

PENN68 NOT DONE YET!

Dear Classmates,

My goodness. February. Leap Year. Year of the Dragon. Groundhog Day. And, most significant: Pluto has just moved into Aquarius. I thought the ‘Age of Aquarius’ dawned when HAIR debuted on April 29, 1968 -- or maybe, when the Fifth-Dimension recording reached number 1 on Billboard. Silly me. Perhaps you don’t know anything more about this than I did...so I’ll share some of what the Google search revealed. If you do know more about this significant transition, or, if what the internet provided is incorrect (how could that be?), please let me know. Remember, I’m in Maui where this information is VERY important. Woo-Hoo!

Here goes:

On January 20 at 7:56PM ET, Pluto moved into Aquarius, marking one of the most significant cosmic shifts of the year. As it activates the sign of the water bearer, it sets the stage for some major societal transformation over the next 20-years.

Named after the Greek ruler of the underworld (which you knew), Pluto represents all that exists beneath the surface. Think clandestine plots, hidden agendas, systemic oppression. It also represents the incredible pressure that builds on a subterranean level ... and what happens when that extreme intensity gets released. Ultimately, Pluto is about truth and power — it’s about peeling back the layers to identify who’s really in charge... (The Cut.com)

Pluto takes about 248 years to orbit the sun and is one of the few “planets” that makes important moves only a few times during an average human’s lifespan. This sets the foundation for revolution, change and transformation ... The last time Pluto was in Aquarius was from 1778 to 1798 and this period was a game changer in the history of mankind with important events like The French Revolution and the Irish Uprising taking place during these years. (which you knew)

As Pluto geared up to leave Capricorn on Jan 20, 2024, staying in Aquarius until September 1, 2024, gear up for an era filled with supportive collaborations where opportunities, connections and a turn of events that support a more altruistic theme of life become pronounced. (Vogue.com)

Anticipate a move away from the traditional pursuit of achievement and toward a focus on creating ease and accessibility for the people. This transition suggests potential power shifts, with the collective gaining more influence. Power may decentralize, moving away from a singular overarching figure or group and into the hands of the majority's desires. We've already witnessed glimpses of this transformation with trends such as the prioritization of remote work, heightened social activism, and technological advancements. (Wmagazine.com)

I have no idea what any of this means. I do know that I am a Moonchild (I reject the zodiacal term "cancer"). I bet you know your sign too. How the heck my sign – or yours – relates to any of this astrological information is a mystery to me. But here in Maui...kookoochahoo!

Continuing down this intellectually profound rabbit hole: This is the Chinese year of the Dragon-beginning on February 10th, 2024. Though most of us were not born in a year of the dragon, you might have a child or grandchild who is a dragon. I personally love dragons! But 1946 is the year of the dog and 1947 is the year of the pig. Neither as glamorous as dragons, that's for sure.

Chinahighlights.com says: Years of the Dragon include 2036, 2024, 2012, 2000, 1988, 1976, 1964, 1952... People born in dragon years usually possess natural courage, tenacity, and intelligence, often displaying enthusiasm and confidence. In Chinese culture, the Dragon holds a significant place as an auspicious and extraordinary creature, unparalleled in talent and excellence. It symbolizes power, nobility, honor, luck, and success. 2024 is the Year of the Wood Dragon—clearly there are differentiators within the sign...but who knew?

And yes, ... we can talk about LEAP YEAR - the extra day given to us by the calendar every four years, providing one extra day to do something fun, adventurous, or silly. Or to campaign.

1948 was a leap year and, of course 1946 was not. CBSnews.com reports that, while leap years normally come every four years, that's not always the case. In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII reformed the calendar by specifying that all years divisible by 4 are to be leap years, except for century years, which must be divisible by 400 to be considered leap years. If the year can also be evenly divided by 100, then it's not a leap year unless the year is also divisible by 400. It's why the year 2000 was a leap year, but 2100, 2200 and 2300 will not be leap years.

And finally, in the universe of astonishing meteorological information, in a moment seen around the world, in the grand American tradition- there's Groundhog Day.

Groundhog Day is on Friday, Feb. 2, 2024. Though not a federal holiday, Americans tune in to see if the famed groundhog (who apparently lives eternally), Punxsutawney Phil, the nation's most well-known groundhog, sees his shadow, which means six more weeks of winter. If he doesn't, it's a forecast of early spring. Meteorologists around the world become furious with frustration or, if they have a sense of humor, they laugh along with the rest of us.

The festivities take place at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania which is a real place. Watch the movie with Bill Murray if you don't believe me! The celebration is free, and spectators begin to enter the grounds starting at 3 a.m. (I'm not kidding.) The Punxsutawney Groundhog Club celebrates with talent shows, banquets and performances leading up to, and after, the prediction. Those performances this year might include people carrying dragon balloons and or singing the score of HAIR.

