

ny delta doings

NY Delta Chapter of Pi Beta Phi at Cornell

Spring 2013 newsletter

2013-'14 Executive Board

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Meet Our New Undergraduate President

By Faith Mannix '14
President

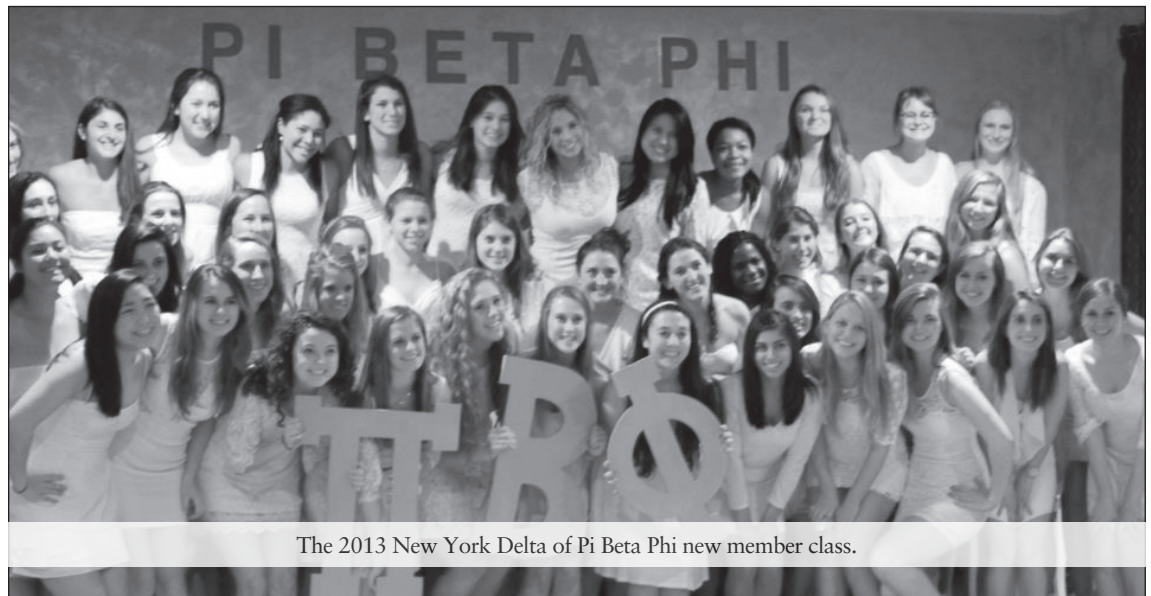
I am Faith Mannix, the new president of our chapter, and I am so excited and honored to be taking on this role. I am a junior, Communication major with a minor in Information Science from Saratoga Springs, New York. I spent last semester abroad in Rome, Italy, where I was fortunate enough to make friends with Pi Phis from different chapters who were also studying abroad! Although I missed my sisters at Cornell, it was amazing to experience sisterhood around the world.

Now that I'm back, I'm ready to take on the role of leading our chapter here in Ithaca. We recently welcomed 53 new members, who were initiated in early March. Cornell has made a lot of changes to the Greek system, particularly regarding the new member period. Our chapter was lucky to have seniors Mariana Caballero, Emma Sheldon, and sophomore Alli Guenther, as new member coordinators who made sure our new members were educated, engaged, and excited throughout the entirety of the new member process.

We have a lot of great philanthropic and social events planned for this semester. After starting the wildly successful Pi Burger Phry last year, we are excited to host this late-night food event to raise money for First Book. Tacky Formal, a favorite event to wear old dresses that have long-been out of style, will be held this year at Joe's Restaurant. This summer, I will be heading to San Diego to attend Pi Phi's National Convention. Our chapter is also sending Nicole Jibrine '15, current VP of Event Planning as an additional delegate. It promises to be a fun learning experience regarding everything Pi Phi.

One of my goals for this year is to strengthen alumni relations. If you will be at Reunion this June, please stop by our house to see our newly renovated living space that the current sophomores have been enjoying all year long.

This month, we will be bidding farewell to many beloved seniors. We wish them the best of luck in all their endeavors, and thank them for their contributions to Pi Phi during their time here on the hill. The doors of 330 Triphammer Road will always be open to them, and we hope that they, as well as any Pi Phi, always knows that a sister is nearby.



