

# the diaspora potrzebie

Alumni Newsletter of the American Community School Beirut

Volume XXXXI Number 2

Our 41st year of publication

June 2019

## Alumni Council 2020-2022 Election

(formerly Board of Governors)

Twelve candidates have agreed to stand for election and, if elected, to serve on the Alumni Council, the group of alumni who help guide AA/ACS. The election process is governed by our bylaws.

You will be able to vote online anytime between July 1 and July 31, 2019. Votes will be tabulated on August 1 and the candidates will be elected to a three-year term beginning January 1, 2020.

If you wish to vote by mail, complete the ballot on Page 4. If you vote by mail, do not vote online. You must vote for at least one nominee. As of the deadline for this edition of the *Pot*, there are 12 candidates whose biographies appear in alphabetical order. Additional candidates may be listed on the online ballot. An asterisk (\*) indicates that candidate is a current member of the Alumni Council who is seeking reelection.

Continued on page 10

## Triennial Reunion

Salt Lake City, Utah, August 8-11, 2019

There's still time to register – go to [www.acsreunion.com](http://www.acsreunion.com) for information and a list of attendees.

Reserve your room now at 801-596-5700. (Be sure to ask for the AA/ACS Reunion block.)

Register online for the reunion at <https://www.acs.edu.lb/page.cfm?p=1685>.

### Schedule

Thursday, August 8: Welcome reception  
4 p. m. – 5 p. m.

Friday, August 9: Choir practices, optional

trip to Park City for lunch, class dinners, karaoke, and dancing

Saturday, August 10: Morning meetings and presentations, banquet

Sunday, August 11: Farewell buffet breakfast, live Tabernacle Choir broadcast

Want to sing in the choir? Contact Carol Schaub at [cjshaub@hotmail.com](mailto:cjshaub@hotmail.com).

Interested in the Friday excursion to Park City? Contact Evelyn Saunders at [mseasaunders@yahoo.com](mailto:mseasaunders@yahoo.com). For any other information or to volunteer contact Melo Hansen at [sona.hansen@gmail.com](mailto:sona.hansen@gmail.com)

## In This Issue

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Alumni Council . . . . .                                | 1  |
| Triennial Reunion . . . . .                             | 1  |
| Hezekiah's Tunnel. . . . .                              | 2  |
| Class of 1969 50th Reunion . . . .                      | 4  |
| BALLOT. . . . .   | 4  |
| ACS Class of 1961 and Friends 2019 Mini-Reunion . . . . | 5  |
| A Desert Classroom . . . . .                            | 6  |
| Alumni Notes . . . . .                                  | 7  |
| In Memoriam . . . . .                                   | 8  |
| Alumni Council Candidate Biographies . . . . .          | 10 |

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AA/ACS: <http://almashriq.hiof.no/acs/>

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ACS Matters: [www.acs.edu.lb/page.cfm?p=1326](http://www.acs.edu.lb/page.cfm?p=1326)

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All correspondence should be sent to AA/ACS Membership Services, 13570 NE 54th Place, Bellevue, WA 98005-1036. Our legal address is: 3 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 8th Floor, New York NY 10017-2303. *The Alumni Association of the American Community School Beirut. (AA/ACS) does not take positions on religious, political, social topics, or issues and does not endorse the positions or opinions given from time to time by contributors to this newsletter.* © 1990–2019 Alumni Association of the American Community School Beirut. All Rights Reserved.

## Hezekiah's Tunnel

By George Herrmann '63

My mother was a Golden Eagle Girl Scout, the first in her town of Bloomington, IN, and she paid her way through college by summer work as a counselor at Girl Scout camps in Wisconsin. She was interested in many things in nature, and she passed some of her knowledge on to my brothers and sisters and me. After my father joined the Foreign Service, she became interested in archeology, especially during our tours in the Middle East.

I went back to college in Pennsylvania after graduating from high school in Beirut. My family moved to Jerusalem in 1964, before the Six Day War. At that time we had two Consulates in Jerusalem, one on the Israeli side and one on the Jordanian side. My dad was the American Consul on the Arab side. In Jerusalem, we had an old Arab villa made of chipped limestone blocks with a domed roof, perched on the side of a large hill overlooking the Damascus Gate to the Old City.

Our next-door neighbors in Jerusalem were the British Consul-General and his wife and daughter. Our neighbor was a strong supporter of the British Museum in Jerusalem and often took my mother there to look at new finds from digs all around Jerusalem. They had some examples of Roman glass in containers from which the air had been evacuated. Buried in the soil for a couple thousand years, Roman glass is coated with metallic oxides that glisten in many colors when first extracted from the ground. These artifacts lose that radiance quickly when exposed to the air. The colors in these artifacts are preserved if they are quickly placed in protective containers as soon as they are unearthed.

