

A Real Classic

BY TAMARA FYNAARDT

This year marks the 125th anniversary of the *Classic*, which began in 1891–92 as the Northwestern Classical Academy’s student publication. Published monthly, each issue during that inaugural year listed the academy’s enrollment (72) and tuition (\$150 to \$200), and subscription rates were 15 cents per issue.

The initial *Classic* ceased publication after 1907, reappearing around 1925 as both the student course catalog and a news bulletin for academy and junior college constituents. In 1930, then President Jacob Heemstra made it official, writing in his column, “... it was decided that a quarterly publication should be issued as the official organ of the institution. The name adopted for this periodical is ‘the *Classic*.’ ... [W]e hope [it] will be given a very cordial reception by all readers ...”

By the 1950s, the *Classic* had a consistent look and could be counted on by constituents for regular updates regarding alumni news and campus developments. Class notes, then called “Personalia,” were popular, and “Our mailbag” included all manner of letters sent to Northwestern, including one from Billy Graham’s secretary in 1959, explaining the notable preacher would be unable to visit campus.

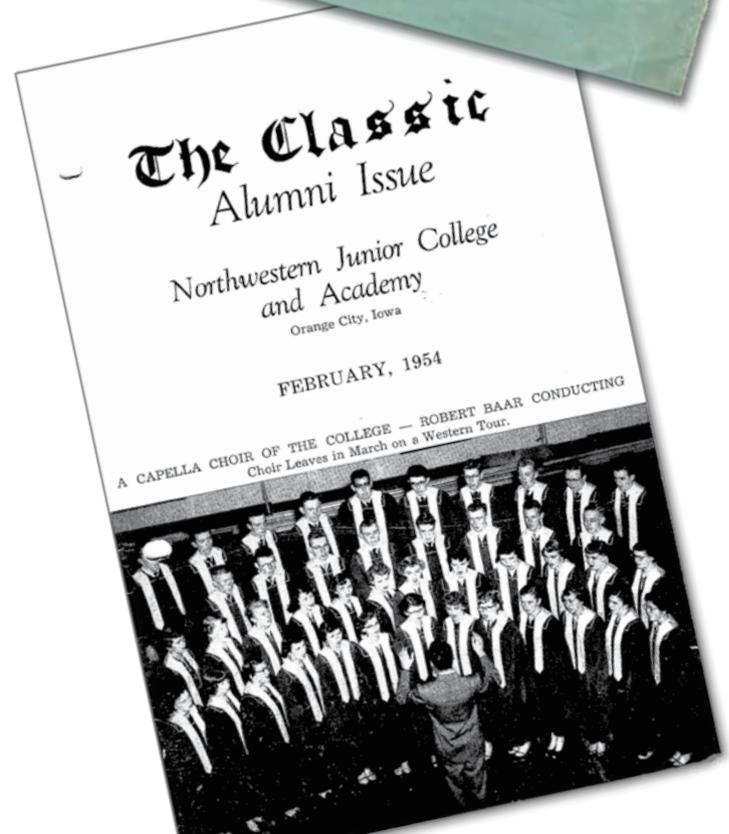
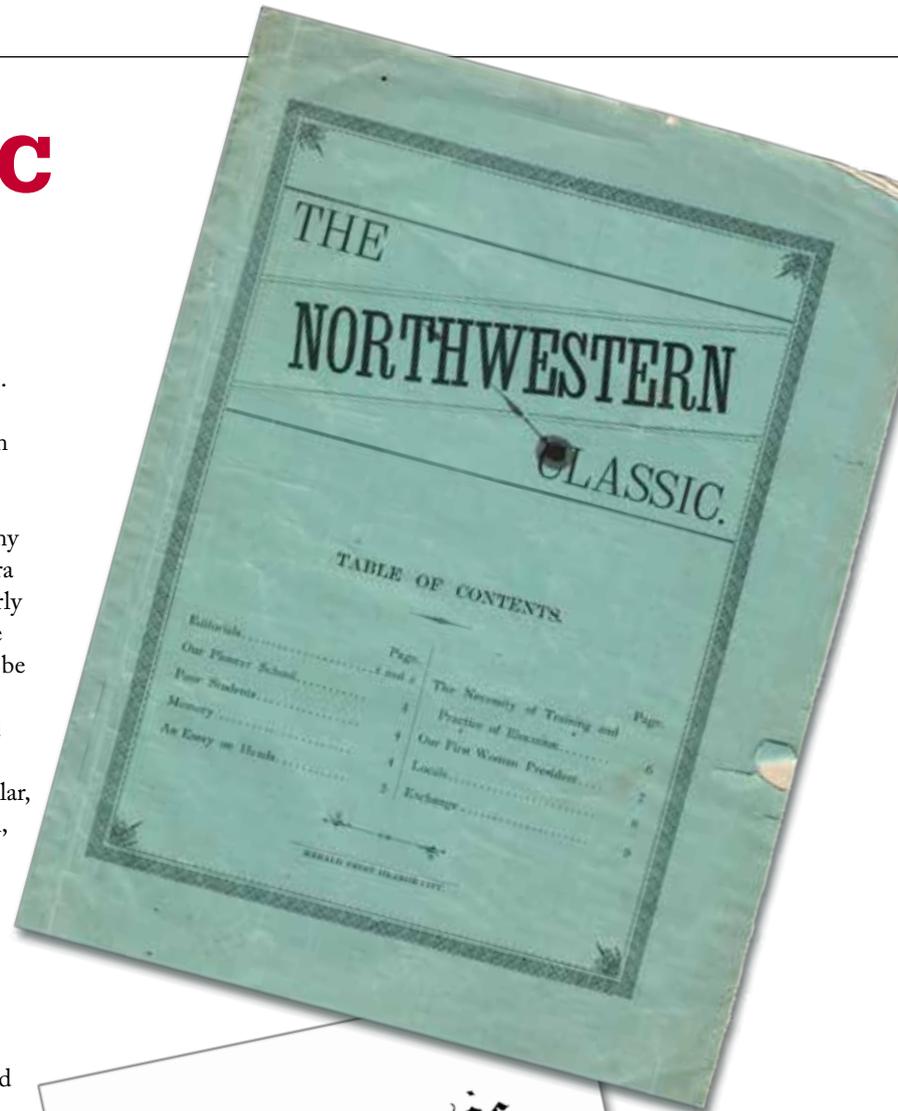
Throughout the 1960s, ’70s and early ’80s, a series of editors transformed the *Classic*’s form and content—including Dr. Syl Scorza, Barb (Hoskins) Turnwall, Edward Stetson, Alfred Drake, Janine (Salterberg ’76) Calsbeek and Bill Lovelady. In 1986 Duane Beeson assumed responsibility for the *Classic*, and he remains the editor today.