The 2013 New York Delta of Pi Beta Phi new member class.

Pi Phi Solidifies Our Friendship

By Katherine DiPastina '13

Looking back over the years, I think the one advancement that has truly altered our world (for better or for worse) is Facebook. Let's take a look at social networking for a second. Not only are you able to access whomever you know, whenever you want, you can also interact with them in a variety of ways—from games and videos, to the "old-fashioned" wall post and message. When you take a look at the Facebook login page, it boasts the ability

to "connect and share with the people in your life," and in a recent advertisement for the site, it is described as something that helps us connect with others—perhaps, as they indicate, on a deeper level. Through all this ease of accessibility, you can have a very diverse collection of friends on your Facebook account—close friends, acquaintances, work friends, college friends, friends of friends, restricted friends, girlfriends, boyfriends—all these classifications that put people into a minute category that describes exactly how you know them and how you want to interact with them.

Now, I'm not saying that Facebook has not become an ubiquitous presence in my life—my browsing history would beg to differ—but I do honestly believe that somewhere along the line, between pokes and Farmville, people can forget what it is to be a true friend to another person. And to that effect, being a friend of a Pi Phi is nothing like being Facebook friends. Facebook friends message you on your birthday in videos and pictures. Pi Phis are

there with you, celebrating your life. Facebook friends see your engagement status and comment on your wedding pictures. Pi Phis are your bridesmaids and maids of honor, and there with you for every breathtaking moment. While Facebook can try to label my friendships with my sisters as "friends from New York Delta Pi Beta Phi," I know for a fact that doesn't begin to define what it means to be my sister. These women, for the past three-and-a-half years, have filled every role in my life: as super fans, confidants, classmates, and teammates. Their dedication and compassion cannot simply be labeled with a generic Facebook friendship.

Today, especially as students, it is easy to check Facebook under "friends from Pi Beta Phi" and get updated on what our sisters are up to. I challenge you, especially those of us in the senior class, to move beyond the superficial layer of friendship that Facebook provides, and remember the value of friendship that Pi Phi has taught us. These women are not just typical friends, they are the best sorts of friends, the kind who are not simple, and are not easily defined. So how can we possibly maintain them simply? Facebook may help connect us, but it is our bond through Pi Phi that solidifies our sincere friendship.



Living Together Brings Us Closer Together

By Rebecca Bobrow '15

My best Pi Phi experience has been living in the house with the rest of my new member class. Living at 330 Triphammer for the past seven months has allowed me to really get to know every woman in the new member class and form a relationship with each of them. Last spring, when I went home after my first semester as a Pi Phi, I was worried there was no way I could nurture meaningful friendships with 50 other women at one time. I joined because I was looking for a place where I could find women who were not only similar enough to me that we would "just click," but also different enough that I would meet some really interesting people and learn something new about myself and the world; however I was worried that with so many women to meet, I would be stuck with the surface-level friendship I had been trying to avoid. I figured that even with my great effort

there were going to be people who I just wouldn't know very well.

Fortunately, this was not the case at all. When I returned to Cornell in the fall and moved in to the Pi Phi house, I was excited to find that with all of us sharing a living space, it was actually really easy to get to know everybody. While all 50 of us are not best friends, all 50 of us do create a family. We chat around the dining-room tables, share laughs when we shower in stalls next to one another, and hang out on lazy afternoons watching TV in the living room. I find that I could give anyone who asked a fun fact or silly quirk about every woman who lives there, and when I pass someone in the hallway, we always have something we can talk about or news to share if we haven't seen one another for a couple of

days. Every woman in the house contributes to the positive atmosphere that I love so much that I sometimes have to avoid it in order to get my homework done. When I return from class, I really feel like I am coming home, rather than just returning to the place I reside.

Living in the house has taught me how to be the best friend I can be. I know that I really would do anything for my sisters, whether it be waking up in the middle of the night to pick someone up from the library, editing someone's 20-page paper the morning it's due, or dropping everything to comfort someone dealing with heartbreak, and I'm certain any other Pi Phi would do the same for me. I'm so grateful that I have had the opportunity to live in the Pi Phi house and sorry that it will soon be time for me to move out.



