Dear Classmate,

We are less than two years away from our Fiftieth Reunion.

More and more of us are retiring, and telling one another that we want to be together in May 2018 on the Penn Campus to celebrate our 50th and experience the joy that grows out of strong friendships and the shared recollections of the four years from September, 1964, to June, 1968.

I take this opportunity to thank our Class Officers, Barbara Russo Bravo, Sidney Rodbell, Douglas L. Cox, Mia Argentieri, Elsie Sterling Howard, Jack Goldenberg and Michael Neiditch, for the work they do month by month in our behalf. I also thank those classmates who have written for the Class Newsletters, contributing their memories while inspiring our own.

I trust that you will enjoy this issue of the newsletter, and I wish you a very happy and healthy summer. The pace of our communications is about to quicken.

Yours for the '68 Celebration in 2018.

Alexius C. Conroy

Suddenly our 50th Reunion is only Two Years Away

Elsie Howard, CW'68, Vice President of Outreach

There is agreement among our classmates that our upcoming 50th reunion will be a milestone reunion and fantastic fun! Early outreach to classmates to build interest and camaraderie -- re-connecting through successful pre-reunion events around the country-- has spurred our classmates to contact friends near and far—and friends and classmates have promised to return for the 50th, May 11–14, 2018.

We are well on our way to achieving a prodigious turnout, developing effective communications – and, most important, connecting with friends. Outreach and collaborative, strategic
planning include the announcement of plans for an appealing, landmark class project in honor of our 50th reunion.

In preparation for the 50th Reunion, our Class has committed to establishing a class legacy through a diversified program of reunion-based, class-focused philanthropy created by 1968, for 1968. This program matches the priorities of our class, and establishes a legacy that enables every classmate to participate.

The Legacy Project supports four exciting initiatives: Scholarship, a Time Capsule, partnership with the undergraduate class of 2018 and a Legacy Garden wherein we will memorialize all of our classmates, those who will celebrate on campus, those who cannot join us, and those who have passed away.

The structure for what to include in the 1968 Time Capsule will be established this fall, after brainstorming at the Homecoming planning meeting...so, stay tuned. The current plan is for the Class of 2018 to open the capsule on the occasion of their 50th reunion, forever linking our classes. 1968 hopes that our partnership will create a new paradigm that will link 50th reunion class with the parallel graduating class, forever strengthening the Penn Alumni heritage. And, even though e 1968 and Penn haven’t yet chosen the exact location for the Legacy Garden, (and that won’t happen until this summer) the Project has electrified class members with this one-time opportunity to shape Penn’s campus, providing space for both contemplation and relaxation for the Penn community. Plans will be solidified this fall. If you are interested in working on either the Time Capsule or the Legacy Garden, please let us know.

If you would like to volunteer to help plan the Legacy Garden, or work on the Time Capsule project, or if you have a student in your family in the Class of 2018 and would like to be a part of that collaboration, please let me know. Fran Poepplemeyer Sheely is the Chairperson of the Legacy Project and she welcomes your help. Sidney Rodbell and Doug Cox continue to lead the Philanthropic effort. Please let us know what volunteer effort interests you. Please reply to Micky Neiditch at hmichael@alumni.upenn.edu.

1968 has already created a Legacy at Penn through scholarship support that has been a cornerstone of our philanthropy at Penn since our first class scholarships were launched in 1993, at our 25th reunion. Since 1993 -18 students have benefitted from financial support from the efforts of the class of 1968. Currently we are helping fund the education of three exemplary students. 416 Penn students have benefited from individually endowed scholarships that members of the Class of 1968 created. WOW!

Profiles of our current students are included in fall newsletters – and these students are truly outstanding! 1968 thanks every donor to the every class gift over these past 25 years who has played a part in strengthening Penn’s need blind admissions commitment through our Class of 1968 Scholarship Fund. Every dollar has made a
difference! Every donor has made an impact, no matter what size the gift, as together we generated an impressive aggregate of financial aid. Today, as we plan for our 50th, 1968 has recommitted to Scholarship Aid as an enduring legacy for Penn students.

