

# BLAIR

BULLETIN



**ARMSTRONG-HIPKINS  
CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

**THE LEGACY OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENTS AT BLAIR**

P. 04

**HOW 'LOOPING'  
IN THE ARTS MAKES  
ALL THE DIFFERENCE**

P. 24

**ALUMNI WEEKEND  
BRINGS THE BLAIR  
COMMUNITY HOME**

P. 36

# On Exhibit



## **Tom Franklin**

*La Buena Vida; A Photographic Exploration of Cuba*

October 1-27 in Blair's Romano Gallery

Artist talk: October 10 at 7 p.m.

From bustling scenes in Havana to gatherings and moments of celebration on the Malecón, this photojournalism exhibit is a vibrant celebration of Cuba's enduring spirit. Photojournalist Tom Franklin invites viewers to experience the rich tapestry of Cuban life and culture, from the rituals of Santería to the determination of young Cuban boxers in training. Classic American cars, vibrant street scenes and a simplicity

reminiscent of a bygone era serve not only as aesthetic elements but also as poignant symbols of a resilient society determined to preserve its identity amid external challenges. Through this exhibit, Mr. Franklin aims to offer viewers a nuanced perspective that embraces both vibrancy and complexities.

## **On the Cover:**

Director of School Photography Tyson Trish captures a rainbow arching gracefully above Blair's Armstrong-Hipkins Center for the Arts.

# IN THIS ISSUE: SUMMER-FALL 2024

- 03** FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL
- 18** OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM  
Sarah O'Neil
- 22** STATE OF ADMISSION
- 29** IN THE NEWS  
**Jon Williams '89** in Travel Series  
**Matthew Tung '19** Powers toward Victory  
**Lauren Keiling '04** Shares Her Story with ESPN
- 32** ACADEMICS  
Interession: Taking the Love of Learning on the Road
- 35** TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT
- 42** AROUND THE ARCH  
Welcome, New Faculty & Staff!  
Employees Honored for Service Milestones  
A New Look Coming Soon to Mason & Freeman  
Campus Updates & Additions  
Steve Fields Retires
- 52** ATHLETICS  
Spring Season Highlights  
Blair's Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2024 Leads by Example
- 54** ARTS  
Arts Guild Inducts New Class of Student & Faculty Creators  
Arts Calendar
- 56** GIFT PLANNING  
**Kris (Coughlin) Lisi '84**
- 58** ADVANCEMENT  
A Night of Gratitude: Blair's Leadership Reception  
Connecting with Alumni & Families Across Asia  
**Bud Bogle '45** Hosts Bogle Brothers Luncheon  
Inkeles Family Scholarship Honors Blair Journeys
- 64** BOARD OF GOVERNORS SPOTLIGHT
- 65** ANNUAL REPORT
- 71** CLASS NOTES
- 92** IN MEMORIAM



## The Legacy of International Students at Blair

Dating back to the 19th century, Blair has welcomed international students from all over the world, and this rich legacy has profoundly shaped the School's community, culture and educational philosophy.



## 10 Team Sharpe Claims Sixth Headmasters' Societies Games Title

In this visual essay, Director of School Photography Tyson Trish offers a few highlights from the 21st Headmasters' Societies Games that saw Team Sharpe take the crown.



## 24 How 'Looping' in the Arts Makes All the Difference

The practice of "looping" involves matching students with the same instructor for several consecutive years, and in the Blair fine and performing arts departments, it leads to rich benefits for students and teachers alike.



## 12 Class of 2024's Resiliency Triumphs at 176th Commencement

At the 176th Commencement ceremony, Blair honored the triumphs of the Class of 2024 and celebrated their victories as they continue on in their academic careers as prepared undergraduates and global citizens contributing to the greater good.



## 36 Alumni Weekend Brings the Blair Community Home

The experience of venturing home was felt across the hilltop during Alumni Weekend last June, as classmates returned to the School to relive fond memories and forge new ones.



## Student Spotlight

### Fionna Lee '25 Attends Competitive California State Summer School for the Arts

For **Fionna Lee '25**, singing is a passion. In her insatiable pursuit to master her craft, she has already been selected for the NJSMA New Jersey Regional Mixed

Choir, NJMEA All-State Mixed Choir and ACDA East SATB Honor Choir. While researching opportunities to challenge herself further in the summer before her senior year, Fionna stumbled upon one of the most rigorous programs, 2,700 miles away, that accepts only a handful of out-of-state students each year.

The California State Summer School for the Arts (CSSSA) is a prestigious four-week program for high school students held at the California Institute of the Arts. The school offers courses in animation, music, film, theatre, dance, visual arts and writing. The admission process is highly competitive, with students selected based on talent and creativity shown in their applications and teacher recommendations. This year, Fionna is one of only 20 students outside of California to be accepted.

"I am beyond grateful for this opportunity," Fionna said after being accepted. "My musicianship has grown exponentially since coming to Blair, and I hope to come out of this program with greater knowledge of music, just absorbing and learning as much as I can. I want to take it all in."

During her time in California in July, Fionna studied in the music program, learning new techniques and honing ideas

under the supportive guidance of leading professional musicians in concerts and master classes. Areas of study included music history and theory, composition and improvisation, Indonesian gamelan and African drumming/dance classes, and exciting interdisciplinary collaborations within the program. Overall, the program's mission is to create a training environment for young artists who hope to pursue careers in the arts and entertainment in California.

"This is, indeed, a milestone achievement for Fionna, and our community could not be more thrilled for her," Director of Vocal Music Ryan Manni-Brennan shared. "As her choir director and voice teacher, I have to commend her for the hours of practice she put in, often unseen by many others—it's this kind of dedication to one's craft and reflective practice that defines a Blair musician."

As Fionna begins her senior year, the experience she gained at CSSSA will only benefit her as she bolsters her college resume and visits potential schools. Looking back on her experiences in Blair Academy Singers, she is filled with gratitude for the older choir members, whose footsteps she has followed over the last three years, growing and learning in the program. Fionna remembers joining as a ninth grader, nervous and excited to be surrounded by such talented singers. This year serves as a full-circle moment, as the newest members now look to her for guidance, confident they are learning from the best. We can't wait to see what Fionna's final year on the hilltop will bring!

Volume XCVII, No. 4  
Summer-Fall 2024

**PUBLISHED:**  
January, April,  
June & October

**PUBLICATION NUMBER:**  
USPS 057-760

**PUBLISHER:**  
Blair Academy  
Blairtown, New Jersey 07825



## Staff

**HEAD OF SCHOOL**  
Peter G. Curran P'27 '27

**COMMUNICATIONS STAFF**  
**Suzy Logan '99**, Assistant  
Head of School for Strategic  
Communications  
logans@blair.edu  
Adele Starrs, Director of  
Communications &  
Editor-in-Chief  
starrs@blair.edu  
Ashley Taube,  
Writer & Editor  
Heather Sprague,  
Communications  
Project Manager

CJ Palanca, Video &  
Marketing Specialist

**CLASS NOTES EDITOR**  
**E. Courtney Stanford '95**

**IN MEMORIAM EDITOR**  
Catie Urfer

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**  
**Rhett Moroses '13**

**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
Douglas Benedict  
Susan Long  
CJ Palanca  
Tyson Trish

### ATTENTION:

Send address changes to Blair Academy Bulletin, P.O. Box 600, Blairtown, NJ 07825

### NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY:

Blair Academy does not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, creed, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability status, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its education policies, admission, scholarships, loans or other school-administered programs. Each Blair student is afforded the rights, privileges and social, academic and athletic opportunities that are generally accorded or made available to students of the School.

### DESIGN BY:

Foster Avenue, Ltd., State College, Pennsylvania

### PRINTING BY:

J.S. McCarthy Printers  
This magazine is printed on recycled paper.

## SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

What do you think about the stories in this issue of the *Blair Bulletin*? Let us know—your letter may be published in the next issue. Please send your comments to [bulletin@blair.edu](mailto:bulletin@blair.edu).



## Our community has

joyfully come back together to embark upon the School's 177th year and, by the time you read this, our 142 newest Bucs will have followed in the footsteps of generations of graduates before them by getting to know their roommates and classmates, building connections with faculty, advisors and coaches, exploring campus, taking part in Convocation, enjoying community weekends and, of course, getting ready for Peddie Day.

The beginning of each academic year is by far my favorite time on campus because the energy is infectious. Blair is an institution that is all about relationships, and we are strategic and purposeful about ensuring the opening weeks in the fall are filled with opportunities to meet new people, forge social connections, learn about the diverse backgrounds and experiences of classmates, and find a rhythm in day-to-day life on the hilltop, in addition to taking a deep dive into academic pursuits. As

we seek to deliver on our mission, our community came together in 2021 to collectively name the values by which we want to live, creating the Five Fundamentals. At opening fall meetings and Convocation, I underscored the importance of one particular value: "Be curious and suspend judgment." As we look ahead to this 177th year, I am hopeful that all of us will embrace this idea of curiosity as we make connections, share ideas and explore new passions.

Throughout the summer, my travels took me up and down the East Coast, as well as to Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong, where my wife, Sarah, and I had the opportunity to spend time with students, parents and alums. It was deeply inspiring to see how much Blair families care for our institution and celebrate its vision and impact as we seek to graduate leaders and changemakers who go on to make meaningful contributions to their professions and communities. It doesn't matter what year you earned your Blair diploma; our students develop an innate intellectual inquisitiveness as humble lifelong learners.

More than that, the true joy and rewards of working with adolescents lie in our efforts to ensure that every student feels seen, heard and cared for. At Blair, every student has someone in their corner, a trusted adult who knows or is curious to learn about them—leading to lasting friendships and mentorships. At the heart of this is an openness to understanding the lived experiences of classmates and teachers; enthusiasm to consider growth opportunities; an eagerness to learn others' perspectives; and, of course, wonder about what the next 10 months will look like. We model what



this curiosity and acceptance look like at Blair and, in the process, help students discover who they are, what they value and who they want to become.

In the year ahead, I hope that the compelling energy and excitement on campus about stepping outside your comfort zone to tackle new adventures continues without interruption. After all, it is this thirst for knowledge, connection, understanding and belonging that drives all of us to be the best version of ourselves. The eloquent words of Blair legend, **John C. Bogle '47**, still ring true today: "The task is large...to preserve, to protect, and to defend this fount of liberal education, this island of opportunity, this community of teaching and learning. At Blair Academy, we give some of the most promising [students] in our land the opportunity to learn more than they might otherwise have learned, to accomplish more than they might otherwise have accomplished, and to develop their character and their values more than they might otherwise have developed them. If these seem like unremarkable goals, I assure you that they are anything but. Such young citizens are the core of our civilization, our hope for years to come."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter G. Curran".

**Peter G. Curran P'27 '27**  
Head of School



# THE Legacy of INTERNATIONAL Students AT BLAIR

**T**hey have come from all corners of the globe. Dating back to the 19th century, Blair has welcomed international students from all over the world, and this rich legacy has profoundly shaped the School's community, culture and educational philosophy. Today, international students constitute 21 percent of Blair's population, representing 30 nations, and bring a wealth of diverse perspectives and experiences that enrich our institution.




# HISTORICAL ROOTS

Blair's tradition of welcoming international students began in the School's early years. In the closing decade of the 19th century, the *Blair Presbyterian Academy Catalogue* recorded international students from over a dozen diverse locales, including Jalandhar City in northern India, Mérida in Mexico's Yucatán state and Jérémie in Haiti. According to Blair's library assistant Kate Skeffington, "Most, if not all, of the international students were the children of Presbyterian missionaries or the children of friends and acquaintances of those missionaries. The 19th-century Protestant Mission Movement was well underway," Mrs. Skeffington explains, "and Presbyterians started sending people out into the world to spread the Gospel as early as 1837." Many of these students braved long journeys and cultural adjustments to seek an exceptional education at Blair, setting a precedent for generations to come.

Although there are few detailed records, some early accounts highlight an international presence at Blair. For instance, in 1917, first-year student *Ching Shan Mung* stepped off a train in Blirstown for the first time. He had endured a grueling six-week journey by ship and train, seasick for much of the time. His travels took him from Peking, China, to Japan and then Honolulu, Hawaii, and on to the West Coast before he finally boarded a train for a 3,400-mile journey across the United States. After 40 days, he arrived at his new home on the hilltop. "Mungie," as his friends soon came to call him, settled in and became a star on Blair's tennis team, well-liked by his classmates. Before he graduated and went on to continue

his education at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Mungie wrote an essay for *The Blair Breeze* in which he described why he came to the United States for an education:

"I attended my school in Tientsin, Chili Province, North China, where I live. My school belongs to the London Mission and was founded in 1901. There are six hundred boys in the school. The arrangements and regulations are just about the same as those here, but their standards are lower than those in the United States. That is why I came here to study."

<p>CHING SHAN MUNG A. D. A. ("Mungie") Tientsin, China "A man well liked by men—and women, too." Entered 1917 Tennis Team (1, 2); Gym Team (1, 2); Orchestra (2); Runner-up in Tennis Championship (2); Insley Club (1); Ark Club (2). M. I. T.</p>	
---	---



**From Shanghai to Blair**  
BY CHING SHAN MUNG

I attended my school in Tientsin, Chili Province, North China, where I live. My school belongs to the London Mission and was founded in 1901. There are six hundred boys in the school. The arrangements and regulations are just about the same as those here, but their standards are lower than those in the United States. That is why I came here to study.

I started from Tientsin on the seventh of August, with a party of nine boys, and reached Shanghai on the ninth. We spent four days here, sailing on the thirteenth. After two days we arrived at Japan. Here we visited all the famous cities. We started our journey again from Yokohama on the twenty-first.

The sea was rough for three days and the white-capped waves were another story.

were served at the tables were nicer, and had a good smell. He ate six meats at a meal. You know that there are three meals a day, and six multiplied by three equals eighteen meals a day, besides the puddings, bread, cakes, nuts and fruits. I suppose that he had never had such good meals before. So we gave him a nickname: "Eater the Great." It sounded something like "Peter the Great," but really not the same.

On the thirty-first of August the boat arrived at Honolulu and I saw the most beautiful scenery there that I had ever seen. I am sorry that we did not have more time to spend there. We had to go back to the boat that night.

Then at last we landed at San Francisco, on the sixth of September. We took the Union Pacific for the East. But we were not all going to the same place.

Four of us settled at Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa. Two of us went to the University of Illinois. The rest of us went to New York.

and those pleasant times cannot come back again.

I arrived at New York on the seventeenth of September, my final destination. It had taken me forty days of traveling from the day I started from my home town to the day I arrived at New York; but it had been a good trip.

Before I close my article, I want to tell you that before I started from China my friends gave me important advice. They said: "Now you are going to study in America. Remember to study not only from books, for you can order books from America and read them at home, but try to learn the inspiration, personality and good spirit and bring it back to China."

AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION  
NEW YORK  
SEP 20 1917  
U.S. AIR MAIL

# THE Legacy of INTERNATIONAL Students AT BLAIR

## SUPPORTING CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

Over time, the influx of international students, with their unique traditions, languages and viewpoints, has fostered a rich cultural exchange at Blair. Associate Head of School **Ryan M. Pagotto '97**, who oversees student life at Blair and has been a faculty member for more than two decades, notes that the move to a boarding school is a time of transition for all students, regardless of their home origins, but international students face additional hurdles. They must navigate long-term issues, such as learning a different language, absorbing American culture and deciphering the Blair lexicon of unique phrases, such as what “going to the Can” means. There are short-term challenges to contend with as well. “When most students come back from a break, they are well-rested and ready to jump back into school,” Mr. Pagotto explains. “International students are often quietly managing the effects of jet lag,” he says.

To support international students and encourage the sharing of their experiences and cultures, Blair has introduced a variety of school traditions over time. Recognizing that the international student body has its own specific needs, particularly at the beginning of each school year, the School began inviting international students to arrive several days before others and gave them a specific orientation program to help them with the early adjustment to their new environment. Each school year begins with students marching in procession at Convocation, proudly carrying flags from around the world to symbolize Blair’s global community. The end-of-year Underclass Assembly features a prize dedicated to outstanding international student achievement. The annual international festival, cultural nights, global cuisine cooking events and food truck festivals provide regular platforms for teachers and students to share their heritage with one another.

Blair’s Chiang-Elghanayan Center for Innovation and Collaboration offers the perfect venue for one of the most vibrant and delicious celebrations of the year: Blair’s International Weekend.



During International Weekend, Club Umoja members (left to right) **Danny Ndiritu '25**, **Nii Otu Ankrab '25** and **Atlas Akinyemiju '25** hosted a T-shirt fundraiser to support food security in Africa.

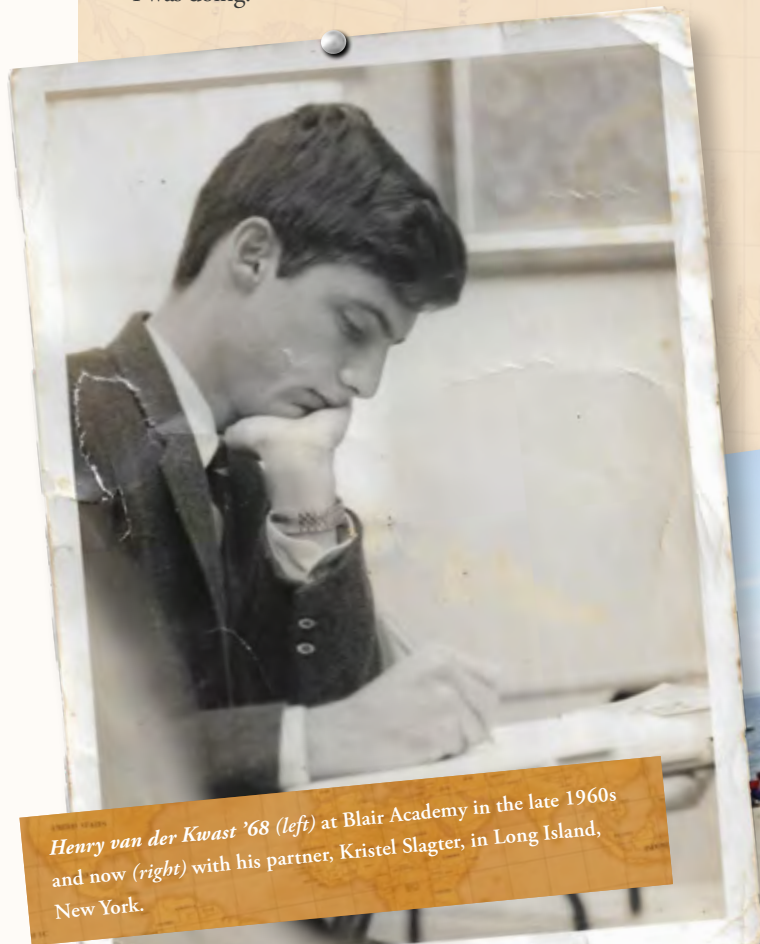


## ARRIVING AT BLAIR IN 1967

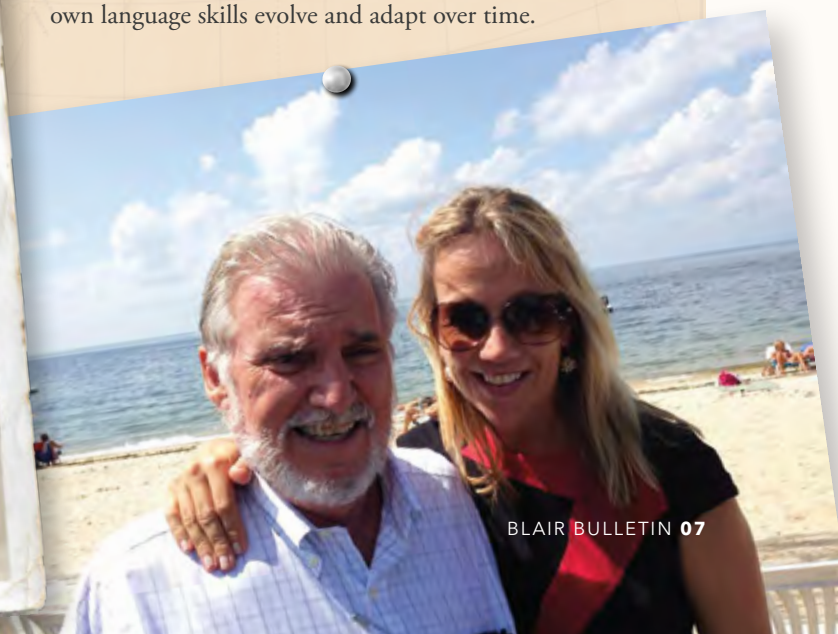
While tailored programming and cultural events do help ease the transition for some, many international alumni most vividly remember the people—the faculty, staff and friends at Blair—who supported and helped them adjust to the rhythms of life in a new country. **Henry van der Kwast '68** recalls arriving on the hilltop in 1967 amid turbulent anti-war demonstrations dominating the national news. Coming from the island of Curacao, with a Dutch father and a mother of Caribbean heritage, Henry learned about Blair from relatives in New York. Attracted by the School's academic excellence, Henry hoped to study hard and improve his test scores. While he had visited the United States many times before, Henry found himself among just a few dozen international students and feeling homesick when he first arrived. He fondly remembers that feeling beginning to wane when he was invited to Thanksgiving at a fellow student's home. Faculty also joined classmates in being welcoming. "Teacher John Carhart was helpful," Henry recalls, "and [Assistant Headmaster] **Fernando Marcial '39** was always on the ball. He allowed me to sit at his table at lunch and was always interested in my development and how I was doing."

Despite the cultural adjustment, Henry quickly found his footing in the community—though not literally. One of Henry's early Blair memories was encountering ice for the first time. Though he had seen snow before, tropical Curacao is sunny and warm year-round, and Henry hadn't seen black ice. He slipped and ended up spending a night or two in the infirmary with a black-and-blue eye, which he recalls with a chuckle. The setback didn't hold Henry back for long. "Blair was very strong in sports," he remembers. Through football, tennis and varsity running, Henry built lasting friendships, many of which he still maintains more than 50 years later. "Blair was very conducive to that," he recalls. "I had **Jonathan Slaff '68**, and people not even in my dorm. We became very friendly. Their parents became instrumental in caring for me and other international students. I was always invited to join them for tea or coffee when they came to visit. I never felt left out."

Many of the challenges that Henry experienced have stayed true across time. International students must balance the importance of maintaining their cultural identity and heritage with fitting in the United States. They must navigate engaging with unfamiliar cultural traditions, holidays and customs, while finding ways to honor their home countries' traditions at Blair. Sometimes, they must address experiencing reverse culture shock when returning home after an extended period abroad. For those whose native language is not English, they must manage language and communication dynamics with family members and friends who may not speak English and deal with the challenge of helping their own language skills evolve and adapt over time.



Henry van der Kwast '68 (left) at Blair Academy in the late 1960s and now (right) with his partner, Kristel Slagter, in Long Island, New York.



# THE Legacy of INTERNATIONAL Students AT BLAIR

## ARRIVING AT BLAIR IN 2021

Henry's experience underscores the supportive environment Blair fosters for its international students, a tradition to which recent graduate *Clara Yan '24* can relate. Although her mother had lived in the United States during graduate school and shared her experiences, Clara recalls, "I was still pretty shocked when I came to Blair for the first time." Coming from Beijing, China, Clara was first struck by the tangible cultural differences between the East and West, such as the food and how people dress. "I come from a pretty conservative family," Clara notes. "I wasn't used to seeing people in pajama pants."

Clara first became acquainted with Blair from a friend who graduated in 2020. When she arrived at Blair in the fall of 2021, global pandemic precautions had made travel from Blairstown to Beijing particularly difficult. "All the U.S. embassies in China closed my first year, so I couldn't get a visa in China. I had to fly to Singapore to get the visa." In addition, direct flights ceased, and Clara found herself taking multiple transfer flights, making her commute both complicated and costly. Unable to get home easily, Clara spent the summers of ninth and tenth grade staying with friends in New Jersey, for which she is grateful. "I know a lot of kids who go to American boarding schools and face more problems. For example, Blair is always open during Winter Long Weekend for international students. It doesn't make sense to fly home for just five days—I'm really grateful that Blair stayed open for us."

However, returning home to China in the summer of her junior year wasn't all she thought it would be. To her childhood friends, Clara had changed, and she felt the perception of others on many levels, especially through comments former classmates made on social media. Certainly, she didn't want to be judged or to lose her own culture. "Sometimes there is judgment for embracing things the Chinese would not do," she explains. "Every

person must sort that out for themselves, but I have found a middle ground."

When Clara first arrived at Blair, she already knew English but grappled with grammar and humor barriers. "I did speak English in my middle school, but jokes are different. Catchphrases are different. I was scared to talk when I came to the United States." For instance, "crack me up" means to cause heartbreak in China, while here it means to cause laughter. The difference between knowing English and speaking it fluently was bridged by the friends who supported Clara's transition into Blair life. She joined fall tennis, managed girls' varsity basketball and took a chance on softball. "The kids were very kind. It was more what I was telling myself." In the end, learning to speak confidently was no different than finding her footing in a new sport; with a support team behind her, Clara learned she could conquer the challenges.

As for what's next, Clara follows in the footsteps of many international students before her, looking toward a bright future. This fall, she joined Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, to study philosophy and, eventually, to pursue law school. Although she has left Blair's campus behind for another, the lessons learned from embracing cultural diversity will guide her in the next chapters of her life.



*Clara Yan '24 performs a traditional Chinese dance during International Weekend.*

## LASTING IMPACT

Blair's international students have come from all corners of the globe, and they have brought all corners of the globe to Blair with them. Learning how to adapt to a new language, preserve their cultural heritage and experience the unifying magic of the arts and athletic teams are just a few of the life lessons that Mungie, Henry and Clara gained during their time at Blair, but their impact on Blair will continue to be immeasurable. Former Dean of Students and Assistant Headmaster Dave Low, who spent

over 30 years helping students from every background and experience adjust to Blair, summarizes the advantages: "For any teenager to be in an environment that includes so many kids from so many different backgrounds is an inherent and obvious advantage. It broadens horizons in ways few other things can and prepares them for a globalized world." In her own way, Clara echoes that sentiment. "The School respects us," she says. "I'm really grateful that Blair is the school I chose." ■



It is not possible to discuss the experience of international students at Blair without mentioning teachers Dave Facciani and Lian Wang. They met in 1999 in Guangzhou, China, where Mr. Facciani was in his second year of teaching English as part of his Yale in China Fellowship, and Mrs. Wang, a classically trained dancer, was working as a dance and fitness instructor.

Fast-forward to today, and the pair have become staples of the Blair community, having taught here for the past 17 years. Mr. Facciani, in addition to teaching microeconomics and history, serves as a monitor for international students, providing academic support and guidance in class selection. Mrs. Wang, a native Mandarin speaker, teaches Chinese and serves as the faculty advisor to the Blair International Awareness Club (BIAC). In that role, she is often the first point of contact for many Chinese parents.

Mrs. Wang's online Activity Parents Group, hosted on WeChat, has become a lively community where parents of Asian students ask questions, converse with one another,

and get involved in activities celebrated by students such as the Moon Festival and Lunar New Year. Created during the pandemic to help parents stay informed, the group has grown to almost 100 members. "It's a big group chat, and it's free. It's a good communication tool for international parents, and I find that they check it more frequently than emails," she says. Mrs. Wang often uses the group to help new parents understand Blair's academic system and to quickly share photos.

In addition to supporting parents, the couple is deeply involved in helping students. "Especially in the first six weeks of school, when students are new and just beginning the process of selecting an advisor, international students often reach out," Mr. Facciani explains. During those opening days, it is not unusual to see BIAC hosting a student gathering in the Faccianis' backyard. "For older students, it's an opportunity to share and hang out at the start of the year; for younger students, it's a chance for them to meet other international students," he explains.

Having lived overseas themselves, the veteran teachers empathize with the experience of learning abroad. "I know how tough it is to be far away from home. We want to help students feel that this place is their home," Mr. Facciani says.

"I came from a big city in China, and I found a huge difference here," Mrs. Wang adds. "I am happy to welcome students who may feel the same and help them build connections."



# TEAM SHARPE CLAIMS SIXTH HEADMASTERS' SOCIETIES GAMES TITLE

**T**his past winter, the 21st Headmasters' Societies Games culminated with a spectacular talent show that saw Team Sharpe take the crown. Over the years, this late February competition has become a favorite event among students and faculty alike, evolving to feature more than 60 competitions spread across six action-packed days. While the challenges have changed over two decades, the format remains the same: participants are sorted into four teams,

each bearing the name of a former Blair headmaster—Breed, Howard, Kelley and Sharpe—and engage in a delightful variety of both silly and serious contests.

In the visual essay at right, Director of School Photography Tyson Trish offers a few highlights of the week that had students, faculty and staff participating in all manner of high jinx for the School's annual tradition. ■





CLASS OF 2024'S RESILIENCY

# Triumphs

AT **176TH** COMMENCEMENT



**EVERY GRADUATING CLASS** of Blair Academy—for 176 years—has been unique in its own right. Each class faces challenging experiences designed to teach students and unexpected events that test their grit and determination, creating a transformative experience. For the Class of 2024, truer words have never been spoken.

With a will to succeed, these students entered the Academy amid a global pandemic that upended educational traditions. From social distancing to the return of intercultural learning experiences, students persevered through it all, growing into the best version of themselves in the process. At the 176th Commencement ceremony, Blair honored their triumphs and celebrated their victories as they continue on in their academic careers as prepared undergraduates and global citizens contributing to the greater good.

Even Mother Nature couldn't dampen Commencement spirits, and after a brief rain delay, the Class of 2024 marched to the Sharpe House lawn, supported by faculty, staff, family and friends who have cheered them on since their arrival on the hilltop. It was an occasion flooded with love and support, as distinguished faculty and members of the graduating class addressed their peers and special guests in attendance and were honored for outstanding achievements before diplomas were presented.

"We, the Class of 2024, are a class of contradictions," said **Charlene Jiao '24**, class speaker and recipient of the George P. Jenkins '32 Prize as valedictorian of the class. "Our Blair journey began with an era of quarantine, social distancing and isolation, yet we leave with lifelong friends and mentors whom we can always lean on for support. While it may seem contradictory that this is our final hour as a class, focus on the joy of the present. Savor this bittersweet day as we prepare to step into the world alone, together."

The entire Blair community extends heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2024! ■

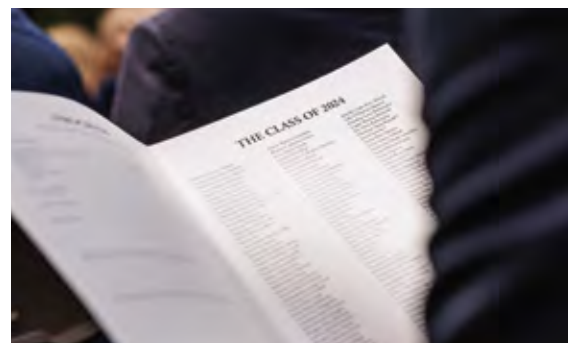
CLASS OF 2024'S RESILIENCY

# Triumphs

AT 176TH COMMENCEMENT







## FACULTY AWARDS

---

**Apgar Award for Teaching Excellence:**

Mathematics teacher Will Murray

**John C. & Eve S. Bogle Teaching Prize:**

English teacher Douglass Compton

**Riether Residential Life Award:**

History teacher Anders Fogel & self-and-society department chair Cency Middleton

**Lillian & Samuel Tedlow Teaching**

**Prize:** English department chair James Moore, Hon. '93

**Headmaster's Faculty Prize:**

Director of Integrated Science Research & science teacher Dr. Nadia Abascal

## STUDENT AWARDS

---

Headmaster's Prize: **Carter Neves & Kady Seck**

Blair Academy Trophy: **Brynne Grant & Machua Muchugia**

George P. Jenkins '32 Prize: **Charlene Jiao**

Appointments to the United States Naval Academy: **Joshua Anthony, Nicholas Barra, Elizabeth John & Andrew Keesey**

CLASS OF 2024'S RESILIENCY

# Triumphs

AT 176TH COMMENCEMENT



“No matter where you are in your life, you will thrive because you know not only how to adapt—and handle hard better—but you also know the importance of being authentic, supporting others and displaying gratitude. Class of 2024, as you embark on your next journey, I am confident that the person you have become here on this hilltop will carry you far in your many adventures ahead.”

