

The Briar Wire

THE SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE ALUMNAE NEWSLETTER

SPONSORED BY THE ALUMNAE ALLIANCE AND PRODUCED BY THE ALUMNAE RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Dear fellow alumnae and friends,

The bells in the quad keep ringing. Although the rhythm for many of us during the hot summer months is slower, the bells at Sweet Briar continue to mark the day in that dependable cadence and familiar sequence of tones.

To me, the tolling of the bells throughout each day is emblematic of the strong and steady support of alumnae for the College. Underscoring that belief is the onset of another round of Sweet Work Weeks. These weeks have become the hallmark of Sweet Briar alumnae engagement, deeply resonating within us all and highlighting our commitment to Sweet Briar's renewal. Loyalty, dedication, and resolve define the days of Sweet Work Weeks as reliably as the cadence of each strike on every bell in the bell tower.

Liberal arts colleges measure loyalty to their school in different ways. Our devotion to Sweet Briar is clearly resonating around the country and abroad in what has become known as the "Sweet Briar Effect." The engagement and leadership this past year by our Board of Directors, students, alumnae, faculty, and staff, shown in governance, mentorship, philanthropic support, and stewardship of our iconic natural and built environment at Sweet Briar, continue to amaze all observers of our progress.

Thanks to more than 75 volunteers on the campus for Work Weeks, the campus will sparkle and embrace our incoming class of 2020, who are looking forward to beginning their college careers. Our alumnae and their families do this because they care, and they are giving back not only to our College with enthusiasm and love of place, but also to the community and the Sweet Briar family. Devotion of this depth is unparalleled and priceless.

The campus of Sweet Briar captivated me in 1978, and I remember that day as if it were yesterday. The imprint of the campus, the educational experience, and the traditions are firmly implanted in my mind. This environment was ripe for engaging in the life of the College coupled with an inimitable challenge from classmates, faculty, and all campus leaders to reach my full potential. Every moment brought to the fore the bonds forged between fellow students, alumnae, and our venerable institution. What was true in my years as a student is true today for the young women on campus, and interestingly, just as true for alumnae, no matter when they graduated. As we have seen this past year-plus, the bonds are still strong, and the environment is ripe for engaging in the life of the College coupled with an inimitable challenge from classmates, faculty, and all campus leaders to ensure Sweet Briar reaches her full potential.

As we ready the campus and our academic, athletic, and leadership programs at Sweet Briar for the incoming class, I also want to thank the parents of these outstanding young women of the Class of 2020 for believing in the promise of Sweet Briar College. At a time when many families are seeking certainty in a rapidly changing world, those of us who work at the college assure you that we will continue to provide a superior liberal arts and sciences education to the young women who will be the next generation of women of character and capable leaders in today's global environment.

The bells keep ringing at Sweet Briar as we welcome the Class of 2020.

With gratitude,

Mary Pope M. Hutson '83
Vice President for Alumnae Relations and Development



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For more information about Alumnae Relations and Development staff, please visit sbc.edu/alumnae-development/staff/.

(800) 381-6131

Qualified retirement accounts and legacy gifts are tax-smart strategies, too

Qualified retirement plans in a large estate are eventually subject to both federal estate and federal income tax. The combined tax occurs at the death of the surviving spouse and the tax rate can be in the range of seventy per cent (70%). Qualified retirement plans such as your individual retirement account, 401K or 403b plan are the best source of tax-wise deferred charitable gifts. You always want to name both a primary beneficiary and a contingent beneficiary of these plans. You can name your spouse as the primary beneficiary of the plan and the plan assets can be transferred to him or her with no estate or income tax. You always want to name a contingent beneficiary in case your spouse does not survive you. You usually name your children as a contingent beneficiary to receive a percentage of the plan assets if your spouse does not survive you and in addition you can carve out a percentage for your charitable interests.

If your estate is a large estate, the percentage that you carve out for your charitable interests with eliminate both estate tax and income tax (70%) on that percentage of the plan assets. If your estate is a smaller estate, the percentage that you carve out for your charitable interest will eliminate income tax (40%) on that percentage of the plan assets. For large estates and small estates, a contingent beneficiary provision that provides a percentage for your charitable interest is a tax-smart gift.

This information is provided for educational purposes. It is not intended as legal advice. Please consult your own advisors who alone are aware of your individual situation and thus in the best position to provide an individual analysis and help you accomplish the best result.

For more information, please contact:

Claire Dennison Griffith '80

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Alumnae Share "Pearls of Wisdom" on Instagram

During Reunion, the Alumnae Alliance Council collected advice — some pearls of wisdom — from alumnae to share with our current students and with each other. Josie Beets '00, Evangeline Taylor '00 and Eleanor O'Connor '07 have turned launched these pieces of advice as a series of posts on the Alliance's Instagram account ([@sbcalumnae](https://www.instagram.com/sbcalumnae)). If you have ideas for other pearls of wisdom, please email them to Debra Elkins '93, co-chair of the Alumnae Alliance, at DebraElkins@comcast.net.