From President Gutmann: “The University of Pennsylvania is committed to putting educational opportunity within reach of all outstanding students, regardless of their financial circumstances. Named scholarships are the most reliable source of need-based aid for exceptional students from all backgrounds. Scholarships help make it possible for Penn to fulfill its promise — supporting need-blind admissions with need-based financial aid and opening our doors to talented, hardworking students who otherwise could not afford to attend.”

Penn has benefited from the generous support of undergraduate scholarship donors for several decades. We would not be where we are today without the generous support of our extended Penn family. Named endowed scholarships provide essential funding that help to define Penn as an eminent, affordable university.”

Presently, 47% of students at Penn receive some financial aid. Penn’s need-blind admissions process depends on the continued and growing alumni support. Endowed scholarships at Penn require a commitment of $150,000, the interest from which supports one student a year in perpetuity. (Your gift of $125,000 may be matched with $25,000 in challenge grants).

As you know, many of us, as well as our friends and classmates benefitted from financial aid when we were undergraduates. Many of them have returned that support through donations to the class gifts and some have paid back and paid forward through the establishment of named scholarships. Among classmates who have individually funded endowed scholarships are Larry and Melanie Nussdorf. Larry wrote recently: “Why do we support scholarships at Penn? For two reasons: First, education has always been at the heart of the American Dream. With it, success is possible; without it, the odds are stacked against you. Second, we love Penn. It changed our lives 40+ years ago, and continues to do so. It would be wonderful if a Penn education were accessible to all. That may not be possible but we feel it is our responsibility to do what we can to bridge the gap, to make a Penn affordable for all qualified applicants, regardless of their ability to pay.”

The Class of 1968 salutes every donor over these past decades who have made the Class of 1968 scholarships possible. In addition many of our classmates have supported personal scholarships. They are: Robert Cort, Frank Coulson*, William Davidson, Michael Glosserman, Beth & Joe Hurwich, Jeraldine Kozloff, Jack Lehman, in memory of Mary Lehman, Carolyn Lynch*, Phil McKinley, Anthony Morris, Larry Nussdorf, Gail Riepe, Phyllis & Sidney Rodbell, Andrew Saul, Norman Scott, Judy and Allen Sokal, Diane Williams, Ed Zolla* (Asterisks reflect our beloved deceased classmates)
I'm looking forward to seeing you soon.

How To Make New Scholarships
If you are interested in understanding the guidelines for structuring new scholarships or adding to existing scholarships, please contact Josh Nay, our Class Giving Director in The Penn Fund, at 215-746-6233 or at joshnay@upenn.edu for more information.

Memoirs and Reflections from Our Classmates

James Carnahan, C’68

I wanted to tell you about where I ate most of my meals during my four years at Penn. Freshman year was Houston Hall, of course, at the cafeteria. In the dorm quad there was a sandwich shop I went to from time to time. Little about this food was memorable; it was satisfactory. I liked that little sandwich shop; there were a couple of African American fellows manning it, and they were very friendly. One thing I remember was what big hands they had, forming those sandwiches and setting those little pickle slices inside the wax paper so they wouldn’t wet the sandwich.

I was in a fraternity, Sigma Phi Epsilon, sophomore thru senior years; that’s where I had most of my meals. We were well served by a gentleman whose name was Alexander Marshall. He had been the house chef for decades, and he continued for many years more. The food was basic, traditional, Southern-influenced American cuisine, and it was served in ample quantities. We were young, with adolescent appetites, and always satisfied with the quality and quantity. I was a scholarship student, and waited tables at the house in exchange for meals. I had a Friday routine of coming back from class, drinking a large martini, and going down to wait tables in a happily intoxicated state. We had a good time, back then—I was fortunate to find a good fraternity house with a collegial, diverse and academically inclined group of fellows.

