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Winter 2014

The Fort Wayne Vine

Fort Wayne Alumni Center Heritage Association

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*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1*

During our recent Homecoming, **Dr. Bob Nienhuis h98**, former vice president, shared devotions from Romans 16. Of these words from Paul, Dr. Bob

said, "people are important to God." He also said "the group is stronger than the individual" and mentioned the importance of showing affection and love for each other.

As he concluded, he challenged the group not to lament about what we do not have any longer, but to focus on the group we still have. His WORDS from the WORD greatly encouraged me.



Dr. Bob Nienhuis h98

In this issue of the *FW Vine*, we will *CELEBRATE* words, and specifically the Professional Writing major, where students learned to write words for publication.

Many of these alumni are continuing the success they enjoyed here in various forms. Some are writing books and articles, while others are writing for church presentations, newspapers, and businesses.

Let's *CELEBRATE* the Word and the words of our alumni. Thank you for submitting your words of what the campus has meant to you over the years (please see the front cover).

The Ministry Continues,



Michael D. Mortensen g91
 Director of Fort Wayne Alumni & Friend Relations
mcmortensen@taylor.edu

*P.S. Special thanks is given to **Andrea (Matetic) Osmun g05**, a Professional Writing major alumna, who wrote the majority of this issue. Her assistance gave me extra time to **care, connect, and celebrate** with more alumni.*

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Send address corrections and mailing updates to Fort Wayne Alumni & Friends Resource Center, 915 W. Rudisill Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46807, or call (260) 744-8790. E-mail: alumnifw@taylor.edu or online at fw.taylor.edu.

Opinions expressed by individuals in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Taylor University.

The Fort Wayne campus was founded in 1904 as the Fort Wayne Bible Training School. It was renamed Fort Wayne Bible Institute, Fort Wayne Bible College, Summit Christian College, and later became Taylor University Fort Wayne. Founded in 1846, Taylor University is one of America's oldest Christian liberal arts colleges. Over 2,000 graduate and undergraduate students from 41 states and 37 foreign countries attend Taylor, where majors in 50 fields of study are available.



Professional Writing Success Stories

When **Dr. Dennis Hensley h08** started the professional writing major back in the late 1990s, he wanted to help aspiring writers fulfill their publishing dreams and make a good living at it. Here are some success stories from TUFW alumni:

Nick Hayden g03 published *The Unremarkable Squire* in 2013 with Barking Rain Press. While working full-time at his family's business, Hayden Honda, in Kendallville, Ind., he also has self-published more than a dozen novels and short story compilations. Along with publishing books, Nick discusses writing on a podcast called "Derailed Trains of Thought," with **Timothy Deal g06 TU**. He also started an online story series called *Children of the Wells*, which he writes with Tim, **Nathan Marchand g06**, and his wife **Natasha (Fast) Hayden g04**. He also updates his blog regularly at worksofnick.com.

Heather (Neilson) Burgette g04 is an adjunct professor at Indiana Tech, where she teaches college reading and writing, English composition, and business courses. She recently published an article in *GLO Magazine*, ran a regular blog for Fort Wayne's Smallest Winner this past summer, and is in talks with

Discovery House regarding a book on her journey out of debt.

Maura (Klopfenstein) Oprisko g04 wrote a guest column for the *Journal Review* in Crawfordsville, Ind., which led to a year-long regular column on special diets from 2012-13. In April 2014, two of Maura's stories appeared in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Raising Kids on the Spectrum*. She's also written for healthline.com and is currently writing a book on autism in the church.

Amanda (Heinch) Luedeke g06 is a literary agent with MacGregor Literary, for which she does a lot of speaking at conferences and writing. She's also been published on janefriedman.com, routinesforwriters.com, among other sites and magazines. She self-published *The Extroverted Writer*, an author marketing booklet.

Kyle Waalen g06 recently launched his freelance writing and editing business called Digital Word Nerd. His services include copywriting, resume writing, press releases, copyediting, proofreading, and developmental editing. He also has been published in several publications for Urban Ministries, Inc.

For the full story, visit the website at <http://fw.taylor.edu/Prowritesuccess>.

CONNECT

Personal Challenge Leads to Professional Writing Major Hundreds Continue Making Impact for Christ

By Andrea Osmun g05

What started as a personal challenge in the professional writing career of **Dr. Dennis Hensley h08** has resulted in the realization of hundreds of students' and alumni's publishing dreams.