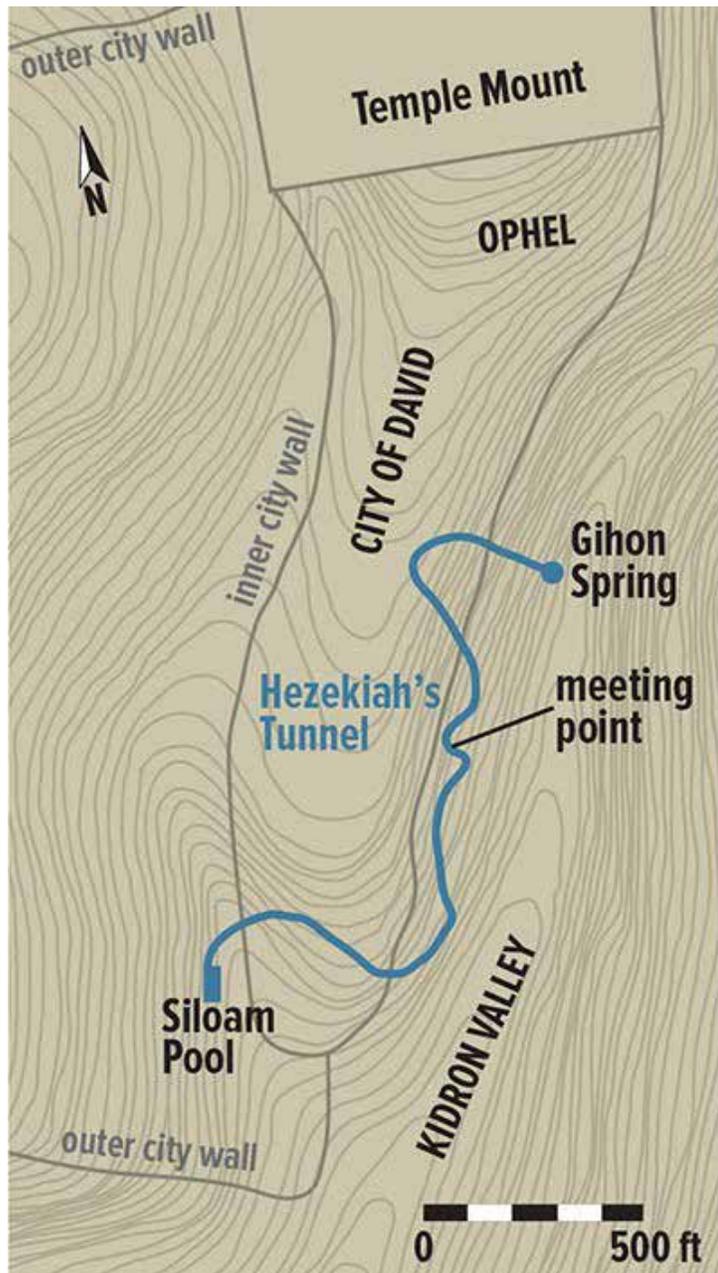
In the 1960s, if you were a government employee overseas and sent a student back to college, that dependent was entitled to a single trip out to your overseas post and back between the time the student left home and the time they graduated. I elected to travel to Jerusalem in the summer of 1965. My mother wanted to have some interesting things lined up for me to do during my visit, and conferred with our neighbor, who suggested a trip through Hezekiah's Tunnel.

In the 8th century BC, according to 2 Kings 20:20 in the Hebrew Bible, the City of Jerusalem was expecting a siege from the Assyrians. Jerusalem was a walled city at that time, and a principal water supply that invaders might use was located just outside the walls. King Hezekiah, reigning at the time, decided

## Hezekiah's Tunnel Continued

to block the source of that water source and dig a tunnel from the spring's location to the Pool of Siloam inside the city walls, denying the Assyrians the use of a convenient water supply.

(Picture borrowed from the Biblical Archeological Society)



Digging a tunnel nearly six football fields in length underground by hand through hardened limestone rock was a serious challenge. Moreover, the floor of the tunnel had to slope from the spring towards the pool in order for water to flow into Jerusalem of its own accord.

There was an inscription inside the tunnel which indicated that two teams were used to dig the tunnel, working toward each other from the two intended ends of the waterway. The means of navigation used to keep the tunnel true is not certain, but might have depended on teams of personnel tapping on the rock above the diggers with hammers. (This inscription now sits in a museum in Istanbul.)

That summer, there was a British archeologist in Jerusalem with his family who was studying the tunnel. My mother talked to him about my impending arrival, and he volunteered his 14-year old daughter (let's call her Phoebe) to guide me, my brother, and my two oldest sisters through the waterway.

About three days after my arrival in Jerusalem, we met Phoebe at the Virgin Spring, as the water source is called these days. We were wearing the prescribed outfits: jeans, sneakers, tee shirts, and were carrying flashlights. Phoebe led us down a little ramp, around a corner and up to a roughly rectangular opening partially filled with water about seven feet in height. She stepped into the water, which was about calf-deep at that point, turned on her flashlight and walked into the tunnel. We followed, finding the bottom of the tunnel to be nearly smooth and the walls to be a little rough.

