

THE College

SPRING 2007

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE • ANNAPOLIS • SANTA FE



J.S. Bach

MUSIC AND CULTURE

ON BACH

Studying Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* is one of the great moments in four years of St. John's. Indeed, if the college ever required a theme song, the *Passion* would do quite well. What makes it a great work worthy of the Program? To Eric Stoltzfus, music librarian in Annapolis, "it's the combination of a very powerful story, and a sense that there's a brilliant mind interpreting that story and adding things to it." Peter Kalkavage, who led the Annapolis Community Chorus in its performance of the opening and closing choruses of the work, says the *Passion* is an immensely satisfying culmination of two years of the study of music, a work that holds special meaning for many alumni years after they leave the college.

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in 1685, a year that saw the birth of two other great musicians: Georg Friedrich Handel and Domenico Scarlatti. By the time he was 10, both of Bach's parents were dead, and Bach came under the wing of his eldest brother, Johann Christoph, who helped guide his musical education. Bach sang in a boys' choir, and later turned to the organ, pursuing his musical education independently. At age 18, he was appointed organist of the New Church in Arnstadt, where he kept getting into trouble. (In 1705, he brawled with a student and called him a "nanny-goat bassoonist"; the following year was reprimanded for staying away too long from his post after he traveled to another city to hear a great organist.)

In 1707, Bach became organist in Mühlhausen, where he married his cousin, Maria Barbara Bach, with whom he had seven children. Other posts followed: court organist and chamber musician, later concert master at Weimar; musical director at Köthen for Prince Leopold of Anhalt; music director and cantor of the church of St. Thomas, Leipzig. He was the third choice for the post at St. Thomas, which he took up in 1723, and he so disliked one of his duties—teaching Latin to the schoolboys—that he paid someone else to do it.

In a span of about five years in Leipzig, Bach gave the first performance of the *St. John Passion* and produced the *Magnificat* and the *St. Matthew Passion*. After Maria Barbara's death, Bach married Anna Magdalena Wülken, a gifted musician, who bore him 13 children.

Bach died in 1750, but four of his sons continued his legacy: Carl Philipp Emanuel, Johann Christian, Wilhelm Friedemann, and Johann Christoph Friedrich. C.P.E. Bach co-wrote his father's obituary, which praised his moral character, piety, and devotion to his art: "If ever a composer showed polyphony in its greatest strength, it was certainly our late lamented Bach. If ever a musician employed the most hidden secrets of harmony with the most skilled artistry, it was certainly our Bach."

This issue of the magazine considers music's place in the Program. Not only is it important in the classroom, but music in all its forms also enlivens the communities on both campuses, with groups such as Primum Mobile singing sacred music in the Pendulum Pit in Annapolis, and tutors such as Cary Stickney in Santa Fe sharing their talents and love for music with all of us.

—RH



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Johann Sebastian Bach
Illustration by David Johnson

BEYOND THE BOTTOM LINE

Annapolis Treasurer Bronté Jones

A brass-framed photo on Bronté Jones' desk tells the story of how she has become, at 37, one of the youngest college treasurers in the country, and one of the few African-American women in this male-dominated profession. Jones, who joined St. John's last summer as treasurer, says she credits her parents for what she has accomplished, but especially

the man in the photo—her grandfather, Asbury Jones. “Last fall I drove over to my grandparents’ home on the Eastern Shore for my grandfather’s 85th birthday. My grandfather is my absolute favorite person in the whole world. He’s a blue-collar worker and when he retired, he made \$16,000 dollars, but he put seven of his kids through college,” says Jones.

“He walked to work until he was 45 to save money. He had a plan—it was about fiscal management and about the differences that could make. I went to college and majored in finance simply because I understood the difference that having strong financial acumen could make in one’s life.” Growing up on the Eastern Shore in a tight-knit family filled with educators (her mother is a retired teacher and three of her mother’s siblings are also educators), Jones saw her grandfather daily and later

took his inspiration, along with his photo, on her academic and professional journey.

As treasurer of the Annapolis campus, Jones’ position includes fiscal responsibility for the college’s operations and she is a member of the management committee that oversees all aspects of the college’s administration and strategic planning. Jones brings more to her new position at St. John’s than her solid credentials, which include a summer at the Harvard Institute for Educational Leadership, and a master’s in business administration from American University, in addition to her doctorate from the University of Texas at Austin. She brings a passionate sense of purpose and the exuberance and desire to help people that mark a leader.

Besides her grandfather, her role models for leadership are trailblazers such as Thurgood Marshall, Nelson Mandela, and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. “I’m drawn to the people who feel like their lives are a mission and there is something they’re supposed to accomplish with it.” Jones cites Johnetta Cole, president of Bennett College, as the kind of female leader she admires. “Her book *Conversations: Straight Talk with America’s Sister President* inspired me—she’s a role model for me. I like people who made a difference and understood their lives’ work to be about enhancing the lives of others,” says Jones, who aspires to be a college president one day.

Jones discovered her passion for higher education 10 years ago while she was



GARY PIERPOINT

BRONTÉ JONES DISCOVERED HER CALLING IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

working at the state auditor's office in Austin, Texas. "Originally I thought I'd be a financial planner, then I wanted to be a finance professor and teach, but when I found myself auditing federal financial aid programs on college campuses I discovered the world of higher education administration. When I went onto college campuses I came alive; I loved getting to know the students. It was and still is about more than making sure the institution's bills are paid and books are balanced, it's about relationships and being a bridge for students who need advice." Jones changed her doctoral focus from finance to higher education administration and was accepted at the University of Texas, Austin. "After completing my doctoral studies in Austin in 2005, it was my dream to return to Maryland. This dream has been fulfilled by having the opportunity to serve as

"The true sign of intelligence, per my grandfather, is that you can explain anything to anybody."

BRONTÉ JONES, ANNAPOLIS TREASURER

an officer for a premier institution such as St. John's," says Jones.

