go to Australia. In a way, it’s given me permission to have this other life.”

Perennially braced against the next life-shattering storm, she has remained untethered, traveling the world, trying to be adventurous in the face of anxiety, writing essays and articles about conservation and environmental issues for publications including *National Geographic*, the *New York Times*, and *Reader’s Digest*. She’s a certified master naturalist and advanced open water diver. Last year, she won a 2024 Fulbright–National Geographic Award, given annually to five individuals to carry out projects around the world that support the conservation of the planet’s lands and oceans. “I’ve been working toward this

for a decade,” she says, calling it the “culmination of a dream” on par with getting into Penn’s Huntsman Program.

The award sent her to Western Australia for eight months, where she studied how climate change and sea level rise impact the marine stromatolites of Shark Bay. Marine stromatolites—which are layered, rock-like structures found in shallow water—are important, she notes, because they can help explain the earliest conditions on Earth as well as the potential for life on Mars. Before returning to the US in September, timed with the release of *No Ordinary Bird*, she worked with a team of scientists that included a paleontologist, an astrobiologist, and an oceanographer, as well as with the Malgana people, an Aboriginal Australian group recognized as the traditional custodians of Shark Bay. She intends to use the research as material for her third book, which she describes as a “braided narrative” that will include the perspectives of those scientists and the Malgana elders with her own experiences.

She also soaked up every minute of her travels in a place she described as “wild.” In addition to several expeditions to Shark Bay, she camped at a sheep station and went swimming with whale sharks—some 40 years after she used to jump off the dock on her family’s own private Bahamas island and swim near lemon sharks. “That was the best thing ever—but also terrifying,” she recalls, tracing her interest in oceans and conservation to that formative experience. And that wasn’t the only connection between her time as a “wild and feral” little kid in the Bahamas and her life today as a nomadic conservation journalist. The two main places that marine stromatolites exist are in Western Australia and the Bahamas, the latter being where she first discovered them. “So if my dad had never been a drug smuggler, I would not be in Western Australia,” she says.

While researching *No Ordinary Bird*, Henderson learned more about those years in the Bahamas in the early 1980s. She connected with a family who’d undertaken a

yearlong sailing voyage in 1983 that led them to the Darby Islands and a chance encounter with Lamar, who graciously gave them a tour of his house, shocking them with an icemaker and big-screen TV. “They thought my dad was like the coolest guy they’d ever met,” Henderson says, adding that the family still kept photos of her dad 40 years later and had been curious about him ever since. They weren’t the only ones eager to share fun stories about Lamar. “Because my dad had been such a secret for me growing up, I maybe had this idea that he wasn’t a great guy. I just assumed the worst. And then I had all of these people talk about just how cool he was, and how interesting and warm and charming he was.”

She also interviewed people who knew more of the details about the investigation leading up to his indictment, his subsequent legal fight, and the revelation that he potentially worked for the federal government as an informant. Many who knew him best maintain that there’s no way a pilot as experienced as Lamar would have crashed his plane that day in 1985. There’s more to the book’s final chapters that would be best read without spoilers, including the Iran–Contra affair, the Bahamian Royal Commission of Inquiry, several Freedom of Information Act requests, a reunion with an uncle in the witness protection program, and conjecture that someone in the government messed with a bolt on the plane to kill her dad. There’s still a shred of doubt, but Henderson came away from her reporting with a firm belief. “So many people he was involved with would have liked him to be dead,” she says. “It’s hard to imagine that it was an accident.”

Yet the final chapters of *No Ordinary Bird* aren’t all bleak. They also see Henderson return to North Georgia, where she learns the house she used to live in wasn’t torn down as she thought, but instead turned into a retreat center by a local Baptist church. There, on rocking chairs that felt like home, on the porch she thought was gone, she happily chat-

ted with old neighbors and friends of Lamar. She also writes about how she’s grown closer with Lamar’s children from his first marriage, her half-siblings who “alternate being wildly proud of me and supportive and then just absolutely making fun of me,” as siblings do.

“You have to be obsessed with something to write a book,” Henderson says. “And this story has sort of obsessed me my whole life, and especially these last 10 years. But also these amazing things have come out of it. Because now I have this whole family that had sort of been hidden from me. My brother Terry, who I talk about in the book, we had no relationship before this book and now he’s like my favorite person. It’s such a gift.”

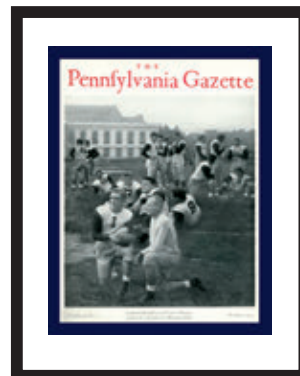
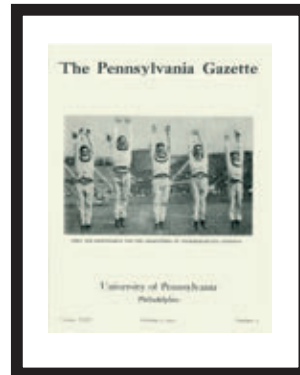
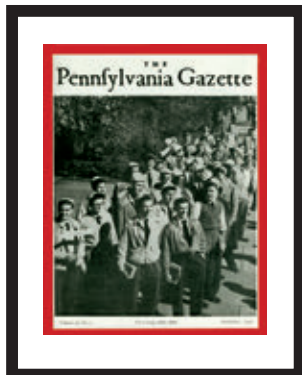
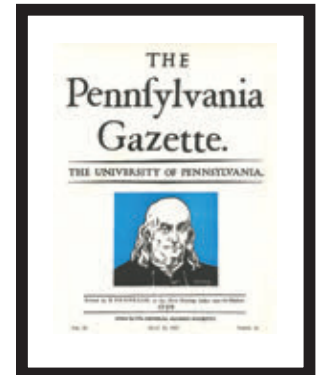
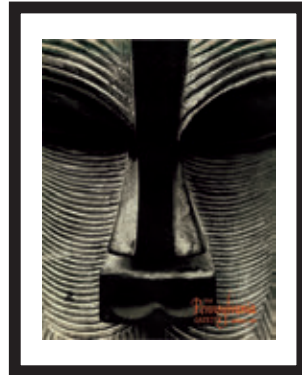
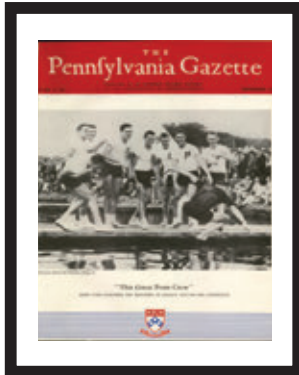
As for her father, Henderson still wonders about an alternate reality had he not been sucked into the drug smuggling world. “Here’s this man who was super smart and had all these talents,” she says. “And it’s like, ‘What else could he have done? What else does someone do who wants a big life but doesn’t have access?’”

She likes to think he’d be proud of his daughter—for the books, her journalism, her life. And in a way, after hearing so much more about him, she’s proud of him, too. Sadly, they’ll never be able to build on what could have been a special father-daughter relationship. They’ll never scuba dive or snorkel or go spear fishing together, as he liked to do. They’ll never create more memories like the one she writes about, not long before he died, when they sat in the dusty cab of his truck, eating scalding hot boiled peanuts he had bought from a roadside stand, the song “Take Me Home, Country Roads” playing on the radio.

And yet, a piece of her father still lives inside of her. It wasn’t long ago that an old friend of Lamar’s called her up while she was in Australia. She was between expeditions to Shark Bay when he said something she’ll never forget.

“That adventurous streak in you,” the man told her, “that’s your daddy.”

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Alzheimer's

Well over a century since it was first identified and following decades of intensive research, Alzheimer's disease continues to withhold its essential secrets and a cure remains elusive. But recent drug treatments, improvements in diagnostic techniques, and other developments constitute what one Penn Medicine leader calls the “dawn of a new era” in confronting its impacts on patients and caregivers.

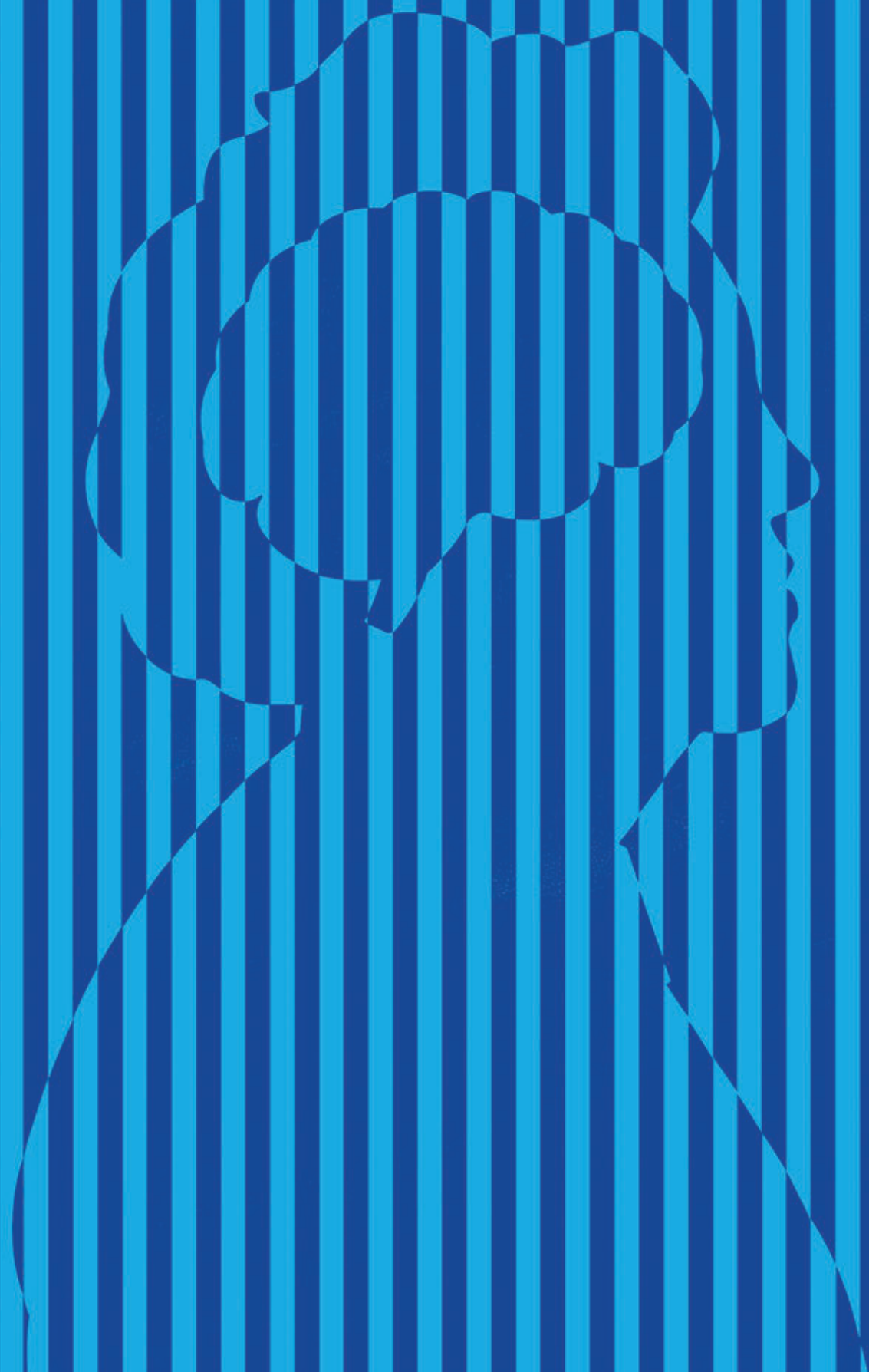
By Mary Ann Meyers

Basic neuroscience undertaken to understand how the human brain works, including the molecular and cellular underpinnings of learning and memory, has led over the course of some four decades to drugs that are slowing the progression of the world's leading cause of dementia—Alzheimer's disease. “It is the dawn of a new era,” says David Wolk, professor of neurology in the Perelman School of Medicine, co-director of the Penn Memory Center, and director of Penn's Alzheimer's Disease Research Center. “We have reached a critical level of maturity in understanding a widespread pathology that will become even more common in developed nations like ours experiencing significant increases in aging populations.”

In the United States, some 7 million people—11 percent of the 65-and-older population—are afflicted with variants of the disease. It causes about two-thirds of the estimated 57.4 million dementia cases worldwide. While lifestyle changes that emphasize exercise, a healthy diet, and social engagement may have cognitive benefits for older people, it is unclear whether they influence the underlying pathology of Alzheimer's. But bench research dating from the 1980s and followed recently by clinical trials at Penn Medicine have led to the availability of drugs with modest benefits. Lecanemab (Leqembi), along with the even newer donanemab (Kisunla), appear to slow cognitive decline in the early stages of Alzheimer's even as sci-

entists continue to search for a cure that has so far eluded them.

The insidiousness of Alzheimer's—its gradual onset over a period of months or years until problems with cognition interfere with function to the extent that family and friends notice a loved one's lapses in memory, changes in mood, and/or difficulty in carrying out once easily performed tasks—often delays diagnosis. Since the identification of the disease as a distinct pathology in 1906, moreover, debate has swirled over its definition. In addition to patterns of behavior setting Alzheimer's apart from normal aging, brain anomalies characteristic of the condition can now be detected in living persons by means of biological molecules found in body fluids.



These changes in neural structure were discovered on autopsy by the psychiatrist and neuropathologist Alois Alzheimer when examining the brain of a woman who had exhibited loss of her short-term memory before dying at 51 years of age. He noted extracellular deposits of what we now know are amyloid beta protein plaques and diffuse neurofibrillary tangles inside neurons, which were subsequently shown to be twisted filaments of a protein called tau. The disorder was named when his mentor and colleague in Munich, Emil Kraepelin, updated his textbook, *Clinical Psychiatry*, in 1910. Kraepelin defined Alzheimer's as early-onset dementia despite similar neuropathological features to senile dementia, which Czech psychiatrist and neuropathologist Oskar Fischer found on autopsy in a large sample of cases. But then World War I disrupted research in German-speaking countries, Alzheimer died in 1915, and Fischer shifted the focus of his investigations until his own death in a way station to a Nazi concentration camp during World War II.

The hiatus in Alzheimer's research was not only a consequence of geopolitics but also of the dearth of imaging technology. High-resolution electron microscopes were not developed until the 1940s. The studies they made possible in the 1960s, notably in the Bronx and in Newcastle, England, of neuropathological changes in the brains of people under 65 who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's before their deaths and in the brains of older people with dementia led neurologist Robert Katzman to declare that the two conditions should be considered a single disease. His 1976 editorial in the *Archives of Neurology*, "The prevalence and malignancy of Alzheimer disease: a major killer," redefined Alzheimer's as a major public health problem.

Soon thereafter the families of afflicted individuals formed a national patient advocacy group, now known as the Alzheimer's Association; and the newly established National Institute on Aging

(NIA), an agency of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), adopted the disease as its inaugural focus. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan charged the Department of Health and Human Services with creating a task force to coordinate Alzheimer's disease research. It was five years after he left office in 1989 that the president, then 83, announced his own diagnosis, and his son has suggested that Reagan may have shown signs of Alzheimer's during his presidency. Whenever the onset, the President's disclosure pointed poignantly to the course of the disease experienced by many sufferers: "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life."

It was during Reagan's first term that Virginia Man-Yee Lee, a biochemist and cell biologist, and her late husband, John Q. Trojanowski GM'80, a neuropathologist and neuroanatomist, undertook research to decipher the building blocks and unmask the molecular aspects of neurodegenerative diseases. They had joined Penn's medical school faculty in 1981 and remained at the center of Penn research on the disease for decades ["Untangling Alzheimer's," Mar/Apr 2011].

Lee, the John H. Ware 3rd Endowed Professor in Alzheimer's Research, credits the pair's "complementary expertise and skill sets" for their pathbreaking discovery: the mechanics by which a distortion of the biochemical processes governing cell-to-cell communication leads to deposits of misfolded tau protein in the brain—a dynamic that they demonstrated plays a key role, along with earlier occurring amyloid plaques, in the progression of Alzheimer's. The couple also discovered other proteins—notably alpha-synuclein (found in Lewy body dementia and Parkinson's disease) and TDP-43 (found in frontotemporal lobar degeneration and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis)—that they showed, through the creation of innovative animal and cell models, were central players in related neurodegenerative disorders.

Their evolving research program was among the first of its kind in the United

States to receive federal funding—monies that made possible the recruitment and training of a whole generation of scientists. Through the years, Penn's Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research, which the couple founded and Lee has continued to direct since Trojanowski's death in 2022 ["Obituaries," May/Jun 2022], played a major role in helping to identify targets for potential drug therapies. Studies conducted under its auspices, moreover, have led to the development of biomarkers of the conditions that progressively damage and destroy nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, resulting in a decline in cognitive and motor functions.

In his clinical practice, Jason Karlawish GM'99, professor of medicine, medical ethics and health policy, and neurology who codirects the Penn Memory Center with Wolk, finds most patients ask the same question: "What's the cause of my problem?" His job, he says, "is to help people to understand why they are experiencing cognitive symptoms" and, in doing so, "give them time to plan ahead." Clinical assessment measures like behavioral testing play a role. So does noninvasive magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), which can suggest "probable Alzheimer's" by detecting structural changes in the brain, and positron emission tomography (PET) brain scans, which can help identify biomarkers indicative of the earliest transition to Alzheimer's disease. It was a Penn medical scientist, the late Christopher Clark—founding director of the center and an associate professor of neurology at the Perelman School of Medicine from 1990 to 2007—who upon becoming the medical director for AVID Radiopharmaceuticals led the investigative team that demonstrated the ability of florbetapir PET scans to detect brain deposits of amyloid beta.

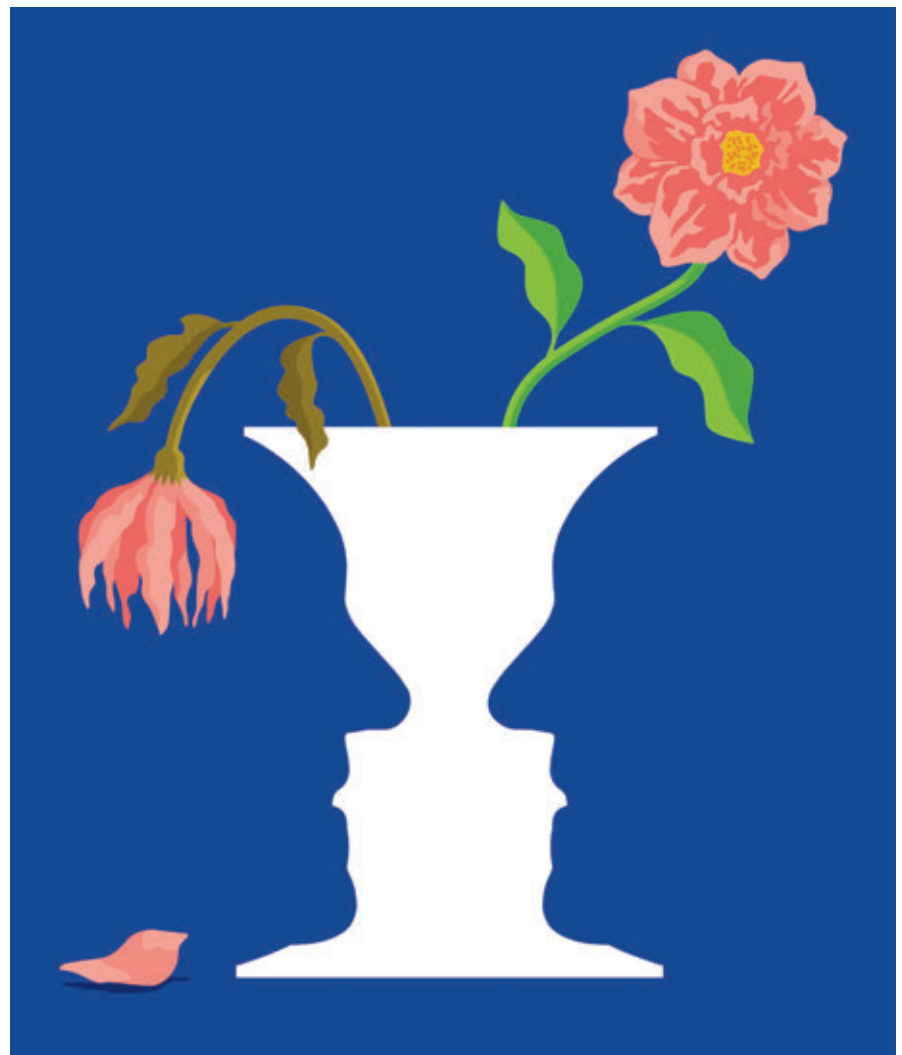
Clinicians can also use spinal taps to look for amyloid and tau pathology in cerebrospinal fluid. Recently, moreover, Penn researchers and others have helped validate a new test that detects a specific form of tau, along with amyloid, in blood plasma, which can indicate the presence

(or absence) of amyloid plaques in the brain—and correlates with the clinical stages of Alzheimer's disease.