The tunnel was largely dug by candlelight. All along our journey, there were little shelves along the walls that were apparently intended to hold candles as men labored with the rock. Here and there the tunnel would widen a bit, but it seldom became narrower than the entrance. It curved gradually on the inside, as the map above might suggest. It did get deeper, especially in the middle where the two teams met. The alignment of the two shafts was not perfect, and there was sort of a cave in the middle where the two teams apparently heard each other digging and dug towards each other. It was apparent that lots of candle ledges were dug in the big cavity, and my guess was that they had a big party after joining the two tunnels and humping out all of the broken rock.

Throughout our hike, the flow of water was clear and steady. There were no algae in sight in the tunnel, and it was impressive that a channel like that could hold up for ten centuries.

We emerged at the Pool of Siloam, a lightly terraced area, from behind a hidden corner in the wall around the pool. Dripping wet from the waist down, we surprised a small group of German tourists who were taking pictures of the facility, and we met our parents for a ride back home.

# Class of 1969 50th Reunion Planned at Salt Lake City

By Dan Swenson '69

The years that the Class of 1969 attended ACS were some of the most momentous in school history. When we started there was no indoor gym. All classes were held in the main academic building. It was during our 5th grade year that we came to school one morning and were told to pack up everything in our desks and we were marched to the new elementary school building. When we became 8th graders we were the first senior

class of the newly organized Junior High Department with **Mr. Turmelle Fac** as principal. As sophomores we were joined by a large group of boarding students from all over the Middle East. At this time ACS also recruited many new faculty who were not much older than us. This influx plus the institution of mandatory after-school activities greatly enriched our final three years at ACS. That year ended early with the evacuation due to the Six Day War. Our junior and senior years coincided with the glory years of pre-civil war Beirut and Lebanon.



Taken outside the Beirut Community Church, downtown Beirut, after the 1969 graduation baccalaureate service. These five of the class of '69 started together in first grade at ACS. Left to right; Liz O'Sullivan, Ted Seto, Becky Ragland, Philip Brown, and Dan Swenson.



Taken outside the AUB chapel after the 1969 graduation ceremony. Left to right standing; Haruki Yasuda (in the background Mike Williamson), Ellen Porter, Donna Barnsley, Sharon Vaissiere, Ralph Churchian, Aurora Lavery, Webster Mack, Pat Sargeant. Kneeling L to R; Dave Van Sanford, Ted Seto, Cynthia Shourd, Dan Swenson. Standing to the right: Chris Baker with his arm around Barbara Hobbs.

## BALLOT

Vote for at least one candidate. If you vote with this paper ballot please do not vote online.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yasmin Agha '04   | <input type="checkbox"/> Donna Harms-Hansen '74 | <input type="checkbox"/> Jeanie Mullin '73                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marwa Bader '97   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jeff Hutchins '65      | <input type="checkbox"/> Linda Handschin-Sheppard '68       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jay Bruder '74    | <input type="checkbox"/> Gina Kano '73          | <input type="checkbox"/> Zeyd Tabbara '11                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joseph Farhat '03 | <input type="checkbox"/> Margaret Kelberer '73  | <input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth "Betsy" van den Berg '74 |

If you wish to vote by mail, complete the ballot and send it to:  
**AA/ACS, c/o Patrick Hinds, 304 Calle Moreno, San Dimas, CA 91773, USA**  
**All paper ballots must be postmarked no later than Saturday, July 20, 2019.**

# ACS Class of 1961 and Friends 2019 Mini-Reunion

The ACS class of 1961 and friends conducted a mini-reunion February 26-March 2 aboard the Royal Caribbean ship Majesty of the Seas. The cruise sailed from Ft. Lauderdale, FL to Key West, FL and Havana, Cuba. Participants of the reunion were: **Diz Caldwell '61** and his wife, Trish; **Tom Dinney '61** and his wife, Julie; **Pete Fleury '61**; **Andy Kilgore '62**; **Bill Hooton '62** and his wife, Claudia; **Charlie Minette-Kaplow '62**; **Anne Haden '61**, **Jih Hua Liu '61** and his wife, Chi Chi; **Bob Miller '60**; **Lisa Ebert-Stacey '74**; **Jay Williams '61** and his wife, Muffy. Everyone