Jones brings her sense of purpose to everything from troubleshooting with custodial staff about new equipment, to offering astute advice on financial strategy at investment meetings with other officers of the college. Yet, dedicated to a leadership style that centers on sharing

knowledge, she remains accessible, even humble. "The true sign of intelligence, per my grandfather, is that you can explain anything to anybody. Finance isn't rocket science. I want to explain terms like amortize, life annuity, and alternate investment, and what's in our endowment. I want everyone to really understand the goals of the institution, how we operate and know that the college and its business office isn't a mysterious place."

Like many of Jones' colleagues, President Christopher Nelson is eager to learn from the college's new treasurer. "We seek Bronté's advice on everything from policy initiatives to administrative matters. Bronté brings a certain sophistication to the business operations and financial controls that is new to the college," says Nelson. "The role of a treasurer in a small college is not just a financial manager. Bronté has a higher education background so she can serve us across the whole institution—admissions, financial aid, enrollment management, business, operations, financial management. She brings a level of managerial skill to help all of us to do our work better."

Given the \$125 million capital campaign, Jones' expertise is needed now more than ever. Not only does she help the college manage the funds that are raised through the campaign, she also works with staff to develop a strategic plan that secures the college's future. Jones says the challenges she faces at St. John's are unique as compared, for instance, to Huston-Tillotson University in Austin, Texas, where she was vice president for administration and finance from 2004 to 2006. "The interesting thing

about St. John's, unlike anywhere else in America, is that we're actually having discussions about reducing the size of the student enrollment to preserve the rich educational experience of the seminars; this runs contrary to most institutions," she says. One of Jones' challenges, she says, is to figure out "how to thrive with 450 instead of 500 students and still provide the small classroom experience that we do." For Jones this translates into questions such as: Where and how does the college streamline? To what degree does the endowment need to grow in order to sustain the college at 450 students? "There are several questions that we will need to answer. It's not going to be a tomorrow fix; it's going to be a multi-year plan."

As Jones moves forward in her new position as treasurer there is one other person besides her grandfather to whom she is especially grateful: her predecessor, Bud Billups (HAA03), who was treasurer at the college for more than a decade. "I have such respect and admiration for Bud," she says. "This is the most ideal situation. It is like running a race and somebody passes you the baton and they want you to run as quickly as you can because you're all in the race together. That's how I feel with Bud—he passed me the baton and he wants me to finish the race well." Jones says her extended family has grown since she met Billups and his wife Bea, an Episcopal minister. "I've adopted them as family." ❖

—PATRICIA DEMPSEY

RANKINGS REVOLT

Christopher Nelson (SF70) and Santa Fe President Michael Peters are among 12 college presidents leading a revolt against *U.S. News and World Report's* college rankings system. Along with their colleagues, they signed a letter sent to college presidents throughout the nation, asking them to refuse to fill out the magazine's reputational survey and to refuse to use the rankings in any promotional efforts. The letter asks colleges to give the magazine data collected according to shared professional standards.

For almost a decade, St. John's has declined to take part in the *U.S. News and World Report* survey, maintaining that rankings don't help students choose a college that is right for them. Both presidents have been quoted in the national press on the college's opposition to rankings of any kind.

Throughout the spring, college presidents continued to sign on to the effort, coordinated through the Education Conservancy, a nonprofit organization that seeks to de-commercialize the college selection process. However, *U.S. News* Editor Brian Kelly dismissed the presidents leading the effort as a small group of "the usual suspects." "These are the folks making these complaints for years," he told the *Washington Post*. ❖

FINDING FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS IN A WAR ZONE

Santa Fe tutor Greg Bayer arrived in Baghdad last Christmas to take up a year-long assignment as director of the Fulbright program in Iraq. After a grueling flight he checked out his new home: a small metal trailer with one bed and some lockers. Jet-lagged, he sat outside by a pool formerly owned by Saddam Hussein, listening to the thud of explosions and watching a thick plume of black smoke rise from outside the walls surrounding the Green Zone. "There's a surreal quality of life here in Baghdad," Bayer says.

Former Santa Fe President John Agresto, who for nine months served as the senior adviser to the Iraqi Higher Education Ministry, alerted Bayer to the Fulbright opportunity. Bayer applied for the position and for a year's leave from the college. "John talked a few times at the college about his work in Iraq, and he got me interested in the whole situation," says Bayer. "I had served on our Fulbright committee in Santa Fe, and I thought I might be able to do some good during my sabbatical."

Bayer has an office in the Chancery. He works six to seven days a week and puts in 10-hour days, processing applications, interviewing applicants, helping students negotiate the visa process, and promoting the program throughout the country. "Our Fulbright program in Iraq is

the third-largest in the world in terms of the number of masters' programs," Bayer says. "It's not a true exchange program: obviously, there aren't too many students from other countries wanting to study in Iraq right now. We will probably have 35 to 40 students going over to American universities this summer and fall. All fields are represented: public health, public affairs, English,

ties and meet students, give lectures, and offer various social events at universities." Unfortunately, classwork has been severely limited at most of the country's universities, and the state department deems most universities unsafe to travel to, though Bayer says the situation in the north is better. He plans to travel to universities in Erbil and Fulyamaniyah later this year.

The war has disrupted everything in the country, so managing the program presents daily challenges. Bayer sent out e-mails to about 70

trailer, his office, and the "DFACS" where he gets his meals. Little else besides work occupies his time except for reading (Thomas Pynchon's newest novel, *Against the Day*; Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*), and writing (a book project on Aristotle). Traveling to and from the city—as he did earlier this spring to make a trip to D.C.—is a tense ordeal that starts with donning a helmet and a heavy Kevlar vest. "You go out under the cover of night in a Rhino, a huge vehicle that's something like a super-armored Winnebago, and travel in a convoy," he explains.

Bayer tries not to dwell on the risk involved in his job. "There are rockets that come in and mortars every once in a while, and sometimes you have to duck into these little pillboxes," he says. "You're on your way to work in a suit and tie, you're thinking about a visa interview or an ad you have to get in the newspaper, and you hear the thuds of car bombs going off not too far away."

