

Reunion comments via email...

On Jun 8, 2013, at 9:37 PM, Struve, Guy Miller wrote:

Dear Members of the Class Council and the Reunion Committee,

After every major litigation, I've learned to prepare a lessons learned memorandum, summarizing what we did right and what we could have done better. Such memoranda are, if possible, even more useful when we win than when we lose, because success often breeds complacency, whereas adversity forces improvement.

In this spirit, attached is a draft of a lessons learned memorandum for our 50th Reunion. The memorandum first summarizes what I think we did right, and then analyzes the areas where I think there is room for improvement.

I will be very interested in your comments on the draft lessons learned memorandum, particularly with respect to any areas where you feel that I have made mistakes in my understanding of the facts.

I should emphasize, however, that this is not intended to be a consensus document. In the end, the responsibility for the views expressed in the lessons learned memorandum is mine and mine alone. (You are, of course, encouraged to feel free to submit your own views to AYA.) But I would like to consider all of your comments before I finalize my lessons learned memorandum and submit it to AYA.

If you have any comments or corrections on the draft lessons learned memorandum, please share them with the group **not later than 10:00 AM on Tuesday of next week, June 11, 2013.**

Thank you very much.

Guy

I don't think we should limit our recommendation for free reunions to the 5th and the 50th Reunions, other than perhaps as a fallback suggestion for them to do as a proof of concept if they can't make the decision to do it all at once. It's something Yale should do for all reunions. Obviously, the Reunion we ourselves are now talking about making free for all classmates is not the 50th, but the 55th.

Guy

On Jun 10, 2013, at 6:09 PM, "Sheronas Victor F., Jr." <vsheronas@verizon.net> wrote:

Guy, et al -

Here are my thoughts, comments, suggestions, etc. to a reunion already VERY well done and to a summary letter well written:

- Attendance record, percentage and/or absolute: While I believe it was very worthwhile and rewarding that we had a tremendous turnout, I had this niggling feeling for the two or three weeks before the actual reunion, that setting a record became more important than seeing your buddies, roomies, meeting new people and just connecting. Perhaps it was a perceived matter of tone,

perhaps it was an artificial device used to get people to attend; but it felt to me that showing up to chat morphed into a push to set a record.

- My above comment segues into the matter of defining what the goal(s) and purpose(s) of a reunion are; and ours, not Yale's. To me, it's to connect or reconnect; and go to seminars if I have time.
- Outreach: In all the calls I made to build a buzz for the reunion, I insisted on making only phone calls as my first means of contact; even to the point of leaving voice messages. I reserved e-mails only for any necessary follow-up action. The point being...Everyone, including those who had strong issues with Yale, appreciated two things: the effort that went into this reunion and, more importantly, that someone cared enough to reach out and contact them and ask them to attend. One of my conclusions from my efforts is not to think highly at all of the non-personal means of contact, e.g. FaceBook, Twitter, etc. They might be useful/acceptable after personal contact has been made. And a benefit of this approach is to clean up the alumni databank with phone numbers that are no longer in service.
- While profane, I believe the best compliment that I can pay to everyone associated with the classbook is to describe the reaction of my wife and older daughter, both of whom are intimately involve with Rosemont College, be it communications, fund raising, alumnae relations, etc. Upon opening the carton containing that tome, both simultaneously looked at it with envious incredulity and said, "Shit."
- Reunion staff: While much - and very much-deserved - praise has been heaped upon Jennifer Julier and the AYA Staff, I believe that two, huge "Attaboys" should go to the unfailingly cheerful and helpful undergrads and to the reunion shuttle service.
- Reunion cost: I disagree with Guy that the reunion scholarships are not the answer to the problem of helping those attend who could not otherwise afford to do so. It certainly must have been a big help to those 18 who availed themselves of the opportunity! The problem, I'm certain, is not in providing the scholarships, it's in somehow getting people to overcome their pride or whatever in order to ask for/accept that help. Whether or not a person needing that help actually ever had any acquaintanceship with the person talking about the scholarship, the fact that they are classmates makes them peers in a certain sense. It's frequently easier to ask a stranger for help than someone you know. While ruminating on these emotions, I have no better suggestion to offer.
- Mini-reunions: Your stated goal of a half dozen mini-reunions per year strikes me as being so ambitious as to be possibly counter-productive. Having attended several mini-reunions, I love the idea. But 6 per year for 3 or 4 years? That's 18-24 total. And I fear that could result in diminishing attendance at the big 5 and 0 reunions. While we have a fairly complete and detailed list of where people live, has anyone "put pins in the map" to see where the geographic clusters are, to identify those locales with the greatest density? Except for compelling mini-reunions like Dick Moser put together in San Francisco, where I'd be willing to cross the country, maybe we ought to draw circles of 300 miles radius and see who's inside.

