ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION !!!!!!

Coming soon! Announcing a creative new fundraising program for the Club!!

Watch your email for this Announcement and program kick-off!

AUGUST 19 SEND-OFF FOR CLASS OF 2016 STUDENTS

Sue Wild ’84 of Brunswick is hosting this gathering for incoming firstyear students, one of whom is her daughter Caroline. Nearby students from the classes of 2013-2015 have also been invited to answer questions, share their experiences and perhaps settle a few jittery nerves. We’ve asked recent graduates what they would want new Smithies not to miss, and the College Facebook page has provided us with student responses to the question, “What item should incoming firstyears definitely bring to Smith?”, so we’ll be able to pass along some very valuable, first-hand information!

TWO NEW VOLUNTEERS JOINING OUR TEAM!

Maine Smithies must be among the country’s most engaged alums! As a result of the last Newsletter’s request to fill two important club roles, we welcome Eliza Warren ’10 as our Social Media Chair and Bridget Kahn ’07 as our Current Students Liaison. Club leaders sometimes wait months to fill positions, so the almost immediate response from these willing volunteers shows a commitment to the College that truly stands out. Thank you, Eliza and Bridget!

(continued)
SARAH SZWAJKOS ‘98, PHOTOGRAPHER - EXHIBIT IN BATH

Sarah Szwajkos ‘98 (www.DamnRabbitStudios.com) of Rockland is a professional photographer who sent the following information about her current show:

You are invited to enjoy seven artists’ visions and interpretations of The Maine Home from photography to painting.

*Inspiration: The viewer will feel like a voyeur into the lives of some interesting and sometimes funky, often old but interesting Maine homes.*

*We will also explore the gardens, structures and magic of the outdoors.*

Eight photographs from her series “Personal Space” are included in this show.

The Maine Home - Inside & Outside
ART Exhibit

This Exhibit runs August 10th - September 15th

Chocolate Church ART Gallery
804 Washington Street
Bath, Maine

CAROLYN BRODSKY ’80 SELECTED ONE OF FIVE MAINE WOMEN TO WATCH

“Last year, Mainebiz launched our Women to Watch recognition as a way to bring attention to top-notch women executives, women whose daily work strengthens their organizations and by extension, Maine's economy. And, frankly, who grace the cover of our publication less often than we'd like.

National statistics show companies owned and led by women are the fastest-growing segment of the American business scene. So where are these women in Maine? Who are the pioneers, the role models, the executives whose savvy and commitment to their organizations make them an inspiration, regardless of gender?” (Mainebiz)

Carolyn is President and Founder of Sterling Rope in Biddeford, a leading manufacturer of life safety rope, cord and hardware. Here is an article and interview with Carolyn taken from Mainebiz:

**What was the biggest challenge of your career?** Balancing having a kid and running a business. I want to do both well. You have to give up the 'other stuff,' like fancy vacations.

**When did you know you’d made it?** I’m still working on making it. Complacent companies fail, so once you think you've made it, you'll fail.
What advice do you wish you'd been given early in your career? How to work with your spouse running a business. You have similar dreams and goals, but how do you make that work? You have to have a life outside of work, so when you leave the office, you leave the office.

“I'll relax when ...” I know my kid is out of school and happy. Actually, I can relax now. You have to have very good employees you trust.

What was your “Haven’t we moved beyond this?” moment? They happen every day. Mostly it’s 'Haven't we gotten XYZ process down so we don't have to keep revisiting it?'

When you talk with Carolyn Brodsky, president and founder of Sterling Rope in Biddeford, the energy and passion she has for her work are obvious, especially when she starts talking about rope. It’s almost irrelevant whether you understand the technical terms and numbers she's throwing out — her excitement is highly contagious.

You'll also notice that her knowledge of "all things rope" is matched — if not exceeded by — her strong business sense and commitment to the people who work for her.

"We've gotten where we are today by focusing on people and product, plain and simple," Brodsky says.

That combination and her entrepreneurial spirit were key to launching Sterling Rope, and have contributed to the company's steady growth from a "leap of faith" startup to one of the world's leading providers of rope for climbers, arborists and life-safety professionals. From 2009 to 2011, sales rose 65% and the company hired another dozen employees to keep pace. Brodsky's knowledge of the rope industry has earned her a seat on the board of directors of the Outdoor Industry Association, a trade group that promotes outdoor recreation in which climbing — and the importance of gear — have gained prominence.

In 1992, Brodsky, a racing sailor who had placed in the top five in a number of international races, owned and operated a marketing company that focused on the boating industry. With the arrival of high luxury taxes, Brodsky realized that industry's future was anything but bright. Pregnant at the time, she decided she wanted to combine her sales and marketing experience with her love of operations and manufacturing to start a company "to build something."