Sweet Work Weeks: Alumnae and families contribute time and talent

For alumnae returning to campus August 1 through 19 to spiff up Sweet Briar's buildings and grounds, painting, weeding, trimming trees and shrubs and mulching is a gift of time and talent to Sweet Briar. For Steve Bailey, Director of Physical Plant, it's a tremendous help to his staff and the College: "Sweet Work Weeks has been able to help Physical Plant do some projects that would otherwise have been deferred to a later time. Their work has been exceptional and is much appreciated!"

More than 75 alumnae, current students, parents of students and alumnae, and their future vixens from 21 are scheduled to come home for the August session of Sweet Work Weeks. Alumnae Relations and Development staff have scheduled evening activities such as shopping on Main Street, when participants descended on downtown Amherst for some retail therapy; a cook out with President Stone at Sweet Briar House; a white elephant Sale to benefit Sweet Briar, conceived by Jean von Schrader Bryan '82 of Amherst; and a Perseids Meteor Shower viewing party.



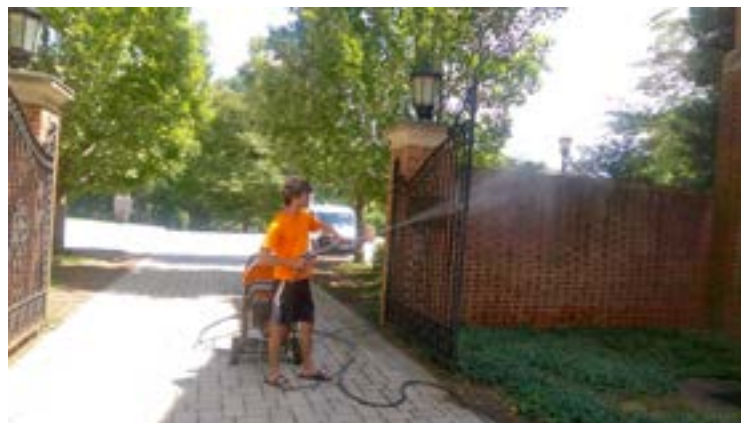
Bernie Wackenhut did some painting in the health center.

For Francoise and Bernie Wackenhut of Atlanta, GA, parents of Sophie '02, Anne-Claire '98, and Céleste '08, this was a reunion with friends from last year's Sweet Work Weeks. They reconnected with alumnae like Katie Tipton Wilson '08 and husband Brad, who also made the trip from Georgia. For the Wackenhuts, loving Sweet Briar has become a family tradition. Francoise's father was a professor in France for the JYF program in the 1950s. While Francoise and Bernie had never heard of Sweet Briar when Anne-Claire expressed an interest, her father remembered the College and its students fondly. Sophie and her sister Céleste were Admissions Ambassadors as students and went on to become Admissions Recruiters after graduation. Their parents have taken on this role as well, says Bernie, "We're always on the lookout for prospective students, and when we meet someone, we always say, 'Look at Sweet Briar!'"



Alexandra Schlomer '11 helped with landscaping for graduate student housing.

Julianne Linza '92, has made this trip into a family vacation with her husband, Jim, 16-year-old son, Jamie, and daughter, Carolyn Virginia '20. This year is their second time at Sweet Work Weeks, pitching in their time and effort to beautify the campus. Julianne and Virginia were both drawn to Sweet Briar because of the supporting community they found here. They loved the community of sisterhood, both with their peers and with the alumnae. Even Jim feels like Sweet Briar, in some aspects, is his school as well. Julianne and Jim dated and got married at Sweet Briar, and they joke with Virginia and Jamie that they wouldn't exist if not for this college! For all of them, Sweet Work Weeks is a way to give back to the campus



Jamie Linza pressure washed the Class of 1953 gates before giving them a fresh coat of paint.



Kathy '71 and John Pegues tackled the bamboo forest next to the Vixen Den.

that gave them so much. They love seeing what is going on around campus, reconnecting with friends from last year, and building connections with alumnae that they never would have met otherwise. More importantly, Julianne says that she looks forward to these weeks because "taking something that is in really bad shape and then making it better... There is a real sense of satisfaction."

Sweet Work Weeks is still under way through August 19. Until then, the campus is alive again with laughter, spirit, and busy workers. Alumnae who gather here enjoy reconnecting and feeling like they are students again. They know that no matter their age, Sweet Briar will always be here to welcome them back through its gates. Bright, shiny, and restored gates.

Case for Support: Tennis Court Challenge

History and background

Tennis has been a sport at Sweet Briar since the first class arrived in 1906. Over the years, the tennis team expanded to have a varsity and junior varsity team, and has competed in ODAC championships since 1982. In the 1980s, SBC's tennis team traveled to the national championships.. Since 1979, Sweet Briar has hosted the notable Dennis van Der Meer tennis camps, which bring high-caliber tennis players to campus each year in addition to auxiliary revenue for the College.

