

# FINCH NEWS

SPRING 2023

A Publication for Finch College Alumnae and Friends



## MEET THE 2023 COSGRAVE HONOREES



**SALLY JOHNSON SHY**



**SHERRY FOSTER TAXMAN**



**MAUREEN K. TOOLAN**

**Sally Johnson Shy** grew up in Memphis, Tennessee. After a gap year following high school, she went to Newport College but found out it was not accredited. Her father called his friend, famed pianist Peter Duchin, who said that Finch College would be perfect for her and immediately contacted Finch president Dr. Roland De Marco. She started at Finch two weeks into the first semester. There, she was president of the student body, a member of the Ineamus Meliora Honor Society, and spent her junior year abroad. She graduated in 1967 with a B.A. degree in art history.

After graduation, "I traveled extensively and finally settled down in 1970, when I married DeWitt Shy and moved from Lookout Mountain to Memphis." She became involved with many charitable organizations and served on the boards of the Junior League, the Marguerite Piazza Gala for St. Jude, the Dixon Gallery and Gardens, and others. She is past president of Memphis in May, a month-long celebration that honors a specific foreign country every year.

In 1988, she started a small business that became Sally Shy Event Design, creating weddings, political events, and special

celebrations for private and corporate clients. During this time, she also wrote a children's book, *Daphney* at the Peabody, which gave "human qualities" to the famous Peabody Hotel ducks.

During her event design business experience, Sally became aware of the lack of proper etiquette for introductions, wedding announcements, and other social interactions. Knowing most of the rules of etiquette, but never having instructed others, she and a friend attended the Protocol School of Washington and became certified in International Protocol and Corporate Business Dining Etiquette. "I still consult on various events and teach etiquette to children, college students, and corporate interns," she says.

Sally is the mother of Sellers Shy and Genevieve Chapman and the very proud grandmother of 6 grandchildren and 4 step-grandchildren, who are all involved in competitive sports.

Sally loved her time at Finch and is "grateful for an education that translates across the globe and friendships that I've cherished for a lifetime."

As a young woman, **Sherry Foster Taxman** commuted from Long Island, NY to at-

tend Finch College from 1967 to 1969, where she was a math and science major and learned the sport of fencing. In 1970, she took classes in art, literature, and sociology at The New School for Social Research in Manhattan. After marrying in 1971, she moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where she completed her bachelor's degree at Creighton University.

"One of my first jobs after college was at Project Success, a unique program for developmentally disabled adults, and I also served as Youth Director at the Jewish Community Center, where I supervised the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization programs for the region," Sherry recounts. After studying interior design, she focused on commercial work. In 1978, after doing extensive research, she moved in another direction and developed a hospice program; she also taught behavioral medicine to medical students and residents.

After a divorce, she chose to remain in Omaha with her infant daughter. "But later, in New York City, I met my current husband, Jeff, an Omaha native. Together, we returned to Omaha, where my second daughter was born," Sherry says.

Sherry worked with her husband in his

*Continued on page 7 ▶*

# IN THE SPOTLIGHT: CEIL GAVIN AINSWORTH

Cecille (“Ceil”) Gavin was named for her mother, Cecille. Hailing from Boston, Ceil’s father, Gerald Gavin, owned a housing construction company with his brother. But Ceil never got to know her dad, who died of a heart attack at age 47 when Ceil was only 9 months old. When Ceil was 10 years old, her mother married widower Augustus Rogers, and they moved to New York City. As a high school freshman, Ceil rebelled by going back to Boston to live with an aunt and uncle. Grades 10-12 were spent at Marymount on 90th & Fifth in Manhattan. Although she was accepted at Pembroke College during her senior year, her stepfather died, and she opted to go to Finch College where she took Home Economics her first year there. Bored by the content and despising the course’s lack of structure, she decided to major in Art History with Dr. Tomasini; she loved studying Italian Renaissance Art. Ceil later met Wichita native, Bill Ainsworth, at a Cornell party in New York. After graduating from Finch, she worked as a Receptionist at the Young & Rubicam Advertising Agency and at the white-shoe law firm of Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett. After she and her husband separated, a shopping trip took her to Best & Co. (now, the Olympic Tower!) in search of a pinafore for her infant daughter, Susan. She was stunned to find that the saleswoman didn’t even know what a pinafore was! Like the saying, “Necessity is the mother of invention,” this mother realized that her female contemporaries would surely know a pinafore when they saw one! During this time, Ceil had a Haitian nanny for her daughter. After describing what pinafores were to this woman, Ceil rented a sewing machine and asked her to make one. The result was a magnificently embroidered pinafore! Being the budding entrepreneur that she was, Ceil submitted a photo of young Susan in a pinafore to the magazine of the Junior League, which they published. Meanwhile, around 1968, Ceil rented a space at 71st & Lexington near her apartment building, where she soon created “Poupées (“dolls”) and Pinafores,” complete with dressed stuffed bears as showpieces. Next, she contacted New York Times fashion editor, Bernadine Morris, whom she persuaded to visit her workroom. The result was a NYT article called “The Doll’s House.” Before long, news about Ceil and her enterprise travelled fast and she received a call from a merchandise manager at Marshall Field in Chicago. The store ended up buying 4 dozen pin-