Alexander Marshall
Oct. 1968, my senior year
Mr Marshall had a special meal he prepared for us once a year, or maybe it was twice. I do not recall. He would roast a whole pig—in the skin, head on. But the house oven was too narrow and he had to cut it in half to get it the entire beast into the oven. Years later, when I moved to North Carolina, I realized this resembled what we here call a “pig pickin’.” One year that pig’s head with an apple in its mouth appeared on my bed (the prankster, still unknown to me, was kind enough to put it on a platter.)

In my senior year I moved into a 2nd floor studio apartment at 4004 Pine St, a couple of blocks from the Sig Ep house (and the then beloved Pennsylvania Diner). I continued to eat most of my meals at the fraternity, and enjoyed paying for them by waiting tables. I think I waited three days a week. When I did eat in my apartment I was a creature of habit: for supper I heated up a ‘Stouffers’ lasagna and fixed myself a salad of spinach greens. The kitchen-dining room was a small space that I think must have once been a porch. There were windows all around. I really enjoyed having a place to entertain friends, and create a meal to share with friends! I went looking for 4004 Pine in 2006; the building is still there but that kitchen-dining porch and room below it have been removed.


“*We met for a reason, you were either a blessing or a lesson.*”

It was over 50 years ago that I walked onto the Penn campus. My life never was the same. People were the main reason. Incredible people – classmates, teachers, fellow undergraduates, administrators and staff, coaches, alumni and others – talented, capable, and diverse. Each one who came into my life served as a blessing or served up a lesson. Lessons varied from the simplistic to the profound. For example, an alumnus advised me, “As an outstanding football player, you will be invited to many events and functions on and off campus. If you are not sure what to wear, always wear a coat and tie. For you can always dress down but, you cannot dress up.”
The blessings came in multiples. As an undergraduate, no blessing was more significant than in the spring of my freshman year. The blessing came in the person of Frank Dolson W’54, Philadelphia Inquirer sportswriter and syndicated columnist. Frank convinced me not to transfer to another university where a full scholarship awaited me. This story is more detailed and heartfelt than I can express here. His bottom line was, “You will never regret graduating Penn”. As you know, I listened to Frank. He was right.

My interaction with a number of you did not end with graduation. After signing as a free agent with the Dallas Cowboys (a lesson in [bad] timing: quarterbacks that year were – Don Meredith, Craig Morton, Jerry Rhome and Roger Staubach and yours truly) and short gigs with 3 other pro teams, I signed with the NY Giants and headed to Manhattan. A good number of you were in NYC starting your careers. Those were fun times. I was in the city until the fall of 1970, working at Chase Manhattan Bank on Wall Street. I left professional football in 1969 and did basic training in the spring of 1969 at Parris Island as an USMCR enlistee. During basic training, where I had time for reflection, I realized that education, not Wall Street, was my calling. It was time to ‘pay it forward’.

After a short stint in regional banking, I returned to Penn graduating in 1972 with a Masters in Educational Leadership from the Graduate School of Education. More importantly, I met Debbie Schmidt ’72 – my greatest blessing. We married in June, 1972. Debbie’s dad, Dr. Rudy Schmidt, was a medical school faculty member, an orthopedic surgeon and team physician at Penn. He worked on me numerous times, and on many of you who wore the Red and Blue. Rudy, another blessing, kiddingly said that he would have taken better care of me had he known I was to be his son-in-law.

Debbie and I began our 40-year journey of amazing lessons and blessings in education at the Peddie School in New Jersey in August, 1972. Roles and responsibilities – teacher, coach, dorm master, assistant dean, women’s co-AD - evolved for both of us. It was during my 8 years at Peddie and my last 5 as Director of Alumni & Development that I decided to seek a headmaster position. The blessing of parenthood found us at Peddie. Our three children were born during those 8 years and I also pursued my doctorate at Penn. I am ‘ABD’ by the way.