At the same time, she noticed extreme sports were taking off in popularity, so she and then-husband, Willie Crear, whose own marine industry experience had taught him a thing or two about rope, "mortgaged everything and put everything on credit cards" to start Sterling Rope in Marblehead, Mass. Crear had an idea to create a rope that used moisture-inhibiting materials common in the marine industry for its core. This had never been done and, when combined with dry-treated coating on the outside of the rope, became Sterling's key differentiator in the marketplace.

It wasn't long before Sterling outgrew its Massachusetts facility and discovered Maine hospitality. While searching for a town with a good school system, Brodsky and Crear found Scarborough and its economic development director, Harvey Rosenfeld, who was instrumental in welcoming the company by arranging meetings, helping them find land and even allowing Brodsky to use his office to interview prospective employees.
Although the company moved again, to Biddeford, Brodsky says those employees are the main reason behind Sterling’s success, and she values them as such.

"The most important thing in business is to hire well. Great people equal great products equal great customers," she says. "It's like they say: Hire good people and get out of the way."

That theory was tested in late 2008, when the financial and housing crises hit and Sterling — like so many other businesses — found itself in rocky times.

"I was scared out of my mind," Brodsky says. "I can usually outsmart anything, but I couldn't outsmart this."

Reluctantly, Brodsky had to cut Sterling’s work force in January 2009 and, in a meeting, asked employees for help weathering the storm and to help the company "not participate in the recession."

"One employee came to me after the meeting and said, 'I'll do whatever I can do to help.' That really shows that if you treat your employees well, they'll treat you well," she says.

The goal, Brodsky says, was simple: survive the downturn. Having made it through a drawn-out divorce that included a battle over the company (Brodsky eventually outbid Crear in a two-person auction to purchase it outright), Brodsky says she knew Sterling would make it through the hard times. She was right. Within three months, employees were once again working 40-hour weeks, and by June 2009 Sterling was hiring again.

Today, several of the world’s leading climbers and arborists use Sterling’s ropes, as do many fire departments across the country. The company also supplies rope to the military, a market Brodsky hopes to grow.

**Ambassadors for Sterling**

A testament to the quality and innovation of Sterling’s products is that every New York City firefighter carries one of Sterling’s FireTech ropes, with a Crosby hook on one end to allow them to quickly and safely exit a building through a window. Brodsky says Sterling’s ropes have been to the top of Mt. Everest many times (they were featured in the IMAX film "Everest") and in 2001 were used to lift beams from the rubble at Ground Zero.

Experts in the field are an integral part of Sterling’s product development and marketing. Most visible is the company’s Sponsored Athletes Team. Started in the mid-’90s as the Product Design, Product Test Team, the roster consists of nearly 70 well-known climbers from around the world. Sterling sends them prototypes to test and products to use; they then can blog about their experiences. Sterling’s website includes links to each climber’s blog and to the particular Sterling products the climber has chosen to include in their toolkit. Sterling also sponsors USA Climbing, the governing body for professional climbing events.

Sterling pays two of the team’s members: Chris Sharma, whom Brodsky describes as the world’s most renowned climber, and Joe Kinder, a Maine College of Art graduate from New Hampshire. The relationship with Kinder is more than a sponsorship, Brodsky says. Kinder also provides graphic design
services, including T-shirts and product tags, and produces videos — including several featuring Sharma — for Sterling.

Saying that "complacent companies fail," Brodsky never rests on accomplishments and past successes, and she won't allow Sterling to do so. She always solicits input from employees, customers and experts in their fields with whom Sterling has built relationships. Many great ideas — for products, streamlined production of those products, new markets to tap, etc. — have come from those sources, she says.

"We use and rely on our experts for a lot of our new product ideas; that's how we got into hardware," she says. "We've also created a structure that allows for employee growth. We actively invite ideas from our employees. If you look at the companies that are profitable, usually you'll find that everybody is engaged."

To register for a Sept. 20 reception honoring Carolyn Brodsky and the other Women to Watch, click here.

HELP WANTED!

Highly experienced museum professional with excellent writing/editing and curatorial skills in search of full-time employment in the museum/arts/academic sectors. Over a decade of experience organizing exhibitions, managing collections and databases, working with student interns and writing catalogue essays. College or University position preferred. Please contact Gena Schwam ‘98 at: gschwam@gmail.com for resume, references and any additional information.