Ceil Gavin Ainsworth

afores! Before long, Ceil hired a team of seamstresses. To help promote her goods, she hung an organdy pinafore on the fire escape, which drew notice from the Editor of Bride’s Magazine. Bridal designer, Priscilla of Boston who had a large factory, took notice and she contacted Ceil. They soon became partners in a business that would last for 20 years. During this time, the 2 women found a floor-through space near Lord & Taylor on 38th Street large enough to accommodate a show-room in the front and a workroom in back. Once the business became too big to handle, Ceil gave it up and hired contractors. After a stint in Roanoke, Alabama where she established a factory, she finally came to realize that U.S. production was too expensive to be sustainable. At the height of her success, she was selling to Neiman Marcus, Ohr-

bach’s, Lord & Taylor and numerous specialty stores around the country, with many sales reps in major markets such as Chicago, Dallas and Seattle. By the time Ceil left the business for good 35 years, \$3 million in sales later, and with enough pinafores to dress the entire cast of Gilbert & Sullivan’s famous comic opera, she turned to manufacturing dresses to be worn under the pinafores, as well as stand-alone dresses for toddlers, to sizes 7-14.

In 2001, Ceil saw an ad for Associate Publisher for Our Town, a Manhattan neighborhood newspaper. She got the job and was a top ad salesperson for many years for all 7 of the company’s papers, starting out with the Upper East Side as her territory, and ending with the responsibility for all of the Manhattan neighborhoods covered by the paper. She retired in 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic hit.

Today, Ceil lives in a comfortable 2-bedroom apartment on the Upper East Side near her childhood home, with her rescued toy poodle mix, Lily. She loves to reminisce about her time at Finch, and is so grateful for the many friendships of different decades from Finch she has made, thanks to volunteering for the Finch College Alumni Foundation, whose rapid growth is due in large part to the tirelessness and creativity she has contributed to its successful scholarship fundraising efforts.

*Article: Wendy Glickstein*

*Photo courtesy of Margaret Nakamura*

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Dear Friends of Finch, Fellow Alumni & Family of Finch Alumni,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have donated to the Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust scholarships and to welcome those who are considering making a donation. Your gift helps colleges become the springboards for helping women achieve success by advancing their lives and promoting mobility through higher education.

It is truly generous donors like you who help make possible their future success. Annual gifts like yours allow FCAAFT to award scholarships to outstanding and deserving women who might not otherwise complete their undergraduate degree. These students transfer from local community colleges into some of our most prestigious 4-year colleges and universities in the U.S. prior to pursuing notable careers. Your ongoing commitment is encouraging to both our scholars and to our organization in pursuit of service to the public good.

Please consider making a donation to FCAAFT this year. Your support is both recognized and deeply appreciated by everyone at the Finch College Alumni Association Foundation, as well as by our scholars.

With gratitude and warmest regards,

Lesley Kaminsky  
Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust Chair

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In a note, please indicate your name, email address, cell number, and the amount of your donation.

Make your check payable to "FCAAFT" and send to:  
Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust  
954 Lexington Avenue #183  
New York, NY 10021

If you prefer to donate online, you may do so at: [www.finchcollege.org](http://www.finchcollege.org)

Each contribution is tax deductible as the FCAAFT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.



# From the Finch E-Mailbag...

Hello to my fellow Finch classmates!