The Fulbright program, he says, provides an oasis of normalcy among the chaos; in desperate times, it offers hope for a bright future for some talented young

Iraqis. "So much is made, and rightfully so, of all the terrible things that are happening in Baghdad," he says. "It's dirty, it's rundown, it's falling apart, but it is still a pretty lively city. People are going about their daily lives, despite everything. The Iraqis are amazingly resilient people." ❖

Bayer would enjoy hearing from members of the St. John's community: gbayer@sjcsf.edu.



SANTA FE TUTOR GREG BAYER WAS FITTED FOR HIS KEVLAR VEST AND HELMET—REQUISITE EQUIPMENT IN BAGHDAD—ON HIS FIRST DAY IN THE GREEN ZONE LAST DECEMBER.

various forms of linguistics, journalism."

This spring, Bayer has been working to promote the program and solicit applicants for fall 2008. He's organized news conferences, given radio and television interviews, and placed advertising in media throughout the country. "The normal way to publicize something like the Fulbright," Bayer explains, "is to go to universi-

versity contacts and received just a handful of replies. After they're awarded the Fulbright, Iraqi students must then get the "right" Iraqi passport, go through the visa process, and undergo a background check by Homeland Security. Bayer helps usher them through the process.

Bayer spends most of his time in the Green Zone, and his daily life restricts him to his

GREEN POWER

While it can't install wind turbines on back campus to power the college, St. John's in Annapolis is nevertheless doing its part for green energy. The college has purchased renewable energy credits (RECs) to cover 100 percent of its energy consumption. Renewable energy credits are created for every 1,000 kilo-watt hours produced by a renewable energy generator. Power plants that use alternative sources, such as the sun, wind, methane from a landfill or wastewater treatment, geothermal energy, and the ocean, garner additional revenue from the sale of RECs so that they become increasingly economical to build and maintain.

"We can't buy wind directly, because there are no turbines in our region or in our grid," explains Don Jackson, director of operations in Annapolis. "So the energy industry sells credits for electricity produced by wind or photovoltaic sources that say we've paid a premium for its product at another location." By purchasing the credits, the college supports the production of energy through renewable resources.

The state requires that about 3.5 percent of all energy purchases be covered by renewable energy credits. Currently, 100 percent of St. John's energy

is covered by renewable energy credits. St. John's purchased enough to cover 10 mega-watt hours; the college uses 6 mega-watt hours per year. "St. John's will be the first college in Maryland to engage in a green energy commitment beyond current state requirements," says Skip Trimble, an energy consultant who helped the college evaluate energy options. Green energy, Trimble says, is more than helping the environment. "It establishes alternative energy sources that also make a more secure nation by limiting our reliance on oil and provides a more reliable energy grid by introducing prudent energy diversity," he says.

Although green energy is more expensive than traditional energy sources, Jackson says the college made the purchase of energy credits a spending priority. "It was the right thing to do," he says. ❀

INSPIRING FUTURE LEADERS

For one week in August, the pristine Limerlost Forest in northern Ontario will be a rendezvous for 12 student activists from around the world. The students will meet under the auspices of International Partnerships through Education and

Collaboration (IPEC), a youth conference founded by St. John's sophomore Malcolm Cecil-Cockwell.

MALCOLM CECIL-COCKWELL (A10), CLEANING THE SHORELINE OF COLLEGE CREEK, WANTS IPEC TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO BE ACTIVISTS IN THEIR COMMUNITY.



Cecil-Cockwell was recently awarded a \$10,000 grant by the Kathryn Wasserman Davis Foundation to put his proposal for a youth-oriented leadership and education retreat into practice. His idea is to support "personal development through conversation and study, for the sake of leading social change." Before they meet in Canada, the students, traveling from Canada, India, Mexico, Tanzania, and the U.S., will research their own locality and develop a project to improve their environment and society. While in the Limerlost, "The students will spend time reading and discussing issues related to their projects, as well as participating in workshops led by qualified guest-mentors," he explains. Cecil-Cockwell has recruited professional volunteers, government lobbyists, and experts on social thought to lead workshops on topics ranging from current news stories to how to collaborate with the media.

The big picture, Cecil-Cockwell writes in his proposal, is to make efficient use of youthful motivation by giving it support, direction, and practical skills through dialogue. "In that way, it is very like St. John's," he says. Long after the participants leave Canada, Cecil-Cockwell hopes IPEC will be a source of mutual support as these potential leaders return to their countries with new ideas and plans for the future. ❀

FROM SANSKRIT TO SKYPE

The Eastern Classics program in Santa Fe immerses graduate students in ancient languages—Sanskrit or Classical Chinese—and texts such as the *Tao Te Ching*, written by Lao Tzu in about 600 BCE. Jason Litton, who will finish the program this August, took a detour from his

study of ancient works to consider how 21st-century technology is playing a role in shaping societies and creating conversations across cultural and geographical barriers.

Last March, Litton presented a paper, "On the Potential for Communications Technology to Cause a Fundamental Shift in the Way People Form Societies," at the New Directions in Critical Theory Conference, an interdisciplinary graduate student forum. Graduate students from all disciplines were invited to present papers on "negotiating and constructing identities" at the University of Arizona conference, and Litton chose to explore how technology facilitates cross-cultural communication and the formation of entirely new social groups drawn together by common interests and ideas.

Litton taught English for several years in Seoul, South Korea, and used Voice Over Internet Protocol, which allows for phone-like conversations via the Internet, to stay in touch with friends and family. He observed how "in Korea, the most wired country in the world," virtual communication created a shift from "parlor" conversations to virtual dialogues open to many participants. Advances in translation technology offer the promise of creating communities by overcoming linguistic barriers, he adds.