Stepping Out of My Comfort Zone to Explore the World

By Emily Blumkin '14

As I stepped off the plane onto Spanish soil, jet-lagged and running on a restless night of flight naps, I felt completely invigorated and extremely terrified. Not only did I barely remember how to respond to a simple “¿que tal?” having not studied Spanish since high school, but this was also my first visit to Europe. Prior to deciding to study abroad, the only time I had ventured onto foreign soil was for a three-hour cruise excursion in the Bahamas. I had barely left the country, let alone lived in one for an entire semester.

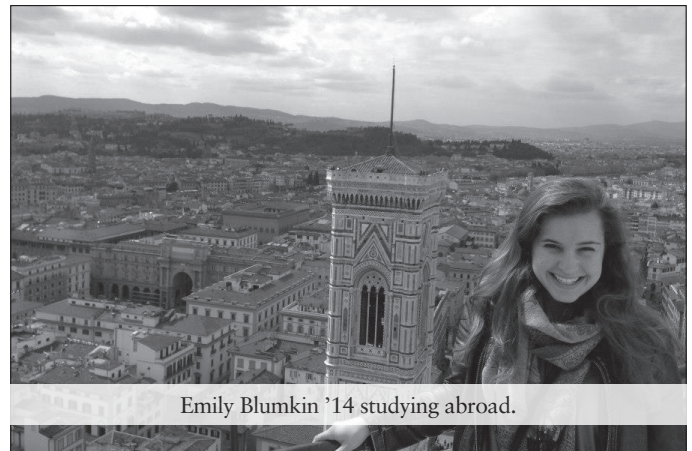
For the first few hours after my flight, I navigated the Catalan city with minimal Spanish and without any access to internet. I was completely alone. Neither my friends nor my family knew where I was; I could have been anywhere in the world with anyone. Despite the waves of panic that surged through my mind, I was able to calm myself through self-reassuring thoughts. I reminded myself of my past perspectives and mentality; through previous obstacles, I consistently accepted and encouraged change. By doing so, I was able to keep a positive attitude, which allowed for unique experiences, as well as many positive outcomes. For this, I reminded myself that adapting to change was what I thrived on, and this situation would turn out the same way. Although I loved my routine in my home university, things were too constant; they were too familiar—too comfortable. I originally had

decided to study abroad, not only to continue my aspiration of Spanish fluency, but also to acquire “life spice.” I wanted to do something different simply to make things interesting. My initial goal was to put myself out of my comfort zone.

Now, at the conclusion of my program, I could not be more satisfied with my decision to challenge myself. For me, every aspect of studying abroad has been just as much an experience of personal awareness as it has been an exposure to new people and cultures. I have not only obtained a better understanding of international, interpersonal dynamics, but have also acquired a deeper understanding of my personal reliability, independence, and responsibility. I now more greatly appreciate my faults and strengths, allowing me to more fully embrace myself. I have learned how to adjust my characteristics to relate to people within my program and within foreign cities, while my interactions have also intensified my love for the relationships I already have had.

Studying abroad, I have realized just how rare and valuable my sisterhood with Pi Beta Phi is. Although I have had the opportunity to

meet amazing, unique, and lively individuals from across the world, these encounters have had no semblance to the bond I have with my Pi Phi sisters. If I had not realized it before, I now understand the true extent of how powerful and genuine my relationships with my sisters are. Despite being miles apart, my communication with Pi Phi has been uninterrupted. Even more so, after traveling and having greater exposure to various individuals, I have been able to appreciate how rare it is to have not only one, but an entire chapter worth of spontaneous, outgoing, friendly, caring, reliable, and quality friends. As my study abroad experience wanes, I am grateful for this extraordinary opportunity to see the world, while I am equally as appreciative that I have a remarkable sisterhood to come home to!



Emily Blumkin '14 studying abroad.

Socks Reveal Littles to Their Lineages

By Iryna Ivasyk '15

After an exhausting-yet-thrilling week of making more small talk than any of us could have imagined, on bid day there was a master list of names of the extraordinary young women whom we would soon call sisters. Although this marked the end of the recruitment process, it was only the beginning of the journey that each of them would take to become a duly initiated member of Pi Beta Phi. After only a couple weeks with the new members, the sophomores had to face the challenge of inviting a woman to carry on each lineage, one to whom they would act as a friend and mentor. In the end, every single woman can truly say that there is no one they would rather have as a little than her little.