When Dr. Hensley turned 48, he had accomplished all the career goals he had set for himself. He'd published best-selling books, both fiction and nonfiction. He'd sold articles to dozens upon dozens of Christian and secular publications. He'd earned his doctorate in English, and he'd been a keynote speaker and workshop leader at numerous writers' conferences.

But when then-Taylor University president **Dr. Jay Kesler g58** approached him in the fall of 1996 about starting a professional writing program on the Fort Wayne campus, "Doc," as his students and friends call him, decided to accept a new challenge.

"For the first three years, I taught World Literature, American Literature, Expository

Writing, Business and Technical Writing, and Specialty Writing seminars while I designed and test-marketed the new writing courses," he said. "By 2000 we had more than 35 students designated as Professional Writing majors within the TUFW English department, and by then I had instituted courses in Fiction Writing, Freelance Magazine Writing, Basic Reporting, Corporate Communications, and other new writing courses."



Dr. Dennis Hensley h08

In the beginning years of the program, the Professional Writing major was under the TUFW English department. Doc taught most of the writing courses. **Dr. Pam Jordan g78** taught English Literature classes, and Kathryn Chevraux-Ludwig worked as a part-time professor in the English department.

Doc began hiring professional authors to teach J-term writing seminars. The first author to teach over J-term was Bob Hostetler (*They Call Me AWOL*) in 2002. Other guest teachers included Cecil Murphey (*90 Minutes in Heaven*), Bill Myers (*McGee and Me*), Lin Johnson (editor of *Christian Communicator* and *Church Libraries*),



Brag Board

Holly G. Miller (senior editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*) and the late David Pierce (short story crime writer for numerous mystery magazines).

The Professional Writing program grew exponentially over the years. In the first year, just three girls had signed up for the major. In 2009 Professional Writing had 89 full-time enrolled majors — as well as 41 students taking professional writing courses online.

When Doc was teaching on the Fort Wayne campus, he and his wife, Rose, enjoyed getting to know each of his students personally. Every year they would invite students to their home for dinner and board games — his favorite being “Humm...ble,” a game in which the students would have to guess what song each person was humming.

“Also, Rose and I were able to house a lot of the visiting parents of prospective students, which allowed us to get close to their families,” Doc said.

He misses having non-traditional students in his classes. When he taught on the Fort Wayne campus, many older students who already had established careers took professional writing classes. That mix of traditional students (ages 18 to 22) and non-traditional students (ages 28 to 70) offered a

wide range of life experiences from which to write and learn.

Since the Professional Writing major has moved to Taylor, it has continued to grow.

As the professional writing department continues to succeed, Dr. Hensley looks toward the future. “I am now 66 years old, so I will probably teach only three more years,” he said. “In that time, I want to put in place solid professors who know my philosophy of teaching writing skills and who have the experience to keep my department thriving. I want to see the Department of Professional Writing continue to produce outstanding Christian writers who are making an impact for the cause of Christ in all areas of communication.”

Doc said his goal is for his students to find areas in professional writing where they can make a good living and enjoy their work.

“Some go into magazine writing and editing, some go into newspaper reporting, some become radio or TV or movie scriptwriters, some become editors at publishing houses, some become literary agents, and some become public relations writers,” he said. “As they enjoy their work and succeed at it, I feel I have done my job.”

CELEBRATE

FW Alumni Reconnect, Reminisce, and Rejoice at Homecoming 2014

By Andrea Osmun g05 and Michael Mortensen g91

More than 300 alumni gathered together Sept. 19-20 for Homecoming 2014 to *reconnect* with friends, *reminisce* about life on campus, and *rejoice* over what God is doing in their lives.

The weekend included the fourth Fort Wayne campus *Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction*, a *70s Night*, *Taylor 10 Tailgate*, and the *50th and 60th Class Reunions* for the Classes of 1964 and 1954. **Dr. Bob Nienhuis h98**, former vice president, gave an inspirational devotional on Saturday, followed by **Janet Nickel g74**, who had just returned from Sierra Leone, West Africa, where she serves.

After lunch with faculty and staff, alumni continued talking and laughing—some even walked down to Foster Park or over to the Friendly Fox, a neighborhood café.

The weekend concluded with a *Sunday Sing...on Saturday*, and a meet-and-greet with **Dr. Jay Kesler g58** and **Dr. Bill Pannell**

g51, who later discussed college, church, and culture in an interview-style *Conversation with Jay and Bill*.