There is a potential downside to virtual interaction, Litton acknowledges: those who replace person-to-person encounters with strictly online interaction can experience isolation, rather than the sense of community. Yet Litton still sees great potential for the use of communications technology in education. "You don't need to be physically present for a conversation," he says. "Online seminar discussions, conducted across cultural boundaries, could be richly diverse." ❀

—OLIVER LEMKE (SF08)

WORLDS AWAY

Each year, at least half a dozen foreign students enroll in St. John's. The College visited with two "F-1" students, an Annapolis Johnnie halfway through the Program and another in Santa Fe, just graduating from St. John's. Interviews are by Elizabeth Burlington (Ao8) and Caroline Caldwell (SFo8).

Yuhai Zhou (Ao9)

Lanzhou, China

Distance from Annapolis:
6,258 miles

LEGENDARY CITY

"Lanzhou is my birthplace, and I lived there for 15 years until my family moved to Guangzhou in 2002, one of the three biggest cities in China (Beijing and Shanghai are the other two). The other name for Guangzhou is 'The City of Five Goats.' It is said when there was famine, five gods on five goats came, each with wheat in its mouth. People accepted the wheat and they finally got a big harvest. Then Guangzhou became the wealthy city in the south. The interesting thing is, before I came to St. John's, I met four alumni of St. John's who were teaching in the same college in Guangzhou."

ON DANTE

"So far my favorite book is Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Originally, I wanted to write on the *Divine Comedy* for my sophomore essay, but, because I feel that it is so beautiful, I am afraid of destroying the beauty in that book by writing about it. So I decided to destroy the beauty in another book. I ended up writing on Job."

ALARMING MOMENT

"I really like cooking and I have become very famous around campus for my cooking. One day [in Gilliam Hall], the fire engines came and all the alarms went off. Chinese people are famous for their cooking-oil smoke. My father, was living in England in 1995, and he was cooking in the apartment and he caused a lot

of oil smoke. So finally he was kicked out by the landlord."

PLANS AFTER ST. JOHN'S

"My plan after St. John's is to continue to study. When I first left China, I thought that I would like to be a teacher in the countryside. The countryside of China is 70 percent of the population. My father says that if you do not understand the countryside then you don't understand the whole condition of China. So I decided to go teach in the countryside, but I am not sure if that plan will change after a couple years here. Both of my parents are teaching at the University of China. My mother teaches economy, my father teaches geography."

Felicitas Steinhoff (SFo7)

Stanhope, Germany

Distance from Santa Fe:
4,613 miles

CULTURAL HIGHLIGHT

"Well, in the town I grew up in mostly, in the north, there was this old monastery and there was a rose bush that apparently was over 1,000 years old. That was it. That was the cultural highlight. So basically there was nothing special; lots of towns in Germany have these odd little cultural artifacts that are famous. Usually they will build a church around it. I've noticed in America that people will proudly put up signs for a street that's like 250 years old or a settlement that's been there since the Founding Fathers. The little town close to where I lived, where my mother lives now in Stuttgart, is originally from 1250 or



LEFT: A COOKING OIL INCIDENT MADE MISS ZHOU BRIEFLY FAMOUS IN ANNAPOLIS. RIGHT: EVEN WITH YEARS OF ENGLISH PRACTICE, MISS STEINHOFF STRUGGLES WITH IDIOMS.

something like the Middle Ages, but there's no sign or anything proclaiming that loudly."

BIGGEST HEADACHE

"I had been speaking English in school and lived with international students for three years in boarding school. We would basically mix and match English and German phrases all the time. It was still odd to come [to Santa Fe] and all of a sudden there was no German, and not the slightest possibility to speak German, so for the first three days I had the biggest headache ever. I think in English now. I dream in English. The only thing that is still a bit problematic are little idioms and figures of speech that I usually butcher in hilarious ways. I had big issues with the word 'pneumonia.'"

ON KANT

"Kant made up a lot of his own words to describe the things he was talking about. It was easier to read [an English] translation of that because in order to translate you have to interpret

it in a certain way that makes sense to you. So the translation itself is almost already an interpretation in itself, which helps, whereas the original is stranger in German. I started reading it in German then I picked up the English one along the way and I thought the English one made much more sense."

PLANS AFTER ST. JOHN'S

"I am right now waiting to get my work permit approved. I don't really want to go back to Germany yet. I was planning to go to grad school but my senior essay got a little bit in the way of my application process. So I'm going to stay in Santa Fe simply because I have no relatives in the states, but a couple of my friends will be staying too. We'll all be working full time, saving up money, and then I will apply to grad school in October. I want to get my master's in counseling psychology." ❀

GOOD WILL PRESERVATION

The last will and testament of Francis Scott Key, class of 1796, came to the college in 1993 when a descendant of Key thought the college was the rightful place for a document of such historic importance. The author of the “Star-Spangled Banner” was also founder of the college’s Alumni Association and is considered its most famous alumnus.

Earlier this spring, the will was transported to the Conservation Center for Arts and Historic Artifacts in

Philadelphia for an overhaul. The Conservation Center will clean and flatten the document (it was folded in thirds for many years), and will repair a slight tear to one of the pages. The document will be returned to the college next spring in a special box that will preserve it for another two centuries or so. The center will also provide a facsimile of the will that St. John’s will enclose in a glass case and make available for public display.

Grants from the Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation; Four Rivers: the Heritage Area of Annapolis, London Town and South County; the Maryland Bar Association Foundation; and the Nielsen Bainbridge Company provided funding for the project.

Distinguished by bold, elegant script that may or may not be Key’s, the will was first penned in 1837 and amended several times. It arranges for the distribution of Key’s assets to various relatives. Alas, no bequest was made to the college. ✱



KEY’S WILL WILL BE PRESERVED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

JAMES M. CAIN WAS HERE

The words *film noir* evoke images of a fedora-wearing, wise-cracking private eye, a curvaceous and ultimately treacherous *femme fatale*, and stark, smoky cinematography. Who would have thought that such scenes, deeply engrained in the American pop consciousness, were straight from the novels of an author who spent his childhood on the sunny campus of St. John’s College?

