



CCW NEWS

A CORNELL CLUB OF WASHINGTON PUBLICATION

www.cornellclubdc.org

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A Tribute to Esther Schiff Bondareff '37

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Esther Schiff Bondareff, 102, of West Palm Beach, FL, passed away peacefully on December 19, 2017. She was born in New York City on June 11, 1915 to Abraham and Annie Schiff and grew up on Long Island. She graduated from Cornell University in 1937 with a degree from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. In Ithaca, she met fellow Cornellian and future husband, Daniel Bondareff '35. They married and moved to Washington, DC, where they raised two children, Richard and Ellen. Esther and Daniel operated the Broad Branch Market and later Bonfeld, Inc.



Esther with former Cornell University President Hunter Rawlings, Donna Forsman '63, Reg Ingram Sr.'51, and Elizabeth Rawlings at CCW Picnic '01 Montevideo.

It is no understatement to say that Esther was the heart of CCW. She and Phil Flemming '52 were responsible for combining Cornell's separate men's and women's Washington DC alumni clubs into CCW. In 1966, Phil became CCW's first President and, in 1971, Esther became the first female President to lead any Cornell University alumni club. She was recognized with the Frank H.T. Rhodes Exemplary Service Award and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) Outstanding Alumni Award. She served on campaign committees for CALS, Athletics and Mann Library, chaired Reunion for the Class of 1937, and provided leadership for many alumni events. In 2005, the new home of the Cornell Raptor Program was dedicated as the Esther Schiff Bondareff '37 and Daniel N. Bondareff '35 Raptor Facility to honor their dedication to Cornell. In the spring of 2016, Esther received the CCW Lifetime Achievement Award.

In 1986, following the death of her husband, Esther moved to Florida permanently. She served as a loyal volunteer and past president to both the Cornell Club of Eastern Florida as well as the Palm Beach Zoo. At the zoo, Esther trained as a docent and volunteered for 29 years before retiring at 101. "She was a force of nature that kept us all on our toes," said Naki Carter, the zoo's spokeswoman. Esther was a world traveler who went to all seven continents. She obtained permission to travel to Cuba on several occasions, bringing humanitarian goods, liaising with a zoo, and connecting with local artists. Her spirit was rivaled only by her generosity and goodness to others - from funding students at Cornell and their research, to hosting a monthly lunch for zookeepers and volunteers. She often said the secret to her long life was that she kept active. It was also because she kept having fun. CCW and all of Cornell will miss her dearly, but her fierce spirit lives on.

Thank you Esther!

Source: *The Palm Beach Post*

SAVE THE DATE

**Washington Capitals
vs.
Dallas Stars**

**Tuesday, March 20th
7:00 p.m.**

Join fellow Cornellians for a night of Hockey. CCW will be heading to Capital One Arena to cheer on the Red... in this case, our own Washington Capitals!

**Members - \$41
Non Members - \$46**

**Questions?
melvin.zurn@gmail.com**

Memories of Esther Schiff Bondareff '37

Board of Directors 2017-2018

President

Terry Horner '92 PhD '98

First Vice-President

Katherine Stifel '87

Treasurer

Elina Hum '79

Secretary

Elisabeth Boas '71

Vice-Presidents, CAAAN

Janet Cornfeld '72 (DC/MD)

Matt Nieman '98 (VA)

Vice-President, Communications

Liz Herman '01

Vice-President, Community Service

Laura Gonzales Meyers '04

Vice-Presidents, Membership

Julia Buffinton '14

Drew Zukosky '13

Vice-President, Programming

Jim Schoonmaker '74

Vice-President, Scholarship

Lisa Burns Griffin '87

Immediate Past President

Grace Jean '00

Directors (terms to 2018)

Jill Fields '88

Christine Song '94, MBA '05

Katherine Rogers '01

Ali Wright '11, Law '14

Kwame Rodriguez MBA '15

Directors (terms to 2019)

Toniqua Hay Gr '12

Linda Johnson '60, '63

Steve Piekarec '74

Chuck Schilke Law '88

Mel Zurn '93

Cornell Club of Washington

2148 O Street NW

Washington, DC 20037

*Esther embodied the spirit of Cornell through her dedication to CCW. Among my many pleasant memories of Esther, I remember her always carrying CCW membership forms wherever she went. She was never shy about taking them out and giving them to people when she learned they went to Cornell. She also urged other CCW board members always to carry membership forms with them. She was one of CCW and Cornell University's greatest supporters and her love for Cornell is something I will always remember. - **Bob McKinless '48***



Esther, her husband Dan Bondareff '35 and then CCW President Howard Epstein '58, Law '61, unveiling the Bondareff Award at CCW's Annual Dinner Meeting in 1984. First recipient: Bob McKinless '48.