- Identifying people in pictures: While I take William Wangenstein's point, I disagree with him. I found myself wishing that each picture had been captioned with the classmate's name; I would use it as a visual reference. The same goes for all the pictures that Jon Larson has uploaded to the www.yale63.org website.
- Reunion cost: I agree with the chorus supporting a free reunion; and if that doesn't work, then a less expensive one. In my buzz-building phone calls, I have no way of knowing how many people who had conflicts were actually put off by the expense. And if P & H provide free reunions, that really puts Y glaringly out of step.
- Hank Higdon raises some good points regarding the class film. We should complete the film's funding, even if it means higher class dues. Perhaps all of his items 2.a-c should be uploaded or linked to www.yale63.org, especially after suitable financial arrangements have been made with the Okie/Butler team.
- Seminars vs. chatting: Given the talent within our class, combined with our broad-ranging curiosity, there was a constant battle - at least for me - concerning do I go to a seminar or do I shoot the breeze with someone? Even after attending the pre-reunion in Cranwell, I still felt I didn't have anywhere near enough time to chew the fat...and that's with attending only 2 seminars. The menu of seminars is another bone of contention: for each of the 3 time slots, there were **at least** 4 seminars that I wanted to attend. Other than making the reunion a week long affair, which would be even more costly, I have no suggestion as to how to improve this conflict. Perhaps we could spring for buying a DVD of the recorded proceedings of each seminar?
- Teacher Commendations, Memorial Service and Class Dinner: Both Phil Stevens & Sam Deloria make great points, and I agree with them. For the commendations, the presenter guidelines were 3-5 sentences, NOT paragraphs. Since Mike Skol required us to send in our remarks ahead of time, those remarks should have been vetted/edited for length. I believe it's important that we recognize all those pros who had a significant influence on our lives but, as with the Kennedy Center honors, maybe we and successive classes could do it in bites of 5 people at a time. In the heat & humidity that prevailed that day, two things became evident: shorter remembrances and MORE fans in Battelle (I saw only 2 at the front, which did squat for those in the back). This year's class dinner had several things going against it: a.) heat and humidity, b.) non-existent fans in Commons (but a gift-naming opportunity for a central a/c system), c.) tables that were placed way too close to each other in both the x and y axes, despite the partition opposite the Woolsey Hall being quite far back from the wall (in other words, more floorspace available), d.) general loudness. All these factors conspired to inhibit conversation. I agree that the singing was nice but many of the remarks, while somehow necessary, went on too long.
- Up-to-date contact data: Mike Freeland, Bob Dickie & Norm Etherington make valid points regarding **up-to-date** contact data for our classmates. Occasionally, Guy attached an Excel spreadsheet, consisting of 2 worksheets, that contained just about everything you'd want to know about any classmate. Perhaps this could be maintained, conformed with the data supplied by classmates for the classbook and then uploaded to the class website.

- Local data: I agree with Phil Stevens about some "directory" of where classmates are staying while at the reunion. Makes it easy to reach out to those I haven't seen at meals. Not sure how I see it violates privacy guidelines since most anyone with a cellphone has their number in the classbook. And it could be voluntary.
- PA system vs. iPad plug-in: Sorry Frank Letcher, I want a better PA system rather than more hand-held devices bulging from my pockets.
- Yale issues: Regarding reunions, we should at all times emphasize that we're gathering for ourselves, not to let Yale have a shot at our money. The only connection that reunions have with Yale is their location, i.e. Yale is the venue. So, despite any classmate having issues with Yale, come to the reunion for yourself and your friends.

Best regards...Victor

Dassori, F. Davis (fdassori@choate.com)

[Add to contacts](#)

6/10/13

To: Struve, Guy Miller

Cc: MikeSkol@aol.com, kiang3000@gmail.com, rhanson4b@aol.com, yale.63.class.council, yale.63.reunion.committee, jennifer.julier@yale.edu, 'Jonathan Rose'

From: **Dassori, F. Davis** (fdassori@choate.com) You moved this message to its current location.

Sent: Mon 6/10/13 3:18 PM

To: Struve, Guy Miller (guy.struve@davispolk.com)

MikeSkol@aol.com (MikeSkol@aol.com); kiang3000@gmail.com (kiang3000@gmail.com); rhanson4b@aol.com (rhanson4b@aol.com); yale.63.class.council

Cc: (yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com); yale.63.reunion.committee

(yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com); jennifer.julier@yale.edu (jennifer.julier@yale.edu); 'Jonathan Rose' (jonathanrose67@gmail.com)

This will be the 117th message since the Reunion ended (and no, I haven't been counting them individually). I hesitate to add one more voice to the swelling polyphony, which I've been following with admiration and interest, though unable really to keep up. There is a point of view, though, that hasn't been very widely expressed and that I'd like to put forward.