Born in 1892, the son of a St. John’s professor, James Mallahan Cain grew up in the Paca-Carroll dormitory, which was then faculty housing. His father eventually became the vice president of St. John’s before moving the family to Chestertown, Maryland, to become the president of Washington College, from which Cain graduated in 1910. After some time in the army,

Cain became a reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*, where he met and was influenced by the famous journalist and satirist H.L. Mencken. In 1923, he returned to St. John’s as a professor of journalism. He stayed in Annapolis for just a year before moving to New York to become an editor and writer for various publications, including *The New Yorker*. With the onset of the Depression, Cain moved to Hollywood where the pay for screenwriters was generous,

although his best-known works are novels that became screenplays.

As Cain’s novels hit the silver screen during the 1940s, some of the brightest movie stars in Hollywood brought his stories to life: *Double Indemnity* starred Fred MacMurray and Barbara Stanwyck; Joan Crawford was *Mildred Pierce*; and *The Postman Always Rings Twice* featured Lana Turner. “Hard-boiled” is a term that is

often applied to Cain’s writing style and, consequently, to the entire genre of classic cinema. (As an example of hard-boiledness, the protagonist in *The Postman Always Rings Twice* says, “Then I saw her...she really wasn’t a raving beauty, but she had a sulky look to her, and her lips stuck out in a way that made me want to mash them in for her.”) Cain’s works were important contributions to what later became known as the hard-boiled school of American detective and crime fiction, a genre that included another Maryland-born author, Dashiell Hammett (*The Maltese Falcon*), and Raymond Chandler, who wrote the screenplay for *Double Indemnity*.

Though some may dismiss Cain’s work as pulp fiction, he claimed a loyalty to what he called in the preface of *Double Indemnity*, “the logos of the American countryside,” saying that “the average man, from the fields, the streets, the bars, the offices, and even the gutters of this country, has acquired a vividness of speech that goes beyond anything I could invent.” ✱

—EMILY DeBUSK (Ao6)



ROY HOOPES, ROY HOOPES COLLECTIONS

JAMES M. CAIN PENNED 19 NOVELS IN ADDITION TO HIS SHORT STORIES AND SCREENPLAYS.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GUGGENHEIM WINNER

Santa Fe tutor and musician-in-residence **Peter Pesic** has been awarded the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship Award for his investigations into the connections between music and natural philosophy. Guggenheim Fellowships recognize “distinguished achievement in the past and exceptional promise for future accomplishment.” Pesic plans to examine music in relation to parallel developments in science, philosophy, politics, and art.

In Pesic’s view, music and natural philosophy have long and deep connections. “With this award, I hope to explore the dialogue between ‘ancient’ music, or music modeled on the dispassionate beauty of the ‘music of spheres,’ and ‘modern’ music—music devoted to moving human passions,” he says.

In February, he was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

GLITCH SILENCES BELL ON ESSAY NIGHT

It’s a wonderful tradition at St. John’s for seniors to ring the bell, signifying the completion of their senior essay. But this February in Annapolis, about 50 seniors were robbed of their celebratory peal when the button that students press in the

McDowell Hall bell tower stopped working. “The switch got stuck because it’s not made to ring a 100 times in a row,” suggested Sid Phipps, director of buildings and grounds in Annapolis.

The college applied to the city of Annapolis for a second exemption to the noise ordinance, and arranged for the seniors who missed the chance in February to have their moment of glory on March 31.

BOARD OF VISITORS AND GOVERNORS

Anna E. Greenberg (HA96) and **M. Brownell “Brownie” Anderson** (HSF98) have been named honorary members of the college’s Board of Visitors and Governors. The designation recognizes individuals who are stepping down from the college’s governing board for their commitment and contributions to St. John’s.

An Annapolis native, Mrs. Greenberg has served for more than four decades as a volunteer leader with civic, educational, social service and religious groups in the community. Ms. Anderson is Senior Associate Vice President of the Association of American Medical Colleges’ Division of Medical Education, where she also serves as the division’s deputy director and executive



CHELSEA STIEGMAN

ANNA GREENBERG (HA96) with **CHRIS NELSON** (SF70), left, and **MICHAEL PETERS**, right, has served the Annapolis community well for more than 40 years.

secretary for the association’s Group on Educational Affairs.

The college’s board also welcomes several new members: **Sheila Bobbs Armstrong** (SF70, EC92, SFGI95) has been involved with the college for more than 40 years. **Brad Davidson** (A77) is president of SPARData. He is a captain in the United States Army Reserve and served on the Annapolis City Council. Until he retired last year, **Austin Ligon** was the first president and chief executive officer of CarMax, Inc., the nation’s largest retailer of used cars. **Mark Lindley** (A67) is a retired America Online executive and volunteers for Touchstones, Inc. **Ford Rowan** (AGI06), a former NBC correspondent, is now a national

security consultant. **Dolores E. Wolf** of Washington, D.C., served for 18 years as vice president of Personnel Resources for American Airlines. **Roxanna Zirakzadeh** (SFGI04, ECO5) owns a bookstore, Symposium, in San Francisco.

STAFF

Earlier this spring, the Santa Fe community said farewell to a long-time and much-valued staff member. **Lawrence Martinez**, head custodian, retired in March after 31 years of service. **Emily Mawhinney** (AGI07) joins the Advancement office in Annapolis, where she will manage the Fielding Challenge, part of the college’s \$125 million capital campaign. ✱

{ LETTERS }

NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

I am writing to thank you for, and to comment upon, the article entitled “Good Design Starts with Good Questions” (Winter 2007), which features architect David Schwarz (A72). The article’s title is an apt summary of a fascinating conversation.

On the other hand, Mr. Schwarz says that “[St. John’s]

gives you three things, and only three things: it teaches you how to think, how to read, and how to speak. If you’re lucky, it will also teach you how to write...” I beg to differ on two counts, although I stand in The Great Outside, as a mere Johnnie-parent.