"It's a very exciting development," says Lee, "because taking and testing a blood sample is neither invasive nor expensive. As far as we know now, current Alzheimer's drugs are most effective in early stages of the disease," she continues, "so having an easy, reliable, and cheap way to gauge how far Alzheimer's has progressed could help doctors determine which patients are likely to benefit from treatment. But what we need to discover," she adds, "is whether tau tangles are affected by drugs now in use that target amyloid plaques since, unfortunately, we don't yet have any pharmaceutical products directed at tau that are able to cross the blood-brain barrier."

Even with the increasing accuracy of tests, the clinical diagnosis of Alzheimer's can be a fussy matter of gradation. How advanced is the disease? Finding out begins in a doctor's office. Karlawish typically talks first with a patient's spouse or an adult child, then with the patient, and concludes with a three-part conversation. To discover if patients are aware of changes in their mental functioning, he "routinely asks a question taken from philosophical inquiries into consciousness: *What is it like to be you?*" Karlawish often hears about memory gaps, temporal confusion, and struggles to navigate routes that were once familiar. If a clinical assessment suggests the usefulness of other diagnostic tests, he explains the options.

"Some people are very information-seeking," Karlawish observes. If test results show definitive evidence of Alzheimer's, he tries to deliver the news to respect what the patient knows and wants to know. "There are patients for whom knowledge is power," he says, "and there are others who react quite differently to their diagnosis. Learning they have a condition that is as stigmatizing as Alzheimer's only escalates their anxiety." But he conveys what he knows is "emotionally



"There are patients for whom knowledge is power," Karlawish says, "and there are others who react quite differently to their diagnosis."

fraught information" as kindly as he can. "I wait," he says, then "I ask the patient how he/she is feeling. I listen to their concerns. When they are ready, I discuss staging—how they can expect their disease to force changes in their lives—and options for treatment." Karlawish, who has written a book about Alzheimer's [*"The Humanist Is In,"* Mar|Apr 2021], believes "agency is a fundamental characteristic of what it means to be human," and he tries not to rob his patients of it—even though the disease almost surely will.

Yet there is hope. David Wolk is excited about drugs that might change the trajectory of decline. Penn was involved in trials for a promising candidate called aducanumab beginning in 2015. It was a monoclonal antibody aimed at removing excessive beta amyloid before it formed plaques, and when tested in patients in the earliest stages of Alzheimer's, it was the first therapy shown to reduce the clinical symptoms of the disease. Biogen, the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based company that produced the drug, sought FDA approval to market it in 2019, and the government agency granted accelerated approval in 2021. But the expedited process generated a backlash from critics who maintained that there wasn't conclusive evidence of the drug's efficacy in large part because these trials were discontinued early based on initial concern that they were ineffective. The FDA man-



dated that Biogen confirm its positive results in a new trial to qualify for full approval. In 2022, Medicare ruled it would only cover patients enrolled in a clinical trial. With sales of the costly Aduhelm (aducanumab's brand name) sluggish, Biogen announced in early 2024 that it was discontinuing the product to concentrate on another promising monoclonal antibody, lecanemab.

In 2022, Biogen and Tokyo-based Eisai had announced that a Phase 3 clinical trial of lecanemab (Leqembi) slowed cognitive decline by 27 percent over 18 months. Wolk says he was encouraged that the drug could produce “meaningful differences in function for a significant portion of patients.” Edward Lee Gr’04 M’05, associate director of the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center and an associate professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at Perelman, dared to hope that the research community had “moved the needle.” In July of 2023, the FDA gave its full approval to lecanemab. The drug, administered by intravenous

infusion every other week, bought time—about five months, a meaningful period for patients awaiting a grandchild, writing a book, or planning a holiday—before sufferers from Alzheimer's began developing more severe symptoms.

Meanwhile, Penn Medicine was conducting trials on a similar drug, donanemab (Kinsunla). Approved by the FDA in July of 2024, it requires monthly infusions, and like the other monoclonal antibodies targets and clears beta-amyloid. It was shown to slow cognitive decline by 35 percent over the course of a year and a half. Wolk and his colleagues think it may be possible for patients to stop taking the drug once plaques are cleared away. If more data confirms his hypothesis, that might mitigate the known risk of lecanemab and donanemab causing amyloid-related imaging abnormalities (ARIA) such as microscopic brain bleeds, which occurred in about a quarter of the trial's participants. No one knows for sure why ARIA are triggered by the drugs, but scientists suspect they may stem from the

antibodies doing their job well—that is, removing amyloids from the walls of blood vessels in the brain and rendering them prone to break. And, most importantly, as Karlawish observed, “no one can say with certainty what happens after 18 months. The big question, to which we hope to find an answer, is: Will the benefits continue?”

Meanwhile, a multidisciplinary team of scientists led by Kurt Brunden, research professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at Perelman, has been awarded a \$6.9 million grant from the National Institute on Aging to prepare a potential disease-modifying Alzheimer's treatment that targets tau. With colleagues at the University of California, San Diego, School of Pharmacy, Burden had developed a new compound, called CNDR-51997, and found it was effective in restoring brain health in mouse models of Alzheimer's. The new grant will help the researchers assess the drug's safety in formal studies required by the FDA prior to the initiation of human testing.

Wolk calls these latest pharmaceutical interventions an “inflection point in the treatment of a dread disease.” He considers lecanemab and donanemab “pretty safe when carefully monitored, though the risk is not zero.” Adverse side effects are typically limited and reversible, though some patients had to be hospitalized with severe headaches, convulsions, and temporary vision loss. No deaths from taking either drug have occurred at the Memory Center, and Wolk is currently leading a monitoring study to see who should avoid the two drugs and who benefits the most from taking them. He stressed that in trials at Penn and elsewhere, they were tested on people whose symptoms were mild. If the drugs were given when a person with Alzheimer’s had no observable cognitive impairment, he says, the newly developed monoclonal antibodies “may delay onset.”

People with a familial history of dementia could be ideal candidates. It was discovered in 1993 that carriers of a gene variant known as APOE4 have a high

“Mind isn’t simply in the brain and dementia isn’t simply the consequence of damage to the brain. Mind emerges from an interaction between the brain and the world around it.”

probability of developing Alzheimer’s. Those with two copies of the APOE4 allele constitute 2 to 3 percent of the general population but 15 to 20 percent of Alzheimer’s patients. A 2024 study concluded that almost all of these people go on to develop the disease, with biological markers apparent by age 55—two decades earlier than they are typically seen in patients with one copy of the allele. Wolk points out, moreover, that scientists have identified some 80 other genetic risk factors for Alzheimer’s. His Perelman colleague Gerard Schellenberg, professor of neuropathology and laboratory medicine and director of the Neurodegeneration Genomics Center, was instrumental in discovering genes implicated in the early onset of the disease, and his ongoing research continues to fill in the genetic landscape of Alzheimer’s.

Gene editing to transform APOE4 into a protective allele is a distant possibility, but one under exploration. Michael Haney is an assistant professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at the Perelman School of Medicine. Since joining the faculty in 2024, he has been using the revolutionary CRISPR ‘genetic scissors’ technology to try to reverse this genetic progression of Alzheimer’s in mice. “We still need a better understanding of the biochemistry of the disease,” he says, but “my lab is hoping to establish proof of the concept that modifying the APOE gene sequence to have protective variants in the immune cells of the brain will prevent some of the disease pathology.”

Haney is collaborating with Frederick Christian (“Chris”) Bennett, who came to Penn as an assistant professor of psychiatry in 2019. Bennett discovered that in mouse models, bone marrow-derived stem cells can replace faltering immune stem cells of the brain—a finding that could one day lead to new treatments for neurodegenerative diseases. As Haney notes, “replacing these brain immune cells with ones that have protective versions of the APOE gene edited by CRISPR may provide some protection against Alzheimer’s by

delaying by years the onset of the disease in genetically at-risk populations.” Although it remains in early stages, this work is another cause for hope.

Meanwhile, other researchers are investigating the factors that affect patients’ willingness to try newly developed therapies like lecanemab and donanemab. Medical anthropologist Justin Clapp Gr’12 GM’17, an assistant professor of medical ethics and health policy at Perelman, is currently interviewing a cohort of about 20 patient-caregiver dyads who have been considering infusions of one of the monoclonal antibodies. All the patients have been diagnosed as having the early stages of Alzheimer’s. Clapp says that about two-thirds of them have opted to take the drug offered to them while one-third have declined for a variety of reasons, including concern about side effects, skepticism about benefit, the burdensome nature of infusions, and difficulties discussing the possibility of treatment.

The burden of decision-making only serves to emphasize the enormous weight a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s places on families. The disease breeds loneliness not just for patients but for those responsible for their care. At the Penn Memory Center, Alison Lynn SPP’16, the director of social work, has led support groups for dementia caregivers for the past decade. “I have encountered almost every imaginable emotion from guilt, grief, depression, anger, and a deep sense of futility to astonishing resilience, dedication, love, and a capacity to keep giving beyond any capacity caregivers thought they possessed,” she says. “Over the years, I have formed deep and lasting relationships with our families.” Lynn reflects one of the most

helpful things she does for many patients is “normalizing the shame they experience over negative feelings. I tell them their reactions are ones I have come across, over and over again.” She describes “an ambiguous sense of loss with no ritual of closure—no wake, no sitting shiva, no funeral—for someone who looks the same but whose personality has changed to the extent that their spirit almost seems to have departed. It is never, ever easy,” she says, “when your spouse or parent or friend no longer recognizes you.”

But sometimes there are unexpected moments of communication and connection. They are often referred to as “paradoxical moments of lucidity,” though Jason Karlawish, who led a study of these so-called ‘blips’ in long downward journeys, objects to the adjective, noting that such occurrences “are part of the dementia experience even in advanced stages of Alzheimer’s.” However brief, he encourages caregivers to cherish them. When the light fades from patients’ eyes and stares become vacant, Lynn sometimes suggests that families light a candle, say a prayer, or gather with friends to reflect on good times shared with their loved one.

A peer mentorship program she started last year pairs longtime caregivers with newer caregivers. She tries to foster a degree of normalcy for the caregivers and more able patients with monthly cafés that involve outdoor events, like bird watching, or attending musical and dance performances especially arranged for them. Engaging in such activities without fear of stigma can be a potent form of therapy in its own right. Indeed, Karlawish has noted that “mind isn’t simply in the brain and dementia isn’t simply the consequence of damage to the brain. Mind emerges from an interaction between the brain and the world around it.”

The world experienced by people with Alzheimer’s is, of course, largely shaped by their caregivers. Karlawish and a colleague, Emily Largent Nu’06, the Emanuel and Robert Hart Associate Professor of Medical Ethics and Health Policy and

Progress in diagnostic science has greatly increased the ability of clinicians to determine the degree of loss of nerve cells in the brain.

the chief of the Division of Medical Ethics at Perelman, have studied the dignity of caregiving and the critical role caregivers play in the mental lives of people living with dementia. In an article in the *American Journal of Bioethics*, they and coauthor Andrew Peterson called the job “mind care,” a term meant to highlight how wrong society is to undervalue it. Chief among the “enduring obstacles to providing good care to persons living with dementia,” they have written, “is an impoverished conception of caregiving and a failure to recognize its moral importance.” They argue that a key and “generally overlooked feature of dementia caregiving is shoring up impairments in cognition, buttressing identity, and advocating for the [afflicted] person’s agency.”

The needs of caregivers have long been the focus of research conducted by Nancy Hodgson G’Nu’88 Gr’99, the Claire M. Fagin Leadership Professor of Nursing who chairs the nursing school’s biobehavioral health department. Last spring she received a pilot award from the Penn Artificial Intelligence and Technology Collaborative for Healthy Aging to study the use of natural language processing (NLP) to analyze recorded conversation with the caregivers of dementia patients. Her objective is to see if NLP, a combination of computer science, linguistics, and AI, can help clinicians detect depression and burden felt by those who are caring for Alzheimer’s patients even when they don’t explicitly share their feelings.

Hodgson is also the coleader of a group of scholars forming a new center, funded by a \$5.8 million grant from the NIA, that aims “to bring research findings from the science of caregiving into the real world of people living with dementia,” she says. Involving Penn Nursing, the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota, the University of Wisconsin, and Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions, the center goes by the acronym EMBRACE (Establishing Mechanisms of Benefit to Reenforce the Al-

zheimer’s Care Experience) and has already awarded two of a projected six grants to applicants who will develop, test, and implement behavioral intervention studies in home and community-based dementia care. Hodgson noted that “the proposals it funds will ask why and how a particular intervention leads to a specific result, with the goal of creating practical, scalable solutions to maximize benefits to sufferers from Alzheimer’s and those who care for them.”

After more than two decades as a neurologist, David Wolk has become convinced that Alzheimer’s is “extremely heterogeneous.” The finding that Alzheimer’s often coexists with other neurodegenerative diseases, notably Lewy body dementia, cerebrovascular dementia, frontotemporal lobar degeneration (FTLD), and TDP-43 pathologies among others, contributes to the challenge of diagnosing and treating it. As the leader of an international team of researchers, Wolk recently made significant contributions to understanding an underrecognized pathology called LATE (limbic-predominant age-related TDP-43 encephalopathy), a common mimic of Alzheimer’s that frequently occurs with it, influencing the disease’s course and potential response to therapy. “My hope,” he says, is that “unravelling the clinicopathologic heterogeneity of the Alzheimer’s spectrum will provide a basis for implementing precision medicine approaches to treatment.”

Another discovery that exemplifies the progress being made in understanding the range of related conditions is Edward Lee’s finding of a novel mutation in the VCP (Valosin-containing protein) gene in an autopsied brain. Using cellular and mouse models, Lee proved that the VCP

mutation was associated with the tangling of the tau protein. “We think it impairs the protein’s normal ability to break apart the clumps,” he says. What Lee has learned suggests a possible new therapeutic target for treating Alzheimer’s.

But the reality is that dementia cases often aren’t cut-and-dried. Progress in diagnostic science, aided by imaging technologies that have been deployed for detecting amyloid since the early 2000s and more recently for spotting tau, spinal taps in use for measuring amyloid and tau levels in CSF since 2018, and even newer blood tests, has greatly increased the ability of clinicians to determine the degree of loss of nerve cells in the brain. On the horizon is retinal imaging, a potential tool being investigated by Benjamin Kim, associate professor of ophthalmology at Perelman, who has identified abnormalities on the retina that are potential biomarkers of forms of FTLD and Alzheimer’s.

“Penn has an exceptional pipeline from research to clinical trials,” Edward Lee says. As the search goes on to refine and expand our knowledge of Alzheimer’s, however, it is sobering to contemplate that scientists still can’t agree on what causes the disease, much less how to defeat it. But their hope for a means of delaying onset has come fast on the heels of medicines to slow Alzheimer’s progression. Science, supported by universities and governments and ultimately donors and citizens, has gone a long way in just the past few decades to unmask a monster its practitioners aim to defang. The staff of the Penn Memory Center wants to help patients age well, preserving autonomy as long as possible and dignity until life ends.

Mary Ann Meyers Gr’76, former secretary of the University, president of the Annenberg Foundation, and senior fellow at the John Templeton Foundation, is the author of *Art, Education, and African American Culture: Albert Barnes and the Science of Philanthropy* (2004 and 2006), among other works.

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Nov. 6 Twelfth Night

Nov. 8 Choir! Choir! Choir!

Hallelujah: An Epic

Anthems Sing-Along

Nov. 14–15 Ephrat Asherie

Dance with Arturo Farrill

Nov. 16 DakhaBrakha

Nov. 21 Philly Story Fest

Nov. 22 Martin Hayes Quartet

Dec. 6 Carnegie Student Showcase:

A Toast to Dear Old Penn

Dec. 7 Dianne Reeves

Dec. 12–14 MOMIX

Dec. 19 Irish Christmas in America

Arthur Ross Gallery

arthurrossgallery.org

open Tues.–Sun.

Postigo Express: Documenting the Basque Conflict in San Sebastián, 1977–2003

Nov. 7–Jan. 4

ICA

icaphila.org

Mavis Pusey: Mobile Images

Through Dec. 7

Kelly Writers House

writing.upenn.edu/wh/

Nov. 3 Conversation with Ken Kalfus

Nov. 4 Randy Ribay: Reading and Conversation

Nov. 5 On Franz Kafka's *Selected Stories*: Mark Harman, Jean-Michel Rabaté, & Liliane Weissberg

Nov. 6 Fact-checking in Crisis:

Kory Stamper, Stefan Fatsis C'85, & Austin Kelley

Nov. 6 Alan Light: Why We (Still) Love Fleetwood Mac's *Rumours*

Nov. 8 Naomi Xu Elegant C'19, Lauren Francis-Sharma C'94, & Beth Kephart C'80

Nov. 11 Conversation with Gabrielle Hamilton

Nov. 12 Masaki Takahashi:

Performance and Discussion

Nov. 13 Patrick Rosal: Reading and Conversation

Nov. 18 Howard Langer: Conversation

Nov. 20 Jack Spicer at 100 (with Daniel Benjamin)

Morris Arboretum and Gardens

morrisarboretum.org

open daily

Penn Libraries

library.upenn.edu

Made (by Hand) in the Midwest: The Contre Coup Press 1979–2019

Through Dec. 12

"My Soul is Anchored in the Lord": Marian Anderson & Florence Price

Through Dec. 2026

Maitin in Philadelphia:

Mayor of the Arts

Through Dec. 19

Reinventing Aristotle

Through Jan. 16

Penn Museum

penn.museum

Open Tuesday–Sunday

Native North America Gallery

Opening Nov. 22

World Café Live

worldcafelive.com

Nov. 11 Acoustic Alchemy

Nov. 15 Sara Naeini & Reza Rohani

Nov. 19 Joe Conklin

& The City Rhythm Orchestra

Nov. 20 Terrian with Aaron Cole

Nov. 26 SKAIISYOURGOD

Dec. 2 Nick Mulvey

Dec. 5 Carbon Leaf

Dec. 6 Pure Prairie League

Dec. 10 John Gorka

Dec. 16 Bria Skonberg

Dec. 17 Jon McLaughlin & Friends

Dec. 26 Sun Ra Arkestra "Holiday Jam"

(Left) San Sebastián, August 14, 1988: Disturbances on Calle Mayor during a procession on the eve of the Feast of the Virgin; (below) portrait of Fernando Postigo.

Both Sides of the Gun

The Arthur Ross Gallery revisits the upheaval of Basque Separatism through the lens of Fernando Postigo.



As assassins and bombers ran rampant, Postigo seemed to be omnipresent.

In the quarter-century that Fernando Postigo CGS'71 spent documenting the violent politics of Basque Separatism in northeastern Spain, the photojournalist gained two reputations. One was for an omnipresence that verged on the uncanny. After returning to his native San Sebastián in 1977 from self-imposed exile in Philadelphia, he developed a sixth sense for the turbulence that marked Spain's uneasy transition from the dictatorship of Francisco Franco. In a city riven by car-bombings and assassinations in broad daylight, the stocky Nikon shooter seemed to be everywhere at once, bearing swift witness on the back of a motorcycle that earned him the nickname "Postigo Express."

The second source of his renown was how deeply embedded he became in a

society at war with itself. "He knew both sides of the gun," says Peter Decherney, the Edmund J. and Louise W. Kahn Endowed Chair in the Humanities and curator of an exhibition of the photojournalist's work at the Arthur Ross Gallery that runs from November 7 to January 4. "He knew members of the government, and he knew members of the ETA"—the armed Basque separatists responsible for killing roughly 800 people and injuring upwards of 20,000 between 1968 and 2000.

The 1995 slaying of politician Gregorio Ordóñez was emblematic. Several hours after meeting and photographing the mayoral candidate, Postigo was called upon to record images of the man's corpse—felled by a gunman whose family Postigo had also come to know.

Born in San Sebastián in 1940, Fernando Postigo grew up amid the severe

repression imposed after the Spanish Civil War by Franco, who illegalized the usage of regional languages such as Catalan and Basque. In his late 20s he married an American student named Mary Wildman, and the couple moved to Philadelphia. Postigo studied political science in Penn's College of General Studies (precursor of the College of Liberal and Professional Studies), and meanwhile served as a social worker in Philadelphia's Department of Public Welfare. In 1977, two years after Franco's death, the couple moved with their two children to San Sebastián.

There Postigo embarked on a career in daily newspaper photojournalism, working first for *La Voz de España* and

(Below) Martutene, April 13, 1985: ETA sets fire to the Koipe oil factory; (bottom) Rentería, June 30, 1988: A truck burns in an urban area of Rentería during a general strike.



then *El Diario Vasco*. Shooting in black-and-white, he chronicled Spain's tentative transition to democracy amid the escalating violence of ETA separatists. The group attained notoriety in 1973 with the assassination of Prime Minister Carrero Blanco, Franco's handpicked successor, but its bloodiest years came between 1978 and 1980, coinciding with Postigo's repatriation.

