

[complete report for Class website]

May 31, 2009

Gentlemen of the Class of '60:

Earlier this month I attended the bi-annual Alumni Council meeting in Hanover. Spring was in the air, Green Key Weekend was in progress, Webster Avenue was closed off for a swingingly noisy open air party . . . fifty years quickly evaporated. But we did transact lots of business. The following is a recap of the highlights. You can find a more information and the minutes of the entire meeting on our class website within a few days.

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Address by President-elect Jim Kim

I cannot remember having witnessed as perfect an example of *veni, vidi, vici* as Jim Kim's brief talk to the Alumni Council. He was eloquent, engaging, charming, thoroughly knowledgeable about Dartmouth, very believable and he hit every hot button that is dear to us as alumni. (*For more go to our Class website.*)

The continued academic excellence of Dartmouth, the education of undergraduates primarily, the invaluable contributions of the Greek system, the importance of football, the alumni's unique role as stakeholders in what is Dartmouth is what he values, he says, and intends to continue to build on and promote. He spoke with admiration of the tears that appear in every alumnus' and every alumnae's eyes at some point when they speak of Dartmouth. He spoke with conviction of the unimportance of being a conservative or liberal and the great importance of knowing why. Several times he returned to the concept of "execution," something that is not always a strong point in academics.

Not only did Jim Kim say all the right things but I also had the strong feeling that he meant them . . . that they came from the heart. This was not a carefully crafted and rehearsed speech, but an expression of his feelings for our hallowed institution and its various constituencies. His obvious

understanding of what Dartmouth is, combined with his academic qualification as an M.D. and an Anthropology Ph. D. and his demonstrated and universally reported ability to work bureaucracies and "get things done" make me look forward to the next many years at Dartmouth with a great deal of optimism.

You can see and listen to and read more about Jim Kim on the College's website.

Interaction with Students and Student Presentations

*I had the opportunity to interact and talk to students in several venues and once again came away almost with awe before the brightness, involvement and learning that I again encountered. I sat in on an anthropology class, I discussed the improved Greek/Administration relations over a sandwich, I heard of new sororities although social gender inequality continues, and I became more familiar with the alumni-oriented student group, the *Hill Wind Society*. (For more on each topic see our *Class website*.)*

In an anthropology class on hominid evolution I listened to the informed discussion of the various levels of sexual dimorphism in humans, chimpanzees and gorillas between a 300 lbs. offensive lineman and a fellow female student who might have weighed in at about 90 lbs if she had worn a substantial weight belt.

I heard with pleasure, in a round-table discussion and during the subsequent sandwich dinner that the relationship between the Greek houses and the administration as well as the faculty has improved substantially. Young alumni attested that that relationship under the Wright administration became much better. Yet, many houses still do not have a faculty advisor and if they have one it is in name only. The students tell me that they believe more faculty advisors would be good for both the houses and the faculty. It seems to me they are right.

There are now 17 fraternities, about half that many sororities and two co-ed houses. (Most of the sororities lack physical facilities of their own.) 65% of eligible students belong to the Greek System. The "best" (I'm not entirely sure of the word's definition in this context) have "mature" (defined as 5 years or more out) alumni involvement. Most houses are striving to create strong alumni groups as advisors.

In spite of the College's attempt to provide more and better physical social spaces for women, social gender inequality remains an issue. The current economic malaise doesn't help; the College is understandably reluctant to spend money on bricks and mortar. But at least one (Kappa Delta) and possibly two new sororities are scheduled to come to campus shortly.

It is interesting, by the way, that the Greek houses today are much more service and much less socially oriented than we were in days of yore. Just about every house today has several active service programs going.

If you have not heard of the "Hill Winds Society" you ought to take a look at their website. They are a group of undergraduates dedicated to establish and maintain connections with us, the alumni. If you want to know what the students are thinking and doing, ask them.