Art Muir... We know you take advantage of the extra day, for sure!

Okay... back to reality... Please join us for upcoming ZOOMs... We do record each one. Every ZOOM and all newsletters are archived on our alumni class page. Information about our keynote speakers and registration links are also included on the website (www.alumni.upenn.edu/1968) and in this newsletter.

If you want to join the 1968 Digital Reunion Book (private access to 1968 only), reach out to Charles Marsh, our Alumni Relations liaison: chmars@upenn.edu.

Special thanks to Hans Binnendijk – who shares his insights on Ukraine and more with 1968 monthly. Thanks to Marilyn Roderick for her personal story last month and her willingness to share her mindfulness training with classmates (marmomdoc@gmail.com). We have a great memoir this month from classmate Bob Gilbert. Please share your story, travels, adventures, and interests with us. Thanks to everyone who has reached out to me in the past few months to talk Penn. Call any time after 12, east coast time. 305-793-7762 or email me at elsiehmiami@gmail.com. When we have more information on Penn's new leadership efforts, we will share it. Join us on [FACEBOOK \(Penn Class of 1968\)](#) overseen by Carol Clapp) but we don't do X.

Sending love,

Elsie

CLASS OF 1968 FRIENDSHIP HOURS

February 16, 2024 | 5:00 PM EST

Join us to welcome

- Professor Michael E. Mann, Presidential Distinguished Professor, Director, Penn Center for Science, Sustainability & the Media, Department of Earth & Environmental Science/Annenberg School for Communication.
- Art Muir, adventurer extraordinaire

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Dr. Mann is the author of several books including his most recent work, *The New Climate War*, which shows how fossil fuel companies have waged a thirty-year campaign to deflect blame and responsibility and delay action on climate change and offers a battle plan for how we can save the planet.

Professor Mann has contributed to the scientific understanding of historic climate change based on the temperature record of the past thousand years. He has pioneered techniques to find patterns in past climate change and to isolate climate signals from noisy data. [READ MORE >>](#)

ART MUIR will join 1968 to recount his Antarctica adventures.



March 29, 2024 | 5:00 PM ET

We will learn more about what Penn libraries look like today – and what libraries will look and feel like in the future.

- Dr. Hans Binnendijk, reflecting on Ukraine...and much more world news



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Dr. Hans Binnendijk is a Distinguished Fellow at the Atlantic Council. Until recently he was also an Adjunct Political Scientist at the RAND Corporation and a Senior Fellow at the School of Advanced International Studies.

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April, 2024: Dr Karen Reivich Date TBA

Director of Resilience and Positive Psychology Training Programs and Director of Training Programs at the University of Pennsylvania Positive Psychology Center. She is the lead curriculum developer and instructor and trains and supervises all

training instructors. She is an internationally recognized expert in the fields of resilience, depression prevention, and Positive Psychology. [READ MORE »](#)

PENN? UPENN?



GOOGLE: *How hard is it to get into UPenn?* [How to Get Into UPenn - University of Pennsylvania - UPenn Essay](#) (collegeadvisor.com)

UPenn is a highly competitive school, with an undergraduate acceptance rate of 5.9% for the class of 2025. The UPenn Early Decision acceptance rate for the class of 2025 was 14.9%. In short, UPenn is a highly selective school. So, there is no one answer to how to get into UPenn.

Brand Standards

The Penn brand is an integral component of the overarching Penn experience. Our insignia are as central to the University as College Hall, Locust Walk, or Benjamin Franklin. These symbols play an important role in promoting the University and as such, it is important that the logo not be physically altered.

The following are University sites:

- <https://branding.web-resources.upenn.edu/>
- [UPenn BrandGuidelines 09-01-22.pdf](#)
- [Penn and the Ivy League - PENN ELP - University of Pennsylvania](#)

Penn? or UPenn? Classmates chime in:

Peter Marvin: I've been humming to myself ... drink a highball and be jolly, here's a toast to dear old UPenn.

Barry Guryan: Quakers. I looked up the values of the Quakers in America, which Penn has adopted as its moniker. These are values we share as alumnae, colleagues, and friends.

Belief that the truth is continually revealed. Belief in seeking peace with oneself and others. Belief in accepting and respecting each individual's uniqueness. Belief in the spirituality of life. Belief in the value of simplicity.

Marilyn Roderick:

1. I don't like it.
2. It may help to solve the identification debate between Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania. People do like two-word identifications.
3. I still don't like it.
4. I really don't like it. However, I cannot think of another every/day description that would "work" better!