*I was introduced to Esther by a classmate, who had been a CCW Board member when I was General Chair of Secondary Schools, now CAAAN. Esther asked what my major and college had been (same as her college) and what other interests I might have involving a CU alumni club. That led to my taking on programs for alumni beyond admissions work especially including the arts, science and education interests. My fellow classmate and a big fan of Esther's, was the late Howard Epstein, who along with his wife Carol, worked closely with Esther and her husband Dan, since the mid-1960s along with Ed and Lois Berkowitz. From those energetic alumni my responsibility with the Club increased to include all CCW members, not just those working on admissions work. I led many a CCW program due to her encouraging me to do so. Among my many fond memories, I remember when a red-tailed hawk named Esther was brought to Esther and she was given a raptor handler's glove to hold the bird herself. The bird had trouble making the shift from the handler to Esther, so in true Esther form she admonished the bird, saying, "Settle down Esther!" The bird did so immediately. Much laughter ensued from all those present. Also, Esther was not someone to ignore if she had something to say. Former Cornell University President Hunter Rawlings learned this lesson at a Florida CU alumni gathering, when he was visiting tables of alumni present. Esther was not getting his attention as he stood behind her chair. She gave him a friendly yank on this tie and said she wanted a word or two with him. Another wonderful memory of Esther! – **Gladys Stifel '58***

*Cheers to Esther who saw opportunity when Cornell combined its men's and women's clubs nationwide in 1966. She was the principal player in bringing the two clubs of the Washington area into a cohesive and successful single unit—the CCW. At every Cornell event, there was Esther with a stack of CCW membership forms, handing them out and accepting dues payments on the spot. She became the first woman president in 1971-72. When my late husband, Howard, and I returned to DC in 1970, she saw a potential enthusiastic worker and—as she did many times and with many people—invited him to join the CCW board. Howard became president of CCW in 1972-74 and I eventually followed in 1977-79. Esther ran the Broad Branch Market in DC and set up a CCW office in the Market office above the store. CCW had its own telephone there, which was answered by Esther or her secretary. The CCW board held its meetings in Esther's home across the street from the store, preceded each month by a tasty dinner. Esther was, after all, in the food business. CCW soon became the best Cornell club in the world, an informal honor it continues to hold and is so acclaimed by Cornell's Office of Alumni Affairs (when they are sure no other club is listening). Esther continued to support the club and maintain her active membership even after retiring to Florida in the 1980s. In our memories, we will always see and hear Esther working for and cheering on the CCW. – **Carol Epstein '61***

Memories of Esther Schiff Bondareff '37 – continued

I remember in the 1970s I was asked by Esther to attend a meeting of the CCW Board to better acquaint myself with the Club. I agreed and near the completion of the meeting, Esther addressed the need for a chair of the upcoming annual Kiplinger picnic. When Esther and the other Board members looked in my direction, I realized that my attendance at the meeting was preparation for chairing the picnic. I quickly found myself not only a past chair of the picnic, but also the 1974-1975 President of CCW. I thank Esther for opening the door to what became many years of enjoyment in service to the CCW. Esther was a dedicated Cornellian, fully engaged in enhancing the Club and supporting the students, faculty, administration and programs of Cornell University. She, along with her Cornell alum and late husband, Dan Bondareff, mentored many alums, including myself, in their activities in support of the Club.

- John C. Rasmus '63

Since 1984, CCW has conferred the "Bondareff Award" annually on a Club member who has given "outstanding, significant, and continuous service" to the Club. This award was created by and named for Esther Schiff Bondareff and her husband, Daniel. I was honored to receive the Bondareff award in 2005, and I cherish my memories of volunteering with Esther in various ways in the 1970s to increase the membership of CCW and to attract and recruit high school seniors to apply to Cornell. Esther was a real pistol, and she got stuff done! Love you, Esther.



Esther with the Big Red Bear in Florida.