—Peter G. Curran P'27 '27,  
Head of School

# CLASS OF 2024

## College Matriculation List

Alvernia University	Loyola Marymount University	University of California (Santa Cruz)
American University (2)	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	University of Chicago
Babson College	Middlebury College	University of Connecticut
Barnard College	Moravian University	University of Florida
Bentley University	Muhlenberg College	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2)
Boston College (2)	New Jersey Institute of Technology	University of Maryland
Boston University (3)	New York University (5)	University of Massachusetts (Amherst)
Bucknell University (4)	Northeastern University (6)	University of Miami
Carnegie Mellon University (3)	Northwestern University (2)	University of Michigan (2)
Chapman University	Penn State University	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Colorado College	Princeton University (2)	University of Pennsylvania (3)
Columbia University (3)	Purdue University	University of Richmond (3)
Cornell University (5)	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Southern California (2)
County College of Morris	Rice University	University of Virginia (2)
Dartmouth College	Santa Clara University	University of Wisconsin
Delaware Valley University	Savannah College of Art and Design	Villanova University (2)
Duke University	Stonehill College	Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Elon University (2)	Syracuse University (3)	Wagner College
Emory University (3)	The Ohio State University	Wake Forest University (4)
Fordham University	The University of Tampa	Washington and Lee University
Franklin & Marshall College (2)	Thomas Jefferson University	Washington University in St. Louis
Harvard University (2)	Tufts University (5)	Wellesley College
Indiana University	United States Naval Academy (4)	Whitman College
Ithaca College	University of California (Berkeley)	Widener University
Johns Hopkins University	University of California (Irvine)	William & Mary
Kenyon College	University of California (Los Angeles)	Yale University
Lafayette College (2)	University of California (San Diego)	
Lehigh University (4)	University of California (Santa Barbara)	

# Sarah O'Neil



**When you're ready, and if you'd like to,** settle into a comfortable posture, giving your body permission to totally relax. You might start by orienting yourself to this moment in whatever way feels supportive.... Maybe feeling the pull of gravity and the points of contact your body is making with the seat or the floor... Perhaps listening for sounds or tuning into the flow of your breath as it moves in and out... Just arriving here—both physically and mentally—as best you can... Letting go of the need to control, create or *do* anything... Accepting a busy mind, a restless body or any difficulties in your life right now as normal aspects of being human.

Do you feel more grounded? Then English and mindfulness teacher Sarah O'Neil has done her job. At Blair, Sarah has taken her personal journey of finding her center and shared it with the community, bringing mindfulness to the forefront of students' minds to support their own well-being. On campus, you will find her practicing what she preaches: habitually walking campus loops

no matter the weather, hosting meditation in Chesnutt Chapel for both novice and veteran attendees, and bringing a sense of calm into whatever space she occupies.

To find out more about how Sarah found serenity and why she chooses to share it with the Blair community, we sat down to ask her a few questions for this issue's "Outside the Classroom."



Sarah O'Neil guides varsity athletes through a yoga practice to support their well-being throughout the season.



Twice each week, Sarah leads meditation practice in Chesnutt Chapel, open to all members of the Blair community.



In the classroom, Sarah teaches mindfulness and English to Blair students.

---

**Q: Can you share your Blair story?**

**A:** I came here, essentially, right out of college. I had taken time off from college, so I was 25 when I graduated and arrived on this campus as a Spanish teacher and coach of field hockey and lacrosse. My job now is very different than it was back then. I lived in Annie Hall when I first started here, and I've lived in a number of dorms, but now I live in Marcial House with my husband, history teacher **Quint Clarke '87**. We had always been friends. About 12 years ago, we realized we actually made sense, and we got married seven years ago. We're in for the long haul at Blair Academy. We love it here!

---

**Q: What do you enjoy most about being part of the Blair community?**

**A:** For me, it's definitely the camaraderie and having amazing colleagues who are also friends.

The thing that has kept me here for 20 years now, other than my husband, is the support—both professional and personal—that I've gotten from this School. As I mentioned, I transitioned from teaching Spanish to now teaching English and mindfulness and running a yoga-and-mindfulness program for athletes. That journey was a process that Blair supported the whole way. It's been really rewarding to feel valued as they have supported me in that transition.

---

**Q: Can you describe your work with AmeriCorps before coming to Blair in 2005?**

**A:** I was a Spanish tutor in under-served schools in San Jose, California. This was during my break from college. I was a Spanish major, teaching reading in Spanish to elementary school students, who would have otherwise been left behind. They didn't know how to read and their teachers didn't have time to spend

with these individual students, so they would pull them out and they would work with me. I always knew I wanted to teach. I went to a boarding school and loved the idea of teaching at a boarding school one day, but it was my AmeriCorps experience that showed me that I could be a teacher, that I had the patience to succeed.



Sarah and her husband, history teacher **Quint Clarke '87**, have 44 years of combined teaching experience at Blair.



Sarah has served in many roles during her Blair tenure, including coaching field hockey and girls' lacrosse for 15 years.

---

**Q: What's the most unusual or creative assignment you've ever given to your students?**

---

**A:** In English, I had them do a Macbeth music video last year, which came out pretty fun. In Mindful Living, one of the activities that makes students the most uncomfortable is spending five minutes slowly eating a Hershey's Kiss. They don't know what to do with themselves, and it's fun to debrief.

My favorite task that I ask students to do is spend three weeks exploring a daily mindfulness practice of their own. They choose something—we talk about it in individual meetings—and they try to implement a daily practice, which we debrief after as a class. I guide them to choosing something they will actually do, and that's the most important thing with mindfulness. Start where you are, pick something you already do every day and change your approach toward that thing.

---

**Q: You have taught several J-term courses on the science of happiness. What has the collective group learned each year from their research?**

---

**A:** I've been working with [English teacher and self-and-society department chair] Cency Middleton on that, and she's an incredible partner. We've put together a course that surveys a number of ingredients to living a happy life. We have students explore each of those ingredients—both the science end and in their own personal lives. The biggest takeaway from teaching that class has been that happiness is multifaceted, and it's really important to understand how our minds work so we can bypass some of our conditioning to access happiness.

---

**Q: Over the past six years, you have been a strong advocate for well-being and mindfulness, in particular, at Blair. Why is this so important to you?**

---

**A:** The truth is I was really struggling in my life about seven years ago, dealing with chronic pain and anxiety. I needed to reduce stress and implement dietary changes, but I also discovered yoga and meditation and realized how integral that was to my overall health. Learning how to come back to center when I get wound up is a really important skill and one of the things I want our students to learn.

It's been a very personal journey for me—this discovery of yoga and mindfulness. And it's been amazing to incorporate the passion that I have for it now into my work at the School. I've been teaching the mindfulness elective course for the last six years, and that course has evolved tremendously over the years as I have evolved in my personal practice.

**Q: Outside the classroom, how are you helping students, faculty and staff at Blair incorporate mindfulness into their lives?**

**A:** I'm doing as much as I can. We have the athletics program, where I offer yoga-and-mindfulness work to all varsity teams, with 80 percent of teams participating. I offer two meditation conference blocks a week, open to the entire community. These are just 10-minute sessions where people can come and reset in the middle of the day, and we've seen a real mix of adults and students utilizing that time.

Every week at Chapel, I open the session with a mini-practice for the whole community. It's important to me that students feel that it is optional to partake, so I always say, "This is your time, but I'm offering this in the next five minutes." That approach has been really well received. Randomly throughout the year, I offer free yoga sessions, and people have definitely taken advantage of that. This past spring, I organized a half-day meditation retreat for the first time, too, for faculty and staff. We had a great time together!

This fall I have started going into dorms each week to offer optional meditation practices at the beginning of study hall, with the aim of helping kids get grounded and focused for their work. I'm looking forward to watching this aspect of the program take better shape in the months ahead.

**Q: How have students at Blair embraced the addition of mindfulness practices in class, on the fields and in the dorms?**

**A:** Surprisingly, really well! I think there is a real appetite for peace of mind. Students know when they are overwhelmed and they need strategies for finding center. The self-awareness is there. My elective is always full and I have two classes each semester, so I'm reaching 40 to 45 students a year with that. I also work with the Foundations of Well-Being II classes, so all sophomores receive a mindfulness lesson with me. The athletes are loving our yoga sessions, and generally the feedback has been positive. I also have individual students reaching out for help with their personal mindfulness practice, which is really cool.

**Q: What is one aspect of the new Center for Health and Well-Being that you are most excited about seeing come to life?**

**A:** Believe it or not—the yoga and meditation room! We've been operating out of Chesnutt Chapel, which is a beautiful space, but I'm excited to have a fresh, new space drenched with light for yoga and meditation. A place that is central on campus and accessible for everyone.

**Q: Can you share one practice the extended Blair community can embrace in their everyday routine for more purposeful intention?**

**A:** Starting a daily practice is as hard as building any habit, but it's also as simple as finding one thing you already do in your everyday lives and turning that into a mindfulness practice. When you're brushing your teeth, slow down and smell the

toothpaste, feel the brush in your hand. If you take a morning walk, tune in to the sound of the birds and feel your feet on the ground. Mindfulness can be infused into our already busy lives in so many ways.

**Q: What brings you joy outside of teaching?**

**A:** So many things. I have learned how to be open to joy in ways I never thought possible. I love my yoga and meditation practice. I am an avid exerciser and reader. I love going on walks with my husband and petting our beautiful 15-year-old cat, Schpilkas [Yiddish for "restlessness"]. A lot of simple things make me happy.

**Q: What's the craziest thing on your bucket list?**

**A:** I don't have a bucket list. This is going to come back to my newfound philosophy on joy, but I feel like every moment is the most important moment I'm in. I don't really have things I'm dying to do. I just want to be right here for as much of my life as possible.

**Q: Your eyes ping open and it's the start of a new day. What's your routine?**

**A:** I like to make the bed, and I take my time with that. I have [decaf] coffee. I meditate. I go for a walk and then I do some yoga, maybe a second meditation if there is time. I do that every single day. My mornings are sacred to me. If I don't tend to my own soul, then I have nothing to give to others. ■



# STATE OF ADMISSION

By Dean of Enrollment **Teddy Wenner '96**

**WITH EVERY ADMISSION CYCLE**, it seems as though the support of the extended Blair community increases alongside the number of applications we receive. Whether it is our international families hoisting the Blair flag across the globe or faculty and staff rallying around Revisit Day events or even smiling students helping a lost visitor find the Blair Room, we couldn't do it without each and every one of you. Thank you—your support allows us to continue to grow and shape the next generation of leaders at the Academy.

I am often asked what Blair is looking for in an applicant, and although there is no “golden ticket” into Blair, we certainly focus on finding kind, high-character students first and foremost. We then gauge their intellectual curiosity and classroom presence, how they will engage with our community and how they will take advantage of the numerous opportunities available on the hilltop. In the end, we aim to build a wonderful cohort of kind and connected individuals who are bright and will enhance and contribute to the community in various ways.

As we continue to grow our reputation and physical plant, overlapping admission with other top-tier institutions, the admission team is traveling more than ever, building a bigger rapport with prospective students and their families with repeat visits. The spring was another full travel season, with admission representatives traveling throughout the Northeast and to California, Florida, North Carolina and Bermuda through April and May.

Each year, we are attracting stronger applicants, with a record number of applications for this school year. As such, our strategic initiatives focusing on our rigorous advanced curriculum, college testing preparation and residential life curriculum play an important role in helping families discern the nuances that make Blair so special. It's truly a collaborative effort, with dedicated professionals leading every Blair department as we seek to provide an outstanding educational experience.

During the spring admission season, prospective students and their families have taken great notice of what sets

Blair apart. We have received positive feedback on our commitment to academic excellence, our strong dual-advisor support system, and our culture of kindness and inclusivity. They value the warmth and connections formed throughout the admission process as they meet students, teachers, coaches, and other faculty and staff. This supportive environment not only fosters meaningful relationships but also reflects our dedication to nurturing each student's potential.

Blair continues to be in a position of strength in this competitive admission landscape. Our environment, coupled with our rich academic, athletic and artistic opportunities, makes Blair an exceptional place for students to grow, be supported and be challenged throughout their adolescent years. We will continue to proudly wave the Blair flag to ensure we enroll applicants who will not only thrive at Blair but also go out into the world as leaders and changemakers—individuals of whom we can all be proud. ■





**36%**

**RECEIVING  
FINANCIAL AID**

**21%**

**INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENTS**

**14%**

**ACCEPTANCE  
RATE**

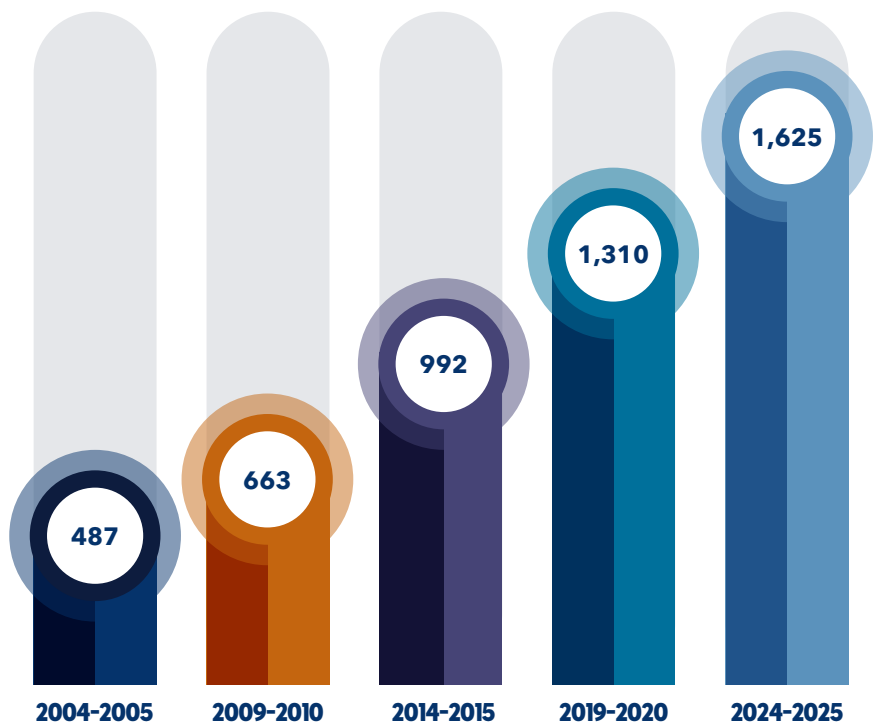


**STUDENTS  
REPRESENTING  
25 STATES**



**STUDENTS  
REPRESENTING  
30 COUNTRIES**

**NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS**







# HOW 'LOOPING' IN THE ARTS MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

**EACH HAS A STORY TO TELL.** Kate Sykes, chair of Blair's fine arts department, remembers a day in the ceramics studio when her pregnancy made it difficult to lean into the pottery kiln. Feeling a sensation that hinted at labor, a dawning realization crossed her face. Art student *Batouly Camara '15*, who had been in class with Mrs. Sykes for years and stood helping at the kiln, noticed. "I got you, whatever you need," Batouly said. Now, almost a decade later, Mrs. Sykes still remembers the moment fondly.

Director of Vocal Music Ryan Manni-Brennan lost two close relatives last year in quick succession and quietly took a few days away from school to attend the funeral services. He didn't tell his students where he was going, just that he would be gone. Singer *Justin Baggett '23*, who had studied with Mr. Manni-Brennan for four years, sensed that something was wrong. "He didn't ask any questions," Mr. Manni-Brennan recalls, "he just took the lead and agreed to run rehearsals while I was out." When Mr. Manni-Brennan returned, Justin didn't ask for details; he simply looked at Mr. Manni-Brennan and asked, "Are you okay?" These small yet profound moments shared between teachers and students, where genuine connections form, are the foundation of everything Blair espouses as a community.

While many at Blair have similar anecdotes of students reciprocating the care and connection that teachers extend, the faculty members of Blair's fine and performing arts departments have an abundance of stories.

Part of the reason is the practice of "looping." Looping involves matching students with the same instructor for several consecutive years, and it occurs in Blair's fine and performing arts departments. Instead of switching to another teacher at the end of each year, students in an orchestra, ceramics, theatre or vocal class often remain with the same teacher and peers for years as the group progresses together.



# HOW 'LOOPING' IN THE ARTS MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE



Saxophonist **Ethan Anthony '24** has spent countless hours under the expert tutelage of Mrs. Pagotto, learning to play organically with the Jazz Band and Symphony Orchestra.



Director of School Photography Tyson Trish analyzes film in the darkroom with **Wale Fadeyibi '23**.

## THE PRACTICE OF LOOPING

As one *U.S. News & World Report* article noted earlier this year, the concept of a teacher spending multiple years with a cohort of students isn't novel; in fact, "about 12% of public schools across the U.S. used some form of teacher looping in the 2017-2018 school year." This centuries-old pedagogical practice has regained popularity in educational circles as its rigorous benefits, to both students and their teachers, have been studied and documented. In Montessori and Waldorf schools, students routinely stay with the same educator for several years, as do children in more than half the schools across the state of Vermont.

While looping may not be a new concept, its benefits, which extend beyond academic progress and into the realm of socio-emotional development and classroom dynamics, are undeniable. According to a recent study from Brown University, the academic and behavioral gains acquired from studying under a teacher for more than one year increase with the proportion of repeat students in a class. The Department of Education's Institute of Educational Sciences has documented that looping "increases student achievement, supports instructional time, and provides enhanced teacher-student relationship[s]." When students and teachers spend more time together, it naturally fosters a deeper understanding of individual learning styles, strengths and areas needing improvement. Teachers can then tailor their instruction more effectively to meet the needs of each student, leading to improved outcomes.

All of this comes as no surprise to the students and teachers in Blair's fine and performing arts programs.

Director of Instrumental Music Jennifer Pagotto, with 20 years of experience guiding Blair's musicians, has witnessed the strong impact of looping, particularly in the Symphony Orchestra. Despite the additional workload that looping entails—crafting four-year lesson plans so that students encounter fresh challenges each year—she finds that the depth of learning that results justifies the effort. For example, ninth



Fine arts teacher Caroline James works to enhance her students' digital skills.

graders initially focus on following directions literally, Mrs. Pagotto explains, but they gradually transition to playing intuitively, thanks to the detailed knowledge and nuance that come with years of performing together. “By the time a student has been playing for four years, there is almost no need for words. In a performance, we all play together organically, following the cues of one another without speaking. It’s the time and years of repetition—together—that allows us to get to that organic stage.”

Alto saxophone player **Ethan Anthony '24** can speak to the positive culture that developed as he and his fellow musicians reached that level of symbiosis. Ethan spent four years in Blair’s Symphony Orchestra and Jazz Band, practicing with his friend and fellow saxophonist, **Andrew Antunes '24**. In that time, Ethan and Andrew have been through thick and thin under the careful tutelage of Mrs. Pagotto. They toted their instruments to practice in the open air of the Bowl during the pandemic their first year and warmed up in the awe-inspiring acoustics of ancient European cathedrals during their third. “We’ve both certainly come a long way as musicians since then,” Ethan muses. Amid those changing landscapes and lessons, one constant remained—learning, three days a week, year after year, together. Ethan credits the sense of community fostered by Mrs. Pagotto and his bandmates with building incredible bonds. “It was very hard to say goodbye.”

That close-knit culture, which results when a cohort of students grow together, is one of the defining characteristics of looping. It makes sense. On sports teams, the same phenomenon happens. Athletes who work together toward a common goal, growing together for years, bond.

**While looping may not be a new concept, its benefits, which extend beyond academic progress and into the realm of socio-emotional development and classroom dynamics, are undeniable.**

The same thing happens in the arts. “When you have a group of student leaders who have been there for a while, they become partners in teaching the younger kids,” Mrs. Pagotto says. “You trust them to convey the right attitude in class. I’m so grateful for all the students who have become part of that.”

Looping not only benefits students by building bonds and proficiency but also leads them to take risks within their craft, something that Mrs. Sykes has seen in her students’ art. “Bigger ideas, riskier ideas come from these trusted relationships that build over years,” she explains. “People knowing each other, allows them to feel comfortable and confident to take risks that push them as artists.”

# HOW 'LOOPING' IN THE ARTS MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE



Director of Instrumental Music Jennifer Pagotto enjoys a quiet moment before the performance begins.

Mr. Manni-Brennan concurs, having seen the same phenomenon occur with the Singers. “Over years, you see their confidence grow as they try to reach new levels, and their leadership skills build as their confidence grows. It’s one of the best parts of the job—to see kids take those risks and develop over time, through a formative period in their lives.”

## FINDING MEANING IN ONE’S WORK

The years spent connecting to each student personally enriches the lives of teachers, too. Not only do they gain a deep and nuanced understanding of each student’s strengths and challenges, but they also develop the sustained relationships that make one’s work rewarding. Over the course of two decades teaching at Blair, Mrs. Sykes has found that the process of working through challenges together builds a deep and collegial relationship. “A deep respect develops,” she says, “that often carries long past graduation.” Today, as Mrs. Sykes admires the pottery gifted by her ceramics students or the student artwork adorning her walls and thinks of the notes she’s collected that often begin with “I thought of you the other day when...,” she remains deeply grateful for those ongoing relationships.

Mr. Manni-Brennan also continues to be a supportive presence in his former students’ musical lives, embracing opportunities

to collaborate anew. “It’s incredibly gratifying when students come back, after their first year in class,” he says, “because they’ve chosen to come back to work together. That feeling is magnified when students graduate.” Mr. Manni-Brennan started the Alumni Choir over Alumni Weekend, he notes, so that the musicians who once performed together regularly can capture the magic of performing together once more. Recently collaborating with *Kendra Payne ’20*, he commissioned an impressive original piece that was premiered by Blair’s choir in last year’s Spring Concert. “Working on a new piece together can be mutually beneficial—for her as a young professional composer, and us as a choral program,” he says.

With her most recent senior students heading off to college and a fresh wave of ninth graders awaiting their first venture into her classroom, Mrs. Sykes looks forward to the new school year. “We are lucky in a way that not every teacher experiences,” she muses. She knows that the incoming students aren’t like family yet, but they will be. She will spend hundreds of hours “looping” with them. As for her departing seniors, Mrs. Sykes pauses, a moment of reflection passing over her before she breaks into a wide, warm smile. “You’ve known them for four years. You still get to have that relationship with them. It was strengthened over time. Why would we give up on this friendship now?” ■

## Jon Williams '89 Shines in CBS' Emmy Award-Winning Series



Jon Williams and The Grooveline, seen here performing at the renowned Gilley's South Side Music Hall in Dallas, TX, regularly entertain audiences across the United States and around the world.

Singer, songwriter and producer *Jon Williams '89* knows a thing or two about music. Growing up in Newark, New Jersey, he sang in the same church that Whitney Houston attended, often performing alongside her on Sundays. Music also runs in the family. His father was a professional singer when he met Jon's mother.

Jon, whose vocal range spans five octaves, has spent years performing professionally as both a lead singer and backing vocalist, working with artists such as Julio Iglesias Jr., Backstreet Boy Kevin Richardson, and Latin music legends Franco De Vita and Luis Enrique.

Now, CBS television has featured Jon and his band, The Grooveline, on their Emmy Award-winning destination channel travel series. The feature, which first aired in May, profiles Jon and The Grooveline, originally formed in 2001 in Miami as a premier event band serving corporate and wedding clients. About 10 years ago, the band relocated to Texas,

where they found their niche. Known for their wide-ranging repertoire that includes everything from big band to Motown and hits from every decade, The Grooveline remains in high demand. The band's most sought-after form is a 12-piece ensemble, including four vocalists and a Grammy Award-winning percussionist, making them a standout in the Lone Star state.

"Grooveline is the only African American-owned entity in Dallas/Fort Worth performing primarily in the luxury event space," Jon relays in the CBS piece. "I am quite proud of that."

Throughout his career, Jon has had the privilege of performing for many celebrities, including Jamie Foxx, Barry Gibb and Tiger Woods, among others. But the secret to The Grooveline's success, he believes, is the exchange of energy between the band and its audiences. "The exchange of energy... is something that comes from within," Jon told CBS. When the audience gives it back, "It's pretty beautiful." ■

Learn more about The Grooveline at [www.thegroovinedallas.com](http://www.thegroovlinedallas.com).

## Matthew Tung '19 Powers toward Victory



At the Asian Weightlifting Championships, Matthew matched his personal record in the snatch, with a lift of 140 kg. (308 lbs.) on his third attempt.

Blair's *Matthew Tung '19* made international headlines recently as the first athlete to represent Hong Kong in Olympic-style weightlifting in more than a decade. Making his professional debut at the Asian Championships in Uzbekistan in February 2024, Matthew clinched fifth place in the 96 kg. division, Hong Kong's highest placing in the competition.

"This competition was a good step for me and Hong Kong. People know we have a team now," Matthew told the *South China News*.

Matthew's journey into competitive sports began during his first year at Blair, sparked by a YouTube video that introduced him to Olympic-style weightlifting. Under the guidance of his advisor, Blair biology teacher and Dean of Teaching and Learning Joe Wagner, and aided by online tutorials, Matthew soon began refining his skills. Within a year, he was regularly lifting close to a combined total of 400 pounds over his head and winning his first competitions.

When he turned 16, Matthew participated in an international competition hosted by weightlifter and U.S. Olympic bronze medalist Cheryl Haworth. When Matthew won and Cheryl encouraged him to turn professional, a dream was born.



In February 2024, Matthew celebrated his arrival in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, for the Asian Weightlifting Championships.

After earning his bachelor's degree in health science from Northeastern University, where he founded the school's Olympic-style weightlifting team, Matthew returned home to Hong Kong in 2023. Eager to continue competing internationally, he approached Hong Kong's Weightlifting and Powerlifting Association (HKWPA) with a proposal to represent the region in the Asian Championships. The HKWPA agreed but stipulated that he must fund the trip himself. Without having sponsored an Olympic-style weightlifter for more than a decade, the HKWPA lacked a uniform to provide for the competition. With characteristic determination, Matthew accepted the conditions and, borrowing an officially branded Hong Kong football uniform from a friend, brought home the win.

Today, Matthew regularly lifts combined totals of over 600 pounds and has acquired a competition coach. He balances his training regimen during lunch breaks and evenings with working as a research assistant for sports medicine at the Hong Kong Sports Institute. His talent and dedication have earned him well-deserved accolades. "As a part-time athlete with minimal support, Matthew has reached a level where he can lift with some of the best in Asia," his coach, Mike Wong Ho-yin, told the *South China News*. "It is an incredible achievement."

Matthew, it comes as no surprise, remains focused on the future. "I'm aiming to go to the Asian Championships again next year and the Asian Games in 2026." All of us at Blair wish him the best! ■



## Lauren Keiling '04 Shares Her Story with ESPN



**Lauren Keiling '04** has what many might call a dream job. This past spring, The Walt Disney Company featured Lauren's work with ESPN for World Storytelling Day, highlighting how the senior director of fan and marketplace insights harnesses the power of storytelling to understand the modern sports fan. Through her work on the ESPN research team, Lauren determines how different consumers navigate media today to improve the experience for all.

"Data and numbers can really fall flat if that is what you are presenting to people at face value," Lauren explained in her interview with Disney. "For my work to have impact, we really have to bring it to life with storytelling and narrative."

Lauren has built her career at ESPN over 15 years with the company. Starting as a research analyst, her work has constantly evolved with the consumer. Lauren's efforts have helped launch ESPN BET, push the company further into YouTube and TikTok, and assess demand for two new direct-to-consumer products—Venu and an ESPN flagship product. Utilizing data analytics on how fans are consuming across platforms combined with talking to fans directly via primary research, Lauren tells the story of fans today to better predict where they are headed tomorrow.

"So much has changed in the last decade, and it's about trying to understand how the consumer will shift into the future."

—**Lauren Keiling '04**

In the last decade, the landscape of media consumption has undergone a dramatic transformation, driven by rapid advancements in technology and changes in consumer behavior, and Lauren's career has evolved with it. Traditional media outlets such as television, radio and print have declined significantly as digital platforms have surged in popularity. The rise of smartphones and tablets has made media consumption more personalized and accessible, allowing individuals to engage with content anytime and anywhere. This shift has also led to the proliferation of niche content, enabling creators to reach targeted audiences with specific interests. Overall, the last 10 years have seen a move toward more interactive, personalized and on-demand media consumption, fundamentally changing how audiences engage with content.

"That's the reason I have stayed so invested in my work," Lauren said. "So much has changed in the last decade, and it's about trying to understand how the consumer will shift into the future. Youth fandoms are important, and observing how young people are becoming fans and consuming media in different ways is key. Older generations are picking up on stuff that Gen Z is involved in, and that is shaping our path in the future."

When ESPN turned 30 in 2009, *PopMatters* noted, "No one can foresee what directions sports coverage will take in the future, but it's a good bet that ESPN will be a major influence in shaping that coverage." After four decades of dominance in the sports industry, ESPN continues to reinvent itself to stay relevant in the ever-changing landscape of media consumption. As they look to find the next great innovation for today's sports fan, one thing is for sure—Lauren will be behind the scenes, discovering just what they are looking for in today's digital-first world. ■

## Intersession: Taking the **Love of Learning on the Road**



In 2024, **Tyler Mo '26** (left) and **Lucas D'Haene '27** (right) participated in "Click Bait," an Intersession class focused on the design and history of classic video games.



**Genesis Medina '25** presents to her peers in "Adaptive Reuse: In Praise of Older Buildings."



**Liam Green '26** (left) and **Luke Antoneck '26** (right) master CPR techniques in the "Keep Calm and Guard On" Intersession course.

Last January, while frost was settling onto the hills and fields of Blair's rolling campus, Blair students found themselves soaking up the sun in distant and exotic locales. Some were in the nation's capital for three days, meeting with professionals driving change on a national and global level. Others ventured to Seneca Falls, New York, tracing the footsteps of the Suffrage Movement leaders and diving into history. Meanwhile, 15 students explored life on the other side of the globe, getting to know the Blair-Serem School in the highlands of Africa and learning about what it takes to support the education of hundreds of children in rural Kenya.

## A Time for Exploration

Whether the goal was to delve into culture, uncover history or explore career possibilities, each trip challenged students to learn firsthand. These experiences were made possible through Blair's Intersession program, formerly known as J-term. Since its inception in 2020, Intersession has provided students with 10 days to delve deeply into a topic of their choosing—with a focus on immersive on- and off-campus experiences. One of the most important aspects of Intersession has been the opportunity to collaborate with those beyond Blair's campus. Outside experts—some alumni, some experts and organizations completely apart from Blair—contribute to these key experiences. Now, with the program moving from January to March, Assistant Head of School for Academics Nathan Molteni sees an opportunity for expansion. "This switch to March provides greater capacity for travel and experiences outside our 'bubble,'" Mr. Molteni says. In 2025, Intersession trips under consideration include Kenya, Puerto Rico and Cuba, in addition to the program's signature day trips and overnight excursions to Washington, D.C., New York City and Philadelphia.



As participants in "Incarceration Nation," **Ella Poliquin '27** (left) and **Lena Rodriguez '26** (right) explored the U.S. criminal justice system, visiting Eastern State Penitentiary and studying various aspects of sentencing, prison conditions and related issues.

"This switch to March provides greater capacity for travel and experiences outside our 'bubble.'"

—Assistant Head of School for Academics Nathan Molteni



**Brandon Wells '26** (left) and **Johnny Fang '27** (second from the left) participated in the "Current Events Forum in Washington, D.C.," designed to connect students with Blair alumni who are now influencing local, national and global change in the nation's capital.