It's been a very long time since we have talked or seen each other. Julie Vasques, you are a true friend to the end. Thank you for finding me on Facebook. After years of being asked, told, and begged by my former students to get on Facebook, I finally got on because of my podcast. I see why some say it's for old folks. We old folks get a second chance to see and visit with old friends, often for the last time. My Finch sisters and I are doing well, considering our ages. Julia Wiley, Bev Pledger, Jackie Malone, Yvonne Martinez, Karen Maynor, and my roommate for life, Gail Bailey, are all very close. We try to visit as a family once a year; last year we were in Maryland for a wedding. Jackie was the first to have a baby. She made a



(l.) Jo-Ann King and friends

point of her daughter, Lexie, knowing us as her "aunts." Like her mother, she is an only child. Since I don't have children, she is my godchild. All the others have daughters, and Karen has the only boy. Like me, Yvonne doesn't have any children.

We all have had our health challenges, but we are still here. I have beaten breast cancer twice and am now dealing with some heart issues. I have been a tennis player, marathon runner, and a gym bum for most of my adult life. I'm waiting for the doctors to allow me back on my road and spin bikes.



Yvonne Martinez

We all are – or have been – wives at least once. I waited until the age of 53 to marry.

All of us have enjoyed

satisfying careers. Only Julia and Yvonne are still working. Julia is a lawyer for the D.C. Housing Department, and Yvonne works for a local business. Gail was a social worker specializing in children, Karen was a librarian, Bev worked for the postal service, Jackie worked for the government, and I was a middle and high school English teacher in Detroit. And, everyone except me lives on either the East or West coast.

Besides the fact that we all went to Finch College, we are all women of God who have had the honor of caring for our aged parents until their death.

Finch College will always be a large part of our lives. I have never stopped thinking about my years at Finch and the people who were a major part of my life. Last year on my podcast, I had an episode on Art in Detroit. My guest was an art gallery owner who divides time between New York and Detroit. I told her how much I loved art as a child, which led me to take Art History 101 with Marshall Mount.

I hope these few words from me will answer some of the questions about our small group. Life is funny. We just might one day get a chance to see each other.

With all our love to the Finchies who are still with us, and in loving memory of those who no longer are:

### Jo-Ann King

The Detroit Jo podcast  
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### Gail Bailey

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### Jackie Malone

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### Julia Wiley

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### Bev Pledger

prioritypostcard@yahoo.com

### Yvonne Martinez

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**Cheryl Deknatel** relaxed at lunch with Finch Florida friends on Tuesday, January 10th at the Norton Museum in West Palm Beach before embarking on a group tour of the Joseph Stella exhibit with luncheon companion, John Delmar, Cheryl's friend who functioned as tour guide. John is also well known to New York Finchies who have enjoyed many of his Manhattan Finch fundraiser gallery tours.

**Ellen Easton's** article, "It's a White Chocolate World in Winter," appeared in the January 11, 2023 edition of Westchester and Fairfield County Business Journals. Here is her recipe for White Chocolate Truffles:

### TOOLS:

- Double boiler
- Parchment or wax paper
- Wire rack or tray
- Cling wrap
- Small scoop, melon baller or measuring spoon
- Slotted spoon

### INGREDIENTS:

- 8 oz. white chocolate (Lindt, Ghirardelli, etc. You may substitute milk chocolate or dark chocolate.)
- 2 tbsps. heavy cream
- (Optional: extracts, grated nuts, sprinkles, cocoa, crushed candy canes.)

### Directions:

Place the chocolate in the top part of a double boiler, making certain the bottom of the pan does not touch the water underneath. Slowly melt it over a low flame, stirring occasionally. Add the heavy cream.

When melted, add a few drops of your extract of choice, for additional flavor. Once blended, remove the mixture from the heat. Place bowl covered with cling wrap in the refrigerator for 5 to 10 minutes to allow mixture to become pliable.

Using a small scoop, melon baller or measuring spoon, make chocolate balls in the desired size. Using either butter paddles or your hands, roll the chocolate into shape. If using an outer coating, place the coating in a separate bowl. With a slotted spoon, gently dust all sides of the chocolate.

Pour the chocolate into candy cups on a wire rack or tray. Place the tray in the refrigerator to set the chocolate. Once set, remove and serve, or box them to give as gifts.