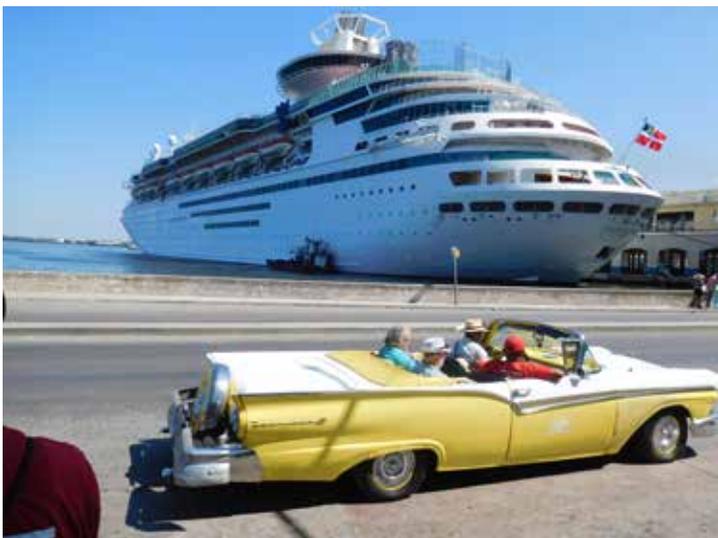
enjoyed catching up and sharing “war stories”, particularly over dinner in the main dining room, breakfasts and lunches in the Windjammer Café, and over wine in several staterooms and the common passageway. We enjoyed visiting Key West and particularly enjoyed touring and learning the history and lifestyle in Havana. During the return leg from Havana a brief memorial was held in the Viking Crown Lounge in honor of our “fallen” classmates. On Saturday morning farewells were said over breakfast in the main dining room.



Center Front: Claudia Hooton; Left to Right, clockwise: Bill Hooton '62, Diz Caldwell '61, Trish Caldwell, Julie Dinney, Tom Dinney '61, Lisa Ebert-Stacey '74, Muffy Williams (wife of Jay Williams '61, photographer), Charlie Minette-Kaplow '62.



Captain Jih Hua Liu '61 gets directions from Chief Navigation Officer Diz Caldwell '61 on the return leg of the cruise to Ft. Lauderdale, FL



Havana Fairlane and Majesty of the Seas Caldwell



Pete Fleury '61 terrorizes Havana in a 1950 Chevy convertible

## A Desert Classroom

By D. Corsette (as originally submitted to *The Daily Star*)

Palmyra, a tranquil Roman city in the heart of the Syrian Desert, became the center for an exciting journey into the past for a group of young American Community School children. Following an extensive study of Roman History, twenty three children from Don Corsette's sixth grade class embraced upon a four day trip of unforgettable adventure.

After a brief visit to the Krak des Chevalier, the caravan jounced over the undulating desert road before stopping at one of the unique bee-hive villages that dot the western fringe of the desert. As objects of curiosity, the students, trailed by what appeared to be the entire village, wended their way through the seemingly endless maze of small alleys. The friendly greeting of, "ahlan wa shalan" resulted in a visit to the mud brick hut of the local sheik. Following innumerable cups of sugary tea—and a pair of mating pigeons as a gift—the group departed and soon arrived at the ruined city of Palmyra.

Settling into the comfortable Zenobia Hotel, the children shared the custom of a hot-dog roast with several of the local inhabitants. Leaving the hotel, the children walked in complete silence down the ancient colonnade, leading through the center of the ancient village. The sweeping wind and moving shadow added to the children's imagery of the history that had taken place several thousand years ago.

Leaving the colonnade, the group climbed a small hill, overlooking the city, and entered one of the curious five-storied tower tombs. With candle light reflecting into the eerie recesses of the deserted tombs—and howling of the animals in the distance—the children added to the atmosphere with ghost stories that had never been more realistic.

The next day, the students revisited the tower tombs and then went on a general tour of the ruins. As the children worked on assignment sheets relating to their Palmyra study, their sharp eyes added to the class's collection of ancient artifacts, coins, mosaics, and fragments of pottery, uncovered by a recent storm, became real reminders of the importance of this oasis city. During a trip to the modern village of Tadmor—next to Palmyra—the children observed various craftsmen and bartering practices of the modern desert town.

Wearing purchased kafeyahs and sandals, the children returned to the Zenobia Hotel. Leaving the automobiles, the students hopped upon six awaiting donkey carts for a forthcoming three



**Don Corsette Fac in front of the Nami Jafet Memorial Library at AUB. Photo and article courtesy of Alan Whitman '76**

hour ride through Palmyra and the surrounding hills. With storm clouds approaching, the bouncing carts entered the valley of the tombs. With a sudden downpour of rain, the donkey carts scattered to various parts of the valley, and deposited their drenched passengers in different tombs. Following a search of several tombs, and the subsequent gathering of twenty three children into one central tomb, the group returned to the hotel via modern conveyance of the automobile.

Leaving the hotel at sunset, the caravan drove some twenty kilometers to a Bedouin encampment. As the children sat in the tent—and mindful of their well learned Bedouin manners—they listened to the lilting melodies of the Bedouin instruments. ACS teacher, **Mr. Mike Mousa FAC**, who assisted Mr. Corsette on the trip, regaled the group with his realistic interpretation of the typical Arab dance and song. Soon a large tray of rice and a whole lamb was brought into the tent.