My first difference with Mr. Schwarz’s statement is that the word “all” implicitly denigrates skills—thinking,

reading and speaking—that are both crucial to our ability to function socially, and so rare as to be remarkable, based on my experience of nearly a quarter-century of teaching graduate students. Even if these comprised the “all” that St. John’s College offered its students, they would be an “all” difficult to improve upon; schools, employers, and organizations—including, I am

sure, Mr. Schwarz’s firm—would be ecstatic if they could find a sure source of students, teachers, employees, and workers who could in fact think, read, and speak well. . .

My second objection to Mr. Schwarz’s statement, however, is more substantive—it concerns his omission of the natural consequence of the pedagogy of St. John’s College.

The pedagogy fosters in students the skill of listening—of hearing what is being said by someone else, whether that someone is an ancient Greek philosopher, medieval Christian theologian, or the person sitting across the table. The ability to hear another does not mean merely to keep one's mouth shut, but to actively listen to what they are trying to say—to seek clarity, or (in a word), understanding. The ability to hear is rare. . . in part because hearing (understanding) requires patience: waiting to hear everything that the other person has to say, waiting a bit more to be sure that they have finished and to consider what they have said, and then responding in such a way that our reply implicitly reverberates with their question, suggestion, insight, or concern. . .

I write this letter because I am very happy to say that I have seen this ability to listen develop in my daughter (Ao8) during her time at St. John's, and in other Johnnies whom I know. . . I have been struck repeatedly by their attitude—a kind of quiet intensity—that focuses their attention on the speaker's words and ideas, so that their comments and questions in turn further our conversation.

I also write because this ability to hear, to understand (a text, another person, or ourselves) underlies our ability to be and increasingly to become fully human, to allow our lives to be examined by others, living and dead, and ourselves. It is a great gift offered by the pedagogy of St. John's, and one that ought not to be overlooked or assumed.

FREDERIC CLARKE PUTNAM

ADMIRING JANE

I am writing belatedly to thank you for the excellent Fall 2006 issue of *The College*. Life is busy and sometimes we don't get all our assigned readings done, but I held onto this magazine through the winter. Being a descendant of Jane Austen's mother's family (the Leighs of Stoneleigh

Abbey), I knew I wanted to give this issue more than a cursory reading. I was delighted to find appreciations of Grand-Aunt Jane's work in so many different voices. I really do think that women of today appreciate Jane Austen much more than earlier generations. These articles demonstrate that her social analysis was deep, insightful, and abiding in value, yet always tender and sympathetic. Sometimes I myself feel that I am just now catching up to her in my understanding of the war between the sexes (as another favorite author, James Thurber, used to call it). Congratulations on a wonderful issue that I will save on my bookshelf alongside my own favorite Austen work, *Sense and Sensibility*.

CHRISTEL STEVENS (A72)

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Reading Mrs. Maschler's "A Life" in the Winter 2007 issue, I was reminded of a still-vivid comment that she wrote on an assignment submission of mine during our freshman science [laboratory], 1986-1987. The assignment, allowing now for my failures of memory, consisted of observing for a time an animal, any animal, and reporting in writing on its actions. I picked a turtle, because there was already at least one in captivity at the college. I observed this turtle, which to my knowledge was unnamed, for approximately one hour. Using the notes I compiled, I prepared a more formal essay for submission. My only concrete recall of my submission was that I likely anthropomorphosized the turtle's actions to a degree (e.g., its banging its body into the glass walls of its tank indicated a desire to exit the tank, etc.). While I didn't quite "get" the assignment, I thought that my submission was well-written and satisfied the assignment's objectives. When the assignments were returned to the class, the following, solitary comment

was written on my submission, verbatim: "Nothing much came of this." I'm relatively sure that whatever measure of success I've achieved since that day has been due, in some small part, to overcoming that pithy dismissal.

SANDRO BATTAGLIA (A90)

DU BOIS AND MCCARTHY

I can't help (1) congratulating you on that wonderful story about Martin Dyer and "Web" Du Bois and (2) telling you my own story. . . It happened the same year, 1952. I was a senior at Yale Law School and chairman of the Yale Student Guild Chapter. We had invited Dr. Du Bois to give a lecture at the law school. The day before the event there was a knock at my dormitory door which, when opened, revealed—I am not making this up—two gentlemen in trench coats and Fedoras, flashing FBI badges at me. "Oh boy," I said to myself, "there goes my legal career." (The McCarthy witch-hunt was in full swing in those days, which entitles President Weigle to a posthumous commendation for inviting Dr. Du Bois to the college).

As it turned out, my two visitors wanted to interview me about Peter Davies (class of 1948), who had applied for conscientious objector status in the draft. I waxed as eloquent as I could about Peter's patriotism, high moral standards and sterling character and the fact that, since he was doing God's work on earth, he must, according to St. Thomas, believe in God even though he refused to admit to such belief. (To merit CO status at the time you had to have a credible belief in some kind of divinity.)

I also mentioned in passing that Peter and I had spent the previous summer in Israel on a project sponsored by the Foundation for World Government, headed by Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan, to wit, several weeks of research on whether the kibbutz was a workable

model for use in underdeveloped countries. The two gentlemen . . . listened attentively and took copious notes. At the end, one of them asked if he could read his notes back to me for verification. When he got to the part of the previous summer, said, "In 1951, subject and interviewee went to Israel to study underdeveloped Jews."

The fact that I was able to make the appropriate correction without cracking up was one of the proudest achievements of my senior year. The St. Thomas gambit did not get Peter out of the draft, but it may have helped him get into the Merchant Marines as alternate service. We have remained good friends ever since. The Du Bois lecture the next day was a great success.

PETER WEISS, CLASS OF 1946

Corrections: An article on W.E.B. Du Bois in the winter 2007 edition misidentified the late husband of Priscilla Bender-Shore; his name was Merle Shore.