*Yields 12-24 pieces, depending on size.*

**Natalie J. Skeet** reported on two Finch Fall/Winter 2022 fundraising events: "Finch Alumnae and Friends of Finch enjoyed an



exuberant matinee performance of NEIL DIAMOND: A BEAUTIFUL NOISE on Saturday, November 12th, 2022. The musical, based on the life of the iconic singer/songwriter, had everyone clapping, singing, standing and swaying to the best of old familiar favorites like “Sweet Caroline”; “Holly Holy”; “Solitary Man” and many others.

The First Annual Finch Holiday Gift Boutique and Luncheon took place on Saturday, December 3rd, 2022 at Da Raffaele restaurant on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. Forty-one Alumnae and Friends of Finch gathered to celebrate the festive winter season and to browse the tables filled with fine jewelry, clothing and skin care products.”

Proceeds from both events helped raise money for Finch scholarships.

**Susie Salomon** became a great-grandma for the 5th time, when grandson Tyler Smith and his wife, Alyssa, welcomed daughter, Brooklyn (and, no, that’s not a typo!) on July 5, 2022. Tyler is Susie’s daughter, Debbie Smith’s, son, and the baby was named in honor of avid Brooklyn Dodgers fan, Great-Grandma Susie.

**Stephanie Brody-Lederman** writes: “As I look back over my achievements this past year, what stands out is the inclusion of my edition Ed art calendar; “Bronx Linoleum Floor,” in an exhibition at the Cooper Hewitt Museum, February 22; also, the exhibition of my multiple book “No Spring Chicken” at the Kandinsky Research Center, Pompidou Museum, Paris, France, summer 2022. My art studio is in a brownstone with an elevator on Madison Avenue & 69th Street, 3rd Floor. All are welcome to visit. [stephaniebrodylederman@gmail.com](mailto:stephaniebrodylederman@gmail.com).

And Finch scholar **Megan Chelednik** writes: “I was blessed to have received the Finch Scholarship this past year to pursue my Bachelor’s Degree at Syracuse University. Before attending the University, I graduated from Brookdale Community College with an Associate’s Degree in Interior Design. I am a first-gen/transfer student (so to have the opportunity of leaving home to have that incredible college experience has been a blessing!) I am 26, juggling full-time school & work, but the women in the Finch family inspire me to keep striving! I am an EDI (Environmental Interior Design) student in the VPA (Visual Performance Art) building. Fall semester has been a joy. My professors are extremely knowledgeable and passionate about sustainability, which challenges me to improve my renderings/design skills! I am looking forward to the next two years, and I feel incredibly honored to be a part of the Finch community. I wouldn’t have made it this far without the Finch founda-

tion’s contribution.”

**Eileen Sherman** reports: “This spring we plan to combine the Spring Finch Salon with Ginger’s cocktail party over Cosgrave Weekend, on Sunday, May 7th. As a longtime Grammy Awards voter, I had the honor of attending all the Grammy Awards festivities on Sunday, February 5th in L.A. On the previous Friday night, February 3rd, I co-produced a special event for my International Music Group, THE INDIE COLLABORATIVE, and co-hosted a sold-out evening, featuring performances by 16 Grammy Award nominees of 2023 – all of whom are members of the Collaborative!”

Although she is eagerly awaiting other decisions, Finch Scholar, **Alessandra (“Ally”) Hussain**, has received her first acceptance letter from her 2nd choice of graduate school – the MSW program at Rutgers. She wrote: “I just wanted to share and say thanks for all the support throughout the past year.” [allyh.hussain@gmail.com](mailto:allyh.hussain@gmail.com).

Finch Scholars Committee Chair, **Lois Ziegler**, has announced a new slate of judges for the Scholarship Program. She reports: “For the past twenty years, the Finch College Foundation Scholarship program has been very fortunate to have Dr. Mary Raddock of Norwalk Community College and Dr. Cecelia Macheski of LaGuardia Community College serve as our judges. After reviewing hundreds of applications – along with a third judge, Dr. Katherine Lynch of Rockland Community College – the three women made recommendations for scholarship recipients. On behalf of the entire Finch community, I want to thank Mary and Cecelia for their efforts in helping to make the Scholarship Program the great success that it has become. We wish them all the best on their impending retirement. Our two new judges, Dr. Karolyn Koh of LaGuardia Community College and past Finch scholarship recipient, Aquella White. As head of the Honors Program at LaGuardia, Karolyn is very familiar with our program, and understands the needs and goals of our applicants. In the past, only college professors served as judges, but now, for the first time, a Finch Scholar is joining the committee. Aquella, a 2017 graduate of Westchester Community College who went on to graduate from Pace University, is currently a member of the Board of Directors of The Finch College Alumni Association Foundation and an auditor with a major financial corporation. Dr. Lynch of Rockland Community College will continue serving as a judge.

