The Olney Current

Olney Friends School
Barnesville, Ohio
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Table of Contents

Report from the Head of School 3
Olney Friends School Board of Trustees 5
New Faculty 6
Roster of Students, Second Semester 2025-2026 7
Commencement 2026 8
Commencement Address 10
Class Representatives Commencement Speech 13
Alumni Association Meeting 15
Alumni Reunions 18
Around Campus 22
From the Development Office 26
Alumni News Notes 28
Friends Who Have Passed 34
Special Event Hosting 44

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Note: Class years are included after the names of alumni; “x” designates an alumnus or alumna who attended but did not graduate. Honorary alumni (Hon.) have contributed significantly to the life of the school, typically through employment over one year.

Christian with seniors holding just-finished graddy essays on the Senior Porch

Dear Olney Community,

Soon after Commencement, I found myself thinking about what it means to return to Olney Friends School. The Class of 2026 entered the Alumni Association almost exactly twenty-five years after my classmates and I did. Watching them accept the Class of 1976's invitation to join the Association, I wondered where life would take them and whether they, too, would someday find themselves driving down Sandy Ridge Road for a reunion, a Commencement ceremony, or simply an afternoon visit.

The question lingered longer than I expected. I returned to it while reading this issue of *The Olney Current*, reflecting on conversations from Commencement, and thinking about my own decision to return to Olney after many years away. As the first weeks of summer went by, my thoughts kept returning to responsibility.

When we first arrive at school, responsibility often appears as a collection of expectations established by adults. We complete assignments, wash dishes, feed animals, arrive on time, prepare meals, clean shared spaces, and contribute to the daily life of the community because someone expects us to do so. Few young people meet those expectations with enthusiasm. Most of us certainly did not.

As time goes by, the dishes no longer belong to someone else. The dormitory becomes our home. Meeting for Worship invites careful listening instead of

compliance. Classroom discussions matter because our questions sharpen someone else's thinking just as theirs sharpen our own. We care for campus because another student will soon occupy the same room, walk the same paths, and inherit the same opportunities. Responsibility quietly sheds the language of obligation and acquires the language of care.

Years after graduation, alumni rarely remember every equation they solved or every essay they wrote. They remember the teacher who trusted them with work they doubted they could accomplish and classmates who challenged, encouraged, forgave, and stood beside them during difficult moments. They remember discovering that their own actions affected other people's lives. Somewhere along the way, learning at Olney Friends School gradually became something they created in interaction with others. They became participants in a community whose flourishing depended, in part, upon their own choices.

That lesson extends far beyond the classroom. Knowledge alone cannot sustain a community across generations. People do. Every day, someone prepares a meal, repairs a building, mentors a student, serves on a committee, welcomes a new family, or quietly completes work that makes another person's day a little easier. These acts rarely attract attention, yet together they explain why Olney Friends School has endured so much and remained unbowed. Every generation inherits the labor, wisdom, and generosity of those who came before. Every generation carries the same responsibility to strengthen the community before passing it on to those who follow.

As another academic year gives way to summer, I find myself grateful to everyone who has accepted that responsibility during the School's nearly 190 years. Whether they taught in our classrooms, repaired buildings, prepared meals, made difficult financial decisions, tended the farm, mentored students, welcomed families, or served on the Board of Trustees, they strengthened the institution through thousands of ordinary acts of care that rarely received public recognition. Their work prepared the way for each generation that followed.

Twenty-five years from now, I hope members of the Class of 2026 find themselves on campus once again. If they do, I hope they recognize something deeper than familiar buildings and old friends. I hope they recognize in Olney Friends School the community that entrusted them with responsibility, welcomed their contributions, and invited them to leave the School stronger than they found it.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the *Olney Current*. I wish you a wonderful summer.

In Friendship,

Christian N. Acemah
HEAD OF SCHOOL

Olney Friends School Board of Trustees

2025-2026

Drew Adair ’78

Ramona Buck ’65

Santha Bundy-Farah ’64

Lisa Cayard ’72: Co-Clerk

Dottie (Stratton) Churchwell ’59: Trustee Emerita

Christopher Harris (Hon.)

Melinda “Mimi” (Gamble) Kramer ’64: Trustee Emerita

Joel Rockwell ’83

Elizabeth Sikkenga ’80: Trustee Emerita

Judy Stanfield ’65

Sandra Sterrett (Hon.)

Doug Terry ’98

Gwen Torry-Owens ’78: Co-Clerk

The Board of Trustees is always looking for committed people to serve in trustee and non-trustee roles on board committees. These committees (both standing and ad hoc) assist and oversee the school’s health and stability in important areas. Existing committees include Academic Affairs, Admissions, Advancement (also known as Development), Buildings and Grounds, Farm, and Finance; others may be created as the need arises. For more information, or to submit your name to be considered for nomination to the board or a committee, please contact Lisa Cayard at mainoffice@olneyfriends.org.

Anna Fitzgerald
Housekeeper

Anna Fitzgerald grew up in Cadiz, Ohio. She is a Christian, a mother, and a wife, and her family has two dogs, Jackson and Nova. Her hobbies include crocheting, fishing, camping, reading, and enjoying nature. She is fond of her flower garden, and she is learning to grow a vegetable garden. Anna is happy to be part of the Olney team and enjoys working with the other faculty members.

Scott Freese
Buildings and Grounds Manager

Scott Freese was born and raised in Mt. Pleasant, Ohio, where he still resides. He is a graduate of Buckeye Local High School and enjoys outdoor recreation, such as kayaking, hiking, and exploring new areas, as well as all things nature related. Some of his passions are native plant and animal identification, land and waterway conservation, organic gardening, and inspiring people to enjoy the great outdoors.

Scott has two children – a son who resides in West Virginia and a daughter who lives with him. Scott is glad to be a part of the team at Olney, and he enjoys working with his hands and repairing various things.

Roster of Students, Second Semester 2025-2026

Asterisks indicate a sibling, child, or grandchild of Olney alumni.

Freshfolk
Zara Andan, New York, NY
Korbin Gallagher, Barnesville, OH
Gabriella Nantongo, Gaithersburg, MD
Phillipa Nazziwa, Chelmsford, MA
Zoe Oleghe, Akron, OH
Neil Wysoczanski, Staten Island, NY

Sophomores
Liam Becerra,* Barnesville, OH
Lillia Davis, Cincinnati, OH
Lily Hisrich, Kent, OH
Chad Xincheng Ji, Wuxi, CN
Dorian Kobel,* Kampala, UG
Nicholas Magoola, Nakwero, UG
Kgolagano Makgabo,* New York, NY
Cole Mayanja,* Barnesville, OH
Johanna Taylor, Johannesburg, SA

Juniors
Sydney Andan, New York, NY
Shalom David Egesa, Kampala, UG
Samuel Gorsevski, Perrysburg, OH
Jowella Kirabo-Nshuti, Belleville, ON
Ashlyn Kyeyune,* Barnesville, OH
Abel Mashiri, Johannesburg, SA
Emmanuel Mpiima, Kampala, UG
Adam Mutaawe, Kampala, UG
Malkah Nakiyemba, Kampala, UG
Kreslyn Schultz,* Bethesda, OH
Maria Sears,* Berea, KY
Nicole Segawa, Kampala, UG
Vivian Segawa, Kampala, UG
Kamila Standley, Santa Elena, CR

Seniors
Giselle Jimbo,* Otovalo, EC
Jerry Kibwika, Kampala, UG
Vickie Kirabo, Secaucus, NJ
Denise Kobel, Kampala, UG
Malaika Namatovu,* Kampala, UG
Salma Owor, Kampala, UG
Inga Tusiime, Newark, NJ

From left: Denise Kobel, Jerry Kibwika, Giselle Jimbo, Malaika Namatovu, Inga Tusiime, Vickie Kirabo, Salma Owor

The Class of 2026

Please enjoy the following introduction to the members of the Class of 2026 of Olney Friends School. After each name we list their hometown, college plans, and a description of their Senior Research Paper (Graddy Essay).

Giselle Anayani Jimbo came to us from Otovalo, Ecuador and will attend the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio.
Title: Of Trauma and Biology: Healing Early Childhood Trauma Beyond Talk
Research Question: Can cognitive reflection heal trauma that formed before language and conscious reasoning developed?
Research Focus: Trauma, nervous system regulation, attachment, developmental trauma, and the physiological foundations of healing.

Jerry Nzogi Kibwika joined us from Kampala, Uganda, and will study at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio.
Title: Unshackling the Mind: A Liberation Struggle in South Sudan
Research Question: Can political independence produce genuine liberation without psychological and educational transformation?
Research Focus: Education, liberation, critical consciousness, postcolonial institutional continuity, and psychological reconstruction.

