



Brad Whitehouse, editor

There aren't many years in my life that I'd be completely willing to live over again. Sure, I think I could do some of them better. But if it's about the pure pleasure of living them, most are bittersweet enough for me to prefer to take my chances with a new one.

There is at least one, though, that I'd like to have back again: my senior year in college.

It took off like a dead bird. I'd lived in an apartment with a bunch of buddies the year before, but then I studied abroad for a semester and messed it all up. I think studying abroad is a fantastic opportunity, but one drawback is that you miss a big slice of your normal college life, and so there I was, stuck back in the residence halls my senior year, and in a single to boot. It wasn't just any residence hall, either. It was the farthest one from campus; it was the "quiet" hall. (It's called Saint Dormitory, no joke.)

And yet everything turned out great. I loved the people there. I met my buddy Chris there, and we roomed together second semester. Chris was a vegetarian, he wore patchouli, he almost preached the environment. (On the three-hour drive to his parents' cabin, he would talk about trees the entire time. If I know slightly more than average about trees, it's because it was not possible to block it all out.)

He was also more extroverted than me, and was charismatic in a way that made him the center of attention. We had lots of fun together, because he could make anything fun. And

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Dear Contact:

I enjoyed the last issue of Contact. I really enjoyed the article on the messy desks. I can relate. I don't think that I can credit any of the professors at Adrian for my desk quality. I think that I learned mine from my mother, but don't tell her.

I was also sorry to hear about the passing of art professor Mike Cassino. I had several interesting classes with him.

**Clifford Rininger '70**  
Rushville, Neb.

Dear Editor:

I have lived in Texas for almost 25 years and haven't stepped on campus since before that time. Therefore, my only contact with Adrian is the magazine. I used to enjoy reading it, but no more. The magazine lacks newsworthy items. Other than Class Notes (where I very rarely see anyone I know) there is not much to read. However, this issue of the magazine hit an all-time low when you dedicated three pages to professors' messy offices. WHO CARES?? I can see messy offices where I work any day. However, the magazine is the only place I can read about Adrian events and people.

**Elizabeth J. Rimer '76**  
Houston, Texas



Stanley Caine, president

As I write, we are preparing for the moving van, one of the final steps on my path to a new life and routine when I retire June 30. I have been a professional educator for four decades, beginning in 1965 when I became a graduate teaching assistant in the history department at the University of Wisconsin. In that period of time, I have witnessed and participated in perhaps the most dramatic period of change in the history of American higher education.

When I attended college, only a minority of high school graduates were doing so. Now most high school graduates enroll in college, and there is great concern about the prospects of those who do not. (Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm, in a recent speech, declared, "Every child in Michigan must go to college.")

A primary reason for the change, of course, is that 40 years ago there were abundant, relatively well-paying employment opportunities for those who did not go on. Now more and more positions require education and training beyond high school and the income gap between high school and college graduates is rapidly growing.

In the 1960s, our college choices were limited—mostly to residential private colleges and universities, the flagship state universities, relatively small regional state institutions (often called "teachers colleges") and a few "junior colleges." Since then, we have witnessed the development of enormous and pervasive community college systems, the rapid growth of full service regional state universities and the birth of "distance" or "online" learning programs. (There are now higher education institutions without campuses. They offer all their courses and programs electronically.)

The revolutionary advances in technology have had a profound effect on all institutions. I recall when, early in my teaching career, our institution acquired its first on-site computer. It filled a whole room and could assist only with certain kinds of rudimentary record keeping. Now, technology is pervasive, and you can carry it in your pocket. Through the Internet, a vast reservoir of information is available to all who seek it, and teachers can utilize a variety of electronic tools to enhance their instruction. The result is a profound change in the way in which the teaching-learning process takes place.

But not everything has changed. Students still want to be respected as individual learners, with their own distinctive interests, skills and values. They wish to be taught by professors who care about them. They enjoy learning new things and exploring new ideas. Most traditional-age students prefer a living-learning environment where they can make good friends, work together for common goals and objectives and experience community.

These are reasons why institutions like Adrian remain so valuable. We speak to the hearts, souls and minds of young

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# LETTER

from the

## Alumni Board

The change of the seasons, particularly spring, has proven to be an irresistible metaphorical crutch for writers of all eras. I plead guilty as I launch into this edition's column, but I'm also quick to rationalize: This certainly is a season of renewal at Adrian College, especially in the area of alumni relations.