First, lest anyone misunderstand, I too am in awe of the work all of you have done and think the outcome was superb. Andrea and I had a great time and, the gods willing and the Styx don't rise, look forward to seeing you at the 55th.

Nonetheless I left the Reunion in some frustration and disappointment at having missed seeing so many classmates and having been unable, with those I did see, to

spend, please pardon the expression, quality time. The sheer size of the event made that inevitable to a degree, but I think the fact that so much of it was programmed made it worse. Indeed the very quality of the programming, as well as the amount, meant that we were all eagerly rushing around in search of enlightenment, to the detriment of our time together. The meals were noisy events with, as others have noted, a lot of public speech, and inhospitable to conversation.

By contrast, if my misty memory of our 25th Reunion is accurate, there were far fewer events at both the College and the Class levels. A tent with suitable refreshment was open all day and into the night, and people dropped by to meet old friends and make new ones. I loved it and, while I did manage to do both this time, I had to work harder to catch fewer fish.

Nostalgia is pointless, of course: What might be called the "social" and "program" reunion models inherently conflict and, also obviously I think, the program model is widely preferred. All the same time I hope it may be possible at our next reunion to give some more scope to the social dimension. There are many other sources of enlightenment, but only at a reunion do we have the chance to . . . well . . . reunite.

Best, and thanks for it all,

Davis

James L. Thompson (JLThompson@mmcanby.com)

[Add to contacts](#)

6/10/13

To: Judson Calkins, Lindsey Kiang, Rhanson4b

Cc: guy.struve@davispolk.com, yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com, yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com, jennifer.julier@yale.edu

From: **James L. Thompson** (JLThompson@mmcanby.com) This sender is in your [safe list](#).

Sent: Mon 6/10/13 8:46 AM

To: Judson Calkins (j.w.calkins@hotmail.com); Lindsey Kiang (kiang3000@gmail.com); Rhanson4b (rhanson4b@aol.com)

guy.struve@davispolk.com (guy.struve@davispolk.com); yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com

Cc: (yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com); yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com (yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com); jennifer.julier@yale.edu (jennifer.julier@yale.edu)

Friends,

I agree with Jud about this being our best reunion and with Lindsey's comments below about the reunion being about "the people" not just on the "institution". Our 50th was more pleasant (not sure if "relaxing" is the right term Jud) and more meaningful than the others. I think the pre-reunion in Lenox, Mass. helped build that. Thanks Charlie and Dan.

Congratulations to Guy, Hank Ian, Jon and Jon Rose plus the members of the class council, the reunion committee and Jenifer Julier for a job well done. A key lesson I think we learned here is for the reunion to be "inclusive". Guy invited, and sometimes demanded, our collective participation and the internet e-mail connection flourished – we received almost daily bulletins and reminders (and we still do). In the end we all became invested in this reunion, like no other, and became "hosts" for the rest of the class to be sure that they felt like part of this celebration. That helped to set the tone and to boost the attendance.

Also, of enduring value for the future is the infrastructure that we developed for continued use in connecting our class: the bank of e-mail addresses, contact information, records of deceased classmates, films and photographs, discussion groups papers plus a reservoir of good feelings about our classmates, about Yale and about Peter Salovey. We now will be connecting on a more regular basis about news or just to share ideas with each other. Somehow, we now seem closer, individually and collectively, and more available to communicate with each other. Also, the mini-reunions or local events such as Wick Murray's Civil War tours or geographic parties like the periodic class lunches with Peter Cressy in DC or attendance at Yale sporting events with class members are things that help maintain that new connection. We should promote these events in cities around the country. It keeps the glow alive, it's great fun and it builds momentum for our class going forward. With Jon Larson's help we have a friendly Class web site (yale63.org) to keep us connected plus a broad base of contacts making future communication easier and more productive.

Best to you,

From: Judson Calkins [mailto:j.w.calkins@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 8:54 AM
To: Lindsey Kiang; Rhanson4b
Cc: guy.struve@davispolk.com; yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com;
yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com; jennifer.julier@yale.edu
Subject: RE: Draft Lessons Learned Memorandum

well said; by the by, I enjoyed this reunion more than any other I can think of; relaxing and reassuring to me to be among people whom I consider dear friends;

and the yale tour of new haven and the yale lectures were great: guy and others: any way we can obtain outlines of some of the yale lectures; I have in mind esp. the one on keys to happiness from the wisdom of ancient greeks.