Victor (Vickie) Kirabo came to us from Kampala, Uganda, and is bound for the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio.
Title: Algorithmic Realities and a Sense of Self and Selves
Research Question: What happens to identity when algorithmic systems increasingly replace human communities as sources of validation and belonging?
Research Focus: Identity, digital culture, algorithmic influence, belonging, validation, and the transformation of human community.

Denise Victoria Kobel joined us from Kampala, Uganda, and will attend St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico.
Title: Self-Authorship: Community, Recognition, and Narrative Becoming in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *The River Between*
Research Question: How do individuals continue to author themselves within communities that demand fixed identities?
Research Focus: Identity, narrative formation, community expectations, selfhood, and the preservation of agency within environments that pressure individuals toward fixed identities.

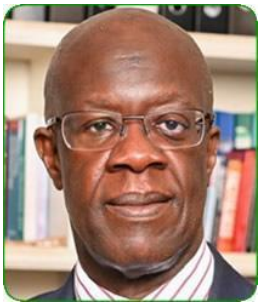
Malaika Esther Namatovu came to us from Kampala, Uganda, and will study at the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio.
Title: When Survival Becomes Harm: Intergenerational Trauma, Parenting, and the Legacy of Historical Adaptation
Research Question: When do survival and protection strategies inherited from historical trauma begin reproducing harm?
Research Focus: Trauma transmission, survival systems, parenting, epigenetics, historical memory, and intergenerational emotional inheritance.

Salma Nakkazi Owor joined us from Newark, New Jersey, and is bound for Soka University of America in Aliso Viejo, California.
Title: Structural Injustice: Hair Policies, Identity, and Colonial Continuity in Ugandan Schools
Research Question: How do educational and political systems normalize racialized identity suppression while presenting themselves as neutral institutions?
Research Focus: Identity, race, belonging, institutional neutrality, racialized identity suppression, and structural injustice.

Ingabua Kamara Tusiime came to us from Newark, New Jersey, and will attend Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey.
Title: Beyond Aid: Reimagining Development Partnerships for Africa's Future
Research Question: What partnerships, policies, and practices will foster genuine African-owned development?
Research Focus: Development, dependency, institutional sovereignty, African agency, postcolonial economic systems, and equitable international partnerships.

Commencement Address

By Prof. Nelson K. Sewankambo
June 6, 2026



Due to the travel restrictions, this address was pre-recorded and delivered at Commencement via video.

Good morning, graduates, families, faculty, trustees, alumni, and friends of Olney Friends School.

Before I begin, I must acknowledge what many of us wish were different. When I accepted the invitation to serve as your commencement speaker, I fully expected to join you in person on your beautiful campus in Barnesville, Ohio. I looked forward to meeting the members of the Class of 2026, spending time with faculty and families, and learning more about a school that Christian Acemah has spoken about with remarkable affection and enthusiasm every time our paths have crossed over the years.

Unfortunately, the current Ebola outbreak in Uganda and the resulting travel restrictions have made that visit impossible at this time. I regret that turn of events deeply. I had hoped to walk your campus, sit in Meeting for Worship, learn from your community, and experience firsthand the place that has clearly captured Christian's imagination and commitment. During the past several months, however, I have learned enough about Olney Friends School to understand why he speaks about it so often and with such pride.

While circumstances prevent me from joining you today in person, I want to make a promise to the Olney community. As soon as conditions allow safe travel, I hope to visit this school and meet many of you face-to-face. Until then, please accept my gratitude for the extraordinary honor you have given me.

I understand that the members of the graduating class selected this year's commencement speaker themselves. That knowledge makes this invitation especially meaningful. I have spent much of my professional life working with students, young professionals, researchers, and future leaders. Few privileges compare with the opportunity to address young people at a moment when one chapter of life closes and another begins.

To the members of the Class of 2026, thank you for inviting me into this important day in your lives. Over the past several months, I have learned something about your class. I understand that you have spent the year exploring questions of care, responsibility, justice, sustainability, and ethical leadership. I understand that many of you aspire to careers in the health sciences. I understand that all of you come from countries in the Global South and that you have wrestled seriously

with questions about knowledge, dignity, and what it means to contribute meaningfully to the world. Those themes resonate deeply with my own life's journey.

Today I would like to share a simple lesson that took me many years to learn. The lesson is this: Pay attention to what the world asks of you. When I graduated from medical school, I had a plan for my life. Like many graduates, I imagined a fairly straightforward path. I would practice medicine. I would care for patients. I would teach students. I would contribute in whatever ways I could.

Then history interrupted those plans. In the early 1980s, physicians in Uganda began seeing a frightening illness[1]. Young men and women arrived in our hospitals with symptoms we did not fully understand. Families watched loved ones grow weaker. Communities struggled to make sense of what they were witnessing.

At the time, nobody knew exactly what this disease was. We lacked many of the answers that people now take for granted.

Fear spread quickly.
Rumors spread even faster.
Yet amid all that uncertainty, one fact remained clear.
The people sitting in front of us needed care.
They did not need judgment.
They did not need speculation.
They needed human beings willing to listen, learn, and serve.

Young people had lost hope and thought that life was not worth living. They used to say, “We are the walking dead.”

That experience changed my understanding of leadership. Before then, I associated leadership primarily with expertise. Afterward, I came to understand that leadership begins with attention.

Attention to evidence.
Attention to people.
Attention to suffering.
Attention to voices that others ignore.
Attention to truth, especially when truth remains incomplete.
As graduates, you enter a world that often rewards certainty.
Many people will tell you they possess all the answers.
Many people will urge you to choose sides before you fully understand the question.

[1] HIV/AIDS

Many people will ask you to react quickly rather than think carefully. Resist that temptation. Some of the most important work you will ever do begins with listening.

Scientists, teachers, farmers, and Quakers know this fact of life. You cannot learn what a field needs unless you pay attention to the soil. You cannot learn what a community needs unless you pay attention to its people. You cannot learn what justice requires unless you pay attention to those who carry the greatest burdens.

Your education at Olney Friends School has prepared you well for this challenge. You have learned to live in community. You have learned to work with your hands. You have learned to care for the land. You have learned to sit in worshipful silence. Many schools teach students how to speak. Few schools teach students how to listen. That gift will serve you throughout your lives. The second lesson I would like to share concerns success.

When people introduce me, they often mention positions, fellowships, awards, and professional accomplishments. I appreciate those recognitions. They reflect the generosity of colleagues, institutions, mentors, students, family members, and friends who have accompanied me throughout my life. Yet the moments that remain most meaningful to me rarely appear on a curriculum vitae.

A student who gains confidence. A colleague who discovers her voice.

A patient who feels heard. A young researcher who realizes her ideas matter.

A difficult conversation conducted with dignity. A community strengthened through trust.

Those moments rarely attract headlines. Yet they leave lasting marks on the world. As you move forward, I hope you will measure success differently from the way society often measures it.

Class of 2026, thank you for allowing me to share this day with you. Congratulations on all that you have accomplished.

May you go forward with courage.
May you go forward with humility.
May you go forward with compassion.
May you go forward with a commitment to truth, service, and human dignity.
This will serve or shape your character.

In August 12963, Martin Luther King Jr., here in the United States, said “I have a dream: that my four little children will live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

May your lives contribute to a healthier, more just, and more humane world. Thank you, and I hope to meet you in person before too long.

Class Representatives Commencement Speech

By Vickie Kirabo & Denise Kobel

Vickie: Good morning, faculty, families, students, and most importantly, the Class of 2026. Thank you for coming to celebrate this wonderful class. My name is Vickie Kirabo. I am a four-year senior, and beside me is Denise Kobel, a year-and-a-half senior.

Before I came to Olney, I believed I could thrive alone and handle anything. But when I arrived, I struggled with presentations because I was out of my context and out of my depth. I felt shaken, out of my element, surrounded by a new environment and unfamiliar people. During my first year, I cried every time I had to present, and I would run to Vicki Lowry afterward. I remember her telling me it was okay, that I would do better next time, and that everyone here loved me.

Denise: During our senior trip to Hocking Hills, after our first meal together, someone pulled out a card game called Let's Talk About It. Looking back, I am tempted to credit the game for making us vulnerable with each other, but that would be wrong. The game did not make us honest. It gave us a choice: to be open with each other and to enact the very work of care and responsibility we had studied together that year. Every person in this class made that choice.

