

SMITH  
COLLEGE

CLASS NEWS



## **SMITH COLLEGE CLASS OF 1971**

### **Fall 2023 Newsletter**

#### **Message from the Class Presidents**

From the West Coast, the East Coast and the Colorado mountains we send fond greetings to you, our cherished classmates, wherever you are! As we composed this piece for the newsletter, we got the email from our new college President Sarah Willie-LeBreton announcing Mountain Day. It gave us smiles and teary eyes and made us feel even more connected to you, our classmates!

Our 55th Reunion (May of 2026) may seem far away but there's a lot we have to do to make it happen. We are in touch with Sarah and Angelica who will be leading the planning and oversight. See their comments below... We'll be meeting with them regularly. We're also in touch with our other officers; they're making sure all is well on the usual class administration items. We're glad to have such a good team!

The relationships we built at Smith continue to deepen and nourish us. Renewing and strengthening these connections will help us as we build

towards our 55th. Please see the Class Spotlight section below for ways to stay in touch and/or re-connect. In addition, here are some other suggestions:

- Organize a local mini-reunion or just get together with a few classmates that live in your area. We can provide you with a list of classmates in your zip code(s). [Email Pinki](#).
- Zoom calls can be a simple yet wonderful way to remain connected, as well as share resources, advice on health and aging – you name it! We can facilitate those Zooms; just contact [Pinki](#) or [Cheryl Lewy](#).

Please let us know if you have any thoughts, requests, ideas, etc. about staying connected, ways to meet challenges, how to pick a next home/senior location or whatever. Let us know what you are doing so we can spread the word...let's stay in touch!

[Margery Goldman](#), [Sandy Cate](#) & [Pinki Fontein](#), Co-Presidents

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### **Our 55th Reunion!**



*Smith College alums from the class of 1971 pose together for their 30th Reunion.*

Sarah Peskin and Angelica Light, Reunion Co-Chairs, remind you that 2026 is not that far away! We're gathering thoughts and suggestions—and volunteers—and hope you'll be in touch. We'll also be speaking with college staff to make sure our class programming fits within the overall schedule. Question: Do you prefer the second Reunion weekend or the first? Reunion II is more relaxed while Reunion I includes Commencement and related activities. Let us know so that we can share your views with the college.

[Sarah Peskin](#) & [Angelica Light](#), *Reunion Co-Chairs*

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### **Class Spotlight**

Our spotlight in the Spring newsletter welcomed Holly Siegele Darzen to our class team as House Reps Chair. House Reps are especially important in Reunion planning and staging. They strengthen our class communications channels, keep our connections vibrant, share info about Reunion and inspire attendance. If you were a House Rep for our 50th (or before) and would like to stay on, or if you'd like to jump in and help this time, please [let Holly know](#). It really is a great way to stay in touch with Smith friends. Really.

Keeping our Facebook page lively and up-to-date is another way to generate and strengthen class connections. Connie Weiss is doing a great job with our class website but our class Facebook page needs someone with deeper software knowledge. Please let us know if you, a relative, or a friend can help!

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### **News from Smith**

We join the Smith College faculty, staff, students, and alumnae in welcoming new Smith President Sarah Willie-LeBreton. There will be an on-campus [Inauguration Ceremony](#) for her on October 21 starting at 2 p.m. Good news for those who have not already booked a hotel room is that the ceremony will be live-streamed. This is a fun opportunity to have an Inaugural Watch Party at your own house and connect with local classmates in person. We can provide you with contact info for classmates who live near you – just give [Pinki](#) relevant zip codes. Or you can set up a Zoom for your Smith housemates, co-majors or Junior Year Abroad friends. You would need to connect to the live-stream from the college for this but we can chat with you about that beforehand if you need help.

Check out amazing books by our women presidents.