The reason for prioritizing travel is simple: It has the ability to awaken passion in young learners like few other experiences can. Many are familiar with the famed journey of Beatles' guitarist George Harrison, who persuaded his bandmates to join him on a trip to India in 1968. The musicians returned profoundly changed by the rhythms of life in India, which led to lifelong personal changes in the men and a period of rich artistic productivity for the band. Similarly, author and poet Maya Angelou found her worldview reshaped in her 20s by experiences in Egypt and later in Ghana. Reflecting on the universal human experiences she encountered, Angelou wrote, "Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends." In both instances, the exposure to new people and new ideas that travel brought proved to be the catalyst that sparked discovery, fueled the imagination and broadened understanding.

## Ensuring Equal Access

Mr. Molteni emphasizes the importance of equitable access to Intersession's learning opportunities for all Blair students.

"If you want students to have a brief but impactful experience, it is through Intersession," he says. "Our students are uniform in their enthusiasm for travel opportunities during Intersession, whether day-tripping to New York City or spending 10 days in Kenya." The leadership and support of every member of the Blair family is so critical to delivering on the School's curricular and cocurricular programs; certainly, this will only become increasingly important through scholarship support and named awards benefiting global travel, not only during Intersession but also for trips planned for other times of the school year.

As we prepare for next March's Intersession, we look forward to continuing to open doors for every student to experience the transformative power of travel. Whether it is an exploration of the historic Eastern State Penitentiary for the class "Incarceration Nation" or a trip to New Haven, Connecticut, to meet with architects revitalizing old buildings for adaptive reuse in "In Praise of Older Buildings," the destination pales in comparison to journey itself. Because in the end, as George Harrison, Maya Angelou and others have discovered, real learning is not just about the places we go—it's about what we learn along the way. ■

# TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT



## **Carina Davidson '86**

**Carina Davidson '86** serves as president of H/Advisors Abernathy (Abernathy), based in the firm's New York office. In that role, she counsels companies of all sizes across a broad range of sectors on complex communications matters, bringing to bear significant expertise helping clients manage their reputations and develop strategies to reach their core audiences. Over the course of her career at Abernathy, Carina has led communications efforts on behalf of her clients surrounding critical, often transformational, events, including mergers and acquisitions, private transactions, initial public offerings, regulatory developments, leadership successions, hostile takeover attempts and shareholder activism. Carina also is one of the firm's leading executive coaches, helping prepare senior leaders to effectively communicate to their stakeholders.

Prior to joining Abernathy in 1996, Carina specialized in issues management and public affairs at the global public relations consultancy firm Edelman. A graduate of Skidmore College, she is fluent in Dutch and proficient in Spanish. Carina received her BA from Skidmore College in 1990. She and her husband, Alex, live in Darien, Connecticut, with their twin sons, Gerrit and Willem.



**Visit [www.blair.edu](http://www.blair.edu)  
for the latest news from Blair!**

- Regularly posted updates about happenings in the classroom & across campus
- Photos & videos of the Blair community in action
- Athletic schedules, news & results
- Calendar of fine & performing arts shows, concerts & productions
- Opportunities for alums to connect & engage with Blair & fellow Bucs



# ALUMNI WEEKEND

## BRINGS THE BLAIR COMMUNITY HOME

**H**ome means something different to everyone. To some, it is a place of comfort and familiarity. For others, home is a feeling—or even a person. As author Nora Keita Jemisin once said, “Home is what you take with you, not what you leave behind.”

The experience of venturing home was felt across the hilltop during Alumni Weekend this June, as classmates returned to the School to relive fond memories and forge new ones. The festivities kicked off with the traditional Blair Cup Golf Scramble on Friday, followed by a tennis and pickleball tournament. Players came together for an awards ceremony for the winners before freshening up for the Welcome Back, Bucs, Party that evening. The Class of 1974 celebrated their 50th Reunion with a dinner at the Chiang-Elghanayan Center for Innovation and Collaboration (CECIC). Taking over their own corners of campus by class, alums retreated to dorms they haven’t stayed in for years, swapping stories while burning the midnight oil.

“I am beyond excited to see everyone back on campus to celebrate 25 years,” shared **Bridget (Brennan) Hodakowski '99**. “It is wonderful reconnecting with so many in a place that has felt like home since the fall of 1995.

I can hardly believe that 25 years have passed since we graduated on the front hill of Blair, and yet it feels like just yesterday we stood in our white dresses and navy jackets excited about what the future would bring.”

Joined by an influx of fresh faces on Saturday, the community took part in myriad activities spread across campus that celebrated the bonds forged on the hilltop, regardless of time passed. Throughout the day, attendees enjoyed campus tours and hikes of the Siegel Property, while an Arts Open House in the CECIC maker space welcomed creative guests to craft keepsakes to remember the weekend. Standout athletes and artists were honored at the Athletic Hall of Fame (see page 53) and Arts Guild (see page 54) induction ceremonies, and the Blair community celebrated outstanding volunteers and class representatives at the Head of School Assembly. To cap off another terrific Alumni Weekend, everyone gathered for a delicious dinner full of food, camaraderie and laughter with DJ **Jeremy Duncan '01**, providing the perfect soundtrack for the night.

“Alumni Weekend is a wonderful opportunity to relive memories and reconnect with the people and places that contributed to our shared experiences,” **Jo Wrzesinsky '94** said. “To return to Blair is to return home.”



## PEACHEY AWARD RECIPIENTS

Alumni Volunteer of the Year: **Kaitlin Maillet '04**  
Class Correspondent of the Year: **Clark Heckert '64**  
Class Representative of the Year: **Kris (Coughlan) Lisi '84, Chrysta (DeMartino) Argue '89, Jo Wrzesinsky '94 & Bridget (Brennan) Hodakowski '99**  
Outstanding Reunion Committee: **Class of 1974**



# ALUMNI WEEKEND

BRINGS THE BLAIR COMMUNITY HOME

# BLAIR ACADEMY



**"Life is so busy, and social media and text strings keep us connected, but planning ahead to come together with old friends on Alumni Weekend is an annual standing date that I always look forward to!"**

***—Chrysta (DeMartino) Argue '89***





During Alumni Weekend, the Blair community dedicated Stival Tennis Court in honor of former faculty member Lewis Stival. Over their 33 years at Blair, Lewis and his wife, Lois, served in many roles, including advisors, mentors, dorm heads, and proud parents to **Michael '03**, **Lauren '05** and **Anthony '07**. In addition to her position as day student coordinator, Lois planned many Blair events over the years, including the prom, Parents' Weekend, Alumni Weekend and various fundraisers. A former English teacher, Lew headed up the School's college counseling office for most of his Blair tenure and coached girls' and boys' varsity tennis for many years. ■

**Delicious catering and beverages for the Welcome Back, Bucs, Party provided by:**

- Tom Kehoe '83**, Yards Brewing Company
- Mark McLean '98**, Remarkable Cuisine
- Emily Downs '02**, Emily's Hearth
- Shaun Mehtani '02**, Mehndi
- Matt Gallira '08**, Big Mozz



# 2024 CITATION OF MERIT

## *KEITH RAUSCHENBACH '76*

**FOR OVER FIVE DECADES, KEITH RAUSCHENBACH '76** has stood as a steadfast pillar of support to the Blair community. His connection to Blair began when he enrolled as a day student from Newton, New Jersey, and was later joined by his sisters, **Sharon Bardos '77** and **Deborah Rauschenbach '80**. During his time on the hilltop, Keith was well regarded as a scholar and an athlete, but it was his exemplary citizenship that truly set him apart.

After graduating with a BA in political science from Westminster College in 1980, Keith pursued further education, earning the Certified Employee Benefit Specialist designation from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans. His professional journey led him to a long and successful career in executive management at TIAA, and as a Blair Trustee since 2008, Keith has played a pivotal role in the School's direction, chairing the Governance Committee and serving on the Executive and Investment Committees. He also served on the Alumni Board of Governors from 1993 to 2001, completing his tenure as president, and in 2016, Keith was honored with the Alumnus of the Year award for his dedication to Blair.

Throughout five decades, Keith has shown up to support community events large and small, maintained open lines of communication with fellow Board members, solved problems effectively and positively guided the School's direction. He and his spouse, J.R., have graciously opened their home for community events, and with his open and warm demeanor, he has become one of our most valued representatives, engaging incoming families about the Trustees' role and vision for the School. Keith has also been a long-standing and generous financial supporter of countless initiatives at Blair. Simply put, few have supported Blair as steadfastly and strongly as Keith. We extend our gratitude for the invaluable time, treasure and talent that Keith has so graciously shared with us over five decades, and it is with great pride that we award Keith Rauschenbach with this School's highest honor, the Citation of Merit.

To view the full text of the 2024 Citation of Merit, visit [www.blair.edu/citation-of-merit](http://www.blair.edu/citation-of-merit).



## 2024 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR | WILLIAM CRAMER '64

In 2019, classmate **Courtney West '64** deemed **Bill Cramer '64** the Class of 1964's "unofficial ambassador for all things good." Bill has dedicated his life to it. From his alma mater to his local community to his law clients, Bill's passion to commit selfless acts of kindness and leave the world better than he found it embodies the long-held values he learned at Blair Academy. Bill arrived on the hilltop in 1962 as a junior and threw himself into campus life, including the band, Webster Society, *The Breeze*, basketball and track. He managed varsity football and served as a prefect his senior year, earning the Franklin Prize for "most-improved student."

After Blair, Bill went on to graduate from Ripon College with an AB in history and from Villanova University with a JD. After serving as a captain in the U.S. Army's Judge Advocate General's Corps, he opened his own law office in 1979 and began practicing in multiple fields of law. Bill is deeply engaged in philanthropic organizations in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, supporting causes he firmly believes in and encouraging others to do the same. He holds a distinguished record of commitment to the community, especially his work

with the Lehigh Valley Health Network's Pocono Foundation, East Stroudsburg University, the Salvation Army and the Pocono Mountains United Way for his charitable gifts, year-round support and leadership in their organizations.

As a member of Blair's True Blue Society and John C. Sharpe Society of planned givers, Bill regularly coordinates gatherings for his class around reunions and encourages classmates to stay connected to the School and one another. In 2005, he and his wife, Barbara, established The Clifford L. and Joan B. Cramer Scholarship in honor of his parents to not only support the education of students but also connect with them during their time on the hilltop and beyond. Bill was honored as the Alumni Volunteer of the Year for his exceptional support during his 50th Reunion in 2014. In a letter to Ripon College's admission office in 1964, former Head of School James Howard wrote, "Blair is very fond of Bill Cramer." Sixty years later, these sentiments remain stronger than ever and Blair is proud to recognize Bill Cramer as the 2024 Alumnus of the Year.

To view the full text of the 2024 Alumnus of the Year, visit [www.blair.edu/alumni-of-the-year](http://www.blair.edu/alumni-of-the-year).

## WELCOME, NEW FACULTY & STAFF!

We are thrilled to extend a warm welcome to 12 new faculty and staff members joining us on the hilltop this fall. Bringing experiences from locations as diverse as Istanbul, Turkey; Jiangsu Province, China; and Putumayo, Colombia, they arrived at Blair with rich backgrounds and a wealth of knowledge. Since the start of the year, they have done much to enrich the learning environment and community life on campus. Discover a little more about their teaching backgrounds and interests below.



**LEANNE PINARD BAUM**  
ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

**EDUCATION:** Binghamton University, BA in economics; Seton Hall University, master's in public administration and a certificate in entrepreneurship; Seton Hall University, MA in counseling anticipated in 2025

**COMES TO US FROM:** The alumni engagement and philanthropy team at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey, where she served as director of annual giving and director of their annual fund



**MATEO CORONADO**  
LANGUAGES

**EDUCATION:** Tufts' School of the Museum of Fine Arts, BA in studio art

**COMES TO US FROM:** Eastie Farm, an urban farm in Boston, where he worked as a Climate Corps Live Interpreter, furthering the farm's mission to educate local communities about climate change and sustainability. Fluent in French and Spanish, he served as the interpreter for five fellows who did not speak English. Mateo also has experience translating scripts and interviews about an indigenous tribe in the municipality of Mocoa in the department of Putumayo, Colombia.

**COACHING:** JV volleyball and swimming



**ASHLYN DERRICK**  
COLLEGE COUNSELING

**EDUCATION:** University of West Georgia, BS in nursing

**COMES TO US WITH:** A professional background in health care, working as a registered nurse on Blair's Health Center staff since 2021. Over the summers since coming to Blair, she has also joined the college counseling team at the Advanced Studies Program at St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, as an administrative assistant.



**CAITLIN DUNNE**  
ENGLISH

**EDUCATION:** Manhattan College, BA in secondary education; Columbia University, MA in English education; University of Bath, doctorate in education anticipated in 2026

**COMES TO US FROM:** Robert College in Istanbul, Turkey, where she served as an English teacher, high school prep English coordinator and deputy head of social entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity

**COACHING:** Winter track and crew



**HEATHER FREDRICK**  
COLLEGE COUNSELING

**EDUCATION:** Colgate University, BA in economics and international relations

**COMES TO US FROM:** Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, where she worked for three years, most recently as assistant director of admission

**COACHING:** Spring track



**EAMON GARA GRADY**  
MATHEMATICS

**EDUCATION:** Williams College, BA in statistics

**COMES TO US FROM:** Williams College, where he served as a research assistant for the school's mathematics and statistics department during his time as a student and worked as a sportswriter for the office of sports information

**COACHING:** Varsity boys' soccer and baseball



**WILL HARVARD**  
LANGUAGES

**EDUCATION:** The University of the South in Tennessee, BA in Greek and Latin; Villanova University, MA in classical studies; St. John's College in Annapolis, MA in liberal arts

**COMES TO US FROM:** The Tampa Preparatory School in Florida, where he taught Latin

**COACHING:** JV boys' squash



**STIRLING INCE**  
LANGUAGES

**EDUCATION:** Wesleyan University, BA in psychology; The State University of New York at New Paltz, MEd in second language education

**COMES TO US WITH:** 30 years of teaching experience, most recently at the Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Massachusetts

**COACHING:** Winter and spring track



**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 RECIPIENT** of the Hardwick Teaching Fellowship, mathematics teacher Eamon Gara Grady. The Hardwick Teaching Fellowship was established in 2007 by lifelong supporters of education, Gerry and Marge Thomas, to support Blair faculty members new to teaching. Today, the Thomases' daughter, Monie Hardwick, and her husband, Chan, continue to carry forward the family's commitment, adding to and supporting new teachers through the

fellowship. "The fellowship is a way to honor and recognize excellent potential teaching talent," says Mr. Hardwick, whose nearly quarter century of leadership as Blair's Head of School was marked by the growth and creation of a faculty culture that did much to attract and retain exceptional boarding school educators. Mrs. Hardwick, who developed Blair's teacher training program during her tenure at the School, notes, "We hope others will continue to support teaching fellowships. It's an amazing opportunity to help people pursue teaching and education." ■



**VALERIE LOHR**  
HISTORY

**EDUCATION:** Lehigh University, BA in political science and history; Pennsylvania State University Dickinson School of Law, JD; Southern New Hampshire State University, MA in clinical mental health counseling anticipated in 2026; Baylor University, doctorate in education anticipated in 2025

**COMES TO US FROM:** San Antonio, Texas, where, in addition to pursuing her doctorate, Valerie has coached a number of highly ranked field hockey and women's lacrosse teams, most recently at St. Mary's Hall.

**COACHING:** Varsity girls' field hockey and varsity girls' lacrosse



**ROSE TILLSON RODRIGUEZ**  
ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

**EDUCATION:** Pennsylvania State University, BA in women, gender and sexuality studies

**COMES TO US WITH:** A professional background as a project manager at Super Heat, Inc., in Mount Bethel, Pennsylvania, and as a senior inside sales specialist at Lutron Electronics in Coopersburg, Pennsylvania



**SARAH THORPE**  
ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

**EDUCATION:** Montclair State University, BA in psychology

**COMES TO US FROM:** The Musconetcong Watershed Association in Asbury, New Jersey, where she served as communications specialist. She also brings a wealth of event planning and fundraising experience developed with the Hawk Point Golf Club in Washington and Great Swamp Watershed Association in Morristown.



**LIAM TULLY**  
TECHNOLOGY OFFICE

**EDUCATION:** New Jersey Institute of Technology, BS in information technology, network and information security specialization

**COMES TO US WITH:** A background in systems engineering and cybersecurity. Liam joins Blair after serving as a consultant at Robert Half Inc. and, prior to that, a systems engineer at the Gotham Technology Group.

## EMPLOYEES HONORED FOR SERVICE MILESTONES



Pictured above from left to right are honored veteran faculty members: Jim Moore, Hon. '93, Joe Wagner, Douglass Compton, **Brian Antonelli '93**, Danyelle Doldoorian and Aimee Neary.

At Opening of School Dinner in late August, Head of School Peter G. Curran celebrated the dedicated and talented members of the community who reached significant service milestones at Blair.

During the ceremony, Associate Dean of College Counseling Joe Mantegna, English department chair Jim Moore, Hon. '93, and building and grounds team member Kevin Rutt were honored with original paintings of Blair's campus by former Blair fine arts teacher Rita Baragona, recognizing their impressive 25 years of service.

Ten teachers and staff members were honored for reaching 10-year milestones. This group includes Director of Athletic Facilities and Security **Brian Antonelli '93**,

English teacher Douglass Compton, mathematics department chair Danyelle Doldoorian, Director of Advancement Craig Hall, Dean of Teaching and Learning Joe Wagner, Instructional Technologist Barbara Angiolelli, Health Center Administrative Assistant Jill Corby, preschool and lead group teacher Jeanne Fields, Childcare Director Aimee Neary and Director of Human Resources **Jackie Roecker '96**.

Blair remains profoundly grateful to those honored in August—as well as to all faculty and staff members whose contributions have done so much to shape Blair into the school it is today. ■

## A NEW LOOK COMING SOON TO **MASON & FREEMAN**



Centrally located between the Annie and Mason dormitories, Freeman Hall, originally named “Freeman House,” was built in 1966 by architect **Frank Perantoni '42** and is named after Albert Myrick Freeman, a Latin teacher and subsequent dean who dedicated 44 years to Blair.

In the 1970s, **Rob Sigety '75, P'16 '18 '20 '21** called Blair's Mason Hall home, sharing the space with 31 of his fellow juniors and seniors. Acquainted with all the nooks and crannies of his former dormitory, Rob's knowledge serves him well today as a Blair Trustee and head of the Board's Buildings and Grounds Committee. Back then, Mason stood as one of the newer buildings on campus, rising from the expansive green field now known as “the Bowl.” The dorm boasted lime-green tiled bathrooms and a modern split-faced masonry exterior that embodied the architectural trends of the time. Now, Rob happily shares, Blair's Board of Trustees has greenlit a renovation of the 58-year-old boys' dorm, alongside its neighbor, Freeman Hall, which was constructed the same year.

“We've been talking about this on the Board and Buildings and Grounds Committee for a long time,” Rob explains. “Prior to the construction of Kathryn and Lakeside Halls, we recognized that the architecture of Mason and Freeman needs to be more compatible with the other buildings on campus.”



All images here illustrate how Mason and Freeman Halls may look after renovations are complete.





Also constructed in 1966 by architect **Frank Perantoni '42**, Mason Hall, originally named "Mason House," pays homage to Marvin Garfield Mason, Blair's first track coach and English Department chair, who served the School for 41 years.

Now, Mason and Freeman are set for a makeover. The dormitories will undergo a transformation—with new and updated exteriors made of limestone, stone and brick, as well as new windows that should lend the dorms more visual compatibility with the neighboring buildings.

While the general layout of the dorms will remain unchanged, lighting, carpeting, floor coverings and wood trim will all receive upgrades, along with a complete refurbishing of all the buildings' bathrooms. Currently, residents on the dorm's first floor use bathrooms on higher levels. That too will change, with a new bathroom being added to the ground floor.

One thing Rob is glad will not change is the central atrium concept of the dorms. The current open plan, with a center atrium extending from the bottom floors to the top, "gives students a much more social experience." That social aspect is crucial, Rob says, and the current project involves adding new features that promote greater socialization and circulation, such as outside recreational

spaces and a common patio between the two dorms with chairs and space for students to relax and sit together.

While not as glamorous as some of the cosmetic changes, plans also include implementing much-needed energy conservation measures. Improved insulation, new heating systems and thermopane windows should reduce energy consumption for the buildings, leading to lower utility bills and a decreased environmental impact that benefits everyone.

"These are well-built buildings. They are solid," Rob says, "and I am glad that we can utilize their sound, existing structures. But, these renovations are needed because of the age of the dorms. It's going to make them so much more attractive. We feel really good about it."

Look for construction to begin in spring 2025. Work will be conducted over two summers, when the dorms are not in use by students, and is expected to finish in the fall of 2026. ■

## A GLIMPSE OF THE LATEST **UPDATES & ADDITIONS** **AROUND THE ARCH**

Thanks to the generous support of donors across our community, Blair has reimagined several key spaces across the hilltop in recent months. Aiming to create welcoming spaces that enhance the academic, artistic, athletic and residential experiences of students, the School has undertaken a series of renovations to make life at Blair just a little sweeter. Read on to learn more about each project.



### **MEERWARTH COURTYARD**

Meerwarth Courtyard, the bustling pathway between Clinton and Insley Halls where students have shuttled between classes for over a century, is now wider and more open, creating a welcoming heart of campus. The aging trees and drainage issues that had become problematic in the courtyard have been addressed, and new seating invites students to spend a moment in the shade of tall maples and flowering hydrangeas. Below are a few snapshots showing the transformation that took place last summer. This campus thoroughfare was dedicated in memory of **Ralph N. Meerwarth '50** by his family in 1995 and is among the first Blair sites visited by prospective families.



### SLOANE TENNIS HOUSE

Constructed in 2007, Blair's tennis center features 10 Deco Turf II courts, five of which are lighted, and the Sloane Tennis House (named in honor of Blair Trustee and Investment Committee Chair **Alex Sloane '70**). The tennis house has long offered locker rooms and a second-floor balcony with a view of the courts; in 2019, a seasonal winter sports center was added as a portion was enclosed under a climate-controlled "bubble" known as Lulu's Place. Now, athletes perfecting their backhand, as well as visiting families and fans, will enjoy the convenience of single-use restrooms located within the building. We remain grateful to Mr. Sloane and his family, whose enthusiastic and generous support made this project possible.





### CENTER FOR HEALTH & WELL-BEING

In late April, Blair broke ground on the School's new Center for Health and Well-Being. Set to open in spring 2026, the new facility will allow Blair's health-services and counseling teams to occupy the same space for the first time in School history. Serving as a community hub, the center will provide space for students to study and socialize, as well as access health care. The 18-to-20-month construction project, located adjacent to Hardwick Hall, is now well underway. ■



## GROUNDSKEEPER STEVE FIELDS BIDS FAREWELL

BY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS ADELE STARRS



He saw the advertisement in the nick of time.

It was November 1984. Ronald Reagan had just won re-election to the presidency. The song "Footloose" echoed on the airwaves, and the Rev. James R. Kelley had been steering Blair

Academy as the Head of School for eight years. Meanwhile, Steve Fields had recently relocated from Frederick, Maryland, to New Jersey to lend a hand to his wife's grandparents on their dairy farm. Steve was flipping through the *New Jersey Herald* in his wife's grandparents' kitchen when he spotted a small ad requesting help on the grounds at a boarding school named Blair Academy.

Little did he know, that single ad would change the course of Steve's life. Now, four decades later, as Steve is preparing to retire from his position on Blair's buildings and grounds team this December, he reflects on the long and fulfilling journey that began with a serendipitous glance at the newspaper.

**Q: You are one of the reasons that Blair has been ranked one of most beautiful private high schools in New Jersey. What is a typical day like for you?**

**A:** On the grounds team, we like to say we "set the table" for the admission office! On a typical day, we meet at the grounds building first thing in the morning, grab our radios and check the whiteboard for our to-do list. The one thing I've noticed—the list never gets shorter; it keeps getting longer! It's really busy before events like graduation and Convocation. [Fellow building and grounds team member] Andy Gramberg has actually been here five years longer than me. Yesterday, Andy and I spent the entire day working together. We've been doing that a long time.

**Q: The first time we met, I was brand new to Blair and did not yet know anyone. Swinging a grocery bag filled with apples, you introduced yourself at lunch and made me feel right at home, offering me apples from your organic orchard. Will you continue to grow apples?**

**A:** Oh yes, I have 14 apple trees that I planted myself. I grow all kinds of apples: Empire, Gala, Liberty. I like Gala the best because they can be used for anything. I also have three disease-resistant apple trees. I don't use any [chemical] sprays on my trees. And, one peach tree. It's just enough for one peach pie every year.

**Q: Over the course of four decades at Blair, what stands out most in your memory?**

**A:** My kids' graduations stand out in my memory. My wife, [Children's Learning Center preschool and lead group teacher] Jeanne Fields, works here, and I remember that our son, **Matthew '05's**, first day was September 11, 2001. That was a day I'll never forget. There are small memories too, like my daughter, **Courtney '04**, napping in the day student lounge in West Hall. Also, I remember the 150th and 175th celebrations. Those were big years. I'm not going to make the 200th!

**Q: What has kept you at Blair for four decades?**

**A:** The people. It always comes down to the people. I have made good friends here, and people I enjoy talking to, like Marty [former history teacher Dr. Marty Miller, Hon. '81] and Razz [former chemistry and math teacher Wayne Rasmussen]. ...I remember meeting **Jack Bogle '47** once. He was out on the golf course, and I recognized him. He was coming around the fifth tee, and, jokingly, I said to him, "Sir, do you pay to play here?" He looked at me, a smile spreading across his face, and said, "I think I'm covered." A few years ago, I met him again, and he kindly remembered me. I am going to miss the people.

**Q: What are you going to do with your free time when you retire? Are there more apple trees in your future?**

**A:** Oh no. Those trees are a lot of work. But, there is a nine-hole golf course here at Blair that I've had my eye on. I might be playing a little more golf. ■

# BUCCANEERS



01



04



05



02

01 **Shane Hadden '25** looks for the strikeout as Blair's top pitcher.

02 **Dash Neville '26** hits an approach shot in a boys' varsity golf match.

03 **Lena Rodriguez '26** attacks the goal to score on the girls' lacrosse field.

04 **Mikey Antonelli '26** passes to an open Blair player at midfield against Pennington.

05 **Adison Thatcher '27** gets in position to tag out a runner at third base.

06 The girls' varsity boat consisting of (left to right) **Allie Wolff '24**, **Emily Tierney '25**, **Riley Bacinski '25**, **Sophia Shah '25** and **Aleksa Bazylevsky '24** won first place at the Cooper Cup, Mid-Atlantic Youth Championships, Stotesbury Cup Regatta and Scholastic Rowing Association of America National Championship Regatta, while helping their team to another MAPL championship.

07 **Lola Bambe '27** looks to win the 100-meter dash.

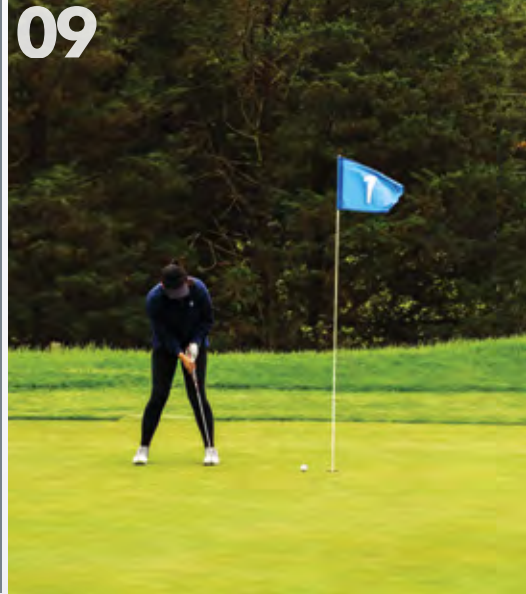
08 **Leo Li '25** hits a backhand at fourth singles for the boys' varsity tennis team.

09 **Serrena Khanna '25** secures a birdie on hole one at Blair Academy's golf course.

10 **Layton Glover '26** looks to win the long jump at Blair's invitational in April.



08



09



03



06



07



10



Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2024, from left: Coach Marty Miller, Hon. '81, 1973-1974 wrestling team coach Tom Hutchinson, **Lisa Garner '77**, **Jordan Bowers '01** and **Marissa Mezzanotte '89**.

## Blair's Athletic Hall of Fame **Class of 2024** Leads by Example

The Blair Academy athletics program is about far more than winning. Blair athletics cultivates skills that help student-athletes become community-minded leaders who embody integrity, humility, a strong work ethic and good sportsmanship. When many athletes leave the hilltop, they carry on those traditions in their sport to become leaders at the collegiate level and beyond. The Athletic Hall of Fame committee is proud to honor their legacy and announce the inductees for the Class of 2024: **Joe Stanowicz '41**, the 1973-1974 wrestling team, **Lisa Garner '77**, **Marissa Mezzanotte '89**, **Jordan Bowers '01** and Coach Marty Miller, Hon. '81.

“Each member of this class has left an indelible impact on their respective teams and has become a source of inspiration for future generations at Blair Academy,” Athletic Director **Paul Clavel '88** said. “These exceptional leaders have instilled values of teamwork, discipline and perseverance.”

To recognize and celebrate the outstanding athletic achievements of its alumni and coaches, Blair established an

Athletic Hall of Fame in 2016. In order to be considered for Hall of Fame membership, nominees must have exhibited the highest caliber of athletic accomplishment during their time at Blair and have been outstanding members of the School community in the areas of scholastic achievement, citizenship, integrity and moral character. Selection is based primarily on athletic accomplishments while a Blair student or coach, although subsequent achievement in athletics or other areas may be considered. Finally, alumni nominees become eligible for the Hall of Fame in the 10th year following their graduation, while coaches become eligible after their retirement from Blair.

Blair inducted this newest class of athletes to the Hall of Fame at a ceremony during Alumni Weekend in June. To read their biographies or to nominate a Buccaneer for the Class of 2025, please visit the Blair Athletics website at [www.blair.edu/hall-of-fame](http://www.blair.edu/hall-of-fame). ■



Members of the Arts Guild Committee and this year's inductees celebrate during Alumni Weekend: (from left) Director of Instrumental Music and department chair Jennifer Pagotto, former faculty Rita Baragona, **Adam Sampieri '99**, theatre director and English teacher Craig Evans, former faculty Judith and Steven Kampmann, **Michael Breslin '09**, fine arts chair Kate Sykes, former faculty Wayne Rasmussen and English teacher Kaye Evans.

## Arts Guild Inducts **New Class of Student & Faculty Creators**

At Blair, art is not just a creative outlet but also an ingrained part of the curriculum and the academic day. Creativity is intentionally woven into our programs, across disciplines and throughout our community, to invite one's inner artist to thrive. Blair takes pride in nurturing the talents of so many inspiring creators, and it is with great joy that we announce the Arts Guild Class of 2024: **John Ahearn '69**, **Adam Sampieri '99**, **Michael Breslin '09**, **Eileen Xie '09**, Judith Kahan Kampmann and Steven Kampmann. This class is an amazing collective of fine and performing artists who have cemented their place in Blair's history, as well as the world of art beyond the hilltop.

"It's always an amazingly warm and sincere induction ceremony, where artists are remembered for their contributions to the culture of the arts at Blair, but also tremendously inspiring to see where these artists landed in their careers and lives after the Academy," fine arts department chair and Arts Guild committee member Kate Sykes said. "As one alum noted after the first induction, it is not

as if we are just remembering their 'glory days' on the hilltop, but celebrating their continued commitment to the arts in the greater world."