When I first arrived here, a faculty member sat with me and explained something about silence that I have not stopped thinking about since. He told me that people struggle to sit in silence, even for ten minutes during morning collection, because of fear. Stillness forces reflection, and reflection means looking inward, staring into a void that stares back and shows you exactly who you are, because no one knows you better than yourself.

During that card game, and throughout this year, the Class of 2026 sat in that kind of stillness and stared into that void. As we looked into it, we saw ourselves. Truly seeing ourselves, and our potential, was the hardest thing we had to face.

My own experience with this began with a summer program I attended last year. With the support of my teachers and my family, I was accepted into a wonderful and competitive program. As the months passed and the date drew closer, a voice in my head grew louder: *You are not good enough. You do not deserve to be here. You are a fraud.* That same faculty member sat with me and named exactly what was happening. He told me I was self-sabotaging, and he did not let me hide from myself. Instead, he showed me that I was simply sitting in that silence. That experience, together with the moment our class shared at Hocking Hills, taught me that Olney sees us, even when we are working hard not to be seen, as I was.

At Olney, people with different backgrounds, different beliefs, and different ways of moving through the world all choose to be vulnerable, with themselves and with each other.

Understanding this, I would not call Olney an easy place to be. It feels like a pressure cooker, because we live with the same people we study with, eat with, and argue with, and later choose to be vulnerable with. Here, everyone around you is doing the hardest work a person can do: figuring out who they actually are. That work is neither comfortable nor easy.

The lesson in our stories, and in our class's story, is this: being at Olney asks you to be responsible and vulnerable, for yourself and for this community. Those demands force you to face the parts of yourself that many people are afraid to embrace. I was self-sabotaging, but I chose to persevere through it.

Vickie: Being part of the Class of 2026 has taught us that the different cultures, beliefs, and people who move through this place are what sustain this community. Standing at the edge of that void this year, we learned that we were all still becoming.

To the faculty, the staff, and the families in this room: you made this possible. You held us accountable when we needed it, and you held us up when we could not stand alone. Thank you.

To the Class of 2026: you did not flinch from the difficult thing. You sat with uncertainty and kept moving. You looked into the void and did not disappear into it. You chose honesty when silence would have been easier. You made space for people who arrived with nothing in common except the willingness to try.

Denise: Congratulations, Class of 2026. We are proud to stand here with you.

Alumni Association Meeting

At 7:30 PM on Friday, June 5, Alumni Association President **John Stanley '71** welcomed the crowd of alumni, friends, students, and family members gathered in Stillwater meetinghouse. The traditional Roll Call was conducted. A grand total of about 70 alumni were in attendance there and/or at Commencement.

After the Roll Call, **Anne Marie Taber '79** spoke briefly on the importance of alumni to all aspects of the life of Olney Friends School, described the current year's Reunion Fundraising drive, and presented each senior with *A Quaker Book of Wisdom* by Robert Lawrence Smith, gifted by an anonymous alumna.

From the facing bench, **Max Vogt '76** stepped up to the podium to welcome the class of 2025 into the Alumni Association on behalf of the 50-year class of 1976. The invitation was accepted by **Inga Tusiime '26**, who then proceeded to deliver a brief address (below) to the Class of 2027 and the student body.

Christian Acemah '01, Head of School, spoke next to welcome our new Honorary Alumni. Each of the following individuals has contributed significantly to the life of the school over a year or more: **Alexander Trouten**, Science teacher, Registrar, and Dorm Staff; **Lorie Dowler**, part-time Dorm Staff; and **Amanda Sobutka**, part-time Admin Staff.

As his report on the State of the School, Christian then invited the seniors to present on some global topics they have been studying this year, which they did both clearly and competently, complete with an impressive slide show.

In closing, John Stanley lit a candle and invited attenders to speak from the silence in memory of alumni who have passed recently. Those individuals will have been remembered in this, or a previous, issue of the *Olney Current*.

The chart below shows the numbers of alumni who returned from each year or range of years. The blue numbers represent the percentage of living alumni returning in that class. Some of those counted here showed up the next day at Commencement (not Alumni Meeting).

Year, reunion	*Count*	*Year, reunion*	*Count*
Honorary	11	1976 – 50 year	12 (40%)
Before 1956	1	1977-1985	4
1956 – 70 year	6 (75%)	1997-2005	3
1957-1965	1	2006 – 20 year	1 (8%)
1966 – 60 year	8 (31%)	2016 – 10 year	3 (23%)
1967-1975	13	2017-2025	5

Letter to the Class of 2027 (and the rest of the student body)

By Ingabua Tusiime for the Class of 2026

Dear Class of 2027,

As we prepare to leave Olney Friends School, we find ourselves reflecting on what this community gave us and what we hope it will continue to give you. Many of us arrived from different countries, cultures, faiths, and life experiences. Some of us arrived knowing no one. Some arrived homesick, uncertain, and fearful, with expectations that changed almost immediately. We quickly learned that Olney does not offer a simple path through high school. It asks something more of us. This community asks us to live together. That sounds simple until you try it.

Living together means sharing rooms, meals, classrooms, responsibilities, victories, disappointments, and long winter months. It means learning how to disagree respectfully, how to apologize, and how to care for people whose experiences differ from your own. It means discovering that the people who challenge you often teach you the most. Community does not simply exist. We build it every day through our choices and our care for one another.

You will have moments when you wonder whether you belong here. Every one of us has had those moments. Stay anyway. You will make mistakes. Learn from them and move forward.

Senior year will challenge you. The pressure will feel constant at times. Senior Research Papers, oral examinations, presentations, college applications, and decisions about the future will compete for your attention. There will be moments when you doubt yourselves and moments when the path ahead feels unclear. When those moments come, remember that senior year does not consist solely of accomplishments and obligations.

Make time for friendship. Make time for laughter. Make time for late conversations, shared meals, and the small moments that seem ordinary while they happen. Attend the performances. Watch the games. Go on trips. Sit with people you do not know well. Join conversations that challenge your thinking. Spend time in Meeting for Worship even when silence feels uncomfortable.

Eat the pizza. Stay up a little too late talking with friends every once in a while. Some of the moments that seem ordinary now will become the memories you carry longest.

Take your classes seriously. Your teachers ask difficult questions because they respect your ability to wrestle with difficult answers. Lean into that challenge. The Senior Research Paper, the Oral Examination, and the many conversations you will have throughout the year will demand more than memorization. They will ask you to think, question, listen, and grow.

Trust yourselves. You have already overcome challenges that once seemed impossible. The same resilience that carried you through your first three years at Olney will carry you through your fourth.

Lean on one another. Support one another. Celebrate one another's successes. The people beside you now understand this journey better than anyone else ever will. Most importantly, please take care of one another.

The strength of Olney Friends School has never come from its buildings, traditions, or programs alone. The strength of this school comes from people who choose, day after day, to care for one another and to build a community that welcomes others into it.

The students who came before us entrusted this community to us. We now entrust it to you. You inherit that responsibility now. Leave Olney Friends School stronger than you found it.

Lastly, we each leave you with a final bit of guidance:

Denise: Please remember to go hard on your ideas and easy on yourself. Your work deserves your full effort, and you deserve your own kindness.

Giselle: Be honest with yourself and don't let other people define who you are.

Jerry: Criticism is meant to help you, not to break you, so accept all the help and advice you receive.

Inga: Nothing in life is guaranteed. Don't become complacent because everything promised to you can be taken away.

Malaika: Ela YOLO!!!!

Salma: Be Bold, Be Authentic, Be You!

Vickie: Always keep in mind that nothing is too difficult for you. Be positive about everything.

With gratitude, confidence, and affection,

The Class of 2026

70-year class of 1956. L-R Gladys (Satterthwait) Trzcinski, Wanda (Edgerton) and John Rockwell, Bob Rockwell, Walter Cooper

60-year class of 1966 (5 of 8). L-R Maria (Smith) Kaminstein, DR Stanley, JJ Smith, Fred Cooper, Jean (Rockwell) Cooper

50-year class of 1976. Back, L-R: Cathy (Cayard) Habschmidt, Elizabeth Stanley, Max Vogt, Gary Smith, Lynn (Stratton) Murnahan, Margaret Wade, David Smith. Front, L-R: Andrew Erdman, Greg Torry, Brian Lake. At right: Maria (Gorecki) Nowak

L-R Darlene Stanley '75, Karen (Stanley) Campf '72, Edith Starbuck '73, Deborah Shaw '74, Ruth (Shaw) Brown '72, Lisa Cayard '72

L-R Neil ’66 and Andrea Scheid, Peter Reid ’65

L-R: Joel Rockwell ’83, Jonathan Wilkinson (behind Joel), Franklin & Danielle Wilkinson, Roseanna (Rockwell) Wilkinson ’01, Trey Lundy ’01

L-R: Vince & Archer Cheng, Leonard Guindon ’70, Kerri (Rogers) Cheng ’13

Laurance Simpson IV ’06, Catesby Simpson ’07, Leonard Guindon ’70

Faith Schanks ’24, Ariel Templeton ’23

Big tent Lunch on the Lawn after Commencement
(tables at left: John Stanley, R front with the class of ’76)

Dean of Learning Report, 4th Quarter 2025-2026

By Anne Marie Taber

Please enjoy this sampling of topics studied and outcomes achieved this spring.