Gena is also seeking temporary living quarters in western or Southern Maine (Portland and points south). She has two well-behaved cats and would need a month-to-month situation. 1- bedroom apartment preferred. Please contact at the email address above.

UPDATE YOUR CAREER INFO IN THE ONLINE DIRECTORY

One of the most heavily used resources on the AASC website is the online Directory. Students and alums looking for career advice or possible jobs, mentors or informational interviews, use this valuable tool, so it’s just as important that we keep our work information updated as it is to keep our personal contact information current. Go to www.alumnae.smith.edu right now before you forget, and see if you need to add your updates.

*****If you are on LinkedIn, you might want to join "Smith Women Connect". There are also many other Smith LinkedIn groups. Word has it that this is THE place to be today!*****
NEWS FROM THE SMITH CAMPUS

Have you ever wondered what went on at Smith during the summer? Read this article from the Daily Hampshire Gazette and find out. Maybe you’ll want to return to campus next summer!

“Hosting summer programs makes financial sense”

As business models go, shutting down for three months of the year is generally not a good move.

So colleges and universities have come up with a way of dealing with the void left by the academic calendar: renting out campus space to summer camps and programs, and also developing summer programs of their own.

Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith colleges and the University of Massachusetts Amherst all use summer programs to generate revenue during a traditionally quiet time on campus. The programs run the gamut from sports camps to music intensives to museum studies.

Private boarding schools are following suit. In Easthampton, The Williston Northampton School is the site of multiple summer camps.

Summer at Smith

"Summer programs are an important part of Smith’s mission," said Laurie Fenlason, vice president of public affairs at the Northampton college. Fenlason said they fall into two categories: programs renting space on the campus, and programs developed and hosted by the college.

"Both represent ways that we increase the visibility of the college, make use of the campus and facilities year-round, and generate revenue," she said.

This summer the college is hosting around 2,000 students in 17 programs, ranging from Django in June to Science for the Soul Weekend Retreat to the Revolution Field Hockey Camp. Some are targeted at teenagers; others are for adults.

The programs pay Smith for the use of the facilities, including dining halls and residence halls, and for whatever staff services are required. In addition to outside programs that rent the college facilities in the summer, Smith offers 15 in-house programs led by its own staff.

The Smith programs, which include a basketball camp and a science and engineering intensive, are primarily targeted to high school girls. Last week 100 girls arrived for a four-week Summer Science and Engineering Presidential Program.

In addition to offering opportunities to explore fields that might not be available at their high schools, said summer program administrator Karen Brunette, programs like the one in science and engineering allow girls to test the waters at an all-women's college.
It's a seller's market, at Smith, at least. The college never needs to advertise to attract camps, Brunette said.

Smith officials declined to give specifics about how much money the programs generate. "Numbers fluctuate dramatically from year to year," Brunette said, "so it would be difficult to offer a reliable figure."

But, she said, the revenue generated by the programs is enough to provide "summer employment for our staff who would otherwise need to look elsewhere for seasonal work."

The summer programs can also be a valuable marketing tool.

Advertisements for the programs often serve as advertisements for the colleges, too.

Since 1994, Amherst College has been the flagship location of the Nike Tennis Camp. The camp’s promotional brochure describes the campus in glowing terms, noting its "exceptional tennis facilities ... 22 hard courts, five clay courts plus indoor courts."

The brochure goes on to devote significant space to the college’s picture-perfect location, "nestled in the small New England town of Amherst."

In Easthampton, The Williston Northampton School is home to nine summer camps and programs, from the World Sports Camp, which specializes in basketball, tennis, golf and tennis and attracts both U.S. and international students, to a two-week photography intensive led by professional photographers who work at Williston.

"Summer programs help us support the school financially both in terms of revenue and employees, but it's also a way to open our campus to the community and share our great facilities," said Traci Wolfe, Williston’s communications director. "Summer programs are a great introduction to the school."

Wolfe noted that parents of campers will often "wander in" to the admissions office and take a brochure. In addition, members of the Williston admissions staff occasionally make informal visits to the camps.

At Smith, said Sarah Craig, director of non-degree programs, summer programs "definitely" act as a recruiting tool, turning what was once pages 630 to 633 in the "Fiske Guide to Colleges" into a place the student has an emotional connection to even before college touring season begins.

Brunette calls Smith’s summer programs a "significant draw" in terms of attracting applicants to the college.

Students who go to college summer programs, especially the staff-led ones, she said, see Smith at its best, filled with students who are there because they are eager to learn and full of excitement. They can explore and enjoy the campus at will, usually without the pressure of exams.

The net result? That positive image carries over, Brunette said, when the students start to apply to colleges.