

Greetings Fellow 89'ers:

The College forwards some helpful letter templates for those of us on reunion committee to use to help us design our class letters. They include all sorts of up-to-the minute information and cheery tidbits about Kenyon and campus happenings. I will admit to having “cheated” in the past and using portions of the College-prepared propaganda, but I generally try my hardest to refrain from borrowing others’ words. I’m such a wordsmith (read loudmouth) that it’s generally impossible for me to refrain from interjecting my own two cents. But this time it’s more than that. This time, I find it impossible to ask for your money with someone else’s canned words, most especially because the economic times are sure to have us all concerned and focused on priorities in ways we never have before.

So instead I am reflecting upon my own life experiences in dealing with today’s challenges. I am holding back on spontaneous shopping sprees, refraining from opening our 401K statements as I fear I’d be perpetually nauseous if I dwelled upon their results. I am cutting back fairly significantly on any frivolous holiday spending this year. Actually, I recently found myself doing what my Depression-era father has always done: in the shower I’m now taking the last sliver of soap, lathering it up and slapping it onto the fresh bar. Ha! I’ve discovered frugality in all sorts of ways and I know you all have too.

Although I try generally to inject as much humor as possible into these letters (and I have fun writing them, actually), this time I recognize that many of us aren’t laughing when it comes to finances. Perhaps you’ve lost a job, perhaps your spouse has, maybe you’re freaking out about tuition for your children, or have lost health care coverage. These are scary times and they are times we’ve not faced previously.

What to do in times like these? Actually, I heard recently that charitable giving is historically increased in times of economic challenge. This is, I speculate, because we must all hunker down and remember our priorities. What has made the most difference to us in our lives? What has shaped our adulthood? What has fed so many of our life-long friendships? Where did we learn how to learn?

If the answer for you is NOT Kenyon, don’t give. I’m fairly confident that the College won’t be thrilled I’m using those words, but I mean them. If your memories of Kenyon aren’t among the dearest you’ve got of your youth and your learning, you’re not likely to be giving anyhow. In times like these, when we all focus upon the nearest and dearest, I ask you to consider how Kenyon affected you, what role it played for you as a student and what role it serves for you as an alum. If you get a bit sentimental at all about the years you spent on The Hill, then DO give. Give what you can, give what’s most comfortable. But do give, please. And, by the way, if you’re so comfortably off that you’re not freaking out about the economy in general, give TWICE! Remember that your contributions to Kenyon will help current students whose families are facing the same economic challenges. Your gift can help keep Kenyon’s neediest students at Kenyon.

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And, oh yes, before I become too maudlin... you all should also remember our **20th Reunion** is this coming May 29 – 31. Mark your calendars now. If you're so bad off financially that you can't afford to snag your own private luxury suite in Caples, Dave Rath is volunteering to shack up with any in need of lodging.

Thanks for digging deep; I will see you all in May. In the meantime, if you want to get in touch with people before reunion, try facebook. We have a class page there and it is a great way to start talking to old classmates. Old photos have started to get scanned in and it is really fun to see what everyone is up to. If you don't know about facebook, go to the website, www.facebook.com. It is free and pretty easy. Even Joan was able to figure it out and she's not the smartest cookie in the box. It is a great place to connect and plan the weekend.

Happy Holidays,



Andrea Bucey Tikkanen

P.S. For those of you missing the Kenyon 'fix' (i.e. the tidbits of happenings at Kenyon which normally accompany this letter), see below:

KENYON NEWS:

I hope by now you've had an opportunity to visit Kenyon's redesigned Web site. The new site seeks to capture the College's energy while enhancing user-friendliness through improved search and navigation functions. The new site is the result of a yearlong process involving the campus community along with alumni, parents, and prospective students. A prominent feature of the new site is a "photomosaic wall" of 27 clickable images that is intended to suggest the vitality of Kenyon and will change regularly.

Also be sure to visit Kenyon's recently introduced "iTunes U" site which allows users to download faculty interviews, baccalaureate speeches, Hall of Fame induction ceremonies, and audio recordings from the College archives. The inaugural faculty interview is a discussion with economics professor Will Melick about the federal government's 2007 tax rebate. To access the site, visit <http://www.kenyon.edu/x40916.xml>.

Kenyon's Web site wasn't alone in receiving a sprucing up. Peirce Hall, certainly one of the College's most beloved landmarks, reopened in August after a \$28-million renovation project. This restoration preserved the building's grand traditional spaces while adding new amenities and emphasizing sustainability and local foods. The dining hall, which includes an expanded pub space, a new patio overlooking the countryside, and all-new cooking and serving stations, will give Kenyon one of the top dining programs in the country. The 70,000-square-foot facility is now entirely air-conditioned and boasts three large dining rooms: the Great Hall; a sleek, modern counterpart in Dempsey, called Richard L. and Helen Thomas Hall; and Alumni Hall in Lower Dempsey.

Among the students taking advantage of the remodeled Peirce Hall are the 463 members of the Class of 2012 who were selected from a pool of 4,509 applicants. This class has an average combined SAT score (critical reading and math) of 1333 and average ACT score of

29.6. Thirty-five percent of the incoming class had a high-school grade point average of 4.0 or higher, with the average GPA at 3.85. This talented class is also the most diverse ever admitted to Kenyon—American students of color make up 17 percent of the class and first-generation students represent 10 percent of the class.

Please join me by sending your pledge in the enclosed envelope, or making your gift online at <http://gift.kenyon.edu>. You may indicate how the College uses your gift: scholarships and financial aid, first-generation college students, academic support, student life, or the area of greatest need.