



HARVARD-RADCLIFFE CLASS OF 1966

Dear Classmates,

April 2025

Our April, 2025 edition:

I missed a few responses to last month's survey about retirement homes. Originally, I got 51 replies. 2/3rds said they will age in place. Here are some additional thoughts after which are the thoughts on Harvard vs. Trump, then general news, and finally the memorials.

Hilary Josepchs:

My husband and I want to age in place. We have retrofitted our home with a stairlift. It worked very well when my husband was recuperating from hip surgery.

There is no shortage of assisted living facilities around here, but even the expensive ones are dreary places where people go to die. Because our neighborhood is walking distance to an elementary school, there are many young families. Watching the kids grow up is a joy.

Barbara Richardson:

Why am I not surprised that no one seemed to mention the COSTS of paying for moving into assisted living facilities? I have just returned from 4 months of rehab in two different Assisted living facilities while recovering from a severely broken leg. The first costs for the Gardens of Terracina community were picked up by Medicare, otherwise they charge close to \$6,000/ month for a single room. In my second rehab stay at Tuscany Villa (all in. Naples FL where I own a condo with a big mortgage and \$3,000 quarterly fees) the fees started at \$5,000/ month for a studio. Most assisted living facilities offer nursing care and this cost can easily be double the rental fee depending on the amount of care you need. (I paid \$4,500/ month during the peak of my recovery needs with my fractured leg.) Most of the survey respondents didn't mention budgeting for care when their health becomes needy.

I shopped around at least 20 of the available Assisted. Living communities available in the Naples area and am reporting on the cheapest ones I could find on my budget. Unlike most others apparently, my own professional career trajectory did not provide generous retirement benefits and paying for moving from my condo to assisted living (in about 6 years when my money runs out of the stock market), I will be relying on profits from selling my condo in a market which right now is quite depressed after the hurricane impact on home insurance in Florida.

I write now, not to complain about the personal financial challenges I am facing, but to add to the conversation about the high costs of making the move from a private home to some sort of communal living that provides for medical/nursing care as needed. These are challenging decisions at this stage of life. Count your blessings if your finances are such that they do not have to be a major factor in your decision making.

Early in my recovery, while still residing in rehab, I did not think I would be able to return to independent living in my condo and prepared it for sale with the help of supportive friends. Hapily, my progress was so improved that. I have been able to move back to my condo and unpack all the boxes my friends prepared to help me move. I am back to comfortable living in my home, going to swim aerobics every morning and staying active in politics via a women's group AAUW. Yesterday I forgot to bring my cane and walked handily without it for some distance.

I wish all my classmates well in their own journeys in our later years. As Katherine. Hepburn says, "Aging is not for sissies!"

Lee Eyler:

I did not get a response to you about staying put/moving in a timely way because I've only been in my CCRC now for a little over a month and am still feeling a bit uprooted. However, I'd like to make a few general comments based on my moving and settling experience so far.

There is obviously no perfect time to move if you don't have to. My move from a dearly-loved arts & crafts bungalow at age 80 was one of the hardest projects I've ever undertaken, both emotionally and physically. It meant deconstructing my life of the past 30 years. But it was the right thing for me to do and the right time for me to do it.

Folks should be aware that the average waitlist time for entering a CCRC, at least in the greater Boston area, is 2-3 years. Excellent mental, physical and financial health are required for entry. Each CCRC has a distinct personality and programs. Try to pick one that has an educational requirement, great exercise facilities, performances, lectures, trips to museums, music, and opera if you want these things. Ask about the quality of care in the assisted living and long-term care units. Ask if doctor-prescribed PT be done in your apartment via referral. Remind yourself what it was like for you the last time you lived in an apartment. Try to get a sense of how residents meet and forge new friendships and how or if the facility fosters community within itself and with the surrounding community. Start right now giving some of the many books you love to friends and to your local library book sales. Pass family heirlooms to family and/or donate them to museums. Get your finances in better order. Remind yourself how much work it was to clean out your parents' home. Don't leave that task to your siblings and children. Feel confident. You will be making a great choice.

-Lee Eyler, now at Lasell Village, a non-profit, educational, continuing care senior community in Auburndale, MA.

Robert Coote:

Interesting question how many of us have made the move. I just turned 81, my wife of 58 years is 83. Currently we have no plans to leave our house in Kensington, CA, just north of Berkeley. We bought it 18 years ago, as we neared retirement, the first we have owned, having lived previously in rental properties and institutional housing. Here we have a separate office and library at the base of a pleasant garden, and the house is chockablock with items from a lifetime and no end of more books. I am not entirely sure ours is the most prudent decision. But for now my wife is still very able and has no interest in a retirement facility. Though not quite so mobile as she, so far I have tended to share her feelings, though truth be told my ambivalence may be intensifying somewhat. The many friends who have made the move are virtually unanimous about having made the right choice. I'm sure that you, too, have heard from people the words "should'a done it long ago."