With the overwhelming response of alumni from all

generations, plans are already underway for **Homecoming 2015** to be held **Sept. 18-19** back on campus.





FORT WAYNE
HOMEcoming 2014
Reconnect • Reminisce • Rejoice



CELEBRATE

Dawn (Renkenberger) g00 Crandall Publishes Christian Romance Trilogy

By Andrea Osmun g05

Dawn (Renkenberger) Crandall g00 never thought she'd write for a living. But 14 years after she graduated with a Christian Education degree from TUFW, Dawn has her first two novels out and one more on the way. Even now, she finds her recent success unbelievable.

"When people would tell me, 'Dawn, you have an agent. You're a real writer,' I'd say, 'I don't know why you think that, because I'm not.'" Her humility comes from her unlikely road to publishing.

Dawn became a Christian when she was a junior in high school and eventually decided to attend TUFW for Christian Education, mainly to learn more about the Bible. The Professional Writing program wasn't offered until Dawn's junior year, and by that time, she felt she was too far into her program to switch.

Although she didn't take many writing classes, Dawn discovered some of her favorite novels and studied them in her own free time.

"I was introduced to Jane Austen, *Jane*

Eyre, Charles Dickens, and found more books I liked," she said. "I wanted to see how each book was constructed. Then I'd just dig into it and figure out why I loved it and why other people loved it."

She doesn't believe that any particular class or professor at TUFW contributed to her love of books or writing. But, she said, "I do think that my majoring in Christian Education and focusing on the spiritual formation of what it means to be a Christian really helped me in the long run with understanding the spiritual growth and journey of my main characters, which I write from first-person point of view."

After she graduated, she married Jon Crandall, and they moved to Indianapolis. Dawn spent most of her free time at the library. One day, in 2005, she came home with a pile of writing books.

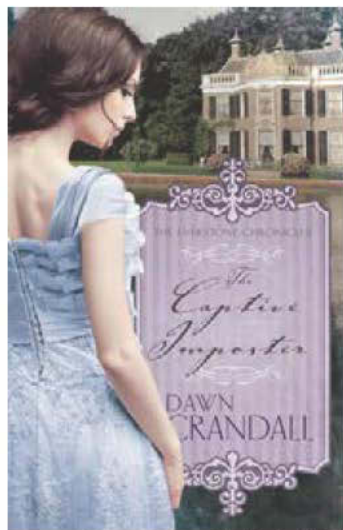
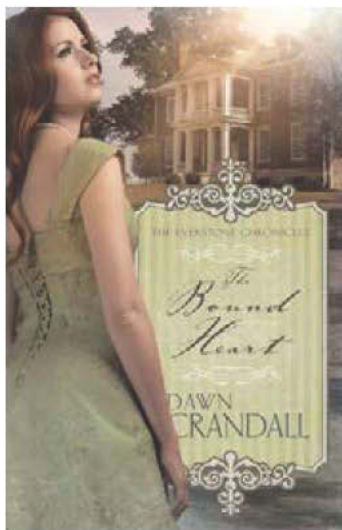
"Jon sees all these books on developing plot and characters and says, 'I didn't know you wanted to write a book. You should do it!'" Dawn recalled.

She finally got the courage to write her first novel, *The Hesitant Heiress*, 10 years after graduating from TUFW and five years after her husband encouraged her to write.

Seventy-five percent through her novel, Dawn got stuck. She felt like her ending was



Dawn (Renkenberger) Crandall g00



Pictures courtesy of Whitaker House

way too long. So she took a break from it and started working on another novel for National Novel Writing Month. That novel was the start to the second book in her *Everstone Chronicles* series.

“I took a character from my first book and wrote the second book from her perspective,” Dawn said. “The plot was all set, and I wrote 50,000 words in a month.”

Then Dawn decided she needed to connect with other writers. Her husband encouraged her to attend the American Christian Fiction Writers (ACFW) Conference. Dawn eventually got a publishing deal through Whitaker House to write a three-novel series called *The Everstone Chronicles*.

Her first book, *The Hesitant Heiress*, was

released in August. *The Hesitant Heiress* has been in the Top 100 Christian historical romance books on Amazon.com since it released and is No. 4 on Amazon’s Most Wished For in Historical Christian Romance.

“Honestly, being a ‘published author’ feels just like being a ‘writer who writes,’” Dawn said. “It still feels strange when someone tells me they’ve either bought or already read my book. I’m so used to it being mine, a personal possession. And now it can literally be anyone’s.”