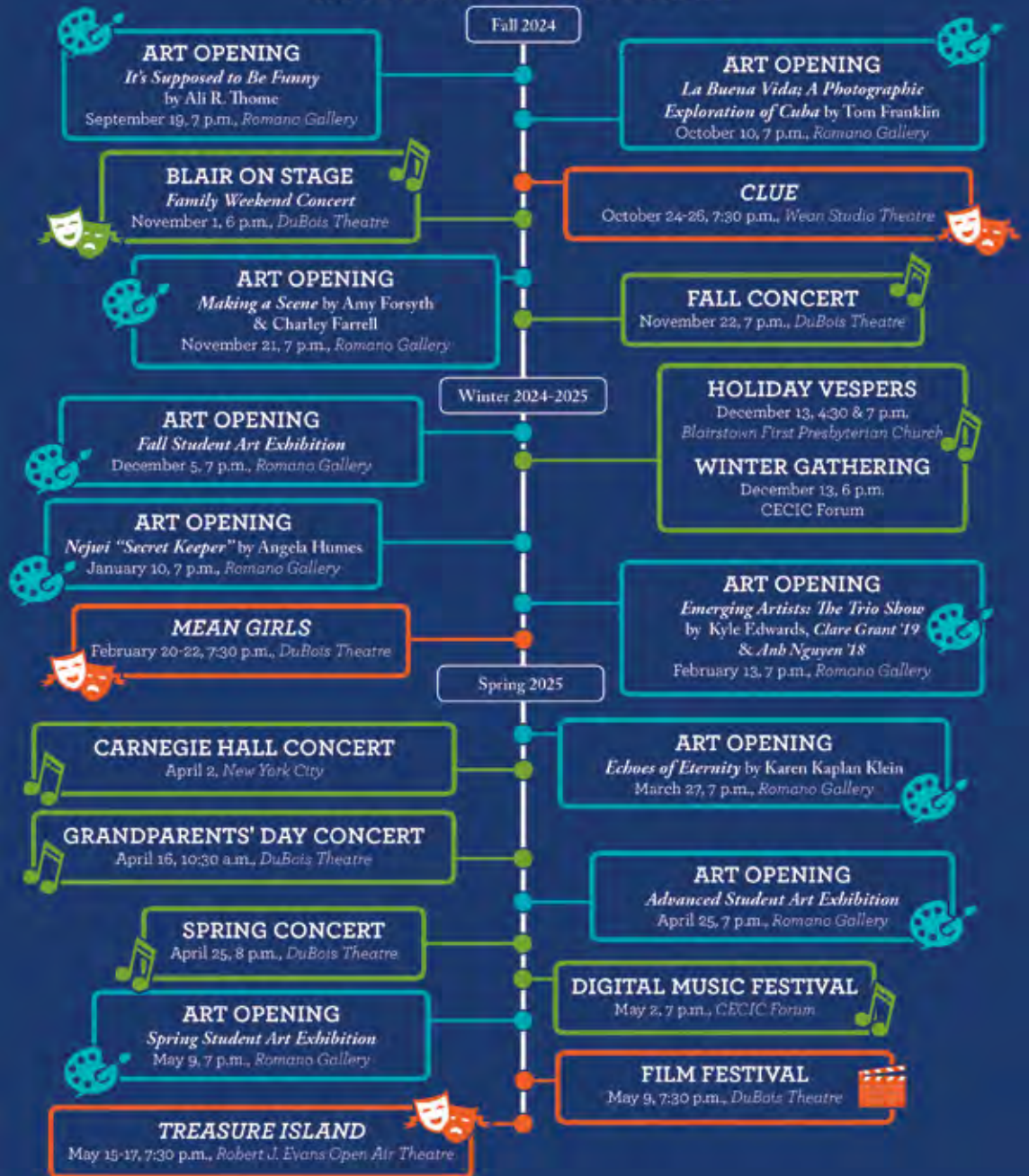
In order to be considered for the Arts Guild, nominees are evaluated on their involvement and achievements in the fine arts while at Blair, as well as accomplishments in the visual or performing arts after graduation. Nominees must have been outstanding members of the School community in the areas of scholastic achievement, citizenship, integrity and moral character. Finally, alumni nominees become Arts Guild eligible in the fifth year following their graduation, while former faculty become eligible after their retirement from Blair.

This year's class was honored at a special ceremony during Alumni Weekend in June. Please visit the Blair Academy arts website at [www.blair.edu/arts-guild](http://www.blair.edu/arts-guild) to read biographies of this year's inductees and nominate an artist for next year's class. Nominations are open until December 31, 2024. ■



# the Arts @ Blair

## The Arts at BLAIR ACADEMY



**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:** Because this calendar is subject to change, please check Blair's website for the most up-to-date information available at [www.blair.edu/arts-this-year](http://www.blair.edu/arts-this-year), or call (908) 362-6121. The DuBois Theatre, Wean Theatre and Romano Gallery are housed within Armstrong-Hipkins Center for the Arts on the Blair Academy campus in Blairstown, New Jersey.

**KRIS LISI '84** CELEBRATES 40TH REUNION WITH PLANNED GIFT

**Kris (Coughlan) Lisi '84** and her husband, Jason, love seeing friends, new and old, at the Class of '84 reunions.

**Kristine (Coughlan) Lisi '84** has little time to slow down. After retiring in 2021, she has found herself busier than ever—playing tennis, traveling, serving as her family's travel agent, volunteering and enjoying countless other activities that occupy her time. However, no matter how hectic the calendar gets, Kris always carves out time for planning a Blair reunion to see old friends.

"I've attended every single '84 reunion since my class's fifth," Kris recalls. "Reunions give us a wonderful opportunity to reconnect. Going back to Blair feels like going back to your childhood home."

Kris views that first reunion as a catalyst for her career and close connection to Blair that has stood the test of time. It was then that she met the new Head of School, T. Chandler Hardwick III, through then Assistant Headmaster for Finance and Development **Dennis Wm. Peachey '62**, whose kids she babysat as a senior. Six months later, Mr. Hardwick offered her a job, making Kris Blair's first female Director of Alumni Relations—a position she held for five years before moving to Philadelphia to continue a 33-year career in professional fundraising.

"I've stayed connected ever since," Kris explained. "I attended Blair for two years, but it was the most transformative experience of my life. That can be the case whether you were there for one year or four. Blair is a special place, and personally, it taught me to grow up



The Class of 1984 celebrated their 40th Reunion last summer at Alumni Weekend.

and hold myself accountable, and I'm so grateful for the experience."

Kris was always determined to give back to the community that gave her so much. She has not only volunteered as a dedicated class representative for the past 35 years, but she also served on Blair's Board of Governors and on every reunion committee. As impressive as her volunteer history is, her giving history to the School, with a 35-year streak of donations, earned her an esteemed place in the True Blue Society.

"When I was much younger, it took me a beat to realize that I didn't need to give a lot of money, I just needed to participate and get in the habit of giving," Kris recalled. "Being in the fundraising industry, I knew I would eventually make a planned gift to Blair as well."

This year, Kris' 40th Reunion spurred her plans into action. Equipped with what she refers to as "insider knowledge," the West Chester, Pennsylvania, resident chose to establish a Deferred Charitable Gift Annuity, firmly believing it is a win-win-win for everyone involved—Blair, herself and her class, which will receive the reunion credit toward their goal.

"Throughout my career, I have seen the benefits of charitable gift annuities. It fiscally benefits everyone," Kris said. You get to support Blair and receive lifetime income as a result." ■



# JOHN C. SHARPE SOCIETY

---

## BLAIR ACADEMY

**“HE FOUND A CAMPUS OF 11 ACRES; HE LEAVES A CAMPUS OF OVER 300 ACRES.** He found buildings few in number, poorly equipped; he leaves a large group of buildings finely equipped for every school purpose. He found a school provincial in type of 100 pupils; he leaves a cosmopolitan school of 300.... He found a school of only local repute; he leaves a school famous throughout the country.” –*Albert Myrick Freeman, on the legacy of Dr. John C. Sharpe, Headmaster 1898-1927*

The John C. Sharpe Society of planned givers embodies the spirit and ensures the vision of Dr. John C. Sharpe, one of Blair’s most influential headmasters.

Planned gifts are the cornerstone of Blair’s endowment, and membership in the John C. Sharpe Society reflects a special commitment to the School’s future.

Interested in learning more? To join Kris and other members of the John C. Sharpe Society of planned givers, please contact Director of Advancement Cara Mohlmann to discuss including Blair in your estate plans. If you have already made a provision for the School, let us know by contacting Cara at [mohlmc@blair.edu](mailto:mohlmc@blair.edu).





## A Night of Gratitude: Blair's Leadership Reception

Blair celebrated its most faithful and generous supporters on April 26 at the School's annual Leadership Reception. This year's gathering, held in the Chiang-Elghanayan Center for Innovation and Collaboration, welcomed parents, alums, faculty, friends, Trustees, and members of Blair's domestic and international Board of Governors, as well as donors in the 1848 Leadership Society, many of whom support scholarships at the School.

In between delicious bites of sushi and chicken-and-lemongrass dumplings, attendees heard from scholarship recipients **Audrey Zawoiski '24** and **Luis Jimenez '24**, who shared anecdotes about their Blair experiences and expressed their gratitude to the donors whose generosity made their Blair education possible.

Head of School Peter G. Curran next took a moment to recognize the extraordinary generosity of the families being inducted into the John C. Bogle '47 Circle of Benefactors. Named in honor of Board of Trustees Chairman Emeritus **John C. Bogle '47**, this award acknowledges dedication to the School and lifetime leadership giving totaling \$2 million.

Mr. Curran recognized the first recipients of the evening, Shibo Jiang and Yaping Gao P'22 '22, for their leadership and support of a wide variety of projects, including the Crew Training Center, the Class of 2022

Scholarship and the international student experience at Blair. Their efforts, Mr. Curran noted, facilitated the expansion of the Bogle Science Center's J&G Wing, providing a state-of-the-art home for Blair's Integrated Science Research program and expanded laboratory space. **Max Gao '22** and **Justin Jiang '22** returned to Blair from Columbia University for the event, and shared their deep appreciation for their Blair experience and continued strong ties to the community.

Mr. Curran also praised former Head of School T. Chandler Hardwick III and former Director of Advancement and Strategic Planning Monie Hardwick, the second recipients of the evening, as models of servant leadership and philanthropy. Throughout their 24 years of service to Blair and in the years since, the Hardwicks have been exceptionally generous with their time and treasure, supporting the Blair Fund and Hardwick Teaching Fellowship, Siegel Faculty Equity Fund and scholarships, as well as countless campaigns and capital projects. Above all, Mr. Curran noted, the Hardwicks' work to shape and carry forward Blair's culture has proved hugely significant, and their efforts were crucial to the position of strength Blair finds itself in today.

Although they couldn't be present at the dinner, Trustee Pete Santoro and Chasity Santoro P'22 '24 were also inducted into the Bogle Circle of Benefactors for their dedicated support of Blair. As planned givers and longtime benefactors of the Blair Fund, the Santoros have made supporting deserving students and outstanding educators a cornerstone of their generosity. Their contributions have greatly benefited the Bogle Science Center, boys' lacrosse, the Miller Family Scholarship and numerous others, for which the School is deeply grateful.

Later in the evening, Board of Trustees Chair Maria Vinci Savettiere P'17 expressed her gratitude to this year's Leadership Reception honorees. Recognizing the generosity of the 57 families whose cumulative contributions each total \$100,000 or more, she presented those in attendance with framed prints of the Blair Arch as a token of the School's gratitude. The final honoree of the night was Board of Trustees member **Keith Rauschenbach '76**. Awarding him the 2024 Citation of Merit, Mrs. Vinci Savettiere commended Mr. Rauschenbach for his long-standing, selfless service to his alma mater, most notably as a Trustee and Chair of the Governance Committee (see page 40 to read the *Citation of Merit*).

As the evening drew to a close, Mr. Curran offered one final reflection, quoting the words of Jack Bogle, the School's most philanthropic alum, who was a dear friend of the Hardwicks:

"Blair has played such a wonderful part in my life, and I have done what I could do to support the School.... Others have done every bit as much to serve Blair, and members of the Blair family certainly continue to build a strong footing for the School whose name we prize. We all must continue to care for Blair, as no institution can survive without a constituency—a family—that cares deeply about the place that helped to nurture them and bring them along in this world." ■



**Luis Jimenez '24** speaks to his Blair experience.



The Santoro family, (from left to right) **Gavin '24**, Pete, **Aiden '22** and Chasity.



(From left to right) Former Director of Advancement and Strategic Planning Monie Hardwick, Nancy Van Deusen, Trustee **Hobby Van Deusen '54** and former Trustee **Melinda Shumway '73** catch up at the Leadership Reception.

The majority of planned gifts that come to Blair are in the form of a will or bequest. You can name Blair as a beneficiary under your will or revocable living trust. Document your intentions by June 30, 2025, and the Santoro family will match your planned gift, dollar for dollar, up to \$10 million, with a generous gift from their estate. Please contact Director of Advancement Cara Mohlmann for more information at [mohlmc@blair.edu](mailto:mohlmc@blair.edu).

## Connecting with Alumni & Families Across Asia

Last spring, members of Blair’s advancement department embarked on a whirlwind tour across Asia. They met with Blair’s International Board of Governors in Beijing, China, and greeted alumni and current and prospective families at a series of receptions and dinners in Singapore; Seoul, South Korea; Taipei, Taiwan; Shanghai, China; Bangkok,

Thailand; as well as Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. In July, Head of School Peter G. Curran and his wife, Sarah, visited many of those cities in addition to Hong Kong.

Below, enjoy a few glimpses of those gatherings, each presenting opportunities to reconnect with our international alumni, as well as forge new bonds. ■



The photos above feature gatherings across Asia, highlighting Bangkok (top left), Beijing (top right and center), Shanghai (bottom left) and Hong Kong (bottom right).



From left, Bogle Brothers Scholars luncheon attendees **Chloe (Brooke) Holderness '94**, Head of School Peter G. Curran, **Corey Downey '20**, **Bud Bogle '45**, Blair Trustee **Emmanuel Bello '04**, **Samantha Tilney '08** and **Kristen (Bogart) Salmon '01** gathered at Sharpe House.

## **Bud Bogle '45** Hosts Bogle Brothers Luncheon

Former Board of Trustee Chair **John C. "Jack" Bogle '47** loved engaging with the recipients of The Bogle Brothers Scholarship at Blair Academy. He and his wife, Eve, pored over hundreds of letters from students at Blair sharing their academic pursuits and daily life on the hilltop. Their dreams and aspirations resonated with Jack, and he committed himself wholeheartedly to both their success and the School's.

Jack established this scholarship in 1968 in honor of his brothers, the late **David C. Bogle '47** and **William Y. "Bud" Bogle III '45**. His mission was to give students the same opportunity afforded to the three brothers to attend Blair. The scholarship has been given to students "of special promise to obtain necessary funding for their Blair education," after demonstrating financial need, academic ability, character and determination.

Jack enjoyed returning to his alma mater regularly, but no visit more so than the Bogle Brothers Luncheon, when he dined with current students and former scholars to get a pulse on their lives on the hilltop and beyond at the end of each school year. After Jack's passing in 2019, his brother, Bud, took the helm, continuing the tradition of connection and celebration with those impacted by his brother's generosity.

In May, Bud ventured to the hilltop once more—a year shy of his 80th Reunion—to honor his brother's legacy. A terrific opportunity to network, the luncheon brought students and alumni together to learn more about one another and share their Blair stories. Bud hosted **Chloe (Brooke) Holderness '94**, **Kristen (Bogart) Salmon '01**, **Emmanuel Bello '04**, **Sam Tilney '08** and **Corey Downey '20** alongside current scholarship recipients at Sharpe House for an afternoon of memories and delectable bites. Jack would have loved the occasion. ■



The Inkeles Family: **John '93**, David, Margery, **Barbara '90**, **Laura '97** and **Charles '88**.

## Inkeles Family Scholarship Honors Blair Journeys

Margery Inkeles traveled countless miles to ferry her children to and from their family home in Sparta, New Jersey, to the hilltop. She made the commute for 13 years while **Charles '88**, **Barbara '90**, **John '93** and **Laura '97** attended the Academy, but it didn't end there. Margery and her husband, David, became fixtures at every event, athletic competition, performance and award ceremony. When all of their Buccaneers had graduated, the couple maintained their strong connections with the Blair community, and their legacy of commitment carried on well past their family's last commencement.

"My father had always heard of this great school nearby with an emphasis on academics when we were growing up," John explained. "Our parents' number-one priority was the opportunity for a great education. Blair provided that, and it was always first and foremost in their minds."

When the Inkeles siblings lost their parents, Margery in 2017 and David in 2021, they looked to honor their tradition of strong connections to Blair. While they knew their parents appreciated the state-of-the-art facilities and beautiful, historic campus, it was always academic excellence that resonated most

with them. When the possibility of an endowed scholarship was presented, the immediate decision was unanimous.

"We loved the idea that our parents' legacy will assist in the academic experience for future students at Blair," John shared. "We were humbled to have the ability to create something meaningful. Naming it the Inkeles Family Scholarship represents all of us. Each one of us had a unique experience and connection to the School, and now, that will live on for generations."

During his days on the hilltop, Charles distinguished himself on the tennis team. He went on to a successful career in finance and today heads U.S. Fund Finance at Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Limited, the largest bank in the world. Living in New York City, Charles regularly returns to campus for events and continues to volunteer his time to his alma mater, serving as a member of Blair's Board of Governors and a class representative.

Barbara excelled academically during her Blair experience, earning membership in the Cum Laude Society and accolades that included the Blair Academy Trophy, the Phillips-James-



Rosen Trophy and the Paul R. White History Prize. She captivated the audience with the Blair Academy Players for a memorable role in *The Crucible* that was met with a standing ovation. Barbara furthered her academic prowess through college at Brown University for her undergraduate degree and Widener University for graduate school. Barbara proudly returned to Blair for a few years in the 1990s as an English teacher. She now serves as assistant director of counseling at Drexel University in Philadelphia.

John's first introduction to Blair was as a young child, accompanying his mother to campus when Charles enrolled. Captivated by the hilltop, he eagerly followed in the footsteps of his older siblings. He joined the wrestling team and admits that he might have been the least skilled member of the team at the time, but he remembers coaches and the Blair community still rallying behind him.

"The coaches genuinely cared about mentoring us as individuals," John recalled. "It spoke to us about Blair. If you excelled at something, they helped you, but they also wanted to develop you as a person. There was always motivation to go out and try new things and not accept limits."

John carries that mentality with him today as senior litigation counsel for the U.S. Department of Justice-Civil Division. He was recently awarded the John Marshall Award for Interagency Cooperation in Preparation of Litigation for his years spent pursuing a Bosnian-Serb war criminal who helped perpetrate the Srebrenica Massacre in Bosnia in July 1995, in which over 8,000 Bosniak men and boys were slaughtered. The John Marshall Awards are the highest accolades that the U.S. Department of Justice awards to attorneys.

The youngest of the Inkeles clan, Laura was a standout on the tennis and squash teams at Blair. She led the squash team as captain and was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame in 2022 alongside her fellow members of the 1996-1997 girls' tennis team. A member of the Cum Laude Society and Blue and White Key at Blair, Laura has spent the last 20 years with mission-driven nonprofits, including her current position in global finance at Evidence Action, dedicated to reducing the impact of poverty for millions in nine countries in Africa and Asia by offering health-related interventions such as chlorinated water and preventative medicines. One of Laura's most exciting ventures was as a cofounder of Girls Rock! DC, a nonprofit summer camp

*"We loved the idea that our parents' legacy will assist in the academic experience for future students at Blair."*

**—John Inkeles '93**

that fosters female empowerment through teaching girls to play in rock bands. The summer experience culminated with the girls taking the stage for a music set at one of Washington, D.C.'s, most famous concert venues.

Through all of these Blair experiences and many of their subsequent ones, David and Margery were there—supporting their children and encouraging them to discover the best versions of themselves. John remembers Margery tirelessly touring with Laura's squash team, ensuring she never missed a match, while David chaperoned trips to Prague and Russia in the '90s. They made date nights of Barbara's plays and were a constant presence on the hilltop. Everything they poured into the community, they received in return.

"They quickly realized how much more than a school Blair was," Barbara remarked. "Teachers became friends—coming over to the house for dinner—and it was always a warm and welcoming community."

As the children grew up and pursued their individual passions, David and Margery stayed true to Blair. Peddie Day festivities and Alumni Weekends became family reunions and the Inkeles clan bonded over their shared experience—Blair.

"This scholarship is the manifestation of the depth of our family connection to the Academy," John explained. "Blair impacted all of us for the better in our own special way, and this allows that tradition to continue for more students and families." ■



# BOARD OF GOVERNORS SPOTLIGHT

The 25 dedicated Blair graduates who compose the Alumni Board of Governors (BOG) represent seven decades of the School's alums. Their time and talent help promote a strong, meaningful relationship between the School and its alumni body, opening new avenues for alumni involvement at Blair. Led by President **Kaitlin G. Maillet '04** and Vice President **Jonathan Januszewski '13**, they work closely with the School to move its mission forward, acting as an advisory body to the Head of School and focusing on alumni relations, communications, reunion planning and fundraising.

"When I was asked a decade ago to join the Board of Governors, my immediate answer was yes, and the feelings remained when I was asked to serve as president. It's truly an honor to be considered," Kait said. "I credit Blair for so much in both my personal and professional life, and I love the opportunity to give back to the community that gave so much to me."

As a crucial member of the BOG since 2014—and as president for the past year—Kait has concentrated on how best to engage younger alums in community events. Working with members of the advancement team, Kait and the BOG have brainstormed how to bring young alums back into the Blair fold with engaging and enticing events. In her leadership role, Kait also hopes to make BOG meetings as meaningful as possible, so members remain committed to their charge.

"It's fun to see the different ways in which I can be involved and continue to make an impact," she explained. "It's important for everyone to know that participation and involvement don't have to mean donating money. Getting reengaged and taking advantage of countless opportunities to reconnect with the community and come out to events are pivotal to moving the School forward." ■

## 2024-2025 Board of Governors

- Kaitlin G. Maillet '04**, President
- Jonathan Januszewski '13**, Vice President
- Robert D. Appgar '99**
- Emily A. Collins '11**
- Jessica A. (Flynn) Deede '94\***
- Melina O. (Martocci) Fisher '93**
- Constance D. Fletcher-Hindle '74, P'04 '10\***
- Matthew C. Gallira '08**
- Roger D. Gershman '82, P'25**
- Lauren N. (Makar) Haley '93**
- Jennifer G. (Grimm) Holenstein '84\***
- Andrew N. Litvin '14**
- Graham N. McConnell '10**
- Michael E. McDonald '97**
- Thomas E. McLean '73**
- James H. G. Naisby '57**
- William J. Pemberton '16**
- Jamiyl R. Peters '98\***
- Brita Roy '98**
- Christopher Sabaitis '12\***
- Anita C. (Ricketts) Sarate '88**
- Christopher C. Strickland '98\***
- Evelyn B. Tilney '05**
- Stephanie E. (Hargis) Tucker '03\***
- Robert L. Van Stone '69**

*\*Denotes new members this year*





## Thank You from the Board Chair

Dear Blair family,

In partnership with Head of School Peter Curran and Blair's entire faculty, staff and Board of Trustees, our focus, as always, continues to be on providing our students the best possible high school experience, while ensuring that they are well prepared for the academic and life challenges that lie beyond our hilltop.

This fall, Blair achieved its long-planned goal of creating its own rigorous, comprehensive and engaging advanced curriculum better tailored than Advanced Placement (AP) courses to developing intellectually curious learners who demonstrate a high level of critical and analytical thinking. This change will distinguish our students during the hypercompetitive college admission process, as well as best prepare them for the demands of higher education and professional life. As the world becomes more complex, employers seek nimble and analytical talent; that's why we strive to graduate global citizens prepared to contribute meaningfully to their professions and communities.

Blair's incredible college outcomes not only reflect the preparedness of our students, but also the increasingly

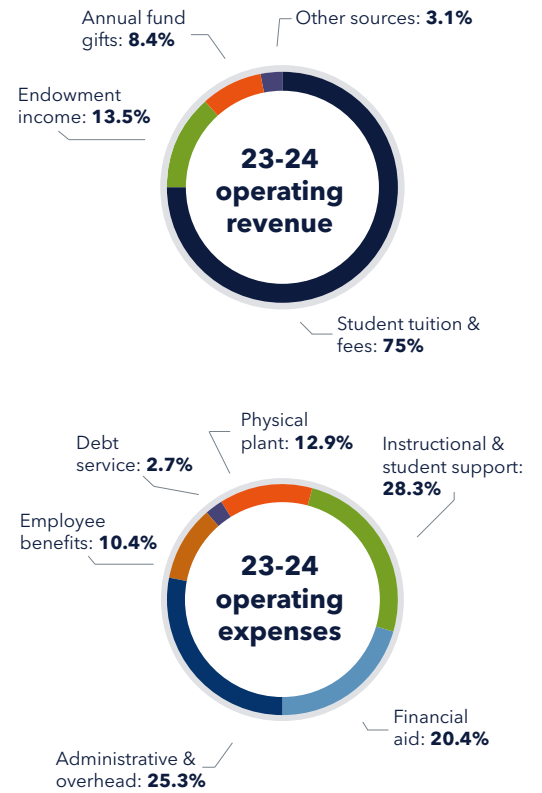
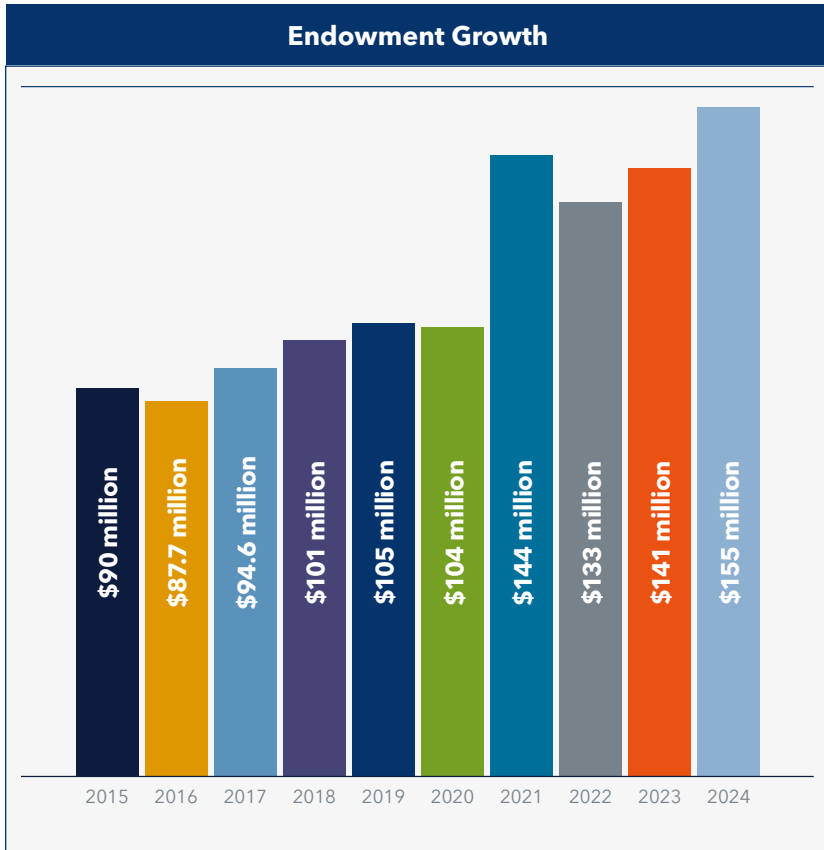
personalized, individually tailored efforts of our college counseling team. Their highly student-centered approach to preparation and support throughout the college admission process is one of many reasons families choose Blair. Of course, our matriculation list is an impressive reflection of our students' hard work and determination to get the most from their time on the hilltop; no doubt, the Class of 2024 will go on to great achievements, and I am proud of the leaders they will inevitably become and the difference they will make in the world.

It is my strong belief that students cannot reach their full academic and life potential if they do not have the tools to deal with challenges they will undoubtedly encounter in healthy and productive ways. That is why the health and well-being of our students continues to be among our highest priorities. This spring, we broke ground on Blair's new Center for Health and Well-Being, tangible evidence of our long-held commitment to developing programs and facilities that best support our students as they navigate adolescence. At Blair, students develop lifelong skills that enhance and enrich their quality of life and allow them to enter college as well-adjusted, resilient young adults. Upon its expected opening in spring 2026, this 23,000-square-foot facility will house our health-services and counseling teams, as well as a host of innovative curricular and cocurricular offerings.

What differentiates Blair from other schools is our laser focus on and commitment to the value of knowing each student well and to building and emphasizing the power of in-person connections. Toward that end, we continue to raise community

consciousness about devices, platforms and behaviors at odds with these goals, fostering an environment where students are fully present in their pursuits. Use of cellphones is limited during the academic day and to specific areas of our hilltop. We have also made peer education and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging initiatives more robust, and broadened the studies within our religion and philosophy department, now named "Self and Society," to push forward all of this work. These programmatic additions give our students more opportunities for leadership as we strive to better equip them for the ever-growing collaborative nature of college curriculums and the workforce.

Interest in Blair and enrollment continue to be extremely strong. The admission team now conducts programs both in person and virtually; this year, the office renewed its commitment to recruiting highly qualified international students and doubled down on travel outside the United States. For admission to Blair in 2024-2025, we received 1,625 applications and the School was fully enrolled by April 10 with 142 new students, resulting in a highly competitive 14-percent acceptance rate. Having enrolled students from 25 U.S. states and 30 countries, we are excited about the students we've yielded, their high level of engagement, and the strengths they will bring to our academic and social community. We remain deeply committed to ensuring students of every background and experience have access to a Blair education and, thanks to the generosity of donors, were able to provide \$9 million in financial aid to 36 percent of students this year. We are fortunate to offer 115 named scholarships and 20 scholarships created by Blair classes wishing to pay forward their own education to other deserving young people.



None of this—the breadth of student aid, curricular and cocurricular innovation, student and faculty support, highly selective admission, and our constant efforts to enhance the Blair student experience—would be possible without strong fundraising. Thanks to an extraordinarily strong development team and a passionate and dedicated Board of Trustees, as well as an incredibly inspiring faculty and staff, impressively supportive parent body and loyal alums, Blair achieved its best-ever year for fundraising with nearly \$12.5 million raised (an impressive \$1 million more than our last record-breaking year). We also raised \$8 million in capital and endowment gifts, while the Blair Fund secured a new record of more than \$4 million for the first time in School history.

Work began in earnest on our Center for Health and Well-Being this summer,

and we are finalizing plans to renovate Mason and Freeman Halls and transform the Bowl into a turf field and community hub in the near future. Other summer projects focused on redesigning Meerwarth Courtyard between Locke and Clinton Halls and adding bathrooms to Sloane Tennis House. I hope you will come back to campus soon to see these enhancements in person, and you can certainly find photos of these projects in the *Blair Bulletin* and on our website at [www.blair.edu](http://www.blair.edu). Plans are also underway to renovate the first floor of the **J. Brooks Hoffman '36** Health Center into additional bed space to open in fall 2026, and we look forward to sharing more about that work soon.

It will be an exciting year ahead as we celebrate the start of our 177th year and the success of *All In*, the largest comprehensive campaign in School history, which will wrap up with a fun and

festive celebration at Blair over Alumni Weekend in 2025, complete with an appearance by The Grooveline (a band that anyone who was able to attend our 175th bash will certainly remember!). I hope to see you there and personally express my gratitude for your support, as it is critical to providing the best student experience possible and delivering on Blair's mission of graduating thoughtful, well-prepared, empathetic leaders and changemakers. They are our future, and we need them!

Again, thank you for your generosity and philanthropy.