I moved to DC in 1974 with my family. We planned to renovate a house in Adams Morgan. The renovation became a major problem in our marriage and I knew I had to find a job. I contacted my Cornell mentor, Harry Levin, who was now the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He told me the University was thinking of starting a semester program in DC and put me in touch with Provost David Knapp. I was hired to do a survey of potential real estate sites, which was how I met Esther. She knew everyone and everything in the metropolitan DC area, and wondered who I was and how I got myself in that position. She set up a meeting with David Knapp and I was there, too. Fortunately, Esther and I hit it off. She and her husband Dan became a part of a group of Cornell alumni, including the Epsteins and Berkowitzes, offering to buy a building and lease it to the University for the cost of running it. I worked with Esther and Professor Arch Dotson in the Government Department from then on. When the University seemed to be dragging its feet, someone said we shouldn't count our chickens before they hatched. Esther retorted, "With Cornell, we shouldn't even count our eggs." Thus began the tradition of giving one another eggs of one sort or another as we waited for Cornell to proceed with the project. By 1983, the University leased a building and advertised for an Executive Director to help administer the program. I, and many others, applied. By this time, I had become active in CCW. She had previously nominated me for the Cornell Council and now wrote a letter in support of my application for the job. I was fortunate enough to be selected for the position, which I lovingly filled for 25 years. Thanks to Esther my life and involvement with Cornell changed forever. She was a model for us all regarding loyalty and service to Cornell. I was lucky to have become active under Esther's tutelage. What a dynamo! What a force! What a special individual!

- Linda Jarschauer Johnson '60, '63

Esther with a namesake raptor in Ithaca.

I moved to Washington in the late 1970s shortly after graduating law school. I remember Esther as very welcoming and encouraging of me and other young alumni. She was always very energetic, devoting herself to her volunteer work for CCW and Cornell in general. At that time, before we had the Cornell in Washington Program and the Cornell building here, Esther and her husband Dan hosted many of the CCW board meetings at their home in northwest Washington. Esther always had a stack of membership forms with her wherever she went and whenever there was a nonmember Cornellian attending a CCW event, Esther made sure the person filled out a registration form and paid the dues before leaving. Ed Berkowitz once joked that the Bondareff Raptor Center at Cornell was named after Esther because Esther with the CCW membership forms in hand was like a raptor circling its prey. Last year at reunion, Jim Mazza interviewed Esther via video during Cornelliana night. It was a fitting tribute to Esther and the last reunion she would attend, albeit virtually. I will miss her.

- Eliot Greenwald '73

Cornell Cares Day 2018



CCW kicked off the new year with a bang! The Cornell Club of Washington, DC, has one of the most active service programs of any alumni group in the country and has participated in Cornell Cares Day since the university began the program. The year 2018 marks the second year that CCW's events have been named in honor of late President Garrett.



This year, over 40 volunteers participated in three events over two days to help the community. On Saturday, January 6th in Rockville, MD, and Sunday, January 7th in Sterling, VA, over two dozen volunteers worked with Lost Dog and Cat Rescue to find forever homes for area dogs in need. The volunteers operated as family groups to show off dogs to prospective families at local pet stores. Thanks to their efforts, nearly a dozen dogs went to adoptive or foster homes.



On Saturday, January 6th, over a dozen volunteers, including teen children of our alumni, helped to clean up Catholic Charities' NY Ave men's shelter. Offering a clean, organized space to clients is one of the many ways that the shelter offers dignity to members of the community who have been marginalized.

We are grateful for the diligence and hard work of our reliable volunteers through their years of devotion to CCW.

- Laura Gonzales Meyers '04

Volunteer Corner



Communications

Are you a fan of Instagram and Facebook? Help CCW with our communications efforts including our social media and email updates. Contact Liz Herman at communications@cornellclubdc.org.

Community Service

We are always looking for community service ideas and volunteers! To learn more, contact Laura Gonzales Meyers at communityservice@cornellclubdc.org.

Finance Committee

Do you have a background in accounting or tax law? Or want to become more familiar with these areas and how they work in the non-profit context? Then please consider joining us! Contact Elina Hum at treasurer@cornellclubdc.org.

Programming

The CCW Programming Committee welcomes suggestions for programs and volunteers to help with them! Contact Jim Schoonmaker at programming@cornellclubdc.org.