Dean of Students Tom Crady

Dean of Students Tom Crady reported on the ongoing belt tightening within the College. He laid off 14 people in his area alone, among them a number of Class Deans. The new Alcohol Policy (discussed at length at the previous AC meeting; *see my previous notes on our website*) will be released within a few weeks. A committee to review the complex question of sexual assault is being formed. Consideration is being given to return the responsibility for adjudicating minor infractions of rules to the students. The entire athletic and recreation program is being reviewed before the search for a new Athletic Director begins in the early fall.

Our 50th Reunion and the Class of '10

Our 50th Reunion is getting closer: June 11-13, 2010! (*More on it and the Class of '10 on our Class website.*)

I knew of course that next year (June 11-13, 2010) is our 50th Reunion, but it was brought home rather shockingly when I realized that Francis Vernon '10, whom I had met three years ago as a shy and timid (alright, Francis was never exactly that) freshman, had been elected president of the Student Assembly. The '10s are of course the guys that will assist our chronologically-challenged group to reach the first few rows of seats in front of Baker at our 50th. Guys with bad or artificial knees should now apply for a sturdy '10 to give them a hand.

In that connection, remember that we are putting together a book of "musings" for the 50th. We've all lived full lives; let's share our thoughts, our musings with each other. Start to think now what you would like your peers to consider, perhaps what lessons you have learned, perhaps what your spouse, kids, grandkids, Dartmouth, etc. have meant. In any case, contribute your musings. You'll hear more of this shortly.

The Class of 2013

Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Maria Laskaris '84 reported on the next Freshmen Class: as of May 15, there are 1,094 members of the Class of 2013. (This number is likely to change marginally in the next few weeks.) 49% are men, 51% women. The mean SAT scores are 715/718/720. 39 % of the kids are of color; 11% are legacies; and there are 203 recruited athletes.

Veterans on campus and ROTC

Former Dean Ralph Manuel '58 introduced a panel of three veterans who had served several tours in the current war zones (one of them was badly wounded) and are now undergraduates. This also led to a lively discussion of ROTC on campus. (*For more on both topics, see our Class website.*)

There are 17 veterans on campus now with considerable additions expected with the Class of 2013. These guys continue, after a long hiatus, a strong World War II tradition and bring a level of extra maturity and a "phenomenal work ethic" (Ralph Manuel) to the campus. The three panelists (all Marines, by the way) were also charming and demonstrated that high school seniors

are not necessarily always ready to go to college immediately. The Marines all spoke warmly about Marine Lance Corporal Jim Wright who was instrumental in bringing them to Dartmouth.

The Council had a lively debate on bringing back the full complement of ROTC activities to Dartmouth. Perhaps the most telling comment came from a member of the Class of '69 who said that he had vociferously clamored for and voted for the expulsion of ROTC in his student days and, that in retrospect, he was very wrong. But ROTC would seem to be an alumni concern . . . not a student concern. There is, in conjunction with Norwich University, an Army ROTC program on campus. But this year, for example, it will commission one single 2nd Lieutenant.

Academics

Carol Folt '78a, Dean of the Faculty, gave a comprehensive overview of Academics at Dartmouth.

We now have a faculty of 411 compared to 352 in 1998/99. The salaries of the faculty are now comparable to those at peer schools. We now have an 8:1 student to faculty ratio as compared to 10:1 in 1998/99.

The curriculum is ever evolving. Few courses, even if their title and description do not change, remain the same from semester to semester. Professors constantly integrate new knowledge, new research data, new insights into their course material. New courses also abound: undergraduate business courses taught by Tuck professors, writing and rhetoric offerings, a minor in international studies, courses at the professional schools and in the graduate departments for undergraduates, to name only a few. (*For additional comments by Carol see our Class website.*)

Carol Folt briefly discussed the five-plus-one "I's" at Dartmouth that she has explained in detail in a series of presentations at alumni gatherings around the country last year:

<http://alumni.dartmouth.edu/default.aspx?id=821>

- 1) *individualized teaching (small classes, personal attention);*
- 2) *interdisciplinary thinking and learning;*
- 3) *international outlook;*
- 4) *innovative and modernized learning while maintaining a strong core curriculum;*
- 5) *inclusive learning environment; and*
- 6) *integration of learning environment.*

She asserted that a liberal arts education is more important today than ever before. But, she says, it must be "flexible, adaptable, culturally agile, internationally oriented" and it must lead to the "understanding [of] divergent thoughts." Every one of these words can be variously interpreted, of course, and can -and should- lead to lively discussions.