The start is at the top: As of July 1, Adrian College will have a new chief executive officer – Dr. Jeffrey Docking, who takes the helm as president from Dr. Stanley P. Caine, who as you know is retiring after a 16-year tenure. Dr. Caine has been a true friend and supporter of AC alumni and alumni causes, and it was gratifying as your representative to present him with Honorary Alumni status at his retirement dinner on April 16.

I am also happy to report that Dr. Docking has a keen interest, and a well-thought-out approach, to the role of alumni and the Alumni Association in keeping the college healthy and growing in coming years.

Your Alumni Association was fortunate, in February, to have a role during the interview process of the top candidates for AC president. The Board of Trustees invited a committee of the Alumni Association to meet the two finalists for the position.

I, along with Alumni Board Vice President **Ken Gonser '62** and Board Director **Deanna Hartley '72**, had a warm discussion with Dr. Docking and his wife, Beth. They not only were gracious, charming and interested in our concerns, but Dr. Docking ("Call me Jeff, please") was able to clearly articulate his vision for involving alumni – both individuals and the collective represented by your Alumni Association – in the future growth of Adrian College. I expect this to be a warm and collaborative relationship.

Now, more change and renewal: Our alumni director, Erika Myers, announced her resignation after her husband accepted a significant career advance in Minneapolis. Erika, who in March gave birth to her third child, finished work here at the end of May.

This is no small thing: The alumni director is the top administrative position dealing with alumni affairs, and is the key link between the Alumni Board – in reality, all of you – and the college administration. No less important, the alumni director is the person who devotes full-time effort to mailings, event planning (think Homecoming) and lining up resources to meet the goals of alumni leadership.

We are optimistic that we will find someone with the energy and passion that Erika brought to the job. (For updates, go to [www.adrian.edu](http://www.adrian.edu) and click on Alumni & Friends.)

If that's not enough change, then hold onto your hat. Spring brings the formal end of our Alumni Board working year, and with that we annually bid goodbye to valuable, hard-working members of your board. Fortunately, it also heralds the inauguration of a new slate of board members, almost all of whom were nominated by our fellow alumni.

At an April meeting of the Alumni Board of Directors, the following slate of officers was elected to one-year terms: Me, as president; **Deanna Hartley '72**, vice president; and **Marilyn Wilson Ward '83** as secretary-treasurer.

Deanna replaces **Ken Gonser '62**, who served one great year as vice president. Ken, who has a long and distinguished resume in nonprofit organizations and community service, provided invaluable guidance as we embarked on an ambitious agenda to broaden the visibility and reach of alumni into campus affairs. I am grateful that Ken will remain on the board as a director, and will continue to rely upon his experience and common sense.

Cliche or not, that's a lot of renewal for one season. Something tells me summer and fall will be just as exciting – stay tuned.

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people at a pivotal time in their lives. We treat them as individuals and help them discover their talents and abilities. And we acknowledge the moral and spiritual issues which lie at the heart of human existence.

All of this we are able to do because we enjoy the loyalty and generous support of many alumni and friends. As I come to the end of the most intense, challenging and satisfying period in my professional career, I salute all who have helped us maintain our strength and pursue our vital educational mission in an era of revolutionary change. Because of you, the lamp of learning burns brightly at Adrian College. Thank you, farewell, and go Bulldogs!

Stanley Caine, President

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it suddenly made me more popular, which didn't do anything bad to my sense of well-being.

The other great thing that happened that year was the writing. I had room in my schedule to take writing classes, which I liked. I worked in the writing center, and I even liked that (mostly because of the cute girls who worked there). And for four years I'd been trying to get good enough to make the college's selective arts journal, but I always got rejected. By the last semester of my senior year, though, I got two poems and two short stories published.

I even made the annual compilation CD for campus musicians, which was distributed to every student. I got to record my song in a real studio, and it led to a gig during the big annual benefit concert – a concert I looked forward to watching every year – backed up by musicians I'd been admiring for years. That was a kick, partly because it was all completely unexpected.

But that's the way happiness works, I think. It's closely tied to a sense of belonging, and it comes upon us unannounced. All of a sudden, we're really happy for a little while.

I have a lot to thank my alma mater for – a quality education, enriching experiences, and a healthy dose of personal development – but my most heartfelt thanks are for all those good times.

Brad Whitehouse, editor of Contact

John Hiner '82

President, Adrian College Alumni Board



Go to [contact.adrian.edu](http://contact.adrian.edu) for a list of new and departing members.