Big Little Week was probably my favorite tradition so far, after experiencing the giving

and receiving end of it. It was tiring and exciting at the same time; every minute someone somewhere was finishing up their crafts, delivering gifts, making Facebook pages, or planning surprises for her little. Finally, the absolute best part of the week was seeing the excitement and gratitude that each new member showed. I personally really enjoyed getting closer with everyone in my lineage as we worked together to welcome my little into the family and make her anxious to find out who we are. For almost all the new members, just like for the upperclassmen the years before, the best part was spending the whole week trying to figure out who their bigs are. Within our gift baskets, flowers, candies, and a plethora of Pi Phi gear, we left our littles subtle and, in many cases, not-so-subtle clues regarding our identities, however, they all were initially warned that some clues might be intentionally misleading.

The climax of the week was at reveal, after which everyone in the house had a large '90s-themed dance party. Prior to reveal, all upperclassmen coordinated to buy their littles a pair of matching socks with which each little would have to pair up to unveil their lineages; my little got a pair of Robin socks, which matched my Batman ones. Reveal itself was a cleverly planned process in which each upperclassman lined up on one side of a large sheet, and each little lined up directly across from them by looking at the different socks sticking out from under the sheet and matching them up. On the count of three, the sheet was dropped and an eruption of hugs, excited screams, and laughs broke out immediately after. After being showered with gifts, secret messages, funny pictures, candy, balloons, and far too many streamers, the new members were unbelievably excited to meet their lineages.

First-floor Renovations Have Strengthened Sisterhood Bonds

By Catherine Rieflin '15

The new renovations to our house that the 2012 new member class has been able to enjoy this year have been phenomenal. Walking into the house for the first time after summer vacation, it was as if I had stepped into an entirely different home than the one I left in May. All the upperclassmen were jealous of the brand-new furniture, curtains, dining-room tables and chairs that the sophomore class could enjoy upon moving in for the start of the semester.

Coming from living in Cornell's dorms—which admittedly are some of the cleanest and most comfortable that I have seen at any college—was a welcome change, to say the least! Now Pi Phi looked like the home it had always felt like for all of us. This winter was the first time I went through formal recruitment from the chapter side, and I had the pleasure of being able to share in the New York Delta Chapter's showcasing of its beautiful, new first floor to all of our potential new members. I had countless conversations with women who came through our doors about how spacious our living room was, and how the new curtains accentuated our large windows, which gave the room more light (not an easy task in the middle of an Ithaca winter!).

Many of our new members of the 2013 new member class, have cited our newly renovated house as one of their favorite aspects about Pi



Phi. A few of them have even stated that our spacious and well-decorated downstairs was a huge reason why they chose our house over other houses that topped their list this recruitment season. I was so thrilled to hear that all of the hard work my sisters put in to renovate our house this summer was a facet supporting how we ended up with so many fantastic new members to make up our new class.

I personally have been so happy with the way our house looks this year, and I am very proud to be able to show it off to all of my friends who come over to indulge in Chef Dicky's fantastic dinners in our spanking new dining room! However, not only have I been able to witness the positive effects that the new renovations have had on Pi Phi as a whole, I also have been able to enjoy my year of living in on a more personal level as a result of our new and improved home. Our living room and dining room now have more seating for sisters to watch movies, do homework, and eat together.

Last year, I noticed that because of a lack of seating, many girls were not able to partake in study sessions, sisterhood movie

nights, or spontaneous dance parties. I am particularly grateful that our renovations have eliminated that problem once and for all for current and future sisters of Pi Beta Phi. One of my favorite memories of living in the house so far was the night of the Academy Awards. At one point, we had approximately 15 girls sprawled across the new living-room furniture admiring the celebrities and their gowns strutting down the red carpet or making our own Oscar winner predictions. When I reflect upon my most memorable sisterhood moments thus far, that one evening sticks out as one of the craziest, most fun experiences I have had. What made it so fantastic was that so many of my sisters were able to watch it together, comfortably and happily. I am confident that all of my future sisters will be able to enjoy many moments like this as a direct result of these new renovations to our house!



our alumnae share their news

"It was a long time ago when I was initiated into Pi Beta Phi—March 1, 1941," writes **Jean (Zenner) Kaelber '44**. "What a great school Cornell is! I met my hubby, Geo Kaelber (Sigma Nu), there, and we were married in California on July 14, 1944. He passed away in August 2009. My delights are twin, 3-year-old, great-grandsons and a 2-and-a-half-year-old great-granddaughter, both living far away in Colorado and California. I meet three times a year with Pi Phis here in Green Valley, but it seems that all are from chapters mostly west of the Mississippi." Reconnect with Jean by writing to 635 S. Park Centre Ave., #1216, Green Valley, AZ 85614; or by sending email to gojean.k@gmail.com.