Joy Kasson:

To answer your question, John and I moved into a retirement community about a year and a half ago. I think he wrote about it for a previous newsletter. I just wanted to say that we continue to congratulate ourselves for making the effort to downsize and move. We didn't go far away, staying in the same town (and so keeping our network of friends, familiarity with our community, even our seats for symphony and the many concerts we enjoy attending). But we sold the house we had lived in for 50 years, sorted out our "archive" of papers and belongings, and opted for the security of a life-care community. So far we are healthy and active, but we see all around us evidence that this can change in the blink of an eye, and we are so reassured to have a plan in place that will make it easy for one of us to care for the other, or for one survivor eventually to have multiple resources of health care, transportation, meals, etc. Our children don't need to worry about us. And we really enjoy the sociability. We dine with other residents

almost every night, choosing the most interesting people and getting to know them better. Yet our own apartment is private and we pretty much live the life we have lived ever since retirement, taking walks, traveling, seeing old friends, working on various projects. When a storm blows through, we don't have to worry about a tree landing on our roof, we don't have to shovel snow (the little we get here), we don't have to figure out how to get things repaired. The bundle of services we receive is just exactly what we need now, and it can expand in the future. So we have no regrets, although we miss our neighbors. But we can always drive by for a visit! I hope you and your wife are able to make the choice that works for you. It's hard making a change, but for us it was really worth it!

Feel free to be in touch with other questions.

Donna Gibson:

I'm teetering on the brink. Need to move but can't find a place that suits.

Harvard vs. Trump

Elinor Gollay:

I'm probably like a lot of other alums from our year at Radcliffe. I never felt that attached to Harvard so never made a donation. And I figured they didn't need my money. However, after they stood up to Trump's outrageous demands, I felt proud of my alma mater and made a small donation. What the government is doing is making me some combination of angry, heartbroken, and scared. On a personal level, I ran Medicaid in NM many years ago and know how important the money is not only for low-income people, but for people with disabilities and for elderly people in nursing homes. I could go on and on about what he's doing to our international reputation, to our fight against climate change, to our economy, to farmers who grow food that is distributed to people who need it around the world, etc., etc - but I won't. I will add, however, again on a more personal note, that I'm outraged and terrified by the way the administration is justifying a lot of their more outrageous efforts to strangle higher education and free speech on the false premise of "fighting antisemitism." Although there are some in the Jewish community who support what they are doing, all the Jews whom I know feel the same way: These actions will actually boomerang and foment rather than tamp down antisemitism. My view is also shared by the Jewish presidents of colleges and universities -- Harvard being but one of them.

I'm heading out of the country to London and then two back-to-back tours in France so I'll be abroad for all of May. It will be "interesting" to learn how people there are reacting to what's happening here. And I'll be able to bury myself in art, craft, music and theater - joyful reminders that we, humans, produce beautiful things.

Tony Scholl:

Wonderful, of course, that Harvard told Trump "Drop Dead", so to speak. Hard to imagine, however, that Garber and Pritzker would take any other stand.

Jeffery Griffith:

Classmates, it is time to stand up. Borrowing from President Kennedy and his inspiring inaugural address, which rings even truer today, I offer the following.

Let the word go forth that the torch has passed – but this time *back* to an older generation of Americans, born in this century, tempered by the wars of our time – civil rights, Vietnam, the environment -- disciplined by a hard and bitter election, proud of our ancient heritage, and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are even more dedicated today.

Let every person and party know that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival of liberty and justice.

So let us not cower and cry “alas”; let us instead rise up and redouble our efforts. Let us do whatever needs to be done to save this great nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the truth that *all* people are created equal and deserve lives of safety, security, and the freedom from fear for themselves and their families.

And so, my fellow classmates, ask not “but what can I do”; say instead THIS I will do. I will march, I will challenge, I will raise my voice in support of my country and of Harvard. I will give more time and more money – twice what I have given before, yea even three times. And when we have won and when Harvard is still the beacon of truth it has always been, we can say THIS is what I did.

Paul Merry:

A couple of letters to Pres. Garber:

Copies of my original letter and the president's response appear below

April 1, 2025

Dear President Garber:

I don't believe we have met, but I am a Harvard College graduate, class of 1966. Thanks for your recent “Zoom” presentation on college affairs. It was good to hear of the thoughtful efforts being made to defend higher education, and Harvard's innumerable contributions to our civilization, amidst the present onslaught.