Technology

Looking for people with website experience to help in the redesign of the CCW website. Contact Terry Horner at president@cornellclubdc.org

Events at a Glance

Cornell in Washington Student/ Alumni Mixer



Tuesday, February 13th
9 pm to 10 pm
Cornell Center
2148 O St., NW
Washington, DC

The spring semester students have arrived! Please welcome them and enjoy refreshments. All alumni are invited and we hope many CIW alums will attend to provide informal advice and networking.

Questions?

Linda Jarschauer Johnson
lj1@cornell.edu

FEBRUARY

- 01-03 Cornell Alumni Leadership Conference (CALC) 2018
Questions: calc@cornell.edu
- 08 A CCW Evening with Cornell VP for Student & Campus Life
Questions: programming@cornellclubdc.org
- 13 CCW Monthly Board Meeting
Questions: Terry Horner at president@cornellclubdc.org
- 13 CCW Monthly Programming Meeting
Questions: programming@cornellclubdc.org
- 13 Cornell in Washington Student/Alumni Mixer
Questions: Linda Jarschauer Johnson at lj1@cornell.edu
- 15..... Third Thursdays
Questions: Katherine Stifel at kgstifel@earthlink.net
- 19 All-Ivy Badminton Tournament
Questions: Ken Meyercord at kiaskfm@verizon.net
- 21 4th Ivy / Seven Sisters Chess Social
Questions: Kuni Matsuda at Stardust@smart.net
- 24 Advancing Civil Discourse - Public Debate
Questions: Ming Shiao at debate@cornell.edu
- 24 Ivy / Seven Sisters Winter Indoor Tennis Party
Questions: Kuni Matsuda at Stardust@smart.net

MARCH

- 01 Reunion Rev Up
Questions: programming@cornellclubdc.org
- 04 Cornell Song Tradition: Pass It On
Questions: Katherine Stifel at kgstifel@earthlink.net
- 13 CCW Monthly Board Meeting
Questions: Terry Horner at president@cornellclubdc.org
- 13 CCW Monthly Programming Meeting
Questions: programming@cornellclubdc.org
- 15..... Third Thursdays
Questions: Katherine Stifel at kgstifel@earthlink.net
- 24 Architectural Tour of Union Station
Questions: Chuck Schilke at cschilke2@verizon.net

Register for events at <http://www.cornellclubdc.org/events>

Club Announcements

A CCW Evening with Cornell VP for Student & Campus Life, Dr. Ryan Lombardi

Thursday, February 8th, Reception 6:30 pm, Program 7:30 pm

Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), 1307 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC

Join CCW members and guests for a reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine and other refreshments, to be followed by a discussion with Dr. Lombardi. He will discuss a number of important issues facing Cornell students and life on campus, including diversity and inclusion; health and wellness; the residential experience; and career services.

Cost: \$20 members; \$25 non-members, includes food and drink at the reception

Transportation: Metro Center (Red, Orange/Blue/Silver line). Take the 13th Street exit and walk north to New York Ave.

Questions: Jim Schoonmaker, programming@cornellclubdc.org

Cornell Song Tradition: Pass it on

Sunday, March 4th, 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

National Cathedral School (Grace Chapel), 3612 Woodley Road, NW, Washington, DC

Come join fellow local Cornellians and CCW to sing the Alma Mater, Evening Song & various standards with CU singers & those that want to learn them or brush up to help spread Big Red spirit & have some fun. Reception at Whitby Lobby immediately adjacent for wine, cheese, fruit and sweets reception. Those who wish to join in the piano accompaniment of a song or 2 are most welcome. Please reach Katherine if you are interested in sharing in piano accompaniment.

Transportation: Cleveland Park or Tenleytown Metro (Red Line)

Questions: Katherine Stifel, kgstifel@earthlink.net

CCW News

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2148 O Street NW
Washington, DC 20037
www.cornellclubdc.org
newsletter@cornellclubdc.org

February 2018

Moved? New email? Update your record at www.cornellclubdc.org

Welcome New CCW Members

Kate Bedding Gr'17	Mary Clare McCorry Gr'17
Keith Crawford '82	Michal Norry '17
DeAnna D'Attilio '12	Laura Poppendeck Gr'11
Mary Deem	Pamela Signorello LAW'01
George Kartalian *	Jessi Silverman '17
Jeanie Kartalian *	Derrick Swaak MBA'91
Steven Kubisen '74	Elisabeth Swanbery '87 *
Jack Lan MBA'17	Rachid Zidani '17

*** New Life Members**