The Professional Schools and Graduate Studies

I had never heard the Deans of Graduate Studies, Tuck, Thayer and the Medical School hold forth together on what is happening in each area. It was a fascinating overview of the innovations that

take place out-of-view of the lesser-degreed. Each of the programs is quite small, very focused, exceptionally innovative and near the top among its peers.

Athletics

Newly named interim Athletic Director Bob “Cep” Ceplikas ’78 reviewed the athletic scene of 34 varsity sports, 34 club sports, 20 intramural sports and 55 fitness classes (3,300 participants)

Ivy League Champions we had three: men’s soccer, women’s basketball, and baseball. In addition the women’s hockey team won the ECAC tournament and the Ski team was the undefeated EISA champion. *(For more details on other sports and athletics-related matters see our website.)*

Cep also had the grace and wisdom to comment on football before he was asked. A just completed outside review indicates, he said, that our major difficulty last year was age and experience of players in general and of linemen in particular. Focused weight training and accumulating experience should at least alleviate the difficulties of last season.

One odd bit of information that surfaced in my talks with students was that athletes (particularly the big guys) have a difficult time getting enough food at a reasonable price. (No more “athlete’s table” or “all you can eat” apparently.) I must say I was a bit shocked; I am trying to get the facts straight and will report again. If you have any input, let me hear from you.

Association of Alumni Election and Constitutional Amendment

As you probably know, the incumbent Executive Committee of the Association of Alumni under the leadership of John Mathias ’69 was reelected and the one-person-one-vote amendment to the constitution of the AofA was approved . . . both by significant margins. *(For details see the College website.)*

Trustee Elections and other Trustee items

Trustee Chair Haldeman ’70 indicated that it is likely that there will be an election at least for one alumni-elected trustee spot next spring. There are also four other trustee seats (board-appointed) that have been kept open pending the appointment of a new College president. In that connection see the May 22, 2009 editorial from *The Dartmouth* that castigates the Board of Trustees for not moving with more alacrity. *(Posted on our website.)*

Asked whether the trustees will contemplate re-establishing “parity” among board-appointed and alumni-elected trustees now that the alumni had voted for a revised election system, Haldeman did not respond but turned the question over to John Mathias, AofA president, who said he had “confidence that the current 16:8 [ratio of board-appointed-trustees to alumni-elected-trustees] can be changed in the future.” He also stressed, however, that we still need financial election reforms, i.e. we have to find a

way to avoid having the candidates for an alumni-elected trustee spot spend unconscionable amounts of money on the election campaign. *(For more see our website.)*

Further asked what skill sets the board was seeking in potential trustees, (since that was one of the arguments used to justify expanding the board-appointed trustees to 16 while keeping the alumni-elected trustees at 8), Haldeman initially seemed clueless how to answer. Eventually he said he wants "people who know how boards operate." Trustee Jose Fernandez '77 was a little more forthcoming. We need, he said, more "public service people and women."

New Alumni Council Officers

Janine Fate Avner '80 will be the president of the Alumni Council for 2009/2010. Janine is an attorney from Los Angeles. The newly elected president-elect and presumptive president for 2010/2011 is Tom Peisch '70, also an attorney, but from the Boston area. *(For the other new officers, committee chairs etc. see our Class website.)*

Your Input

I will be looking forward to your comments. More than eighty of you, roughly 20% of the classmates that receive these emails, have already responded in one way or another. Tell me what you like, tell me what bothers you, tell me what you'd like to know more about, tell me what you want me to raise at Council meetings.

Best regards, Axel.