

Reunion: Basking in the afterglow

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Alfred University Reunion 2012 is now a warm glow in the memories of alumni who attended the three-day event last weekend. Rhoda Prager Steinberg '63 attended husband Steve's 50th Reunion with him, and is already looking forward to her 50th next year. "Steve and I want to thank you for all each of you did to provide a weekend we will never forget," she wrote in a note to Reunion organizers after the event. "We know how much planning, organizing and plain old hard work it took to make the experience appear smooth, seamless....and yes, effortless." I was a 16-year-old kid from the Bronx who came to Alfred and had my life changed forever. The very same influences and impressions awaited 49 years later. It is reassuring to know that in our shifting world some things do hold. "We thank you for all this, but what will uplift us for the longest time to come is the open heart with which you each greeted us upon our return. An Alfred welcome is like no other. Honestly, I think it's good for our health! Lori (Wellman, director of alumni engagement) and Susan (Gorman, associate director of The Alfred Fund), your smiles and hugs were spectacular!" "We love Alfred University. We always will. It was - and is - a blessing in our lives.....and we count our blessings every day." "The thing I love about the AU Reunions is I never fail to meet interesting people," wrote Bob Matolka '62, in summing up his experience at the event. "I tell my family that there is no need to even look at the registration list (which I do anyway), since there are people registered who I don't know, but will soon get to know." For Matolka, the weekend was also an opportunity to reconnect with a friend he had not seen in 25 years, and whom he had to convince to attend. "In the end he expressed profuse thanks and gratitude, for convincing him to show up and participate in the celebration. Made my day!" I had a wonderful weekend that included meeting a number of graduates who I had not seen in 50 years. Most importantly, despite the fact we may have been only marginally associated in our undergraduate years, we had some wonderful conversations about our lives and we shared remembrances of those long ago years. "My special thanks to Charley Edmonson (Alfred University's president since 2000). Alfred is blessed to have him at the helm. On the several occasions when I heard him speak, it always left me with the feeling that AU was in good hands," wrote Matolka. This year's Reunion saw a marked increase in attendance, said Wellman. "Some of our honored class coordinators worked really hard to get their classmates to attend." Special reunions, too, had excellent attendance, Wellman said. She estimates 60 people attended the Delta Sigma Phi dinner at the Fasano Welcome Center, which was once the fraternity's house. Mitch Feldman '83, president of the Lambda Chi Alpha Alumni Association, "did an amazing job," Wellman said, of pulling together almost an impromptu gathering of Lambda Chi brothers. "He asked me if he could organize a get-together at Reunion, and the next day, we had 18 brothers register," said Wellman. Feldman promises an even bigger get-together next year. Wellman says she's getting ready. "We've already started our preliminary plans for next year. We will have the theme (this year's was 'Mysteriously Fun,' and featured a Alfred-themed mystery play) by August, and will be working on the entertainment plans. Some things will remain the same, but Wellman says she's open to suggestions about events for Reunion 2013. (Email your thoughts to alumni@alfred.edu) "We know we are going to keep the Alumni Council Wine-Tasting," said Wellman. "That's grown every year, and this year, we had more than 190 people attending."