This past January, Japanese-American activist and movement artist, EIKO OTAKE, premiered “Eyes Closed” with the Kronos

Quartet during a world premiere performance at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Otake was the first student to receive a scholarship from The Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust upon her acceptance to graduate school at the NYU Gallatin School of Individualized Study. In 2017, she was the guest of honor at a Finch fundraiser hosted by Lois and Ron Ziegler at their beautiful Manhattan apartment following a performance at The Whitney Museum of American Art.



The Three Tomatoes and Glow Magazine have announced that Tony Award winning Broadway Producer, **Pat Addiss**,  
*Continued on page 8 ►*

## Transitions

**Tom Decker** passed away October 26th, 2022. He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Finch alum Denise Mularoni Decker; daughter Jennifer Decker Buck, and son-in-law Gary Buck of Eagle, Colorado. He was pre-deceased by his son, James Laidlaw Decker.

Tom and Denise were active as civic, cultural, and healthcare volunteers. Among the many organizations that benefitted from their largesse: Marin Council Boy Scouts of America; Children’s Burn Foundation; UCLA Healthcare; CA Science Center; CA State University Foundation; LA Library; LA Economic Development Corporation; LA Chamber of Commerce; LA Music Center; CA Chamber of Commerce; Catholic Healthcare Hospitals; Henry Mancini Institute; Japan America Society, and Japanese American National Museum.

Joungwon Alexander Kim, a former Professor of Political Science at Finch College, died at the age of 86 on January 25, 2023. He had a series of distinguished careers as an attorney, politician, writer and educator, and he was an avid promoter of US-South Korea relationships and developing a democratic government. He wrote extensively about protecting rights as well as US-South Korean relations. His legal work focused on economic development.

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# Finch Holiday Party and Gift Boutique

On December 3rd, more than forty Finch alumnae, friends and family attended the inaugural Holiday Luncheon and Gift Boutique at Da Raffaele, a restaurant filled with striking paintings by blind artist Busser Howell. Organized and hosted by Lesley R. Kaminsky, Natalie J. Skeet,

Marjorie Schulman and Lynda Maer, it was a joyful celebration, with wine and a three-course continental lunch, a raffle, and boutique items by Louise Blaney (fashions), Christl Pelikan-Geismann (giftware), Nina La Bruna (cosmetics), Galina Gould (Robin Woolard jewelry) and

Margaret S. Nakamura (stationery and prints). Enough funds were raised for a full scholarship!

*Article: Margaret S. Nakamura*

*Photos courtesy of Margaret S. Nakamura and Hideaki Nakamura*



Marjorie R. Schulman, Natalie J. Skeet and Lesley Rigler Kaminsky



(Clockwise from bottom left) Lesley & Stan Kaminsky, Evelyn Hilton, Mark & Diana Jacoby, Karen G. Rosner, Vilma P. & Hubert Wiesenmaier, (hidden-Neal & Eileen Sherman), Kate McGrath, Louise Blaney, Denise Mularoni Decker



(Clockwise from bottom left) Nina D.G. La Bruna, Pat Meehan, Carol Barnes Ross, Lois Moran Ziegler, Audrey E. Greene, Diane G. Crupain, Corrie de Groot and Maureen K. Toolan



Eileen Bluestone Sherman and Lesley Rigler Kaminsky



(Front) Eileen B. and Neal Sherman, (back, l-r) Diana O'R. Jacoby, Karen G. Rosner, Vilma P. and Hubert Wiesenmaier



Galina Gould, Lynda Maer and Marjorie R. Schulman



Nina Di Giovanna La Bruna & granddaughter, Nina La Bruna



Hideaki Nakamura, Margaret S. Nakamura & Francine E. Port



(Front left) Maxine Stark and Tatiana Hirsu (front right)



Lesley Rigler Kaminsky and husband Stan Kaminsky



(L-r) Joy Corrige and Wendy G. Glickstein



# FINCH COLLEGE COSGRAVE WEEKEND EVENTS AND ANNUAL JESSICA COSGRAVE AWARDS DINNER

Friday, May 5 - Tuesday, May 9, 2023

Philanthropist and Finch Alum, **Marcy Syms**, will introduce the three 2023 Cosgrave Awards Honorees on Tuesday, May 9th, at the The Cosmopolitan Club in New York City prior to the 28th Annual Jessica Cosgrave Awards dinner.