The year 1980 began 30 years of leading independent schools in Bryan-College Station, Texas, Miami, FL, Severna Park, MD, and Tucson, AZ. People continued to provide so many important blessings and lessons that have enriched and endeared the lives of our family. As a headmaster, transitional leadership defined my executive style. Each school that I led needed to redefine its mission, build upon its historical fundamental purpose and principles and present day community assets. My Penn education instructed much of my leadership and strategic planning proposals for each school. Sustainable strides and successes were realized at each school. Each school achieved many regional and national recognitions and awards, for example, U.S. Department of Education School of Excellence Award.
The prospect of a mission driven, student-centered, goal-oriented school community grounded in explicit principles and holistic educational philosophy in pursuit of personal excellence has proven a sound formula for independent school advancement.

Education has been a true calling for Debbie and me. Debbie continued her career primarily as a middle and upper school math teacher. We have been fortunate to earn distinctions and awards at all levels. However, in 2006 we were stunned when the Severn School Board of Trustees in Maryland named the newest 45,000 sq. foot academic building on campus in our honor, Creeden Hall.

Today, Debbie and I reside in Oro Valley, AZ and St. Joseph Island, Ontario, Canada. Oro Valley is a suburb of Tucson and St. Joseph is an island where five generations of Debbie’s family have spent summers. Our two daughters and son live in Seattle, NYC and Charlotte respectively. They are our pride and joy along with our son-in-law and two grandchildren. We have been blessed with the good health that allows us to enjoy regular gym exercise, golf, tennis and more. We too enjoy time in nature, reading and travel to visit family and dear friends. Debbie continues as a math tutor and community volunteer. I do some independent school consulting and volunteer work.

Over the decades, Debbie and I have directed dozens of promising young people to Penn, including our son, Court ‘01. We have headed or served on regional Alumni Admission Interview Committees, class reunion efforts, athletic recruitment, and specific speaking events on campus. Our personal financial support has been modest but substantial from families directed to Penn. Penn has and always will be extremely important to us. I can best sum up our feelings by paraphrasing Robert Browning’s poem “Italy”: ‘Open my heart and you will see, carved inside it U of P, such lovers old are I and she, so it ever was and ever will be’.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you classmates for being a blessing, lesson or both. I’d be remiss if I did note three special lifelong friends, classmates and fellow Dekes Rick Owens, Dennis Blake and Kirk Karaszkwieciz. Special Penn mentors include Paul ‘Herky’ Rubincam ’57, George Koval ’59, Bill Owen, Craig Sweeten’ 37, Dick Corrigan, Fred Shabel, Coaches Harry Gamble and John Cervino, and Dr. Bill Castetter. Hope to see all of you for our 50th to continue both blessings and lessons. Until then, take good care.
Bonnie J. O'Boyle, CW'68

For the last 12 years, I’ve had one of the best retirement “jobs” around, as one of two dozen trustees of the James A. Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, Pa. For an art collector, being on the board of an art museum is like being a chocoholic in a Lindt shop: you can talk one-on-one with the curators and museum director, you can visit the art storage rooms and the other “backstage” places, and you are able to meet and come to know---as friends, collectors, curators, and artists you weren’t aware of in your life as a “civilian.”

You can even meet royalty as we did when the museum hosted a Princess Grace exhibit.

Ironically, though I never took an art course at Penn, or anything in museum management (if there was such a class in 1968), Penn really taught me how museums run. My favorite place to hang out as an undergraduate was the University Museum. It was a little old-fashioned looking in the 1960s, and there was no climate control, but it was a welcoming place, full of treasures from all over the world.

After college, when I started making more than a subsistence wage, I became a member of the Loren Eiseley Society which provides as much as 70% of the Museum’s unrestricted funds. Reading the Museum newsletters and reports, plus listening to the director’s talks at the annual dinner, I learned what museums need to do to survive and flourish.

I learned that bringing in visitors means offering new, changing exhibits, and also updating existing ones. You only have to consider the contrast between the old, dusty Greek gallery and the new one to see that museums have to update, just as any business does.