Sitting cross legged around the steaming mound of food, the children expertly rolled the rice and meat into a ball with their right hand, and popped it into their mouths. "Not like at home," one student was heard to exclaim. The Sheikh soon approached the circle of visitors, holding several small objects. Choosing

*Continued on lower half of page 7*

# Alumni Notes

Hello Potrzebie from Skillman, NJ. Tony Glockler '53 and wife Bev moved into Stonebridge, a continuing care community in March of 2016. We were elated when Barbara Knapp-Purnell '57 and Harry Purnell '57 also moved in a year later. It is nice to see fellow ACSers daily as we move around this facility. We would be happy to exchange greetings with fellow members of our classes via email at [glocklers@comcast.net](mailto:glocklers@comcast.net) or [bpurnell2@comcast.net](mailto:bpurnell2@comcast.net) or [hpurnell@comcast.net](mailto:hpurnell@comcast.net).



**Tony Glockler '53, Bev Glockler, Barbara Knapp-Purnell '57 and Harry Purnell '57.**

**Leonard Smith '67** writes: I am happily retired and living in a suburb of Denver, CO. I'm keeping busy volunteering with

a non-profit, the Viet Nam Veterans of America. And yes to those who know me, I still go to Jimmy Buffet's annual concert in Paris. As always, I enjoy reading the *Pot*. Leonard can be reached at: **Leonard.Smith@Telesis-usa.com**.

**Sheila Graham-Smith '73** noted on Facebook: Tim and I are headed to Lebanon to help set up a disability support office at NDU as follow-up of setting up SKILD nine years ago. SKILD is a special education center under the Lebanese Society of Education and Social Development which services all schools, private and public in Lebanon. <http://www.lsesd.org/>

**Anna Polesny Fac, MS, MFA** has devoted a lifetime to art creation, education, and advocacy exploring fiber, identity, and most recently ideas through visual expression. She has exhibited nationally and internationally and been recognized with awards in her field. Her work has recently been exhibited at the Museum

of Art and Design in New York and will soon be featured in an exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of art where she will be represented in the permanent collection. In May, the Southern Vermont Arts Center will highlight her work in an exhibition, Unusual Threads: Stitching Together the Future of Fashion. As reported by The ArtSalon on Facebook.

## Lost Alums

Gail Hohlweg '54  
Elizabeth Beebe-Crane '57  
Sue Vandendorre-Allen '60  
Pam Parker-Howd '61  
Victoria Calvert-Smith '70  
Arne Tronstad '72  
Sarah Schutte-Beebe '73  
David Swenson '75  
Alan Sternik '76  
Stephen Munro '79  
Gordon Olsen '79  
Soufian Mamlouk '04

## A Desert Classroom continued from page 6

several of the children as his honored guests—and accompanied by the cheers of the others—the eyeballs were accepted and swallowed. Strangely enough, 21 children were disappointed that they had not been chosen.

Following the meal, the children were taught several of the native dances. As a reciprocal gesture, the incongruous sounds of "Michael Row Your Boat Ashore" as well as "O Come All Ye Faithful" drifted across the desert wastes.

During the last full day at Palmyra, the students visited the elaborate Temple of Bel in addition to the other important temples. Using the ancient amphitheater, the children informally acted out a play, based on the life of the famous queen of Palmyra, Zenobia. In past years, with other classes the play had been done in full costume for the entire village of Tadmor. As the

children entered the empty amphitheater and started the first act, goats, sheep as well as donkeys, followed by their tenders, filed noisily into the theater. During the second act as the actors yelled their lines that the Roman Army was approaching, a dozen soldiers from a nearby base—as if on cue—marched in and stood behind the small actors. With a sophisticated composure, the children continued the play much to the delight of the varied audience.

After a bath in the sulphur springs, the students spent the final night in Palmyra on a last hike through the ruins. A trip in international understanding had come to an end. A trip where children had gained an insight into a different culture, both past and present, but who in addition had left behind a most favorable impression on their own.

# In Memoriam



**Pakrad Kazazian '55:** My good friend Pakrad Kazazian died suddenly early in March of this year near his home in Los Angeles. He was born in Chile in 1937 but spent most of his primary school years and all his high school years at ACS in Beirut. He earned a bachelor's degree in geology from the University of California Berkeley where he was instrumental in

establishing a chair of Armenian studies. He worked in Chile, Iran, and the US.

We were both on the basketball team at ACS. Although not tall, his speed and skill made him a star, whereas I was mostly on the bench. We hiked together on Mount Sannine above Beirut and went to occasional Armenian movies.

Pakrad was an active, positive, and very caring person. He was a proud Armenian who enjoyed following the progress in his beloved country. He was exuberant over the peaceful Velvet Revolution that took place in Armenia last year.

He helped many and gave of himself to many. I experienced that personally a few years ago when I had a medical problem and could not drive a U Haul truck from Portland to Seattle with my daughter's belongings and some furnishings for a room at the time of her first year in medical school. Pakrad flew up to Portland and drove to Seattle in the truck with my daughter, my wife, and the belongings.

I will miss him and the long conversations we had over the past many years about the Middle East. He not only knew a lot about what was going on from reading Turkish, Armenian, and Russian sources in addition to US sources, but he thought deeply about why things were happening and what might be the consequences.

He is survived by his sister **Zaroug '51**, his sister Maral, and his son Andrew.