With heartfelt gratitude,

**Maria Vinci Savettiere, Esq. P'17**

# 2023-2024

## BY THE NUMBERS

**285**

The number of first-time donors

**\$12,482,123**

Total dollars raised

**\$58,564**

Dollars raised through gifts of \$100 or less

**1,221**

Donors made gifts of \$100 or less

**2,301**

Total number of donors

**359**

The number of young alumni donors (classes of 2009-2023)

**\$217,515**

Dollars raised by young alumni (classes of 2009-2023)

**100**

The number of gifts received of \$25,000 or more

**876**

True Blue Loyalty Society members (five or more years of consecutive donations)

**37**

The number of events held for alumni & parents



**"BLAIR ACADEMY PROFOUNDLY CHANGED THE TRAJECTORY OF MY LIFE BY BROADENING MY HORIZONS AND HELPING ME FORM LIFELONG FRIENDSHIPS.** I'm 'all in' for this campaign because it supports the faculty talent and innovative programs that make Blair such a remarkable school. By contributing, we ensure future generations benefit from the same exceptional opportunities and experiences that Blair provided me."

**—Lauren (Makar) Haley '93**

Annual & Capital Fund Total	No. of Donors	%	Total Giving
Alumni	1,470	23%	\$2,678,457
Current Parent	351	69%	\$6,291,262
Parent of Alumni	171	5%	\$1,029,607
Current Students	144		\$2,701
Friend	349		\$1,588,143
Estates	6		\$675,730
Matching Gift Company	40		\$58,553
Foundation	58		\$2,906,312
Corporation	12		\$136,754
			<b>Total \$12,482,123</b>

- Alumni and current parent totals include matching gift company giving.
- Current parents who are also alumni are recognized in both categories.
- Foundation giving has also been credited to the category of the donor who directed the gift.
- Friend totals include gifts from grandparents and former and current faculty and staff.
- Note: The numbers in this publication are not audited and are for recognition purposes only.

### All-Time Reunion Class Gift Records

Reunion Year	Highest Participation Percentage		Highest Dollars Raised	
60th Reunion	Class of 1956	74%	Class of 1962	\$705,560
55th Reunion	Class of 1956	91%	Class of 1953	\$1,094,448
50th Reunion	Class of 1945	100%	<b>Class of 1974 *</b>	<b>\$1,314,702</b>
45th Reunion	Class of 1944	59%	Class of 1976	\$746,391
40th Reunion	Class of 1961	60%	Class of 1976	\$218,684
35th Reunion	Class of 1956	46%	Class of 1974	\$80,040
30th Reunion	Class of 1977	55%	Class of 1974	\$64,312
25th Reunion	Class of 1990	58%	Class of 1997	\$91,006
20th Reunion	Class of 2003	38%	Class of 2003	\$166,350
15th Reunion	Class of 1981	39%	Class of 2008	\$172,084
10th Reunion	Class of 2002	46%	Class of 2013	\$101,877
5th Reunion	Class of 2008	75%	Class of 2006	\$12,482

**Note:** Reunion records are cash donations only, except the 50th Reunion.  
 \*New record established this year.



**“BLAIR GAVE ME SO MUCH—FIRST AND FOREMOST, MY EDUCATION AND THE ABILITY TO THINK FOR MYSELF, IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM.** It also handed me enormous challenges, both academically and personally, but gave me many opportunities for success. Most importantly, Blair gave me the dearest friends I will ever have in my life.”

**—Emily Collins '11**



**“WE HAVE EXPERIENCED THE EXTREMELY POSITIVE IMPACT THAT BLAIR HAS HAD ON OUR DAUGHTER AND HER CLASSMATES.** The Blair ethos of academic, athletic and artistic growth and achievement in a supportive and safe environment is more than just words in a brochure. In our experience, the Blair community—whether it be the administration, teachers, coaches or staff—believes deeply in the School’s mission and encourages their students not to leave anything on the table during their time on the hilltop. We could not be happier with the decision our family made four years ago, and we proudly support Blair’s ongoing mission—we’re ‘all in.’”

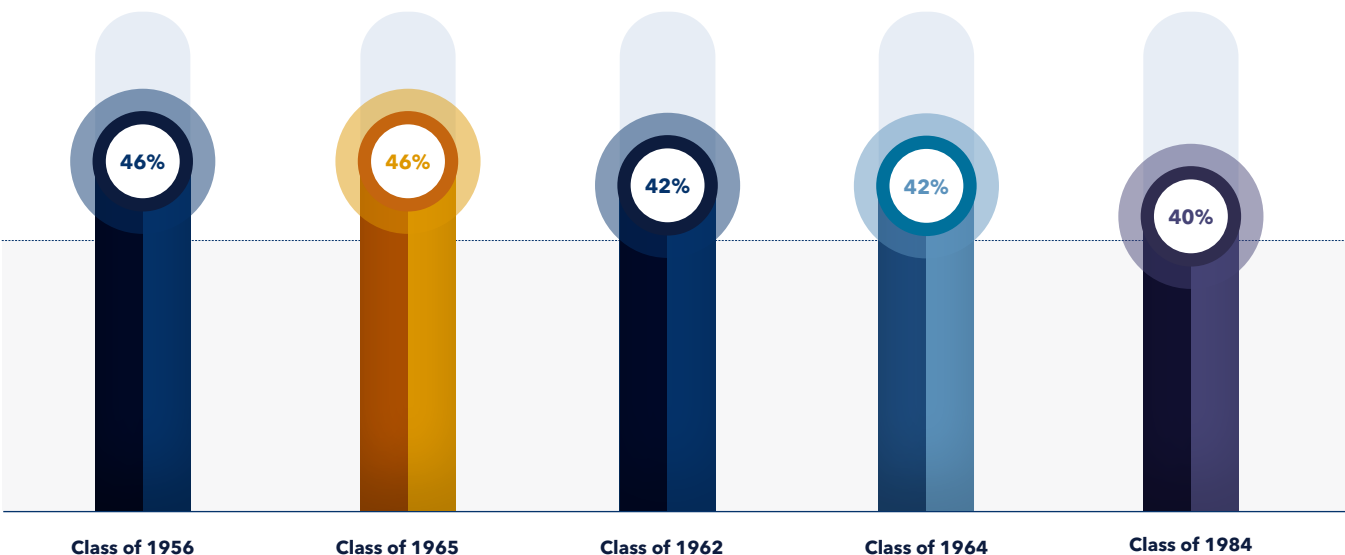
—Laura & Ken Wolff P’24

### Alumni Weekend Reunion Attendance Records

Year	Highest Percentage	
2024	Class of 1974	43%
2023	Class of 1973	42%
2022	Class of 1962	25%
2019	Class of 1969	42%
2018	Class of 1968	40%

**Note:** The traditional program was suspended in 2020 and 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

### Leading Classes for Participation

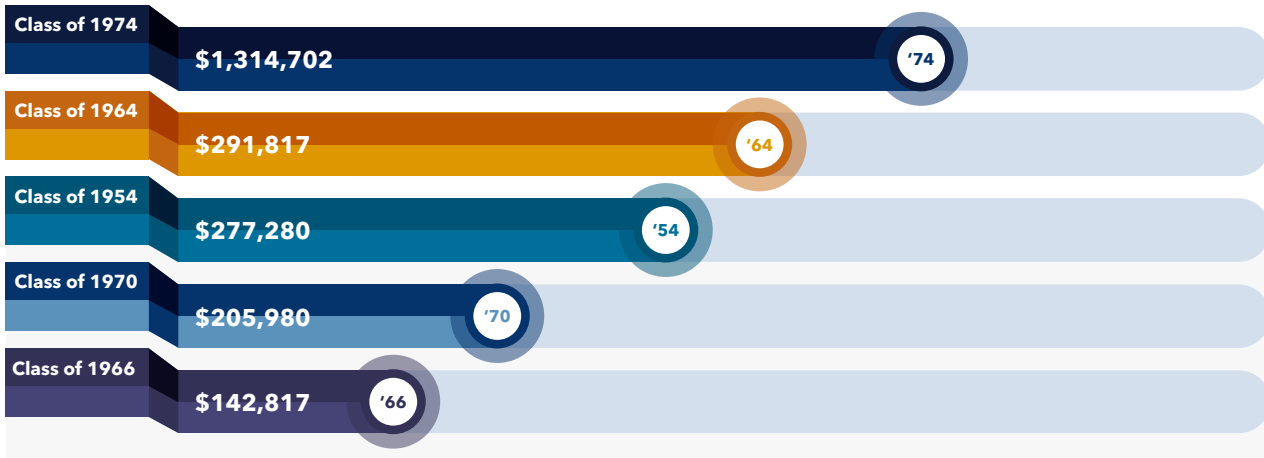


**Note:** Top-five list includes the classes of 1949-2023.

To read the full annual report, visit [www.blair.edu/annual-report](http://www.blair.edu/annual-report).



### Leading Classes for Financial Support



**Note:** Top-five list includes the classes of 1949-2023.



**"ARRIVING TO BLAIR'S CAMPUS IN THE FALL OF 2012 AT 14 YEARS OLD WAS A VERY EXCITING AND FRIGHTENING ENDEAVOR, BUT TODAY I REGARD THAT TIME IN MY LIFE AS THE START OF A TRULY PHENOMENAL JOURNEY.** I consider my four years at Blair to be the most formative of my life, and I wouldn't remotely be an iota of the man I am today without the countless lessons and experiences it taught and provided me—in and out of the classroom. But most of all, Blair taught me that, if I approach the world with an open mind and big heart, all dreams are made possible! I'm 'all in' for Blair because I endeavor to help support the School as it continues to provide students with a tremendous start in life—as Blair fortunately did for me."

**—Will Pemberton '16**



1945

**William Y. Bogle**

budbogle@aol.com

*Bud Bogle* was back on campus in May for the annual Bogle Brothers Scholars luncheon. (See Page 61.)

1946

[*David W. Harvey, George F. Mayrosh* and *Charles C. Morrison, Jr.*, In Memoriam]

1947

**Elmer A. Bannan**

[*Gerald C. Kinne* and *J. Mitchell Reese, Jr.*, In Memoriam]

1948

**Martin S. Simon**

1949

**Robert A. Neff**

princetoneff@aol.com

[*Victor Meyers* and *Robert H. Wharton*, In Memoriam]

1950

**Eugene Krohn**

eugenekrohn@gmail.com

[*Bruce R. Goddin* and *C. Edward Schofer*, In Memoriam]

1951

[*Mervyn J. Blank* and *Bruce K. Byers*, In Memoriam]

1952

[*Dominick Desiderio, Jr.*, In Memoriam]

1954

**Hobart D. Van Deusen**

rtn.hoby@snet.net

**News from Hoby Van Deusen...**

We had a terrific 70th Reunion with five classmates returning. I was joined by *Don McCree, Bill Dudley, Mike Galesi* and *Bob Hunziker*. Our class led the parade walking from the Arch behind two bagpipers. We carried our 1954 flag to the Head of School



Director of Advancement *Cara Mohlmann* (center), *Nancy* (right) and *Hoby Van Deusen '54* (left) were all smiles at Alumni Weekend.



(Left to right) Former Assistant Dean of Admission *Tim Goggins*, his wife, *Bridget*, Former Assistant Headmaster *Dave Low* and his wife, *Candy*, Head of School *Peter G. Curran* and *Don McCree '54* gathered in Williamstown, MA, this summer to share Blair stories new and old.

Assembly held in Armstrong-Hipkins Center. *Nancy* and I had many opportunities to reminisce about our classmates, our school days and catching up. *Mike* was accompanied by his wife, *Anni*, and daughter, *Camilla*. *Bill* brought with him his daughter, *Jennifer*, son-in-law and granddaughter. It was a wonderful weekend for our class and BLAIR!

[*Raymond E. Soriano, Jr.*, In Memoriam]

1955

**George H. Brooks**

brooksie01@aol.com

**Gene A. Losa**

galosa1@comcast.net

[*Terry A. Michael*, In Memoriam]

1956

**Nelson P. Cohen**

charlcohen@aol.com

**Courtney R. Fritts**

petefrittsr@att.net

**News from Pete Fritts...**

It is that time again to hear from our Class



Classmates from 1954 (left to right) *Mike Galesi, Don McCree, Bill Dudley* and *Hoby Van Deusen* enjoyed celebrating their 70th Reunion together at Alumni Weekend.

of 1956 members, who are still “alive and kicking!” Here goes!

*Paul Kelley* sent me his “words of wisdom” from faraway Wales, in the United Kingdom. “Needless to say, *Judith's* departure obliged me to adjust to being a solo act. After 55 years with her, it took a bit of time, but gradually, I came to terms with it. Since then I have concentrated on maintaining our acre of land



Aerial photo of *Paul Kelley '56's* property in Wales, United Kingdom.

and carrying on with my detailed account of our time together. I started this 20 years ago having been inspired by my mother who did a similar thing when I was an infant and I enjoyed reading what she had put together—not least finding out that, in terms of origins, I am half English, one-fourth Irish and one-fourth Swiss—which speaks volumes as to the impact of immigration to the United States in days of yore. The joke is, and I fully recognize this, that however far I get with this, that it will have a readership of ONE, our granddaughter, *Heather*, now 18, should she ever find her curiosity piqued by what Granddad and Grandma might have got up to during their time. That said, I derive considerable pleasure recounting our tale and that is sufficient.

“An aerial photo of our property taken in 2003 after 12 years of our combined efforts dragging the property into the early 21st century. There are three houses (joined together) and the two stone ones were built in the 1820s with 24-28” stone walls. Trust me, what we bought in

1991 didn't quite look like that photo. Being polite, a shambles will give you some idea of what we started with but we got there in the end—Judith in charge of all things organic and painting anything that didn't move while I tended to the carpentry, masonry, plumbing and electrical. We did 90 percent of the work ourselves. I just carry on, albeit at a somewhat more stately pace, and while tending to the maintenance of the property. Cheers to the remaining members of our class.”

**Barry Bullong** sends this update: “Not much exciting in our lives other than we can get out of bed each morning and know what day of the week it is. But, you know you're old when your doctor signs off on a handicap-parking permit. It sure is one of the advantages of old age. Still ambulatory enough to get to my medical appointments. Seems one doctor visit leads to another. I purchased a new car—wasn't concerned about gas mileage, how fast it could get from zero to 60 or if it could park itself. My only worry was how easy it was for me to get in and out! Hope all is well with our '56 classmates.”

**Pete Gleichenhaus** sent me his greetings from the west coast of California. Here is what he had to say: “Thanks for being on the 'Net. Anyone coming through the left coast is welcome to call.” He tells me that he and Barbara still live in San Francisco and that he continues to coach tennis at a private high school. “This is my second year at the Jewish Community High School. Prior to that, I coached at Bay School, Urban School, University High School and Lick-Wilmerding High School. I also serve on several boards to include the Interfaith Center at the Presidio and the Jewish Community Relations Council. I'm still playing tennis and golfing, albeit at lower quality than in the past.” Sounds like Pete is making the most of his twilight years. Keep it going, Pete!

**Raleigh Chinn** is doing good at almost 89 years of age in Oroville, Washington. He respects the learning atmosphere and personal growth he received at Blair back in the 1950s. Both of us are in good health for our age group. Raleigh “retired” from being active at the senior center and maintains his weekly pool games at the American Legion. He wishes the best to all of our class members.

**Nick Moehlbmann** reports that “After 45 years, I had to close down the hot-air balloon business. I have had two heart attacks, then open heart surgery with bypasses. I really don't want my next attack to come at 5,000 feet in a balloon. The people in the control tower at Lancaster Airport tell me they miss seeing the balloons at sunrise. But, otherwise, all is well. Feeling very well but doing very little. And a little sad. My roommate at Yale just passed away. That is certainly a reminder that it is getting late. I sit on my deck and feed the



On March 29, 2024, **Pete Fritts '56** represented his local VFW post at the Vietnam War Memorial in Peachtree City, Georgia, during Vietnam Remembrance Day.

squirrels and our resident chipmunk, Alvin. Otherwise, there is not much to tell. As a hobby, I dabble in the stock market. I had the good sense to buy some Apple stock many years ago, and that has treated me well. It will take care of my widow.”

**Sid Baumann** had this to say: “All is well with my family. My grandson, Garrett, is in Air Force Basic Training and seems to be surviving it okay. My granddaughter, Sydney, starts her third year at William and Mary. My son, Sid, and his wife, Laura, are enjoying the summer break from teaching high school. Gail and I will be celebrating our 64th anniversary September 24. Our family has grown from children to grandchildren and a great-grandchild. Wow, who would have thought?! As always, I wish the very best to all my classmates.”

Our world traveler, **John Hatfield**, expressed his opinions about my personal “caregivers.” “Hope you're doing well and your caregivers are treating you well. Our last cruise was to New Orleans, and our next one is to Bermuda. Later this year, we'll be taking my son, daughter-in-law, and 10- and 8-year-old grandsons on a Caribbean cruise again. Here in The Villages, I'm playing a lot of pickleball and platform tennis while Norma plays golf. In the evenings, we ballroom dance. Hope to see everyone at our 70th Reunion in 2026.”

Our classmate and my longtime personal friend, **Steve Hopkins**, passed away March 2 in Ocala, Florida. He was 85 and led a distinguished life, mostly in his hometown of



**Pete Fritts '56** and his caregiver, Alyssia Arjun, preparing for the annual Fourth of July parade.

Goshen, New York. Please refer to his obituary for a detailed resume of his illustrious life as a public servant as the decorated city mayor, fire chief and local business owner.

Before I conclude my class notes, I thought I would add a few tidbits from way down here in Peachtree City, Georgia. Like most of you, I am attempting to navigate my twilight years. Fortunately, thanks to a long-term care policy that my late wife and I acquired nearly 20 years ago, I have been able to hire as many as four caregivers at one time! As long as I do not exceed 56 hours per week, I get reimbursed for every cent I pay. Consequently, I have been well taken care of for the past 23 months. Life is good! Well, that wraps up my report for summer 2024. Hope you all are somewhat healthy and enjoying your twilight years!

[**Stephen O. Hopkins**, In Memoriam]

## 1957

**James H. Naisby**

jnaisby@ptd.net

### News from Jim Naisby...

Alumni Weekend was again a great time for all attending. **Ed Cliff** drove up from Ocean City, New Jersey, and met me at the well-known Blairstown Diner for an early breakfast before taking a walking tour of campus and registering. Ed spotted a painting in the lower level of the library of West Hall and was surprised to find the artist was **Woody Woodruff**. Woody later confirmed he had painted it as a freshman in art class. Ed spends time walking the boardwalk for two miles on good days, maintaining his yard, and enjoying the beach and educational TV. Thanks for your support of the Blair Fund, Ed.

**Pete Hastings** is still on dialysis, which knocks him out for three days, but he stays upbeat, plays some golf, enjoys his home, family and friends, and loves gardening (butterfly plants). Thanks for keeping in touch, Pete, and supporting Blair. Glad you are allowing your world to continue spinning with the never-ending support from Carol.

**Bill Owens** has been trying to sell his house in Lady Lakes, Florida. He found a new,



During Alumni Weekend, **Ed Cliff '57** spotted a painting in the lower level of the library of West Hall and was surprised to find the artist was none other than his classmate, **Woody Woodruff '57**.

upbeat Realtor who rearranged the house and placed more ads. Fingers crossed. He is moving farther south in Florida due to health challenges where he, his wife, Jill, and Jill's sister, Avis, will share a home they have purchased. Bill and Jill's challenges include a broken tibia, which Jill earned via a tipping stool while she was dusting a top shelf on Halloween night. Bill's unfriendly additions include neuropathy, glaucoma and vertigo, resulting in retirement from his many years of crafting furniture, cruising in his pontoon boat on the lake behind his home and the independent enjoyment of driving. Fortunately, Jill recovered quickly, installed a meter in her car and donned a "cabbie" hat. Both Bill and Jill remain optimistic with their changing lifestyle and are looking forward to settling farther south following the passage of their 20+ year home in Lady Lakes. The best to you two in your new "digs" and many thanks from Blair and we of '57.

**Mel Tebak** and Bonnie spend more time at home and on short trips near their home due to physical restrictions for both. Bonnie's spirits are high in preparation for their granddaughter's bat mitzvah this spring. This is their last grandchild, so the event will be extra special. Mel has retired his golf clubs due to a periodic balance problem. Putting and chipping would be a possibility, but a strong swing might result in a hook, slice or fall. Yard work is his hobby. Their daughter lives with them, and a caregiver is a regular help. Mel was unaware of **Rich Zipe's** passing, so I sent the obituary. He sent greetings to **Herbie, Marty, Bob Pearl, Ash, Neal, Bob Melzer**, etc., wondering how they all are. He is always glad to hear from the "old gang."



**Jim Naisby '57** took **Ed Cliff '57's** photo near the 1957 Alma Mater stone near the Arch. This class knows and loves to sing the "Alma Mater."

**Al Flessner's** buddy "Goldi" is now 31 (gold parakeet) and Al, like many of us, is now 85, yet hanging in there. In other words, his spirits are up, his sense of humor is sharp as it always was, he keeps in contact with past friends from Branchville, and limits his driving to doctors and the grocery store. In past years, Al enjoyed feeding and watching the variety of birds frequenting his yard, but with a serious bird flu in North Carolina, he has discontinued that practice. With North Carolina being one of the largest producers of turkeys, this disease has caused concern about it spreading to all birds. We spoke of changes, Blair and memories—like the measles epidemic when some students pricked their bodies with needles and put spots of Mercurochrome on their face and arms to show they too were infected. As a result, classes ended by quarantine and many students went home to recover (real and fake). It is always a fun conversation with my old roommate, Al.

**Don Parsons** continues to stay young, visiting the gym regularly, but he yields the pushup competition to his bride, Arlene. Both are always upbeat, looking for fun and a party or traveling within and outside the United States. Unfortunately, Alumni Weekend didn't fit this year, but our 70th is coming. Thanks, Don. Stay healthy.

**Woody Woodruff** arrived from Colorado for Alumni Weekend to keep **Ed Cliff, Eric Walther '56, Hoby '54** and Nancy Van Deusen, **Pete Cleary '58** and me company. Golf had been Woody's and my plans for Friday until more players than golf carts appeared. At that point, Woody and I became "Green 8" putters (Ed had left, while Eric and Peter arrived Saturday). So as "pro putters," we saved the winning team. The entire weekend, weather, events, food, parties, friendship shared



(Left to right) **Bill Russell** and **Frank Sogorka** represent the Class of 1959 in the alumni parade on the Saturday of Alumni Weekend.

and stories told were everything we could have asked for. **Bob Pearl, Rich Herbert** and **Marty Newmark** had considered being with us, but...there is always next year and hopefully more from '57.

In addition to Woody's painting of West Hall, hanging in the basement of the library, was one painted by **Nelson Blakely**, who is now an attorney in Pennsylvania. We haven't heard from "Blake" for some time, but perhaps a trip to see and remember his artistic talents would help him join us for Alumni Weekend '25.

Thanks to the active '57 class members for continuing your support. You make a real difference. Changes in our campus, staff and instructors have raised the bar with the students being the benefactors. I encourage everyone who can to consider a trip back. You will be impressed and thereby encouraged to support. Keep in touch, stay healthy, be thankful and happy. Go Blair!

[**Jack L. Woods**, In Memoriam]

## 1958

**Norman E. Beatty**

norm.beatty@firsthope.bank

**Peter J. Cleary**

ClearyPJ@aol.com

## 1959

**Joseph E. Bell**

jebbellonline@gmail.com

**William L. Russell**

wruss70@gmail.com

**News from Jeb Bell...**

Unfortunately, we have a makeup tour cruising off the west coast of Italy. My

old (double meaning) roommate **Lyle Antonides** wrote that both Barb and he are doing well. They are involved with their two grandchildren (Jack, who is a junior at Providence College and is an attack in lacrosse, and Molly, who is a freshman at Southern Methodist University). They are both involved with their church and country club. He plays three times a week, if there isn't snow on the ground, and Barb has served as the chair of the ladies nine-hole league. They have traveled several times to Europe.

After 25 years, radiation in my thigh finally claimed my foot and I had it amputated. I had sepsis three times with my most memorable journey in a Lear Medjet home from Morocco. I suppose I could switch to a wooden leg and be a true Blair Buccaneer. Our granddaughter, coming from a school of only 62 classmates, will attend UCLA this fall. I recall **Harold Valentiner** may have been an alum to avoid the snow. Please keep the news coming.

#### News from Bill Russell...

**Frank Sogorka** and I represented the class in the parade and the Head of School Assembly that provided much information on the status of the School and construction plans.

As some folks had indicated they would not be able to travel to the reunion, we staged our first ever Zoom meeting, made possible by Blair Director of Advancement Cara Mohlmann. We had good participation considering it was our first attempt. Present on campus were Cara Mohlmann and **Bill Russell** and on the Zoom: **Sam Durland** in Australia, **Pete Gulick** in New Hampshire and **Hunt Dumont, John Dumont** and **Frank Sogorka**, all in New Jersey. We also had a letter from **Stephen Long** in California, giving an update on his activities. We had a great exchange, and Frank and I were able to fill them in with things we had learned at the Head of School Assembly. It is our plan to continue these Zooms in the fall and spring. More information to come as we plan further.

[**David C. Gallagher, Robert H. LeCron, Lawrence E. Shafer, David J. Shotwell** and **Denis P. Slattery**, In Memoriam]



## 1960

[**Stathes J. Kulukundis**, In Memoriam]

## 1961

**Frank H. Briggs**  
betabriggs@gmail.com

#### News from Frank Briggs...

I was in touch with **Jonathan Paul**. His father

was the longtime, much-loved and respected dorm master of the senior dorm, East Hall. Paul entered Blair as a freshman in 1957. Paul notes that "For my first year, I lived with my father and stepmother in their apartment in East Hall. It was not ideal, mostly because I lacked daily contact with my classmates. As a sophomore and thereafter I lived with our class in Locke, and then Insley. As you mentioned, as a senior, I was a prefect in Insley."

**Jonathan Paul** shared: "It was a pleasure receiving your call this morning. You are doing a commendable job as class rep and keeping in touch. Thank you for that. Just to recap some of the things we touched on in our phone call: Unlike you, who seems to have populated the Eastern Seaboard with numerous Briggs progeny, I have but a single daughter, a school principal in Santa Rosa, California, married with no children. My wife, Gayle, also a former school principal, and I live a quiet life on our hilltop overlooking an area that John Steinbeck, also a Monterey County local, called the 'Pastures of Heaven.' I have been retired for the better part of a decade after a career in computer programming, almost exclusively dealing in the area of weather data processing and prediction. In the course of my career, I traveled extensively, mostly to service clients in foreign weather bureau. The high point was unquestionably the year we lived in Prague in the Czech Republic. I have visited more than 130 different countries, probably a sizable proportion of the countries in the world. In retirement, Gayle and I have enjoyed ship cruising to parts of the world we may have missed. It's nice to have your five-star hotel following you around as you travel to exotic places. In addition to traveling, I have been active in wilderness hiking (Mount Whitney in the Sierras, among others) and have until recently been an active pilot with over 5,000 hours and an instrument rating. I particularly value my connection with Blair, which I credit for a good start in the world, including excellent preparation for college, and for encouraging good writing skills. I have kept in touch with a few classmates including **Peter Williams** and **Marc Suffern**. We were all lucky to pass through Blair."

## 1962

**Mark Gottesman**  
gottesmanmark@gmail.com

#### News from Mark Gottesman...

**Will Johnson** shared: "Diane and I have been busy with graduations at Notre Dame and Chelsea. It is hard to believe that five of my eight grandchildren have graduated from college, two are in college and one in Chelsea Schools. Diane and I continue to play pickleball several times each week, while continuing to rate golf courses for *GolfWeek*

magazine. Our June and July trips will take us to Wooster for a performance of the Ohio Light Opera, which makes its summer home on the College of Wooster campus, to rate The Canterbury Golf Club (Diane's home course) plus another course in the Cleveland area. In July, we plan to go on a cruise to Alaska."

**Paul White** reported that "Nothing is really new (bridge and book club). We have read some really interesting books recently: *Longstreet* (history); *The Wager* (adventure); and *James* (a retelling of *Huckleberry Finn* by Jim the Slave). One of our bridge members just returned from his 70th at Yale, so we have a ways to go. Six of us (and their spouses) have had our own mini-reunion at Bucknell in the fall for many years, so I hope we can keep the tradition going. I may even get down to see one of them in Houston before the fall if the weather in the south improves."

News from **Charlie Newman**: "Things here are good. Love the weather. Vegas people are better than expected (except for their driving). The drivers here are either stupidly aggressive or terminally cautious. The family grows with a quickly approaching great-grandchild on the horizon...hotcha. The Amazing Amber Cornette continues to amaze with her dedicated cute guardian angelism. (FYI—The Amazing Amber Cornette is Charlie's dog!) She's my seventh....I won't be without a dog, better than people. I do music daily and the podcast weekly."

**Bill McKinley** has some news and "insights" to share: "Daughter, Erin, just had my newest grandchild—Claire. She's perfect. Not much to complain about—which is annoying. My gums are receding at about the same rate as my teeth are wearing down—so that's a win. Still got plenty of hair if you count the nose and ears (who's counting?). Off to Cape May for two weeks with the children and their children. Twisted my knee, so I have been binge-watching *Suits* to recover." (Does anyone know what *Suits* is?)

**Dick Doremus** reports: "Still taking care of the old homestead, the same house I grew up in, though I finally had to buy a self-propelled lawn mower. Arthritis in my fingers has cut back the time I 'practice' on the piano/organ—just can't make them do what they used to or as fast. I had my last yard sale two years ago. I've been trying to dispose of all the stuff my grandparents, parents and I collected as I don't want my executors to curse me when I'm gone! When I'm not doing what all homeowners have to do, I read a lot, mostly old mysteries, do crossword puzzles, meet with friends for cocktails, and go to the beach, out to dinner, etc. My life isn't as exciting as most of my classmates, but it suits me fine. Hello to my classmates and carry on!"

**Don Weinstein** shared the following: "Many years back, I wrote about the ages and stages

in our lives...I remain mindful of the topic. I think of our place in the continuum from birth to... (I don't like to use the word, it upsets **Mark**) and marvel that we are almost at the front of the line on Alumni Weekend. We have all either recently celebrated our 80th or are about to. We have also increased the speed at which we open the *Bulletin* and go to the obits to make sure we're still alive. I've lived a mostly fortunate (some would say blessed) life with Donna, my wife of 57 years; an excellent string of educational opportunities leaving me without the albatross of school debt; two absolutely special children—Evan, our physician son, passed away seven years ago, leaving us with three wonderful and well-adjusted grandkids (his oldest is a senior at Oberlin College, 50 minutes from our home in Cleveland, while the other two are an hour from us on Cape Cod), and Elizabeth, our physician daughter, who lives four miles from us in Shaker Heights, Ohio, with her physician husband and three boys—one cross country runner, one soccer player and one baseball player (15, 11 and 11—yup, twins). They keep us going to sporting events, band and piano concerts, and Starbucks for 'treats' for them and PopPop. I should mention, just to round it out, both in-law children are physicians (plus our son-in-law can fix our computer and does so often). So, 'what's it all about,' classmates? At this stage, it's the quality and the legacy. My life well lived began for me at Blair. It appears to continue that way too...as noted. Many years ago I visited **Dennis Peachey** to fish (successfully) and help him shut down his Parry Sound home (Mark was there but not much help). Dennis sat with us in our Cape house on 9/11 watching the travesty in New York City. Last July, Donna and I visited **Frank Barnako** and his dog, Luc (Donna was at a meeting). Donna and I had dinner with **Sam** and Julie **Barnett** before we left for Cape Cod this summer. **John Gibbon** and I had coffee when he met with me to be supportive about a medical issue I am dealing with (all good, I might add). **Steve Shuart** (irreverently "The Rev") and I chat often and meet for coffee and fish unsuccessfully when I'm on the Cape. And then there was **Sid Portnoy**, who left Blair with **Don Mershon** and me to venture to Franklin & Marshall College as psych majors, whom I would chat with and see (his wife, Sandy, introduced me to her sorority sister, Donna, many years ago). And then there is **Gottesman**. Mark has been an omnipresent pleasure in all our lives at and since Blair. We ran into him and Janet in a restaurant in Boston recently, and as you've read, he is a frequent attendee on these unsuccessful fishing trips. Mark turned 80 back in May. He remains a constant and stable presence in all our lives. I, for one, salute him for his tenacity and humor, his dedication to something he holds dear, and his care and concern for each of us. For such a small school where we spent

such a small percentage of our lives, I believe it has had a major impact. As we continue into our 80s, let's make it a point to celebrate those milestones and people who contributed to who we are at this point. To that end, I thank you all for your role in who I am today and who I will continue to be. A special acknowledgment to Mark for being a constant Blair reminder, but more importantly, an enduring and meaningful friend. See you all at the 65th."