Randy Elkins: On whether "UPenn" is OK, I suggest we go back to the nickname most outsiders gave Penn, at least prior to the Liz Magill testimony, namely "Penn State." In that regard, here is a true story from my Penn days when I worked summers as a busboy in a hotel in the Catskills. One of my guests asked me where I went to college and I said "Penn." He smiled knowingly and said "Ah, yes, the Brittany Lions." I guess you have to know Penn State's actual mascot to fully appreciate it. This is for your amusement only and not worthy of inclusion in a newsletter unless you are really desperate to fill space.

Jack Goldenberg: I would rather hear fingernails scratching on a blackboard than hear the word "UPenn" used in reference to my beloved alma mater. You asked for our opinion. You did not ask for the long-winded response that has been echoing through my head. The song does not end "Here's a toast to dear old UPenn!" We all know how it ends. Enough said!

Jim Colins: I do not like "UPenn!" I prefer Penn, the University, or Pennsylvania. "For dear Pennsylvania, all hail the Red and Blue."

Sue Croll: I admit that I was taken aback when I first heard a young person (with whom I was discussing her college selection preferences) refer to Penn as UPenn. I supposed that the term was limited to young people who encounter upenn.edu as the web address. But I have since heard it from news commentators, so it appears to be widespread. It may be hard on the ears of those of us who are used to and who love "Penn," but we may indeed be stuck with it. In any case, when we "Drink a highball at nightfall" we certainly will not "Drink a toast to dear old [U]Penn!"

Tom Farrell: I wince every time I see or hear it. Penn is Penn.

Marilyn Kanas: What would Benjamin Franklin say? "Penn."

Phyllis Rodbell: I do not mind the use of UPenn. My niece who applied there called it UPenn. In fact, I think that it helps to differentiate us from Penn State.

Carol Greco: I like you UPenn. When I say I went to Penn a lot of people think Penn State.

Karen Carr : I intensely dislike the idea that our University intends to change its acronym from PENN to UPenn. Penn is an ivy league school and, like Harvard, Yale, Brown, Dartmouth, Cornell, and Princeton, is known by its single word acronym, PENN. All these schools are universities (except for Dartmouth although it should since it offers an MBA among other disciplines) and are known by the single name each one chose decades ago. Penn has tried and succeeded in creating its own brand by using PENN in all its informational and marketing materials. I know as an alum, I always say when asked, "I went to Penn." If I need to give further clarity, I will say University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. I am very proud of being a PENN alum as was my late husband and is my daughter. UPenn sounds to me like it is trying to justify that it is a University. Personally, I find that insulting and I will continue saying that "I went to Penn."

Thanks to **Colin Hanna**.. sleuth extraordinaire: [From the Pennsylvania Gazette](#)

Editor's note: We will continue to collect your opinions. I apologize if your response is not here, then it's lost in space so please re-send. Thanks.

A classmate's story: Bob "Poultry Legs" Gilbert

Blockhead: Football Was Very Good to Me

I am the only person I know who flunked college football. Not a D-minus, a big fat F, as in total failure. At the time, this felt outrageous. Rudy, the undersized Notre Dame scrub clobbered and glorified in the 1993 biopic, couldn't have tried much harder. The cause was a clerical error augmented by kinetic forces. Yet I'm grateful it happened. You learn more from losing.

In 1964, the University of Pennsylvania's freshman team boasted seventy-five players. In the team photo, I am the blond beanpole at top right. There were so many of us, the Quaker coaching staff fielded two squads with different schedules. I played second- or third-string guard with the B Squad. The undefeated A Squad was crushing Princeton and other Ivies at Franklin Field; we scrimmaged in unrecorded contests on the dirt and crabgrass of such places as Westchester State and Bordentown Military Institute. The latter, however, was no sacrificial lamb. It was a gateway to the pros disguised as a prep school. It boasted alums like NFL Hall of Famer Floyd Little. They played with frightening determination, as if already on the Notre Dame varsity.

How I came to face off against a fantastically stoic Bordentown monster—unfazed by a broken nose dribbling blood throughout the game—can best be explained as a fluke, especially if you'd seen my math SATs. In fact, my whole college experience hinged on random luck.

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Sharing news from classmate Neal Kassell

60 Minutes Features FUS for Alzheimer's and Addiction and more news

[Read article>>](#)

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Visit our Class of 1968 website for archived Zoom recordings and class emails under Class News: www.alumni.upenn.edu/1968



PHILADELPHIA

If you are visiting Philadelphia, take a look at Conni Bille's Historic Penn-centric Philadelphia Tour for Penn Alumni: [1968 historicaletour booklet final 2.pdf \(upenn.edu\)](#)



Penn Alumni Relations

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