Submitted by **Curtis Bell '55**.

**Ann Zimmerman-Finley '60:** I am sad to report that Ann died on April 15, 2013, in Uvalde, TX where she and her husband,

Nick had lived for many years. She suffered from COPD and had recently been put under the care of hospice. Her entire family was with her and she passed away peacefully. Reported by **Nancy Zimmerman-Conerly '63**.



**Patricia Rieger-Hayes '63,** passed away on March 18, 2019 in Santa Rosa, CA. She was 72.

When a longtime friend learned of Pat's passing she said, "Pat was an amazing light. Whenever she was in a room she made it a brighter place. She had a wicked sense of humor, a great sense of justice, and an unflagging capacity to party, dance, sing, and recite limericks. She made me feel like there were always more opportunities around the

corner for more laughter and celebration".

Born into a State Department family, Pat lived in Brazil, Germany, Austria, and Israel before arriving at ACS in 1960. She loved her time at ACS, cherished her many friendships, and was a proud timekeeper at basketball games. She often said how grateful she was that her "big brother" **Tom Dinney '61** shielded her in situations on and off campus where there might be rough language. And there were many.

After graduating from Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Pat received a master's in speech pathology at Northeastern University in Boston. She married **Mike Hayes '61** in Boston in 1968. The two were blessed with two beautiful children, Joseph and Siobhan.

The family lived in Boston, Ecuador (Peace Corps for 3.5 years), Connecticut, and Davis, California where Pat taught English as a second language at University Extension. In 1993 Pat and Mike moved to Geneva, Switzerland for 5 years, where Mike worked for the Red Cross and Pat consulted in accent improvement and recruited students throughout Europe for the UC Davis ESL program.

The couple has lived in Sebastopol, CA since 2000. Pat served

## In Memoriam Continued

for many years as a Spanish language medical interpreter at Memorial Hospital in Santa Rosa—a job she absolutely adored. In addition to her husband Mike, Pat leaves behind son Joe and his partner Stacie, three grandchildren, daughter Siobhan, brother and sister Paul and Ann Rieger.

While Pat had been dealing pretty successfully with kidney cancer since 2011, the accumulation of surgeries, treatments, and their side effects ultimately proved too much. From the beginning she approached this challenge with determination and optimism, researching all options, welcoming all ideas, sharing with others.

Throughout her life, Pat showed a remarkable ability to apply her talents and passions to shape a career and to make people happy. She loved acting and performed almost to the end. She was fascinated with the English language, was fluent in Spanish, conversant in French and German. She was at her best imitating accents of all kinds. We mourn Pat's loss but we celebrate and will never forget her spirit, her kindness, her humor, her grace, and her huge capacity to love.

**Reported by Mike Hayes '61** who can be contacted at hayes.patmike@gmail.com.

**Edward Vormwald '67** passed away in February 2015 from lung cancer, just five weeks after the death of his mother. Reported by **Linda Vormwald '70**.



**Charles B. Seidel '74**, age 62, passed away in his sleep on May 7, 2019 while on business in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Charlie, as he was known to all, was a 26-year veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency, where he rose to the top ranks of the clandestine service while serving

in ten important field assignments.

Charlie was born on June 29, 1956 in Alexandria, Virginia to the John and Annette Seidel. John was also a senior CIA officer who took his family abroad on a series of exotic foreign postings, which clearly made an impression on Charlie. After earning a B.A. at Drew University, spending a year skiing in Europe, and working on the family farm in West Virginia, Charlie joined his father in the CIA in February 1980.

From start to finish in his CIA career, Charlie focused on the Middle East. He spoke Arabic fluently and loved Arab culture and history. His deep knowledge of the region, coupled with his infectious enthusiasm, won lifelong friends far and wide.

During critical periods, Charlie was not just a witness to history, he was a key player in its unfolding. Charlie was serving in Baghdad when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, and after a tense standoff, he was finally allowed to leave Iraq just before coalition military forces launched the successful campaign to eject Saddam from Kuwait. Charlie provided vital intelligence support to that effort, and he soon reprised that role while directing all CIA Iraqi operations in the Middle East immediately before the 2003 Iraq war. When U.S. forces moved into Baghdad following the fall of Saddam, Charlie was with them.

In addition to Iraq, Charlie had a special affection for Egypt and Jordan, where he spent almost 12 years as a senior U.S. intelligence representative, interacting with both governments at the highest levels. Charlie moved effortlessly through their societies; he was just as relaxed and friendly with carpet merchants and tea servers as he was with presidents and kings. In that regard, Charlie truly represented the best that America has to offer.

Charlie was a two-time recipient of the Intelligence Star for valor, the CIA equivalent of the U.S. military Silver Star. He retired from the CIA in June 2006, having earned the enduring respect and admiration of his colleagues in the Agency. After his retirement, Charlie continued to work as a consultant in a wide range of private sector projects in the Middle East. Notably, he led field efforts to recover Libyan assets that were stolen by the Qadhafi regime after the dictator's fall.