A profile of Richard Field (SFG198) in the fall 2006 issue of *The College* incorrectly reported his doctoral degree; he holds a PhD in exercise physiology.

Santa Fe tutor James Carey was misquoted in the same issue; instead of being "faithfully impressed with the cadets," during his time as a visiting professor at the Air Force Academy, Mr. Carey was actually "favorably impressed."

The College welcomes letters on issues of interest to readers. Letters may be edited for clarity and/or length. Those under 500 words have a better chance of being printed in their entirety. Please address letters to: *The College* magazine, St. John's College, Box 2800, Annapolis, MD 21404, or e-mail to: rosemary.harty@sjca.edu.

“WITH A CLEAR AND SINGLE PURPOSE”

*How the Campaign for St. John's College is
Making a Difference in Santa Fe*

BY GAIL GRIFFITH

St. John's College Santa Fe President Michael Peters had been on the job barely a month when one of the first major events of the Capital Campaign was held in Boston. “The Board of Visitors and Governors made a decision to launch the campaign at the same time they made the decision to launch me,” he says.

The magnitude of a campaign to raise \$125 million—more than triple the amount raised by the previous campaign—might have been daunting to a new college president. But because so much of the

groundwork had been well-established, Mr. Peters says he “just stepped into the job.” Although his presidency began at one of the most critical times in the college's history and required him to get up to speed quickly, it also gave him an opportunity to get to know the community. Working with Annapolis president Chris Nelson, he has met board members, alumni, parents, and other college supporters at campaign events across the country. He discovered how strongly Johnnies feel about their alma mater, and saw that non-alumni share the same fierce loyalty to St. John's.

Much has transpired on the Santa Fe campus since Mr. Peters' inauguration in October 2005, and the success of the campaign thus far gives him reason to feel confident that some of the goals he articulated early on are coming to fruition and others are within reach. "I believe it is important to establish and maintain a campus community that is worthy of the program of instruction," Mr. Peters says. "That means having the resources to make classrooms as productive as possible and to provide the kinds of services and resources both inside and outside the classroom that enhance the learning experience for our students. It is critical that we have not just adequate, but modern, facilities that provide the infrastructure to make this possible."

Of the \$125 million campaign goal, \$49.5 million has been earmarked for capital projects on the two campuses. The building projects included the renovation of Mellon



ANTHONY RUSSO

Hall and the construction of two new dormitories in Annapolis; these have been funded and completed, thanks to gifts of \$23.5 million from alumni, parents, friends, and foundations.

In Santa Fe, campaign priorities include a new Graduate Institute building, a new residential center, a set of campus improvement projects, and renovations and an addition to Evans Science Laboratory.

Fundraising for the Santa Fe projects is progressing nicely, says Mr. Peters. Last summer, Dr. Norman Levan (SFGI74), gave the college a \$5 million gift for construction of a Graduate Institute center. An architect has been hired, and the college has

engaged a local firm to help negotiate the complicated process of securing required permits from the city of Santa Fe. The building, to be situated between Weigle Hall and the Fine Arts Building, will offer graduate students "a welcoming place to congregate in the center of campus," says Mr. Peters.



THE CAMPAIGN FOR
ST. JOHN'S
College

"WITH A CLEAR &
SINGLE PURPOSE"

The college's capital campaign seeks to address priorities that will sustain the Program and strengthen the college.

Funding these priorities will require \$125 million. To date, \$107 million has been raised.

FINANCIAL AID: \$33 million for need-based aid.

FACULTY AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT: \$34 million to increase faculty salaries to the median of peer institutions; provide faculty development opportunities; develop Program-related

student instructional material (manuals and workbooks); and ensure small class sizes and 1:8 tutor-to-student ratio.

STUDENT SERVICES: \$3.5 million to improve services to students, fund internship opportunities, and provide grants so that elementary and secondary teachers can attend the Graduate Institute.

ST. JOHN'S IMPROVEMENT FUND: \$5 million for library collections and laboratory equipment; improving Information

Technology infrastructure; staff professional development and compensation.

BUILDING PROJECTS ON THE TWO CAMPUSES: \$49.5 million for building projects, including a Santa Fe dormitory, a Graduate Institute Center in Santa Fe (funded), and the addition to and renovation of Evans Science Laboratory. The renovation of Mellon Hall and the addition of two new dormitories in Annapolis are completed and fully funded.

"It is critical that we have not just adequate, but modern, facilities."

MICHAEL PETERS, SANTA FE PRESIDENT

The Santa Fe Initiative, a group of smaller-scale campus improvement projects, has been completed. The purpose of the initiative was to make the kind of improvements that would affect the first impression appearance of the campus. The Campus Core Renovation project, for example, transformed the upper campus by replacing chipped and patched concrete with 105,000 bricks and renovating the koi pond.

In addition, the college now has pledges in hand to build a new residence hall, allowing the campus to house 80 percent of its students on campus. Campaign Chairman Ronald Fielding (A70) has pledged \$2.5 million toward the construction of the dormitories, and the college received pledges and gifts of \$7 million from several other donors.

AN EVOLVING CAMPUS

The bold move to establish a second campus of St. John's College in 1964 presented challenges that the founders of the Santa Fe campus could not have imagined. The program of instruction remained constant, but the demands of adapting to both the distinctive physical surroundings and the needs of the growing student population have meant ongoing challenges. When, in 1967, the Graduate Institute was established in Santa Fe, the size and scope of the college's educational mission expanded,



RONALD FIELDING (A70) HAS PLEDGED \$2.5 MILLION IN A CHALLENGE GRANT FOR SANTA FE'S NEW RESIDENCE HALL.

and with the launch of the Eastern Classics program in 1994, it was clear that the original footprint mapped out for the Santa Fe campus was inadequate. "Having a structure dedicated to the Graduate Institute programs on campus physically demonstrates the importance and centrality of these programs," says Mr. Peters.

