

The Wellesley College Class of 1956 presents

Scarlet Letters

Number 27 – April 2023



1956 Class Officers on their recent Zoom call.

Top: Jane Kentnor Dean, Marian (Maya) McGrath Percy, Toni Gallicchio Caviness.

Bottom Center: Anne Sinnott Moore. Sheila Owen Monks, bottom left, and Claudia Lauper Bushman, bottom right, were invited members of the press.

All are invited to heed this invitation and join in.

Dear 1956 Classmates:

Wouldn't you like to take a trip down memory trail and visit with the friends you made at Wellesley? Your Class officers are ready to sponsor Mini-Reunions on Zoom. We are scheduling reunions as follows:

Monday, March 27, at 1 PM EDT

Tuesday, March 28, at 3 PM EDT

Wednesday, March 29, at 5 PM EDT

Monday, April 3, at 1 PM EDT

Tuesday, April 4, at 3 PM EDT

Please note that all the times are Eastern Daylight Time so that for those living in other time zones, please adjust the time accordingly.

All you have to do is email Maya McGrath Percy at marian@mpearcylaw.com the date you would like to participate and she will confirm the time with you. She will send you a Zoom invitation three days before the Zoom date you pick, so that you may join in and visit with your classmates. (The April dates will be hosted by Toni Holland Liebman, but please make your reservation with Maya.)

We look forward to seeing you.

Anne Sinnott Moore – 1956 Class President

Marian (Maya) McGrath Percy – 1956 Class Vice-President

Bev Baldwin McCoid and Toni Gallicchio Caviness – 1956 Class Secretaries

Jane Kentnor Dean – Wellesley College Fund Rep

Toni Holland Liebman – Web Manager

The Obituary of Elaine Smith Amendola

On Monday, November 21, 2022, Elaine Smith Amendola passed away peacefully surrounded by her family and friends. Elaine was born on January 16, 1935, in New Haven, Connecticut, the daughter of Michael E. Smith and Rosa Witham Smith of Orange, Connecticut. She graduated from Hill House High School in 1952 and from Wellesley College in 1956 with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics. Elaine was employed in the structural engineering department at Sikorsky Aircraft, programming their first computers upon graduation from college. In 1962, Elaine became one of the first women to graduate from the Yale University Law School. Elaine was admitted to the Connecticut Bar Association in 1962 and served as a member in good standing for over fifty years.

Elaine was admitted to the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut in 1963, the United States Second Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court in 1967. Elaine was widely recognized as a pioneer for professional women. She co-founded the law firm of Zeldes, Needle & Cooper in Bridgeport, Connecticut in 1971, where she specialized in criminal and civil litigation. She was lead counsel in precedent-setting cases before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and United States Supreme Court.

Elaine was a fierce promoter of women's rights, including on the groundbreaking level in Connecticut to protect reproductive rights. She sued the National Little League Organization to allow girls to play and worked tirelessly to promote Title IX so women could have equal access to athletic opportunities in college sports. In 1997, Elaine and Bonnie Amendola founded the law firm of Amendola & Amendola, LLC., in Fairfield, Connecticut with their assistant, Ms. Jamie Caplinger of Westport. The firm concentrates in matrimonial law and advocacy for children's rights. Bonnie and Jamie will continue her legacy; however, her courage, strength and incredible sense of humor will always be missed.

Elaine was a Gold Star Widow, surviving her, first husband, Lt. Joseph F. Crehore, who was killed on active duty while serving as a member of the Massachusetts Air National Guard in 1962. She married David and Bonnie's father, Bonaventure "Buddy" Amendola of Orange, Connecticut in 1964. Although divorced, they remained friends until his untimely death in 1994.

Elaine was an incredible athlete. She was an accomplished equestrian who showed horses from her teenage years well into her sixties, winning ribbons at the highest levels of competition throughout the country. Her escapades and adventures with her soulmate, Scott D. Wilson, on the horse show circuit were the joy of her life. She loved to ski and cherished her annual trips to Sugarloaf, Maine. She enjoyed nature, gardening, floral design, and most of all cooking! Her culinary talents and her love of food are legendary, and she welcomed all to her table.

Elaine was predeceased by her brother, Willard C. Smith of Cheshire. She is survived by her son, David Amendola and his wife Karen of Westbrook; her daughter, Bonnie Amendola, of Bethany; her nieces, Amy Smith, Elizabeth Friedler, and Dr. Maria A. Smith of Shelton. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Alex Wilson of Temecula, California and Taylor, Brooke, and David Amendola, Jr. of Westbrook.