Charlie is survived by his wife, Mary Bonvouloir Seidel and three children, and his brother **John L. Seidel '72** and sister **Anne Seidel Overington '77**. Published in *The Washington Post* on May 16, 2019.

**Annette Ramadan Fac** passed away in July 2018 according to a notation on her newsletter returned from Germany.

# Alumni Council Candidate Biographies

## **\* Yasmin Agha, Class of 2004, Resides in Beirut, Lebanon**

After graduation from ACS Yasmin established her own business. Cookie Dough, part boutique, part nursery consulting center, has been operating for the last decade. Yasmin is recognized as a pioneer, regionally and internationally, for innovation and excellence in the field of baby and children's luxury goods and services, and parent workshops. Yasmin seeks to renew her service to the alumni association, which she has been a member of since 2017. She is passionate about ACS and believes that her commitment to the ACS mission, her position as an influential entrepreneur in the city, and her strategic networking skills make her a valuable member of the association.

## **Marwa Bader, Class of 1997, Resides in Beirut, Lebanon**

I graduated from ACS it was run by the late, great Catherine Carlin-Bashshur. Also, I am an alumna of IC (International Colleges, Beirut, Lebanon), SAISR (Saudi Arabian International School, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) and a graduate of LAU (Lebanese American University, Beirut, Lebanon) with a bachelor's in International Relations and International Economics with an emphasis in diplomatic and counselor services. I have worked in marketing, licensing, and business development (including but not limited to at Microsoft and the distributors of SPRI) and now manage property for the family, as I am simultaneously pursuing my passions in life as part of a mid-career shift. I value family, friends, and all things beautiful, find loyalty and perseverance as crucial traits in individuals and am a believer that all children retain the right of an education, be it formal or not. It is the one true asset a person may obtain and carry with them through life.

## **\* Jay Bruder, Class of 1974, Resides in Alexandria, VA, USA**

Jay attended ACS for four years between 1967 and 1974. Jay has served on the Alumni Council since 2007 and also served for a few years in the more distant past. In addition to organizing several small ACS events around Washington, DC starting in the 1970s and Honolulu, Hawaii in the 1990s, Jay acted as the Reunion Chair for the 2007 Reunion in Washington, DC. More recently he served as the chair for the Strategic Planning Group of the AA/ACS and as an advisor to the 2016 Boston Reunion. For the past three years Jay has served as the President of the association.

## **\* Joseph Farhat, Class of 2003, Resides in Silicon Valley, CA, USA**

Joseph (Youssef) attended ACS from nursery until graduating. As an "ACS Lifer," Joseph wants to give back to the institution which has helped him grow into the person he is today. Joseph believes in ACS's rigorous commitment to a great education and building strong, independent, free thinkers. As an alumni representative, Joseph help current ACS students and recent grads in their college and career decisions and pursuits. He leads Innovation and Customer Success at a Deep Learning AI startup in the Silicon Valley of California.

## **Donna Harms-Hansen, Class of 1974, Resides in Andover, MA, USA**

In 1972 I was starting my junior year while my family was living in Tripoli, Libya. Having survived my sophomore year at a school in Switzerland, in a town of 250 including the students, the landing in Beirut was monumental. Looking back at that time, I realize the impact it made on me.

ACS, and the opportunities that were afforded me in Beirut and Lebanon, was such an important part of my formative years. Think of the clubs, organizations, sports groups, the opportunities to visit different regions of the country; the people from different countries and cultures, the International Relations Club working on the school building near Maidoon. Mixed in were the challenges of the Yom Kippur battle and the various curfews from the beginnings of the civil turmoil. The list of the important notches in my life before I graduated goes on and on

I attended the first ACS reunion in 1981 in Washington, DC and several more since, enjoying the chance to reconnect with friends from the past. So, when, in the summer of 2013, I was approached to coordinate the ACS Triennial Reunion in Boston, I did not hesitate. For three years our committee worked to put together a successful event that drew 310 people from all over the world for three days of connecting and remembering. On social media I so enjoy watching the lives of new generations of students being impacted by the opportunities ACS continues to provide.

I work as the Assistant Director for the Recreation Department. My experience with different cultures helps tremendously in my interactions with members of a very diverse community.

## **\* Jeff Hutchins, Class of 1965, Resides in Black Mountain, NC, USA**

Jeff graduated from ACS in 1965 after two years in the Boarding Department. He grew up in Saudi Arabia as an Aramco Brat from 1954-1966. Following ACS, he attended Boston University and got a B.S. in Broadcasting and Film in 1969. Jeff spent most of his career in the field of TV captioning (the free service that makes video accessible to deaf viewers). He is now an author and is working on a number of creative projects. In 2008, he and his wife, Diane, moved to Black Mountain, NC. He has been on the AA/ACS Alumni Council since 2000, and was its president from 2003 to 2007.