For those of you whose friends and family members will be joining us from out-of-town, here are a few suggestions for hotels that are in proximity to both the Awards dinner, and the traditional weekend events leading up to the dinner:

## The Franklin

164 East 87th Street  
(bet. Lexington & 3rd Aves.)  
212-369-1000

[www.lhg.com/voco/hotels/us/en/newyork/nycvo/hoteldetail](http://www.lhg.com/voco/hotels/us/en/newyork/nycvo/hoteldetail)

The 90-plus year old Franklin - a former Carnegie Hill townhouse - has just 50 rooms. The least expensive room is small with a queen bed; prices range from \$180-\$300 per night, based on seasonal demands. A small amenity fee covers a morning coffee and WiFi. The hotel is pet-friendly.

## The Concorde Hotel

127 East 55th Street  
(bet. Lexington & 3rd Aves.)  
212-355-7255

<https://www.concordehotelnewyork.com>

This four-year old hotel boasts 130 rooms and 37 floors, with only four rooms to a floor. Its rates are affordable, ranging from \$160 to approximately \$350, depending on your room needs and the events calendar. Each bathroom has a rainfall shower head and a separate soaking tub, enclosed in a space that is at least 270 square feet, which is the minimum-sized room. There is a \$25 additional fee for WiFi, coffee or tea, use of the health facility and business center, as well as an Asian fusion café on the premises for light bites, and an outdoor area strictly for hotel guests. All rooms have only one bed.

## The Pierre

2 East 61st Street at Fifth Avenue  
212-838-8000

[www.thepierreny.com](http://www.thepierreny.com)

This 1930 landmark offers, at minimum, a well-appointed 300 square foot space. There are 140 rooms and 49 suites, with the other spaces part of a posh co-op. Room rates fluctuate from around \$500 a night to three times that during peak times.

## Pod Hotel

230 East 51st Street  
(bet. 2nd & 3rd Aves.)  
844-POD-ROOM

[www.thepodhotel.com/pod-51](http://www.thepodhotel.com/pod-51)

The least expensive room in this 342-room hotel has a double bed, 112 feet in total, with a private bath, for about \$100-\$400 per night.

## At-a-Glance Cosgrave Weekend Events Calendar

Friday, May 5, 2023: 11:30AM-12:30PM

– A Visit to Theodore Roosevelt’s Birthplace Townhouse

Saturday, May 6, 2023: 2:30-3:30PM

– Fashion in Art Tour at The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Sunday, May 7, 2023: 5:00-7:00PM

– Spring Finch Salon and Reception at the Home of Regeen (“Ginger”) Runes Kiernan

Monday, May 8, 2023: 11:30AM-12:30PM – Tour of The Sassoons Exhibition at The Jewish Museum

Monday, May 8, 2023: 5:30-7:30PM

– Reception at the home of Diana & Mark Jacoby

## ◀ Continued from page 1

insurance and investment business, which continues to this day. Because of her extensive experience in the field, Sherry was sought out to develop critical illness and qualified long-term care plans for a consortium of companies. She also has used her expertise to develop software and payroll deduction plans for clients.

For the past 25 years, Sherry has served on the boards of various organizations including the Omaha Symphony Guild, Omaha Habitat for Humanity, Omaha Community Playhouse, Joslyn Art Museum, and Beth Israel Synagogue. She enjoys travel, often to NYC.

She has 4 children and 5 grandchildren scattered around the US and in Israel.

**Maureen K. Toolan**, who grew up in New Jersey, first attended college in the mid-west, but found it was not a good fit. “I

learned about Finch College from a friend who attended Finch, and I enrolled and completed my junior and senior years there. I loved the Finch experience! It was glorious being a few blocks from Central Park and many NYC museums,” Maureen remarks.

Maureen majored in history and government at Finch, graduating in 1966. Her favorite professors were Dr. Margaret Maxwell, Dr. Jean Ellis, Dr. John Knowlton, and Dr. Carol Hawkes. She briefly wrote for the Finch newspaper and interviewed Finch College President Dr. Roland De Marco.