Dawn’s second book, *The Bound Heart*, was released November 3. The final book in the series, *The Captive Imposter*, will be available in February 2015. For updates, follow her blog at dawnrandall.blogspot.com.

Editor’s Note: Have you written a book? The Alumni Center is in the process of building a library of books written by our alumni. Please consider donating a copy of your book(s). As we are able, we will celebrate your work with other alumni.



CELEBRATE

Dr. Jordan-Long Retires to Teach High School

By Keith g06 and Andrea Osmun g05

Dr. Pam Jordan-Long g78 transitioned with about 100 students and a handful of faculty and staff to Taylor University in 2009.

“It was difficult for Taylor Fort Wayne to close,” she said. “For the sake of the program and its students, I felt that I should say yes to the opportunity.”

Dr. Jordan-Long said she had a hard time adjusting to work on the Upland campus at first. “It got easier when my teaching assignment was based mostly in the Professional Writing department and when I became the director of C.S. Lewis and Friends.”

But she still missed teaching English classes. So, she decided to retire last spring. She now teaches English to high school seniors at Blackford High School in Hartford City, Ind. The school needed

someone to teach college-level English classes, and Dr. Jordan-Long found her place.

Dr. Jordan-Long said she misses her colleagues and the college atmosphere, but she’s being challenged in new ways.

“Going to a public school is a huge adjustment instead of being in a Christian environment. I started my career in public schools, so it’s not an unfamiliar territory, and the schedule is a lot less flexible. You go to work and stay there all day, but it keeps me young. The pace is different in the high school.”

Amidst all the changes in her life, Dr. Jordan-Long finds hope in the only One who remains constant.

“From the closing, to being in Upland, to being here, I’ve learned that God doesn’t let you down, despite your circumstances,” she said. “I’ve learned even more how crucial it is to make sense of things by relying on Him. His plans and ways are bigger than ours, but He can be trusted.”



Dr. Pam Jordan-Long g78 and student

“I owe Dr. Pam a huge thank you. I always did well in writing until I had her class. I’ve never seen so much red! To this day I don’t remember what the paper was about, or her comments. What I do remember is that she took the time to sit down with me and go over my writing skills in great detail. She pushed me hard, and I ended up with a good grade. More than that, I’ve been able to apply those critical thinking skills as I write my doctoral dissertation. Further still, I was able to help my students with their writing pieces. Thank you, Dr. Pam Jordan-Long!”

– Melissa (Daniels) Holtzhouse g98





1995-present

Class of 1995

Sarah (Matthew) Curry g95 was named the director of LifeKids, a program that ministers to 200 children (K-5th) and their families each weekend. She and husband, Steve, and their three kids continue to live in metro-Detroit.

Class of 1996

Erin (Hayes) g96 married Joe Wills on Sept. 2, 2012. Erin works as Dean of Instruction at Phoenix Multicultural Academy in Detroit.

Class of 1997

Lance Stiver g97 is now pastor at Alliance Community Church in Fort Wayne, IN. Lance also works at Blue Jacket, Inc., a non-profit serving the hard to employ. He and Megan live with their children in Fort Wayne.

Class of 1998

Dave Arnold g98 and his wife, Angie, welcomed their daughter, Angelina Elizabeth, into the world on March 6, 2014. She was 6 lbs, 4 oz.



Class of 1999

James Upham g99 was named District Sales Manager of Winnebago Industries, Inc., a leading United States manufacturer of recreational vehicles. James, his wife, Melissa, and their three children reside in Wilmington, NC.



Ciara Wade g99 married Josh Peters g98 May 12, 2012. They live

in San Francisco, CA, where she has worked for 10 years as the program director at New Door Ventures, a non-profit started by the Nazarene Church that works with at-risk youth and young adults.

Submit *News Notes* items to alumnifw@taylor.edu, call the Alumni & Friends Resource Center at (260) 744-8790, or mail to *FW Vine*, 915 W. Rudisill Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46807.



Use your smartphone to submit the latest News Note.

Do you receive your monthly e-newsletter, the *FW Falcon*? Contact the Resource Center to add your email address to our list.

Class of 2001

Jovanna Leona Sewell arrived Aug. 12, 2014. She weighed 9 lbs, 8 oz and was 22.5 inches long. Her parents, **Kelley g01** and Kelly **Sewell**, say her name means "God is gracious." Her nickname is Jovie.

