



VOICE *of* Love



THIS IS A SPECIAL EDITION OF PRES HOUSE VOICE. IT SPEAKS OF LOVE FOUND WITHIN THESE WALLS. OF COUPLES THAT HAVE DISCOVERED ENDURING LOVE WHILE ATTENDING PRES HOUSE. THIS IS BUT ONE KIND OF LOVE THAT THRIVES HERE. WE HOPE YOU FIND WARMTH AND KINDNESS THROUGHOUT THESE PAGES, AND HAVE THEM SERVE AS A REMINDER THAT GOD'S LOVE IS THE SOURCE OF ALL THAT WE HOLD DEAR TO OUR HEARTS.



Dear Pres House Alumni, Friends, and Supporters,

We hope you enjoy the stories shared herein and that it rekindles fond memories of your own time at Pres House. In our next edition of Pres House Voice we will highlight the Break with a Purpose trip to Birmingham, Alabama, where students will be learning more about the birth of the Civil Rights Movement. We will share with you updates about our expanding programs, our growing worship community, and our flourishing apartment community.

Thank you for your support of Pres House. Our mission and ministry is only possible because of your participation and partnership. To the couple's that so graciously shared their stories for all of us to enjoy, thank you. We sincerely appreciate our connection with all of you and encourage you to contact us with any comments or questions.

In Christ's Service,



*Rev. Mark Elsdon
Campus Co-Pastor/Executive Director*

Gary and Judy Schwab

We met at Pres House in the academic year 1959–60 during the time when Jim Jondrow and Rafael Sanchez were the pastors. Judy was a student in the Nursing School earning her degree in nursing and I was in the History Department doing a master's degree.

In the fall of 1960 I moved to New York City and enrolled at Union Theological Seminary, so we had a long distance relationship (without the benefit of email, etc.). Judy had classes each summer so the romancing continued then. The summer of 1961 I was a ROOJAH (Royal Order of Janitors and Hosts) at Pres House with Henry Kao.

We were married September 1, 1962, at Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church in Stevens Point. Rafael Sanchez co-officiated with Richard Hill who was then Frame's pastor.

We have remained in contact with some of our Pres House friends: Kathy (Doughtery) Enzi, Bob Graham, Murray and Marsha Milford, Byron and Mary (Bersch) Mohlke, and Rafael and Elvi Sanchez. ✿

Judy and Fred Blue

Fred and Judy met at Pres House in the fall of 1960. Judy (Hertwig), from Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, was a junior majoring in occupational therapy and Fred, from Staten Island, New York, was a new graduate student in history. Both joined the Pres House choir then under the direction of Betsy Farlow. There were two ministers, Jim Jondrow and Rafael (Ralph) Sanchez. The congregation was supported by the Presbytery while the church boards were made up entirely of students. In addition to choir they attended frequent church suppers. Judy graduated in June 1962, and they were married five days later in her church in Wauwatosa. Betsy Farlow played the organ and Art Smith sang the solo at their wedding.

After the wedding they continued to live in Madison until 1965, when they moved to Youngstown, Ohio, where Fred took a job in the History Department at Youngstown State University. After close to forty years in Youngstown they moved to Redmond, Oregon, in 2004. On June 9, 2012, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Over the years they have maintained close contact with Pres House which has a very special place in their hearts. ✿



Pat and Susan Morrissey

Pat and I started dating in high school, graduated from West High in Madison and enrolled at the University in the fall of 1957. We were married during Christmas break on December 20, 1958, at Pres House. Rev. Jondrow performed the ceremony. Our best man was a life long friend of Pat's and our maid of honor was a high school friend of ours. We lived on Conklin Court and walked to church on Sundays. Our daughter and son were born in Madison and baptized by Rev. Jondrow. Pat graduated in January 1963, and he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. The Berlin Wall went up and the Army needed to send more troops to Germany, so off he went and I followed that summer. Our third child was born in Germany and baptized by Rev. Jondrow when we returned. We spent the next 28 years traveling around the world, finally retiring in Menasha, Wisconsin where our oldest daughter and her two girls lived. We did get back to Madison in the late 1960's when Pat taught ROTC. It was during this time that Rev. Jondrow left the ministry, the Old Red Gym was fire bombed and T-16, the ROTC classrooms, were under constant attack. We celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary at Quivey's Grove on December 20, 2008. It's been a grand adventure that isn't over yet. ❀