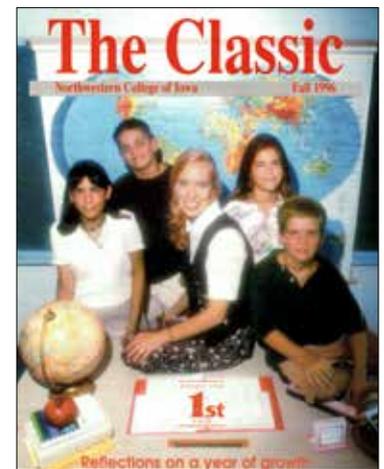
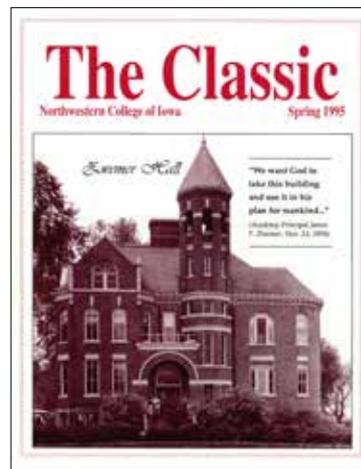
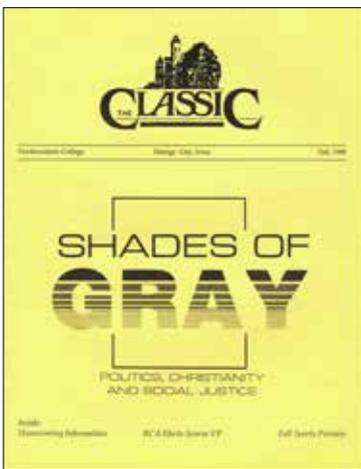
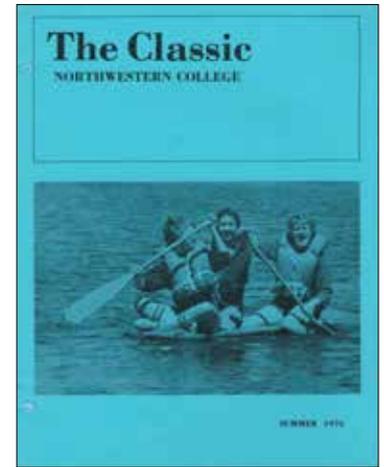
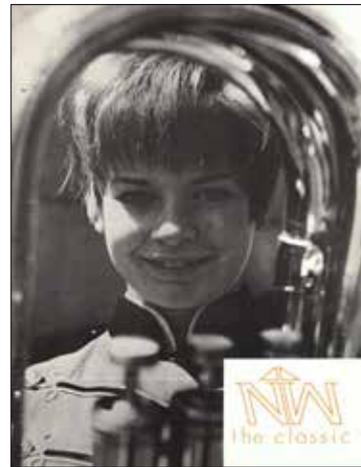
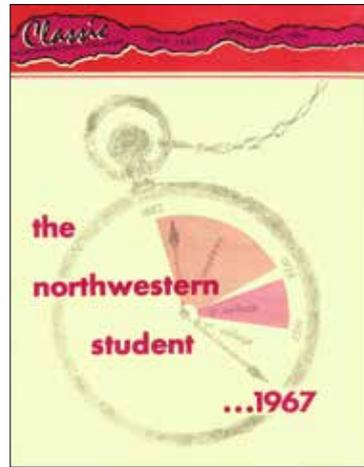
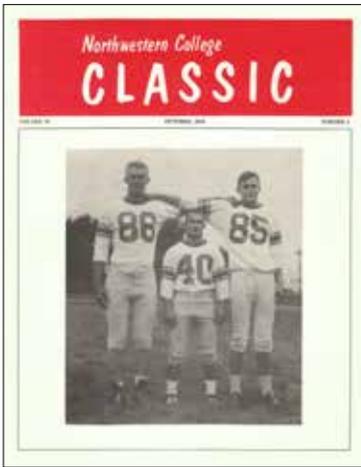
During Beeson’s 30 years as *Classic* chief, the magazine has continued to celebrate alumni, student and faculty accomplishments as well as nurture readers’ lifelong learning and awareness of important issues.