Class of 2002

Jill (Probst) Bauer g02 is working as an ESL Instructor at North Seattle College in Seattle, WA, where she and her husband Scott reside.

Megan (Wood) g02 and Steven Bell are excited to announce the arrival of their daughter, Maggie Claire, on July 22, 2014. She is 5 lbs, 12 oz and 20.5 inches long.

Class of 2003-2011

David Stucky g03 and Carrie Bolejack were married on April 11, 2014.

Aleya (Kruis) g04 and Ben **Raterman** welcomed Willow Faith into the world on May 13, 2014. She was 7 lbs, 7 oz. The Ratermans live in Grandville, MI.

Daphne Marian Jo was born to **Chad g04** and **Trishelle (Raine) g06 Edwards** on Aug. 4, 2014. She was 7 lbs, 11 oz and 19.5 inches long. The Edwards family lives in Seattle, WA.

Dorothy (Bradley) Webb g05 recently finished her work at the Marion County Prosecutor's Office and now works with the State of Indiana, Department of Child Services, Child Support Bureau.

Abby (Lehman) Amstutz g07 and her husband, Andy, live in Berne, IN, and now have three delightful children, James (3), Lena (2), and Tyler (8 months).



Darlene Divine g07 works as a marketing writer at United Healthcare and resides in Carmel, IN.

Joey Graves g07 is the associate pastor at Central Avenue United Methodist Church. He and his wife, Allysa, were married on Dec. 2, 2012, and live in Athens, OH.

Brooklynn Rose Schwartz was born April 17, 2014, weighing 8 lbs, 1 oz in Lima, OH. Her parents are **Rick g07** and **Jamie (Knuth) g07 Schwartz**. Brooklynn joins her brother, Caleb (2).

Chajua Peterson g08 is teaching kindergarten at Ossian Elementary School. She also works with the Foel-lering Summer Clubhouse program administered by Taylor during the summer. Chajua and her husband, Casey, live in Ossian, IN.

Phil Wells g08 is the Campus Pastor Apprentice at Cedar Creek Church in northwest Ohio.

On April 24, 2014, **Tesia (Sheffield) g09** and **Jimmy Mallory g09** welcomed their first child, Julian Wesley, into the world. Tesia and Jimmy minister and work in Dayton, OH.

Sean Smuts g09 began his new job as a Special Education Teacher at Goshen High School in Goshen, IN.

Bill g10 and Jennifer **Helmlinger** welcome Naarah Grace, born on Aug. 26, 2014. Bill is the youth pastor at Dupont Church of the Brethren. The Helmlingers live in Continental, OH.

Pete g10 and **Victoria (Knight)g12 Semple** welcomed their baby, Ana, into the world on April 11, 2014. She was 8 lbs, 3 oz and 21 inches long. The Semples live in Marion, IN.

Nathan g11 and **Christa (Mullen) g11 Logue** were married on June 11, 2011. **Melissa Kerkhoff g11**, **Michael Moore g11**, and **Timothy Oberg g11** were members of the wedding party. Nathan's sister, **Jenn (Logue) Sprunger g06**, played the flute.

Memorials

Jeremy Stout g98 passed away on April 30, 2014, in Indianapolis. Jeremy received a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Taylor University Fort Wayne and served an internship with the United States Marshals Service. He worked with several areas of federal government, including the Federal Probation Department and Court Security Officers. Jeremy was also a certified NRA pistol instructor with concealed weapons training.

Editor's Note: More current *News & Notes* are added weekly on our website, <http://fw.taylor.edu>. Alumni and friends can send for our review and posting, and then they can be read by former classmates and friends. Check out this feature today!



CARE

Editor's Note: Each time our staff hears of the passing of one of our alumni, we send a *Songs & Words of Solace* CD, read, played, and produced by Dr. Ken Mays g60. We Care!

Crime and Mystery Writing Professor Remembered

By Andrea Osmun g05

David Pierce, professor of Crime and Mystery Writing at TUFW, went home to be with the Lord on July 22, 2014, following emergency brain surgery.

David taught the class twice on the Fort Wayne campus and once on the Upland campus



David and Chondra Pierce

and was a close friend to Dr. Dennis Hensley ha08 and beloved professor to many Professional Writing alumni.

“The students valued his patience, intelligence, and solid teaching,” Dr. Hensley said. “When he taught in Fort Wayne, he would live at our home during J-term, and I enjoyed many evenings of talking shop with him about what he was reading and writing and what my current writing projects were.”