Roy and Lois Plekenpol

"Happiness is being married to your best friend." This is a statement by which Roy and Lois live their lives. Meeting for the first time at Pres House, they soon became good friends but didn't go on their first date until more than a year later. That first date was quite memorable since their first topic of conversation was math major Lois's attempting to explain to Roy (a business major) what a parabola is. Roy chided their first date was almost their last for that very reason! Thankfully, the bonds of attraction won out; Roy and Lois became a steady couple. In 1949 during a "pinning ceremony", Roy presented Lois with his Kappa Sig pin making their relationship "official".

During their courtship Lois was active in the church choir. Miriam Belleville as director; led the choir in a presentation of "the Messiah", giving the alto solos to Lois. Love of music has continued throughout her life. She remembers time spent with friends during Sunday night dinners that the students prepared.

Roy became a ROOJAH (shoveled sidewalks and stoked the furnace) and was active in leadership roles at Pres House as well as in Kappa Sigma fraternity house. To help with his finances Roy was head waiter at the Kappa Delta sorority house, right next door to Kappa Sig.

During Lois and Roy's college years, Dr. Cecil Lower was their minister. 'Doc' was a pied piper, his encouraging, charming disposition drawing students to Pres House. This environment offered a comfortable place to find commonality with other students on the large UW-Madison campus. Both Roy and Lois were ordained as church officers. On one occasion 'Doc' persuaded Roy to preach the sermon at a small church near Madison, and Lois went along to play the piano.



"Happiness is being married to your best friend."

After over two years of dating, Roy and Lois were married on October 6, 1951. Roy had been the only Wisconsin student the year before to have been accepted into IBM's yearlong training program. Military service interrupted including a year managing the IBM installation at Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Denver, Colorado. Turning a lemon into lemonade, Lois and Roy learned to ski. Furthermore, Roy's Aunt Gladys lived in Denver, a Presbyterian missionary among a growing Spanish population. This was the only time Lois and Roy had a related baby sitter. Daughter Janie adored being with so many youngsters!

In the following 40 years, IBM moved their family (now with 3 children) over 10 times throughout this country. Shortly after, AT&T had broken up and Roy was recruited as a Vice president, developing and managing a sales and marketing organization for the former monopoly. The Presbyterian Church remains an integral part of their lives. Lois and Roy always sought out a place to be with like-minded people and churches that offered engaging programs for their children. Today they are active in the First Presbyterian Church on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Twice Roy has served as Elder and Finance Chair and Lois still sings in the 75 member choir. ❀

George and Nancy Shook

George's memories:

I arrived in Madison for grad school in August 1963. I don't recall how I found Pres House, but by January 1964 I was delighted to be singing in the Pres House Choir. The camaraderie and musical talent among choir members were quite good. And the music under direction of Betsy Farlow, and later under direction of John Barr, was inspiring.

I met and dated several young women members of the choir and the church, a few of them for several months running. In April 1966 I invited Nancy Bliss to join me to attend a performance of the Benjamin Britten "War Requiem" by the Madison Symphony Orchestra and Chorus [How was that for a first date? The music, while inspiring, is anything but light and happy!]. Nancy joined the PH choir as a beginning freshman in September 1964. Although we sang in the choir together, our interactions were few until that famous first date in April 1966.

The next move was Nancy's: She invited me as her guest for the August 1966 wedding and dance of one of her friends in Mosinee, Wisconsin, a three-hour drive north. I think her criteria for inviting me was that I was an OK guy and I had a car. That much time together gave us the opportunity to become much better acquainted. We continued dating and singing in the PH choir through the fall. At one point, it seemed our relationship had nearly taken its course. But Nancy's superb communication skills saved me! Then and ever after! Her gift to me for Christmas was a portrait photo of herself – one that I still cherish. This, to me, was a great sign that I was her guy! We continued finding that we had many interests and tastes in common. By March 1967, I was thinking that I would like to spend the rest of my life with Nancy. During a Saturday evening of window-shopping on State Street we found that our tastes were virtually identical; now I was convinced that she was the one!

