

Class of '70 Officers' Conference Call

May 21, 2011

Participating: Connie Ferris Meyer, Sally Anne Levine, Hsiao Ping Liu Katz, Beth Heydinger Treadway, Jeff Haber, Gail Post Wallis, Bill Wallis, Murem Sakas Sharpe, Carole Peck Fishman, Cindy Johnson O'Malley, Kathy Cornell

Connie opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for participating. She asked that the meeting follow Robert's Rules of Order as much as possible to assure that it was clear when the group was voting to make a decision.

The minutes of the previous meeting on January 29, 2011 were approved as distributed. It was decided that in the future the minutes will be circulated for approval within a few weeks of a meeting. Jeff Haber suggested that once circulated and approved, the minutes be posted on the Class web site. This was agreed.

Class Finances

Treasurer's Report: Hsiao Ping gave the financial report for the Class. She began by reviewing Cornell's policies and processes for recording class finances. Since Cornell is a non-profit organization, the accounting method used is different from business accounting. To maintain the university's non-profit status, all dues and other income are recorded as "Gift Tran" for Gift Transfer under the category "Income", subcategory "Dues". When our class contributes funds to the Class endowment, it appears in our financial statements as a negative number under Income/Dues, rather than as an "Expense". As a result, in a year in which we make significant contributions to our Class endowment our Income appears exceptionally low. This happened in 2005, when the Class of 1970 Scholarship was initially funded by the Class. The accounting process and transaction accounts are determined by the university, and used by all classes and departments of the university.

The bulk of the Class income is from dues, and most of this goes for the Alumni News. Postage, supplies, and printing expenses incurred by university departments on behalf of the Class, such as for the annual dues letters, are all paid automatically and are not subject to prior or post approval. Discretionary expenditures are limited, and only the President and Treasurer have the authority to approve these.

Hsiao Ping summarized significant financial events over the past 5 years, and reported that the Class Treasury currently is just over \$80,000. The university recommends that each class maintain a balance of at least \$20,000. In addition, each class typically pays for members to attend the 70th and 75th reunions, and we should provide for this. Alumni House advises that a class should set aside \$15,000 for the 70th and \$7 – 10,000 for the 75th reunions. Hsiao Ping recommended that we maintain a balance of \$45,000 considering all these future expenses and to cover any shortages from Class Reunions (in one year, there was a shortage of \$15,000). She then encouraged the Leadership Team to focus on future financial planning.

One question was whether it would be possible to increase the Class income. Income principally consists of dues and interest on the Class treasury. Our dues are in line with the classes around us, so there was no interest in raising them at this time. To better understand the current income, we will ask Alumni House for a breakdown of dues by singles/duals/'70 Club/auto-renewal.

Any surplus or shortfall from the reunion every 5 years is added to or subtracted from the treasury. At the 40th reunion last year, there was a surplus of \$7415. Hsiao Ping reviewed the results of 3 other reunions, and the net impact of the surpluses and shortfalls was basically a wash. Having funds in the Class account for a reunion shortage is prudent to allow for a possible deficit from one reunion until there is an offsetting swing at the next. In addition, it was noted that some classes subsidize the cost of reunions to encourage participation. The reunion reserve could be used for this as well.

Hsiao Ping proposed that to reduce expenses the Class take advantage of the university's 'opt in' offer for class members to receive a copy of the book the university selects for the annual Reading Project. After discussion, this was agreed. It was also suggested that we offer an 'opt in' option for people to only receive the Alumni News in an on-line version. This will be investigated by Connie.

The Class has endowed the 1970 Scholarship, but has not fully funded it. At this time, it is \$5,896 short of the Class' commitment to the university. The scholarship provided a grant of \$1,888 to a student this year. Hsiao Ping will provide information to Connie and Jeff as to how classmates can contribute to the Class of 1970 Scholarship Fund. Connie will provide Jeff and Murem information about the Scholarship Fund history and how it is managed for posting on the Class website and FaceBook sites, as well as other media. In addition, she will provide them with information on the recipients, working with the university to be sure that the recipient approves of any information published about her or him and that any publication conforms to existing confidentiality agreements and privacy policies prior to use. Class communications and social media channels will be used to encourage additional contributions to the Fund.

40th Reunion Financials: Gail reviewed the final financial results from the 40th reunion. A total of \$85,294 was received and expenses were \$77,879. This resulted in the surplus transferred to the Class treasury. The majority of the expenses are set by the university. In considering reducing costs for the future, one area that does not appear fruitful is meals. The cost differential between a meal such as lasagna and a steak is minimal, since most of the caterer's costs are fixed for employees doing the serving and supplies such as tablecloths and serving pieces. The food cost is not significant. An area for consideration at the next reunion is the souvenir gift.

Class Constitution

Bill reviewed the revised draft constitution circulated to all the officers. The revision included wording and organization suggestions from the first draft, and added officers based on Class objectives and plans from the last meeting. These include a Vice President of Communications, a Vice President of Affinity Groups, and Regional Vice Presidents. A procedure was added for filling vacancies between Class reunions, and the distinction between elected and appointed members of the Class Council was eliminated.