In the Humanities, 9th grade studied the decline of Greek rule, the rise and fall of the Roman empire, and the beginning of the Dark Ages. Sophomores' study of the Middle Ages examined primary and secondary sources on Joan of Arc and the Crusades, including a history by Anna Komnene (Comnena), a Byzantine Greek princess. Juniors read important works about 20th century America with an emphasis on industrialization, the continuing presence of Indigenous Americans, the World Wars, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Cold War, all while completing the Junior Research Paper. Having read Suzanne Simard's *Finding the Mother Tree,* they also participated in a large-scale transdisciplinary project planting native trees with Biology and Agricultural Science students. Finally, seniors wrapped up their year of exploring global cultures, philosophies, and human experiences with intense and focused work on strengthening, editing, and completing the Senior Research Paper.

In the Sciences, Biology students identified and made posters of wildflowers. Chemistry focused on types of chemical reactions, demonstrating examples of each in the lab, along with ionic, covalent, and metallic bonding, and stoichiometry. Physics learned about electromagnetic forces and circuits after completing a bridge-building lab on the practical application of tension, shear, torsion, and compression forces. Agricultural Science designed and planted the Ag Sci Garden, continued working with chickens, and joined in the afore-mentioned transdisciplinary project planting native trees around the edge of several hay fields. That project highlighted the importance of biodiversity in both forestry and agriculture. Finally, the fourth-term Environmental Science curriculum concentrated on two things: the Envirothon, where our teams placed 8th and 11th out of 50, and a culminating essay about the future of climate change mitigation including each student's predicted role therein. One senior completed an independent study in Enviro by working with the Captina Conservancy director on various indoor and outdoor projects, culminating in the creation of a promotional video.

In other classes: Spanish 2 read a novel about Frida Kahlo and created a self-portrait, while Spanish 3 explored the theme of immigration through music, history, and current events. Quakerism students discussed conditions that led to the rise of Quakerism, the life of George Fox, how Quaker beliefs differ from other Christian sects, Quaker pioneers in the local area, and Quakerism at Olney. An elective course on African Feminisms introduced students to important essays, Nobel speeches (Wangari Maathai), films (*The No. 1 Ladies' Detectives Agency*), music, poetry, and literature including Mariama Ba's *Scarlet Song.*

Physics bridge-building lab. L-R: Malkah, Maria, Alexander, Shalom, Nicole

Students learn about goat birthing from Roseanna (Rockwell) Wilkinson '01. L-R Gabby, Korbin, Malaika, Zoe, Phillipa, Roseanna

Students prepare for Gym Ex, above and below

Celebration of the Arts featured many examples of self-expression, ranging from photography and drawing to music and textiles.

Above: Junior Kreslyn and teacher Devin perform. Below: Teacher Hanna's work.

Junior Social took students to nearby Barkcamp State Park for fun and games, such as the sack race shown above.

From the Development Office

By Jennifer Compston-Strough

As Olney Friends School marks its 150th year in Barnesville, our faithful supporters once again helped us achieve our Annual Fund goal! Together, alumni, their families, friends of the school, and our business partners contributed $306,069 toward that $300,000 target. A week prior to our June 30 deadline, we still needed $15,000 to complete the Annual Fund. We relayed that message via social media, and you responded in a big way! We are grateful to all who contributed throughout the year, and especially to those who stepped up at the last minute to help us cross the finish line. We received 273 gifts totaling $144,256 in the fourth quarter alone.

Farm Manager Don Guindon urges support for the Annual Fund in a video shared on Facebook.

We also appreciate the unwavering support of the Olney Friends School Board of Trustees. As the deadline neared, members stepped up with a $30,000 matching fund to raise the final dollars needed. A special thank you is also due to the parent of an alumnus who gave $25,000 toward that match effort.

Finally, the Development Office thanks those who helped spread the word by appearing in videos that we could share with you: Head of School Christian Acemah, Class of 2025 graduates Denise Kobel and Vickie Kirabo (who also made their first gifts to Olney as new alumni), and, of course, **Don Guindon '74**.

We now turn our attention to the 2026-27 Annual Fund and to efforts such as "Friends: The One Where We Fix Up the Gym." Now that the new metal roof is in place, this appeal to renew the interior of the gym is already being supported by **Paul Neumann '73**, who has pledged $20,000, and by the **Guindon family (Lloyd '77, Janet Hammer '76, Don '74, Leonard '70, and Dale '67),** who matched that gift – all in honor of beloved former teachers **Larry (Hon.)** and **Cleda (Ewald) Mott '57**. Planned improvements include insulating and updating walls, windows, and the ceiling; repairing or replacing exterior doors; installing a new HVAC system; and repairing and refinishing the hardwood floor.

In other Development news, the office successfully obtained a few grants during the spring. Thanks to inspiration from teacher **Hanna Vera (Hon.)**, Olney sought $500 from the Ohio Valley Mall in St. Clairsville. The retail outlet awarded the money, which will be used to purchase additional camping gear to supplement the many gifts received last year via our Amazon Wish List. The Development Office also received two grants totaling $4,000 from the Ravdin Fund through the

Friends Council on Education. Those funds will be used for development training for faculty and board members.

Giving Back to Olney

Current and future members of the Olney Friends School community thank you for considering a donation. Here are some ways to join our shared mission:

Annual Fund Gifts: The annual fund helps meet the school's operating needs, including teacher salaries, classroom equipment, guest speakers, and field trips. We accept cash gifts (in person) and check or credit cards gifts by mail (address below) or online (www.olneyfriends.org/support-olney/).

Monthly Gifts: Many friends find it more convenient to set up a recurring monthly gift than to budget one larger donation. Use your online bank account's bill payment feature, or your credit card or PayPal at our web page (below).

Matching Gifts: Your donation may be eligible for a corporate match from your employer. Many companies have matching gift programs; ask yours if they do and how it works.

Stocks, Securities, and Mutual Funds: Giving appreciated assets maximizes your contribution. Due to capital gains considerations, it is more beneficial to transfer shares directly to Olney than to sell them and donate the proceeds. Please contact us for transfer instructions.

Planned Gifts: Friends at any age can designate Olney as beneficiary of an insurance policy or retirement fund, establish a charitable gift annuity through Friends Fiduciary Corporation (FFC), or make a bequest in your will. Please contact us for more information and let us know about any plans you have made.

Endowment Gifts: An endowment gift is a permanent investment in the future of your values at Olney Friends School. A robust endowment confers the ability to withstand socioeconomic disruptions and mitigates our dependence on an annual fund.

Amazon Wish List: To help meet specific needs of the school, our Amazon Wish List features everything from furniture to classroom equipment and cleaning supplies. *Note: If you purchase one or more items to have delivered to the school, please include a note identifying yourself so we can acknowledge your gift and thank you.*

Development Office: development@olneyfriends.org
Jennifer Compston-Strough, Director; Shea Bugala, Assistant
Olney Friends School • 61830 Sandy Ridge Rd., Barnesville, OH 43713
740 425-3655 • www.olneyfriends.org/support-olney

85-Year Class of 1941

Mary (Foster) Cadbury
Dear friends at Commencement: My class has a reunion this year, its 85th. I graduated in 1941. I wish I could be present in Barnesville in 2026. I believe the School, Friends Boarding School (FBS) as it was then, is quite different now, and much more expensive for which I am sorry.

I was part of the Wilburite (Conservative) Yearly Meeting in Rhode Island with relatives in Ohio Yearly Meeting (Wilburite as well). FBS was an exact fit for me, and I loved my two years there. My best friend and I were close the rest of our lives. After we'd become close, we learned we were double second cousins once removed!

After college I began teaching (no training, just observation over the years) at George School, a Quaker-run boarding school near Philadelphia. With that experience (two years) I came back to be a teacher & dorm adult at FBS for three years. My future husband, **Chris Cadbury (Hon.)**, and I overlapped for one year. We had known each other in New England. We enjoyed being part of the small teachers' group together.