**John Gibbon** shared: "Aside from some lingering health issues, life is very good and delightfully full. Family and friends, music, woodworking, reading, keeping up with this overly large house of ours and still being on the board of the Cleveland Music Settlement keep me occupied, and Pam and I are starting to do a bit of traveling. **Andy Berger** contacted me recently, and I am looking forward to catching up with him."

**Frank Barnako** wrote that Donna, and their dog, Luc, are settling into their new, second home on a beautiful lake in Brevard, North Carolina. His days in Wiscasset, Maine, and his weekly news columns will now be in the past. Renovations on the deck to enhance his waterfront view are complete. A stunning lake vista and certainly warmer water than someone (Mark) near Good Harbor Beach in Gloucester! They arrived in Brevard the week before Memorial Day, and "just in time for the White Squirrel Festival. For Memorial Day, Brevard goes into four days of music and food events. Should be an exciting introduction to North Carolina...The community is also more culturally diverse than Wiscasset (where we were for 18 years). Lots of music (a serious music school, a four-year college. The town has a downtown and features restaurants and art galleries. Even a movie theatre and a radio station that plays 'whatever'). I am happy to say that Donna and I are in good health, and oh so thankful that Luc, the five-year-old Briard, is also doing well and a never-ending source of amusement and love."

**Timber Kirby** is dealing with some additional but seemingly manageable surgeries as a result of Agent Orange many, many years ago. But he writes: "At least Bumblebee is having fun." A club he is involved with enjoyed a polo match and car show. Member cars, featuring Timber's Racing Yellow Boxster, were paraded in front of spectators before the match.

**Creed Terry** on birthday milestones (or millstones): "Have you noticed we are getting closer to the first page in the alumni news section plus first dibs on the golf carts for the parade? Not on our radar screen for post-graduation accomplishments. We have agreed to stay put for the rest of the year as we are finding travel, especially by plane, is becoming more of a challenge and less enjoyable." Creed's daughter arranged a surprise birthday party in celebration of her dad's 80th, joining our "elite" clan.

A brief and creative work of verbal art from **Gerry Manning** back on Christmas Eve:

*"I hope you are all snug and warm by the fire, That your family is with you or nearby soon, That you might hear the strains of the neighborhood choir, And that the joy of the season will fill the room."*

A quick note from **Sam Barnett** in commenting on Mark's 80th: "80...what a nice, round number. Around here at Laurel Lake Retirement Community (the correct name of the place), we're young folks. You need to stop obsessing about your advanced age, advancing senility and being reduced to playing pickleball with the other folks without properly working knees (like you AND me!). If you do that, you'll have more time to write class agent letters or invest in a Volvo dealership....Oh, I forgot...I don't ever mention my age or complain about life's indignities. Or have I forgotten how much I actually do?"

**Jim "Foxy" Fox** was a bit late but shared: "I wanted to send a few notes in case the fake news is still open. Kathy and I celebrated our 80th birthdays on April 9—identical! She is younger looking because she was born two hours after me. We recently attended our granddaughter's college graduation from John Carroll University in Cleveland. Completely forgot about **John Gibbons**. We also attended a high school graduation for a grandson in Pittsburgh, who is off to play college football at Washington and Jefferson. He started both ways as a wide receiver and defensive back. Kath and I logged many miles to Pittsburgh as Ethan's team went to the playoffs, where they lost in the state finals and ended the season at 15-1."

[**Lance K. Eschholz**, In Memoriam]

## 1963

**Robert D. Fulton**

[bfulton106@aol.com](mailto:bfulton106@aol.com)

**William S. Wildrick**

[njhutch@earthlink.net](mailto:njhutch@earthlink.net)

## 1964

**Clark W. Heckert**

[cwheckert@verizon.net](mailto:cwheckert@verizon.net)

**News from Clark Heckert...**

Assisted by members of the Blair advancement team **Courtney Stanford '95** and Emma Barnes O'Neill, the Class of 1964 had an excellent reunion weekend. Additionally, Emma arranged a very successful Zoom session on Saturday, which included **Ray Schaefer**, **Dennis Bradford**, **Albert Grant**,

*Don Lusardi, John Vail, Clark Heckert, Bill Cramer, Paul Vartanian, Chuck Potter and Rich Brown.*

*Gus Hedberg and Andros Thomson* send their regrets for not making it. I really enjoyed breakfast on Saturday at Sharpe House and a chance to meet Head of School Peter Curran and his wife, Sarah. I did not know we had a Colorado connection. I especially liked a chance to reconnect with *Rich Brown* and our discussion that followed. *Chuck Potter* reminded us that his brother was mentioned in a previous *Blair Bulletin*. I noted in the Head of School's presentation that Blair is still aware of the important role the School plays in helping each student to succeed. After the long and rewarding weekend, *Albert Grant* and his wife, Evelyn, departed for Maine on vacation. Pam and I attended our local radio amateur club's Field Day contest for the weekend in the foothills near Silt, Colorado.

[*Richard P. Hoppe, Jr.*, In Memoriam]



1965

**Don Jay Smith**

don@lksassociates.com

**News from Don Jay Smith...**

It's hard to believe that I've heard from so many classmates, but with our 60th Reunion fast approaching, I guess it is understandable! I can't accept the fact that it has been so many years since we graduated from Blair, but the School has undergone many changes and we have to accept it. East Hall is gone, there is a new athletic center and the campus has been changed in many ways.

*Dave Allen* writes from California to tell me that in May of this year he and Betsy went on a two-week cruise to Alaska. As he reported, "The weather was pretty tough with rain on some days, but we did get to see some beautiful mountains, coastal towns, bald eagles and glaciers calving into the water." I have included a photo from Dave of him and Betsy on the trip, which looks gorgeous.

*Steve Driever* now lives in Texas with his wife, Shu, and reports that they lived in China for four months last year, where they adopted twins who are now almost four years old. It took them all of that time to get through the bureaucracy to obtain U.S. citizenship for the boy and girl and to get permission to leave the country. The fraternal twins are now living in Texas and learning to speak English. I cannot imagine being the father to such young children, but Steve is extremely happy!

I spoke to *Marc Cottone*, who is retired and living with his wife and daughter on Long Island. Marc had a heart attack last year but



The Class of 1964 celebrated their 60th Reunion, and together (left to right) **Charles Potter, Paul Vartanian, Clark Heckert, Bill Cramer, Albert Grant, Richard Brown and Robert Unangst** celebrated and reminisced about their time on campus.



Elizabeth and **Keith Robertshaw '65** (center and left) spent time with **Don Jay Smith '65** (right) at the Blair Leadership Reception in April 2024.

has recovered fully. I hope he is able to return for our reunion!

I hear occasionally from *Bob Weiner*, who continues to work. He recently wrote two op-eds that covered topics ranging from the dangers of Real ID to the mixed-messaging opportunities in Democratic healthcare initiatives. He also did several on-air interviews, including an appearance on Britain's GBN.

*Jeff Corwin* and I had a long conversation, and he recounted the story of the pacemaker he had installed last year. It seemed like a close call to me, but Jeff took it in stride! Needless to say, he is back doing everything he did before the surgery!

*Tom Salmon* writes from Mexico to say hello and pass along the info that he had fallen twice this year but has no serious injuries. I have also heard from *Daniel Gordon, Jim Krugman, George Phelps* and *Bob Pollack*.

I communicate regularly with *Bob Lay*, who is surviving the very hot weather in



Betsy and **Dave Allen '65** were all smiles during their trip to Alaska in 2024.

Fort Worth, Texas. It has been upsetting to follow the progress of his wife, Pam, who had complications following back surgery at the beginning of the year. As of this reporting, Pam still cannot drive or turn her head. She is lucky to have Bob to care for her, and I hope that she is fully recovered by the time we celebrate our 60th!

As you can see from the photo, *Keith Robertshaw* returned to Blair for the Leadership Reception in April. It was a nice surprise to see Keith and to spend time with him. He was the only other '65er at the reception. I had expected to see *Bill Durland*, but he couldn't make it.

As for me, I am slowly recovering from a very serious fall I had at the beginning of May. I hope that by the time you read this in the *Bulletin*, my accident will be only a memory, but for now it occupies my time and energy. However, I plan to be at our 60th Reunion and hope you do, too!



1970

**News from Jerry Bamel...**

Spring skiing in Alta, Utah, and look whom I bumped into. Santa said that there was no vertical to speak of in the North Pole so he headed to Alta! Otherwise, retired and making lunch for my wife daily as she pursues her master of science degree in acupuncture and Asian Oriental Medicine.

1971

**Michael J. Lieberman**

mliberman@ashleydevelopment.com

1972

**Carl R. Cramer**

cramercr@gmail.com

**Kurt O. Kosack**

lindakurt01@gmail.com

**Gregory A. Washburn**

Gregory.wash.washburn@gmail.com

1973

**Thomas E. McLean**

tmclean1452@gmail.com



**Jay Rubin '69** (far right) celebrates with his friend, Danielle Nicole. Jay was the executive producer for Danielle's last album, which reached No. 1 on the Billboard blues chart.

1966

**Christopher L. Barrington**

chris.reefcker@gmail.com

**David H. Sculnick**

david.sculnick@gmail.com

[John G. Beam, Jr., In Memoriam]

1967

**Gregory U. Auger**

gaugeri@gmail.com

**Barry H. Smith**

bhsmith5@gmail.com

**J. Lawrence Snavelly**

larry.snavelly@fosteravenue.com

1968

**Richard A. Rubin**

RARlaw@comcast.net

**News from Richard Rubin...**

**Ted Pearce** reports he's off to play in a U.S./ International Cup tennis event in July. This year's USIC senior competition is in Belgium. Who knew that after 56 years, Ted would become an international senior tennis sensation surpassing **Mike Harvey**, **Doug Waterman** and **Henry van der Kwast**. Not our septuagenarian's first rodeo either.



**Jay Rubin '69** had his DNA launched into deep space aboard the *Celestis Memorial Spaceflight Enterprise*.



Look whom **Jerry Bamel '70** ran into while skiing in Alta, Utah!

1969

**Frederick L. Mirbach**

fmirbach@gmail.com

**Notes from Fred Mirbach...**

**Jay Rubin** notes he recently had a couple of events happen that were exciting: "In February of 2019, I had my friend, Danielle Nicole, come and perform at Roy's Hall in Blairtown. She is an award-winning blues musician from Kansas City. She just recently won the Blues Music Award for Contemporary Blues Female Artist. Two years ago, I had my friend Dion DiMucci (The Wanderer) come to my birthday party, where Danielle performed. I reacquainted them, and as a result, they did a song together, 'I Aim to Please,' released on Dion's new album, *Girl Friends*. I was the executive producer for Danielle's last album, which was No. 1 on Billboard's top blues albums. This last January, I had my DNA launched into deep space aboard the *Celestis Memorial Spaceflight Enterprise*."



**Aileen Gaumond '73** captured a photo of this beautiful bobcat.



**Mike Rubin '73** and his wife, Carla, enjoyed their travels.

**Bonnie A. Nault**

bonnienaulthomes@gmail.com

**News from Thomas McLean...**

Hello, Class of 1973!

This past Blair Academy Alumni Weekend was fun and informative! Several of us “infiltrated” the Class of 1974’s parties and fanfare. They did a great job and raised a lot of funds for the School. We were dethroned as No. 1, but so it goes!

**Andy Heinze** had posted an invitation to his play right after our 50th Reunion, *The Rimsky-Fogelman*, on Thursday, October 19, at 7 p.m. at the Karl Kemp Performance Space, Balance Arts Center. It was well attended, and the play has received great reviews. I believe there was a West Coast show in 2024.

Great news from **Jack Silverstein**: “I want to thank everybody for your kindness and your concern after eight very tough months. I’m doing much better, and I just wanna let everyone know. I’m still here and fighting every day to get well! Thank you again, everybody.”

**Dee Garrett** shared: “Sounds like Jack has really been through the mill since we saw him last June (2023). Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers...and probably a little harassment would be good, too! Hang in there, Jack, and keep fighting! As they say...you can’t keep a good man down!”

**Mike Rubin** writes: “That’s Mo (**Modesto Ulloa**) on the left and Fred Turim on the right. Fred was in our class and lived with us in East Hall. He was in the first room on the left as you came up the stairs to our floor, two doors down from Mo and me, with the room between us occupied by **Andy Heinze** and **Jim Houston**. Fred was a popular chap and only at Blair for our junior year. Mo and I drove down to Maryland to see him after the reunion. Nobody had seen him in 50 years, but he was the same guy, a warm and wonderful human being. No idea why I’m sitting in the chair. Perhaps we were afraid that with all of us the same height, we’d look like the Three Mouseketeers. Also possible my knees just wouldn’t hold me up.”

**Aileen Gaumond** shared: “I wish I had seen the eclipse. I was so stoked at the 65 percent they had here. I was out trying to take pictures, and I had my strainer to see it, and a bobcat was on my doorstep earlier in the day, which was weird.” Wow—the bobcat held Aileen’s attention over the once-in-a-lifetime eclipse!

I was on an email thread with 1973 class members **Jordan Philipbar**, **Dave Fernandez**, **Modesto Ulloa**, **Mike Rubin**, **Mark Glass** and **Guy Detrick**. All seemed well and in great



Members of the Class of 1973 outside of West Hall: (left to right) **Drew Pelak**, **Jim Van Kirk**, **Thomas McLean**, **Jim Brunn**, **Steve Frankel**, **Geoff Van Sickle**, **Elizabeth (Hamra) Shayesthepour**, **Karen (Kinney) Nalbone**, and **Skip Waddell**.



As a board member of the Friends of Hamilton County Parks Foundation, **Thomas McLean '73** and the foundation’s executive director, April Williams, received a proclamation from the City of Westfield council chair Patrick Tamm. The proclamation supports the foundation’s efforts to provide a grant from their Active People, Healthy Hamilton County program.



(Left to right) **Mike Rubin '73**, **Modesto Ulloa '73** and Fred Turim take a stroll down memory lane together!



**Guy Detrick '73** celebrates having just completed a large construction project.

spirits. Guy just completed a large construction project. A special note on the 44th anniversary of Mark and Steph Glass as they travel around the Pacific.



A special note of celebration on their 44th anniversary to Stephanie and **Mark Glass '73** as they travel around the Pacific.

**1974**

**Josefina I. Iglesias**

**David B. Lieberman**  
dbleib@yahoo.com

**John D. Rea**  
john@crossadvisors.com

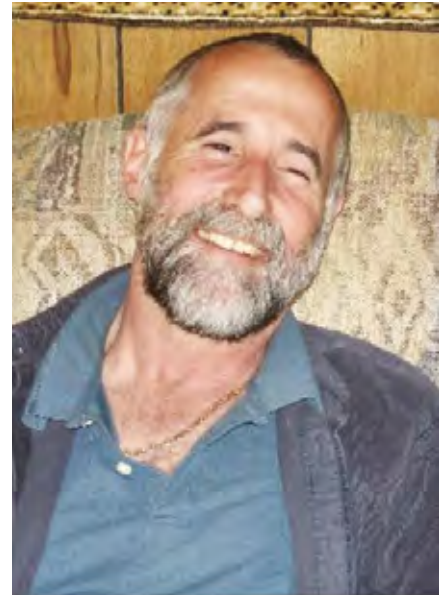
Join thousands of Blair alumni online: [www.blair.edu/alumni](http://www.blair.edu/alumni)  
Follow us on Instagram, @BlairAlums!







Reuniting for their 50th Reunion, these fabulous five from the Class of 1974 (left to right)—**Liz (Fowler) Horton**, **Connie Fletcher-Hindle**, **Jean Peelor**, **Debbi (Goldman) Markowitz** and **Laurie Yankowitz**—had a blast catching up during Alumni Weekend!



The Class of 1974 lost fellow classmate **Richard H. Demmy, Jr.** At Blair, Rick was a steadfast friend who never complained or uttered a bad word about anyone. Always upbeat, he loved being outdoors and carried a great smile sure to brighten the day of fellow classmates.



(Left to right) The Class of 1974's **Russ Collins**, **Robert Ortiz**, **Bill Hindle**, **Jean Peelor**, **Todd Ruppert** and **David Lieberman** shared stories and memories during their 50th Reunion dinner on Friday evening of Alumni Weekend.



**Connie Fletcher-Hindle '74** presented the Class of 2024 flag to **Amogh Katare '24** at this year's Commencement.



Just like the good old days! From left, **David Lieberman '74**, **Laura Cochran Morris '75**, **Jim Williams '74**, **David "Moochie" Waddell '76** and **Anne Cramer '75** celebrate at 1974's 50th Reunion dinner.



The band is back together—'74 Back for More members include, from left: **Blair Mathies**, **Harry Ullmann**, **Connie Fletcher-Hindle**, **Jim Ferrara**, **Liz (Fowler) Horton**, **Marcus Lucas**, **Dick "Metzie" Metz** and **Jean Peelor**.

**News from David Lieberman...**

All I can think about is our 50th Class Reunion! The turnout was fantastic. To put it in terms of our competitive side, we won the award for the most classmates coming on campus for this year! The Reunion Committee won the award for outstanding performance. None of us would have thought that our outreach would have been so successful. I can't thank all of those on the team for their constant and relentless efforts in bringing so many people back. But it wasn't won alone. We owe a great deal to the Class of '73 for helping us understand our responsibility. **Tom McLean '73**, **Bonnie Nault '73** and



Classmates from 1974 take a trip down memory lane during Alumni Weekend. Pictured left to right: **Ed Brodie**, **Ralph Jacob**, **Robert Ortiz** and **Bill Hindle**.



(Left to right) **Donna (Burkhardt) Kennedy '74**, **Mike Pagano '74**, **Warren Youngblood '74** and **Matt Martini '74** returned to campus for Alumni Weekend!

**Dee Garrett '73** were instrumental in helping us, and for that we will be forever grateful. While we outdid their numbers, they are reminded of the efforts they put into it that made us successful.

When you make calls to classmates, you always wonder what effect it may have on those you speak to. I think **Harry Ullmann** learned what it takes to make that call. When Harry reached out to **Rick Demmy**, they ended up having a wonderful conversation. Rick wouldn't be able to make it to the reunion as he was going through chemo treatment. The Wednesday following Alumni Weekend, Rick passed away unexpectedly from complications. Rick's wife, Pam, sent Harry an email letting him know Rick had passed and telling Harry how much that call meant to him.

Since Alumni Weekend, I have been overwhelmed by the memories of that day. It seems many of our classmates have. As Harry puts it, we can't wait another five years until we get together. He is actively reaching out to everybody to get their opinion of when we get together next. Please respond to Harry with a call or email when you hear from him.

On a final note, we have had success with our class for our 50th because of all the efforts of Director of Advancement Cara Mohlmann and Director of Alumni Relations **Courtney**



**Lisa Garner '77** (center) was inducted into the 2024 Athletic Hall of Fame by her friend, **Laura Cochran Morris '75** (right), pictured here with Director of Athletics **Paul Clavel '88**.

(**Brennan**) **Stanford '95** (daughter of Coach Brennan). They brought us together and mentored us all the way through. I believe we need to make them part of our class.

**Harry Ullmann** shared: "I continue to feel what **Jim Ferrara** describes as the 'afterglow' of being on campus for our 50th Reunion. I enjoyed being on the Reunion Committee and reaching out to speak, text or email with so many of you. Each connection I made and response I received built momentum toward our Reunion Weekend.

"Those in attendance know the School did a great job in celebrating our class. For all who were unable to attend but contributed through an **ACTA** update, thank you. Your words and photographs were so appreciated. You let us know you were doing okay. If you were unable to make the trip back to campus, you were deeply missed but celebrated all the same.

"So, a few of your fellow classmates posed the following question during and after our Reunion Weekend: 'Why do we need to wait another five or 10 years to celebrate the bonds of our friendship?' It is possible to return every year. Blair is welcoming to all alumni in that regard. However, time and distance benefit all who live closest to 'The School on the Hill.' Every year would be great, but perhaps a bit too much for classmates who live more than a serious car ride or flight away. How about every other year, which would be in 2026? It certainly gives us time to plan something special, and I am sure the advancement team would help us coordinate a redux of '74 Back for More.' Think about it, and shoot me a note if you have any thoughts or ideas either way. The suggestion box is open for business.

"Before closing, I just want to pass along some recent news. Unfortunately, and very sadly, our classmate, **Rick Demmy**, passed away on June 12. I had been speaking to Rick since early March, which is when I learned he was



Left to right: **Harry Gates '77**, **Eric Maine '77**, Head of School Peter G. Curran, **Scott McKee '77** and **Richard T. Liuzzi '77** enjoy time together over Alumni Weekend.

dealing with cancer. Chemotherapy was moving Rick in the right direction, and he was holding out hope that he could make our class reunion. Complications from his chemo set in, and Rick slipped away on June 12."

[**Richard H. Demmy, Jr.** and **Christian J. Lafaurie**, In Memoriam]



## 1975

**Laura Cochran Morris**  
lauracmorris21@gmail.com

**Robert G. Sigety**  
rsigety@msn.com

## 1976

**Cornelius E. Sigety**  
neal@sigety.org  
**David L. Waddell**  
davidwaddell33@gmail.com

## 1977

**Lisa Garner**  
Lg1girl@aol.com  
**Harry D. Gates**  
harrydgates@gmail.com  
**Richard T. Liuzzi**  
rickliuzzi@gmail.com

## 1978

**Douglas R. Linton**  
douginton@aol.com  
**Joseph E. Waddell**  
gov18@msn.com

## 1979

**Guy N. Saxton**

guysax@verizon.net

**Susanne P. Ullmann**

susannullmann@gmail.com



## 1980

**Donna S. Haag**

donnahair@hotmail.com

**Katherine T. Henry-Schill**

blairkths@yahoo.com

**News from Katie Henry-Schill...**

Sending our deepest condolences from the class to **Jennifer (Skeels) Olivia** on the passing of her loving husband, Rick, whom some of us had met at a few of our reunions. Condolences to the Maquire family on the passing of **Jim Maquire** and to the Osborne family on the passing of **Mike Osborne** (Mike was included in the last issue of the *Bulletin*). I had not seen Mike Osborne since the mid '80s when he and Jami came and stayed with me at my apartment at Marist College, where I had just moved in as the new hall director.

Jim and I had become good friends after he returned from Europe and have many fun memories with him and his family. Jim's generosity and spirit will always be remembered with me, and he really embraced life to the fullest! After reading his obituary, it was a gentle reminder to do what we want now and made me take that red-eye to Blair! Jim was notorious for surprises.... We attended a Fleetwood Mac concert and events in New York City, with his family all insisting that I be their guest. I surprised him by taking him on a dinner cruise at Christmas time on the Hudson, whereupon he named buildings and told me about his various internships in Manhattan while a student at Villanova. He leaves behind his beautiful parents, Patricia and James, Sr., and his three sons, Patrick, Sean and James, Jr.

Alumni Weekend 2024 was a blast, and the last-minute red-eye from Scottsdale, Arizona, to Newark, New Jersey, was totally worth the trip. Upon arrival that Friday, we (my husband, Fredrick, and I) went to the hilltop so this Blair girl could get her fun name tag and toddle around the campus, meeting up with a few familiar faces, which is always a nice surprise, as you never know who you might run into. Having not been back on campus for 15 years, I was elated to be there! The weekend was a whirlwind of fun, laughter and phenomenal conversations with new and old friends alike.

I had to laugh as I first encountered Razz, who has retired but was on the run to do an errand as he was volunteering his time to help out. He honestly looks younger each year in his 50s, and he said Charlie Underwood made him appreciate seeing his former students at Alumni Day.

I also caught up with **Ed Brown '79** and **Peter Bosch '79**, who adopted me and Fredrick for the weekend. It goes without saying—every time he goes, he gets asked the same question: "What year did you go to Blair?" (which, as you well know, he did not).

I attended the memorial service for alumni no longer with us, and during the program they mentioned the alums who have passed. I confess, it felt like a Chapel, as Reverend Peter Amerman was the main speaker for the memorial.

We had a lovely dinner with an open bar outside on the field in front of the gym, where the Canteen is now located. After dinner, Ed, Peter and I headed back to Lakeside dormitory (yes, near the lake) and sat on the porch in comfy Adirondack chairs with some Class of '77ers and other fun alumni. I encountered **Richard Liuzzi '77**, Jenny Maine (former Alumni Director), **Eric Maine '77** and Lynn Peachey, Hon. '65 '74 and '77. It was a fun night.

Saturday was the best, but I got a little lost—or shall I say I miscalculated how long a walk it was from the golf course path to Sharpe House. Fortunately, someone from the maintenance department rescued me and zipped me over on his tractor. I had breakfast with **Ed Brown '79** at the Currans' home, where the highlight was meeting Bowdoin! (their well-behaved and very sweet yellow Lab. Peter is an alum of Bowdoin College. I confess, I hung around longer than expected because I needed to play with Bowdoin as I am a dog lover.)

I encountered **Kristine (Coughlan) Lisi '84**, former Alumni Director, and **Marivelle Clavel-Davis '82**. After the bagpipers played for the alumni parade, we heard an impressive welcome and update on Blair Academy from Head of School Peter Curran. It is amazing what Blair is doing, and I would encourage you to peruse the website to learn more. He mentioned a woman named Kara Lawson, who is a coach at Duke University and how the students were exposed to the concept and speech of *How to Handle Hard Better*, which they encourage Blair students—and all of us—to do. Google her, as it really is so true, and I now think about it whenever my day gets a little challenging. The new Center for Health and Well-Being will not only have the infirmary but will also house the School's counseling department.

At lunch, **Billy Abbott '82** came up to me, and then I was off to the races with **Wiks Moffat '81** and **David Owen '81**, who warmly greeted me and heard some fun stories. At some point, I glanced over and there was **Trevor Power '82**, so then Bill, Trevor and I hung out for several hours. I like to call Bill the 'mayor of Blair,' and I was laughing as Bill and Trevor told some fun stories! Trevor, while not his full-time job, has a band called the Trevor B. Power Band and plays locally on a regular basis. The memories of him playing at Blair Academy and his guitar came flooding back. I have been following his music for years now and love it! He has a regular Thursday night radio show and can be found on <https://spiderglennradio.com>. While we could not convince him to stay for the evening festivities, he gave me a signed copy of his latest CD *Are We Ever Free* (his third album), which was about to be released.

Later, we wandered over to the porch of Insley and had dinner with **Carolyn Conforti-Browse '79**, **Ed Brown '79** and Peter. It was a wonderful evening with a beautiful view of the hilltop. Around 10:30 p.m., I was pretty much wiped out. We had to catch a plane to head back home the next day, so we said our goodbyes and headed back to the hotel with sweet dreams of a wonderful day.

On Thursday of that same week, I texted **Trevor Power** to let him know I had tuned in to his 7 to 9 p.m. radio show. He did a shout-out to me on the radio! I will tune in when I can.

Special thanks to the advancement office for a wonderful weekend. Love and thanks to **Ed Brown**, **Peter Bosch**, **Carolyn Conforti-Browse**, **Bill Abbott**, **Wiks Moffat** and **Trevor Power** for making me laugh and smile all weekend long! It was a great time! Our 45th is next June and I hope you can attend. With warmest wishes to all. Go Blair!—Katie

[James P. Maguire, Jr., In Memoriam]

## 1981

**Holly J. Anderson-Bender**

hollyab418@gmail.com

[Jay A. Smith, Jr., In Memoriam]

## 1982

**William H. Abbott**

wabbott24@gmail.com

**Kirsten T. Bushick**

ktbushick@gmail.com

**News from Bill Abbott...**

Just a quick update on a few of our classmates to hold you over through the holidays. By the time you read this, **Dave Woods** will have been



**Jessica Stark '82** (left), **Debbie Cohen '82** (right) and her husband, Jay (center), were all smiles at Jessica's eldest son, Jaimon's, wedding.



The Wash-a-palooza! Members of our Blair family had a great time at **Warren Washburn '82's** 60th birthday. Right to left: Mike and Kathy Otinsky, **Greg Washburn '72**, **Zach Bertoldo '23**, **David Green '83**, **Lara (Bucarey) Sternberg '06**, **Edythe (Washburn) Bertoldo '79**, **Dave Lieberman '82**, **Warren Washburn '82**, **Greg Morgan '82**, **Rory Bertoldo '21**, **Bill Holenstein '82**, **Kirsten Bushick '82**, **Bill Abbott '82** and **Ray Castellani '82**. Present but not pictured was **Dave Woods '82**.

married for about three months. Dave and Tricia met a number of years ago and went to the altar July 12. Many of you who have been back on campus for the past couple of years during Alumni Weekend have met Tricia, who fits right in with our collection of somewhat misfit toys. She's become a friend, and I couldn't be happier for Dave...and we get a great addition to our crew! They will live in Dave's lovely home in Newton, New Jersey—on top of a hill with incredible views of the Appalachian Mountains!

**Warren Washburn** will also be having a big bash to celebrate his 60th birthday. It'll be a small gathering of about 200 of his closest friends! **Greg Morgan** is calling it "The Wash-a-palooza!" I'll write again about the party as there should be a bunch of '82ers there.

Speaking of Graper, he told me he got a text message from **Lisa Teitler** recently. They exchanged messages, and from what I can gather, Lisa is still living in London and doing well. This is what **Celeste (Strunk) Haghani** told me two years ago and that she (Celeste) speaks with Lisa regularly.

**Bill Holenstein** and I returned to campus in June for Alumni Weekend this year. As many of you know, he's married to **Jenna Grimm** from the Class of '84, and I was there to fulfill a promise to her that I'd come back for her 40th Reunion to keep Holly company while she partied with her classmates.

Kiki spoke with **Jessica Stark** a couple of months ago, so I'll let her give an update on Jessica. Kiki and I would both like to give a special thank-you shout-out to **Marivelle Clavel-Davis** for her efforts as a class rep for

the past decade or so—Thank you, Marivelle! She continues to work at Blair and has now taken a position in the admission office. She was also a Reunion Committee member for our last three reunions, and we also need to thank her for what she's done for the class over many years!

**Charlie Eck** sends his very best to everyone. He's living in Florida, and we have established a fun tradition of chatting annually around the National Lacrosse Championship (Charlie was the best face-off man I've ever known). This year we started a little early as our Lehigh lacrosse team made a great season-ending run into the big tournament.

**Peter Metz** and his awesome wife, Mally, have moved permanently to Maine (I believe I mentioned this before, yet I'm not sure I was able to say this was a permanent move). Pete still stays in close contact with **Gina (Pugliese) Perlstein** and **Lee Fankhauser**, and I hope we'll see all three of them back on campus for our 45th Reunion.

We saw **Trevor Power** on campus over Alumni Weekend, and he was his usual hilarious self! He's produced a brilliant CD with his band, and I was thankful to get one, which is an awesome blues collection! He's still living in New Jersey and also returned to Blair for the Leadership Reception earlier this year.

I think I mentioned that **Jon Greenbaum**, still in Connecticut, took his family on a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Congo and sent me some incredible pictures of the gorilla colony they got to meet in the wild—just awesome!

On a separate note, we saw a number of members of the Class of '81 return over Alumni Weekend to honor the induction of Marty Miller into the Athletic Hall of Fame as a coach and all-around great human being. It was a pleasure for me to have a chance to catch up with **Tim Gibson**, **Dave Owen**, **Rob Sudduth**, **Jennifer (Helton) Piniaba** and **Wiks Moffat**, and it was great of them to show their support for Dr. Miller's induction! Everyone looked great and seemed to be in overall good health and spirits—it was fun to see you kids back on campus!