Elaine Smith Amendola

After You Left

It's been a while.

*There is a faint smell in the air, like shampoo
and some wrinkled spots on the couch where you were sitting.*

I hear an echo,

but it can't be your voice; it must just be the wind.

*Your wine glass is still sitting in the sink
and there are cracker crumbs on the floor.*

I don't want to sweep them up.

Sheila Owen Monks

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Our Year of Golden Infinity

Mary Estill Buchanan of our class noted that this is an important year for all of us. In Japanese culture, we can all expect extreme good fortune. We, this year, can celebrate our year of Golden Infinity, a designation for those fortunate enough to reach our golden age, that of eighty-eight. That is the number of years that the world has had to enjoy us and vice versa. We can be grateful for many good years. May this golden one be healthy and happy.

The sign of the Golden Infinity looks like the number eight laid on its side. The infinity symbol goes round and round in a sideways figure 8, a path with no end. Infinity is used to describe something endless, exceedingly great, or without bounds. Some of us may have met the symbol in math class when we were taught that numbers are *infinite*. We can count forever, never reaching an end.

The infinity symbol is centuries old. It has been referred to as *Lemniscate*, which means "ribbon" in Greek. The English word *infinity* comes from the Latin "infinitas," which means endless. Infinity is long-lasting and cannot be measured. The symbol evolved from the Etruscan numeral for 1000 which looked like two letter Cs facing each other and the letter 'I' between them.

However, even without true infinity, the symbol represents a life of balance and simplicity, love, power, beauty, and spirituality. That's a good focus. For couples and friends, the infinity symbol is an expression of commitment. The infinity symbol represents unceasing hope and everlasting love. Many also associate it with the idea of loyalty.

The infinity sign symbolizes faith, spirituality, and the ethical beliefs found in various religions, symbolizing the meaning that while our physical presence is finite, our souls are everlasting, infinite. Religions consider their god as infinite. Followers wear infinity symbols to show their love and commitment to their faith. People focus on the symbol in meditation, bringing balance, clarity, harmony, peace, and wholeness into their thoughts and being.

In ancient India and Tibet, men and women wore the infinity sign to represent love, as love has no boundaries. Love is boundless, infinite. When a person gives infinity jewelry to a loved one, he is declaring "We are together *forever*."

Fashion people note the increasing popularity of the infinity symbol, a classic sign of grace and simplicity, adding elegance to style. Jewelers sell infinity sign jewelry promising peace and poise.

The gold infinity symbol has been adopted to represent Autism Acceptance. Those first two letters of autism (au) are the chemical symbol for gold. The rainbow coloring was adapted by Aspies for Freedom in 2005.

The infinity symbol is good for us 88-year-olds in many ways. Would that it meant that we would all live forever.



Surviving Hurricane Ian

Having lived most of my life in New England, I have experienced numerous hurricanes. We lived through Hurricane Charlie in 2004 here in Punta Gorda, FL, and we thought it was the worst we would ever be through. HAH!

September brought Hurricane Ian. I prepared as well as I could. Extra water, non-perishable food & snacks. I made sure the cat had her food. I moved furniture off the lanai and took down the wall decorations. The trick is to get rid of anything that might fly around in the wind.

The day started off just as we expected. When the power went off in the late afternoon, some of my floor-mates and I sat in our third floor lobby sipping wine and feeling the building shake. When the wind began to howl, and the rain slammed against the walls, I knew we were in for "the big one"! A quick check of my unit showed that the wind had blown water under my hurricane-rated-sliding-doors. It looked as if a geyser was bubbling up over the sill and into my rooms. The water soaked my rugs, floors, and adjoining walls. The only thing I could do at that time was to crawl into bed and ride it out through the night. no internet/TV for fifteen days.

The results of this storm were extensive. I had no power for eleven days, no internet/TV for fifteen days, and no running water for thirteen days. Gallons of water were taken from the swimming pools and carried up to the units each day to use for flushing the toilets! We were careful and only flushed once a day! UGH! I was stuck on the third floor until the power was restored and the elevator was functioning again. Thank God for all my good friends who are younger, sprier, and able to help me out when necessary.

The months since have been filled with workmen doing remediation on my unit. Much of my flooring (only three years old) has been removed and stored in hopes that it can be reinstalled. The master bedroom carpeting is torn up and will be replaced with waterproof vinyl planking. Numerous walls have been cut out, dried, and encapsulated to prevent moisture and mold from forming. Nothing can be restored until our new roof is installed to correct the damage done by the wind and rain. No word yet as to when that will happen.