Best wishes to you all, Tr. Mary

75-Year Class of 1951

Thomas Hanson
I have lost track of my classmates over time. I don't plan to attend the reunion, as I have been living in Arizona since 2014 and not traveling much anymore, not that I wouldn't like to. It would be interesting to hear from other old grads from 1951. I hope some can get there and get reacquainted.

I'm still able to get around and drive myself to most appointments. If it is too far, my son-in-law will help, they only live 45 minutes away. My son and his wife live back in Fayetteville, New York along with a granddaughter, her husband, and two great grandsons (their own house). Another granddaughter and husband live in Boston.

I still go to the weight room twice a week and play golf at least once a week. My wife got called to heaven back in 2020, thus I am learning household chores. I am enjoying the warm (hot) weather we have here.

Greetings to all, Tom Hanson (tmhans84@gmail.com)

70-Year Class of 1956

John and Wanda (Edgerton) Rockwell
Wanda, from Winona, Ohio, was a four-year senior. John, from Fairhope, Alabama and Monteverde, Costa Rica, joined the class in junior year. We started dating in our senior year, 1956, and married in June of 1960.

John attended and graduated from Wilmington College. Wanda had a "gap year" working as proofreader for the Salem News. She attended Otterbein College in Westerville, transferred mid-sophomore year to Wilmington, and worked in college public relations.

After graduation, John did his alternative service teaching at Olney, while Wanda worked there as librarian, teaching typing, etc. Children **Faith ('80)** and **Joel ('83)** were born in Barnesville. In '66 the family moved to Virginia Beach, VA with interest in the Friends meeting and school. John worked as an auto mechanic and mechanical engineer. After six years Olney called, saying they needed a secretary, and the family returned to Olney. John taught science and math before becoming an engineer for Watt Car and Wheel Co. in Barnesville.

In 1970 we helped to organize Raven Rocks, Inc., raising and selling thousands of Christmas trees. Using Malcolm Wells' plans we renovated the 1892 Amburg Danford house on the Raven Rocks property and lived there for 43 years. We both commuted from the Rocks to Barnesville where John was Watt engineer and Wanda worked at Olney. In 1985 Wanda became a legal secretary for **Tom Hampton '68** in Barnesville. In 1999 the leadership of the school changed from Ohio Yearly Meeting to an alumni board. Wanda returned to work initially in admissions and then as school secretary until she retired in 2005.

John left Watt Car and Wheel in 1987 to help neighbors **Rich '63 and Mary Sidwell (Hon.)** build their Malcolm Wells-designed house at Raven Rocks. In 1991, as a self-employed designer and drafter, John started helping clients with engineering and home design projects. Rockwell Design is still open for business!

In July 2024 we sold the Amburg House and moved to a two-bedroom, bath and a half apartment at the Walton Retirement Home in Barnesville: 1270 E. Main St., Barnesville, 43713; 740-309-5003; jonda99@gmail.com; wandarockwell@gmail.com.

Class of 1967

Christopher K. Starr
MUTUAL EDIFICATION: During my time at Olney in the mid-1960s, my classmates and I were exposed to many different teachers. Some were outstanding, and I would say that all of the others were at least okay. What I think is less obvious is how much the students learned from each other. Two examples.

Tr Lynne Shivers one day mentioned the cave formations called stalactites and stalagmites. At this, Chris Starbuck raised his hand to tell us how he kept in mind which is which. “A stalactite sticks tightly to the ceiling, while a stalagmite rises mightily from the floor.” I have never forgotten this. The thing to bear in mind is that it doesn’t matter whether a mnemonic is elegant, it only has to work. I believe it was Chris who also pointed out one day in class, regarding the two kinds of conducting vessels in plants, “Xylem up and phloem down.” Get it? Flow ’em down. Another keeper.

One day Tr Dottie Stratton Churchwell was late for Geometry class. This was during a time when Bob Salov spent his Saturday mornings in the Barnesville hospital as a welcome observer. Waiting for class to get underway, we asked Bob whether he had been present for anything notable the previous Saturday. “Oh yes” he told us. “I was in the operating room to observe an appendectomy.” We were interested, so he said he would show us. He laid me down on Tr Dottie’s desk at the front of the classroom, pulled up my shirt, and with a marker drew a line across my lower abdomen. “Okay, here is the opening incision. Now I am cutting further down. Reaching the appendix, I ligature it off. Now I’m sewing my way back out.” And just as Tr Dottie entered the room he drew cross-hatches on the opening incision, and the operation was over. That was downright gripping.

That sort of thing was an important part of my early education. Is it still much the same at Olney today, more than 60 years later?

Class of 1968

Jo Smith

Warmest of Greetings from Phoenix! I have just returned from closing out my apartment in Bologna, Italy and was pretty sad to say goodbye to my Italiano friends, but it was time to let go and end this lively 5-year chapter of my life. My caregiver duties for my sister here in Phoenix have a higher priority these days, but I am hoping to get to Montreal and Quebec City soon for a visit and some French language classes. The Canadian government just changed their citizenship laws in December and it turns out that anyone who can prove they have a Canadian ancestor is considered a “Lost Canadian”. Great Grandpa, George Washington Smith, was born in Ontario and it feels like I have won the lottery – what a hoot, eh? I didn’t even know I was “Lost” and now, at age 75, I am finally found. Oh Canada!

55-Year Class of 1971

Lucie (Starr) Chartrand
Has it been 55 years already! Thanks to our mother hen, John Stanley, that I'm even writing something.

All is well here in Almonte ON. I'm thankful every day for our two children and their partners, and our two grandsons. Pat, my husband, whom I've been with for almost 52 years, was diagnosed with radiation and vascular dementia three years ago. He is my full-time job now! We go through the good times and bad times together.

We are still in our home that Pat built for us 45 years ago. A very peaceful place outside of town. I had to give up our big vegetable garden, but our son built me a raised garden box that I plant a few things in each year, for some fresh veggies. I have 2 big rock walls and a flower garden to tend. I fill large pots with flowers. This keeps me busy in the heat of summer. In the fall I have 4 apple trees that need picking and pies to make. In the spring I help with the firewood for the next winter. And the winter, I'm keeping wood in the house for the wood stove, and of course, shoveling snow. My life is full!

Gretchen (Neumann) Stone
While I would love to see you all at our 55th reunion, I'll be celebrating 50 years since graduating from Macalester College instead.

A quick synopsis of post-Olney life: college, medical school, Family Practice training, marriage and 3 kids. When my dad died in 1996, we returned to Butterworth Farm and southwest Ohio, where I had grown up. I was happy to re-connect with Olney by serving on the Board during its exciting years of transition, 1998 to 2005.

After my mom died in 2003, Phil and I thought it was time to realize our long-held dream of living in a country where our kids could learn Spanish and expand their cross-cultural knowledge. We wound up in Tasmania, Australia for a one year "working holiday". Twenty one years later, we are dual citizens. We thought that year abroad would just mean that our eldest entered Olney as a sophomore instead of a fresh-person. Instead, all three kids graduated from Friends School of Hobart, the largest Quaker school in the world!

We love the town of Scottsdale, Tasmania, where I still fill in as a family doctor.. We usually return to Ohio in the spring, throw ourselves into projects on the farm and support righteous political campaigns, While none of our kids became fluent in Spanish, they have done their part for cross-cultural awareness. Katie married Ben (Australian), Woody married Komaki (Japanese), and Pete married Aysha (Canadian). Now comes the dilemma of being able to spend time with far-flung loved ones.

After getting a new hip two years ago, we are trying to fit in as many outdoor adventures as we can manage before something else gives out. Tasmania is incredibly beautiful – as is Ohio. How lucky can we get? We welcome visitors in both places.

50-Year Class of 1976

Janet (Guindon) Hammer
It is hard to believe that it has been 50 years since graduating from Olney! I took two years off following graduation and then pursued an environmental science degree from Ohio University. My science background led to 32 years working as a research technician to three different professors at Ohio University in the Biochemistry and Biomedical Science departments.

I met my husband as a student, and we were married in 1986. We purchased 130 acres and an old farmhouse on a dead-end road out in the county. This was a wonderful setting to raise our two sons. Our oldest lives in New Hampshire and works for the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation. Our youngest son lives in Michigan and works for General Motors. Both sons have met and married lovely girls, both with Indian backgrounds. We are learning much about the culture of India and have been warmly welcomed into their extended families. My husband and I are both retired and keep busy on our property with various projects including tapping 315 maple trees in the late winter for boiling into syrup.