Barbara (Rapp) Hamilton '48 is looking forward to her 65th Reunion this June! She hopes to see other Pi Phi classmates. Get in touch with Barbara if you're going to Reunion at 2884 Treasure Isle Rd., Port Saint Lucie, FL 33452; brwjham@comcast.net.

"Life is good here in Southern California," writes **Jean (Thomas) Herrington '50**. "While I live alone with my 9-year-old cat, I have helpful neighbors, a laptop with Windows 7, DirecTV, and a Sudoku puzzle book at my side. I also attend jazzercise classes even though I walk with a cane. My passion is lilacs. As a member of the International Lilac Society, I like to travel to the annual conventions held at various botanical gardens. I have been to Descanso Gardens in California; Quebec, Canada; Omaha, Nebraska; Woodland, Washington; Mackinac Island, Michigan; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Lombard, Illinois. The 2013 convention will be in Madison, Wisconsin, and the 2014 in my hometown of Cleveland, Ohio. Join me; they are so much fun!" Contact Jean at 51609 Oregon Trl., Morongo Valley, CA 92256; oregontrail.b@juno.com.

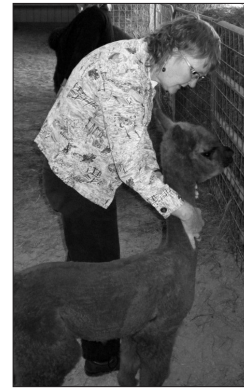
Carol (Edlund) Pierce '55 spent Thanksgiving on the East Coast with her family, and Christmas in Carbondale, Illinois, with husband Carl Rexroads's family. In January, they went to Sarasota for the sun and walks, swims, and relaxation! Then it's back to Bloomington, Indiana, for home basketball games, opera, and

theater. Keep in touch with Carol by sending postal mail to 917 E. Juniper Pl., Bloomington, IN 47408; or by sending email to crexroad@indiana.edu.

"Hurricane Sandy certainly took its toll here in northern New Jersey," writes **Carolyn A. (Carlson) Blake '60**. "I felt blessed to have only lost power for a week, but sad at the devastation all around New Jersey. Our Pi Phi alumnae club continues another full year of events, and I'm glad NY Delta is going strong. I was appreciative of the Homecoming invite—maybe I'll get there next year!" Reconnect with Carolyn at 111 Midwood Ave., Allendale, NJ 07401; cclake38@aol.com.

Elisabeth (Kaplan) Boas '71 has been living in suburban D.C. for 13 years, doing more or less what she did during the 20 previous years in Connecticut. Her kids are grown—Katherine is living and working in Manhattan with an enviable work/life balance at age 32; Benjamin is enjoying he's sixth-consecutive year in Japan, where his quite fluent culturally and language-wise (many of his Facebook posts are in Japanese); Esther lives with Elisabeth as she awaits decisions from MSW programs, working in a language therapist practice with school-age kids. Elisabeth wrote, "It's been a spectacular year for educational travel, much of it with Cornell's Adult University (CAU), which I heavily endorse for solo travelers, couples, and families. For me, Cuba, Jerusalem, Ithaca (four summer-weeks again!), Antietam, Assatiagua, Chinciteague, and the pre-Reunion seminar at Mohonk Mountain house. I hope to return to Central Asia this spring and to Ithaca this summer. Art and I enjoyed a winter break at Virginias The Homestead at years end and looked at Appamattox Court House and Petersburg Battlefield on our way home for New Year's." Stay in touch with Elisabeth at 11 Oxford St., Chevy Chase, MD 20815; ekb7@cornell.edu.