Here's a thing for everyone: Some of us are retiring, and Kiki and I would love to hear from you so we can update the class on this type of cycle-of-life event. This does not mean we only want to hear about your retirement—we would welcome any updates on the events of your life! So send a text or email or give a call—we'd love to hear from you!

#### **News from Kirsten Bushick...**

Proud to report that **Tom Falls** entered the Favorite Chef Contest presented by Carla Hall and placed third in the first round, first in the second round and has steadily held second place in all subsequent rounds. Please keep your fingers crossed that he places first

in the final round, which was not completed at print time. And speaking of chefs and cooking, I also have some somber news to share. I am very sad to report that **Jessica Stark's** husband, Eric Wolpin, died in early June after a hard-fought battle with cancer. All our love, support and condolences flow her way. On a happier note, however, **Deb Cohen** and her husband, Jay, were able to accompany Jessica to Vail, Colorado, for Jessica's eldest son, Jaimon's, wedding. I have included some big-smile photos of the stunning location and occasion. 'Tis the wedding season, as I am thrilled to report that I will be celebrating my son's wedding this September in New Mexico!

It has been rather quiet on the Blair '82ers news front lately, but I do know that **Jorge Albert '81** will be moving to Panther Pond in Raymond, Maine, and living right next door to **Pete Metz!** Our class never wanders too far from one another! Sounds like a perfect place for a class reunion for the year that most of us all turn 60; I can only imagine all the shenanigans! I just celebrated some of my own with some college friends in Italy and Greece, even though I am not official until November. Please let me know how the Class of '82 is ringing in another new decade, but in the meantime, stay as healthy and happy (and in touch) as possible!

## 1983

**William F. Blume**

liam.blume@gmail.com

**David A. DiGioia**

David@signwithapro.com

**Kathy (Hammond) Chandler** writes: "I am working as an addiction counselor for women with substance use disorders and mental health disorders at The Damascus House, just outside of Baltimore, Maryland. I am also working on my master's degree in social work at University of Maryland, hoping to become a middle-school counselor. I live in Annapolis, Maryland, with my two sons. My youngest son just graduated from St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and is working in the film industry and as a server at the Annapolis Yacht Club until he decides his next steps. We are enjoying our summer here in Annapolis, getting on the water as often as possible and getting over to Bethany Beach, Delaware, on weekends. It was great to see some of you last year, and I also cannot believe a year has gone by already!"

## 1984

**Kristine C. Lisi**

Kristine@Lisi.org

**News from Kris Lisi...**

After we all got over the shock of realizing it



Amy and **Matt Cramer '83** accompanied by Lea LaBrunda-Fang and **Sonny LaBrunda '83** during a tour of the Eastern State Penitentiary in Pennsylvania. Neither to confirm nor deny, these two may have seen the inside of a hoosegow together before!



Members of the Class of 1984 were all smiles during the Alumni Parade (left to right): **Dave "Apple" Mitchell, Rich Wilt, Tom Rohl, Alan Mackerley, Noreen (Moore) Britt, Jenna (Grimm) Holenstein, Chris Devine, Kris "Cogs" Lisi, Ed Dawson, Susie (Douchette) Pyle, Holly "Jammer" Stewart, Anne (Land) Ellingson** and **Carol (Anderson) Hess**.

has been 40 years since we graduated, several of us worked for months to try to convince our fellow classmates to attend the reunion in early June. We had monthly Zoom calls, which featured several guest classmates as well.

Reunions are a funny thing. Some would call them surreal, because it's really like going back in time. Some people get nervous because of old high school angst. And some, like me, are over-the-top excited, because there's nothing like going back to a place that means as much as Blair and seeing folks that remain in your heart, even when 40 years have gone by. Sure,



The Class of 1984 held a pre-celebration dinner Thursday night before Alumni Weekend in Morristown. From left to right: **Alan Mackerley, Elisa and Dave Mitchell, Anne (Land) Ellingson, Susie (Douchette) Pyle, Chris McClanahan, Chris Devine** and **Rich Wilt**.



**Tim Losa '84** (left) flew in from Colorado to catch up with the Class of 1984's **Jenna (Grimm) Holenstein '84** (center) and **Todd Detrick '84** (right).

on the exterior, we may have gotten a tad older, but put a bunch of us '84ers in a room together, and it's like no time has gone by at all.

Our reunion actually started on Thursday night when a bunch of out-of-towners met in Morristown for a casual dinner. It was an intimate time to get reacquainted and learn more about how and why everyone went to Blair.

On Friday, after we got settled into our dorm accommodations (we stayed in a new dorm where the East tennis courts used to be), and had lunch in the dining room, several of us hit the golf course and tennis courts. After getting cleaned up, we headed to the Alumni Memorial Service, where our classmate, **Bill Feus**, was recognized. Sadly, Bill, who was



The Class of '84 rocks! During Alumni Weekend, we loved seeing their spirit, rocking their matching T-shirts all over campus.

very much looking forward to the reunion, tragically passed away a month before we could see him again. It was a shock to all of us since he was on so many of our Zoom calls. In the evening, we had a huge all-alumni dinner on the lawn by the magnolia tree at the old gym. A fun fact—most of the food and beverages were provided by alumni and their restaurants, and it was all delicious!

Saturday was a blur! From the early morning run to the evening dinner, drinks and dancing. In fact, we had to start a group text to keep track of where we needed to be and when. The most important thing—the class photo! Second only to the parade, where we showed off our very popular class T-shirts that **Jenna (Grimm) Holenstein** designed. And yes, the Class of '84 rocks! Even after all these years!

On Sunday morning, we bid a fond farewell after brunch. I'm not going to lie—I went straight home for a nap. I'm sure several out-of-staters slept on the plane, too. It wasn't just that the weekend was jam-packed and we slept on dorm beds; it was also emotional. The love and goodwill we all have for one another is profound. Someone who hadn't been back in 40 years said to me, "I forgot how much Blair meant to me." That is true for so many of us. I hope to see everyone at our 45th Reunion, if not beforehand!

Notes about classmates who couldn't join us—**Tom Rue** joined us on a Zoom call to say he couldn't make it because he had a senior graduating from high school that weekend. **Maurice Frankefort** moved to France and now lives in Perros-Guirec. He extended an invitation if anyone happens to be in the

Bretagne area. **Dave Motter** was supposed to be at the reunion, but family obligations got in the way. He is alive and well in New Orleans. **Beth (Davidson) Carroll** was also supposed to be at the reunion, but sadly her mother and dog passed away just before the reunion. **Chloe Ross** (aka **June Lucas**) joined us on a Zoom call from Australia. Oddly, she didn't want to make the 21-hour flight to join us in person for a weekend, but it was great to "see" her again on Zoom. I can't remember why **Dave Pagliughi** couldn't make it, but it may have been family stuff. Ditto with **Stuart Smith**. Both were fun to see again on Zoom! **Melissa Henderson Koenig**, **Chris McClanahan**, **Liza O'Dowd** and **Chris Clayton**—next time, we're getting you back to Blair! Along with everyone else that was too busy this time around.

HOLD THE PHONE—I almost forgot some pretty impressive news! Our class reached a new 40th Reunion record—40 percent participation and more than \$40,000 raised! Many thanks to all who helped us attain this goal.

[**William F. Feus**, In Memoriam]

## 1985

**Amelia C. Wolfe**  
athate67@gmail.com

**Christian K. Wolfe**  
ckwolfe8@gmail.com



## 1986

**Linda M. Fellows**  
linda1507@aol.com

[**Thomas A. Kleban**, In Memoriam]

## 1987

**Marnie Bruder Raines**  
marnola@gmail.com

## 1988

**Daphne Borowski**  
daphneborowski@gmail.com

**Matthew R. Hennessey**  
matthew777@netscape.net

**Charles H. Inkeles**  
charles.inkeles@gmail.com

## 1989

**Chrysta A. Argue**  
chrysta23@aol.com

**Lesley H. Underwood**  
lhunderwood@netscape.net



## 1990

**Todd C. Smith**  
toddcsmith10@gmail.com



The Class of 1989 celebrates their 35th Reunion in style. (From left to right): **Dan O’Grady, Stirling Levy, Ari Milner, Greg Gomory, Nicole (Sanabria) Shelton, Brenda Waardenburg, Christina Slimack, Lesley Underwood** and **Chrysta Argue**.



**Janine Clifford ‘90** (left) and **Cassandra Davson ‘90** (right) back to campus to support Blair softball this spring.



These two alums bleed Blair Blue: **Janine Clifford ‘90** (right) and **Bridget Hodakowski ‘99** (left)!

## 1991

**Meredith Magrone-Wiacek**  
meri1999@yahoo.com

**Elizabeth W. Webster**  
websterew@gmail.com

**Elisabeth J. Wenner**  
elisabeth.wenner520@gmail.com

## 1992

**Darryl M. De Marzio**  
ddemarzio@portsmouthabbey.org

**Daniel C. Millner**  
danmillner@outlook.com

**Tasha R. Williams-Arroyo**  
tasha.r.arroyo@gmail.com

## 1993

**Bernadette M. Clifford**  
Clifford17@gmail.com

**John J. Inkeles**  
johninkeles@hotmail.com

**Nicole Tipton**  
nicusanti@gmail.com

## 1994

**John P. Weesner**  
weesner4@gmail.com

**Joanne L. Wrzesinsky**  
wrzesinskyj@mercersburg.edu

### **News from Jo Wrzesinsky...**

I can’t adequately express how wonderful and fulfilling it was to see everyone who made the trip back to Blair for our 30th Reunion! It was healing to be together to reminisce and remember our time with **Bryan Kelly**. He was missed! We appreciated the efforts that everyone made to get back for all or some of the weekend. Unofficially, **Matthias Hornberg** won the award for most impressive return for traveling from Germany to Blair for the weekend! There are too many updates to list so I’ll just say this, we haven’t changed at all! From your reunion committee, thanks for all the love and laughter! Plan to join us for our 35th in June 2029! We will be organizing a Zoom in the coming months, so please make sure that Blair has your correct contact information.

[*Bryan P. Kelly*, In Memoriam]



1995

**Stephanie J. Marcial**  
Stephanie.marcial@gmail.com

**E. Courtney Stanford**  
ecourtney@gmail.com

**News from Courtney Stanford...**

30th Reunion? Is this possible, you ask? Yes, yes it is. I hope many of you plan to come back to campus on June 6-8, 2025. Be on the lookout for a Zoom call to chat more about this fun-filled weekend. We all have done amazing things individually and together, and we have Blair as our common link. Let's plan to reminisce and share stories in June! There have been many changes on campus, but many things have stayed the same. I encourage you to consider a trip back to Blairstown. The band for Saturday night, Grooveline, will be amazing. See you in June!

On a sad note, many of you have heard the news about the passing of **Bryan Kelly '94**. He was a great part of our Blair experience. We will miss him dearly. From all of us in the class of 1995, we will continue to think of him (can you hear his big laugh?) and his family.



During a summer 2024 visit to Vermont, the Pagottos spent time with Dave and Candy Low.



**Victoria (Golden) Gebhardt '96** retired after a five-year career in the Air Force as a nurse practitioner both on active duty and in the Air National Guard.

1996

**Stefanie R. Kuhner**  
stefkuhner@yahoo.com

**Summer J. Passannante**  
utvols\_21@yahoo.com

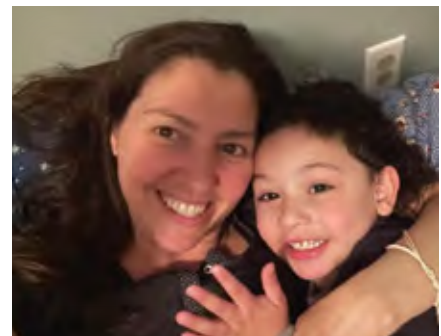
**Anthony C. Powell**  
acpowell@me.com

**Victoria (Golden) Gebhardt** writes that "I recently moved to Virginia Beach, Virginia, to be closer to my daughter, Sailor. I am loving the mellower beach life after a five-year career in the Air Force as a nurse practitioner both on active duty and in the Air National



**Dr. Addrain Conyers '96**, associate provost at Marist College, returned as a speaker at Skeptics this spring, meeting up with current and former faculty members Jim Moore, Hon. '93 and Marty Miller, Hon. '81.

Guard (ANG). My commission expired after I served several deployments on COVID orders with the ANG in California. It was quite the adventure. I also found time to catch up with **Melissa Guyre** and her lovely husband in their home while I was out in California."



**Stef Meilinger '97** became a foster mom on October 5, 2022. Her sweet Mesiah joined her at 19 months old, and he was reunified with his birth mother on May 15, 2024.

1997

**Christy L. Burkart**  
christy.burkart@gmail.com

**Ryan M. Pagotto**  
pagotr@blair.edu

**News from Ryan Pagotto...**

The classes of '94, '99 and many others were back in force for Alumni Weekend. I enjoyed catching up with **Jon '98** and **Jordan**





**Nicole Pouliot '99** married Michael Riccioli last year. They are expecting a baby boy in October 2024. Pictured here with Nicole and Michael are her beautiful children: Lucas, Colton and Teagan McEntee.



**Bowers '01** (inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame), **Joy Smith '99**, **Keith Meeney '99**, **Seth Low '94**, **Jo Wrzesinsky '94**, **Amy Glick '99**, **Jamiyl Peters '98**, **Jason '96** and **Mark McLean '98**, **Adam Sampieri '99** (who was inducted into the Arts Guild), Lew and Lois Stival, **Suzy (Martin) Logan '99**, **Bridget (Brennan) Hodakowski '99**, and so many others. It was a great weekend, and I think everyone enjoyed the experience of being back on campus, especially with all of the offerings and amenities...golf, pickleball, lawn games, bounce house for kids, great food and drinks, and of course dormitory living!

**Tanner McAuley Homlish** and his fiancée, Rachael, are getting married in St. Martin at La Samanna in December 2024. It has been great to see Tanner and Rachael at a few Blair events in New York City over the course of the last year.

**Natasha (Leitch) Huggins** shares the following: "On the Huggins front, Zaiden graduated from Lawrence Academy on May 31, 2024. He was a member of the NEPSAC champion football team last fall, and he was the treasurer for the Senior Class cabinet. He is attending University of Massachusetts Lowell and is interested in computer engineering. My daughter, Zahria, finished her first year at Xavier University in Cincinnati and is interested in the STEM field. This August will mark my 10th anniversary teaching at Lawrence Academy. Finally, I presented at

the African American Development Officers conference in Atlanta, Georgia. I just missed **Aisha Gayle Turner '98**, who attended the conference as well."

**Stef Meilinger** became a foster mom on October 5, 2022. Her sweet Mesiah joined her at 19 months old, and he was reunified with his birth mother May 15, 2024. Stef shares, "He changed my heart and was my whole world. He is a precious, intelligent, handsome boy, and I'm holding on to the infusion of love that we shared and that he will always carry inside him. I don't know where my next steps will lead me. In the meantime, I'll be playing music with my band GAIA in the Lehigh Valley. Come see us if you can! Happy summer everyone. Take care of one another."

## 1998

**Charisse L. Manzi, Jamiyl R. Peters**

## 1999

**Bridget D. Hodakowski, Kathryn S. Piotrowski, Mark T. Rosenthal**

**News from Bridget (Brennan) Hodakowski...**

What an amazing 25th Reunion. It was so wonderful to see you all back on campus. Thanks for making the trip to the 07825 and bringing the laughter, hugs and walks down

memory lane. For me, I wasn't 100 percent sure what to expect from our 25th, but boy, was my heart full to the brim once the weekend passed.

A few highlights for me: seeing our classmate **Adam Sampieri** get inducted into the Arts Guild was incredibly special. Having shared a stage or two with Adam was nothing short of a privilege, but what was so special about Alumni Weekend was to see his true and genuine friendship with longtime faculty member Craig Evans on full display. In both of their speeches—they allowed the audience to hear about their special bond—the years of friendship and mentorship mashed together and well, you just love to see that kind of happiness. A big congrats to you, Adam, on your induction—it is so well deserved. Bravo! The dark horse award is going to my favorite preseason roomie **Keidra Hoskins**. I legit forgot how stinking funny you are and how you light up a room with your beauty, rib-splitting humor and genuine good nature. My heart was so incredibly happy to get my arms around you, Keidra. Thank you for making the effort to come to campus and allowing this old lady to shed a few tears of friendship with you. I will be forever in your debt.

Bottom line, it was a great weekend—reconnecting with old friends (Bucky, thank you for our own reunion in New York City with you, Suz and Wiss. You are in your own category of highlights!), remembering

with fondness some of the old haunts and happenings and lastly, just being together on the holy ground of a place that helped mold us into the people we are today. I am incredibly grateful to you, 1999ers. Thanks for filling up my cup! Cheers to the next 25—but let it be known, you should all come back next June because the band will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, I promise. GO BUCS.



2000

Logan K. Garrels

*Cristina Vivenzio* won a 2024 Tony Award for Best Musical as a producer for *The Outsiders*.

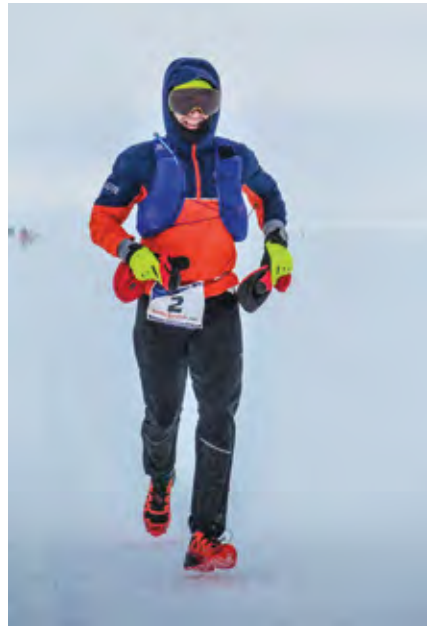
2001

Kweighbaye Kotee, Maria Lieberman Smalley, Kristen E. Salmon

*Justin Pierce Berutich* writes in...

I did accomplish an impressive feat in early 2023 when I completed the World Marathon Challenge, a logistical and physical challenge of running seven marathons on seven continents in seven days—an accomplishment obtained by fewer people than those who have summited Mount Everest.

The journey had me running in temperatures of minus 20 degrees (with 60 mile-per-hour wind gusts) in Antarctica to 100+ degrees in Perth, Australia. From January 31 to February 6, I ran a marathon in Novo, Antarctica; Cape Town, South Africa; Perth, Australia; Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Madrid, Spain; Fortaleza, Brazil; and Miami, USA.



*Justin Pierce Berutich '01* completed the World Marathon Challenge.



*Justin Pierce Berutich '01* in Perth, Australia, for one of the seven marathons on seven continents in seven days.



Jennifer and *Ryan M. Pagotto '97* enjoyed a visit with *James Hinton '06*.

2002

E. Meredith Gal, Stephanie A. Garbutt

2003

Jessica A. Hess, Brandon D. Lucien, Christine L. Nalty, Stephanie E. Tucker

2004

Kaitlin G. Maillet, Philip J. Mauriello



Blair alums across Asia celebrated a long overdue reunion in Bali, during which the next generation of Bucs sported Blair T-shirts to show their school pride. From left to right: *Xian Ong '03* and Tracy, with their son, Ollie; *Woo Lee Cho '05*, with her son, Eugene; Esther Jang, with her son, Lucas; Sae Takagi, with her daughter, Ami; *Jonathan Tse '03*; *Ahra Cho '03*; *Kevin Jang '05*; Ashley, with her son, Noah, and Emma Jang; Sena Eu and Moet Kurokawa; *Paul Ong '03*, with his son, Matty; Nayu Kurokawa; *Kathy Jang '04*, with her son Leo; Caroline, with her daughter, Seoa, and *Hwan Choi '05*, with John; Yosuke Kusaka '03, with his daughter, Emily; *Richie Eu '03*; *Mitsuharu Kurokawa '03* and Namita, with their son, Mitsuaki; and Magda, with her son, Nico.



*Natessa Amin '06* married Gordon Stillman on July 29, 2023.



Blair was excited to welcome back three young alumni, including senior manager of GTM operations at Dell Technologies **Maggie Hoffman '11** (left), co-managing partner and head of acquisitions at Arden Group International **Jeremy Conway '13** (center), and registered nurse at Brigham and Women's Hospital **Paige Cordero '14** (right).



**Suji Kang '08** returned to campus for a quick tour and to see if her violin is still on campus from 2008. With the help of Mrs. Pagotto and Mrs. Sykes...guess who found it?



**Dylan Evans '08** married Marlesse Marino in the spring. Blair family and friends gathered at brunch following the wedding, pictured here from left to right: **JP Bowditch '08**, **Tyler Browse '08**, **Faith (Evans) McNeill '05**, **Tim Peacock '08**, **Dylan Evans '08**, Marlesse Marino, Craig Evans, Kaye Evans, Latta Browse and **Carolyn Conforti-Browse '79**.



The best season is basketball season, especially when (left to right) **Torera Fagbenle '13**, **Temi Fagbenle '11**, **Council Dawson '13** and **Lionel Gomis '11** are at an Indiana Fever game!



**Maggie Hoffman '11** (left) and **Paige Cordero '14** (right) were all smiles as they returned for the Young Alumni Skeptics Panel.

20<sup>th</sup> REUNION

2005

**Mary J. Hall, Martha C. McCauley, Kathryn H. Nelson**

2006

**Elizabeth A. Hinman, Kelly L. Hoyes, Anne E. Newall**

**Natessa Amin '06** married Gordon Stillman on July 29, 2023. It was a beautiful day full of love! The couple were joined by **Dan Kraines, Anne Newall, Winnie Lizardo Orbe**, Joary Lizardo, **Sarah White**, Aaron White and former faculty member Rita Baragona to celebrate their big day!

2007

**Kymbia P. Ainsworth, Dennis W. Flores, Margaret L. Harding, Marisa S. Nedderman, Cooper A. Smith**

2008

**Madeline A. Hargis, Alexa M. Jachowski, Katherine I. Johnson Birchette, Ashley H. Thompson, Samantha M. Tilney**

2009

**Raleigh F. Dierlam, Alyssa B. Drazin, Elliot Parauda**

15<sup>th</sup> REUNION

2010

**Jin Ryang Chung, Michael De Togni, Dillon R. Hoffman, Saul Sparber, Neil P. Zimmermann**

2011

**Anu C. Akinbamidele, Emily A. Collins, Margaret B. Hoffman, Nicholas M. Hogan, Quinn C. McKay, Rebecca H. Smith-Fuentes**

2012

**Olivia R. Clavel-Davis, Timothy J. Hettinger, Ali N. Johnson, Max Kaplan, Timothy M. Kui, Phoebe M. Norris**



First Lt. **Shannon Davis '14** stops by campus after returning home from his five years of service in the Marines.



Head of School Peter G. Curran (far left) and Associate Head of School **Ryan M. Pagotto '97** (far right) caught up with **Shoshana Geller '16** and **Yi Jun Lim '16** in Blair's gym this spring.

## 2013

**Hope C. Dawson, Rebecca Hargis, Dong Hyun Kim, Madeline M. Kling Thees, Benjamin Meisel, Claire M. Ryder, Kyle R. Tierney**

## 2014

**Sara C. Bullock, Demetrius J. Daltirus, Graham Merrifield, Abigayle Troy**



## 2015

**Breanna Cavanaugh, Lucy V. Drinkwater, Sophia Elghanayan, Ethan Simon, Morgan G. Valeo**



The Class of 2019 brought a strong showing of Blair pride as they celebrated their 5th Reunion.

## 2016

**Shoshana M. Geller**

## 2017

**Christopher J. Berry-Toon, Jacob N. Saxton, Lauren C. Tung**

## 2018

**Clara C. McGrath, Yingjian Pan, Max D. Thorsheim**

## 2019

**Cornelia R. Sigety**



## 2020

**Kate M. Gerdson, Garrett M. Long**

## 2021

**Grace C. Higgins, Abney T. Whitehead**

## 2022

**Brad T. Allen, Archer C. Benedict, Laila C. Davson**



The Blair Young Alumni “Summer Sips” Event in June was a huge success! Alums in and around New York City caught up on the big red boat, known as the Frying Pan, on the west side of NYC. It was a great evening catching up with so many of our young alums.

## 2023

**Aniketh B. Bandi, Katerina Trantzas**

## 2024

**Avery S. Andrasek, Nathan M. Byrne,  
Luis R. Jimenez, Carter P. Neves,  
Joaquin A. Tahta, Hayden H. Yau**



Brown University senior **Lily Starrs '21** spent last summer completing Army ROTC training in Fort Knox, Kentucky, and Oahu, Hawaii.



In April, a few members of the advancement team took a moment to check out the solar eclipse!

**1946** David W. Harvey  
May 4, 2024  
Warwick, Rhode Island

George F. Mayrosh  
May 11, 2023  
Vero Beach, Florida

Charles C. Morrison, Jr.  
January 14, 2024  
Seattle, Washington

**1947** Gerald C. Kinne  
December 30, 2023  
Charlottesville, Virginia

J. Mitchell Reese, Jr.  
January 20, 2024  
Bethesda, Maryland

**1949** Victor Meyers  
September 10, 2023  
Kailua, Hawaii

Robert H. Wharton  
September 15, 2021  
San Tan Valley, Arizona

**1950** Bruce R. Goddin  
February 17, 2024  
Okatie, South Carolina

C. Edward Schofer  
April 18, 2024  
Wernersville, Pennsylvania

**1951** Mervyn J. Blank  
December 23, 2022  
Brookfield, Connecticut

Bruce K. Byers  
May 9, 2024  
Cornwall, Vermont

**1952** Dominick Desiderio, Jr.  
February 22, 2024  
Branchburg, New Jersey

**1954** Raymond E. Soriano, Jr.  
March 5, 2024  
Rangeley, Maine

**1955** Terry A. Michael  
June 15, 2023  
Westlake, Ohio

**1956** Stephen O. Hopkins  
March 2, 2024  
Lady Lake, Florida

**1957** Jack L. Woods  
April 25, 2024  
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

**1959** David C. Gallagher  
March 4, 2024  
Bluffton, South Carolina

Robert H. LeCron  
November 2, 2021  
Toledo, Ohio

Lawrence E. Shafer  
December 23, 2021  
Altamonte Springs, Florida

David J. Shotwell  
June 21, 2024  
Blairstown, New Jersey

Denis P. Slattery  
October 21, 2022  
Albany, New York

**1960** Stathes J. Kulukundis  
February 24, 2024  
London, United Kingdom

**1962** Lance K. Eschholz  
March 19, 2024  
Falmouth, Maine

**1964** Richard P. Hoppe, Jr.  
December 20, 2022  
River Vale, New Jersey

**1966** John G. Beam, Jr.  
June 14, 2024  
Louisville, Kentucky

**1974** Richard H. Demmy, Jr.  
June 12, 2024  
Buena, New Jersey

Christian J. Lafaurie  
June 3, 2022  
Tampa, Florida

**1980** James P. Maguire, Jr.  
April 12, 2024  
Short Hills, New Jersey

**1981** Jay A. Smith, Jr.  
May 31, 2024  
Petaluma, California

**1984** William F. Feus  
April 29, 2024  
Fort Mill, South Carolina

**1986** Thomas A. Kleban  
March 30, 2024  
Boalsburg, Pennsylvania

**1994** Bryan P. Kelly  
May 24, 2024  
Bradenton, Florida

**Former Faculty & Staff**

Thomas L. Cracas  
March 4, 2024  
Staunton, Virginia

Foster Q. Doan  
May 11, 2024  
Drums, Pennsylvania

Barbara M. Robinson  
June 5, 2024  
Lincoln, California

**Friends**

William I. Houghton, III  
April 3, 2024  
Newton, New Jersey

Frank M. Warr  
September 24, 2023  
Sparta, New Jersey

**1946**

**David W. Harvey.** David spent two years on the hilltop and was known as "one of the top-notch musicians on the Blair campus." He mainly played the trombone but was also renowned for his skill on the piano, playing both classical and swing. David also had a great voice

and could be heard singing with the choir and playing in the Blair band and glee band. When he wasn't singing or playing an instrument, David could be found playing baseball with the varsity team. David received his bachelor of arts degree from Colby College in 1953.

During the Korean War, he proudly served in the U.S. Army. In 1956, he obtained his master's of education from Harvard Graduate School of Education, and his doctorate in education from the University of Connecticut in 1971. David went on to serve as the Dean of College

for Mitchell College in New London until his retirement in 1990. David also served as a deacon for the First Congregational Church in New London. A devoted father and grandfather, David kept in touch with many members of his extended family. He loved spending time in Long Pond, New Hampshire, where he fostered many close friendships with his "lake friends." A lifelong learner, he enjoyed research, writing, nature, hiking with his grandsons and playing tennis. David also loved traveling, especially around the United States to visit various national and state parks. He will be greatly missed by all those whose lives he touched. David was predeceased by his wife, Joan, and is survived by his three children, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**George F. Mayrosh.** George, known as Bud throughout his life, came to Blair from Easton High School as a postgraduate. Known to be on the quieter side, Bud still had many friends and was one of the sharpest dressers on campus. For the first half of his year at Blair, he lived in "Top Insley" and later moved to East Hall. Bud played on the varsity baseball team and was recruited by the New York Yankees that year. Despite that opportunity, Bud decided to continue his education, attending Georgetown University and then Georgetown Law School to attain his law degree. As a young man, he worked for the family business, Kuebler Brewing Company, in Easton, Pennsylvania. Later, Bud was a successful real estate attorney at Morgan Lewis & Bockius. After practicing in the Philadelphia office, he later relocated, establishing their commercial real estate office in Miami, Florida. Bud enjoyed gourmet cooking, playing golf, traveling to new places and watching football, especially the Philadelphia Eagles. He was a loyal supporter of the Blair Fund, attaining recognition for 20 years of consecutive giving in the True Blue Loyalty Society. Bud was predeceased by his wife, Rose Marie, and one of his daughters. He is survived by his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**Charles C. Morrison, Jr.** A two-year Buc, Charles was best known for freestyle swimming, diving and having the most spacious room in the Ark. He shared early ambitions of becoming a doctor, and wrote for both the *ACTA* and *The Breeze*. Although a career in medicine did not become reality, he flourished in the open spaces of the natural environment. After graduating from Colgate University with a degree in geography and earning a master's degree in economic geography from Columbia University, Charles worked as a research assistant for the American Geographical Society in New York City, where he met and married his wife of 52 years, Marie. Through this research, he studied glaciers in Alaska, which he continued to monitor for decades, and volcanoes in Mexico. In the early 1960s, he served as chief of school planning for New York City, before moving on to his new role in the U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in Washington, D.C. Here, he helped prepare the first nationwide plan for outdoor recreation and the 1965 National Recreation Survey. Soon, he and Marie moved to upstate New York to head a new Commission on Natural Beauty, which later became the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. His later career saw him as state representative on numerous efforts, including land use, coastal management, river recreation programs, and Adirondack and forest preservation. Charles retired in 1995 as the director of natural resources planning, but continued to engage in his passion on environmental issues through several boards and committees. He was a lifelong swimmer and world traveler who loved sailing, canoeing and camping, and he will be remembered for his instrumental efforts to keep the Adirondacks "forever wild." Charles was predeceased by Marie and is survived by their four children, granddaughter, great-granddaughter and cousins, **Gene Losa '55** and **Steven Losa '58**.