In the meantime, I live in a disaster area, flooring gone, walls open. I feel I will be very lucky to be back in order by the end of this year. Living through the hurricane was, and continues to be, quite an experience--one I would just as soon never have to live through again. However, I like it here and still will not leave if another storm comes this way in the future.

Joan Ward Lasley
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Wellesley College, Ranked Top 20 Most Expensive School

On February 10th, Wellesley College was ranked 13th among the top 20 most expensive colleges in the United States. The article was published by *The College Investor*, a personal finance blog. The 2022-2023 tuition for Wellesley is \$61,584. The total cost of tuition, when factoring in room, meal plan, and the student activity fee, is \$81,000. Theresa Peaches Valdes, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, said that the College continues to be committed to meeting 100% of students' calculated financial need.

Wellesley believes money shouldn't be an obstacle to a world-class education. [Wellesley] meets 100 percent of the calculated need for all admitted students. [Wellesley is] also need blind for US Citizens and Permanent Residents—that means [Wellesley does not] consider a student's need for financial aid when considering her application for admission.

For the 2022-2023 academic year, the average grant for first-year students receiving financial aid was nearly \$62,000. This is money that students do not have to repay. For Mara Casals '26, a first-generation, low-income, international student, generous financial aid was the main reason behind her decision to apply to Wellesley.

When I was looking for colleges, I knew that I couldn't apply to many US colleges because tuition is too high. The majority of US colleges have financial aid for domestic students, but there are only a few colleges that give full financial aid to international students. Wellesley is one of the few colleges that give full financial aid to international students, and if it weren't for that then I wouldn't have gone to Wellesley.

The majority of Wellesley's students do not pay the sticker price. Over 55% of current students receive financial aid. The average student debt for all four years at Wellesley is less than \$19,000. Financial aid was also a major factor for Ashley Salmeron '26 in committing to Wellesley. "I'm a first-gen low-income student, and I'm [an] out of state [student]. So I can't afford it."

Bothina Abdelrahman '26 is also a low income student, but she did not see money as an obstacle in committing to Wellesley. "I felt like the college was good enough to take a loan out. I wasn't going to let money keep me from going to college."

Wellesley spends over \$80 million annually on financial aid. That money is dedicated exclusively to supporting students with calculated financial need to make a Wellesley education possible.

Abdelrahman was surprised by Wellesley's sticker price. "I'm somewhat surprised because I know Wellesley is a prestigious college, but it doesn't feel like the money is being distributed well. For example, I feel like the college should help more low income students with laundry, and they shouldn't have made [laundry] as expensive as it is."

Valdes justifies Wellesley's cost because of a 7:1 student faculty ratio, state-of-the-art facilities, a picturesque campus setting, and an educational environment where students are inspired to thrive. When asked about the College Investor ranking, Salmeron expressed shock. "That's crazy. Why is it so expensive? We're such a small liberal arts college."

Valdes says students who are concerned about tuition costs should visit or reach out to Student Financial Services. The SFS staff is here to assist students and their families in understanding the aid application process, parent and student loan options, payment plans, student employment and more. Whether or not you receive financial aid, we are here to help families figure out how to pay for college. We are confident that a Wellesley education is one of the best investments your family can make.

Reprinted from *The Wellesley News*

Pompadour Pudding

Here is the recipe for Pompadour Pudding, the staple of many a dinner at Wellesley. It actually was pretty good, but most of us remember it as being the butt of many jokes, due to the frequency with which it was served!

Custard (bottom)

3 cups whole milk
1/2 cup sugar
2 T cornstarch
pinch of salt
2 egg yolks, beaten
1 tsp. vanilla extract

Combine all the ingredients except the vanilla. Cook in the top of a double boiler until the custard is smooth and thick, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from heat and add the vanilla. Fill 8 custard cups about 2/3 full. Set aside.

Meringue (top)

1 square baking chocolate
4 T sugar
2 T whole milk
2 egg whites

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Melt the chocolate with the sugar and milk in the top of the double boiler. Remove from heat and set aside. In a medium bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff and fold them into the chocolate mixture. Divide the mixture evenly and spread over the custards. Place the custard cups in a pan of water and bake at 375 for 30 minutes. Serves 8.

Scarlet Letters deeply regrets that in the most recent issue, No. 26, Toni Holland Liebman's intriguing kitchen appliance was referred to as a "little banana machine," when in fact it is an onion chopper. She adds a "fool proof" trick for easy egg peeling: "steam eggs in a vegetable steamer for 25 minutes, rather than boiling them. Dip in ice water or run them under cold water. They peel immediately."