

1969

Even though it's been almost 57 years since we graduated from The Woods, the class of 1969 is still a very active group of women. Many of us are enjoying retirement and grandchildren, a few of us are still working and several are traveling or enjoying hobbies.

The sad news is that some of our classmates passed away recently. Please keep **Nancy Butler Bruck, Laura Maloney Keaney, Rory Tappan Kosanovich** and their families in your prayers and thoughts. Nancy died the day before her 79<sup>th</sup> birthday of bladder cancer. Her husband Morgan and their girls were hit hard but are rallying to keep Nancy's spirit alive.

**Therese Connor Benken** had surgery in early September to remove fluid in her chest cavity. She finds it wonderful to breathe deeply again! She still substitute teaches. Her girls and granddaughters are doing well and time seems to fly for Terry. Her oldest granddaughter will be 18 on March 27th.

**Cassandra Almonte Bauza** has been living in Hanover, Massachusetts for almost five years. When she wrote, both her and her husband were buried under the snow and could only leave the house via the garage door. They'll be escaping back to Puerto Rico shortly to unite with the part of her family that is still there. They have three now adult children. Graciela and Gustavo are trauma surgeons and Mariana is a federal Magistrate Judge stationed in Puerto Rico. Their six grandchildren range in age from four to nine. Three live near Cassandra and take up a lot of her time. The family manages one big and noisy vacation a year with all 13 of them.

**Anita Redoutey Bowlin** feels very blessed and says all is good. She is enjoying time with her family, and her hobbies. Both Anita and **Ellen Gildea Douglas** are involved in Christ Child Society and enjoy their volunteer work and the extra time they get to spend together.

**Ellen Gildea Douglas** mentioned that in addition to enjoying their Christ Child Society volunteer work, packing baby layettes, **Anita Redoutey Bowlin** and

she had a fun visit with **Ann Donahue** last May when she flew in to visit. Ann counted churches and Amish buggies when they traveled to Shipshewana, just northwest of Ft. Wayne. Ellen is grateful for each blessing as she maneuvers 'senior status!'.

**Martha "Marti" Rumely Kuehn** is on her 3rd career surrounded and enmeshed in the art world of Louisville, Kentucky. In March, she is co-chair for a 300-guest Gala for Louisville visual Art where she has been on the board for 10 years. She is on the mayor's Art in City Hall and curating the next exhibition of global artists in the area. Her daily oil and watercolor practice also scratches that creative itch. Her husband, Henry, is chairing his 65th Yale Reunion. Then they will wander up to Quebec City for a week. They took their family of 16, kids and grandchildren, for a week in Costa Rica over the Thanksgiving week which was in a fabulous house with a pool/hot tub in "living room" and Pacific Ocean in the back yard. Chef teams cooked breakfast and dinner all week. Her daughter, Maria, will be getting married - first time - at age 51 in Los Angeles with nuptials on Venice Beach!

**Donna Eichmuller Liszewski** has had some mobility issues that have slowed her down, so she had been at home and not traveled. However, she's heading to Pennsylvania for the baptism of her 20th great-grandchild. Number 21 is expected to arrive in the next couple of months. Living in St. Petersburg, Florida, Donna continues to enjoy the sunshine. **Mary Kay Campbell Watson** and husband Al live south of Donna so she gets to see them frequently. They all joined Donna's sister **Susan "Sue" Eichmuller Hamilton '66, '90MAPT** and Wayne's for a family cruise over New Year's. She is busy with the Bereavement Ministry and St. Vincent DePaul at her church and find both perfect for this time of her life. She's looking forward to our next reunion so we can all meet again on The Avenue.

**Mary Kay Campbell Watson** and husband Al made several trips to The Woods and participated in many virtual meetings as Board of Trustees members for SMWC this past year. Mary Kay is still doing AARP taxes and

enjoys playing Canasta a few times a week. They spent the Thanksgiving holiday with the Hamilton family in Naples. In August, Mary Kay and Al enjoyed a 10-day cruise to some of the southern New England islands and seaports.

**Mary Fran Roberts Bennett** and husband Richard have been very blessed with good health. They do a lot of traveling, taking five trips last year. They are doing two more cruises this March in Portugal, the Netherlands and Belgium. They are very thankful and appreciative every day. Both of their children are doing very well, which is a lot to be thankful for.

Last year was not the best for **Christine “Chris” Fleck Neva’s** family. Her husband of 53 years, Rich, died at age 82 on May 3, 2025. He had a short, two-month illness precipitated by Parkinson's. He went through two hospitalizations and two spans of rehab. They brought him home for hospice so that he could at last experience peace and content. Chris’s son Peter still lives with her and together they are planning renovations for the house this spring. They plan on staying in Oregon. Her daughter Susan, who lives in California, had her wedding postponed until October. They will travel to New York for that and meet up with Chris’s sister and her husband from Virginia.