Just before midnight on March 31, 1967, I asked Nancy to be my wife. Her immediate response, "What time is it?", was more

than a little startling. I wondered what did the time of day or night have to do with answering my question. It turns out that her father was a great April Fool prankster. She apparently thought I was more like her father than I really am. April Fool was the furthest thing from my mind; obviously, she had been thinking about it. After we established that it wasn't yet April 1, and that my proposal was sincere, she accepted. Whew! I was worried there for a bit!

We wanted to try out this new status for a while so we could both be sure that we truly wanted to spend our lives together; we decided to wait several weeks before announcing our engagement to the rest of the world. About May 25, while having dinner with Nancy's family at their home, we announced our engagement. Nancy was finishing her junior year at UW-Madison, and we decided that the wedding would wait until after her graduation.

The 13 months between announcing our engagement and our wedding were, needless to say, eventful and life changing. I finished my Ph.D. in June 1967 and was hired as assistant professor in the Dairy Science Department in July. Nancy, her family and Nancy's friend Paula did a family summer vacation to New England. My parents made their first trip to Madison from their home in Pennsylvania to meet their daughter-in-law-to-be. Nancy made her wedding dress and bridesmaid dresses. Sadly, Nancy's father, Gordon Bliss, was diagnosed with brain cancer and underwent surgery in November. His treatment was only temporarily successful; he passed away in May 1968. Nancy completed her BS in Nursing in June 1968. Our happiness in planning and celebrating our wedding, although real, was diminished by the illness and death of Nancy's dad.

Our wedding and reception were at Pres House on June 29, 1968. Rev. Jim Jondrow officiated. John Barr, PH choir director and organist, played the organ. A particularly memorable and lovely piece of music before the ceremony was the Bach Air in G. A student member of the church played trumpet (with organ) for the recessional.



Nancy's memories:

George and I met after a Pres House choir rehearsal in the fall of 1964. I was a freshman, and asked him if he was too... and he quietly smiled and said, "No." In typical peppy freshman behavior, I followed this with, "A sophomore?" and he again quietly said, "No." After striking out again on, "Senior?" I finally said, "Grad student?" and he replied, "Yes." Slinking away in embarrassment, I think I barely spoke with him after that for several months.

Our choir at Pres House was a lot of fun, and we were all friends, especially the group that joined the same year as I did. George had been in choir longer, and was more involved with his studies than we freshman, so I didn't see much of him outside of choir practice and early service. We were friendly, but not close. We both sang in the early service choir, directed by Betsy Farlow my freshman year, and then by John Barr beginning in September 1965.

In spring of my sophomore year, two events occurred that started us on our way to a relationship. First, George invited me to go with him to hear the Madison Civic Chorus and Orchestra perform the Benjamin Britten "War Requiem," at the First Congregational Church. Sometime after this, my roommate invited me to her wedding in northern Wisconsin, to occur in August 1966. I wanted to invite a date, and especially one with a car, since I did not have one, and it would not have been "cool" to have to be the driver myself. I invited George, and he and I attended the wedding together.

In September, he invited me to a football game, and afterwards, we stopped at his apartment to admire the tuner that he had built. At the end of this afternoon together, George took me home (I was living with my parents at the time). At the door, he met my mother, and she promptly invited him to stay for supper. I was actually tired by that time, and wishing for some alone time. We had really run out of the casual topics to discuss, so I was a bit peeved that my mother had invited him! Later, after he went home, and I was helping her with the dishes, I said as much. Her response was, "He is really nice. You might marry him!" Of course, my scornful response was, "Oh MOM!"

George and I dated fairly regularly that fall. My feelings for him grew, and I gave him a framed picture of me for Christmas. At some point, he began taking me home after choir practice, and to and from Pres House church service on Sunday mornings.

