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Colby Confidential

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Colby CONFIDENTIAL

By Scott Lainer '87

Dearest Colby Alumni,

I have a secret to share. Please do not tell anyone—not even yourself. But I love being class correspondent! Oh sure, I try to make out like it's an effort. Occasionally I complain about how busy I am or my impending carpal tunnel. But it's all a deliberate act. Truly, I have nothing better to do, and my hands are only a bit dry from the cold weather.

See, I had a hard time graduating from Colby. Who in their right mind would ever want to leave such an invigorating and supportive environment just to dive into the uncharted waters of real life? Not this boy.

Luckily, every few months, I get to live vicariously through the unbridled energy of my classmates, who always offer inspiring updates. And while individual achievement is usually on the menu, more prominent are the proud acknowledgements to spouses, offspring, and pets. Those who have children now attending Colby actually seem to be smiling through their words. Big, toothy smiles. A few need to brush more often.

One thing I've learned through the kind notes I've read over the last decade or so is that there is no destination. No end point. No bar we have to clear. Life is full of crests and troughs, but each journey is distinct and every existence has its own beautiful thread.

Paradoxically, nobody complains about anything, which would surely make for compelling copy. I've never gotten, "Hey Scott, just one more day of this annoying gout and I'm gonna dropkick a small defenseless squirrel, which would probably hurt a lot. Because I have gout!"

Perhaps you've been reluctant to submit news to your respective correspondents because you think it is somehow unworthy of reporting, won't compare well, or isn't relevant to your classmates. Not remotely so, my dears. It actually heartens us to know that you are out there, toiling away, sometimes succeeding, but never stopping. We are inexorably connected, and that is a comforting thought.

Then again, maybe you think your prose is suspect. Well that's what we're here for! Here's a primer that may help:

Hey (Your Class Correspondent):

Wow, have I got news! I just (ran a marathon/opened my own car dealership/won the Pulitzer Prize/painted my kitchen cabinets). My (spouse/significant other/alter ego) is, as usual, eclipsing me as the (president of Worldwide Plumbing/most decorated Navy Seal in history/lead actress in *A Star Is Born*/painter of our kitchen cabinets). Our kids, (names), are respectively (traveling to Singapore in a straw skiff/attending college, volunteering, and skydiving at the same time/living in our basement and demanding lunch). My beloved (dog/cat/emu) is still pooping on a regular basis, and so am I!

These days, we are delivered news on a 24-hour basis. It has become part of our entertainment, rife with thrills, chills, and possible collusion. And though we may have little control over how much we are fed, we can certainly choose what to chew. That means cherry-picking that which is relevant to us, the news that touches us deeply, words that uplift and embrace the best parts of us.

And I would submit that our class updates fit that bill. You should read the columns of other graduates, as far forward and back as you can. I've noticed the oldest among us often seem to be the wisest. Many of their stories center around reconnecting, travel, and Colby memories that still resonate.

Of course, you can always just write: "Hey, checking in. Nothing of any significance to report, except that I'm alive and kicking." Which is plenty significant to those who care about you, starting with your grateful class correspondents.