

## “What should I write about?”

### PERENNIALY POPULAR CLASS NOTES TOPICS

#### Book and other recommendations

*What are classmates reading, binge-watching, etc.?*

#### Class officers

*Who are they? When they're elected at Reunion, use your column as a platform to introduce them.*

#### Continuing education

*What are classmates learning these days?*

#### Current events

*How are classmates reacting to major national and international events?*

#### Holidays

*How do classmates celebrate specific holidays?*

#### Houses

*What are classmates' house-specific memories? Have classmates continued their friendships with housemates?*

#### Legacies

*Are classmates the parents or grandparents of current Smith students? If so, ask them to describe that experience.*

#### Life-cycle topics relevant to your generation

*How are classmates coping with major life changes like parenthood, menopause, retirement, and downsizing?*

#### Majors

*Are classmates' careers in sync with their Smith majors, or not at all? What would they major in if they could go back and do it again?*

#### Milestone anniversaries

*How are classmates celebrating their 25th and 50th wedding anniversaries?*

#### Milestone birthdays

*How are classmates celebrating their 40th? 50th? 75th?*

#### Mini-reunions

*Who's having them? Where and when are they taking place? What stories can participants share?*

#### Reunion memories

*What were classmates' most meaningful campus Reunion experiences?*

#### Reunion planning

*How can classmates help plan your next campus Reunion?*

#### Seasons

*What were the highlights of classmates' spring/summer/fall/winter?*

Trips and travels

*Where in the world have classmates traveled lately?*

Weather

*Were classmates affected by any recent major weather events?*

## “OK great, but how do I get my classmates to write in?”

### TIPS AND TRICKS FOR DRUMMING UP NEWS

Piggyback on our broadcast emails.

*We send them to all alumnae four times a year to solicit news for your column. Remind classmates that these messages, which include a link to your email address, are their cue to submit updates and photos. Encourage classmates to [keep their email address up to date](#) and to stay subscribed to Smith broadcast emails.*

Use social media.

*Scour your class Facebook page for items that could work as class notes. Ask permission to include them in your column, or encourage the poster to adapt her item for the Quarterly.*

Get creative.

*In a nod to Twitter, 1996 challenged classmates to condense their thoughts about why they chose Smith into 140 characters and then compiled their “tweets.”*

Have a contest.

*1968 asked classmates to write about the most amusing or most unexpected experience of their life. The winner received a dinner for two at IHOP.*

Harness the power of Smith’s record-keeping.

*Ask me for an up-to-date class list in the form of an Excel spreadsheet. Mine it for ideas. Fields with potential include “Senior House,” “Major,” and “Parent Current Student?” Reorganize by field and target classmates with specific questions. Their email addresses will be included in the spreadsheet.*

## “Cool! Got any other advice?”

### A FEW FINAL THOUGHTS

Assure classmates that no news is too small to submit. Everyday news is perfect for class notes.

Encourage first-time submissions.

Read the class notes section of the *Quarterly*. See what other class secretaries are doing to solicit class notes; adapt their ideas for your own column. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Look for themes among the submissions you receive and try organizing your column by topic.

Last but not least: Remind classmates of the power of print!

*1997 wrote, “I know social media may make sharing news via print seem obsolete, but you reach a broader audience and become part of history when you share your news in the Quarterly.” Too true.*