

## Class of '70 Officers' Conference Call

October 1, 2011

Participating: Connie Ferris Meyer, Kathy Cornell, Carole Peck Fishman, Sally Anne Levine, Cindy Johnson O'Malley, Sandy Schorr, Bill Wallis, Gail Post Wallis

Connie Ferris Meyer opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for participating. She asked if there were any questions or comments on the Minutes from the May 21, 2011 meeting, and there were none so the minutes were approved.

### Treasurer's Report

Carole Peck Fishman assumed the duties of Treasurer in September. She presented the status of the class finances. The class finished the last fiscal year on June 30, 2011 with \$85,467.27. There has been little income in the current fiscal year, which is expected since dues, which account for 60%+ of our income each year, will not be solicited until the spring. Our expenses for the fiscal year are almost \$21,000, with the major expenditures for the Cornell Magazine (\$11,123.00), \$6,896 to fund our class scholarship, and \$1,000 for the class Art endowment. The rest of the expenditures are in the hundreds of dollars, and Carole will be investigating these in the next few weeks.

Carole is in the process of developing a budget for the current fiscal year. She also reported that the University is in the process of rolling out a new financial reporting system and will be providing training at CALC in January.

Attached to these minutes is a spreadsheet on the class finances Carole distributed.

### Officer Openings

Connie reviewed Hsiao Ping Katz's resignation as Treasurer, and thanked her for over 30 years of service to the class as Reunion Registrar and Treasurer. Connie then announced that she had asked Carole Peck Fishman to take on this role, in addition to being the Reunion Registrar, and Carole accepted. Bill Wallis moved and Cindy Johnson O'Malley seconded, that the officers elect Carole to the position of Treasurer. The motion passed.

Connie announced that she had asked Murem Sakas Sharpe to serve as Vice President, Communications, a role she has been informally filling as part of the communications team that has been working on the website and social media plans. She also said she had committed that the officers, especially the Class Correspondent and Web Master, would work with her on communications. Carole moved and Gail Wallis seconded a motion to elect Murem as VP, Communications. The motion passed.

Connie informed the leadership team of one more opening, the Vice President for Affinity Groups. Bill suggested Toby Marion, who had been one of the Affinity Group Leaders for the last reunion and who had expressed interest in helping in the future. Since Toby's opportunities to be engaged may be limited because he lives in Hong Kong, this is a role he could effectively fill via email correspondence. There was discussion and endorsement of Toby as an excellent candidate, and no other names were offered. Connie asked Bill to approach Toby about the position. It was also suggested that Toby have a woman

as co-leader to focus on sororities and women's clubs and sport teams. It was decided that this would be up to Toby, should he accept the position.

### Class Activity Timeline

Susan Doney, our class contact in Alumni Affairs, distributed a matrix to all class officers on August 30, 2011, with a timeline of activities a class should be doing in each of the years in the 5 year cycle between reunions. It lists activities that should be done every year and activities that should be done in the specific year. Since the original matrix was too big to be readable on a computer screen and wouldn't print easily, Bill reformatted it to show just the activities our class needs to focus on this year on 4 easily printed pages and sent it to the leadership team. A copy is attached to these minutes.

Connie noted that for the most part we're ahead of the plan. For the rest of the meeting, the discussion followed the topics on the matrix to be sure the class is on track.

### Affinity Groups

There are no activities called for under Affinity in the timeline. Bill reported a lack of support from Alumni Affairs for cleaning up the University records of who was in which affinity groups. He is considering a plan to just try to fix our own records, and will work on this with the VP Affinity Groups when the position is filled.

### Communication Plan

Bill reported on behalf of Murem that a communications team has been addressing the question of how we communicate with officers and classmates, and is engaged in updating the class web site and building our presence in social media. Specifically:

- All members of the leadership team are responsible for generating content, initially sending it to Jeff Haber for the website and Connie for our class column. Historically the website and column have been the "magnets" for class news
- Cornell70 Facebook page has been launched. At this point we need more "viral" involvement of "Likes" by the rest of our classmates. So far featured post categories include: Reunion Radio audio updates from Bill and Gail; Missing Classmates reminders; Memories audio interviews; and news from campus, especially about Touchdown the Bear.
- CornellClass70 Twitter page is also launched, set up to Tweet new updates from our Facebook page. Murem would also welcome more followers to this page.
- Class column in Cornell Alumni magazine is a main interest for classmates. The length is limited by % of classmates who are paying class dues, and there is a delay of 2+ months in magazine publishing. Connie and Murem are exploring if we can issue the news earlier and more of it on our website and social media pages.
- Regional events and the build up to our next reunion will become a significant source of news and excitement over the next few years.

The other task on the matrix is to increase the number of classmates with valid email addresses. Murem has suggested asking Alumni Affairs for help identifying best practices to find missing emails. Carole reported that the class of '64 has made a concerted effort to clean up their email lists, and will speak to a contact in the class for more information.

### CALC (Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference)

Connie reported we held the meeting described in the matrix at CALC this past January, and encouraged everyone to attend this coming January 27 – 29<sup>th</sup> in Washington. She mentioned that in the past the class had paid for the cost of registration for attendees, and could pay for one night of the hotel cost. Sally Anne Levine moved that this be the policy for the coming CALC and Sandy Schorr seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### Regional Representatives and Activities

Sally reported that the next planned event is the hockey game with BU at Madison Square Garden Thanksgiving weekend. A gathering of classes from the 70's before the game is being planned.