## 1947

**Gerald C. Kinne.** Gerald, a two-year Buc, came to Blair the fall after his brother, **Birge Kinne, Jr. '44**, graduated. Known as Jerry among friends, he played in the band and ran track. After Blair, Jerry attended Cornell University, where he obtained his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and spent his time participating in Greek life at the Delta Phi fraternity and serving in U.S. Army ROTC. After a two-year stint in the Army as a nuclear weapons officer during the Korean War, Jerry continued his career as a nuclear engineer at the Brookhaven National Lab in Long Island, New York. He stayed with Brookhaven until retiring in 1992, notably being part of the team that built the High Flux Beam Reactor. Jerry was also active in his community, teaching basic seamanship and celestial navigation. He was a member of the Old Field Point Power Squadron in Setauket, New York, while serving as usher and vestry member of the Caroline Church. Jerry continued running throughout his life and was also an avid clock collector, boasting a collection of more than 50 clocks in his home. In the winter, he and his wife of 58 years, Lucy, would spend time on their boat "Kestyll" in the Virgin Islands. Other passions in his life included sailing, antiques, skiing and his family. Jerry was predeceased by Lucy and survived by their two children, two grandchildren and several cousins in the Sigety and Marcus families.

**J. Mitchell Reese, Jr.** Upon graduation, Mitch was awarded with the Blair Academy Trophy in recognition of his standing as the member of the senior class with the highest all-around achievement. Along with his academic achievements, he showed leadership on the courts as the varsity tennis captain. Mitch continued his education and passion for tennis at Harvard College and Harvard Law School, graduating in 1954. Before beginning a distinguished career in law, he served overseas in the U.S. Army's Counter Intelligence

Corps from 1954 to 1956. Mitch began his career with Willkie Farr & Gallagher in New York, eventually moving to the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., and working with Gulf Oil Corporation worldwide. Notable highlights of his career include arguing *United States v. Aaron Zacks, et al.*, before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1963 and heading the Gulf Oil office in Washington, D.C., during the 1970s. In retirement, Mitch served as a public defender and founded Step-Up, a nonprofit dedicated to helping inner-city high school students gain access to college. He also enjoyed friendly competition with his golf friends at the Chevy Chase Club. Mitch's most treasured achievement was his 59-year marriage to his "inseparable soulmate," Mary Ellen, with whom he had two sons. He was a loyal supporter of the Blair Fund and served as class representative from 2012 to 2014. His obituary states, "For all his accomplishments, he will be remembered mostly for his empathy, compassion and positive outlook on life." Mitch was predeceased by Mary Ellen, and is survived by his two sons and their families.

#### 1949

**Victor Meyers.** Victor attended Blair for three years, excelling both academically and musically. During his senior year, he made the honor roll and was a member of the choir, Omicron Kappa Delta Society, dance band, concert band (earning a marching band varsity letter) and glee club. The 1949 ACTA stated that he was "often heard blowing the wildest trumpet this side of The Royal Roost." After Blair, Victor served two years in the U.S. Army in Germany before earning his degree from Williams College in 1953, as well as a master's degree from Trinity College. His career began at Westminster School in Connecticut, where he taught mathematics. He then moved to Monterey, California, where

he continued to teach mathematics and served as Dean of Students at the York School. Victor finally settled in Hawaii in 1988, where he taught mathematics at the Punahou School in Honolulu before transitioning to computer science at Hawaii Pacific University until his retirement in 2000. In retirement, Victor remained active by volunteering to teach Excel and Word to prison inmates, swimming daily in the ocean and singing with the Honolulu Symphony Chorus in the bass section. For his 50th Reunion, Victor fondly recalled a particularly memorable concert directed by visiting maestro Robert Shaw. He also reminisced about learning to play bridge at Blair, a card game he continued to play weekly at local clubs. Victor enjoyed retirement with his wife, Pat, and affectionately spoke of their dogs. Throughout his life, Victor stayed connected to Blair through reunion correspondence and supporting the Blair Fund. He made it back to campus once after graduation before moving to Hawaii. Victor is survived by his loving wife, Pat.

#### 1950

**Bruce R. Goddin.** Vice president of the senior class, Bruce was admired for his enthusiasm in all sports during his two years at Blair. A leader among his classmates, Bruce served as captain of the varsity soccer team, president of the Webster Society, treasurer of the Varsity "B" Association and a member of the varsity baseball team. He notably coined the name "Buccaneers" for our mascot after submitting a winning entry in a contest sponsored by *The Breeze* on October 14, 1949. After graduating, Bruce attended Wesleyan University, but left after two years to serve in the U.S. Army Signal Corps in Japan from 1952 to 1954 during the Korean War. After his service, he married his sweetheart, Grayce, and returned to Wesleyan to complete his BA in 1956. He obtained his master's in education from Rutgers

University during the same time period. Bruce taught English and coached soccer at Newark Academy in Livingston, New Jersey. One of his notable achievements included starting the boys' soccer program in 1968, which quickly reached the title of State Champions in 1975. For this feat and his legacy as a soccer coach, he was inducted into the Newark Academy Hall of Fame in 1994. Bruce retired in 1992, moving to the Carolinas to spend time with family. He remained connected to his alma mater throughout his life, supporting the Blair Fund, achieving membership in the True Blue Society and returning to campus for his 50th Reunion. He will be remembered for his infectious sense of humor, love of language, and strong commitment to family and friends. Bruce is survived by his two children and their families.

**C. Edward Schofer.** Ed was a quiet yet impactful presence on Blair's campus for three years, known for his work ethic and excellent piano skills. During his senior year, Ed made the honor roll, served as manager for the varsity winter track team, and was a member of the choir, glee club, band, dance band and camera club. Ed graduated from Haverford College in 1954 and earned his master's degree from Temple University in 1971. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1955 to 1957 as a hospital corps operating room technician at Naval Medical Center Camp LeJeune. In 1960, Ed was hired by the Conrad Weiser School District in Berks County, Pennsylvania, where he taught science and math in the junior high school and later worked as a guidance counselor during his 30-year tenure. Although he retired in 1990, Ed remained committed to the school, becoming a daily volunteer and performing part-time clerical work for several decades. Ed loved trains and visiting with family, often reminiscing during annual birthday visits. Ed is survived by his family, who will miss his kindness and gentle spirit.



**1951**

**Bruce K. Byers.** Bruce spent an active two years at Blair, making the most of his senior year by participating in the marching band, dance band, Webster Society, Spanish club, choir, *The Breeze*, and last but not least, on the baseball and basketball teams. He went on to Middlebury College, graduating in 1955, and then Cornell Law School in 1958. At Middlebury, he continued to play basketball, baseball and soccer and met his wife, Suzanne, to whom he would be married for 67 happy years. Bruce and Suzanne loved Middlebury and retired to nearby Cornwall, staying very active with their alma mater. Bruce launched his legal career in 1962, starting his own firm in Ridgewood, New Jersey, where he and Sue were deeply involved in the community. Bruce served as the attorney for the Planning Board, a town councilman and mayor. He was also board chair of the Holley Child Care and Development Center and spearheaded a large senior citizen housing project and town park restoration. In Cornwall, Bruce served on numerous boards and committees and, notably, helped secure the Town Hall Theater restoration. At Middlebury, Bruce served on the Alumni Board, co-chaired several reunions with Sue and stayed connected by attending Alumni College at the Bread Loaf Campus. Bruce received two awards from Middlebury, the Bonnie and John McCardell Citizen's Award in 2016 and during his 50th Reunion, the Outstanding Service to College Award. Bruce leaves behind a legacy of kindness, community service and a love for life. His family will hold memories of his laughter, kindness, generosity and fun. Bruce is survived by Suzanne, their two children, grandchildren and many friends who became family.

**1952**

**Dominick Desiderio, Jr.** "Dom" arrived at Blair in 1945 and spent six formative years on the hilltop. He was a leader on the athletic fields and a member of the Student Council and Varsity B club. As co-captain of the varsity football team his senior year, he took pride in their undefeated season and often told stories of their victories. He also co-captained the varsity winter track and varsity track teams with his brother, **Robert '52**, in 1950, a special year for the family in which his other brother, **Frank '50**, graduated. Dom attended New York University and served two years in the U.S. Army before joining the family business, Whippany Paperboard Company, the world's largest manufacturer of recycled paperboard. Dom spent his career with the company and traveled the globe, including a notable trip to Nigeria, where he proposed modernizing paper production to become more efficient and "green." Dom was predeceased by his first wife, Geraldine, and his two brothers. He is survived by his second wife, Maria, five children and seven grandchildren.

**1954**

**Raymond E. Soriano, Jr.** Ray came to Blair for his last two years from Somerville High School in New Jersey. During his time on the hilltop, he displayed a love for the outdoors, participating in the rod and reel club, running winter track and playing basketball. He also proudly played on the golf team that attained the state championship two years in a row. Throughout his life, Ray remained supportive of Blair through the Blair Fund and the Class of 1954 New Horizons Scholarship, attaining his five-year True Blue Loyalty Society pin. After Blair, Ray studied horse breeding and raising at Delaware Valley University's College of Science & Agriculture. He began his career with the family business at Soriano's Food Market, leading to a long career at ShopRite supermarket.

Ray married his wife, Evelyn, in 1963 and held a management position in New Jersey before being transferred to upstate New York for a district supervisor position from 1969 to 1977. In 1977, Ray and Evelyn purchased Quimby Pond Camps in Rangeley, Maine. There, he fulfilled his love of the outdoors by becoming a registered Maine Master Guide, hunting in the region, and hosting hundreds of clients and friends. Some of Ray's passions included raising Brittany spaniels and snowmobiling. Notably, he started the first snowmobile club in Rangeley and earned an Orvis Doubles Club hunting award for an outstanding triple on a grouse flush. Ray and Evelyn sold the camp in 1984 but remained in Rangeley for several years before moving to Florida, where he worked at a golf course and spent his free time fishing. After a decade, they returned to the mountains near Rangeley in 1998, where he continued to guide hunting and fishing for 15 more years. Ray was predeceased by Evelyn and one of their sons. He is survived by four children, more than 20 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**1955**

**Terry A. Michael.** Terry attended Blair for a year of postgraduate studies. He enjoyed writing for *The Breeze* and excelled on the football field. After graduating, he stayed connected with his classmates and supported the Blair Fund. Terry began college at The Ohio State University but soon enlisted in the U.S. Army and served as a military policeman stationed in Tokyo, Japan. While in the service, he continued his passion for football and played for the U.S. Army's Tokyo Bulldogs. After completing his service, Terry returned to The Ohio State University and earned his bachelor's degree in 1963. While at school, he also worked at the R.O. Hull Company, married his wife, Sandra, in 1960 and welcomed twin sons soon after.

Terry began his career at Ernst & Ernst in Cleveland, Ohio, an accounting firm that eventually merged to become Ernst & Young, where he worked as an auditor for almost 20 years. In 1982, he made a career change, accepting a position as treasurer with the Rocky River Board of Education. He served on the board for five years before moving on to the Solon Board of Education, where he stayed until his retirement in 2000. After Sandra passed in 2004, Terry married his longtime friend, Patricia, celebrating their union with a Bahamian cruise ceremony surrounded by their children and grandchildren. In retirement, he continued to dabble in many hobbies, including typeset printing, stamp and coin collecting, and cartography. He and Patricia traveled from Florida each winter to Torch Lake in Michigan. Terry loved spending time with his children and grandchildren most of all. He is survived by Patricia, three sons, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

#### 1956

**Stephen O. Hopkins.** Steve, affectionately known as “Hoppy” during his time at Blair, spent an active three years on the hilltop. In his senior year, he was a member of the dance band and student council, played varsity football, and ran for the track team. He was also known to have a passion for sports cars. After graduating, Steve attended the Rochester Institute of Technology and served two years with the New York National Guard. Steve’s active lifestyle and commitment to service were evident throughout his entire life. He lived in Goshen, New York, and ran Hopkins Hardware, a family business founded by his grandfather, making Steve the third generation at the helm. In addition to the store, Steve spent more than 50 years with Goshen’s Cataract Engine and Hose Fire Company, serving as president for two terms, from 1981 to 1983 and 2005 to 2007. He also

served as chief of the Goshen Fire Department, Orange County’s deputy fire coordinator, and six years as mayor of Goshen Village. In addition to these roles, Steve served two years as a town supervisor, 22 years on the Goshen Savings Bank board and a term as the Goshen rotary president. He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce and Goshen Masonic Lodge. Following the sale of the store in 1993, Steve took on a variety of roles with Sutphen Fire Apparatus, R.D. Murray Fire Apparatus, SVI Rescue and American LaFrance. He was a partner in Upstate Limousine and general manager of Goshen’s Historic Track in 2006. Steve is survived by his two daughters, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. His stories and family’s legacy will forever be lovingly remembered by the Goshen community.

#### 1957

**Jack L. Woods.** Known as “Woodsy,” Jack was a member of Omicron Kappa Delta, the science club, and both the varsity soccer and golf teams. He notably smoked a pipe and may have scored a goal or two for the other team on occasion. Jack honorably served his country in the U.S. Army during the Cold War era and was discharged in 1962. After service, he continued his education, earning a master’s of education degree from the State University of New York at Oswego in 1975. Jack was employed as an industrial arts teacher at the Cato-Meridian Central School District in Cato, New York, for more than 20 years. Jack also worked for the Syracuse Rescue Mission as the director of safety. He served in various ministries over the years in every church he attended, as well as the Ontario Bible Camp and Conference in Oswego, New York. After retirement, Jack and his wife of 62 years, Judith, moved to Pennsylvania Dutch country, where—as a train enthusiast—he helped restore the historic coal-burning steam train for the Strasburg Railroad. He

and Judi also spent time in their garden and wrote a couple of books together. Jack is survived by Judi, their four children and nine grandchildren.

#### 1959

**David C. Gallagher.** David spent an active three years at Blair, where he was a member of the cross country, winter and spring track teams. He also wrote for *The Breeze* and was a member of the Varsity B club. After graduating, David remained connected with the School, attending events, supporting the Blair Fund and earning his five-year True Blue Society pin. David attended Hobart College in Geneva, New York, and upon graduation, began working for the Chrysler Corporation, which took him to Royal Oak, Michigan. In Michigan, he met Susan, who was by his side for more than 30 years. Later in his career, David made a shift and began serving the Detroit Institute for Children, where he passionately advocated for children with special needs. In 2007, David and Susan moved to a retirement community in Hilton Head, South Carolina, where they immersed themselves in tennis, golf and the vibrant community there. David enjoyed being a member of his local book club, as well as exploring museums, art galleries, and historic sites with friends and family. David’s obituary reads, “[his] legacy is one of love, learning and laughter. His warm presence and insightful conversations will be profoundly missed by all who were fortunate enough to know him.”

**David J. Shotwell.** David spent five formative years at Blair. Known for his skills in science and math, he was also a leader on the varsity fencing team. David graduated from Lehigh University in 1964 with a BA in chemistry and went on to Rutgers University for graduate school. During his entire professional career, he worked at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, where he rose to the rank of site manager. With his entrepreneurial spirit, he owned

**1960****Former Trustee**

**Stathes J. Kulukundis.** Stathes, who was an owner and director of R & K Consulting, LLC, was known for his leadership, innovation and deep commitment to Blair ideals. A longtime resident of the United Kingdom, he came to Blairstown in 1958 as a junior and soon became involved in everything from varsity football to glee club. He matriculated at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating with a bachelor's degree in economics in 1965, and began a long and successful career in international shipping. When Blair awarded Stathes the Alumnus of the Year prize in 2010—the same year his class celebrated its 50th Reunion—former Head of School T. Chandler Hardwick III noted his impeccable record of attendance at Blair's Trustee meetings and credited him with raising the level of civility, wisdom and commitment among Board colleagues during his tenure. A member of the Board of Trustees'

Development and Budget committees, Stathes became highly knowledgeable about the School's finances, and he worked tirelessly to raise alumni awareness of his alma mater's needs. Beyond his Board service at Blair, Stathes was also an active leader of several national and international shipping organizations. Given his commitment to financially supporting deserving students for whom a Blair education might not otherwise have been possible, it is no surprise that Stathes championed the Class of 1960's efforts to fully fund an endowed scholarship in honor of their 50th Reunion. A frequent host of Blair receptions in London, Stathes was also extraordinarily generous in supporting the alumni communities in the United Kingdom and Europe. Stathes is survived by his wife, Koula, their three children, and many friends and colleagues throughout the world.

**1962**

the Country Liquor Store and Country Cousins Clothier. After his retirement from the state, he became co-owner of North Warren Farm and Home Supply. Over the course of three decades, he served on the school boards of both North Warren Regional High School and Warren County Technical School, as well as the New Jersey School Boards Association. The Blairstown Rotary Club named David Citizen of the Year in 1997, and the Warren County Freeholders dedicated Shotwell Drive in Belvidere in honor of the many Shotwell family members who served the community. He was treasurer of the Cedar Ridge Cemetery Association for many years, a member of the Blairstown Masonic Lodge No. 165 and a member of the Blairstown Township Agricultural Advisory Committee. His hobbies included collecting trains and pennies. His main interest, however, was collecting and researching all types of glassware (especially cut-glass) and he wrote a book entitled *Glass A-Z*. David was well known and respected throughout his community and will be remembered fondly. He was predeceased by his wife, Anna, and survived by three children, their spouses and three grandchildren.

**Lance K. Eschholz.** Lance attended Blair for his final two years of high school, where he was on the varsity football team, ran winter track and played with the junior varsity golf team. Following graduation, Lance served in the U.S. Navy from 1964 to 1968 as a hospital corpsman and was decorated for combat. While stationed in Brunswick, Maine, he fell in love with both the place and his wife, Elaine, deciding to settle there. After his military service, Lance attended the University of Maine Portland-Gorham, attaining his BA in biology in 1971 and a master's degree in 1974. He also furthered his education at Moravian College and Lesley College. Lance dedicated his career to education, teaching science, math and computer science for 32 years in the public school system in Brunswick. He retired for a few years but returned to work with the L.L.Bean flagship store in Freeport, working in the firearms department. A firearms enthusiast, he was a member of the National Rifle Association, Pine Tree State Rifle and Pistol Association, Lincoln County Rifle Club and the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association. Lance was deeply involved with the Boy Scouts of America, volunteering

as scoutmaster assistant and explorer scout advisor and earning the Silver Beaver Award, the highest honor for a Boy Scouts volunteer. He was also a CPR instructor and trainer for the American Heart Association. Lance will be remembered as an outdoorsman and admirable civil servant. He is survived by Elaine, his three children and their families.

**1966**

**John G. Beam, Jr.** Hailing from Louisville, Kentucky, John spent three years on the hilltop. He served as a prefect with the student council, was a member of the press club and the Bunnell Dorm Council, and captained the varsity basketball and track teams. At graduation, John was awarded the Harold F. Walker Memorial Prize, the prize awarded annually to the member of the senior class who has made significant contributions to the life of the School. John earned his BA from Sewanee: The University of the South in 1970 and an MBA from Northwestern University in 1972. His career began with Thomas Industries in Louisville, a manufacturer specializing in industrial equipment.

John made a career change to the insurance industry, where he became a highly respected insurance broker with USI Insurance Services. One of John's dedicated passions was horse racing. He spent many Thanksgivings enjoying family lunches at Churchill Downs, where he had many friends. He served on the Kentucky Derby Museum Board as president, as well as a board member for CityStreet and Jefferson Banking Company. He was a proud member of the Pendennis Club of Louisville (served as president), the Louisville Country Club and River Valley Club. John especially loved traveling, music, fitness, and spending time with his children and grandchildren. He and his wife, Taffy, to whom he was married for 53 years, spent their winters in Delray Beach, Florida, and summered in Wequetonsing, Michigan. John was predeceased by one of his sons and survived by Taffy, their son, grandchildren and brother, **Bradley Beam '71**.

#### 1974

**Richard H. Demmy, Jr.** When remembering Rick, a classmate wrote, "At Blair, Rick was a solid friend who never complained or uttered a bad

word about anyone. Rick was always upbeat, loved being outdoors in any season and carried a great smile that was sure to lift any fellow classmate who was enduring a dour day." While at Blair, Rick enjoyed soccer and skiing. His love for the outdoors brought him to Williamsport Community College, where he graduated with a degree in forestry. With his wife of over 48 years, Pam, he owned and operated Tip Top Kennel in Vineland, New Jersey, while also working with Berkshire Hathaway realty for 30 years. Rick and Pam were dedicated to canine rescue, especially that of German shepherds. He was also an avid boater, who loved fishing and the beach. He spent much of his time working on his Grand Banks trawler in Rock Hall, Maryland, when not in New Jersey. Rick will be fondly missed for his approachability and his kind nature. He is survived by Pam, their son and daughter-in-law, two grandchildren, and two beloved shepherds, Igloo and Yeti.

#### 1980

**James P. Maguire, Jr.** For James, Blair was a cherished collection of good memories, from captaining the ski team, to traveling and nurturing a love for

music. Through these experiences, he made lifelong friends and set the stage for the rest of his life. James went on to Villanova University, where he studied accounting and earned his BS in 1984. He started his career at Deloitte, Haskins & Sells, but his passion for travel and hard work flourished when he joined the pharmaceutical company Schering-Plough. As their finance director of Central and Eastern Europe, James moved with his wife, Dorian, and their first son to Budapest, Hungary. As his career progressed, they moved to Luzerne, Switzerland, where their second son was born. Later, as finance director of the UK and Ireland, the family relocated to Harpenden, England, and had their third son. After a decade abroad and countless adventures traveling many countries, they moved back to his childhood home in Short Hills, New Jersey. James's obituary remembers him as, "a proud father, a loving son, an avid skier, a determined golfer, a passionate sports fan, a devoted music lover and a motorcycle enthusiast." What brought him his greatest joy was sharing all these passions and experiences with his family and friends. James is survived by his sons and Dorian, his fiancée, Kasia, parents, and extended family.

#### Friends of Blair

**William I. Houghton, III & Frank M. Warr.** Bill and Frank were founding partners of the architectural firm Houghton-Quarty-Warr in Newton, New Jersey, along with their friend, Stu Quarty. The trio graduated from Syracuse University School of Architecture, Class of 1964, and came together to create their firm in 1971. Houghton-Quarty-Warr first came to Blair's campus in winter 1984, when the Boiler House oil burner blew up and destroyed the building's roof. Houghton-Quarty-Warr oversaw the response, installing a temporary roof and overseeing the months-long reconstruction project. The team led another notable project, Tracy Hall, an addition to Walker Gymnasium [Hardwick Hall] dedicated in May 1993, that included three squash courts, a golf shop and conference room. Following Tracy Hall, Houghton-Quarty-Warr spearheaded several projects across campus, including the renovation

of Memorial Hall into Timken Library in 1998, construction of Annie Hall in 1999, and renovations and additions to Hardwick Hall. Their talents and signature style are woven into the fabric of Blair's campus and leave a beautiful mark for generations to come. Bill will be remembered for his irresistible smile and an easygoing personality that will be greatly missed by all who admired and loved him. Bill is survived by his wife, Abbie, three daughters and their families, extended family and friends. Frank's gregarious personality and infectious sense of humor left an indelible memory for the community and all who knew him. He deeply loved his family, and they will remember him for his generosity and exemplifying a life lived to the fullest. Frank is survived by his wife, Patti, two children, two stepchildren, including step-daughter **Kelli (Miro) Sienicki '01**, grandchildren, extended family and friends.

**1981**

**Jay A. Smith, Jr.** A four-year senior at graduation, Jay was surrounded by his family during his time at Blair. His mother, Barbara Robinson, was secretary to the Dean of Students from 1975 to 1981, and his stepfather, Bruce Robinson, was a reading specialist who taught study skills. Jay's sister, **Wendy (Smith) Dakin**, graduated in 1978, followed by his brother, **Paul Smith**, in 1980. Jay competed on the varsity football, wrestling and baseball teams. He graduated from Randolph Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, earning a liberal arts degree. Jay spent his later years living and working in Northern California, most recently at Santa Rosa Mercedes in the service department. Jay was a sports enthusiast and avid reader who loved completing daily crossword puzzles. Jay is survived by a son and daughter, his father and siblings. Jay's mother passed away a few days after him.

**1984**

**William F. Feus.** Bill came to Blair in the fall of 1983 as a postgraduate after graduating from West Windsor-Plainsboro High School. While at Blair, he was a notable member of the Blair Academy Players. Throughout his life, he remained connected to the School and his classmates, supporting the Blair Fund, earning membership in the True Blue Society, serving on the 1848 Leadership Society Committee, and returning to campus for reunion weekends. After Blair, Bill followed in his father's footsteps, attending Lehigh University, where he initially studied government. Ultimately, Bill graduated from The New School in New York City with his BA in 1992, while working full time as a paralegal. During this time, he met and married his wife, Kim, with whom he had two children. Bill's early career started with AG Edwards, working as a financial advisor with his father—a time he treasured. In the mid-1990s, Bill felt called to the ministry. He graduated

from General Theological Seminary in New York City and went on to serve three Episcopal churches: St. George's by the River in Rumson, New Jersey; St. Bernard's in Bernardsville, New Jersey; and St. Mark's in Chester, South Carolina. In 2016, he re-entered the financial industry, joining Thrivent Financial Services and later founding Gray Rock Financial Planning and Consulting in 2019. As a Christian financial advisor and ordained minister, he helped his clients align their financial plans and investments with their faith. Bill lived by the reflection in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 that "love never fails." Bill is survived and lovingly remembered by Kim and his two children.

**1986**

**Thomas A. Kleban.** Thomas, known as "Tek," graduated from State College Area High School, State College, Pennsylvania, in 1985 before coming to Blair to play football as a postgraduate. During his year on the hill, he played football and captained the track team. Heading back home with the dream of a business degree, Tek began his college education at Penn State University. Here, he was a leader in track and field, setting several decathlon records. Tek suffered a life-changing swimming pool accident the summer before his senior year, resulting in spinal injuries that left him a quadriplegic. With incredible tenacity, Tek successfully completed his education, earning a BA in speech communications from Penn State University and a BS from Penn State Smeal College of Business in 1995. He then went on to earn his master's in business administration from Penn State Smeal College of Business in 1998. Tek worked with Vantage Investment Advisors, which later became Mariner Wealth, as a research analyst. Coworkers, clients, family and friends all remember Tek for his unfaltering smile and gracious demeanor. He was empathetic and

loved visiting family and friends, hearing their stories, championing their wins and offering comfort in their losses. His passion for track and field never faltered, and he spent many happy years coaching athletes, especially in vault and hurdles. Tek was a faithful member of the Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church and also attended Mass at Pasquerilla Spiritual Center on the Penn State campus. Tek will be remembered for his compassion, gentle spirit and unfaltering loyalty to his family and community. He is survived by his mother and steadfast caretaker, Elizabeth, his four siblings, nieces, nephews and their extended families.

**1994**

**Bryan P. Kelly.** Known for "never sitting still," Bryan was a favorite among classmates and faculty alike. His passions were seen on the football and lacrosse fields and in the debates in the Society of Skeptics. Bryan remained connected to Blair throughout his life, serving on his reunion committees, including this past year's, which would have been his 30th Reunion. He was a dedicated Blair Fund supporter and a member of the True Blue Loyalty Society. Leaving Blair, Bryan headed to Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, where he founded their Division III lacrosse team and earned his BA with a double major in criminal justice and political science. Bryan built a robust career in radio advertising and sales, beginning with iHeartMedia in 1998. He spent 18 years with iHeartMedia before moving to Cox Media Group as director of sales. Bryan was highly regarded by his professional community for his partnerships, leadership and commitment. He moved to Florida from Pennsylvania but brought his devotion to the Philadelphia Eagles with him. Bryan was deeply involved with the Tampa Bay community, serving as chair of the Sarasota Tarpon

Tournament, which combined his passion for the water and love for fishing with community service. Always busy, Bryan left an indelible mark on everyone he met with his kindness and generosity. Above all else, Bryan's two children were the center of his life. He will be remembered for his larger-than-life personality and his ability to always make people laugh. He is survived by his wife, Lauren, their children and many friends and colleagues.

#### Former Faculty/ Staff

**Thomas L. Cracas.** After serving as a staff sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, Tom graduated from Brown University with a BA in Greek and Latin. He began teaching at the Brooks School in North Andover, Massachusetts, before joining Blair in the fall of 1963 as a member of the language department, where he taught Latin for four years. Tom spent the majority of his career at the Kent School in Connecticut, where he taught and coached for 32 years and he and his wife, Kay, raised their family. In 1979, he obtained his MBA from the University of Connecticut. He became land manager at Kent, overseeing 2,000 acres of land on two campuses. His responsibilities included managing a first-class equestrian center and overseeing harvesting operations and transplanting hundreds of blueberry bushes gifted by Henry Kissinger. Tom was a writer of articles and served in leadership roles for the American Classical League and the Classical Association of Connecticut. In retirement, Tom and Kay moved

to Staunton, Virginia, in 1999, where they became members of the Trinity Episcopal Church, Rotary Club and other community groups. Tom was predeceased by Kay, and is survived by their three sons, their spouses, eight grandchildren and his later companion, Beate.

**Foster Q. Doan.** Foster came to Blair in 1956 from Lafayette College and the Princeton Theological Seminary, where he taught as chaplain for 13 years. Dedicated to Foster, the 1966 ACTA described him as someone who "fills his post with distinction." It goes on, noting, "In the classroom Mr. Doan is stimulating, in the chapel he is imaginative, in personal consultation he is patient and sympathetic, and in social gatherings at Clee House he and Mrs. Doan are warmly hospitable." Foster expanded Blair's reach to include Buck Hill Falls conferences, Philadelphia weekend work camps, the Boys' Club of New York, the American Farm School in Greece and an orphanage in Korea. "Through his enthusiasm and vision," the ACTA continues, "Blair boys have a clearer understanding of who they are and how they can live and serve in the world around them." After leaving Blair, Foster taught at the Westtown School in Pennsylvania and the Friends Select School in Philadelphia. A strong supporter of Quaker education, he also worked for the Education Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. He retired in 2000 to Drums, Pennsylvania, where he served on the board of trustees at Greenwood Friends School in nearby Millville, Pennsylvania, for several years.

He was a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) and Millville Friends Meeting. Foster was an avid gardener who always tended a plant and vegetable patch wherever he lived. He enjoyed listening to classical music, conversing with friends and, most of all, spending time with family and several beloved dogs. Foster is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, three children, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Barbara M. Robinson.** Barbara served as secretary to Dean of Students Dave Low from 1975 to 1981. A proud Blair parent, her three children, **Wendy (Smith) Dakin '78**, **Paul Smith '80** and **Jay Smith '81**, graduated while she worked at the School. In 1980, Barbara met Bruce Robinson, Blair's reading specialist, and fell in love. They married in 1981 and moved to Annapolis, Maryland, for new job opportunities. There, she worked for Manpower, an organization that provides resources and education for communities in need, managing 10 offices in the Washington, D.C., area. In 1989, Barbara and Bruce moved to Benicia, California, to be closer to her children, and she began working for the local chamber of commerce. She also enjoyed Creative Cuisine gatherings, golf, decorating her beautiful home and traveling to Europe, Central America and Hawaii. However, spending time with her children and grandchildren was the highlight of her life. Barbara was predeceased by her son, Jay, and is survived by Bruce, Wendy, Paul and their families.

# Save the Date!

BLAIR ACADEMY

## ALUMNI Weekend

JUNE 6-8,  
2025



### Questions?

Contact **E. Courtney Stanford '95**,  
Director of Alumni Relations,  
at (908) 362-2059 or stanfc@blair.edu.

Visit [www.blair.edu/alumni-weekend](http://www.blair.edu/alumni-weekend) for more information.

# BLAIR ACADEMY

Post Office Box 600  
Blairtown, New Jersey 07825-0600

Periodicals postage paid at  
Belvidere, NJ 07823 and  
at additional mailing offices



**SHOW YOUR BLAIR PRIDE** by making a gift to the School today.

The Blair Fund provides the resources to ensure that Blair students feel known and supported and that Blair faculty and staff members have the tools to provide a rich and meaningful educational experience.

To make your Blair Fund gift, visit [www.blair.edu/make-a-gift](http://www.blair.edu/make-a-gift).

*Questions?*

Contact Leanne Pinard Baum, Director of Annual Giving, at (908) 362-2041 or [pinarl@blair.edu](mailto:pinarl@blair.edu).