I am a member of Chesterfield Monthly Meeting which is affiliated with Ohio Yearly Meeting. Our Meeting is very small and has had two elders pass in the last two years leaving me the main person keeping the Meeting open and alive. I have been learning about the Quaker history of this area and was excited to learn that I have ancestors on both sides of my parent's families that lived in this area in the 1800's. Belmont County Quakers migrated here in the 1830's and established the village of Chesterhill. The Meeting has been active here since 1834! I will do my best to keep it open for worship as long as I am able.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our reunion! 12666 Parmiter Road Amesville, OH 45711, hammerj@ohio.edu

35-Year Class of 1991

Jon Mandel
35 years wow! The world has changed so much in 35 years and not all for the better! Technology is getting more and more advanced as time goes on and on. I've lost too many family members, including both parents, both grandparents, and too many others to mention. Unfortunately, we've lost classmates and former teachers and staff too.

I live in Waterford, Michigan. north of Detroit and help three adults with Autism with daily living skills and outings. Pay is not great, and gas and upkeep of car is expensive. I'd LOVE a cash side hustle to get more financially secure if it exists? Open to ideas. I am glad I've had a few different chances to visit Olney and see former classmates and staff, including one wedding where two fellow classmates got married to each other.

Hobbies include some travel but always would love more. Spending time outdoors. Volunteering, reading, music, etc. Pickleball, which I think Olney should consider offering, if they don't already. It is the fastest growing sport in the world. I would LOVE to hear from any Olney folks. Jon William on Facebook, jmandel91@gmail.com. I'm not active on TikTok or Instagram etc. I miss the community feel of Olney. I find out, time and time again, it is hard to find out there!! All my best wishes today and always.

Class of 2004

Molly Baskin
Hello, I moved recently and my new address is: 1125 Potrero Ave, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Class of 2005

Lindsey (Sprague) Crabtree
Our family welcomed a baby girl last year, so now we have two daughters: Avalon (3) and Ingrid (9 months). We have moved to Stockholm, Sweden where I work as a service design manager. I've changed my last name to Crabtree, and my email is hello@lindseycrabtree.com if anyone wants to say hello.

Class of 2014

Teddy Ha
Per posts on Facebook and Instagram, Teddy Ha got married around November 11, 2025. Congratulations!

Class of 2023

Jonathan Hutson
Jonathan Hutson and Fedora Bodkin were married on June 14, 2026. Some of us met her when they came to Commencement 2025 reunions. Congratulations!

Merlin Taber '43

Merlin Arthur Taber of Urbana passed away peacefully in the early morning of Saturday, April 25, 2026. To the end of his 99 years, he was smiling and interacting with those around him. He was preceded in death by an older sister, Louise Kautz, and younger brother, Richard Taber.

Merlin was born November 24, 1926, in Anamosa, Iowa, to Melvin "Louis" and Esther Wilcox Taber. His father was a farmer, and Merlin often referred to himself as "just a farm boy," despite leaving the fields before age 20. After being taught by his mother in a one-room schoolhouse, he attended Friends Boarding School in Barnesville, Ohio, where he graduated from high school. As a Quaker, he enlisted as a Conscientious Objector near the end of WWII; during 1944 and 1945, he volunteered for four placements, seeing in each an opportunity to go somewhere new. The final placement was at Byberry in Philadelphia, a state hospital for the mentally ill. Working as an attendant – that is, keeping peace in a gym full of men with mental health and addiction issues – he was deeply shocked by the miserable conditions there. He resolved to join the developing movement to create community-based mental health services, which would lead to closure of such institutions.

Returning to Iowa, Merlin attended William Penn College in Oskaloosa, graduating in Sociology and Mathematics in 1948. He married Ella "Jo" Baker, a student whom he had met there. For a brief time they lived in Oklahoma, where Merlin had relatives, and he apprenticed to be a carpenter. But within two years they had moved back to Iowa and had their first child, and Merlin began to pursue further education. At the University of Iowa, Merlin received his MA in Social Work in 1948. He served as a child welfare worker for DCFS while teaching and working toward a Ph.D. When Merlin received his Ph.D. in Sociology in 1962, the family, now including children David, Sara and Rachel, was living outside Iowa City on Lake Macbride, in a house Merlin designed and built largely by himself.

In 1964 Merlin came to the University of Illinois, where he would remain on the faculty of the School of Social Work until his retirement in 1990. He developed a methodology for the design and analysis of programs, which he taught in the School and used in a variety of large projects. His research was widely recognized as well, and he received multiple funding awards from the National Institute of Mental Health to assess the state of mental health and substance abuse research. Merlin was active in mentoring Ph.D. students, and had an impact on many who went on to have influential academic careers.

With his interest in services for strengthening families and for home care of frail and disabled individuals, he sought to build relationships with state and local service agencies. He saw these as the front lines of improving service delivery to

people in need. In his own words, innovation and improvements in public programs were the focus of his work.

In 1972, Merlin married Marilyn Flynn, another Social Work faculty member. Together they traveled for both work and pleasure, played tennis, and enjoyed family life. Moving toward retirement Merlin pursued passions including boating, carpentry, and photography.

After his retirement, Merlin was invited by doctoral graduates to lecture, teach and visit Schools of Social Work in several countries, including Europe, China and India. During this period, he reconnected with a family friend, Lidia Geiser, in Switzerland. In 2000 they married and began a decade of bi-continental living. They kept a home in CU where Merlin's children and grandchildren could visit. While in Switzerland, they often stayed at Lidia's family farmhouse in Mont Soleil or in Bern with her brother Sam and his wife Heidi. They especially enjoyed hiking, biking, and hosting friends and relatives in either realm.

The couple were devoted to one another, acting as one unit to keep things going through their eventual transition to assisted living in Urbana. After Lidia's passing in January 2024, the support Merlin received from both family and staff helped him adjust to being on his own. He never complained, and he was without pain and in good spirits till the end. He will be greatly missed by his three children who feel grateful for all they received from their father: his love and a model for living a long and productive life.

Merlin was an active and esteemed participant in the Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting over many years. A memorial service will be held in late summer 2026 at the Friends meetinghouse. The Merlin Taber Collaborative Research Fund was established at the School of Social Work as a tribute to Merlin's dedication and influence. Donations in his honor may be made to the fund or to the American Friends Service Committee.

Oliver Kirk ’47

Oliver James Kirk died 8/25/25 at the age of 95. He graduated from Olney in 1947. He married the love of his life, **Sara Louise (Guindon) ’55** in 1955. They had four children together (Dan, Wayne, Cindy and Lyle) and raised them on the family dairy farm.

Frances (Smith) Taber ’47

Frances Irene (Smith) Taber passed away peacefully, with family members singing by her side, in Barnesville, Ohio, on June 21st, 2026. She was born March 2nd, 1930, to Sheldon and Mary (Moore) Smith of the Quaker community in Whittier, Iowa. Her family later moved to Barnesville for a few years and then settled in Middleton, Ohio.

Frances was deeply involved in the Quaker community throughout her life along with her first husband and the father of her children, **William P. "Bill" Taber Jr. '45**. They made their home in Barnesville and worked at Olney Friends School. They also spent several important years at Pendle Hill, a Quaker study center near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Throughout her life, Frances was a loving and creative mother, homemaker, teacher, writer, cook, and spiritual leader who loved beauty, art, and flowers. Frances's deep concern for ethical simplicity was balanced by her eye for beauty. Her artistic side was expressed through her delicious, nutritious cooking, beautiful floral arrangements, and peaceful home. She gardened, baked, sewed, and helped nurture generations of young seekers after Truth.

After William Taber passed in 2005, Frances married **Richard Simon (Hon.)** of Barnesville, Ohio, where they spent 20 happy years together with children and grandchildren nearby.

Frances was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Walter, and her first husband. She is survived by her husband Richard, daughters **Anne Marie Taber '79** (Steve Martin) and **Debora Taber '85** (Robert Becerra); grandchildren Jeremy, **Timothy x'10,** and **Daniel Washburn '13** and **Marisa x'20, Julian '23,** and **Liam Becerra '28**; and one great-grandchild, Alder Ray Davisson Washburn.

Frances has been laid to rest at the Stillwater Cemetery. A public Memorial Meeting for Worship was held at the Stillwater Meetinghouse in Barnesville, Ohio, on Saturday, July 18th. A video recording may become available (contact a daughter). In lieu of flowers, her family would welcome memorial donations to Olney Friends School.
www.campbellplumlymilburnfuneralhome.com/obituaries/frances-taber

Elvina (Thomas) Krekler '53

In the rolling hills of Southeastern Ohio, in the midst of the Great Depression and winter weather, a red-haired baby girl was born at home on February 6, 1935, within a close-knit community of Conservative Friends (Quakers) near Harrisville, Ohio. Her parents, the young Alfred and Harriet (Stanley) Thomas, named her Elvina Mary in memory of her mother's elder sister. Her birth was announced to her paternal grandmother, Martha (Binns) Thomas, who lived 1.5 miles away, by a simple postcard.