The real point of life changing decision-making came on the evening of March 31, 1967. We had gone to a movie, and then walked up and down State Street, looking in the store windows and discussing our opinions of the stock in the stores. We seemed to agree on a lot of the items, and to like the same things. Finally, we drove to Lake Wingra, and parked on the drive near the beach. We hugged and kissed for awhile, and then George asked, "Will you marry me?" I was stunned, and then remembered that it was the evening before April Fool's Day. Was he really asking me, or was he just playing a big joke on me? So I said, "What time is it?"! It was George's turn to be surprised. Whatever he had expected or worried about as a response to his question, it was not to be asked the time! He was puzzled, but looked at his watch and said it was 11:45. So, reassured that I was not responding to an April Fool's joke, I said, "Yes," and thus started a big life change for us both.

We were married June 29, 1968, in the Pres House sanctuary, with a brief cake and punch reception afterward in the Pres House Lounge. So meeting in Pres House choir was the start of what is now close to 45 years of marriage. ❀



"My wife and I first met over a volleyball net on a Pres House picnic. We have now been happily married 43 years."

—John Rusterholz

We are interested in hearing your story. We invite you to send us your "Pres House" story or memories of your time here. Please mail or email memories you would like to share to our Office Manager, Mynda Pull, at mynda@preshouse.org

Ray and Leatrice (Lea) Thurston

We met at one of Pres House's Sunday night fireside chats in the fall of 1946. Ray was president of the Trustees, a Madison resident and chairman of the Retreat Committee. I was on a committee to arrange food for the retreat. After that we started dating, and we arranged to be lab partners in a physics class, which about ended our relationship, but we survived.

In 1947 I went to Harper Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, for my Dietetics Internship. After returning to Wisconsin, I became employed as a home economist by the Wisconsin Power & Light Co. in Portage, Wisconsin. This enabled us to spend weekends together and we were soon engaged.

Ray graduated and took a job in Des Moines, Iowa. His parents took me to Des Moines to visit Ray. That was the first time I had crossed the Mississippi River and I thought it was a big deal, but now we have traveled so much it is no big deal at all.

On November 27, 1948, we were married by "Doc" Lower in the chapel. We memorized our vows and repeat them on the 27th of each month. The service lasted only about ten minutes. "Doc" Lower used to brag about how fast he could tie the knot. There were other weddings the same day at Pres House. We had our reception in the Fireside Room (Pridham Lounge) on the first floor, followed by a wedding party dinner at the Memorial Union.

We look forward to celebrating our 65th wedding anniversary on November 27, 2013, here in South Carolina where there will not be snow and cold weather. ❀



Barb and Norm Fedderly

Barb and I met as seniors at Wisconsin Dells High School. Our next four years (1947-1951) found our social and spiritual life primarily at Pres House as I attended UW-Madison and Barb went to business school and on to employment. We became part of an engaged couple's group and then to premarital counseling with "Doc" Lower. We were married in the Wisconsin Dells Presbyterian Church (our home church). We were moderators of the Pres House married couple's group. Even after graduation and the beginning of family Barb and son often went strolling with Pres House friend Carolyn (Foster) Udell and their child. We have enjoyed keeping in touch with Pres House and following its ministry and mission.

Pres house had a central place in the early times of our love story and marriage, and ultimately to my call to ministry. ❀



Sally and Jim Davis

Living in the Pres House apartment building next to the church was ideal for my junior and senior years (1954–55 and 1955–56) at the University of Wisconsin. It was a perfect location for my two roommates and me.

The nicest part of the location was proximity to Pres House where I had attended services since my sophomore year. Sunday was a special day both for worship and the Sunday night fellowship dinners.

In February 1956, between semesters, I went on a Pres House retreat with a busload of students to Devil's Lake near Baraboo. The weather was frigid (water left out overnight was frozen the next morning). Students being together in a not very warm meeting room—let alone the sleeping rooms—didn't bother us, nor stop our discussions, meal preparation and cleanup and fellowship times.

On the retreat I became aware of a graduate student whom I had seen at worship and evening dinners but didn't know. For me, graduate students were "them" and undergraduate students were "us."