"Postigo Express: Documenting the Basque Conflict in San Sebastián, 1977–

2003" will feature more than 70 12-by-18-inch prints spanning the photographer's career, drawn from an archive of approximately 50,000 negatives. His own images will be supplemented by snapshots depicting the journalist in action—like one that shows him scrambling through a 1979 street riot in one direction as a man hurls a chair through the air in the other. Postigo's granddaughter Libby Paquette, a freshman in the College, served as assistant curator.

The still images will be accompanied by a short documentary film directed by Decherney, in which Postigo revisits the scenes of social upheaval in a city that has been transformed in the 21st century. For the gastronomic tourists thronging Michelin-starred restaurants above the picturesque Bay of La Concha, San Sebastián's violent past can be hard to imagine. Yet even though the ETA ceased armed activity in 2011, and disbanded entirely in 2018, Postigo's photographs can still touch a nerve. When the city's San Telmo Museoa exhibited his work in 2020, according to Decherney, the museum "didn't want to show some photographs, because the wounds were too fresh." That was the first dedicated retrospective of Postigo's work. The Arthur Ross exhibition will be the second. —TP

Photos by Fernando Postigo courtesy Arthur Ross Gallery

Historical Fiction

Telling Stories

A new novel locates the enigmatic author known as O. Henry within a richly detailed portrait of New York at the turn of the 20th century.



Alias O. Henry: A Novel

By Ben Yagoda

Paul Dry Books, 279 pages, \$18.95

Ben Yagoda G'91 is the author or editor of more than a dozen books—spanning subjects that include biography (*Will Rogers*), cultural history (*About Town: The New Yorker and the World It Made*), music (*The B-Side: The Death of Tin Pan Alley and the Rebirth of the Great American Song*), and several on language. But he's never tried his hand at a novel—until now, with *Alias O. Henry*, a playful and densely researched tale about the prolific writer of popular fiction (some 400 stories and shorter sketches in all) whose "real" name was William Sidney (later *Sydney*) Porter. *Gazette* editor John Prendergast spoke with Yagoda about the elusive Porter and his own path to becoming a first-time novelist. Their conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

How did you come to O. Henry as a subject? And why a novel?

My first book was a biography of a somewhat comparable guy, Will Rogers, and I had this thought to do another biography. I'm not sure exactly how O. Henry got on my radar, but I started reading his stuff and stuff about him. I came upon this biography from 1957. And I just thought the author, Gerald Langford, had done a really great job, and I just didn't feel like reproducing that.

So you thought of writing about him first, and then started reading his stories more seriously?

I was familiar with "The Gifts of the Magi" and "The Ransom of Red Chief," and another one I'm forgetting the name of, about a guy who deliberately gets arrested ["The Cop and the Anthem"], but that was it. I had the sense of him as sentimental, somewhat hokey—and that's not totally unfair, but I was really impressed with how funny and clever many of the stories were, and also the portrait of New York in the period. He was known as the chronicler of New York, but he set foot in New York for the first time in 1902, at the age of 40. It was all new to him, and that was fascinating to me. So I proposed doing this collection of the stories for the Library of America and did that.

In Langford's biography—which is also called *Alias O. Henry*; I acknowledge borrowing or stealing the title—and the others that have been written about Porter, he was an enigmatic person, and he was very secretive. And this big catastrophic event in his life was his being arrested and tried and convicted for embezzlement and spending three and a half years in prison. At his trial, he essentially didn't mount a defense—he didn't plead guilty, but he just presented no defense. And this led the early biographers, which are sort of hagiographies, to say, 'Well, he really didn't do it. He was covering up for somebody.' But

they never said who. And there were other mysteries as well.

I forget where I saw this analogy, but it compared a historical novel to a kind of a tent pole where the poles are the verifiable facts, and then to get from one to another, you can use your imagination to try to present some sort of explanation. So that was really how it all got started.

One of the great aspects of the book is the portrait of the magazine industry and New York in general that it presents. Is there anything else you want to say about how you went about researching that and weaving it all in?

I bought on Kindle for like \$2.99 the *Complete Works of O. Henry*, which can be done because they're all in the public domain. For the novel, I had this color-

coded note-keeping system. One color was any sort of slang or language term, and another was any sort of scene that I might incorporate into

a book. One of the books I was reading that really inspired me was called *Greater Gotham: A History of New York City from 1898 to 1919* by Mike Wallace. And just doing any sort of historical project within a certain period, in this day and age there's so much online. With newspapers.com and the *New York Times* archive and the Internet Archive, I was able to get so many contemporary sources.

A variety of famous characters pop up for cameos in the story. Was that something you were on the lookout for?

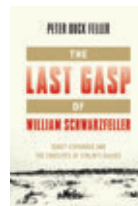
Oh, definitely. There were a number of people who were in New York at the time that I didn't really get a chance to weave in—like Maxim Gorky was around and about, and [Enrico] Caruso was a sort of colorful character I didn't get in there. But yeah, that was a fun thing. Some of them are relatively major characters like [the Old West icon] Bat Masterson and Edwin Porter [who directed *The Great Train Robbery*]. But there are a few that I don't mention by name, and I'm kind of

Briefly Noted



LOVE AND LOSS
AFTER WOUNDED KNEE:
A Biography of an
Extraordinary Interracial
Marriage by Julie Dobrow
ASC '84 Gr '87 (NYU Press,
2025, \$35.00.) This dual

biography of Elaine Goodale and Ohiye'Sa (a Dakota Sioux from Minnesota, also known as Dr. Charles Alexander Eastman) explores their individual lives as well as their highly publicized interracial marriage in the late 19th century.



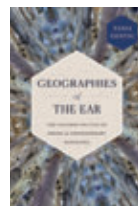
THE LAST GASP OF
WILLIAM SCHWARZFELLER:
Soviet Espionage and the
Cruelties of Stalin's Gulags
by Peter Feller C'60
(Bloomsbury, 2025,
\$35.00.) Feller's father

disappeared in Moscow in 1938, when Feller was just six months old. As a young boy he asked his mother about him, but got no answers. Decades later, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Feller went searching for the truth. What he discovered is anything but what he expected.



LETTING GO: Parenting
Teens and Young Adults
in a Time of Uncertainty
by Demie Kurz (staff)
(Oxford University Press,
2024, \$99.00.) Based on

interviews with a diverse group of mothers, Kurz, former codirector of Penn's women's studies program, details the negotiations parents make with their adolescent children over trust, control, and letting go, and the ways social policy can help young people succeed.



GEOGRAPHIES OF THE EAR:
The Cultural Politics of Sound
in Contemporary Barcelona
by Tania Gentic G'02 Gr'07
(Duke University Press, 2025,
\$31.95.) A professor of

Spanish and Portuguese examines the language and soundscape of post-Franco Barcelona to listen for the remnants of a globalized colonial ear.

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interested to see if readers pick up on them. Definitely a couple have already.

Another running theme is people asking why he calls himself O. Henry and Porter coming up with different stories to explain it. You have your own answer, which I won't give away, but were those real stories? They're wonderfully varied.

They're all things that he really said or were said by others as a serious explanation, and the majority of them are in that Langford biography. I hit on that early on as just such an amazing example of him messing with people and not wanting to reveal anything, and I guess also his imagination.

How different was the experience of writing a novel versus your usual process? Are you interested in that genre now for the future?

Well, it started out probably too similar, in that like with a biography or historical work, or any sort of nonfiction works that I've done, I just load up on the research. Part of it is kind of a security blanket, just to know that you had that. And also, the more you know, the stronger the writing is. It's a bit of the Hemingway iceberg theory—that what you write is the tip of the iceberg, but you need that stuff under the surface to support it. But the early drafts of the book were a little too research intensive at the expense of things like character and plot and intention and stuff like that. So each successive draft—of which there were four or five—got less research stuff and more with the characters. And probably that was the main thing I learned in the course of doing it.

Reading interviews with fiction writers over the years, a thing you hear a lot is someone saying, 'It got to the point where the characters took over. I surprised myself with what came out.' And by the end, I got a little bit of that, and that was nice. As for another one, I don't know. I wouldn't bet on it.



Aristotle the Alchemist, Sexologist, Palm Reader, Papist, and Jew

A Penn Libraries exhibition surveys the remarkable afterlives of the great Greek thinker.

Behold Plato's most illustrious student. Though posterity has no photographs, portraits abound. Here's Aristotle draped in a toga. There he is decked out like a Renaissance courtier. Now we see the handsomely robed polymath wielding a quill pen—a technology that appeared roughly a thousand years after he held court in ancient Athens. But that is perhaps a small quibble compared to a 16th-century Flemish depiction of the philosopher on all fours, mounted side-saddle by a nude temptress raising a riding crop above her hapless captive.

These are some of the striking likenesses on view through January 16 in Van Pelt Library's Goldstein Gallery, where an exhibition called "Reinventing Aristotle" thoroughly lives up to its title. Was the philosopher's nose slender or bulbous? Did his beard cascade past his sternum in luxuriant curls, as presented by Guillaume du Val in 1619? Or was it close-cut to frame a boxer's square jaw, as drawn in a Japanese manga series in 2004? The answers, of course, are all *yes*. And for all the liberties artists have taken with the philosopher's face and physique, the substance of his actual thinking has

Top: The historical Aristotle tutored Alexander the Great when the young prince was 13; this 1509 Aragonese woodcut depicts the philosopher paying homage to the king as an old man. Bottom: 16th-century Venetian depiction of Aristotle in a hat and cape resembling those of Greek merchants.



been bent in even more bewildering directions.

In about a dozen glass cases spread around the gallery, a lively variety of books and manuscripts make Aristotle out to be a great many things. An Arabic treatise from 1394, purporting to be a translation of a letter he wrote to his pupil Alexander the Great, details secret knowledge ranging from astrology to the magical properties of gems. A first edition of the infamous sex manual *Aristotle's Masterpiece* boasts a frontispiece showing a naked and furry “Maid all Hairy” next to “an Infant that was born black, by the imagination of the Parents.” In different times and places, Aristotle has emerged as a devout follower of the Pope, a convert to Judaism, an expert on midwifery and conjugal pleasure-seeking, a cautionary character in medieval sexual morality tales, and the author of an Italian ABC of misogynistic sayings.

“One of the things this exhibit tells you is that we make our ancients over in the



form in which we want them,” observed Anthony Grafton, an emeritus professor of history at Princeton University, in remarks at the exhibition’s opening. “We make Aristotle Christian because we need him to be Christian. Or we make him Jewish because we need him to be Jewish. ... You make Aristotle believe that the world had a beginning—even though it’s pretty clear he actually did not believe the world had a beginning—but Christianity has a Creation and Plato has a Creation, so Aristotle’s got to have one too.”

Aristotle was plainly a victim of his own renown, and it didn’t help that many of his own literary works disappeared in antiquity. In medieval and early modern Europe—from which most of this exhibition’s artifacts derive—those circumstances set the stage for a rash of pseudo-

Aristotelian manuscripts and publications. The motives ranged from religious evangelism to good old-fashioned profiteering. For peddlers of “gynecological works of a certain pornographic interest,” as Grafton described the fake *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, “if you want people to buy them and think that they’re authoritative, say that this is *Aristotle's* gynecological work of pornographic interest.”

The playful and thought-provoking exhibition is curated by Lynne Farrington, director of programs at the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts; Hannah Marcus C’09, a professor of the history of science at Harvard University; and Eva Del Soldato, an associate professor of Italian Studies at Penn. “In the millennia since Aristotle’s death,” as noted in a summary, “the philosopher has been repeatedly reinvented by his students, his antagonists, his admirers, people wanting to cash in on his prestigious name, and even Shaquille O’Neal.”

ON VIEW

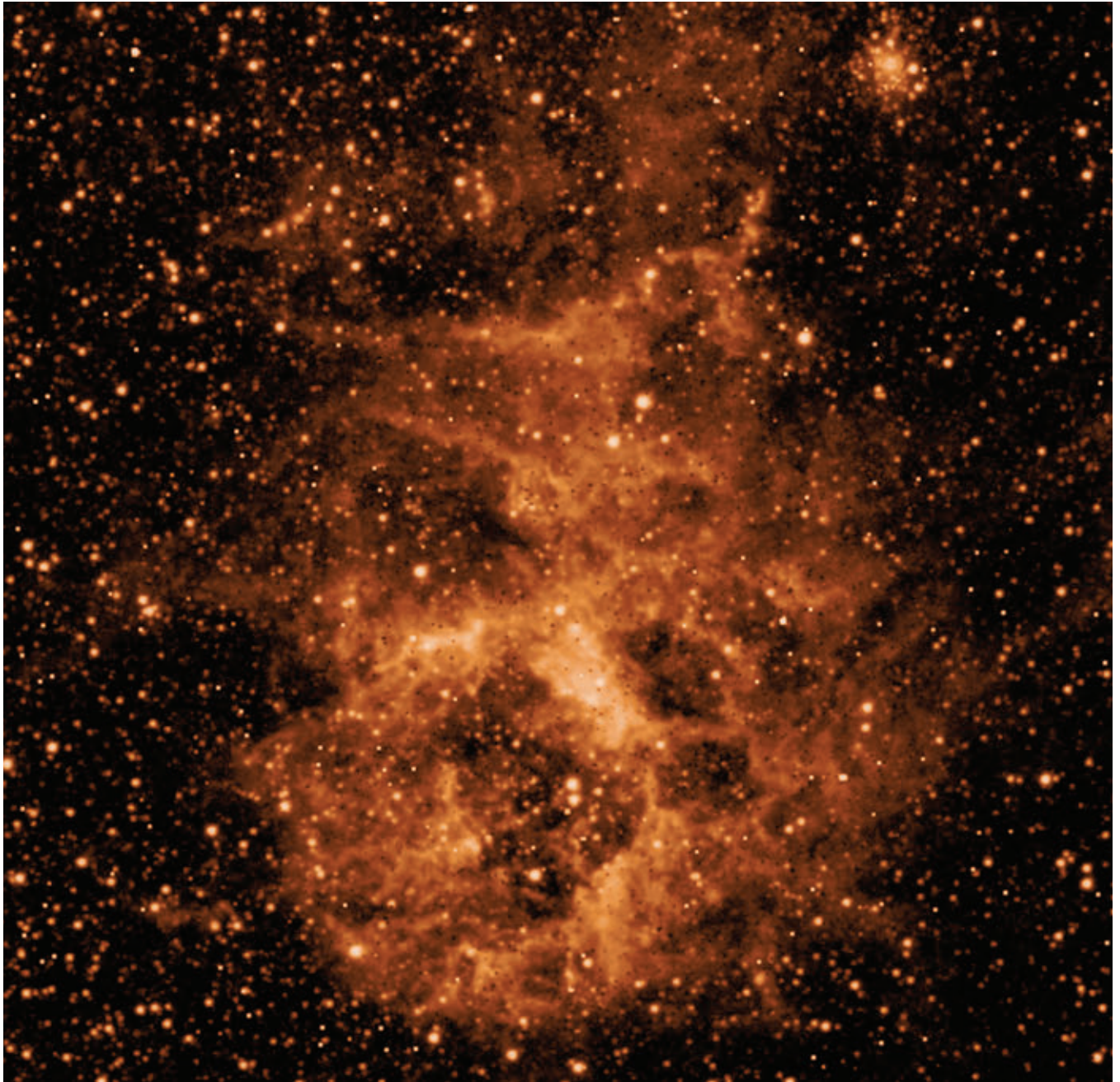
Philadelphia's “Mayor of the Arts”



The beloved Sam Maitin FA’51 is back on campus this winter—in spirit and

the joyful splashes of color that endeared the late artist to several generations of Philadelphians who encountered his ebullient collages and paintings in public spaces of all kinds. “We the People: Sam Maitin” presents 26 of his works in the Annenberg Center for Performing Arts through February 21. They range from gouache and paper collages, to watercolor and acrylic paintings on canvas, to lithographs—including one of the 20 covers he illustrated for the *Gazette*. Meanwhile visitors to Van Pelt-Dietrich Library can take in another seven of his posters in a fifth-floor alcove near the east elevator bay, where “Maitin in Philadelphia: Mayor of the Arts” will brighten an otherwise subdued space through December 19.

That last figure would be the self-proclaimed “Big Aristotle,” who wore number 34 for the Los Angeles Lakers and had a penchant for the philosopher’s credo that “excellence is not a singular act, but a habit.” Which the Athenian did not actually utter, but does at least accord with his *Nicomachean Ethics*—which cannot be said about much of the material this diverting exhibition explores.—TP



Creativity and the Cosmos

How to build an astrophysics mission at NASA—
while dabbling in a little music on the side. ▶

Phil Korngut Gr'11 has spent his life serving two muses. From his childhood as an aspiring musician to his eventual path to cosmology, Korngut has long combined creativity and hard science, which he's now applying to some of humanity's most profound questions.

An experimental astrophysicist at the California Institute of Technology, Korngut, 42, is the instrument scientist for the space telescope SPHEREx—short for Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization, and Ices Explorer—which has dominated his career.

The \$488 million NASA mission is creating the world's most complete sky survey to better explain how the universe evolved and galaxies formed, and to search interstellar gas for water ice and organic molecules, the key ingredients for life. "We are finding water everywhere," Korngut says.

Having launched to low-Earth orbit last March, the 1,100-pound spacecraft is producing 102 maps in 102 infrared wavelengths every six months. After two years, the mission team will have enough data to create a 3D map of the entire night sky. By mapping how matter dispersed after the Big Bang, they hope to improve scientists' understanding of the physics driving the universe's expansion to its current flat, weblike structure. Onboard spectroscopy instruments are helping analyze the chemical compositions of stellar objects and

their distances between one another. A key part of the project is measuring the extragalactic background light—the total cumulative radiation produced in the universe through cosmic time, which should account for galaxies beyond the detection threshold. Depending on what they find, scientists will make more targeted observations with the Hubble and James Webb space telescopes, for which other Penn alumni played key roles ["Profiles," Sep/Oct 2019 and Nov/Dec 2021]. "We're measuring the entire forest. James Webb is counting pinecones," he says.

Meanwhile, mission data—which Korngut is helping to compile and analyze—is already pouring into a public archive for anyone to use, providing fruitful findings not only for the SPHEREx researchers, but other branches of science. "There's so much in this rich data set," says Korngut. "The first exposure we took with SPHEREx had a signal that we didn't expect to see arising from helium emission in the upper atmosphere. There's a whole other branch of science, heliophysics, that is now using that data."

Yet if you'd have asked the teenage Korngut what he was destined to be, he'd have told you a musician.

Growing up in Brooklyn, Korngut was a multi-instrumentalist who focused on jazz saxophone at the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. But he still managed to tackle AP Physics. He



The \$488 million NASA mission is creating the world's most complete sky survey to better explain how the universe evolved.

straddled the two paths well into his time at Oberlin College, when his talents and preference for a more stable career tilted him toward physics and his particular interest in the history and evolution of the universe. The absence of a graduate school enabled Korngut to do his own research in solid-state physics as an undergrad. "I loved working in the laboratory," he says. "It was very important for me to get to build stuff and actually make measurements and do tests."

After graduating with a physics degree in 2005, he spent two years at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's Green Bank Observatory in West Virginia, working on a new receiver antenna to study how massive clusters of galaxies inter-

act with the cosmic microwave background, the relic radiation that is thought to have formed a few hundred thousand years after the Big Bang. The project lead was Mark Devlin, Penn's Reese W. Flower Professor of Astronomy and Astrophysics. The experience led Korngut to pursue a PhD in physics at Penn, with Devlin as his advisor.

At Penn, Korngut relished the department's close-knit community of students who often lunched with professors. "Mark Devlin's lab was absolutely the place for me," he says. "That culture of experimental cosmology, where you're after some of the most profound things we can measure in physics. But to get at them, you have to build experiments. So, you get to play with lots of cool toys, then go

to crazy places around the world to implement them.” (Korngut’s career has included scientific collaborations in Asia and field work in Chile’s Atacama Desert.)

Devlin remembers Korngut as enthusiastic and hard working. “Phil was one of these multitasking students,” he says. “He played the banjo and was always a fun guy to have around. He was very excited about the work and very good at it. He’s a prime example of a great Penn student who has gone on to do great things.”

From Penn, Korngut headed to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, for a NASA postdoctoral fellowship. There, he developed suborbital rockets that carried research instruments for 10-minute spaceflights to study the extragalactic background light. Remaining a JPL affiliate, he continued that research at Caltech with a second postdoc that led to positions as staff and research scientist.

“We were making real measurements with just 10 minutes in space,” he says. “But we thought that if we could build a dedicated satellite that was in space for years and optimized specifically to get at these signals, we could learn so much more.” They began formulating the concept for SPHEREx in 2012, which NASA finally approved in 2019.