Elvina was the ninth generation of the Stanley family of American Quakers, her direct ancestors having first arrived from England to our Virginia shores in the 1660s. She was the eldest of four, with siblings **Eva Mae Cope '55, Edith**

Marlene Cooper ’58, and Walter Arthur ’61. All were happily raised as Conservative Friends, speaking the Plain Language and part of a larger family of grandmothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, neighbors and Meeting folk. They belonged to Shortcreek Monthly Meeting, part of Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends (Conservative), which would play a huge role in their upbringing and support system.

Elvina received her guarded Friends secondary education at Olney Friends School (then Friends Boarding School) near Barnesville, Ohio, thus becoming the third generation to find both lifelong friends and her spouse among the other Quaker attendees. Her two children, **Debora Elizabeth Osborn ’73** and **Suzanne Jeanette Krekler-McClelland ’74**, would later follow in these footsteps of tradition.

She graduated from Olney in 1953 and attended Earlham College in Richmond, IN. Her marriage to **Bruce Krekler ’52** two years later in 1955 took her to live in other parts of Ohio amongst other less conservative Friends communities. Two little girls, the delight of her life, were born to them within the next two years. They lived at first near a nursery near Akron, and later at a grain farm in southern Preble County. While in southwestern Ohio, she commuted to Miami University, receiving her teaching degree in elementary education. But in 1967, after twelve taxing years of increasing marital stress, volatility, and abuse due to her husband’s progressively worsening mental disorder, she and her girls bravely returned to her origins in the larger Conservative Friends community amongst the hills of Belmont, Harrison, Jefferson, and Columbiana counties. They began, with the support of her parents, to live with them in the big family home, attending Meeting once again. Raising her girls, teaching school, and jumping whole-heartedly back into Ohio Yearly Meeting activities, her life began to find safety, normality and peace. She became active in the local 4-H teaching sewing, taking tailoring classes herself and making beautiful, serviceable clothing, including many men’s suits.

Her Papa’s sudden death in 1973 at the age of 63 shattered their close-knit lives, but her Mama rose above her heavy grief, continuing to serve her family whenever there was need. Elvina and Harriet became even closer during the next twelve years as they continued to share the old 1909 farmhouse where her father Alfred was born. Together, mother and daughter were sewing, cutting quilt blocks, canning and freezing vegetables, fruit and pickles; and always making the applesauce, mostly from their trees, which accompanied every meal.

Around the time of her mother’s illness and death in 1986, Elvina retired from teaching. Following her mother’s example, she was devoted to serving her family and those around her with a modest and gentle demeanor, always exhibiting thankfulness and quiet faith.

Elvina was a reader and collector of books. A great interest of hers was family history and genealogy. She often recited, as her parents before her did, favorite "pieces" (memorized poems). Her favorites were handed down through by family members and from *A Child's Garden of Verses* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Like her mother before her, she often quoted them for her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren as they shelled peas, peeled apples, pitted cherries, etc. Her most favored book was *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri, which as a girl she read 12 times! During April this year, Debbie read it to her again. Having thoroughly enjoyed that, she stated, "Well, I guess I have probably read that story enough now, but it was a good one!"

She especially loved reading stories to children. She also read and shared stories with young folks and adults, from her beloved *A Hive of Busy Bees* by Effie M. Williams. Also from *The Friendly Story Caravan: A Compilation of Quakers, True Life Experiences Concerning Faith and Morality*, and more recently, the *Obadiah* children's books series depicting early Quakers on Nantucket. Her days continued at the home place near Harrisville, now with more service on Yearly Meeting committees and meetings, sewing and mending for family and friends, working with her flowers, and faithfully caring for her grandchildren. She worked many years with Junior Yearly Meeting and Christian Education Camp, held on the Olney campus, and was active in the local First Friends Church's Women's Missionary Society. Elvina remained a dedicated member of Shortcreek Friends Meeting, erected in 1862, which she helped to lay down in 2018 when there remained only two regular, loyal attendees, who then continued to meet together for worship in each other's homes.

Elvina began every day with thoughtful devotions, Bible reading, and prayer, deepening her faith and Christian walk. Often she reflected on God's goodness and mercy that had followed and led her all the days of her life. She loved visiting with and writing letters and cards to many people, keeping track of the well-worn Birthday Book received from her father on her 12th birthday. Her compassion for others prompted her to set aside a large portion of her monthly retirement check by living simply and donating to many charities, especially those serving children.

In 2019, after two years of sorting through the four floors of her four-generation home, she moved to Salem, Ohio, to be neighbors with her daughter Debbie and closer to extended family. She transferred her membership to Salem Upper Springfield Monthly Meeting and became an active member. The next seven years saw several falls, broken bones, and a heart valve replacement, but her spirit abated never! Each time she was raring to recover and rehabilitate again. She was often pleased to ask complete strangers, "And how old are you?" – then replying happily, "I am 91, and I have 21 great-grandchildren!"

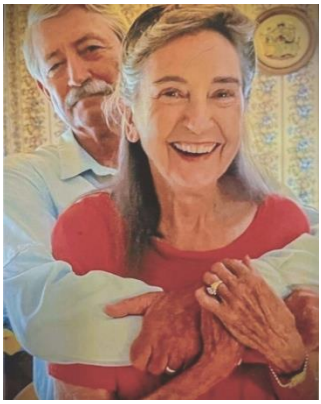
In April 2026, Debbie began staying with her around the clock. In May, Suzanne came from Illinois for a week to assist in her care. Elvina enjoyed their time together immensely, even though punctuated with yet another hospital stay. By

June, she moved once again, this time with Hospice to Bob and Debbie's house. Her last week of life as we know it saw a revival of her joy with family and friends who came to call, especially after the many previous weeks of Covid quarantine followed by another serious infection, surgery, and 40 days of IV medication that her body rejected. During that last week, Debbie read to her from the Thomas family recollections in her Aunt Alice Satterthwait Walton's book, *Tell Me More*. At a break in the reading, she broke out, "Isn't that a wonderful story? And it's about us!"

She spoke often that week of her Savior Jesus and His great love and care for us, and of course how much she loved her family near and far. She said she wished we could all travel Home together. Then on separate occasions early one morning, she told her daughter and granddaughter that she was leaving us, but we could come later. She thanked us for her care and cautioned us not to cry or worry for her; she would be fine. Later that morning, after a happy visit with a much-enjoyed grandson and grinning the whole time, she finally fell into a peaceful sleep.

Elvina left us quietly in the early dawn next morning, June 14, 2026, for a place she knew was Home, but had never seen. She knew she was going to the Promised Land and would arrive to be embraced by her First Love and Redeemer, living with Him forever more. A private burial was held at Shortcreek Friends Cemetery, beside her parents and grandparents.
From www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/elvina-krekler-obituary?id=61725437

Mary Beth (Loeber) Walcott '55
July 10, 1937 – June 29, 2026



Beth Walcott was born Mary Beth Loeber, July 10, 1937, in San Francisco, CA. At the age of 3 Beth and her mother moved to Tucson, Arizona where she lived many of her formative years. If ever there was a desert rose, it was Beth.

She is survived by her best friend and most devoted husband of 53 years, Kenneth Wray Walcott; (damnit Wray!), her three children Mark, Jennifer, and Sarah; grandchildren Nicole Gettings and husband Joseph, Sean Maginnis and wife Katrina, Katherine Livingston, Andrew Phillips and wife Hannah Peterson, Eli Phillips, Seth Maginnis, Emma Kino, Hanna Parcus, Samantha and Steven O'Sullivan; grandchildren Alex and Jonathan Gettings, Paxton and Ember Maginnis; brother-in-law Melvin Walcott and wife Patricia, sister-in-law Cyndi Wilkins, nephews Stephen, Jacob, Phillip and niece Jessica; and many other loving relatives including Dave and Bill Maginnis.

Beth was a proud graduate of Olney Friends School in Barnesville, OH in 1955. She earned her BFA from the University of Arizona in 1966. Beth was a gifted and talented artist and worked as a commercial artist for Tandy Corporation.

We will miss her beautiful smile and funny sense of humor. She was the center of the family, a true matriarch. She rarely used the words "I love you" but there was never any doubt of the intensity of her love.
https://obits.lonestarcremation.com/mary-walcott

Judith Starbuck '60
February 28, 1942 – November 9, 2025. Judith's friends and family gathered at Horizon House in Seattle on February 28, 2026, at 2 p.m. PST. The gathering was live streamed on YouTube and can be viewed at the following URL (obituary not found): https://tinyurl.com/StarbuckMemorial.