And then there is the all-important development office. Museums can’t survive on “box office” receipts or sales at the shop—they need to cultivate important donors and use tools like the LES to raise money. I watched, for example, how ladies on the important Women’s Committee at the museum put in countless hours of work and think outside the box (like lunches organized around jewelry) to bring in extra revenue.
So Penn did prepare me for the heavy lifting museum trustees need to do. “My” museum, the Michener, is just 30 years old, but is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Only 10% of museums in the USA carry this accreditation and achieving and retaining it means periodic hard bouts of work by the trustees as well as the staff. Months of meetings, for example, go into evaluating and updating the museum’s strategic plan. And that’s just one part of the package needed for periodic reaccreditation inspections.

As head of the collections committee, I know that accreditation means careful consideration of works being deaccessioned. The AAM’s strict standard is that any funds realized by the proper sale of deaccessioned works must be used for art acquisitions only, not to pay off mortgages or for operating expenses. By the same token, works accessioned should be worthy of display. Our committee, which meets quarterly, very carefully accepts gifts and deaccession pieces. There is a lot of discussion over these moves and, thankfully, we have a trove of experts on our committee who respect each other’s opinion.

Opinions! Yes, there are differing opinions on a museum board—about events, exhibits, and keeping to the budget (along with that other perennial hot potato—the yearly draw from the endowment). The Michener has been fortunate in having two strong directors who understand the importance of keeping church and state separated. As a trustee, I don’t want to meddle with what the curators are doing—we’ve hired them and we need to let them do their jobs.

Our chief responsibility is budgeting and development. (Thank you Penn Museum!). Oh, and that includes some hefty draws on a trustee’s checkbook. When you take a position on a museum board, you expect to write checks. You need to contribute a yearly set amount, plus cough up for tables at galas and special appeals. Any museum director knows it’s easy to get people to pay to put their name on a room; much harder to get them to plonk down cash for A/C improvements or to buy a painting that fills a gap. That’s what trustees are for!

Trustees also need to be a public face for the museum, to interest outsiders in its mission. For the last few years, for example, I’ve arranged for the curators and collection committee members to visit private collections outside our bailiwick in Bucks County. We’ve met some great people that way and, hopefully, interested them in the Michener.

The Michener, incidentally, has a fine tradition of having one trustee drawn from the pool of museum volunteers and docents. Currently, that person is one of our best, most dedicated docents, and having her on the board has made us all aware of how hard the docents train and continually update their education as new exhibits roll in. For one photography exhibit two years ago, they even had to learn a fair bit about astronomy (the photos were of astral bodies!).
On April 12, we had our annual Volunteer Recognition party and I had the honor of giving the keynote speech. The museum wouldn’t be what it is without these hundred-some men and women who do the real, unglamorous jobs of keeping our programs and tours rolling. We sure couldn’t afford to pay people to do what they do freely, so it’s our duty to make sure they know they’re appreciated. And donate some decent wine to the party!

Our Classmates Select Their Favorite Professors

Diane McClure Holsenbeck, CW’68: Remembers Dr. Froelich Rainey

Each of the eight terms of classes during our undergraduate years at Penn revealed a different favorite professor. Hence it is a difficult choice, especially since atop them all for me was a T.A., Mary Ellen Didier, who came from the University of Chicago to pursue a PhD in archaeology at Penn. So I pondered from the plethora of choices. Was it Pleistocene Geologist Horace Richards, for whom Raymond Dart, L.S.B. Leakey, and Rhodes Whitmore Fairbridge substituted while Dr. Richards was lecturing abroad? Was it brilliant archaeologist Dr. James B. Pritchard or famous Loren Eiseley, dramatic Art History professor Dr. Richard Brilliant, or showman Alexander Riasanovsky (shortly to be eclipsed by Alfred Rieber?) Or better yet was it Botanist Dr. John M. Fogg from the Morris Arboretum or English master teacher Dr. Charles Bassett, or even Neil Welliver and his architecture course in "learning to see?"