Korngut oversaw the lab that designed, built, tested, and calibrated the instruments, made them resilient enough to weather launch vibrations, radiation, and

–380°F temperatures, and integrated them into the spacecraft. But there was one unexpected biological hurdle. “We were deep in the design phase and starting to prototype things when COVID-19 hit,” he says. Getting through the pandemic without falling behind was one of the biggest challenges, alongside negotiating between mechanical, thermal, optical, structural, and weight constraints.

“We really came up with some creative solutions,” he says. “People don’t often think of physics as a field where creativity is encouraged, but it absolutely is, whether it’s designing an experiment, the aesthetics of presenting figures, or giving presentations. When you give lectures, it’s a performance.”

Which harks back to his other passion. Korngut continued playing music—mostly banjo, dobro, and guitar—in bluegrass and American folk bands in Philadelphia during grad school, and later around Hollywood before settling down. “I still play for my two-year-old daughter,” he says.

“My time at Penn was invaluable to my training as a scientist, and got me to where I am now, which really is my dream job,” Korngut adds. “I remember having a moment in grad school, sitting in that lab, and thinking about what I wanted to do later on. And I really thought, *Man, what I wanna do is to build an astrophysics mission at NASA for cosmology.* And that’s what I ended up doing.”

—Susan Karlin C’85

Bright Lights, Lab Nights

How mixing theater directing and science makes this multifaceted career juggler better at both.



Susanna Jaramillo EAS’19 spent most of her years at Penn racing between STEM classes and theater rehearsals. One minute she’d be learning about the dynamic responses of linear systems, the next choosing wigs for *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* or directing a man-eating plant in *Little Shop of Horrors*.

Her senior year brought two awards: one for designing a chemical process sys-

tem, the other for leadership in performing arts.

Penn students are notorious jugglers and dabblers, but often that ends when a career begins. Jaramillo has kept at it, leaning in to both professional theater work and full-time science jobs since graduation.

Last fall, about a year into pursuing her PhD in biotechnology at NYU, she was working full-time in a synthetic biology lab while also assis-

tant directing a Broadway play with the Roundabout Theatre Company: *Yellow Face*, starring Daniel Dae Kim. Either gig could absorb a person's time and energy reserves. Fortunately, Jaramillo doesn't really get tired.

"I'm the kind of person who will make things work," she says. Sometimes that means getting up at 5 a.m., squeezing in a few hours at the lab before a 10-to-6 day of Broadway rehearsals, then returning to the lab to finish her latest experiment.

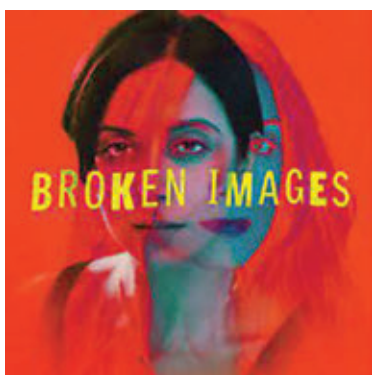
"Most reasonable people would think that sounds insane," she laughs. "I think I just have a lot of natural energy that I need to expel. I don't drink coffee. I don't really drink tea. I don't ever feel like I need more energy from something."

Her latest directing endeavor, *Broken Images*, opens this November at Paradise Factory Theater—an 85-seat black-box venue in the East Village. It's a one-woman psychological thriller, written by an Indian playwright and performed by a Southeast Asian actor. Exactly the kind of work she cares about putting on stage.

"Growing up, there was no representation of people like me in theater," says Jaramillo, a queer Chinese Colombian woman. "I really want to help shift the theatrical canon to include works with Asian people, Latine people, queer people, and really think about the intersectionality of our identities."

Broken Images marks the eighth play she has directed

in the past two years—nearly all of them brand new works by people from marginalized communities. That includes a one-person musical from a gay Chinese creator (*Lullabies for Motherf*ckers Vol.2*) and a play about archivists searching for lost memories, written by a queer, nonbinary Indonesian writer (*The Memory Brigade*).



Even as she worked on *Yellow Face* and subbed in as stage manager for other Broadway shows, Jaramillo sought out these smaller indie projects for her own directing. She says it's easy for early-career directors to get stuck in the assistant/associate director lane. "My goal for this year has been to direct a lot of my own work," she says.

She's also drawn to the edgier stories that indie theater can tell. "I like things that will subvert an audience's expectations," she says. "I love complicated characters who make questionable choices that are informed by the totality of their personhood. That's unfortunately something that we don't get to see very often."

In theater, the route to directing gigs is significantly

fuzzier than for acting roles. There are no auditions or callbacks; no 32 bars or choreographed routines. "There are fewer people who want to be directors than actors, but also fewer opportunities," Jaramillo says.

She traces her own spark back to Penn and her first-ever directing experience as a sophomore: the dark comedy

"Growing up, there was no representation of people like me in theater."

Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play for iNtuitons Experimental Theatre. "After that, I was really hooked," she says.

Even more so after directing *Yellow Face* her senior year—the same play she would help bring to Broadway six years later. Written by Asian American playwright David Henry Hwang, it's a direct response to *Miss Saigon*, a musical she believes to be "pretty racist," and to white people playing Asian roles on stage. "Over the entire time I was at Penn, no one had done a theater piece for Asian American students with a cast full of Asian American students," Jaramillo says. The performances sold out.

She continued on, infusing familiar productions with

fresh takes. Facing a lack of professional puppeteers on campus, she reimagined the plant in *Little Shop* as a drag queen perched on a foliage throne. She staged *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* in a grungy off-campus basement, with standing-room-only tickets and a standby line outside.

"It's such an exciting thing to be the person who simultaneously sees the big picture but also sees all of the small components," she says of directing. "There's no other position in theater like it."

Sean Begane EAS'20 worked on multiple shows with Jaramillo at Penn and describes acting in her production of *Yellow Face* as "the most stress-free, controlled, and organized production that I had been a part of." They're still friends, and Begane says that Jaramillo excels at bringing people together in her personal life just as she does in her directing. "She's the glue in a lot of her friend circles," he adds. "She's the kind of person that people want to be around and have fun around."

Jaramillo moved to New York after graduation "to see what would happen" with directing. By the end of 2019, she was splitting her time between a stage manager fellowship with the Atlantic Theater Company and working as a technician at the New York Blood Center. "It was very *Hannah Montana* vibes," she says.

When the pandemic ground live theater to a stop, Jaramillo continued working at the Blood Center and ap-

plied to graduate school. By the fall of 2021, she was back in Hannah Montana mode, working steadily on shows and in a synthetic biology lab at NYU while also pursuing her master's there.

She became a directing fellow with the Roundabout in 2022 and landed an assistant directing fellowship from the prestigious Drama League. Right now, she's midway through the two-year WP Theater Lab program, which nurtures rising directors, playwrights, and producers.

"As the industry continues to reexamine its relationship to Asian artists, I think that she is a very necessary voice in the moment," says Dominique Rider, a theater director whom Jaramillo calls her mentor. "I'm excited, in the next year or two, to watch her start to get work out of town, to get work regionally ... and I can't wait until she texts me that she's doing a musical."

Rider also admires Jaramillo's refusal to choose between science and theater, believing that more artists should try to juggle multiple things because "it would allow for more interesting ways to think about and arrive at solutions or questions about the way we make art."

Jaramillo isn't sure where she'll be a few years from now when she finishes her PhD. "I joke with people that I've been putting off the decision to pursue one or the other ever since I graduated," she says. "But I'd love to continue to do both. They both bring a lot of fulfillment into my life."

—Molly Petrilla C'06

Grand Ideas for Building Community

A burgeoning group coaching company helps professionals navigate challenges.



In the modest apartment where Anita Hossain Choudhry WG'15's parents first settled in South Carolina nearly 50 years ago, the dinner table was the heart of family life.

"My parents would tell these incredible stories about their time in Bangladesh," she recalls. "Someone would cut a mango from the tree and bring it down—it was so vivid. I remember as a kid feeling like I was transported back to Bangladesh."

Those dinner-table stories, told by immigrant parents who initially got by on her father's graduate student's chemistry stipend while raising three children under five, planted the seeds for what would become Hossain Choudhry's work: creating spaces where people can be vulnerable about their struggles and find community in shared experience.

Today, she is the CEO and cofounder of The Grand, a group coaching platform

that's combatting what she calls "the loneliness epidemic." Founded in 2019, The Grand matches groups of six to eight people navigating similar transitions—like new parenthood, career changes, leadership challenges—with an executive coach to guide them. The company works with start-up founders, company managers, athletes, and more. This fall, they launched The Grand Pursuit, a coaching journey specifically for entrepreneurial mothers.

The premise is simple: that the executive coaching typically reserved for Fortune 500 leaders should be accessible to everyone, delivered in group settings where participants realize they're not alone in their struggles. "It's more accessible than executive coaching and we not only focus on group coaching but also community," Hossain Choudhry explains. The company has built a digital platform where members can access content and coaching tools.

But getting there required abandoning her original definition of success.

Growing up, Hossain Choudhry internalized the idea that good grades, prestigious schools, and fancy-sounding jobs were the surest measures of a person's worth. After earning her Wharton MBA a decade ago, she seemed to have done all the right things to make her relatives proud—ascending from assistant vice president at Deutsche Bank, where she managed over \$400 million in Latin American investment portfolios, to a position

as head of knowledge at First Round Capital, one of Silicon Valley's most influential early-stage venture capital firms. "I was very much in that orientation," she reflects. "Are you getting good grades? Are you getting into top schools? Do you have a respectable job? That's how you measure success."

At First Round, her job was to convene founders to share knowledge with each other. But she noticed something troubling in those gatherings. "Everyone was talking about all the things that were going right—*Oh, I'm crushing it, things are awesome*. It felt a little not helpful and not authentic—because we know the founder's journey has so many ups and downs."

The breakthrough came when she created guiding principles that gave founders permission to share more vulnerably. In one session, a participant opened up: "I have an executive coach, and I have a therapist. Those two things have been game-changing for me."

"That's when everyone started talking about their self-worth, self-doubt," she recalls. "*Am I good enough as a founder? These are the mistakes I'm making*. Everyone felt less alone on their journeys and felt like they had that support system of people who really get it."

Despite loving her role and coworkers at First Round, Hossain Choudhry decided it was time to move on. That decision marked a turning point for her—from pursuing accolades and external vali-

dation to a mindset that treated experiences as experiments. Her parents, both educators, were supportive but cautious. "They've always taught us, believe in yourself, you can do it, go for it," she says. Though, she adds with a laugh, "My dad still asks me when I'm going to get a PhD."

The spark for The Grand came during walks with her cofounder Rei Wang, with whom she'd bonded at First Round over the challenges of navigating unfamiliar territory. "We kept coming back to loneliness," Hossain Choudhry says. "We in our lives had moments of feeling alone—being first-generation, being the first to do a lot of things, being women. There were a lot of moments where we were the only ones or we were the first."

A 2023 advisory on loneliness by US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, along with a 2021 study that found that Americans report having fewer close friendships than in decades past, have amplified their mission. "That shocked us because community has been such a big part of both of our lives and how we got to where we are," she says. "It was all about the people and the networks and the friends and the support systems."

That's why The Grand settled on a group-based approach to executive coaching.

"It's the difference between show versus tell," Hossain Choudhry says. "When I was a coach working one-on-one, I could tell someone, 'Everyone has imposter syndrome, this is the research.' But if



"Building meaningful relationships is so core to who I am."

you hear someone in your group say, 'Every day I'm unsure I'm going to keep my job because I don't know if I'm doing anything right,' suddenly someone puts words to exactly how you're feeling. That is so powerful in helping you feel less alone."

The model has attracted investors including Reddit cofounder Alexis Ohanian, whose venture capital firm Seven Seven Six led a \$4.7 million seed funding round two years ago. "I was fundraising twice while pregnant," Hossain Choudhry notes, emphasizing how crucial it was to find partners who supported them as humans, not just business leaders.

Today, working from her home office in Milwaukee, Hossain Choudhry measures success differently than she did at Deutsche Bank. "When I did a values exercise through

The Grand, I realized that meaningful relationships are the thing I value most," she says. She traces that realization to a piece of feedback she once received in finance: that she was "too nice." Her boss at the time told her not to listen—to be authentic, that it would serve her well.

"Building meaningful relationships is so core to who I am," she reflects. "Once I was able to realize that and align my leadership in that style, it became a lot more natural."

On her desk sits her most treasured possession: a book her husband created for her 40th birthday, which she celebrated in February, filled with letters from friends and family about the impact she's had on their lives. It's based on an exercise The Grand uses called "best self-reflection," a fitting symbol for someone who has reoriented her professional aspirations around helping others discover their authentic selves.

Last May, Hossain Choudhry attended her 10-year Wharton reunion, calling it "one of the best weekends of my life, because it reminded me of the power of being with such thoughtful, introspective, intellectual people."

Her advice to current students reflects her evolution since graduating: "Follow your curiosity. A lot of times we tend to go down a path we think we're supposed to, but the moments when you follow what's sparking your interest, that's when you're able to make the most meaningful change."

—Tasmiha Khan

Gail Korostoff C'80,
Heidi Minkin C'80, and
Margo Szabunia C'80
are delighted to announce
that they are now laughing
regularly on video, since they
live on different continents.

1954

Moshe Sonnheim C'54 SW'56, who published, *The Helpers* last year, has released a new book, *In a Secret Garden: The Life and Times of an Author*. This book is a collection of poems and short stories, arranged according to different life stages, with an illustration for each and a brief explanation of the stimuli that led to each story. He writes, "The stories deal with nostalgia, love and romance, sadness and death, crime and mystery, the paranormal, the Holocaust, war and antiwar."

1957

Neal E. Krucoff C'57 see **David C. Krucoff C'89**.

1960

Peter T. Clark C'60 submitted a poem, titled "In Memoriam Barney," when he learned about the passing of his classmate **Barney Berlinger Jr. ME'60** ["Obituaries," Sep/Oct 2025]. Peter writes, "Barney's humble strength lives on, and I remember how he included the lost, the least, and the left out—a true leader. At times, as an athlete, and I am sure in business also, Barney could see a way to transcend himself and others in tight situations and transform defeat into victory (e.g., the Cornell game in '59 when he caught the winning touchdown pass

to propel Penn to its first Ivy League football championship.)" Peter's poem can be read on our website.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

1961

Betty Boyd Caroli ASC'61 has a new book coming out in February, *A Slumless America: Mary K. Simkhovitch and the Dream of Affordable Housing*. Simkhovitch was a city planner, social worker, and one of the first members of the New York City Housing Authority. Betty is a former women's history professor at the City University of New York and the author of several history books (bettyboydcaroli.com).

1962

Kent Douglass EE'62 GEE'63 writes, "At age 60, I restarted my basketball career by playing in the Masters Basketball Association, which hosts competitive tournaments for older players. I have won many state and a few national championships and recently won my third world championship in Lugano, Switzerland. In the 80-plus age group where I competed, there were 10 teams from four continents. I have played in five different countries and made many interesting friends in the competitions. I also enjoy competing in the Austin (Texas) Triathlon

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Please include your school and year, along with your address and a daytime telephone number. We include email addresses only when requested or obviously implied.

ALUMNI NOTE DEADLINES 7/15 for the Sep/Oct issue; 9/15 for Nov/Dec; 11/15 for Jan/Feb; 1/15 for Mar/Apr; 3/15 for May/Jun; and 5/15 for Jul/Aug.

with my son and granddaughter. Kudos to the many doctors who have kept my body functioning along the way. Contact me at ekdrmd@earthlink.net."

1963

Michel Jeruchim GEE'63 GrE'67 wrote a memoir, *Out of the Shadows, Survival in Nazi-Occupied France and Making a Life in America*, that details how he survived World War II by hiding with a French Catholic family in Normandy, France, when he was just five years old. His parents did not survive, though it would take decades for Michel and his siblings to discover their fate. Other stories, including immigrating to America and becoming a pioneer in satellite communications, are told in his book.

Bernis Neiman von zur Muehlen CW'63 has published a new book with her husband, Peter von zur Muehlen. *Prague Revisited: From World War II to the Velvet Revolution* contains over 200 photographs the couple took between 1985 and 1992, "an epoch that saw Czechoslovakia's transformation from Communist dictatorship to the restoration of democracy," according to the book's description. After graduating from Penn, Bernis taught English and creative writing for over 30 years. She began photographing in 1972, with her first exhibit of a male nude in 1973 in Washington, DC. In later years, she turned to other subjects, including still lifes, portraiture, and landscapes. Their book is available through Goff Books.

1964

Stuart Resor C'64 writes, "Bonnie and I just completed five years of living at the very nice Del Webb Community in Mount Juliet, Tennessee. We arrived in 2020 and

recently moved back to family in Virginia. The first thing I noticed when we arrived was older men like me are just not there. And the 'widows club' packs the clubhouse and the church front rows. Men are not making it to old ages! Penn ... you have got to stop everything and figure this out!"

1965

Dr. Arnold Weisgold GD'65 has received the 2025 Achievement Award from the Greater New York Academy of Prosthodontics. He is an adjunct professor at Penn's School of Dental Medicine.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15-18, 2026!

1966

Karen Weiner Escalera CW'66 shares that her blog on food, fashion, culture, and travel, MiamiCurated.com, has been named the No. 3 lifestyle blog in Florida by FeedSpot. This joins the blog's other distinctions, including being in the top 10 fashion blogs in Miami and the No. 12 food blog in Florida. She writes that last year was the 45th anniversary of KWE Partners, her marketing and public relations firm specializing in luxury travel, hospitality, and lifestyle. The firm has represented all sectors of travel, from foreign governments, hotel companies and cruise lines, to credit cards and industry organizations.

1967

Dr. Stephen R. Permut C'67 has been awarded the Cristol Award by the Philadelphia County Medical Society (PCMS) for his work in organized medicine. He is a retired family physician who served as chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University. He also served as president of PCMS and the Medical Society of Delaware. He is the former chair of the Board of Trustees of the American Medical Association.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15-18, 2026!

1971

Joel Brown C'71 writes, "I retired from architecture 12 years ago. My show of wood-fired ceramic sculpture opens at BAU Gallery in Beacon, New York, on December 13."

Carl Feinberg C'71 shares that he established the Feinberg Center for Theoretical Physics at New York University and the Rees-Feinberg Professorship at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk at the University of Cambridge this year. His hope and expectation is that these "investments in civilization will serve to advance and preserve civilization" and deliver a leveraged return on his philanthropic investment. He previously endowed the Feinberg professorship in theoretical physics and the Feinberg Cross Disciplinary Program in Innovation, both at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and the Feinberg Chair at the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Joan Poliner Shapiro GEd'71 GrEd'78, Steven Jay Gross GrEd'80, and Susan H. Shapiro have released the third edition of *Ethical Educational Leadership in Turbulent Times: (Re)Solving Moral Dilemmas*. Publisher Routledge calls it an "engaging, case-study-based text that assists leaders in their ethical decision-making processes during a time of turbulence and uncertainty." Joan is professor emerita of higher education at Temple University and former codirector of women's studies and supervisor of intern teachers at Penn. Steven is professor emeritus of educational leadership at Temple University.

Fred A. Slone C'71 L'74, a member of the State Bar of Georgia for over 50 years, proudly announces the publication of his law review article, *Default Is No Option: The Unconstitutionality of the Debt Limit Law*, 52 UC Law SF Const. Q. 363 (2025), in the *UC Law Constitutional Quarterly*, Volume 52, Issue 4. He says his article presents "fresh perspectives on the unconstitutionality of any default by the United States due to the debt limit law and calls for its repeal, explaining that Treasury borrowing would still be limited by other laws already enacted by Congress which establish a variable debt ceiling that complies with the Constitution."

1972

William J. Donohue W'72 is an adjunct assistant professor of legal studies at Temple University's Fox School of Busi-

ness. Previously, he worked as in-house counsel for 45 years for three Fortune 500 companies in the transportation, petroleum, and electric industries, specializing in corporate, environmental, and health and safety law. In recent years, he has had two articles published on the management trend of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)—the first in the American Bar Association's *Year-in-Review*, 2021 edition; and the second a book review in the *Dickinson Law Review*, Spring 2024 edition. He has volunteered for a number of legal services organizations in the Philadelphia area and has been recognized for his pro bono service by the Association of Corporate Counsel, Exelon Corporation, and the Senior Law Center of Philadelphia. William and his wife, Margie, have been married for 51 years and have four sons and nine grandchildren.

Manuel García Jr. ME'72 writes, "I was asked by a teenage daughter a few years ago, 'What was it like when you were in college?' So, to give an honest answer, I wrote a little novella that blends fact and fiction with poetic license, drawn from my memories of 1968-1970 at Penn. Perhaps some alumni of similar vintage will find some resonances here." Manuel's complete book, *A Tempering of Dreams*, can be downloaded for free at manuelgarciajr.com/2022/05/30/a-tempering-of-dreams.