All the Best,
Jud Calkins

Lindsey Kiang (kiang3000@gmail.com)

6/10/13

To: William K. Wangenstein

Cc: Struve, Guy Miller, yale.63.class.council, yale.63.reunion.committee, jennifer.julier@yale.edu

From: **Lindsey Kiang** (kiang3000@gmail.com) You moved this message to its current location.

Sent: Mon 6/10/13 9:46 AM

To: William K. Wangenstein (wangen900@qwestoffice.net)

Struve, Guy Miller (guy.struve@davispolk.com); yale.63.class.council

Cc: (yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com); yale.63.reunion.committee

(yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com); jennifer.julier@yale.edu

Congratulations to all on a great 50th! Regarding the photo disc "Seasons of Our Lives," my wife and I watched it again last night, and I had a rather different reaction to the "unidentified classmates."

On the first viewing last week, I did wonder that many of people in the pictures were not identified specifically. On the second viewing, though, I found that I liked that and thought it was very effective. I know personally relatively few in the class of 800+ and those I recognized even without captions. The rest were people I didn't know, and I felt that it wasn't crucial to me that they weren't identified. Instead, as the sequence of photos passed by on the screen accompanied by the music of the time, all these images together formed a strong, impressionistic representation of the class as a whole. Rather than a directory of individual faces and names, the images of all these unidentified people blended to present the class, in all its variety and diversity, as a wonderful and unique "organism" bound together by so many common experiences in the past 50 years as well as in the years to come.

My wife and I are still marveling at what a superb event it was, and at the amount of work that was done by the relatively small group of volunteers.

Thanks to all,
Lindsey

On Mon, Jun 10, 2013 at 9:19 AM, William K. Wangensteen <wangen900@qwestoffice.net> wrote:

This dvd seemed to be largely a compilation of pictures from the Reunion Book; by and large, pictures of unidentified classmates, only a small fraction of whom I recognized; and, by and large, all from one "season" of their lives.

- RE: The Financing of Reunions

To see messages related to this one, [group messages by conversation](#).

Kenney, Jerome (jerome.kenney@blackrock.com)
6/10/13

To: MikeSkol@aol.com, kiang3000@gmail.com, rhanson4b@aol.com

Cc: guy.struve@davispolk.com, yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com,
yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com, jennifer.julier@yale.edu

From: **Kenney, Jerome** (jerome.kenney@blackrock.com) You moved this message to its current location.

Sent: Mon 6/10/13 8:02 AM

To: MikeSkol@aol.com (MikeSkol@aol.com); kiang3000@gmail.com (kiang3000@gmail.com);
rhanson4b@aol.com (rhanson4b@aol.com)

guy.struve@davispolk.com (guy.struve@davispolk.com); yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com

Cc: (yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com); yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com
(yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com); jennifer.julier@yale.edu (jennifer.julier@yale.edu)

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Mike and Guy,

I do agree that with H and P both providing (mostly) free reunions, it's worth a recommendation to the AYA to consider. Harvard raises more in alum gifts than Yale with a similar participation rate, even adjusted for Harvard's larger size; Princeton has a much higher alum participation rate, avg 63% vs Yale's 37% and I think higher individual gifts. For Yale's two reunion weekends, that's the equivalent

of one more week of dining rooms and dorms being open; probably a worthwhile trade off. I would expect Yale's reunion attendance would rise, though these additional grads are not likely to be major givers. FYI, the weekend of our 50th, Princeton had over 25,000 alums back for its annual reunion, pretty impressive.

Jerry

From: MikeSkol@aol.com [mailto:MikeSkol@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 10:19 AM
To: kiang3000@gmail.com; rhanson4b@aol.com
Cc: guy.struve@davispolk.com; yale.63.class.council@davispolk.com;
yale.63.reunion.committee@davispolk.com; jennifer.julier@yale.edu
Subject: The Financing of Reunions

I have now seen any number of calls by classmates for Yale to pay for the reunions. Most often linked to the fact that Harvard and Princeton do so. As the Class of '63 representative to AYA, I would be interested to know if there is enough support on the Class Council (and the Reunions Committee) for me to present that, on behalf of the class, as a formal recommendation at the next AYA Assembly this autumn in New Haven.

My personal view is that the idea has merit and that it would disadvantage normal fund raising less than a class campaign to raise the money on our own. Moreover, given the numbers that Guy passed on, I can't help but feel that the goodwill generated and increased presence at reunions would ultimately result in a rise in gift giving which would more than compensate for the reunion costs to the university.

Yale has a new president; let's give him a precedent to set.

Mike Skol

In a message dated 6/10/2013 7:50:41 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time, kiang3000@gmail.com writes:

By the way, I still don't understand why Yale can't finance the class reunions like H and P do. Surely it too can afford to do so.

Regards,
Lindsey