Even as a small boy I remember my father, the Rev. Canon Robert E. Merry, c. 1929, explaining to me that his beloved alma mater, first flower of the New England wilderness, had been founded for the purpose of educating clergymen for the growing communities of the new world. Clergy needed to be educated, of course, because they were presumed to be the thought leaders, and more importantly the moral conscience, of the communities they served.

So it is painfully disappointing that Harvard, my alma mater too, has apparently decided to abdicate from this role as moral compass for us and the world. We as members of the Harvard community benefit from access to its great assembly of scholars, researchers and scientists, in all the areas of learning that impact our life as a culture and a nation. With the position it enjoys as arguably the pre-eminent educational institution in the world, to say nothing of its unparalleled financial strength, Harvard is singularly well placed to maintain its independent vision of what are the right moral and pragmatic choices among the excruciatingly difficult decisions we as a society are facing. And with its privileged position comes the responsibility of sharing that vision as it relates to public affairs at all levels, irrespective of incidentals like ill-considered, regressive governmental policies; or hostile reactions from less public-spirited citizens.

This role is particularly important with relation to recent efforts by many institutions in all walks of American life, including Harvard, to recognize, and to seek to remedy, the shortcomings in our country in realizing the high ideals of fairness and equity on which our country was founded. These efforts, which have arisen as a collective moral response to a series of high profile killings of racial minority group members, have been attacked by politicians seeking to capitalize on the fear, guilt and envy felt by a substantial segment of our population. These attacks on what some critics mock as “wokeness” are difficult to see as other than a betrayal of those high American values. They are even more ironic when it is clear that those selfsame critics have in many cases benefitted greatly from the fruits of those ideals, which have produced the most prosperous, powerful society in human history.

It is also difficult not to see those critics and opponents as simply lacking the courage to join in confronting, and aiding in redressing, our failure as a people to assure that those ideals will be honored and observed in our national policies and practices. Rather, those critics, and

apparently Harvard, are choosing to turn a blind eye to these shortcomings, (such as tolerance of slavery and its sequellae, anti-Semitism and others); and instead to seek to force our institutions of learning (among others) to pretend that they did not and do not exist. It is even harder not to see this action as a capitulation to the anti-intellectual, anti-scientific, and anti-democratic forces that sadly are ascendant in our excellent country at present.

Harvard, champion of veritas, must not acquiesce to the regressive political and financial pressure arising in so much of our society in recent months, and must not abandon its leadership role in what in many ways appears to be our hour of greatest need. Your decision, announced in late May of last year, that Harvard's leaders are to be constrained against sharing their insights and opinions on public affairs outside the educational arena, based on their unique, privileged position as having access to the best information available, must accordingly be reversed.

Thank you for your attention. I and many other community members look forward to your announcement that this reversal has occurred.

Sincerely yours,

Paul H. Merry, A.B. 1966
Law Offices of Paul H. Merry, Esq.
18 Belair Road
Wellesley, MA 02482

April 9, 2025

Dear Paul,

Thank you for writing. I appreciated learning about your family's ties to Harvard in your message—and I'm glad to hear that you could join the recent Zoom conversation.

In this fluid situation, Harvard leaders are working to identify the ways that rapidly emerging regulations and legislation may affect our community, and we are deciding how best to address the implications. Our approach will be guided by our values and commitments. These include the pursuit of excellence in our core academic mission as well as our efforts to build a community where people of all backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences can come together to learn, grow, and thrive.

Rest assured that Harvard will keep advocating for higher education in Washington and beyond. Meanwhile, I appreciate your care for the University in these uncertain times.

Best regards,

Alan

Dear Alan:

I hope this finds you well and enduring the storm that is raging against American institutions of higher learning. And again, thanks for your gracious response to my earlier letter.

I saw from the letter of another alumnus that an effort is under way to weaken Harvard's resolve against surrendering to the White House occupant's effort to eliminate its independence. Kindly accept this as my reiteration of my gratitude for Harvard's (and your own) courage in unequivocally rejecting and defying those efforts, which appear to be a clear attempt to take the first steps to turn our beloved democratic republic into an authoritarian state.

More importantly, it is also clear that Harvard's (and your) courage have inspired some hundred-seventy other of our precious colleges and universities to follow its example and reject these unconstitutional attempts to deny the right to freedom of expression. With this wonderful result from Harvard's adoption of its courageous stance, we cannot now equivocate or retreat from that position and leave academia again at a loss for leadership.

I know I speak for a great many other alumni and alumnae when I say we are proud of Harvard, and are counting on you and the Fellows not to give in to the pressure to retreat. Please also know that many of us are engaged in other activities intended to preserve our constitutional system.

In gratitude,

Paul H. Merry,

Harv. Coll. c. 1966

Peter Brooks:

Reactions to recent news? Now, if someone asks me where I went to college, I no longer feel the need to look down and murmur with modesty.