Dr. Harold Pincus C'72, professor of psychiatry and public health at Columbia University, has been selected as the inaugural recipient of the Christopher and Kathryn Colenda Health Policy Award by the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP). This award honors individuals who have made substantive contributions to the geriatric mental health policy initiatives and transformation at local, state, national, and international venues. As noted about Harold by the AAGP, "Your career of contributions to public policy as it relates to mental health and aging is staggering, and we at AAGP would like to honor you for your work."

Ellis Weiner C'72 and Steve Radlauer have coauthored a new book, *The Split*, a satire that begins 15 years after the US peacefully divides itself into two countries. Former red states make up the Con-

federation of Conservative States of America (CCSA), while former blue states call themselves the USA. From the book's description: "Like a divorced couple living in the same house, they share the continent in an uneasy, tenuous equilibrium." The story follows Lorinda Moon, a 20-something bartender living in the CCSA when she discovers she's pregnant. "But her plans don't include spending months in a government breeding center followed by a forced marriage. On the lam from CCSA authorities, she is taken up by a scraggly army of volunteers dedicated to helping women like her get to the USA for medical attention."

Deborah R. Willig CW'72, managing partner at Willig, Williams & Davidson, has been named to *City & State Pennsylvania's* 2025 list of "Who's Who in Labor." This guide provides an overview of the most influential leaders in Pennsylvania's labor sector.

1973

Seth Bergmann GEE'73 competed at the USATF Eastern Regional Outdoor (Open and Masters) Track and Field Championship Meet in Hightstown, New Jersey, on June 29. In the 5,000-meter run, he finished first in the men's 75-and-older age group with a time of 30:13. In the subsequent 1,500-meter run, he finished third in the men's 75-and-older age group with a time of 8:45.

Robert M. Steeg C'73 ASC'75, managing partner of Steeg Law Firm in New Orleans, has been included in *Best Lawyers 2026* for Banking and Finance Law, Commercial Finance Law, Commercial Transactions/UCC Law, Corporate Law, and Real Estate Law (1995–2025). He is one of a select group of attorneys who has received this honor for more than 25 years.

1974

Dr. Larry P. Bleier D'74, a periodontist and founder of Cutting Edge Technology (CET), shares that his 120-page clinical research article, "Minimally Invasive Periodontal and Implant Care: A CET-Based Clinical Advancement," has been published in *MAR Dental Sciences and Oral Rehabilitation* (2025) 5:12, a publication of the open-access website Medical

and Research Publications. He shares that he is licensing some of his patents for enhanced wound healing and that there's "no slowing down" for him.

Ron Klasko L'74, chairman and a founding partner of Klasko Immigration Law Partners, has been honored in the 2026 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*.

Amy Pollack GEd'74 has published her third book for middle-grade readers in the Jelly Bean series, *The Still Further Adventures of Jelly Bean*. From the book's description: "Faced with the departure of her best friend, Jelly Bean struggles to adapt to new dynamics in the classroom. Life also becomes more difficult when her grandmother, who had always had the time to listen to her, gets remarried and moves away. Together with her trusty and beloved dog, Roger-Over, and her wonderful new aunt who takes a keen interest in her, Jelly Bean continues navigating and adapting to life's challenges." Amy notes that she is available for speaking engagements at schools, libraries, reading groups, and more. Contact her at ampollack111@gmail.com.

1975

Jay Rogoff C'75 has been named Poet Laureate of Saratoga Springs, New York, for the years 2026 and 2027. His most recent books are *Loving in Truth: New and Selected Poems* and *Becoming Poetry: Poets and Their Methods*.

1977

David E. Smith W'77 is the author of a new children's book, *First, You Need Pajamas*. From the book's description: "When the nightly bath-to-bed ritual gets derailed—because Danielle has other plans—this whimsical repetition book tells how her family attempts to get things back on track. This charming, illustrated story, appropriate for ages two to nine, captures how cute, fun, and challenging toddlers can be. Perfect for bedtime, *First, You Need Pajamas* will have little ones giggling—and parents nodding knowingly. This book also encourages a discussion about children with disabilities." More information can be found on the book's website fynpbook.com. David also invites alumni contact at fynpbook@gmail.com.

1978

Ruby Wiles C'78 is the founder and director of Free Books for Kids Town, a nonprofit that promotes children's literacy by providing books that match a child's interests to spark their love of learning. Her latest endeavor is a new program called Read and Treat, where children get to pick out a book to take home along with a Halloween treat, and she invites anyone interested to participate in their hometown next year. The program's tagline is "A treat for the mind as well as the sweet tooth." Visit FreeBooksKidsTown.com/Halloween to register for the program and receive the guidance and promotional materials to get started, as well as help acquiring books.

1980

Janney "Jay" Florey C'80 writes, "I got my first full-time job at age 17, working as a clerk in the mail room of a bank. Fifty years, two college degrees (psychology from Penn and geography from University of Washington), and a Coast Guard stint later, I decided it was time to find out what life would be like if my time was all my own. I retired on February 28. So far, most of my time has been dedicated to the slow recovery from a serious illness so I am still figuring out what retirement will look like. My lifelong fascination with maps led me to my favorite work study job at Penn, in the geology map library."

Steven Jay Gross GrEd'80 see **Joan Poliner Shapiro GEd'71 GrEd'7**.

Lisa R. Jacobs W'80 was elected president of the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) in July, following more than 15 years of service. The ULC, also known as the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, provides states with nonpartisan draft legislation to bring clarity and stability to key areas of state statutory law. Her ULC work has focused predominantly on business-related laws, including most recently chairing the committee drafting updates to the Uniform Partnership Act, the Uniform Limited Partnership Act, and the Uniform Limited Liability Company Act. Lisa is a partner in the Philadelphia office of the law firm Stradley Ronon and an adjunct professor at Penn Carey Law.

Gail Korostoff C'80, Heidi Minkin C'80, and Margo Szabunia C'80—former roommates at Penn—are delighted to announce that they are now laughing regularly on video, since they live on different continents. They have possibly accomplished a few things in the years since graduation, none of them important. This friendship is probably the most valuable thing they took away from their Penn experiences.

Jayne Davis Perilstein W'80 has been named executive director of development for the Foundation to Combat Antisemitism. Jayne is the former chair of the Trustees' Council of Penn Women, the current president of her Penn class, and a recipient of the Penn Alumni Award of Merit ["Homecoming 2016," Jan/Feb 2017].

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

1981

Dale Bell MT'81 and Leslie B. Posnock C'81, copresidents of the Class of 1981, write, "Believe it or not, we are quickly approaching 45 years since our graduation from Penn. We are planning our next Reunion and look forward to seeing many of you this spring. Please save the date for Alumni Weekend, May 15–18, 2026, and in particular for our Class event on the evening of Saturday, May 16. Prepare to party like it's 1981! There's lots of work ahead to make this the greatest 45th Reunion Penn has ever seen, and we need your help! Join the Reunion Committee to assist with planning and outreach—every little bit helps, even if you can only connect with a few classmates. Please email Dale (dalesbell01@gmail.com) or Leslie (lposnock@schwartzposnock.com) if you'd like to get involved."

Kem Hinton GAR'81 announces his new book, *Nether Land: A Story of High School Temptation, Insurance Haze, Stolen Resolution, and Murder*. In this book, Kem tells the story of his high school and undergraduate school classmate, Ed Netherland, who was murdered in the Virgin Islands in 2014. *Publisher's Weekly* writes, "Equal parts illuminating and mysterious, the memoir provides a split-screen narrative of two men from the

same town with the same background going on to lead vastly different lives, along with insights into the era. ... *Nether Land* is a somber, gently provocative memoir suffused with loss."

1983

Shaun Eli Breidbart W'83 G'25, a corporate stand-up comedian, recently earned a master's degree in Applied Positive Psychology from Penn. He writes that he "has just been booked by Armed Forces Entertainment to perform in such dangerous war-torn hellholes as the Bahamas and Curacao." To get in touch with him, email Shaun@BrainChampagne.com.

Daniel Eng EE'83, a NASA systems engineer, was recently featured in a profile on NASA's website. "From Garment Industry to NASA: Meet Systems Engineer Daniel Eng" tells how he dropped out of high school to serve in the US Army during the Vietnam War, later earning a GED and building a 40-plus career in the aerospace industry. Today at NASA, he helps design the future of urban flight. Read the story at go.nasa.gov/43VDZZ6.

Duane R. Lyons C'83 shares that he retired from the practice of law after 38 years. After graduating from Penn, he earned his law degree from Berkeley Law in 1986. He then moved to Los Angeles where he practiced for five years before joining the US Attorney's Office. In 2001, he joined Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan as a partner. In 2023, he was appointed as a special assistant attorney general for the State of Colorado, where he helped secure the conviction of a police officer charged in connection with the death of Elijah McClain. He and his wife have three grown children, and they split their time between Los Angeles and New York.

1984

Hon. Michael McCord G'84 has joined the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) as an adjunct research staff member in the Cost Analysis and Research Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center. IDA is a nonprofit that operates three federally funded research and development centers focused on US national security.

1985

Stephen M. Cohen C'85 is the 2026 winner of the American Chemical Society's James T. Grady–James H. Stack Award for Interpreting Chemistry for the Public. The awards ceremony will be in March 2026 at the semiannual American Chemical Society meeting in Atlanta. A freelance technical writer, Stephen has authored a graphic history of chemistry, a science-travel book, and a genealogy book, among other writings. His podcast, *The History of Chemistry*, is available at thehistoryofchemistry.buzzsprout.com.

Dr. Lee Scholop C'85 W'85 writes, "The US Food and Drug Administration has granted accelerated approval to dordaviprone (formerly ONC201) for the treatment of patients with H3 K27M-mutant glioma, an aggressive and previously untreatable brain cancer. I first began working on this molecule shortly after graduating from medical school in 2008 and went on to cofound Oncoceutics, where I served as CEO, to advance its development."

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1986

Ralph H. Cathcart C'86 has been recognized by *Super Lawyers* magazine as a 2025 Super Lawyer (Metro New York) in the field of intellectual property. In addition, *Managing Intellectual Property* magazine named him as an IPStar for the year 2025, and *World Trademark Review* named him to the WTRI000 list of best trademark attorneys in the world. Ralph is the managing partner of the litigation department at Ladas & Parry, LLP, with offices in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

Kevin Stirling WEv'86, a writer and documentary filmmaker known for his films exploring NASA's historic Apollo lunar missions (gospacefilms.com)—including *Moon Beat*, *Go for Landing*, and *March to the Moon*—has expanded his repertoire to include American history and historical fiction. Stirling writes that his newest screenplay, *Committee of Five*, was recently named an Official Selection in the Hollywood Stage Script Film Competition and the Inroads Screenwriting Fellowship. In addition, Stirling writes that *Committee of Five* was also named a finalist in the

New York Script Awards 2025 competition. He explains, “Just in time for our nation’s 250th anniversary in July 2026 in Philadelphia, *Committee of Five* brings to life the Second Continental Congress’ final, tumultuous days of debate, disagreement, and deal-making in sweltering Philadelphia in 1776, and its prescient if not pragmatic decision to form an elite committee tasked with drafting a Declaration of Independence, despite Congress not yet voting in favor of independence.”

1987

Scott A. Snyder EAS’87 GEng’90 Gr’94, a senior fellow at Wharton and an adjunct professor at Penn Engineering, is the author of a new book, *Your AI Life*. He says the book is “focused on personal AI transformation and helping everyone connect the benefits of AI to the life and work. The goal is to help bridge the looming AI divide and give everyone a chance to thrive in the AI wave.” It can be purchased on Amazon at a.co/d/2cFGF27.

1988

John P. Halfpenny C’88 writes, “I opened Halfpenny Law on July 28 in the historic district of York, Pennsylvania, right next door to the Central Market, and a block from the courthouse. And, best of all, it’s located in a super-funky, former ice cream parlor. Why an ice cream parlor? Because I immediately fell head over heels for the whole soul-refreshing quirkiness of the enormous loft-like space with its exposed brick walls and soaring 16-foot ceilings! We’re going rogue, retro, and radical, right at street level! Storefront retail law. For real people with real problems, who can drop in any time they like, put their feet up, let their hair down, and talk to a lawyer about whatever jam they’ve found themselves in. So, “Why not open a law firm there?” was all I asked after learning the building was available. And, since I couldn’t think of any reason not to, I hastily scribbled my signature on a boilerplate lease—and a few weeks later we opened!”

1989

David C. Krucoff C’89 writes that his father, **Neal E. Krucoff C’57**, passed away on July 19 [“Obituaries,” this issue]. David

shares that his parents were married for 65 years and had two sons, David and Barney. He continues, “Neal loved taking [his wife] Ella to Penn reunions every five years and singing ‘The Red and Blue’ and ‘Drink a Highball’ with me, even though we can’t sing worth a damn.”

Lisa Niver C’89, a travel journalist, TV host, and founder of We Said Go Travel, shares that she is “celebrating a milestone year.” Her memoir, *Brave-ish: One Breakup, Six Continents, and Feeling Fearless After Fifty*, received 10 awards (read more about her book at lisaniver.com/braveish). She also received a Telly Award for her travel segment filmed in Ireland for *The Jet Set TV* (view the episode at youtu.be/h1rIvYuti6U). At the 67th Southern California Journalism Awards, hosted by the Los Angeles Press Club, Lisa was recognized with her first-ever First Place win in the Lifestyle Feature category for her podcast, *Make Your Own Map* (listen to the podcast at lisaniver.com/makeyourownmap). She was also awarded Third Place for Online Journalist of the Year and named a five-time finalist this year, bringing her career total to over 40 award nominations across categories including broadcast, print, digital, TV, and podcasting.

Michelle RhodesBrown EAS’89 has been named senior director of finance for Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women. As such, she will oversee all financial operations and spearhead the financial strategy for both Pi Beta Phi and the Fraternity Housing Corporation. Prior to this appointment, she served as chief financial officer of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

1991

Linda Kneidinger C’91, a personal coach with a degree in neuroscience, has published her first book, *Your Best Year Yet: Weekly Personal Growth Challenges to Unlock Your Best Self*. She explains, “The book is a weekly guide to actions you can take to overcome common obstacles and [mistakes in thinking] humans are wont to make.”

Dr. Scott J. Loev C’91 has been appointed adjunct clinical associate professor of anesthesiology at Temple Uni-

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versity. He currently serves as medical director of the interventional pain medicine program at St. Luke’s University Health Network and a faculty member of the interventional pain medicine fellowship at St. Luke’s.

Jeremy Shane C’91 is the author of a new book, *Life for Health*, which he says proposes “a new way to solve chronic disease using life insurance instead of health insurance. Part manifesto, part blueprint, the book explains why we need a second system, purpose built to address multi-decade disease challenges like metabolic disease, creating long-term alignment to improve Americans’ healthspan.” Jeremy is now bringing the book’s ideas to life through a Life for Health business, focusing initially on metabolic issues.

1993

Gideon Evans C’93 has launched a podcast with his friend and former officemate from *The Daily Show*, Kathy Egan-Taylor. Called *Bad Elizabeth*, each episode is about “a different person named Elizabeth (or any derivation of the name) from history or pop culture who is notorious,” he explains. Gideon is also working with Broadway performer **Jill Abramovitz C’93** (who has appeared in *Beetlejuice*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and many other shows), on a one-

woman show about the music from the Borscht Belt era. Gideon writes, “The show is a humorous and sometimes moving look at the history of the many songs and singers who frequented the Catskills resorts and bungalows through much of the 20th century. Abramovitz sings many numbers, some classics and some more obscure.” Gideon and Jill cowrote the show, which was commissioned by the Borscht Belt Museum in Ellenville, New York. Jill will do a special performance of “Borscht Belt Serenade” at the Penn Club in New York City on November 20. They are looking forward to sharing it with fellow Penn alumni.

Jonathan S. Goldstein C’93 L’05, a founding partner at Goldstein Law Partners, was elected to the board of the National Rifle Association in April, where he is also chair of the organization’s Finance Committee. This fall, he is teaching a course on Second Amendment law at Penn Carey Law.

1994

Jennifer A. Brandt L’94, an attorney at Cozen O’Connor and chair of its Family Law Group, has been elected chair of the American Bar Association Family Law Section. When Jennifer was at Penn, she was senior editor of the *Journal of International Business Law* and an Arthur Littleton Fellowship Instructor in legal research in writing.

1995

Dr. Kenneth N. Sable EAS’95 has been appointed president of the Acute Care Hospital Division of Hackensack Meridian Health, overseeing 12 acute care and two children’s hospitals. Prior to this appointment, he led the organization’s southern market for six years. He is also currently assistant dean for integration at Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

1996

Scott Harris C’96, founder of New York-based Magnetic Real Estate, is pleased to share that his first book, *The Pursuit of Home: A Real Estate Guide to Achieving the American Dream* was published in October

with Matt Holt Books. He writes, “Thanks to alumna and fellow author **Dara Lovitz C’00** for her advice and guidance.”

1999

Andrea Canepari GL’99, an Italian diplomat currently on leave, has returned to Pennsylvania as Professor of Practice at Penn State School of International Affairs, where he teaches public diplomacy. He also teaches comparative law at Penn State Dickinson Law. Andrea was also recently appointed senior affiliate for the Partnership for Innovation, Cross-Sector Collaboration, Leadership, and Organization (PICCLO) at Penn’s College of Liberal and Professional Studies (LPS). Among his several responsibilities as an Italian diplomat, he served as ambassador in the Dominican Republic and consul general in Philadelphia. He shares that his wife, Roberta, accepted a position as assistant professor of international business at the Smeal College of Business at Penn State.

John Legend C’99 see **Aaron Karo W’01**.

2000

Dara Lovitz C’00 see **Scott Harris C’96**.

Meryl Koenig Sole C’00 is delighted to share the publication of her second co-authored book, *Seeking the Mystical Child: Nurturing Young Children’s Identity, Faith, and Belief*, written with Danette Littleton.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

2001

Nathaniel Calhoun C’01 G’01 has been named chair of the board at the Edmund Hillary Fellowship and the Hillary Institute of International Leadership. The organizations, based in New Zealand, are focused on providing answers to climate change, poverty, disease, and peace justice.

Aaron Karo W’01 and **Matt Ritter L’05** have released an audiobook exclusively on Audible, titled *The Buddy System: A Modern Man’s Guide to Mastering Friendship and Leveling Up Your Life*. The book is based on their popular podcast *Man of the Year*, which is dedicated to helping men make and maintain friends. To celebrate the audiobook’s release, Aaron and Matt appeared on Chrissy Teigen’s

podcast *Self-Conscious*, alongside **John Legend C’99**. Aaron and Matt share that they’re “still basking in the glow” of their appearance on the cover of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* [“We Should Be Friends,” Mar|Apr 2024]. Learn more about their work at manoftheyearpodcast.com.

2002

Tania Gentic G’02 Gr’07, an associate professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Georgetown University, is the author of *Geographies of the Ear: The Cultural Politics of Sound in Contemporary Barcelona*. In this study she “examines the language and soundscape of post-Franco Barcelona to listen for the remnants of a globalized colonial ear,” according to the book’s description.

2003

Adam Lubow C’03 has entered private practice as a civil rights lawyer in Cleveland, Ohio, after 18 years of public service as a public defender and US Department of Labor attorney. His practice focuses on plaintiff-side wage and hour litigation, employment discrimination, Section 1983 actions, the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act and criminal defense. He also teaches continuing legal education courses.

2005

Matt Ritter L’05 see **Aaron Karo W’01**.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

2006

Katelyn O’Brien C’06 has joined the board of directors for the Boston-based Home for Little Wanderers, one of the nation’s oldest child welfare agencies. Katelyn is a partner at the law firm Proskauer, where she represents clients who develop, own, and invest in commercial real estate.

Fletcher Wilson EAS’06, CEO and co-founder of Throne Labs, was recently featured in the *Wall Street Journal* for his company’s “smart bathrooms,” portable, ADA-compliant, solar-powered public restrooms that employ user-provided data to keep them clean and secure. The bathrooms have been deployed in cities such as Los Angeles and Detroit. The

article, “The ‘Smart’ Restrooms That Can Solve America’s Public Bathroom Crisis,” appeared in the July 18 issue of the *Wall Street Journal*.

2008

Emily Ozan Rosen C’08 has published her first children’s book with illustrator Esther Diana, titled *Waiting for Max: A NICU Story*. Emily writes, “It’s based on my personal experience with my son Max (now six) spending time in the NICU after arriving six weeks early.” Publisher The Collective Book Studio describes it as a “heartfelt and imagination-filled picture book” that will help families “navigate the NICU journey from a sibling’s perspective—offering comfort, connection, and a big dose of hope.”