For **Kathleen “Kathy” Shine Wright** this has been a year filled with great joy for her family and 2026 promises to be even better. Her oldest grandson was married in Cabo in May. They had such a wonderful time celebrating the union. Her second grandson will graduate from Rose-Hulman in May. He has already secured his job with an engineering firm. The third grandson spent the summer in Spain completing his Spanish minor and will graduate from Indiana State in December with a chemistry degree. Kathy’s granddaughter is moving back to Indianapolis from Charleston, South Carolina this summer, where she has lived since college graduation four years ago. Kathy continues to volunteer at a retreat house two days a week and at her parish. She looks forward to keeping busy.

**Anne Becherer Hambly** and husband Larry and I are continuing to live in the Bay Area. They’re not sure they will ever leave. Most of their time is spent taking care of themselves and maintaining their health. So far, so good. Anne

is still involved with theater and has invested in several Broadway shows (not to make money!). They went to New York City last April where they saw nine shows in six days. They hope to go again this year. Their daughter, Kira, and her family are living in Littleton, Colorado. The granddaughters are 15 and nine already. They have slowed down their international travel, after having been to all seven continents. However, Anne and Larry did take a lovely trip to Ireland last August where they learned to do their own perfect pour of Guinness.

**Georgette Harber Schraeder** continues to lead formation classes within her local Franciscan fraternity in North Carolina and enjoys time with her three sons and their families and friends. This July she is looking forward to being back in the Midwest at the Marriott in Lexington, Kentucky to attend the National Franciscan Quinquennial Congress. Franciscans are commemorating the 800th anniversary of St. Francis passing to eternal life in 1226. This year is designated as a special Jubilee Year by Pope Leo XIV honoring Francis of Assisi.

**Judy Sadler Nelson** claims to lead a rather sedate life. However, she does enjoy putzing in the yard and flower beds! She's done some traveling to see family and friends, but nothing too exciting! Health issues have interfered with some of those plans, but life is good for her and she's looking forward to this new year!

**Susan "Susie" Starr Tomaszewski** said that her news is simple in that she is enjoying retirement and has time to see her children and sisters more often, especially for trips to Disney World. Her grandchildren are busy too. Madi is in Law School in Minnesota and Andrew is in a Doctoral Physical Therapy program at St. Louis University. She's proud of all their accomplishments while in school and sends wishes for a great year to everyone.

**Kathleen "Kathie" Truffa Cowperthwait's** husband has had two major health issues: Merkel Cell Carcinoma and Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. They're lucky to be close to UCSF, where he is being treated for both. She asks that

our classmates keep him in their prayers. For this next chapter in our lives, after interacting as classmates, spouses, children, etc., being very ill is a new one for Kathie and she's struggling to keep it all together. Besides praying for strength every night, she would welcome any suggestions. Several of our classmates are facing these same life struggles as we get on in years.

**Barbara "Barb" Wahnsiedler Klein** reported that nothing much has changed at her house. Her mother turned 100 years old in January. She still lives by herself in her home. Barb and husband Rich are trying to age gracefully, but at times that is hard to manage. She stated that falling down is not an option because they can't get back up. If something falls on the floor, she must think very carefully if she really needs it or not before she bends down to pick it up. She hopes everyone is staying as healthy as possible and maintaining a vertical position most of the time.

This March, **Patricia "Pat" Doran Martini** finally retired from working as an electrical engineer. 60 years in the business and this was her second retirement. She enjoyed every bit of it. Her grandson is going to a private high school locally as a boarder. She shares with the other grandparents to have him at her house for weekends. Pat commented that it is nice to see him more often as his dad is in the service, moving from base to base. This is a stable four years of high school and friends for him.

**Marsha Duvall Davis** is adapting to life in her assisted living facility in Columbia, South Carolina. She misses her family and church in Folkston, Georgia, but her son Eddie lives in Columbia. She enjoys seeing him almost every day, and she is able to see his family frequently. She also stays busy talking to friends on the phone and writing letters.

**Mary Ann Gibbons Rennels** has a new grandson born in 2025, Silas, who joins his two brothers: Asher, 4, and Eli, 2. They live in Lakewood Ranch, Florida, where she enjoys visiting them as often as she can. Sometimes when

she is there, Mary Ann is able to have lunch with **Donna Eichmuller Liszewski**.