Northwestern has great stories. And sharing them never goes out of style. 🏠

March 1892 | The earliest *Classics* regularly included personals and local ads. A personal in this issue read “Lost or stolen—A pair of wooden shoes ...”, and a local proprietor, C.P.G. Roelofsen, advertised temperance drinks and cigars.

February 1954 | Starting in the 1950s, *Classic* issues reported booming campus, academic and co-curricular growth. Northwestern was building a reputation for excellence, including in the sciences. This issue included photos of an addition to Science Hall as well as an article on the appointment of Dr. Alfred Popma ’24 as president of the American Cancer Society.





October 1964, July 1967, Fall 1968 | In the 1960s as college students cast aside social conventions, Northwestern’s *Classic* editors experimented with covers and content. The cover description for the Fall 1968 issue explains that while the student pictured, Judy (Vogelzang '69) De Graaff, doesn’t play the tuba, “she is prettier than the fellow who does.”

Summer 1976 | Edward Stetson took over as editor in the late 1960s. Despite renaming the portion of class notes that lists alumni deaths as “Necrology” (a label that remained in place until 1983), Stetson set the tone for a decade of mostly consistent *Classic* design and content. The majority of *Classic* covers in the 1970s were black and white, except for the few years when Alfred Drake was editor (1973–76), and covers were printed on colorful paper.

Fall 1988, Spring 1991, Spring 1995, Fall 1996, Winter 2005–06, Spring 2015 | During Duane Beeson’s three decades as *Classic* editor, the magazine’s design has changed multiple times. In addition to covering campus and student news and celebrating alumni success, the content has expanded to include features on national crises like Hurricane Katrina and challenging issues like racial reconciliation.