In the summer of 1966, Maureen traveled in Europe with a Finch friend. She spent extensive periods living and traveling in Spain, including Torremolinos and Pamplona, where the running of the bulls during the feria (fair) was made famous by Ernest Hemingway. “While there, I met James A. Michener, who was doing research for his next book, The

Drifters. My friends and I became a resource for him,” she recalls.

Maureen’s first job was in the NYC garment district, which later led to a position as a market analyst in textiles.

In 1974, she decided to trade New York waters for the Caribbean sun. There she cooked on charter boats and sailed the islands, eventually settling down in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where she lived for more than 20 years. She served on the board of the local League of Women Voters and as president of the St. Thomas-St. John Arts Council.

While visiting her son Devin in New Orleans, where he attended college, she fell in love with the city’s architecture and culture. Impulsively, she purchased a home there and has been in residence ever since. “I continue to travel to New York, St. Thomas, Spain, England, and France, and I focus on my hobbies of pottery and art,” she says.

◀ *Continued from page 5*

He is survived by a daughter, Elizabeth Kim (Brian) Mannion, 3 grandchildren: Meghan (Seth Chadosh), Alex, and Peter (Yiyi Zhang) Mannion, and 2 great-grandchildren, 3 brothers, 2 sisters and several nieces and nephews.

Finch alum, **Marla Perkel (née Schneider)**, died on January 15, 2023, at age 87.

Born on April 8, 1936 in Canton, Ohio she was a dedicated ballet dancer who spent her childhood summers at dance academies in New York City before moving permanently to New York to attend Finch College. Marla received her bachelor's degree at Finch before attending Columbia University, where she earned a master's degree in zoology and master of philosophy degree.

Marla spent over 50 years in New York

City, where she married Bertram (Buddy) Perkel in 1961 and raised her daughters, Diana and Rachel Perkel. After completing three years in genetic research at Columbia, she focused her talent and energy as a community and non-profit volunteer for the rest of her life. She ran the Chelsea Civil Rights Council, served on the Board of the Hudson Guild Settlement House, was a founding member of the Food Co-Op at the General Theological Seminary in Chelsea, and volunteered with Recording for the Blind for over 25 years. She also managed the 9 unit co-op building where she and her family lived, and created a needlepoint canvas business called Designs from Antiquity. In her later years in New York, she was a fully trained volunteer Mediator for the criminal court system in the City of New York.

Marla was one of the first three female

Auxiliary Mounted Police Officers in New York City in 1973, where she patrolled Central Park on horseback for over 15 years, achieving the rank of Lieutenant.

Marla and Buddy Perkel spent their honeymoon in 1961 in Provincetown and fell in love with Cape Cod, where, starting in 1970, they summered with their family in Wellfleet. She and Buddy - her husband of 61 years - moved full-time to North Truro in 2001, and then to Provincetown in 2019.

A devoted mother, grandmother, aunt and friend, Marla is survived by her husband, Buddy Perkel, of Provincetown, MA; her daughter, Diana Perkel, of Amesbury, MA; her daughter, Rachel Perkel (Shawn Becker); grandchildren Aaron and Abigail Becker of Burlingame, CA; and niece Marla (Jacques) Brand of Scarsdale, NY

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will be this year's recipient of The Woman of Purpose Award. Presented by Cheryl Benton (The Three Tomatoes) and Anne Akers (Glow Magazine), the award recognizes inspirational role models who are not defined by age or labels, but who are all about living life fully at any age. A "Woman of Purpose" projects the inner and outer glow that comes from living a fully integrated life of purpose, service, and humanity. Pat will be the second

recipient of the award, which will be presented on Friday, May 19th at The Three Tomatoes Renewal Summit at Scandinavia House in New York. For tickets, contact: [thethreetomatoes.com/renewal2023](http://thethreetomatoes.com/renewal2023).

In October, 2022, Finch alum, author & mother who lost a son to drugs, **Wesley Davidson** and psychologist Sanam Hafeez, Psy.D pitched their book, *Secrets of Sober Parents: "How To Get Your Kids Unhooked"* to St. Martin's Press, a subsidiary of Macmillan Publish-

ers. Publication is slated for May 2024. Steve Harris, owner of "boutique" literary agency, CSG Literary, will have world rights.

Wesley writes: "My roommate of two years at Cosgrave House, Julie Wunker, is in assisted living at Beach House, 1000 Airport Pulling Road South, Naples, Florida 34104. I'm sure she would love to hear from classmates of '69, particularly Susan Reed and Jody Hilton."



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