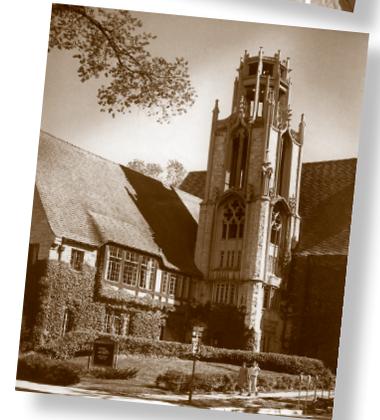
This changed during the retreat and on the bus ride home, Jim Davis, the graduate student, asked to sit by me. By the time we were back to the campus we had planned a date sometime in February (Pocket assistants and telephone apps were non-existent). Our first date was a movie at the Orpheum. As we walked back down State Street on a snowy winter's night we were intrigued by our new friendship.

Graduation came in June along with a summer job as a counselor at Camp Onaway in the Chain of Lakes. Jim had stayed in Madison to complete a physical chemistry class as part of his minor for the Ph.D. in geology. He picked me up at Camp Onaway on an August weekend and we went to my home to meet the family. The family thought Jim was very nice and he was a hit with my two younger siblings.

We continued to date in the fall when I began my first journalism job at the American Automobile Association in Madison. En route while walking to an October UW football game, we stopped at Rennenbohm's Drug Store on University Avenue. It was there that Jim proposed!

We became formally engaged on Thanksgiving weekend and called my parents to tell them that we hoped to get married on December 29 during the UW winter break. My mother was speechless and hung up the telephone! I called back and she said that she hung up because she was so surprised. She said she would do her best to help plan the wedding. Mother ran a boarding house for five full-time residents, she had two elementary school children, and was helping Dad remodel the old "hotel" that had been in Dad's family. She did all the food preparation for about 200 persons for the wedding dinner, which was served at the high school cafeteria, and the dinner was done in the family tradition of welcoming everyone and celebrating special times together. Both Jim and I will always cherish the beautiful cold winter day we were married in a little Presbyterian church surrounded by our families, friends and most of the people of the little town where I had lived all of my life.

It is indeed a blessing to recall our meeting at Pres House and having Pres House as the beginning of our now 56 years of marriage. We have lived in Madison, New York State, and California, and have recently returned to Madison for our retirement. Our daughter and her family live in the city and we now live just a few blocks from the State Capitol and the UW campus. ❀



Jon and Susan Udell & Foster and Carolyn Udell

We met in early summer of 1958 at a Pres House social event welcoming summer students, hosted by Jon, a Deacon at Pres House. Susan attended and in June 1960, we were married at Pres House. Our two oldest children (of six) were baptized at Pres House. (Pastor Jim Jondow said we should baptize the others at the church which we attended.)

Many years earlier (the 1940s), Jon's older brother Foster also met his bride-to-be at Pres House. He and Carolyn were married in 1948 and became Resident Couple at Pres House, living there for quite some time while Foster finished his degree after serving in the armed forces. ❀



**Support
Pres House**

Throughout this newsletter you have read about the exciting activities happening at Pres House. Ministry at Pres House is only possible through generous donations from alumni, friends, and churches.

Please give today by using the enclosed envelope or send your contributions to Pres House at 731 State Street, Madison, WI 53703. You can also give online at www.preshouse.org/donate.

Peter Carroll and Erin Hilt



Erin and Peter both graduated from Homestead High School in Mequon, Wisconsin. They met in High School on their orchestra trip to Italy. Peter asked Erin to prom on top of the Duomo Cathedral in Milan. She said yes and their story began. They continued their relationship long distance in college while Erin attended the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and Peter attended the UW–Madison. Erin started attending Pres House when she moved to Madison to live full time and commute to school. In October 2012, Erin and Peter became engaged at the Pres House Fall Retreat in Green Lake, Wisconsin, and soon after asked Pastors Erica and Mark to officiate their wedding. The wedding is to take place on August 24, 2013. ✝

Ginger Morgan
Director of Residential Community
ginger@preshouse.org

Steve Schmidt
Residence Leasing Office
home@preshouse.org

Mynnda Pull
Office Manager
mynnda@preshouse.org

Brandon Donkersgoed
Business and Accounting Manager
brandon@preshouse.org

Hannah Weinberg-Kinsey
Student Intern
intern@preshouse.org

Michael W. Hilliestad, Worship Director
music@preshouse.org

Erica Liu, Campus Co-Pastor
erica@preshouse.org

Mark Elsdon
Campus Co-Pastor and Executive Director
mark@preshouse.org



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