Viewing all the choices from my life now I decided on Dr. Froelich Rainey, Director of The University Museum, who both inspired me and awakened me to ideas that are relevant today. Well before senior year students learn that it is better to choose courses for the professor than for the subject matter. It seemed a pity to me as a second semester senior majoring in archaeology that I had not taken a course with Dr. Rainey. He was offering a senior seminar in "Archaeology & Ethnography of the Circumpolar Regions." I had almost zero interest in the subject matter but it was open to only six
students, a controversial limitation the Anthropology Department enjoyed because of outside funding from the museum.

Dr. Rainey had done research as a young PhD candidate in the geographic area of my thesis but he had turned to expeditions elsewhere.

Dr. Rainey conducted the class much as though he were a grandfather telling you through his life stories the hard truth of what you needed to know if you went on to become an archaeologist or ethnographer. Dr. James B. Pritchard did this too but in a big lecture hall in the Law School. In doing so Dr. Rainey kindled a suppressive desire in me to explore the circumpolar regions, with or without a PhD.

I would not have made the serious sacrifice of health that Rainey's wife and daughter made living in Point Barrow back in the late 40's/early 50's but I am grateful that he broadened my vision. (His wife had to eat separately with the native women, and while pregnant, putrid meat. The severe climate affected their daughter's health for her lifetime.)

Although there has been an assumption for over a century that the Americas were populated by peoples migrating across the Bering Straits, Dr. Rainey went to great pains to explain that despite all the research, including his own, there was not one bit of physical evidence of this having happened and that imposed consequences and challenges for archaeologists.

Three decades after graduation I began collecting Inuit sculpture and just this year I finally went to Antarctica, below the Antarctic Circle. Only 5% of the continent of Antarctica has ever been explored.

The confluence of what I learned from the aforementioned professors formed an education that can neither be taken away from me nor traded for the most valuable material possessions. What a moment it was when I read that scientists had finally accepted the theory of continental drift that Columbia's Rhodes Whitmore Fairbridge purported in 1965 to us wide-eyed freshman and to loud boos from geology graduate students! Even the one term with Dr. Fogg has made me regret that those four years at Penn could not have been doubled.

As interesting as the question of who was your favorite professor is, I would say more fascinating is how the concept of "transfer of training" that began first term in the Fall of 1964 between all of my five courses has continued throughout the years since.
When I took the unusual step of changing my major from elementary education to English two weeks into our senior year (!!), I simultaneously encountered my “great professor”, Dr. Humphrey Tonkin. My change in major resulted from my having been offered an administrative position at Penn for post-graduation and my realizing, two weeks into the Elementary Education “methods courses”, that I did not want to stick with that major. Among the many English major requirements that I needed to meet were the two-semester Senior Seminar and at least one course in the early periods of English literature. I landed in Dr. Tonkin’s seminar (first semester on “pastorals” and second on “utopias”) as well as in his Elizabethan Poetry and Prose course. Having virtually no preparation in any of these areas, I confessed my state of ignorance to Dr. Tonkin and took my seat.

My state of ignorance was an interesting match for Dr. Tonkin’s unique (in my Penn experience) treatment of students as though they were as engaged in the subject matter as he, and, thus, up to contributing to the body of knowledge in the field we were studying. With that kind of professorial respect, I gamely and enthusiastically launched into our weekly short papers on pastorals and explications of sixteenth century poems and sonnets. With kindness and tolerance, Dr. Tonkin introduced me to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, after I strayed into a post-sixteenth century meaning of the word “slipper” when writing about a poem by Sir Thomas Wyatt. One of my proudest moments occurred when a paper on a sonnet by Sir Philip Sidney came back to me with Dr. Tonkin’s penned comment “at last someone sees it!” in response to one of my observations. In the seminar course on “pastorals”, I found myself purchasing and reading “The Pastoral Art of Robert Frost”, not related to any assignment but based on the spark that Dr. Tonkin’s teaching style ignited. (Seeking out extra, non-credited work was not my typical style, especially given my reading intensive course load). I enrolled in his Seventeenth Century Poetry and Prose course the following semester, thus studying with my “great professor” for four senior year courses.