"Our alpaca business is growing by leaps and bounds," reported **Deborah (Lyon) Fister '74**. "We purchased Absolutely Spotless in May 2012. In July, Livie had her third cria (baby), a female we named



Our Honduran Hope. Here is the story behind the name: Dave and I joined eight other people on a short-term mission trip to Siguatepeque, Honduras. During our 10-day stay, we built bunk beds for seminary students, held a

vacation bible school and a medical clinic at a day-care center, and taught Sunday school at a remote village. The children at the daycare (Emmanuel Children's Day Home) captured my heart. These kids are from single-mother homes, and while mom works, children as young as three or four would be left at home without adequate supervision or food. The Day Home provides two nutritious meals, a safe and clean place to play and tutor, and adequate supervision. Although Siguatepeque is a large city, clean water is not available for most people. Berean Hills Alpacas' goal is to provide water filters for the Day Home and for every family who has a child there. Unclean water often

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our alumnae share their news

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brings parasites and diarrhea, a leading cause of death in children under age five. To accomplish this goal, Berean Hills Alpacas has an Etsy store where I have my handcrafted jewelry, yarn, and hand-knit items for sale. We also have hats, mittens, gloves, and socks for sale via our Facebook page. I hope Pi Phis will help me achieve my goal in creating hope for Honduras." If you'd like to help Debbie, contact her at 54 Sherwood Dr., Brockport, NY 14420; yargirl1952@gmail.com.

"After a busy 2011 with a full-time job and 93-year-old parents across the country in New Jersey, who ended up passing, 2012 has been a better year," writes **Elizabeth Dobisz '75**. "Rich, my beau, and I traveled to Hawaii and Italy. Hawaii was a couple of weeks mixing business and pleasure. We had a great time. We hiked part of the Napali Cliffs trail on Kaiu. We went to Italy for a family reunion and the 85th birthday of Rich's mother in her hometown of Intradacqua. We got an insider view of Italy and had a great time. My daughter, Hannah, is living at home and going to school. We are still in California, and love it here. Anyone coming to the Bay area, feel free to get in touch—6543 Cobblestone Ct., San Jose, CA 95120; erzebet1@sbcglobal.net."

Cynthia M. Powell '76 is completing her term as president of the American Board of Medical Genetics. She keeps in touch with **Lynette Prosser '77** and **Jeanne Mullenhoff '76**. Write to Cynthia at 109 Bayview Dr., Chapel Hall, NC 27516; powellcm@med.unc.edu.

Marjorie (Bock) Klar '76 enjoys being on AAC for Quinnipiac University that colonized in the fall of 2011; her counterpart in VPFD! She is planning to attend convention in San Diego to be part of the group that receives the charter. Catch up with Marjorie via postal mail—95 Hickory Knoll Dr., Easton, CT 06612; or via email at mmeklar@gmail.com.

"We continue to enjoy our posting in Dubai with PepsiCo," writes **Vicki M. Gillespie '84**. "We have met and made friends with so many interesting and diverse people from this region and further abroad. It has been a wonderful opportunity to further expand our knowledge and appreciation of cross-cultural differences, practices, and perspectives. Our home is open to anyone wishing to visit this part of the world (P.O. Box 11330 Emaar Square, Dubai, United Arab Emirates; gillespie.vicki@gmail.com)."

Janet (Nelson) Gerhard '95 is still living in Philadelphia. She started her own company this past summer consulting to the hospitality industry and also doing

facilitation and sales training. Her job has her traveling a ton, which means she gets to visit a lot of Cornell friends around the country. Stay in touch via email at janet@hospitality-gal.com.

deceased

We regret to announce the deaths of the following alumnae:

Janet (Cook/Holmes) Dennard '47
October 22, 2012

Gwendolyn (Slater) Millager '54
December 3, 2012

Nancy (Hislop) McPeck '61
December 10, 2012

Natalie Egleston '86
February 4, 2013



Growing Up in a Frank Lloyd Wright House

Kimberly (Brown) Bixler '91 finished her latest book, *Growing Up in a Frank Lloyd Wright House*. It recounts the joys and pitfalls of owning and living in a Frank Lloyd Wright home. She incorporates personal reflections, accounts from prior and current homeowners, anecdotes, family histories, and more than 200 photographs to portray a memorable childhood. Kim will be on a lecture tour this spring to coincide with the recent release of her book and the upcoming PBS documentary *Frank Lloyd Wright's Boynton House: The Next Hundred Years* (in which she is featured). Check out her website for tour dates and to stay connected—www.kimbixler.com or www.growingupinafranklloydwrighthouse.com.