2009

T. Andrew Huddleston C’09 has been promoted to director of the newly created Advocacy Department at the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the largest union representing federal employees. Prior to this appointment, he led AFGE’s Communications Department for the last seven years. Andrew writes, “I’ve positioned AFGE at the forefront of the fight against the Trump administration’s DOGE initiative—initially spearheaded by fellow Penn alumnus **Elon Musk C’97 W’97**—and the broader anti-union agenda of **President Donald Trump W’68**, mobilizing workers and allies to defend federal employees and public service.”

Amin Osman C’09 is a coauthor of *Bordergrams*, which he describes as “a combination spy-novel-and-word-puzzle collection.” He shares that one of his coauthors, Greg Karber, is creator of *Murdle*, “a murder-mystery-logic-puzzle book series currently in development as a TV series at Amazon Prime Video.”

2010

Abigail Fine C’10, assistant professor of musicology at the University of Oregon, has published a new book, *The Composer Embalmed: Relic Culture from Piety to Kitsch*. The University of Chicago Press describes it as “the first granular study of nineteenth-century composer devotion—a network of

devotees who preserved tangible traces of composers through relics, rituals, pilgrimage, exhumation, and embalming.”

Marissa Rosen C’10 writes, “I married Benjamin Ehrenberg in sunny Somis, California, on July 13, in a lush ceremony in the botanical gardens with several Penn alumni by my side.”

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

2011

Brandon Bloch C’11 published his first book, *Reinventing Protestant Germany: Religious Nationalists and the Contest for Post-Nazi Democracy*, with Harvard University Press in August. Brandon is assistant professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where his research focuses on human rights, religion, and the politics of memory in 20th-century Germany and Europe.

Mark Lester C’11 was awarded the 2025 Manfred Lautenschläger Award for Theological Promise from Heidelberg University for his book, *Deuteronomy and the Material Transmission of Tradition*. The book also received an honorable mention for the 2025 SHARP Book History Book Prize, awarded by the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP).

Lilly Wyden C’11 shares that she has a podcast and Substack called *Shared Narratives* where she explores “the ideas, trends, and people shaping tomorrow.” Lilly writes, “Penn was instrumental in instilling a love of learning and storytelling.”

2013

Chevahn Brown C’13, an author and educator, has released a new book, *5-Minute Story Prompts for Kids*. She writes, “This collection is designed to spark imagination, encourage creativity, and nurture emotional maturity in young learners through short, engaging storytelling exercises. In today’s world—where screens and instant gratification often replace slower, more reflective forms of expression—creative tools like these are more important than ever. Storytelling cultivates curiosity, empathy, and resilience, and I believe it offers

children an essential balance to the pace and pressures of technology-driven life.” More information can be found on her website, chevahnbrown.com.

2015

John A. McCabe LPS’15 shares that he has entered the contest for the next poet laureate of Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Celebrate Your Reunion, May 15–18, 2026!

2016

Mikah Sellers WAM’16 GrEd’24 has published *Forging Emotionally Intelligent Leaders in the Age of AI*. Mikah writes, “Drawing on original research and immersive fieldwork with senior executives, the book makes the case that emotional intelligence is the defining human advantage in an AI-driven world. It offers a new blueprint for leadership development rooted in neuroscience and adult learning theory, with insights from hundreds of hours of interviews with C-suite leaders.”

2017

Christopher DiLeva C’17 see **Briella Meglio C’18**.

2018

Briella Meglio C’18 and **Christopher DiLeva C’17** were married in July on Long Island, New York. They first met at a Penn Phi Delta Theta fraternity party, later reconnected by chance in New York City, and now reside in Brooklyn. Briella and Chris are deeply grateful to all who attended, especially the many fellow Penn alumni. Special thanks to their wedding party: **Elliot Bok W’17**, **Morgan McKeever Bok C’18**, **Brian Broder C’17**, **Alexander Ehat C’17**, **Haley Wickham Ehat C’17**, **Catherine Moore Egan W’18**, **Aidan Kelly W’19**, **Michael McCurdy C’17**, **Christine Park W’18**, **Amar Patel W’17 C’17**, **Michelle Pereira C’18**, **Jessica Ryan C’18**, and **Aimee Stephenson C’18**.

2025

Savanna Cohen C’25 shares that she has been accepted to the four-year doctor of philosophy program in neuroscience at the University of Oxford.

1943

Dr. Jack Hughes M'43, Durham, NC, a retired urologist and professor of medicine at Duke University and the University of North Carolina; Aug. 21, at 105. He served in the US Navy as a medical officer during World War II.

1944

Howard W. Kreiner ChE'44, Silver Spring, MD, retired operations analyst for the Center for Naval Analyses; June 19, at 101.

Elaine Gold Newberg Ed'44, Delray Beach, FL, a former high school music teacher and guidance counselor; Aug. 11, at 101. At Penn, she was a member of Delta Phi Epsilon sorority and the Choral Society.

1948

Gladys Bliss Bernstein Ed'48, Dresher, PA, cofounder of a nursery school with her husband; June 12. At Penn, she was a member of Sigma Delta Tau sorority.

Dr. J. Timothy O'Leary Jr. D'48, Girard, PA, a retired dentist; Dec. 17, 2024. He served in the US Army Dental Corps. His sisters are Martha O'Leary Gette DH'54 and Kathleen O'Leary Moylan DH'55.

1949

Martin A. Coopersmith W'49, Jenkintown, PA, a retired accountant; June 22. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. One grandchild is Maya Kasutto C'18.

Melvin Finkelstein W'49, Delray Beach, FL, a philanthropist and former president and CEO of House of Westmore, a manufacturer and distributor of cosmetics and professional beauty supply products; Aug. 14. His philanthropic activities included establishing the Finkelstein Prep for Prep Scholarship for minority undergraduate students at Penn and the Finkelstein Family Scholarship for underrepresented Penn medical students. He served in the US Navy during World War II. As a student at Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. As an alumnus, he was a volunteer for his Class. His children are Lawrence Finkelstein W'73 L'76, Dr. Amy H. Finkelstein C'76 M'80 GM'84, and William P. Finkelstein W'80 WG'82. His grandchildren include Andrew J. Finkelstein W'02 and Sarah Finkelstein C'22.

Beatrice Moy Garbern CW'49, Saratoga, CA, Aug. 4, 2023.

Hon. Paul Ribner C'49 L'52, Potomac, MD, a retired judge in the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas; July 17. He also presided as National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States. He served in the US Air Force and as a Judge Advocate General during the Korean War. His daughter is Sarah Ribner C'11.

Victor H. Unger C'49, Doylestown, PA, retired corporate director of agricultural products research for Rohm and Haas; July 20. He served in the US Army.

1950

Robert L. Cory C'50, Dunkirk, MD, a scientist for the US Geological Survey; June 26, at 99. He served in the US Navy during World War II. At Penn, he was a member of the wrestling team.

J. Thomas Cottrell Jr. W'50, Swansea, MA, retired chairman and CEO of Cottrell Paper Company, manufacturers of electrical insulating papers; May 30, at 100. He served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity.

Harold Einhorn W'50, Marlton, NJ, a retired lawyer; July 1.

1951

Burton D. Fine C'51, Newton, MA, retired principal violinist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra; Nov. 15. He was also a former scientist at NASA. At Penn, he was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

John N. "Jack" Reardon W'51 WG'56, Lancaster, PA, an accountant and CEO of Users Incorporated; Jan. 25. He served in the US Army during the Korean War. As a student at Penn, he was a member of Glee Club, the Choral Society, Friars Senior Society, and the ROTC. As an alumnus, he was a former chair of the Wharton Alumni Society and a past president of the University of Pennsylvania Alumni Society. One brother is Frederick H. Reardon ME'54 GME'56.

Corinne "Corky" Zelson Swiren Ed'51, Fort Washington, PA, a retired elementary school teacher; June 25.

1952

Joseph S. Finch Jr. W'52, Wilmington, DE, financial director of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington; June 24. He served in the US Army during the Korean War. At

Notifications

Please send notifications of deaths of alumni directly to: Alumni Records, University of Pennsylvania, Suite 300, 2929 Walnut Street, Phila., PA 19104

EMAIL record@ben.dev.upenn.edu
Newspaper obits are appreciated.

Penn, he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity and the ROTC. His wife is Ann Marie Stefanowicz Finch CW'55.

Donald R. Gant W'52, Amelia Island, FL, a retired investment banker; July 18. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity and the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

Emma May Bruce Goddard CW'52, Newtown Square, PA, July 9. At Penn, she was a member of Delta Gamma women's fraternity.

James J. Hopes C'52, Longwood, FL, a retired executive at J.P. Morgan Chase Bank; Feb. 14, 2022. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Alpha Society fraternity.

Barton L. Post W'52 L'55, West Chester, PA, a retired attorney and founder of an insurance company for physicians; Aug. 10.

Cyrilla Gaber Rosen Ed'52, Dresher, PA, a retired schoolteacher; Sept. 19, 2024. At Penn, she was a member of Delta Phi Epsilon sorority. One grandchild is Evan Dienstman GEng'28.

Alvin L. Snowiss C'52 L'55, Lock Haven, PA, an attorney; May 23. At Penn, he was a member of the Debate Council.

Nancy Shand Thigpen CW'52, Charlotte, NC, a former real estate agent; Aug. 24.

Marvin B. Woolf W'52, Boulder, CO, a retired attorney; April 7, 2024. He was a veteran of the Korean War. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity, the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, and the wrestling team.

1953

Gloria Melada Durchsprung CW'53, Warminster, PA, a former sales coordinator for Edon Corporation, a fiberglass company; Sept. 7. At Penn, she was a member of Chi Omega sorority and Penn Players.

Mary Ellen Elwell SW'53, Hollywood, MD, a retired professor of social work at Salisbury University; July 4. She also helped found a rape crisis center and child sexual abuse treatment center.

John A. Parmer Ed'53, Akron, PA, retired president of Berkley Products; July 7.

Thaddeus J. Puzio W'53, Wayne, PA, retired management engineer for several hospitals; Aug. 21. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity and the fencing team.

George Warren Schiele W'53, Winter Park, FL, a trust manager; July 5. He served in the US Air Force and the US Air Force Reserve. At Penn, he was a member of Theta Xi fraternity and WXPn.

1954

Bruce L. Castor L'54, Schwenksville, PA, a retired estate lawyer; July 29. He served in the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps.

Dr. John G. Emerson V'54, Buckingham, PA, a retired veterinarian; July 6.

Sydney W. Fleming Gr'54, Kennett Square, PA, retired senior research fellow at DuPont; March 1, 2024, at 99. He served in the US Army during World War II.

Betty Kaminsky Jacobson FA'54, Gainesville, FL, a retired landscape architect; July 31.

C. Robert Lonshein W'54, Marlboro, NJ, a retired commercial real estate broker and attorney; Sept. 5. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity and the baseball team. His daughters are Alison Lonshein L'00 and Nancy Lonshein C'88.

Edwin T. Pawlowski Ar'54, Johnstown, PA, a retired architect; July 1. One brother is Blair V. Pawlowski C'54.

Daniel S. Samuels EE'54, Armonk, NY, a retired principal engineer for an infrastructure engineering company; June 22. At Penn, he was a member of WXPn and Chess Club.

Moselio "Elio" Schaechter Gr'54, San Diego, CA, a professor emeritus of microbiology at Tufts University; Aug. 14. He served in the US Army.

Fred B. Soulas W'54, Media, PA, retired CEO of a market research company; July 14. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity. Two grandchildren are Elizabeth M. Soulas D'20 GEng'20 and Dr. Jaclyn M. Soulas V'24.

1955

R. Kenneth Bluh W'55, Coral Gables, FL, a financial executive; May 6.

Dr. Louis Copman C'55 M'59, Kaneohe, HI, a physician; Aug. 25. He served in the US Navy as a radiologist. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

Charles N. Davis W'55, Saint Helena Island, SC, a defense intelligence officer in the US Navy; Aug. 10. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Phi fraternity, the squash team, and the ROTC.

Dr. Maurice E. Goldman M'55 GM'61, Wellesley, MA, retired medical director of an insurance group; July 6. He served in the US Coast Guard.

Harriet Simberloff Indik Hershenov CW'55, Monmouth Junction, NJ, a retired special education teacher; June 28.

Dr. Benson J. Horowitz C'55 M'59, Bloomfield, CT, a retired obstetrician-gynecologist; Feb. 14, 2024. He served in the US Navy. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

Jacqueline Moratelli Jerrehian HUP'55, Haverford, PA, a former nurse and real estate agent; July 1. Her husband is Aram K. Jerrehian Jr. W'55, and one child is Dean Jerrehian L'86.

Kenneth J. Long W'55, Raleigh, NC, a former real estate agent; Aug. 2. He served in the US Navy during World War II. At Penn, he was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity and the sprint football team.

Jean Yoshida Morioka OT'55, La Jolla, CA, July 20.

Alan A. Rubin W'55, Newton, MA, a humanitarian activist and founding director of Goodwill Global, which expands economic opportunities and training for people with disabilities; June 22. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity.

Donald E. Shipley PT'55, Greenwell Springs, LA, a retired physical therapist and clinical instructor at several universities; Aug. 19.

Helen Hedge Spellman HUP'55 Nu'55, Houston, a retired home visiting nurse; May 22. At Penn, she was a member of Alpha Xi Delta sorority and the Choral Society.

1956

Claude I. de Botton CE'56 GCE'58, Penn Valley, PA, a real estate developer and founder of National Realty Corporation; Aug. 21. One child is Paul M. de Botton C'80, and one grandchild is William D. Robinson C'21.

Mathew S. Epstein W'56, Suffern, NY, Dec. 7, 2024. At Penn, he was a member of Beta Sigma Rho fraternity. One grandchild is Sophie E. Jay C'21.

1957

George C. Greer L'57, Rector, PA, retired vice president of organization and development at H. J. Heinz Company; July 26. He served in the US Army.

Neal E. Krucoff C'57, Washington, DC, a lawyer; July 19. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity. One son is David C. Krucoff C'89.

Carolyn Logan Penta CW'57, Doylestown, PA, a retired property manager; July 21. She was also a longtime volunteer with Witness for Peace, which promotes nonviolence and human rights in Latin America.

Dr. Karl Rickels GM'57, Gladwyne, PA, a professor emeritus of psychiatry in Penn's Perelman School of Medicine; July 16, at 100. He joined Penn's faculty in 1957 as an associate professor of psychiatry and became a full professor in 1969. While at Penn, he studied and developed outpatient drug therapy for individuals affected by anxiety, panic, and depressive disorders, becoming one of the first psychiatrists to study antianxiety and antidepressant medications in outpatients. Over time, his work expanded to include the treatment of premenstrual dysphoric disorder, and in 1977 he was named the Stuart and Emily Mudd Professor of Human Behavior and Reproduction. Among his many awards are the National Institutes of Health Merit Award (1988), the University of Pennsylvania William Osler Patient-Oriented Research Award (2008), and Penn Medicine's Distinguished Graduate Award (2018). He also endowed three professorships in the department of psychiatry: the Karl Eduard Rickels Chair (1993), the Karl and Linda Rickels Chair (1999), and the Roehrhoff Rickels Chair (2015). He continued his research well into his 90s, retiring from Penn in 2019. Two sons are Laurence A. Rickels C'75 and Dr. Michael R. Rickels M'99 Gr'07 (Alyssa Logan Rickels SW'98).

Stanley Waldstein W'57, Boca Raton, FL, a retired accountant and former adjunct professor of accounting at Penn; June 10. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity and the sprint football team and the track team. His son is Robert E. Waldstein W'88.

1958

Dr. George M. Gill M'58 GM'64, Alexandria, VA, a retired pediatric oncologist and former faculty at Penn Medicine; Sept. 21. He served in the US Army Medical Corps.

Diane McCrea Harrington Nu'58, Glen Mills, PA, a retired pediatric nurse; Sept. 27. At Penn, she was a member of the basketball team.

Sidney Z. Moss SW'58, Northampton, MA, a retired psychiatric social worker and clinical assistant professor of social work at Temple University and Hahnemann University; July 2, at 100. He served in the US Army during World War II. His wife is Miriam S. Moss G'69, one son is Paul A. Moss WG'87, and one grandchild is Benjamin Z. Moss-Horwitz C'23.

Joel H. Resnick C'58, Kansas City, MO, a movie and movie theater executive who led Orion Pictures and AMC Theatres, among other companies; July 30. At Penn, he was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

Robert C. Robertson Jr. WG'58, Sinking Spring, PA, retired owner and president of Schuler Machine Company, and a substitute teacher; June 29. He served in the US Army.

Joel D. Siegal C'58, New York, a retired attorney; Aug. 15. One son is Evan C. Siegal C'00; and his brother is Dr. Elliot J. Siegal C'64 M'68. At Penn, he was a member of the squash team.

Reva Sprafkin Wurtzbarger CW'58, New York, retired founder of Bottomless Closet, a nonprofit providing workplace preparation for disadvantaged women; July 12. Her husband is Jon A. Wurtzbarger C'57.

1959

Dr. Bennett D. Aspel C'59, Newton, MA, a retired psychiatrist; June 28. He served in the US Air Force. His sister is Barbara Aspel Goldstein CW'55.

Dr. Carol Kay Lissenden Barre CW'59, Stone Harbor, NJ, a retired pediatrician and founder of a pediatric urgent care facility; July 17. At Penn, she was a member of Sphinx Senior Society and the Penningtonettes synchronized swimming team.

Dr. Joel W. Eisner C'59, Phoenixville, PA, a physician and former clinical professor of medicine at Penn; July 23. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society and the heavyweight rowing team. His daughters include Dr. Elana R. Eisner C'91 M'95 GM'98 GM'00, Alyssa Eisner Henkin C'98 (Evan D. Henkin WG'01), and Lauren G. Eisner C'03.

Dr. Malcolm R. Freedman C'59 D'64 GD'67, Enfield, CT, Aug. 27. After receiving his degrees at Penn Dental School, he attended medical school and later served as

a psychiatrist for the US Coast Guard Academy. As a student, he was a member of Kappa Nu fraternity and the soccer team.

William H. Hardesty III C'59 Gr'70, Oxford, OH, a professor emeritus of English at Miami University (Oxford, OH); Aug. 16. He served in the US Navy Reserve. At Penn, he was a member of Psi Upsilon fraternity, the ROTC, and Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. One child is William W. Hardesty C'88.

Dr. William O. Houston Jr. GD'59, Boise, ID, a retired oral and maxillofacial surgeon; July 5. He served in the US Air Force.

Henry D. Jaglom C'59, Santa Monica, CA, an independent filmmaker; Sept. 22. His films include *A Safe Place* (1971), *Sitting Ducks* (1980), and *Last Summer in the Hamptons* (1995). At Penn, he was a member of Penn Players and WXPB.

1960

Edward T. Borer W'60, Newtown Square, PA, a retired investment executive; Aug. 16. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Upsilon fraternity, the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, and the ROTC.

Roberta "Bobbi" Yenchko Fechner Nu'60, Warwick, PA, a retired nurse at the physical therapy chain NovaCare; Dec. 26, 2024.

Dr. James H. U. Hughes V'60, Wilmington, DE, a retired veterinarian; July 19.

Kenneth S. Kramer C'60, Boynton Beach, FL, a financial advisor; July 25. As a student at Penn, he was a member of the swimming team. As an alumnus, he received the Alumni Award of Merit in 1994, was a longtime member of the Alumni Interview Program (1960–2000), a volunteer with the Class of 1960, and past president of the Penn Club of Long Island.

Edward E. Paris WEv'60 CGS'65, Jamison, PA, a retired internal auditor and fraud examiner for Johnson & Johnson; July 2. He served in the US Air Force.

William K. Schubert WG'60, Kennebunk, ME, retired director of international business at the chemical company Union Carbide; July 23, 2024. He served in the US Army.

1961

Judith Kramer Greene G'61, Worcester, MA, retired editor at Forest Press, the unique publisher of the Dewey Decimal Classification system; July 27.

Bonnie Wilson Hartsock DH'61, Mechanicsburg, PA, a retired dental hygienist; Aug. 18.

B. William Mayer III W'61, South Salem, NY, founder of a gourmet food and cookie distribution business; Aug. 2. At Penn, he was a member of WXPB.

Edwin S. Mehlman D'61, Providence, RI, a retired dentist and professor of dentistry; July 1. He served in the US Air Force.

Dr. Raymond L. Milhous M'61 GM'65, Hallowell, ME, a retired physician and professor emeritus of medicine at the University of Vermont; Dec. 29, 2024.

James A. Nolan C'61 G'68, Philadelphia, former director of admissions at Penn and cofounder of Independent Educational Consultants Association; Aug. 5. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and WXPB and coach of the polo team.

Dr. Dan C. Pullen D'61, Hillsborough, NJ, a dentist and volunteer firefighter; Aug. 7. He served in the US Navy.

Peter J. Ryker W'61, Philadelphia, July 2. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Upsilon fraternity.

Rev. James F. Salmon Gr'61, Baltimore, an engineer, priest, and professor of chemistry and theology at several universities; Aug. 17, at 100. He served in the US Navy during World War II.