Connie reported on the special event at Homecoming, where the Big Red Bears made a presentation at the tailgate parties before the game. All the classes in the area were encouraged to come over and watch as the Bears gave Connie the first jersey Touchdown wore after the class provided funding for the Bears in 2005. It was framed and had a plaque identifying its significance. This is currently hung on the walls at Alumni Affairs new downtown facility, but the idea is to permanently hang it in one of the libraries on campus. Gail suggested Uris library as being used by most undergraduates from all schools, and also the most centrally located, which was endorsed by Kathy. Gail also suggested that the framed jersey be available for display at our next reunion. Connie will work with the Bears and Alumni Affairs on displaying the jersey in Uris and making sure it's available in 2015.

Connie reported that the Bears were very grateful for our endowment and the storage cabinet for Bear costumes donated by the class of '74. She also noted we're the first class to endow a student club at Cornell! Connie has been promised pictures from the event, and will follow up to make sure we have some to post on the website and Facebook.

A lesson learned from this is that evites from Cornell are necessary but not sufficient to garner a significant turnout for events like this. We'll need to have some communications from the class to generate enough interest and enthusiasm.

### Fund Raising

The leadership team was reminded we're all expected to set an example and contribute to the annual fundraising campaign.

There was discussion of the fact that classmates can direct their donation to the Class of '70 Scholarship Fund or the Class of '70 Art Fund. This option and exactly how to do it needs to be communicated to the class. It was suggested that Beth Treadway, Martin Tang and Paul Vizcarrondo send a blast email to the class with this information. Alumni Affairs can help with the distribution list.

### Leadership

This is described on the matrix as consisting of

Class Specific Initiatives:

- Review and re-evaluate class officer roles with CACO's Personal Assessment Form. This form can be requested through your staff contact.
- Develop a class council/class networking structure. Review class council structures/roles.
- Review and reevaluate your class's 5 year plan.

#### Every Year Initiatives

- Plan to participate in CACO's New and Continuing Class Officer Leadership Training Webinar and other leadership training webinar (more details to follow).
- Make sure all class officers have an active Net ID and password.
- Review and reevaluate class officer roles with CACO's Personal Assessment form. This form can be requested through your class contact.

Since these are new items with new forms, and some are still not ready from Alumni Affairs, Connie will investigate it and discuss it at the next leadership meeting.

#### Membership

As a spring class, our next membership drive begins in the February/March timeframe.

There was a discussion of how to boost membership, such as by cutting dues for new members, or offering a reduction for early sign ups or for signing up for automatic renewal via credit card, or entry for class members in a lottery for an iPod or similar prize. Sally reported that the class of '71 has successfully raised their number of dues payers, and will speak to a contact in the class to learn what they found worked well. A team volunteered to work on these ideas: Connie, Carole, Cindy, Kathy and Sally.

#### Missing Classmates

Bill reported we've been using our Facebook page to list a few missing classmates once or twice a week, but since there are only 37 people who have 'liked' the page we're not getting a lot of exposure. Also, since we started getting monthly updates to our missing classmates listing, the number has jumped from around 600 to almost 700, with no explanation from Alumni Affairs. Other suggestions were to use affinity groups to track down missing classmates or whitepages.com.

#### Website

Bill reported on behalf of Jeff Haber. There are several items listed on the activity timeline, all of which have been done. These are:

- Review your class website.
- Appoint a website community manager for your class, if needed. (Jeff)
- Display photos and stories about your recent reunion and other class events.
- Post dates for upcoming reunion.
- Post a president's message and list of new class officers.
- Post your latest membership mailing or class newsletter.

The on-going effort at re-engineering and re-designing the class website was put on hold when the University announced that it was decommissioning the server used to host the class websites, and only

classes that used the generic CornellConnect websites would be supported. Over the past 2 months Jeff has researched our options, registered two URLs for the class, cornell70.org and cornell70.com, and signed a 3-year agreement for hosting the site with GoDaddy.com. He has moved our existing website and has returned to working on the changes described at our last meeting.

The website is more dynamic than in the past as several people have responded to Jeff's call for content. There's a President's message welcoming users to the site, the Homecoming invitation from the Bears was posted and removed in a timely fashion, the lists of missing and deceased classmates are being updated monthly. A static site won't be useful or visited by classmates, so continued provision of timely content to Jeff is essential.

For the longer term, Murem has been exploring moving the website content to a WordPress.org platform so that all members of the leadership team can update content without burdening the Webmaster.

### Other Activities

The activity timeline listed several additional tasks for class officers:

- reviewing the leadership team for vacancies (covered at the beginning of the call);
- considering participating in the new student reading project (covered on the May 21 call);
- reviewing the class statistics posted on the CACO website, which is new and will be done for the next meeting; and
- encouraging classmates to visit the CornellConnect on-line directory" (there is a link from the class website, but we'll look at adding more information about CornellConnect on our website).

### New Business

Concern has been raised about the quality of support the class has been receiving from Alumni Affairs. Two specific areas of concern were noted: the decision to cut off support for class websites other than those on CornellConnect, which we view as an inadequate platform; and the poor responsiveness to requests for assistance. Several examples of the second item were noted, where a request was sent and never acknowledged or responded to. It was suggested that we find the organization structure of Alumni Affairs so we can start copying the supervisor of our class contact on all emails.

We'll gather some information and see if other classes have had similar experiences. If so, we'll provide our feedback to Alumni Affairs as a group, which will carry more weight than just working individually.

### Next Meeting

The next class officers' meeting will be at CALC during the January 27 – 29<sup>th</sup> conference in 2012. A block of time is set aside for classes to hold their meetings. We'll also have it available as a conference call

### Adjournment

Connie thanked all for their participation and closed the meeting.