- Jill Ker Conway's autobiography, *Road from Coorain*. She grew up in Australia and was Smith's first woman president (1975-1985)
  - Ruth Simmons' autobiography *Up Home*. She was Smith President 1995-2001
  - Sarah Willie-LeBreton's book *In Acting Black: College, Identity, and the Performance of Race*. President Willie-LeBreton discusses this on YouTube: [In Acting Black: College, Identity, and the Performance of Race](#).
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### In Memory

Sadly, we say farewell to Alice Cole Williams who died this past July. We have not heard of others who have died since our report in the Spring newsletter. We try to share condolences with their families if the college has that info. Let us know if you would like to do the same. We have notified her King housemates. We would appreciate a volunteer to help oversee this class function. Please let us know if you are willing.

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### Fundraising Update

Many thanks to all who participated in the 2023 Smith College Fundraising. Collectively we are generous and helped the college in so many ways this past fiscal year. We nearly met our Smith Fund goal by contributing \$174,000, added \$25,000 to our Class of 1971 Scholarship Fund, and blew past the goals we set for ourselves.

As your Fundraising Team, we are working to achieve participation goals above the 35% mark. Want to help us, and become a house fund representative agent for your house? Please join us in helping grow our class gift to the Smith Fund or to our awesome scholarship fund. Say yes to helping others give or give your gift now. For most of us, the size doesn't make a huge difference, it's the accumulated total that helps Smith College support our students.

We look forward to seeing you all at our reunion in 2026 and renewing the



connections we have to each other and to Smith. It's been a long time.

[Kate Bennett](#) & [Sue Burns Maltz](#), Class Fund Co-Agents

GIVE TO SMITH

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## Gift Planning Update



Most of us are at an age (73+) when we must take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from our retirement accounts, which (unless we have a Roth IRA) will generate taxable income for us.

The IRS allows us to direct all or a part (up to \$100,000/year) of our RMD to a charity (other than a donor advised fund), and the amount so directed will not be taxed as income to us, which has the potential to lower our tax bracket and provide greater tax relief than if we took the distribution and then made a charitable gift.

Mechanically, making such a gift is easy. You simply provide the institution holding the IRA with instructions as to the gift amount and recipient. The funds never pass through your hands.

In 2022 Congress created a separate, one-time option to fund a charitable annuity (and some other charitable instruments) with up to \$50,000 from your IRA. With an annuity, you receive (taxable) income payments for life and the charity (fingers-crossed, Smith) receives the balance of the funds. The rate at which Smith pays income is usually generous (currently, 6.3% for a 73-year-old; it's adjusted from time to time). The precise amount you receive in income increases as you get older, but a \$50,000 annuity today will yield about \$3,150/year.

As with all planned gifts—through your will or a trust, an annuity or other plan and of stock, a home, cash, or other assets—there is much information to be found on Smith's [Gift Planning website](#), and Sam Samuels and his staff are expert not only at the ins and outs but, even more importantly, with explaining them. You can reach them via 800-246-2056, option 4 or

[giftplanning@smith.edu](mailto:giftplanning@smith.edu). You can also check in with me.

[Deb Lans](#), *Planned Giving Chair*

MORE INFO

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### Keep in Touch & Stay Informed

- Visit [Stay Connected to Smith](#) for the latest campus news
- [The Network](#) (password protected)—find alumnae and update your profile
- [Update your contact information](#)
- Follow Smith on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#)
- Access every issue of the [Smith Alumnae Quarterly](#), going back to 1909, on the SAQ digital archive
- View past issues of [Notes from Paradise](#)
- [Be A Friend](#) (of the Libraries, Botanic Garden, Athletics, or Museum of Art)
- [Volunteer for Admissions](#)
- Join a [Smith Club](#) in your area

### Class Volunteers

[Margery Goldman](#), Co-President

[Sandy Cate](#), Co-President

[Pinki Fontein](#), Co-President

[Sarah Peskin](#), Co-Vice President & Reunion Co-Chair

[Angelica Light](#), Co-Vice President & Reunion Co-Chair

[Suzy Ross McDowell](#), Co-Secretary

[Mimi Zaugg](#), Co-Secretary

[Karen Infantino Burke](#), Treasurer

[Deb Lans](#), Planned Giving Chair

[Connie Weiss](#), Web Chair & Digital Media Coordinator

[Kate Bennett](#), Class Fund Co-Agent

[Sue Burns Maltz](#), Class Fund Co-Agent

### Connect With Us

Smith College Class of 1971

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