Dr. James W. Shira GD'61, Chambersburg, PA, a retired dentist; July 18. He served in the US Navy.

Hon. Lawrence E. Wood L'61, Kennett Square, PA, a retired judge; Aug. 21. He served in the US Navy.

1962

Dr. Paul C. Aita C'62, Wyomissing, PA, a retired surgeon and clinical associate professor at Penn and Temple University; July 12. He served in the Navy Medical Corps. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity, and the wrestling and football teams.

Ronald G. Bodkin Gr'62, Windsor, ON, Canada, professor emeritus of economics at the University of Ottawa; July 28. Earlier in his career he taught economics at Penn.

John T. Curatola WEv'62, West Berlin, NJ, retired CEO of King Services; July 16.

Janette Martin Deihl G'62, State College, PA, a retired teacher of English literature and writing at State College High School and Penn State University; June 22. She was also a violinist with the Nittany

Valley (PA) Symphony and Altoona (PA) Symphony Orchestra. At Penn, she was a member of the orchestra.

Dr. William S. Frankl GM'62, Gladwyne, PA, a retired cardiologist and professor of medicine; Aug. 14.

George K. Huber C'62, Swarthmore, PA, a retired performing arts librarian at Swarthmore College; June 29. At Penn, he was a member of Acacia fraternity and the Choral Society.

Dr. James E. "Doc" Stiteler V'62, DuBois, PA, a retired veterinarian; Aug. 17. He served in the US Army during the Korean War.

Judith W. Weinstock CW'62, Philadelphia, an interior designer; July 5. At Penn, she was a member of the Pennguinnettes synchronized swimming team.

Howard P. Weisz W'62, The Villages, Florida, a retired supply chain executive at Scott Paper; June 7. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of the Penn Band.

1963

Ira Jon Brumley WG'63, Fort Worth, TX, an executive in the oil and mineral industries; July 3. One stepchild is Caleb A. Canning WG'05.

Doris Derenzo DeFalco CW'63 GED'68, Philadelphia, a former middle school and high school English teacher; July 27. As a student at Penn, she was a member of Kappa Delta sorority. She was also a member of the Alumnae Association and a volunteer for her Class. One daughter is Julie DeFalco Rowe C'94.

Mary E. Golin GED'63, Audubon, PA, a retired schoolteacher; Aug. 13.

Peter S. Keppelman C'63, Concord, MA, Oct. 14, 2023. One daughter is Courtney T. Keppelman C'88.

Lalitha B. Krishnan G'63, Havertown, PA, a retired mathematics professor at Cheyney University; Aug. 3. One child is Chidambaram K. Krishnan EE'72 GEE'74.

Jeffrey A. Legum W'63, Baltimore, a former automobile dealer, investor, and philanthropist; Sept. 25. At Penn he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity. His children are Laurie H. Legum C'95 and Michael N. Legum C'98.

Dr. Ronald C. Pruett M'63 GM'67, Beverly, MA, a physician focusing on macular degeneration and myopia; Aug. 11. He served in the US Army Reserves as a surgeon during the Vietnam War.

Dr. Robert P. Shillingford GM'63, Newtown Square, PA, a physician; Aug. 21, 2024.

Lorraine Haas Truitt GED'63, Medford, NJ, a retired high school English teacher; Aug. 5.

1964

Col. Samuel T. Brick Jr. C'64, Blythewood, SC, retired chief legislative counsel for the US Army and director of legislative reference for the US Department of Defense Office of General Counsel; July 19. He served in the US Army as an attorney in the Command Judge Advocate General Corps during the Vietnam War, as well as the US Army Reserve. As a student at Penn, he was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity, the lacrosse team, and Friars Senior Society. As an alumnus, he volunteered with the Class of 1964 and hosted the veterans reception during Alumni Weekend 2014 at his 50th Reunion.

Lord Meghnad J. Desai Gr'64, Hastings, England, an economist and former member of the House of Lords of the United Kingdom; July 29. He was also a professor emeritus at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Dr. Breese M. Dickinson III GD'64, Stuart, FL, a retired orthodontist; July 13.

Edwin J. Feulner Jr. WG'64, Alexandria, VA, cofounder of the public policy research organization The Heritage Foundation; July 19. He received the Presidential Citizens Medal in 1989 from President Ronald Reagan.

Arthur A. Gelman W'64, Somerset, NJ, a former attorney; Jan 23. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity.

Dr. Kennedy W. Gilchrist M'64, Madison, WI, a surgical pathologist and professor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin; June 22. He served in the US Army.

Allen H. Harris Jr. C'64, Quarryville, PA, a pastor at a Presbyterian church and a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary; Aug. 21.

Zoltan L. Hegedus G'64, Providence, RI, July 5, 2022.

Dr. Warner E. Lund Jr. D'64, Canton, MA, retired chief of dentistry at a Veterans Administration medical center and a professor of dentistry at Harvard; July 26. He served in the US Navy during the Vietnam War and in the US Navy Dental Reserve.

Thomas H. Nuhfer GED'64, Edinboro, PA, a professor emeritus at Edinboro University; July 15.

Dr. George W. Schnetzer III M'64, Tulsa, OK, a retired hematologist-oncologist; May 25. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

Jeff W. White WG'64, Bryn Mawr, PA, a financial executive; Aug. 12. He served in the US Navy.

1965

Henry H. Gunther III GCh'65 Gr'67, Wilmington, DE, a retired engineer at Conrail; July 5. He served in the US Army. His daughter is Elizabeth M. Gunther Nu'06.

John C. Hover II C'65 WG'67, New Hope, PA, a bank executive, former University trustee, and chairman of the Penn Museum's board of advisors; July 18. He became a member of the Penn Museum's board of advisors in 1997 and eventually rose to chair the board. As chair, he oversaw the development and completion of the museum's Mainwaring Wing for Collections and Storage and the construction of the infrastructure to bring air conditioning to the building. In 2005, he received the Angell Medal, established by the Penn Museum to honor distinguished service to the museum by a museum supporter. From 2000 to 2005, he also served as a University Trustee. In 1994, he founded the Penn Club of New York and also served as its president. Among his many accolades as a Penn alumnus, in 2006, he received the Alumni Award of Merit. As a student at Penn, he was a member of Phi Delta Epsilon fraternity, Mask & Wig, and the rowing team.

Brigitte Knechtsberger Knowles Ar'65 GAR'71, Philadelphia, an architect and professor emerita at Temple University; July 3. At Penn, she was a member of Alpha Xi Delta sorority.

Joseph R. Krynicki W'65, Roselle, NJ, a data analytics consultant; Aug. 19. At Penn, he was a member of WXPn.

Norman MacAfee C'65, New York, a poet, writer, and literary translator; July 2, 2024. ["Arts," Jul|Aug 2009.]

Alan D. Westheimer W'65, Houston, a retired accountant; June 12. He served in the US Air Force and the US Air Force Reserve. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Delta fraternity and the Debate Council.

H. Reed Wiegler EE'65 GEE'71, Glenmoore, PA, a retired electrical engineer; June 8. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity and the track team.

Frank S. Wilkinson Jr. WG'65, Minneapolis, a retired reinsurance executive; July 3.

1966

Howard G. Carrey W'66, New Smyrna Beach, FL, retired owner of a number of fast-food franchise restaurants; Oct. 20, 2024.

Donald G. Clemens Gr'66, Goshen, IN, a retired professor at Goshen College; July 27.

Dean A. Frenz C'66, New Sewickley Twp, PA, retired CEO of a laser equipment supplier; Aug. 2. He served in the US Army Reserve. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity and the sprint football team.

Capt. Peter J. Gaskin II C'66 WG'74, San Diego, a captain in the US Navy; July 12. He served in the Vietnam War. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Nu fraternity, the rowing team, and the ROTC.

Jon P. Larrick WG'66, Vero Beach, FL, an entrepreneur who founded several ventures, including a children's toy company; Aug. 7.

Larry L. Laster C'66 Gr'74, Phoenixville, PA, a professor emeritus of epidemiology and biostatistics in clinical studies at Penn Vet and a former associate professor at Penn's School of Dental Medicine; May 16. In 1964, while working on his master's degree, he joined Penn's faculty as an instructor in oral medicine at Penn Dental Medicine. He spent the next decade and a half as a member of Penn Dental Medicine's research faculty, specializing in biometrics, before becoming an associate professor in 1978. He served in this role until 1997, when he moved to Penn's School of Veterinary Medicine, where he became a professor of clinical sciences and advanced medicine. He retired in 2009.

Dr. Michael A. Naidoff M'66, Haverford, PA, a retired ophthalmologist; June 9. He served in the US Army. His wife is Stephanie Weiss Naidoff L'66.

Jonathan F. Orser C'66, Perrysburg, OH, May 26. He worked for the US State Department and was a former mayor of Perrysburg. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Psi fraternity and the wrestling and sprint football teams.

Dr. Jerome L. Silverman GM'66, Corpus Christi, TX, a retired pathologist and hematologist; July 15. He served in the US Air

Force as a flight surgeon during the Vietnam War, and also in the US Army Reserve.

James B. Sinatra GLA'66, Trentham, Victoria, Australia, a professor emeritus of landscape architecture at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology; April 25, 2023.

Dr. William S. Stockman V'66, Bozman, MD, a retired veterinarian; Oct. 27, 2022.

Edward S. Torba GEd'66, East Syracuse, NY, a retired high school teacher; June 28.

Dr. Robert A. Waugh M'66 GM'70, Durham, NC, a retired physician at a VA Medical Center and professor emeritus of medicine at Duke University; May 10.

Henry O. Westendarp III W'66, Pawleys Island, SC, retired founder and CEO of a marketing company; Sept. 4. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity.

1967

Hon. Marshall J. Breger C'67 G'67 L'73, Silver Spring, MD, a longtime law professor at Catholic University of America and former senior official in the Reagan and Bush Sr. administrations; Aug. 3. One daughter is Sarah G. Breger C'07.

Howard S. Denburg W'67, New York, an employee benefits attorney; May 8. His daughters are Elizabeth U. Denburg C'03, Abigail Denburg C'12, and Dr. Michelle Denburg G'10 Gr'10, who is an associate professor of pediatrics and epidemiology at Penn's Perelman School of Medicine.

Douglas K. Dumm EE'67, Boulder, CO, a former senior business analyst for IBM; March 7. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity. His wife is Susan Urban Dumm CW'66, and three sisters are Barbara Dumm Cramer CW'68, Jo-Ann D. Johnson FA'71, and Diane Dumm-Boyd CGS'78.

Philip F. Eckert Jr. C'67, Richmond, VA, retired counsel for the US Department of Defense; July 31. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Alpha Society fraternity. His daughter is Kathleen D. Eckert C'08.

Dr. Arnold J. Goldberg D'67, Fort Myers, FL, a retired endodontist; Dec. 14, 2023.

Lorna Zeitlin Jimerson CW'67, Charlotte, VT, a school therapist and educator; July 27.

Axel J. Johnson III GEd'67, Millville, NJ, a retired elementary school principal; July 16.

Dr. Louis J. Landino Jr. D'67, Seattle, a retired orthodontist; June 29.

Dr. Ivan S. Login C'67, Charlottesville, VA, a neurologist and professor of neurology

at the University of Virginia; June 3, 2024. He served in the US Navy. At Penn, he was a member of the fencing team.

Col. David P. McLain Jr. G'67, Eastpoint, FL, a longtime US Army officer who later served as executive director of the Apalachicola Riverkeepers, a nonprofit environmental conservation group; July 4. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

Deborah Pellow CW'67, Syracuse, NY, an anthropology professor at Syracuse University; May 30.

Harris L. Perry Pepper C'67 WG'73, Gladwyne, PA, retired president of Chester County Hospital; July 29. At Penn, he was a member of Zeta Psi fraternity. His wife is March Wier Pepper CW'67, and one daughter is Meredith Pepper Taylor C'96.

Digna H. Santiago WG'67, Makati, Philippines, a retired film producer; Aug. 5.

Dwight R. Smith ME'67, Dearborn, MI, retired supervisor of product development at Ford Motor Company; June 27. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity and the lacrosse team.

Alan L. Spielman L'67, Philadelphia, a civil litigator and entertainment lawyer; Aug. 15.

Louis J. Wagner WG'67, Prairie Village, KS, a franchisee of Burger King restaurants; June 7. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

1968

Richard I. Beattie L'68, New York, a mergers lawyer who helped pioneer private equity takeovers; June 6. He served in the US Marines.

Herman Denzinger GAR'68, Santa Fe, NM, a retired architect; June 29.

Joan LeClair Ellis Nu'68, Philadelphia, a retired elementary school nurse; July 16. One daughter is Joanna Claire Ellis GNu'03.

Betty-Jane "BJ" Elias Kirwan Hanna CW'68, Rockville Centre, NY, an environmental attorney; May 6.

Jan F. Herbst C'68 G'68, Sedona, AZ, retired principal research scientist at General Motors, focusing on rare earth minerals used in vehicles; Jan. 21. At Penn, he was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society and a Benjamin Franklin Scholar.

Dr. John W. Klay EE'68 GM'74, Chalk Hill, PA, a retired cardiac and vascular surgeon; July 10.

Dr. Ronald G. Mangan C'68 D'72, Carlisle, PA, a retired dentist; June 19. He served in the US Army. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Alpha Society fraternity and the sprint football team.

Brian B. Riley EE'68, Underhill Center, VT, an electrical engineer and high school special education teacher; June 30. He served in the US Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. At Penn, he was a member of Theta Xi fraternity, ROTC, and the track team.

Bruce F. Romer WG'68, Bethesda, MD, chief administrative officer of Montgomery County, MD; June 10, 2023.

Edward F. Schwartz C'68, Weston, FL, Aug. 16. He retired from Eastman Kodak Company. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity.

Susanne Levett Shilling SW'68, Charlottesville, VA, a retired family practice attorney and faculty member at Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Richmond; July 28

Sharon Kauffman Winstead DH'68, York, PA, a retired dental hygienist; June 19.

1969

Karen R. Borack G'69, New York, former public affairs executive for the New York City Transit Authority; Aug. 24.

Dale M. Botwin C'69, WG'72, Miami, a former computer programmer in the restaurant industry; March 27. He later started a business called Reimbursement Prescription with his wife. He served in the US Navy. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity.

Jay F. Carr WG'69, Hummelstown, PA, retired president of the international division of the Hershey Company; Aug. 14.

Dr. Hack R. Chung GM'69, Ambler, PA, a physician and assistant clinical professor of medicine at Penn's Perelman School of Medicine; Aug. 3.

Ruth Kebker Durham SW'69, Tempe, AZ, a retired medical social worker; May 24, 2023.

William F. Hart CE'69, Cranbury, NJ, a retired engineer at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection; June 30.

Dr. Vernon Y. C. Kwok D'69, Simsbury, CT, a director of a hospital dentistry department; May 18.

David W. Loomis GEE'69, Needham, MA, an engineering executive at General

Dynamics; June 5. His daughter is Karen N. Zermani C'92 G'96.

Brinkley M. Messick III C'69, New York, professor emeritus of anthropology and Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African studies at Columbia University; Aug. 14. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity.

Robert Olshansky Gr'69, Falmouth, MA, a retired engineer at Verizon; March 29, 2022.

David G. Santry WG'69, New York, managing director of an investment bank; July 18. He served in the US Army.

Robin Kushner Tivic CW'69, Much, Germany, Dec. 15, 2024.

Calvin A. Wolfgang PT'69, Telford, PA, a retired physical therapist; May 5.

1970

Tracy B. Braun Mte'70, Anthem, AZ, a metallurgical engineer specializing in copper and gold mining processes; Feb. 11. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity.

Anne Clattenburg Gr'70, Wynnewood, PA, a retired chemistry professor at Eastern College; June 30, 2023.

Alan G. Hassenfeld C'70, Providence, RI, former chairman and CEO of the toy company Hasbro; July 8. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity and the squash and tennis teams.

Ajit K. Laroia WG'70, Norwalk, CT, retired vice president of strategic planning at Xerox; July 11.

Henry S. "Hank" McNeil Jr. WG'70, Philadelphia, an art collector and former co-owner of an art gallery; July 28.

Marvin N. Newberg W'70, Monticello, NY, an attorney; July 31. At Penn, he was a member of Beta Sigma Rho fraternity and the golf team.

Dr. David L. Rooney D'70, Salisbury, MA, a retired dentist; July 6.

Dr. Steven K. Secunda GM'70, Palm Beach Gardens, FL, a retired psychiatrist; July 25.

Thomas R. Sharbaugh WG'70, Sanibel, FL, a retired marketing executive at Sears and The Leap Group; May 27. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

Patrick L. Sheehan W'70, Mount Pleasant, SC, Jan. 23.

1971

James L. Boockholdt WG'71, Lake Jackson, TX, an accounting professor at the Uni-

versity of Houston and Samford University; Aug. 31. He served in the US Naval Reserve.

Elwin I. Brawner WG'71, Richmond, VA, president of a chemical company; June 2.

Robert M. Delaney WG'71, Amityville, NY, April 28.

Dr. Ronald Friedman D'71, Delray Beach, FL, a retired dentist; July 29.

Mary Hirsch Hawk GEd'71, Chambersburg, PA, a retired teacher; July 19.

Dr. Jack D. Horton M'71 GM'75, Arlington, VA, a retired cardiologist; July 10.

Raymond G. Laurito GEE'71, Riverton, UT, a former manager at Computer Sciences Corporation; July 10.

B. Quinton Lynch WG'71, Woodbridge, VA, a retired grants manager for the US Department of Health and Human Services; May 26. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

Charles C. Slover WG'71, Signal Mountain, TN, owner of a company that made equipment to support the circuit-board assembly industry; Aug. 10

Dr. Mark Unger D'71, Center Valley, PA, a dentist; June 17. He served in the US Army.

Stephen A. White L'71, Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, a genealogist at the Centre d'études acadiennes Anselme-Chiasson at the the Université de Moncton; Aug. 13.

1972

Dr. S. Mitchell Freedman M'72, Raleigh, NC, a physician; Jan. 18. He served in the US Army Medical Corps.

J. Arch Getty C'72, Santa Monica, CA, a professor of political history at UCLA; May 19. At Penn, he was a member of Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity.

Barry W. Henry C'72, Millsboro, DE, a retired investment banker; June 1. At Penn, he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity.

Robert A. Holmes C'72, Salt Lake City, an accountant; June 1. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity.

John H. Marks W'72, Claremont, ON, Canada, retired general manager of American Medical Systems; July 18, 2024. He played ice hockey well into his 60s and worked as an assistant hockey coach at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. At Penn, he was a member of the ice hockey team.

Hugh J. McCauley GA'72, Bryn Mawr, PA, an architect specializing in historic

preservation; Aug. 20. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

Charles W. Nallen Jr. SW'72, Fairmont, WV, retired executive director of a juvenile detention center; July 15. He served in the US Army.

Dr. William G. Woods M'72, Atlanta, a professor of pediatrics at Emory University and director of a children's cancer center; April 18, 2024. One son is Elliot C. Woods EE'09 EAS'09.

1973

Stanley H. Birnbaum C'73, Circle Pines, MN, a retired nonprofit executive at organizations that helped marginalized groups; June 14.

James E. Furlong WEv'73, Blackwood, NJ, former director of member relations at the New Jersey Farm Bureau; July 1. He served in the US Navy.

Abel Garcia WG'73, Kerrville, TX, a portfolio manager for a financial planning firm; June 4. He served in the US Army.

Dr. James E. Holford GD'73, Lake Geneva, WI, a retired endodontist; July 17. He served in the US Air Force during the Korean War.

Barbara Madigan Preston Nu'73 GNu'78, Mechanicsburg, PA, a former nurse; Aug. 7.

Walter J. Zerkow CE'73, Houston, vice president of Oracle's Industrial Sector Consulting division; July 9. At Penn, he was a member of the rowing team. His wife is Syma Rosenzweig Zerkow CW'72.

1974

Benjamin M. Ashcom GrEd'74, Warm-
minster, PA, a former faculty member in Penn's College of Arts & Sciences and in the Graduate School of Education and a board member of the Graduate School of Education and the Penn Museum; May 5. While at Penn, he served as an assistant instructor of history in the College of Arts & Sciences and as a lecturer in the Graduate School of Education. He then taught education at Harvard University and Antioch University before transitioning to the healthcare industry, eventually becoming president of Healthcare America. He remained a dedicated member of the Penn community, serving as a Charles E. Merrill Fellow in the Wharton School and as a member of the Graduate School of Education's Board of Advisors. Starting in 2011,

he was a member of Penn Museum's Board of Advisors, serving on the board's education committee and developing interactive curricula for student tours of the museum's Classical and Egyptian Galleries. He also served as a docent for the museum's Etruscan and Roman galleries and was a member of the museum's Sphinx Circle and Loren Eiseley Leadership Giving Program. His wife is Jane N. Ashcom G'64.

