

LETTERS



Alumni Notes Appreciation

I am not sure when or why I began to read the Alumni Notes all the way through. I think it has something to do with my intellectual curiosity that was stoked at Taft some 40-plus years ago. Some of what I have gleaned from the notes over the years: potential vacation destinations from pictures and descriptions; books to add to my “to read” list; a better understanding of the many Taft graduates that have left—and are leaving—their mark in the world. I have learned about history from the people that lived it. I have laughed out loud at the political discussions and the inside jokes that run from issue to issue.

I have read tidbits of wisdom and have wanted many times to thank the individual for taking the time to put it into writing. In the Winter 2017 *Bulletin* (page 55), it is Nick Giobbe '51 that I would like to thank for sharing his philosophy of life and his “life’s little lessons.” Having turned 60 recently, I appreciate his opening statements: “At our age it is easy to contemplate the end rather than the future. Life is still full of exciting opportunities and challenges, which motivate us mentally and physically.”

I think back to the three years I spent at Taft and can only be thankful for how

my experiences prepared me for my life. I have just retired from 10 years of teaching nursing students. I never imagined myself at Taft becoming a teacher, but I know that my Taft teachers supported me, encouraged me, and influenced me. Funny, that is how my students described me at the end of each semester.

I receive a number of alumni magazines: Chatham Hall, Wheaton College (Norton, Massachusetts), and Georgetown University. The *Taft Bulletin* is always the most interesting and informative.

—Holly Holmes Williams Ross '74

Connected by Class Notes

The Bulletin was pleased to receive this letter from longtime class secretary Pete Greer '53, who agreed to let us share it with our readers.

When I was asked to take on the task of class secretary, I thought it might be a burden, but that has not been the case. I’ve had the best people to work with at Taft and cherish the rapport and friendship that has grown up. I also enjoy the contact with my classmates, and while I’m not overly aggressive about contacting them—not wanting to intrude in anyone’s life—I do look forward to hearing from them and sharing their news with the others in our class.

My brother, Jay '50, attended Taft for three years before I went there, so I can look back in class notes and see names of alumni dating from 1946 to 1947 that I recognize or know. I read their class notes and those about three years beyond 1953, so I keep up with people who were lower mids when we were seniors. I really feel connected to Taft and enjoy it immensely.

—Peter Greer '53

Oriocos' Origins

After the Class of '62 celebrated their 55th Reunion in May, an email discussion followed about the origins of the names of Taft's student choral groups, Hydrox (who sang at their Reunion Dinner) and Oriocos. Here are two excerpts:

A little more back ground about the choral groups. The Orinoco is one of the longest rivers in South America. Most of the length of the river is in Venezuela, where Beezer Manning was a young petroleum engineer for Standard Oil and part of a team that discovered one of the biggest oil fields in the world. And it remains so today. He contracted malaria and had to be evacuated back to the States. It was determined that he could not return to Venezuela. He was given a medical separation with a significant financial package.

He then joined the staff at Taft. He started the Oriocos, which was to be called the Orinocos but the *Pap* misspelled the word, dropping the 'n.'

I know this how? After we graduated from Taft, my parents moved to Liberia, West Africa, and over that summer I contracted malaria. Over the years Beezer and I had many conversations about malaria as we both contracted the repeating type.

—Marty Keller '62

Hydrox

Whoever came up with the name thought the all-male group was called Oreos, like the cookie, instead of Oriocos, and so named the female group after the parent company Hydrox. By the time the school learned of the mistake, everybody decided it was OK.

—David Forster '62

Correction

In the spring issue's Alumni Spotlight about Joyce Poole '74, the 2017 Horace Dutton Taft Alumni Medal honoree, on pages 6–7, we neglected to add that her father, Robert (former faculty member and coach), was also a graduate of the Class of '50.