Dear LVIIIers,

Probably most of you know by now that we have lost Tony Musante. We seem to be at a time where there’s no such thing as “minor” surgery and no such thing as a “little” cold/fall/medical problem. The loss of over 120 other class members testifies to that.

Those losses affect all of us differently. Some people we barely knew during our years at Oberlin and their disappearance leaves us with vague, general regrets. Others we knew very well and we are left with a sense of personal sorrow. Four years on the Hall Auditorium stage made Tony known to almost all of us, and so we have a more widespread class grief. Having played Tony’s wife in A View from the Bridge, I can tell you that I would much rather be sobbing over his inert body, downstage center, than facing the actuality of his death now.

But we are not given such options and so we can only honor classmates as best we can. To that end, we will be holding a brief memorial service prior to our class dinner on Sunday evening. If you attended the 50th, you will know that several reuniting classmates read the necrology as we lit candles. We shall do this again. If any of you wish to help in the reading of that list, please e-mail me (houckmx@oberlin.net) and I will make a note. We will need approximately six people and we will finalize plans at the reunion itself.

I think I can also mention that we do have the Class of 1958 MEMORIAL Scholarship Fund, as well as other funds that can use contributions in the memory of those you might wish to honor: Peace and Conflict Studies, Friends of the OC Library or Art Museum or Conservatory.

On a slightly happier note, we also need class members to man the Welcome Desk from 2:00-7:00 p.m., Friday, in Shipherd Lounge in the Theolog/Asia House. I already have several volunteers for that, but would like more so that we can allow people a reasonable shift schedule and allow them time to eat at the Kickoff Picnic in Wilder Bowl.
The evening promises a wild gala at my house during/after the piano extravaganza at the Con. The next day, Saturday, brings a cluster-sponsored panel on Peace and Conflict Studies to go along with our 50th reunion endowment for that field of concentration. And then it is class picture time. (We’ll try to avoid conflict: “No, YOU’re shorter!”). And in the afternoon we have conservatory festivities plus library doings. (With my fantastic influence over the Friends of the OC Library, I’ve persuaded Ray English to show off the new archives and equipment, special collections, and letter press facility—all fascinating.) We can show our appreciation by joining the Friends. That leads us into the Half-Century Club reception and dinner. Another reunion recital then brings us to another party—this time at the Brittinghams ’60.

Sunday is the presidential address (Marvin Krislov’s, not mine) Champagne Luncheon, Baccalaureate, our cluster memorial service, followed by our cluster dinner, and finally Pie on the Square (circumference or area, I forget). A Punch Brothers Concert, and Illumination Night with more concerts. Monday, of course, is Commencement. And outguessing the morning weather is the comic relief as always.

Don’t forget to send in your information form to the Alumni Office (alumni@oberlin.edu). Don’t forget to show up, bringing your talent(s) and any reasonable musical instrument to enhance our evening parties. (Midge and I both have pianos to spare you trouble and vertebrae.) Don’t forget to keep track of everything on our cluster reunion website page (http://tinyurl.com/pyn9alj). Don’t forget to send in class directory info. And when registration materials are mailed at the end of this month, don’t forget to get your room registration in early so that you are not doomed to North Olmstead.

If you have had a book published in the years 2009-2014, and will be coming to Oberlin for your reunion, there will be an exhibition and reception for alumni authors at Mudd Library on Saturday 5/24. Please email or call Jessica Grim for more information (jessica.grim@oberlin.edu or 440.775.5035).

You’ll get another letter and ballots for new class officers (if you submit nominations to the Alumni Office pronto) in April. If you have questions, e-mail the Alumni Office because I don’t really have any answers anyhow (alumni@oberlin.edu). And please join us. The next chance for togetherness will be 2019. And then we’ll all be even older and shorter for the class picture – if we’re lucky.

Till May.

Maxine Houck
1958 Class President