## **\* Gina Kano, Class of 1973, Resides in Seal Beach, CA, USA**

Gina graduated from ACS in 1973 and went on to AUB, where her father was Dean of the School of Engineering and Architecture. Born in Syria of an American mother and Syrian/Lebanese father, Beirut was home for 20+ years. The family left Lebanon, and Gina transferred to Mount Holyoke College, where she got an AB (advanced undergraduate degree) in Economics. She lives in Southern California, where she owns a business coaching franchise. Previous to this endeavor, she had a highly successful career in retail, direct mail, and marketing, ending as SVP of Client

## Alumni Council Candidate Biographies Continued

Services for one of the largest sales and marketing companies in North America. She was on the planning committee for the 2013 San Diego reunion, and has remained active in the ACS community.

### **\* Margaret "Mug" Kelberer, Class of 1973, Resides in St. Paul, MN, USA**

I am a lifer from ACS, having gone to ACS from first grade through 12th. The school and the experiences living in Beirut have shaped my life as it has for all who went to school there. I am currently semi-retired, after having spent the last 5 years working in international schools in Madagascar and Trinidad.

I have enjoyed the last six years I have been on the Alumni Council. Serving keeps my heart close to ACS. As a continuing member I want to offer continuity as the make-up of the council changes. The council is faced with the task of keeping in step with the changing face of alumni, many of whom are stretched across the globe. I hope to help with this task by working with younger alumni, seeking innovative ways to grow the membership, to keep the association healthy.

### **Jeanie Mullin, Class of 1973, Resides in Houston, TX, USA**

I had the opportunity to attend ACS in the early '70s for my junior and senior years while Beirut was at its zenith. My dad was working for Aramco in Dhahran, SA so I was a boarding student, although I was also good friends with a lot of day students. It was during that time at ACS that I made some of my best lifelong friends. I think we all agree living in Beirut and attending school there was a highpoint in the lives of the majority of us.

Although I am retired from my first career at The University of Texas Medical School - Houston, I consider myself semi-retired. In addition to experience in office management, I worked at the medical school in executive administration. I also had the opportunity to manage UT Office of Alumni Affairs prior to a restructuring of that office. It was enjoyable and fulfilling working with alumni of the school.

As we all know, the council faces many challenges in the future. One big question is how to increase the number of members in our alumni association as the older class numbers start to dwindle? This seems to be more difficult as so many graduates are going off to colleges in Europe and the Middle East. How do we bridge this gap between the alumni living in the States and those in Europe? Do we need to start planning reunions for those alumni living and working abroad? This is an area I would be most interested helping to develop.

As an enthusiastic supporter of the ACS Alumni Association, I have been waiting for the appropriate time to step up my participation. I feel that time is now and would like to serve as a Representative of the Alumni Council of the AA/ACS.

### **\* Linda Handschin-Sheppard, Class of 1968, Resides in Bellevue, WA, USA**

Linda grew up in Dhahran and came to ACS as a sophomore, graduating in 1968. After receiving a BA and MA in Near Eastern Studies with minors in French and Italian, she returned to work for Aramco for five years. She was located by a classmate and introduced to AA/ACS in 1986 and has since served on the board with the exception of one three-year term. In those 33 years she has held the offices of president and secretary, handled dues receipt and deposit for 20+ years, chaired the 1991 Seattle Reunion, hosted multiple Summer in the City events, and has been editor of the newsletter since 2012. She has actively participated in the Strategic Planning Group, an 18-month undertaking to plan the future of AA/ACS. She currently sits on the Communications Committee looking to restructure how AA/ACS disseminates information to alums. Her professional life includes over 20 years as a development professional in private schools in the Seattle area – fundraising via annual funds, capital campaigns, and auctions; managing community involvement for parents; and providing opportunities for alumni and grandparent engagement.

### **\* Zeyd Tabbara, Class of 2011, Resides in New York, NY, USA**

Zeyd is an ACS lifer who is currently serving his first three-year term on the Alumni Council. During this time, he has kickstarted the Buddy Program initiative, whereby interested alumni will be able to guide ACS students as they apply for college. Zeyd hopes to get a pilot of the program running by the end of the year and, if reelected, will see out its integration into the school's college counseling offering.

Zeyd works at BGC Partners as an Environmental Commodities Broker serving the renewable energy markets in North America. Aside from the Alumni Council, he also volunteers as Treasurer for SEAL, a New York-based non-profit that funds rural projects in Lebanon. Zeyd holds a Joint Honors degree in Economics and Finance, as well as a minor in Middle Eastern Studies, from McGill University.

### **Elizabeth "Betsy" van den Berg, Class of 2074, Resides in MD, USA**

Betsy was a Boarding Department student at ACS from 1972-74 while her dad was stationed in Rhodes, Greece. She was an active member of the Drama Club and Choir, and served as a dorm prefect during her senior year. Betsy previously served on the alumni council (the Board of Governors) for a period of six years, leaving only when her job duties increased. During her tenure she also served on the 2007 Washington, D.C. reunion committee. She is Professor and Chair of the Theatre Arts Department at McDaniel College in Maryland, and lives in the suburbs of D.C.