Bill then stepped through the sections of the constitution to summarize the intent and content. At the end he asked for approval of the constitution, pending a final review by Carole Peck Fishman to assure that any typographical errors were corrected. The Leadership Team approved the constitution. It is now enacted, and will be presented to the entire Class at the next reunion for ratification. Once it has been through its final check, it will be dated and posted on the Class web site.

Communication Plan

Murem reviewed the work of a team consisting of Jeff, Connie, Bill and herself to increase communication with classmates. She described a funnel of opportunities for reaching people starting first with our web site, then adding social media including FaceBook and Twitter to increase contact points. She emphasized content, noting that Cornell provides a lot of information we can use as a foundation, then add Class specific content.

The web site is being redesigned. After considering the Cornell Connect platform as an alternative to the current one, it has been determined that Cornell Connect is too limiting. The team is in the process of making changes to the page design and the site organization by adding tabs for easier navigation.

A new Class of 70 FaceBook page has been created. We need 25 people to 'Like' it before we can get an easy to remember URL for it. Murem encouraged all the officers to find and Like the page. Evoca, Murem's company specializing in internet voice recording and playback functionality, is donating a site for classmates to record memories to share via the web site or FaceBook. Murem will interview Connie for the first posting, and share instructions for the rest of the members of the Leadership team to record their own. The objective is to build a critical mass of recordings so that it attracts other Class members to participate. The number to call to make a recording is 607-241-9945.

Regional Representatives and Activities

Sally reported that Susan Doney of Alumni House is providing her with a list of active classmates sorted by region. Susan's recommendation is to use this list to solicit people to host regional events. One that has been very successful for other classes is a group birthday party, which we could do for all to gather and celebrate our 64th birthdays. For example, the Class of '73 had 9 parties around the country.

A question was raised on funding for these parties. In most cases, the host or hostess provides everything if it is at his or her home. The Class might offer a small subsidy to help out. Other possibilities are to hold the event at a restaurant, in which case each person would pay his or her own expenses. Another possibility is a picnic at a park, where everyone would chip in for the food and drink, or even bring their own.

The possibility of coordinating the events with regional Cornell Clubs was discussed. Sally reported that Susan's experience has been that this is not as effective. This was supported by Carole and Kathy based on their active experience with their clubs.

Sally will start seeking hosts and hostesses for a first round of birthday parties as the Class' initial step in building regional activities. The intent is that some or all of the regional volunteers will become Regional Vice Presidents.

Affinity Groups

Bill reported on efforts to build our affinity group network to (re)build relationships among classmates, with a long term objective of stimulating attendance at the 45th and 50th reunions. The first step is cleaning up the university's record of who was in which organizations. Bill has been in contact with Alumni House, and has volunteered the Class of '70 to help develop and trial a process for improving the

database. He is drafting a process proposal for their consideration and, once agreed, their development.

Other parts of the Affinity Group plan are to ask the Affinity Group Leaders that were so helpful in encouraging attendance at the 40th reunion to continue in that role, and provide composites and other photographs for an Affinity Group section of the Memories area of our web site.

Class Legacy/Memorial Gift

Connie reported on a proposal from Tom Newman that the Class funds a lecture series on topics pertinent to the times we were on campus. He had several excellent suggestions for specific topics. There was considerable interest in this idea, but discussion of the cost resulted in an estimate of approximately \$750,000 to fund a high profile annual lecture. Tom had also suggested including other classes around 1970 to participate, but the cost would still be prohibitive.

Connie noted that in addition to the Class of 1970 Scholarship, there have also been donations of art in the name of the Class. Beth described the Class of '70 Art Fund, the only class art fund at the university. To date it has purchased 2 pieces of art and contributed to others. The pieces relate to our time at Cornell. To avoid conflicting with the university donation solicitations, only a small group of classmates have been approached for contributions.

Connie then reviewed the status of a proposal from the last meeting, that the Class permanently endow the Big Red Bear costume. The Athletic Department has committed that it will provide the shirts and jerseys the bear wears, and that they will only be 70 shirts. It will cost \$22,500 to endow this.

There was a considerable discussion of these possibilities. Finally, it was proposed that the Class have 3 legacies supporting:

- Academics through the Class scholarship
- Art through the Class Art Fund
- Athletics through the Bear Costume endowment

Specifically, the Class will provide the final \$5,896 to fully endow the scholarship and will provide the \$22,500 to endow the bear costume. In addition, the Class will include \$1,000 each for the scholarship and the Art Fund in its annual budget, to be approved each year. This proposal was approved.

New Business

Connie covered 3 points under New Business:

1. Consideration of an Officers retreat in Ithaca in the next year. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
2. The Reading Project for this year is Homer and Langley by E L Doctorow. As Hsiao Ping proposed, the Class will offer the book to the usual select list of recipients (dues payers, donors, reunion attendees), but will only send a copy to those who opt in to receive the book.
3. The Class has a new Alumni House representative, Susan Doney. Connie asked if there were any objections to having her join calls in the future, and there were none.

Next Meeting

The next class officers' meeting will be a conference call on October 1 at 10 AM. Connie thanked all for their participation and closed the meeting.