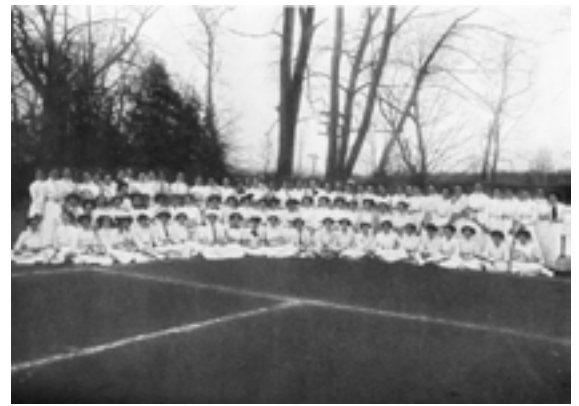
Current conditions

The tennis courts at Sweet Briar were last resurfaced 12 years ago, but best practices among collegiate facilities call for resurfacing every 7 to 9 years. Maintenance was limited to patching any problem spots, but patching is not proper maintenance for the long term. As a result, water has penetrated many of the courts as far below the surface as 12 inches. This has caused foundational cracks, surface cracks, dead spots, and separation between the topcoat and the foundational layers of the courts. The courts now have to be rebuilt.

Summary of need and challenge

Rebuilding the tennis courts is a critical need for Sweet Briar not only for ODAC intercollegiate play but for rebuilding auxiliary revenue through camps and clinics in the off-season. Sweet Briar hosted a condensed version of Dennis van Der Meer's adult tennis camp this summer; however, any expansion of the camps is in jeopardy due to the condition of the courts. The total sum needed for this project is \$275,000. We have already received a \$50,000 challenge gift from an anonymous donor to complete the rebuilding of the courts, and other donors have provided an additional \$9,000 to date. Former tennis teammates are reaching out to each other to raise the remaining \$216,000, but gifts are welcome from all of our Sweet Briar alumnae and friends. Work on the courts must begin before the winter months so that competitions and camps can resume in the spring; therefore, we must reach our goal by October 1, 2016. If the courts are not rebuilt in time for the spring season, our tennis team will have to hold its home matches at one of Amherst's public schools.

If you have questions about this project or would like to make a gift of \$10,000 or more, please contact Mary Pope M. Hutson '83 at 434-381-6131.



Vixen Voices: Emily Dodson '18 leads at Sweet Briar and beyond

For Emily Dodson '18, executive leadership has been a part of everyday life at Sweet Briar. A business and environmental studies major, Emily is also captain of the field hockey team, chairwoman of the Admissions Ambassadors, and Vice President of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee. Besides taking on commanding roles in her extracurricular life, Emily has a strong academic life at Sweet Briar. She came to the College for its small class sizes and for the connections she'd be able to make with her professors and alumnae. "Sweet Briar continues to give me a strong education while giving me opportunities outside the classroom to be a leader in the community," she says.

This summer, Emily has been a National Sales Accounts intern at Allianz Global Assistance in her native Richmond, VA. She found out about the internship from her next-door neighbor back home, but Barb Watts, director of Career Services, Mary Pope Hutson '83, vice president of Alumnae Relations and Development, and Luther Griffith, husband of Claire Dennison Griffith '80, director of Major and Planned Gifts, all helped her prepare for her interviews.

At Allianz, Emily has been making calls to Allianz's preferred partners, creating a presentation that shows revenues for various accounts, and reorganized their training programs. For Emily, this internship has given her relevant experience, which will make her a more desirable candidate once she applies for jobs.



Calendar of Events

August

Opening Convocation Wednesday, August 24
Fall classes begin Thursday, August 25

September

Fall Step Singing Monday, September 19
Founders Weekend Friday through Sunday, September 23 - 25
Fall Break Thursday through Sunday, September 29 - October 2

October

Amherst County Day Saturday, October 22 (tentative)

November

Thanksgiving Break Friday through Sunday, November 18 - 27

December

Fall classes end Friday, December 9
Winter Break Friday through Tuesday, December 16 - January 17

January

Spring classes begin Wednesday, January 18

March

Spring Break Friday through Sunday, March 3 - 12
Spring Step Singing Monday, March 20

May

Spring classes end Tuesday, May 2
Commencement Saturday, May 13

June

All-Class Reunion Friday through Sunday, June 2 - 4
All are welcome to attend, classes ending in a 2 or 7 will be honored.



The Sweet Briar Fund will
launch in mid-September.
Stay tuned for more
details in the next issue of
The Briar Wire!

**Do you have questions or comments
about The Briar Wire? Please contact
Clélie Steckel, editor, at (800) 381-6131.**