Wendell Satterthwait '63

Wendell W. Satterthwait, 80, a lifelong storyteller, historian, broadcaster, and proud Quaker son of Columbiana County, Ohio, passed away on January 24, 2026, after a life defined by resilience, humor, and an unwavering commitment to learning and community.

Born on July 21, 1945, and raised on his family's 78-acre dairy farm in Salem, Ohio, he graduated from Olney Friends Boarding School in Barnesville, Ohio, in 1963, beginning a broadcasting career that would span decades and reach listeners across the world. From small-town stations in Ohio to the CBS-owned WCAU in Philadelphia, the voice of "Tom Wendell" became a familiar presence to thousands. His fourteen years as a network anchor for the United Press International Radio Network placed him on more than 1,400 stations nationwide with his newscasts and ski reports and was carried globally on the U.S. Armed Forces Radio Network. Wendell's love of history and scholarship led him to earn his bachelor's degree, summa cum laude, from Hunter College, and later a Master's in American History from Columbia University. His research into his Quaker lineage traced the Satterthwait family back to the 1680s and even carried him to Satterthwaite, England, a village whose narrow roads and deep roots left a lasting impression. His life was marked by adventure as much as intellect. Wendell logged more than 140,000 miles on his beloved BMW motorcycles, proudly claiming to have been "lost in every one of the 48 contiguous states." He survived a devastating bicycle accident in 1991, crediting his helmet with saving

his life, and later faced major open-heart surgery with the same determination that carried him through every challenge.

Wendell's personal life was rich with love, loss, and enduring connection. He met Margaret "Peggy" Leonard while living in New York City. He was captivated by her sharp intellect and faith, and they married in 1983. Sadly, her life was cut short by illness in 1994. Wendell's lifelong association with the Religious Society of Friends began in childhood at the Winona Friends Meeting House. He cherished the people who supported him during his life and looked forward to returning to Ohio to see the many cousins, friends, and neighbors who enriched his life.

In his later years, Wendell made his home at Riddle Village in Media, Pennsylvania, where he embraced a quieter life filled with bicycles, learning to play pool, joining the resident theatre group, enjoying companionship of fellow residents, and attending family events. He remained close to his sisters, **Martie Latshaw '51** of Pennsylvania and **Gladys Trzcinski '56** of Washington, and to his nieces and nephews, who lovingly referred to him as "Uncle Silly." Wendell lived a life of stories – told, heard, collected, remembered, and shared. He carried with him the landscapes of Ohio, the energy of New York City, the discipline of Quaker tradition, and the joy of a well-lived, well-examined life. He leaves behind a legacy of intellect, humor, deep generosity, and a voice that once traveled the airwaves but now will echo in the memories of all who knew him.

In lieu of flowers, donations to his boarding school would be welcomed: Olney Friends School, 61830 Sandy Ridge Road, Barnesville, Ohio 43713 or www.olneyfriends.org/support-olney/.
From www.longwoodfuneralhome.com/obituary/Wendell-Satterthwait

Peter Holvik '67
Peter L. Holvik passed away July 25, 2025 unexpectedly of a cardiac event.

Peter graduated from Olney in 1967. He pursued an education in fine arts receiving a Bachelor of Fine Art from the Dayton Art Institute and then attending Drake University's Masters program. He studied at the New York Museum of Modern Art and in Florence, Italy.

He married Mary Ann Holland in 1979 and settled into a farm life, raising large vegetable gardens and working in school transportation driving buses and working as a mechanics assistant. He retired after 32 years of service having received special recognition from the Ohio State Highway Patrol for his work. He continued his love of painting throughout his life.

In 2013 Peter and Mary Ann moved to Poulsbo, Washington, after retiring, and she survives.

Sharon (Smith) Newlin ’71

Sharon Esther (Smith) Newlin of Stockton, California and formerly Salem, Ohio, passed from this world on April 3, 2026, after a courageous battle with ovarian cancer. Sharon was born January 15, 1953, in Martins Ferry, Ohio, to **Carl ’48** and **Dorothy (Starbuck) ’48 Smith.** She was a 1971 graduate of Friends Boarding School (Olney Friends School) in Barnesville, Ohio, a Quaker in faith and longtime member of Salem/Upper Springfield Monthly Meeting.

Sharon married her long-time friend and the love of her life, **Neal Newlin ’71**, in 1973 in Salem, Ohio. They later moved to Stockton, California to raise their family. Sharon was an avid reader and enjoyed working both in the Salem Public Library and the Troke Branch of the Stockton San Joaquin County Library. She was best known for her beautiful cross-stitch creations that were lovingly shared with family and friends.

Sharon is preceded in death by her parents, her husband, her daughter, Jessica Caroline, and her son, Brian Smith. She will be dearly missed by her son Zach (Courtney), grandchildren Jessica Bailey and Ellie Jeanne of Stockton, California; sister **Barb ’73 (Dave ’74) Warrington** of Hudson, Ohio; brother **Gary ’76** (Tracy) **Smith** of Winston-Salem, North Carolina; brothers-in-law **Carey ’79 (Kim (Juerling) ’79) Newlin** and **Tracy Newlin ’85** of Salem, Ohio; aunt, **Kay Smith ’55** of Barnesville, Ohio, and many much-loved nieces and nephews.

Robin (Breiling) Vestal x’82

Robin Lynne Vestal, 61, of Savage, Maryland, passed away after a long and valiant struggle with cancer on Sunday, April 12, 2026. She was born on September 3, 1964 to James and Annette Breiling in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Robin practiced a long career in health care: first as a nurse and later for over 20 years as a physician assistant at the Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where the cancer forced her to retire in 2024. She was devoted to providing veterans with the best healthcare and was a loyal advocate for their needs. She worked in GI, hospice, and rehab among other areas. Her second family was her cherished VA family.

Robin was devoted to her husband of over 30 years, to whom she was affectionately known as BeeBee, as well as her furbabies. Their family of Samoyeds and Great Pyrenees transformed their lives. Robin had a lifelong commitment to advocate for social justice issues, especially immigration, homelessness, and the brutal treatment of Palestinians. For years she would spend every Saturday morning at the MD Correctional Institution in Jessup providing practical counseling to detained non-citizens. Her advocacy touched and transformed many lives. She inspired countless people to see and practice love and kindness in place of hate and fear. Beyond her advocacy, she gave much of her own resources to the many charities she supported over the years.

Her other passions included reading – she was a voracious reader of wide interests. Cooking gave her great joy. She was a pianist, who never complained when the years-long neuropathy from cancer treatment prevented her from continuing. She had a good eye for art and was fond of supporting local artists directly. In her younger years she was an excellent photographer, back in the days of darkrooms and manual cameras. She continued that in later years by sharing with many her paradise of flowers and trees and roaming white fluffies.

She was of strong Christian faith. For a time, she was a regular attender of Seneca Valley Friends Preparative Meeting (Quaker) in Boyds, MD. She had been a member of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA, later of First Baptist Church in Laurel, MD. Finally, she became part of the parish of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Columbia, MD.

She is survived by her husband Ulysses Keith Vestal, her two surviving furkids, Buddha and Dharma, her parents Jim and Annette Breiling, sisters Bonnie Grimm and Linda Grunfeld, nieces Ely Grimm and Julia Grimm, and nephew Alan Grimm. She was preceded in death by her son Alexander Julian Vestal. www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/robin-vestal-memorial?id=61246943

Richard Hansgen (Hon.)
October 23, 1937 - April 8, 2026.
Richard taught science at Olney from 1984-1987 while his spouse, Karen, worked here in Development. Their child **Emil (Emily) Hansgen '00** graduated from Olney. A memorial service was livestreamed by Messiah Lutheran Church, Reynoldsburg, OH, and may be viewed at the following URL (obituary not found): www.youtube.com/live/sNRw8qJySi4?si=nn5V8Hyv7HBb76UC.

Special Event Hosting

Olney Friends School is a unique alternative for facility rental. Our historic facility is perfect for small cozy gatherings and large enough for big family reunions and weddings. We have a variety of spaces indoors and outdoors on our certified organic 350-acre campus. Overnight accommodations and piano rentals are available. We also offer delicious buffet options for all occasions (with a minimum of 25 people).

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- Recital
- Wedding
- Birthday Party
- Retirement Party
- Board Meeting
- Reception
- Bridal or Baby Shower

For more information on booking Olney Friends School, contact Melissa Rataiczak at 740-425-3655, 800-303-4291, or mainoffice@olneyfriends.org.

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