Dr. Tonkin became Penn’s Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies before moving on to two university presidencies (he currently is University Professor of the Humanities and President Emeritus at the University of Hartford). During my career as a Penn School of Medicine administrator, I once received a letter from him recommending an individual for a position for which I was leading a search and was thrilled to find that my “great professor” remembered me. And I later enjoyed sending an email to
tell him how my memory of lines of sixteenth and seventeenth century poems had enabled me to create ultra-secure passwords in our then-new e-communications era, and receiving his warm response. I highly recommend taking a look at his University of Hartford webpage [http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/TONKIN/intro.html](http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/TONKIN/intro.html), where Dr. Tonkin’s illustrious academic career is well-documented.

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**Edward M. Sachs, Jr., W'68: Recalls Jamshed Ghandi**

The personality that most deeply impacted my education was that of [Jamshed Ghandi](http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/TONKIN/intro.html), Professor of Finance. He was one of the truly brilliant men I ever met. He opened my eyes to theories and to econometrics, which I realized, required a lot more background than I had gained. Nonetheless, when I was graduating, he strongly encouraged me to head to the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business to study under their empirical platform. Being an average Penn student, I was flattered because he suggested without hesitation I continue along a challenging economics course. He raved about the real world research and cutting edge approach of the Chicago School. After the Navy, I did just that, which was simple to do as I lived in Chicago. My family had deep roots in Hyde Park, and it as return "home". Jamshed Ghandi opened my eyes to market based economics, and I have never regretted one day of the awakening. I wish more people could share the insights enjoyed by many of my GSB classmates, but to the chagrin of many Penn alums, being of the "Chicago School", one is not reflexively pro-federal/pro-national government for creating fair, free, and growth oriented economic outcomes! So, the Penn and Chicago approaches were a healthy tension of ideas. Isn’t this the purpose of education?
The greatest professor I recall from my Penn years was Alexander Riasanovsky, the acclaimed Russian History teacher. Even though I majored in History, his class was one I had not planned to take as I had little advance interest in the topic. My only real acquaintance with Russian society (aside from occasional fantastical stories of how my grandparents and other family of that era had escaped the Czar) resulted from the attention paid each year surrounding the annual track and field contest between the U.S. and the USSR. However, because of word-of-mouth and DP class reviews, I was persuaded to take the leap into Riasanovky-world. I figured I might as well learn something about my grandparents’ homeland.

It was the smartest academic decision I ever made at Penn.

Dr. Riasanovsky was always engaging, never dull, and particularly adroit at enlivening the subject at hand. He brought to life hundreds of years of interesting characters who populated a truly enigmatic society, one that had dramatically expanded in 1917 (and, as time and events later showed) dramatically contracted in 1989.

I can still remember one story in particular that he told on the last day of class. It had to do with the annual US – USSR track meet he attended at Franklin Field in 1959 with his brother, Nicholas (also an acclaimed historian at the University of California, Berkeley). It seems that the Penn song “Hail Pennsylvania” had actually been composed to the tune of the former Russian National Anthem (abolished after the advent of Communist control). So when Hail Pennsylvania was played to inaugurate the ceremony, Prof. Riasanovsky regaled us with the story of the looks on the faces of long-time Soviet participants in the entourage who were old enough to remember the Anthem, and who were accordingly concerned about there either having been a coup of the Motherland while they were traveling in the US, or their being exposed to severe discipline if they showed even the slightest recognition in hearing the Anthem one more time!
Dear Classmate,

More and more of you are contributing memoirs and recollections about faculty, Thank you very much. As Alex Conroy mentioned in his opening message, our 50th reunion is just two years away, and our class newsletter is the best vehicle for us to share news about our lives and our class. Your continued submission of memoirs, and recollections about the faculty who taught us are greatly welcomed.

I send you my very best wishes for the summer, your good health and much happiness.

Michael Neiditch  
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