The husband of Christian comedian Chonda Pierce, David often wrote satirical crime stories on killing his wife and burying her in the backyard, while Chonda joked on stage about David’s love of Nascar racing.

Nathan Marchand g06 remembers David’s “sense of humor and his love of story.” He enjoyed David’s personal storytelling, especially the teasing banter between him and his wife. Nathan also remembers David’s kindness.

“He held one-on-one conferences with each student, which let him get to know each of his students individually and helped them improve their stories. I loved that,” he said. “He was also kind enough to talk to me about agents when he taught again at TUFW after I graduated. And he remembered me.”

David published his crime and mystery stories in *Alfred Hitchcock* and *Ellery Queen* and published a compilation book of his stories, *It’s a Crime*. He also published several nonfiction books, including *Don’t Let Me Go*, *Savage*, and *To Kill A Zombie*.

Author’s Note:

David Pierce corresponded with this author a couple of times through Facebook private message after she graduated—once after TUFW closed and again in 2012, when he taught the class on the Upland campus. The first time, he wanted to know what kinds of writing projects we were doing. The second time, he had asked me if my husband Keith g06 and I would be interested in reading some of his crime and mystery stories again.

I thought he was going to send us a few of his published short stories from *Ellery Queen*, but instead he sent us the whole compilation book *It’s a Crime*, and two of his other books, *Don’t Let Me Go* and *To Kill a Zombie*. He had autographed all three books for us. I remember David’s kindness more than anything. I still don’t consider myself a fiction writer, but I’ll never forget how David took interest in us, his writing students.



You know where to find us, but have we found you?

Please let us know if any of your contact information has changed so that we can stay in touch with you.

- First:
- Last:
- Preferred Grad Year:
- Spouse:
- Spouse Preferred Grad Year:
- Address:
- City:
- State:
- Zip:
- Phone:
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- Job Title:
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You can update your information by giving us a call at 260.744.8790 or via email.



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Former Volunteers Join Alumni Team

Marlene (Sholl) Embry g69 and **Andrea (Matetic) Osmun g05** have joined our Fort Wayne Alumni Center team. Marlene is our new quarter-time program assistant, and Andrea will primarily write articles for the *FW Vine*, our mini-magazine, the *FW Falcon*, our e-newsletter, and the FW alumni website, <http://fw.taylor.edu>.



Marlene (Sholl) Embry g69



Andrea Osmun g05

“Our team of primarily volunteers is thrilled to have these two alumni working with us serving our alumni,” **Michael Mortensen**

g91, director of the Alumni Center, said.

Marlene began volunteering in January. She brings years of experience in organization and serving as an administrative assistant. Andrea brings to the team more than a decade of journalism skills, which she has honed through professional experience as a newspaper reporter, magazine writer, and blogger.

Marlene lives in Fort Wayne, Ind. and has three grown sons, and Andrea lives in Holland, Mich., with her husband **Keith g06** and their daughter **Kamryn, 3**.

SAVE the DATE



September 18-19, 2015

Friend,

The Alumni Center has been a place of excitement and action during the last four months. The Singing Collegians reunion, Homecoming 2014, and smaller gatherings brought over 360 alumni and friends to campus. Old friends were hugging as they greeted each other after many years apart, reminiscing together what life was like at the corner of Indiana and Rudisill, and laughing as videos reminded everyone of the fun and mischief of college days.

One of the greatest joys was hearing how alumni continue to minister literally around the world in numerous occupations. Many conversations were centered on the faith foundation received during college that became life's cornerstone.

Bill Pannell g51 traveled from California to Homecoming 2014 and reflected, *"I didn't know the extent of how much I felt at home here, how much I missed it. . . This campus with our alumni are under the powerful impact of a living history, a legacy that simply will not go away."*

Those who came to the Alumni Center for the first time were amazed to learn all that is happening in the Center's ministry of caring, connecting, and celebrating.

The ministry continues! Will you, Friend, join a growing number of alumni in keeping the Alumni Center a wonderful place where friendships are renewed, stories of God's sustaining power are shared, and the memories of life-changing college days are celebrated? Your \$25.00 will keep the momentum moving forward to unite even more alumni and friends in 2015. Your tax-deductible gift sent by December 31 will be so appreciated.



Michael Mortenson g91



Your gifts, no matter the amount, are appreciated and needed for us to continue our ministry of *Caring, Connecting, and Celebrating!*

<http://fw.taylor.edu/gift>



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