Dr. David S. Crimmins D'74, Mount Pleasant, SC, a retired dentist; July 18. He served in the US Army Signal Corps.

Glenn P. Crooks C'74, Dalton, GA, a dentist; Aug. 25. He served in the US Navy as a dentist. At Penn, he was a member of the swimming team and the ROTC.

Susan H. May Gr'74, Farmville, VA, a professor emeritus of English at Longwood College; Aug. 3.

Susan Murray Wilgus HUP'74, Millsboro, DE, an operating room nurse and a forensic nurse consultant with the Delaware public defender's office; June 27.

1975

Marstin L. Alexander W'75, Bluffton, SC, former associate comptroller at Penn; May 31. He later relocated out of the Philadelphia area to work in a family business. At Penn, he was a member of the football team. One daughter is Heather M. Pierce Nu'93.

Carolyn Hendrie Bargmann GAR'75, Lincoln, MA, an architect; Aug. 10. Her husband is Joel D. Bargmann C'73 GAR'75 and one daughter is Sarah H. Fay C'08.

Charles V. Dipietropolo WEv'75, Had-
don Township, NJ, a longtime employee of a data analytics firm; July 13. He was also an adjunct professor of computer science at Camden County College and an extra in several movies and TV shows.

Ronald E. Hicks Gr'75, Muncie, IN, a professor emeritus of anthropology at Ball State University; June 19. He served in the US Navy and the US Navy Reserve.

Dr. Thomas P. Keon GM'75, Indian River Shores, FL, an associate professor emeritus of anesthesiology and critical care in Penn's Perelman School of Medicine; May 13. He joined Penn's faculty in 1978 as an assistant professor of anesthesia. Over the next decade, he also took up teaching duties at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where he also served with the pediatric care unit; in

1987, he advanced to associate professor (clinician-educator). He retired in 1999.

Dr. Jeffrey I. Komins GM'75, Wilmington, DE, a retired obstetrician-gynecologist and chief medical officer for several hospitals; August 2025. He served in the US Army Reserve Medical Corps.

Dr. Robert A. Rushmer V'75 Gr'82, Paradise, PA, retired owner of a company that performed bovine embryo transfers; June 8.

Dr. Mark S. Schaffenburg C'75, Dallas, a former emergency medicine physician; Oct. 28, 2024.

1976

Mark R. Fetting W'76, Baltimore, CEO of an investment management bank; Aug. 9. At Penn, he was a member of Delta Psi fraternity and the squash team. One child is Conor Fetting-Smith C'04.

Larry S. Kobori G'76, Newark, CA, March 16.

Judith Neubauer Worsley PT'76, Bethlehem, PA, regional manager of the physical therapy chain NovaCare, specializing in geriatric therapy; June 2.

1977

Charles H. Abdalian WG'77, South Den-
nis, MA, cofounder of a pharmaceutical company and a biotechnology senior executive; Aug. 23. He served in the US Army.

Anthony J. Girifalco C'77, Valley Forge, PA, executive vice president and a founding member of the Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center; July 16. One sister is Sandra A. Girifalco CW'75.

Sheri Cohen Rosengarten C'77, Norristown, PA, Aug. 16.

1978

Brian D. Cole GCh'78, Orrtanna, PA, former plant manager at a chemical manufacturing business; Sept. 13, 2024.

Kal J. Kassel W'78, Myrtle Beach, SC, a former real estate broker; May 18.

Dr. Maureen H. Sapelli M'78, Hardee-
ville, SC, a rheumatologist; May 4.

Stephen M. Weld Jr. GLA'78, Milton, MA, a retired naval architect; June 25. He served in the US Army during the Vietnam War.

1979

Samuel B. Friedlander W'79, Greenbrae, CA, a stand-up comedian; June 18, 2024.

Diane Kahan Apfelbaum Toll CGS'79 G'79 CGS'01, Jenkintown, PA, Aug. 1. Her husband is Charles Toll CGS'03, and one child is John D. Apfelbaum C'75.

1980

Dr. Robert M. Elfont C'80, San Francisco, an executive in the biopharmaceutical industry; June 5. At Penn, he was a Thouron Award recipient.

Mark P. Maguire WG'80, Langhorne, PA, retired president of a chemical company; June 22. During his retirement, he worked with the Wharton Small Business Development Center to establish a program matching MBA students with start-ups in all lines of business.

Dr. Dana R. Martin GD'80 GEd'80, Knoxville, TN, a retired orthodontist; July 17.

Patrick E. McGovern Gr'80, Media, PA, the former scientific director of the Biomolecular Archaeology Project for Cuisine, Fermented Beverages, and Health at the Penn Museum and a former adjunct professor of anthropology in Penn's School of Arts & Sciences (SAS); Aug. 23. He joined the Penn Museum as a research specialist after earning his PhD. While most of his work was concentrated at the museum, he also taught in the anthropology department at SAS. He was a pioneer in the field of biomolecular archaeology and archaeological residue analysis, studying the world's earliest alcoholic beverages. He directed excavations in the Baq'ah Valley, Jordan, for more than 25 years; and later excursions led to such discoveries as alcoholic beverages in China that dated to about 7000 BCE and early wine from a Neolithic Iranian village from about 5400 BCE. His best-known public project with the Penn Museum introduced modern consumers to ancient ales: Using residues extracted from drinking vessels found in a tomb belonging to King Midas's father, he successfully recreated the beverage served at the famous ruler's funerary feast. This recipe led to a commercially produced beer, Midas Touch, in partnership with Dogfish Head Craft-Brewed Ales ["Man, The Drinker," Jan/Feb 2010, and "Beyond the Golden Touch," May/Jun 2016]. He retired in 2014. His wife is Doris Nordmeier McGovern CGS'78 GEd'88.

1981

James P. Bovenzi WG'81, Clarkston, MI, retired executive director of global supply chain for General Motors; May 28.

Linda Jean Cook GNu'81, Catawissa, PA, retired associate professor of nursing at Bloomsburg University; July 4, 2023.

Kay McGhee Leary GNu'81, Jacksonville, FL, a women's health nurse practitioner and a professor of nursing at Jacksonville University and the University of Florida; July 26. Her sister is Bonnie McGhee Strittmatter WG'80.

Dr. Stuart E. Lieblich D'81, Collinsville, CT, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon; Feb. 28, 2024.

Thomas Seraydarian Jr. GrEd'81, Parkville, MD, retired director of professional development education for Penn's Graduate School of Education; July 1.

1982

James R. Power SW'82 WG'82, Minneapolis, part of the leadership team of a youth sports education nonprofit; July 14.

James H. Rich Jr. WG'82, Ardmore, PA, founder of an oil services business, and a commercial pilot and flight instructor; May 24. He served in the US Navy and the US Navy Reserve.

1983

Michael F. McGinn C'83, New York, a middle school psychologist; Aug. 13. At Penn, he was a member of the *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

Scott R. Mixer C'83, Berkeley, CA, a former financial officer for a healthcare firm; July 18. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

1984

Dr. Barry Dubner M'84, Parkland, FL, a retired dermatologist; July 30.

Garry C. Gaylord W'84, Damascus, MD, retired director of corporate internal audit at Lockheed Martin; March 5.

Elizabeth B. Hatcher WG'84, Santa Fe, NM, May 2. She retired from an insurance company.

Dr. Craig W. Holbrook V'84, Lebanon, ME, a veterinarian; May 20. At Penn, he was a member of the ice hockey team.

Roger K. Rauffer Gr'84, Cinnaminson, NJ, an environmental engineer and professor at Penn and Johns Hopkins University; Aug. 2.

1985

David Thomas Deery Nu'85 GNu'86, Philadelphia, a retired pediatric nurse; May 25.

1986

Kenneth A. Brunetti C'86, Kensington, CA, a lawyer; April 26. At Penn, he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity.

Elliott J. Zucker C'86, Plainview, NY, an attorney; Dec. 6, 2024.

1987

Dr. Scott T. Josephts M'87, Mashpee, MA, retired chief medical officer at Cigna Healthcare; July 28.

Roy A. Markell C'87, New Rochelle, NY, former secretary and treasurer of his family's footwear business; July 8. At Penn, he was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity.

Errol D. Rafal G'87, Phoenix, AZ, a teacher; June 1.

1988

Dr. Jerald S. Matt D'88, Lafayette Hill, PA, a dentist; Aug. 11.

Janet M. Mullen-Krimm GNu'88, Philadelphia, a former nurse; Jan. 24.

Eiko Amy Okamura C'88 W'88, Culver City, CA, former controller for a nonprofit that provides housing and social services to low-income families; June 24.

1989

Mark R. Endicott EE'89, Louisville, KY, an educator at a college prep day school; June 24.

1990

Greg R. Quaglia EE'90, Syracuse, NY, a telecommunications analyst for MCI Communications; June 16.

Baron Guy Ullens WAM'90, Ohain, Belgium, a retired investment banker, philanthropist, and art collector; April 19.

Richard W. Zito Jr. WG'90, Sandy, UT, a financial advisor; Aug. 7.

1991

Philomena Ann Gruppo G'91, Allentown, PA, director of nursing at a psychiatric hospital; May 24.

1993

Carolyn Dillon Carter GrEd'93, Harrisburg, PA, an elementary and middle school educator and administrator; June 20.

Mark L. Koontz Gr'93, Melrose, MA, a professor and educational administrator; July 10.

1994

James G. Davis Gr'94, Philadelphia, a former research assistant professor of pathology at Penn; May 27.

Kevin A. McCreadie WG'94, Toronto, ON, Canada, an investment bank executive; July 2.

1996

Kenneth A. Colaluca Jr. L'96, New York, a lawyer; July 1.

William A. O'Flanagan GrEd'96, Philadelphia, headmaster of a school for students with significant learning, mental, and physical challenges; June 20. His children include William A. O'Flanagan C'91 (Michelle L. Toll C'91) and Elizabeth J. O'Flanagan C'97. His grandchildren include Caitlin T. O'Flanagan C'22 L'25 and Spencer T. O'Flanagan C'24.

1998

John L. Guinan CGS'98, Ardmore, PA, founder of an architectural design and construction business; June 6. His wife is Maryanne B. McGuckin-Guinan GEd'79 GrEd'81.

Rochelle "Shellie" Levy Sherman GGS'98 CGS'02, Pittsburgh, a weaver, painter, printmaker, photographer, collagist, and mixed-media artist; Aug. 29.

Tiffany C. Wright WG'98, Decatur, GA, former president of Toca Family Business Services; April 8.

1999

Dr. Susan R. Cowdery GM'99, Ithaca, NY, a physician; Dec. 1, 2024.

2001

Dr. Duncan C. MacCourt M'01, Woburn, MA, a psychiatrist, attorney, and professor at Harvard University; Aug. 7.

Dr. Peter G. Sultan WMP'01 GM'02, Westhampton, NY, an orthopedic surgeon; July 13.

2006

Jeffrey D. Czermanski W'06, Wayne, PA, June 28. At Penn, he was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and the lacrosse team.

Rodney Gibson IV WG'06, Highlands Ranch, CO, a business executive; Aug. 23.

2007

Victor Friedman CGS'07, Merion Station, PA, a retired judge of the Superior

Court of New Jersey; June 28. One daughter is Amy E. Friedman C'86 GEd'86.

Sondra Robinson Isen CGS'07, Boca Raton, FL, May 27. Two children are Nathan D. Isen W'75 and Nancy Isen Roberts C'86.

Rabbi Herbert Rosenblum CGS'07, Rockville, MD, Sept. 7, 2023.

2009

Jonathan D. Schroeder WEv'09, Wilmington, DE, a travel planner; June 27.

2013

Dr. Darren E. Mantyla D'13, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI, July 26.

2014

Natan M. Lailari EAS'14 EAS'15, Falls Church, VA, a former software engineer at Google; June 30. At Penn, he was a Benjamin Franklin Scholar and a member of the sprint football team.

2016

Dr. Luis A. Perez Melean D'16, Philadelphia, a dentist; March 30, 2023.

Monica Ruth Myers WG'16, New York, an investment banking analyst at Bank of America; March 31.

2019

Natasha Allen C'19, Brooklyn, NY, a former investment banker; Aug. 22. She shared her cancer journey on social media, propelling her to internet fame.

2021

Brianna A. Cotton GNu'21, Marlton, NJ, a nurse practitioner in the oncology unit at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania; Aug. 5.

2022

Jon M. Corley WMP'22, Franklin, TN, former founder of a communications firm; July 31. He served in the US Army during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

2027

Claire Y. Lee Nu'27, Manlius, NY, a junior in Penn's School of Nursing and a student clinical assistant at Upstate Medical University; Aug. 20. At Penn, she was a Benjamin Franklin Scholar.

Faculty & Staff

Dr. Paul C. Aita. *See Class of 1962.*

Marstin L. Alexander. *See Class of 1975.*

Benjamin M. Ashcom. *See Class of 1974.*

Ronald G. Bodkin. *See Class of 1962.*

Dr. Hack R. Chung. *See Class of 1969.*

Brianna A. Cotton. *See Class of 2021.*

James G. Davis. *See Class of 1994.*

Dr. Joel W. Eisner. *See Class of 1959.*

Douglas C. Ewbank, Philadelphia, a research professor emeritus of sociology at Penn and the former associate director of Penn's Population Studies Center and the Population Aging Research Center; July 22. He joined Penn's faculty as a senior research investigator and as a lecturer in sociology in 1982. He became an associate director of the sociology department in 1986, an adjunct associate professor in 1989, and a research associate professor in 2001. His early research focused on the demography of tropical Africa and genetic differences in mortality by genotype. He collaborated with Penn's Alzheimer's Disease Center on various aspects of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. His research also addressed longevity and chronic disease in older adults. He left Penn in 2007.

Dr. George M. Gill. *See Class of 1958.*

Dr. Thomas P. Keon. *See Class of 1975.*

Larry L. Laster. *See Class of 1966.*

Roberto S. Mariano, Gladwyne, PA, a professor emeritus of economics in Penn's School of Arts & Sciences; April 17. He first came to Penn as a visiting lecturer at Wharton in 1971. Two years later, he became an associate professor of economics. The economics department moved to the School of Arts & Sciences in 1974. There, he became a full professor in 1980. At Penn, he conducted research on economic statistical models of commodities, including tin, rubber, and wheat, and on the economy of the Philippines. He co-created the Diebold-Mariano test to evaluate forecast accuracy, which is still widely used in econometrics today. In 2022, he was appointed by Pope Francis to serve as a board member of the Supervisory and Financial Information Authority, the Holy See's financial intelligence and anti-money-laundering unit. In 2002, he was appointed the founding dean of the School of Economics and Social Science at Singapore Management University (SMU) and served as the vice provost for

research and deputy director of the Wharton-SMU Research Centre, a collaboration between SMU and Penn. He retired in 2004. His wife is Julie D. Mariano CGS'73, and his son is Michael R. Mariano W'00 CGS'07 GFA'11.

Patrick E. McGovern. *See Class of 1980.*

James A. Nolan. *See Class of 1961.*

Roger K. Raufer. *See Class of 1984.*

Dr. Karl Rickels. *See Class of 1957.*

Peggy Reeves Sanday, Chincoteague, VA, a professor emerita of anthropology in Penn's School of Arts & Sciences (SAS); June 13. She joined Penn's Faculty of Arts & Sciences (today known as SAS) in 1972 as an associate professor of anthropology. She also had a faculty affiliation with the Penn Museum, where she did much of her teaching. She became a full professor in 1985, and in 2001 was named the R. Jean Brownlee Endowed Term Chair. While at Penn, she also taught in the College of General Studies (the precursor to today's College of Liberal & Professional Studies); lectured in SAS's Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing; and helped to form the Center for Public Interest Anthropology. She conducted pioneering research in women's studies, Southeast Asia, the anthropology of gender, multiculturalism, sexual culture, and public interest anthropology. She created an influential theory of "matrifocality," which challenged western assumptions about male dominance in human societies ["Gazetteer," Nov/Dec 1997; and "Gazetteer," Jan/Feb 2005]. She retired in 2007. One son is Eric C. Sanday C'91.

Thomas Seraydarian Jr. *See Class of 1981.*

Norton S. Taichman, Narberth, PA, a professor emeritus of pathology and former chair of the department of pathology in Penn Dental Medicine; June 21. In 1972, he accepted a position as department chair of pathology at Penn Dental Medicine. He also served as associate dean of academic affairs in the dental school. In 1977, he won Penn's Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching. His pioneering work identified fundamental mechanisms of periodontal pathogenesis. He retired in 2001. One child is Dr. Darren B. Taichman C'86 Gr'92 M'93 GM'04 GM'00.

Stanley Waldstein. *See Class of 1957.*

School Abbreviations

Ar	Architecture	GEE	master's, Electrical Engineering	HUP	Nurse training (till 1978)
ASC	Annenberg	GEng	master's, Engineering and Applied Science	L	Law
C	College (bachelor's)	GEx	master's, Engineering Executive	LAr	Landscape Architecture
CCC	College Collateral Courses	GFA	master's, Fine Arts	LPS	Liberal and Professional Studies
CE	Civil Engineering	GGs	master's, College of General Studies	M	Medicine
CGS	College of General Studies (till 2008)	GL	master's, Law	ME	Mechanical Engineering
Ch	Chemistry	GLA	master's, Landscape Architecture	MT	Medical Technology
ChE	Chemical Engineering	GME	master's, Mechanical Engineering	MtE	Metallurgical Engineering
CW	College for Women (till 1975)	GM	Medicine, post-degree	Mu	Music
D	Dental Medicine	GMt	master's, Metallurgical Engineering	NED	Certificate in Nursing
DH	Dental Hygiene	GNu	master's, Nursing	Nu	Nursing (bachelor's)
EAS	Engineering and Applied Science (bachelor's)	GPU	master's, Governmental Administration	OT	Occupational Therapy
Ed	Education	Gr	doctorate	PSW	Pennsylvania School of Social Work
EE	Electrical Engineering	GrC	doctorate, Civil Engineering	PT	Physical Therapy
FA	Fine Arts	GrE	doctorate, Electrical Engineering	SAMP	School of Allied Medical Professions
G	master's, Arts and Sciences	GrEd	doctorate, Education	SPP	Social Policy and Practice (master's)
GAr	master's, Architecture	GrL	doctorate, Law	SW	Social Work (master's) (till 2005)
GCE	master's, Civil Engineering	GrN	doctorate, Nursing	V	Veterinary Medicine
GCh	master's, Chemical Engineering	GRP	master's, Regional Planning	W	Wharton (bachelor's)
GCP	master's, City Planning	GrS	doctorate, Social Work	WAM	Wharton Advanced Management
GD	Dental, post-degree	GrW	doctorate, Wharton	WEF	Wharton Extension Finance
GEd	master's, Education	GV	Veterinary, post-degree	WEv	Wharton Evening School
		Hon	Honorary	WG	master's, Wharton
				WMP	Wharton Management Program

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Commemorating "Collegiate"



This year marks the 100th anniversary of a bouncy earworm of a song called "Collegiate," written by Penn alumni Moe Jaffe W1923 L1926 and Nat Bonx L1925 while they were still students. The lyrics are rife with period references and comic wordplay ("Tap-pa Haf-fa Keg," "Del-ta Hand-a Poker"), but the spirit of the song is best expressed by the energetically nonsensical refrain: "Collegiate, Collegiate. Yes! we are Collegiate. ... We're collegiate, Rah! Rah! Rah!"

After becoming a campus favorite as performed by "Jaffe's Collegians"—as pictured on the sheet music—the song became a hit when it was recorded in 1925 by Fred Waring's band, the Pennsylvanians. That version used the lyrics sparingly, and the tune without words would be employed in two Marx Brothers movies: as background music for Harpo's character "The Professor" in *Animal Crackers* and played on camera by Chico in the college-set *Horsefeathers*.

A 1955 profile in the *Daily Pennsylvanian* ("Moe Jaffe, Wig Writer of '20s Currently Producing Hit Songs") recapped his experience, "[r]iding on the luxury of his first success," of taking the band on a European tour in 1926 and described his continuing to write for Mask and Wig as an alumnus. It singled out "Gypsy in My Soul," written with Clay Boland D1926 for the 1937 show *Fifty-Fifty*, as a highlight. Later Jaffe compositions included "Bell Bottom Trousers" in 1945 and "I'm My Own Grandpa," written in 1947 to meet a demand for what the article called "the gimmick tune."

Less is immediately findable online about Bonx, who sources credit for the music in "Collegiate." According to a brief obit in the *New York Times* after his death in 1950, he got a scholarship to Penn and graduated from the law school. "An accomplished pianist" who "had played with several orchestras," he continued to collaborate on songs with Jaffe but, unlike his partner, he also went on to practice law, working as an attorney for the Securities and Exchange Commission at the time he died.

A number of versions of the song can be found on YouTube. But be warned before you hit play: a century on, the song retains its power to get in your head and stay there. "Collegiate, Collegiate ..." —JP



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