Today I am honestly proud as hell to be from Harvard. And proud of the institution and its current leadership. Since 1636 there have been some dark places, but right now it has really proved itself. I certainly hope it doesn't stand alone.

Hadley Williams:

Any ideas how our class can support actions of our President? Without a vote of some kind, suppose can't make a Class declaration, so what can you outreach to our class do??

Alan Venable:

I hadn't given to the Harvard College Fund in decades, but I just did once again.

Forrest Chrisman:

I do have some thoughts. I have long had mixed feelings about our Alma Mater. I have been concerned that it was evolving into a business not a temple of culture. But I have never been more proud of it than I am today. Harvard is often hailed as a "leader" in many fields. I suppose in a technical sense it is. But far more important has been its leadership in standing up to the gangster in the White House. By this act of integrity, it has changed the direction of national life. It has inspired the many good people to stand up and be counted. It has been the tipping point that I hope will be decisive. At a time of national crisis, our university is playing a role of historical importance. I will resume my contributions to the college fund, because now I know they will be used well.

Catherine Hughes (co-class secretary):

Yes, as forecast, a rally was held today (April 12) on Cambridge Common, co-sponsored by the American Association of University Professors & the Cambridge City Council, to urge the Harvard Corporation to "Stand Up" for academic freedom by resisting recent financial pressure tactics from the Trump Administration under the the guise of the administration's concern about anti-Semitism at the university.

A pretty impressive turnout, given the typical raw and drizzly New England "spring" weather! We heard from a whole line-up of speakers (professors, international students, a Jewish student, several local politicians including the current mayor of Cambridge, as well as a representative from the ACLU). All called on Harvard to hang tough & take on a leadership role for rest of the country in defending the academic freedom so critical fir universities.

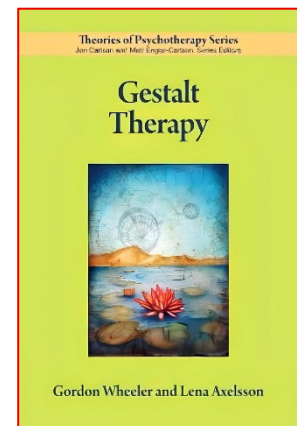
I saw 2 other RC '66 Cambridge residents in the crowd—**Katherine Perls** (pictured below, with placard) and **Loulie Kent**—both there like me to urge Harvard to stand up to Trump, though I left before the rally ended to walk back home, because it was so darn cold and wet!



Newsletter News:

Gordon Wheeler:

Gordon Wheeler, longtime President (2002-25) and CEO (2004-10; 2016-19) of the pioneering Esalen Institute in Big Sur CA, has transitioned this year to President Emeritus. Gordon remains Vice Chair of the Esalen Board of Corporate Fellows and continues to serve as Chair of the Committee for Indigenous Affairs of the Esalen Board of Trustees. His latest book, *Gestalt Therapy*, is published in the APA series *Major Methods in Psychotherapy*; a second edition will come out in 2026. In 2025 he retired from fifty years of clinical practice as a Licensed Clinical Psychologist; he continues to see clients as a consultant and executive life coach in Santa Cruz CA. Gordon and his wife Nancy Lunney Wheeler are blessed with a blended family of eight midlife children and their partners, and nine (going-on ten) grandchildren (who are split between California and NY/New,England).



Stephen Bergman:

Like of all of us, struggling. My wife Janet and I have various stuff wrong in body, not good. So far, as you see, not fatal. I'm starting a new book, but this one is not fiction—if it is my life. I always think of my first Harvard writing. I got a “Below Bad” the teacher. So, I realized I could **not** be a writer. This was great—I didn't try to write until years later when I got the Rhodes—“She can't get me now!” Wary, I started to write. And no, that's what I did! Became a doctor, so I could time to wrote in home. Wrote to write as a shrink. It worked.

Gratitude!

William Neaves:

Photographing wildlife continues to distract me from less pleasant matters (e.g., Trump's threats). Here's a scissor-tailed flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*) at our mesa-top home in Northwest Texas on 4/23/2025.

**In Memoriam****Dan Melia**

Has sent in an obituary for **Charles Carnese** which is here:

legacy.com/us/obituaries/oregon/name/charles-carnese-obi'65

'65	Gary Gossen	02/07/25	Taos, NM
'65	Lloyd Corwin	01/20/25	Largo, FL
'65	Charles Shurtcliff	03/10/25	Beverly, MA
'66	Lawrence Thomas	11/13/24	Lawton, OK
'66	Peter Atkinson	01/25/25	New York, NY
'66	John Brookes	02/17/25	Ann Arbor, MI
'66	Marc Temin	02/13/25	Newton, MA

There you have it, and now it's time for my nap!

Tom Black

co-class secretary