**Anna Mae Brown Comment** stated that her five grandkids are flourishing and getting on with their lives and dreams. Two are already out in the working world, one is about to graduate from the university and is applying for a master's program, one is about to finish high school and already is accepted at the university for the Fall and the last and youngest is in her first year of mids. It has been a challenging two years since her husband Denis had several operations on his shoulder, spine and is now handicapped and in a wheelchair. After lots of physical therapy and they're hopeful that he will be back on his feet soon. In the meantime, they have curtailed their travel. They have had many visitors including Denis' sister and niece from Switzerland, his nephew and a cousin also from Switzerland and recently a wonderful visit from James Welu whom they have kept in touch with over the years. Mr. Welu former Art Professor at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in the late 60's, early 70's is now Director Emeritus of the Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts. A specialist in 17th Century Dutch and Flemish Art, he was in Florida visiting an exhibit of Dutch Masters at a Museum in Palm Beach. They were fortunate to have him spend a short time with them and catch up on their respective lives over the years. Though semi-retired, he leads a very active life and continues to lecture at the Worcester Art Museum and is a visiting Professor at the College of Holy Cross. Anna Mae is still working on her second novel and hopefully will finish it by the end of this year.

**Patricia "Pat" Bihl-Miranda, MD** and husband Fernando spent the last half of 2025 trying to get relief for some of Fernando's back problems. They did manage to visit all the grandchildren last year; three boys in Birmingham, two boys and one girl in St Louis and, of course, the two boys where they live in Nashville. Their big challenge was the catastrophic ice storm in Nashville at the end of January. They had terrible destruction and loss of untold numbers of trees in town. They were without power for seven days and many people went fourteen days without power. No internet for a total of 16 days. The dog and Pat stayed in the 40-degree house and slept in front of the fireplace.

**Penny Higgins Dunham**'s family was stunned in September when her niece **Amanda Stultz Ludlow '24** died in a tragic accident. She and her daughter **Emma Chambers '24** both graduated from The Woods in 2024. Amanda had a degree in equine studies and pre-vet and had been accepted in a veterinary school when she died. Her sister **Sarah Stultz Mahady '05** (another of Penny's nieces and legacies) may also be known to some of you, as she works at SMWC. The family has established a scholarship in Amanda's name for the Equine Studies program. The rest of Penny's news is more upbeat. She is living in sunny California for the first half of this year and missing all the snow and ice in the East. Her husband Bill is visiting at Santa Clara University as the Halmos Professor in the math department this term. They live near the lovely campus and have been taking advantage of the good weather and local attractions. There is even an old Spanish mission on campus, and they are just a few blocks from the famous El Camino Real. Her Hoosier roots were excited to learn that this is a big basketball school for both men and women, and they've enjoyed having season tickets to the women's games.

**Darlene Skibinski Marchina** and husband are enjoying spending time with their granddaughter, Olivia, 2 ½. They try to visit her and her parents in Florida at least three times a year. In September they will travel to Croatia for their youngest son's destination birthday celebration. Darlene and her husband continue to volunteer at their parish's food pantry every week. Recently Darlene met a 2018 SMWC alum at a lector workshop. Woodsies are everywhere!

**Gloria Kirwan Gick** has loved most everything about living in New Orleans for the past two years. Her respiratory system isn't crazy about an allergy season that starts by February and goes on, seemingly, forever or summer heat and humidity but the people, celebratory lifestyle, culture and beauty make up for it. Son Paul's family is only five blocks away, and that is the biggest plus. Carrie, Gloria's oldest daughter, has also made a move down there and is living with Gloria for the time being. For Gloria, it's a big change from Manhattan.

**Mary Romanyak Brown** and husband Mike enjoy playing Bridge, gardening and traveling. In the spring, they took a lovely trip to the Smokie Mountains with their son Eric, his wife Janet, and their two grandchildren, Ethan, 8, and Talia, 3. They also spent Christmas with their other son, Jeff and his wife, Shannon, in Dallas and visited Mary's brother and his family. Summer will take them to Michigan and visit Meijer Gardens and the city of Grand Rapids.

**Cynthia "Cindy" Jackson** and Mary communicate frequently. They even went to their 60th High School Reunion together.

I (**Karen Erazmus McNeal**) am still teaching math at a local college for my "retirement" career. This semester, I was asked to take on a full-time load of several different statistics and math in healthcare classes when two full-time professors took leaves of absence. My husband David recently executed his second retirement, leaving teaching at the college, but he still has his private psychotherapy practice. For enjoyment, we have taken several cruises. Both for winter breaks to get away from the Chicago area cold and summer ones to see the world. Lately we've traveled to the top of the world and the Arctic circle. The next adventure will take us to the Scandinavian capitals and the Baltic area. It was nostalgic to walk across the famous Erasmus bridge in Rotterdam last summer. Our daughter, **Karleen McNeal, MD '92**, is doing well as a geriatrician and along with her husband Erlandas, a nephrologist, keeps busy raising the four grandchildren. I volunteer at my parish as a Eucharistic minister and David, and I help with the community dinners there.

As you can tell, our class is keeping busy and enjoying life. We have our ached and pains of aging, but the Woods spirit from long ago keeps us going. Please stay in touch and look for something good each day the Lord gives us.