The new center, Levan Hall, will hold classrooms, offices, and common rooms for graduate students. The building is being designed so that in the future, it will be possible to add an auditorium that can accommodate the entire campus community.

The Evans Science Laboratory renovation and addition is the most pressing unfunded capital need for the campus, says Mr. Peters. The current labs are 30 years old, and there are not enough of them to accommodate the number of

laboratory classes that need to be scheduled. Expansion of the laboratory building calls for the addition of four new state-of-the-art labs with adjoining prep areas and four seminar rooms. Renovations will include installation of new multi-purpose workstations, safety equipment, chemical storage facilities, and improvements and repairs to the laboratory ventilation systems.



A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

At 30,000 square feet, and with 60 beds, the new residential complex in Santa Fe will allow the college to house about 80 percent of its undergraduate students on campus. The new project will provide a more affordable and convenient housing option for students and support the college's student recruitment efforts while providing more opportunities for learning outside the classroom.

As is the case in Annapolis, some students will still choose to live off campus, even with additional housing. For Will Hollingsworth (SFo8), moving off campus for his sophomore and junior years had some advantages, such as the convenience of a kitchen. But it also removed him from the community in more than a physical way. "Moving off campus really severed my ties with a lot of friends—the dynamic shifts so much from year to year," he says.

Because she found herself in a double room in a "gregarious dorm" for her first year, Betsy Hardin (SFo8) sometimes found it hard to go about her work without

THE SANTA FE INITIATIVE, PAID FOR IN PART BY GIFTS TO THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, INCLUDED THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE CENTRAL CAMPUS AREA. STILL TO COME: THE NORMAN AND BETTY LEVAN HALL, A CENTER FOR THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE; MAJOR RENOVATIONS IN EVANS SCIENCE LABORATORY; AND A NEW RESIDENCE HALL FOR SANTA FE.

being distracted. On the other hand, being in a friendly environment eased the social pressure of making friends and adjusting to the campus and the Program. "I made great friends from that dorm," she says. Living off campus during her sophomore year was more challenging than Hardin expected. But a Johnnie life doesn't leave a lot of time for chores like grocery shopping.

Ensconced in a suite on campus this past year, Hardin found a happy medium. She enjoyed the conveniences of the dorm without the distractions of a double, along with the conveniences of a kitchen. "I often make breakfast for myself and it's a nice way to start the day," she says.

When the new dorm is open and ready for students, more Johnnies will find that balance of community and independence. ✿

NEW PROGRAM, NEW COLLECTION

BY JENNIFER SPRAGUE
MEEM LIBRARY DIRECTOR

"Without knowing the force of words, it is impossible to know men." *Confucian Analects*, 20:3.iii

When a pilot program of the Institute for the Study of Eastern Classics began in the fall of 1992, Meem Library accordingly started to develop a collection to support these studies. At that time the library had just a few copies of the primary texts.

The librarians thus had the joy of building essentially a brand new collection. Thankfully, the Lounsbery Foundation and the Bradley Foundation provided generous grants to fund the institute that also provided for enhancing the library's collection.

The tutors involved with the pilot program gave Inga Waite, then library director, lists of book recommendations, and the library staff went to work ordering and processing the texts. The initial inventory of texts included just one copy each of 130 recommended readings. In 1994, the college enrolled its first students in the Eastern Classics master's program. The library now needed to support a new curriculum—without an adequate budget increase. Book donations and gifts made the growth of the collection possible. In 1998 the William H. & Mattie Wattis Harris Foundation gave the college a \$10,000 grant for Eastern Classics acquisitions, allowing the college to purchase multiple copies of program readings and alleviating some financial burden for students. The library also acquired translation tools such as grammars and dictionaries as well as significant secondary materials.

The library continues to depend on gifts to fund Eastern Classics collection development. The Harris Foundation gave the library two more grants in 2004 and 2006. Eastern Classics alumni have been generous donors, too. Recently, one alumnus who wishes to remain anonymous gave the library a gift of \$20,000. A tutor committee identified authors and texts to focus development efforts on, including Chuang Tzu, Confucius, Dogen, Nagarjuna, Shankara, Sima Qian, *The Mahabharata*, *The Pali Sutras*, *The Tale of Genji*, and the

Upanishads. The goal is to create a broad, more comprehensive collection to support the study of these primary readings.

Increasing the depth of the collection will provide tutors with resources for their own inquiry, says Graduate Institute Director Krishnan Venkatesh. "The library collection is essential for faculty development," he says. Having effective language learning tools is important as well because both students and tutors depend on library resources to enhance their study of either Sanskrit or classical Chinese. The language requirement for the Eastern Classics degree sets St. John's apart from other Eastern studies programs, and Meem Library has specialized tools such as the Sanskrit Atlas, Ralph Swentzell's classical Chinese program, and other language software.

In addition to focusing on program-related materials, Meem Library plans to supplement its book collection with movies and music that can offer a historical setting to the readings. Mr. Venkatesh suggests that such materials "can provide a cultural context for places that can be quite foreign for some of our students." These resources will likewise serve as another avenue for introducing the Eastern Classics program to undergraduates and Santa Fe residents who use the library.

As Meem Library expands its collection, it continues to face the challenge of maintaining the physical condition of its print materials. Most of the books that come from India have poor bindings and acidic paper. The library often sends these books to a professional bindery to be rebound. Many classic Indian texts are now available in beautiful editions as part of the Clay Sanskrit Library, a bilingual series co-published by New York University Press and the JJC Foundation. Another challenge in maintaining the collection is the regular wear on books in

circulation, requiring the frequent purchase of replacement copies.

Collection development is truly a dynamic process, and the library is deeply grateful for those donors who have supported this ongoing endeavor. ❖



THE MEEM LIBRARY'S
COLLECTION EXPANDED
WITH THE LAUNCH OF
THE EASTERN CLASSICS
MASTER'S PROGRAM
IN 1994.

GREAT BOOKS, RARE BOOKS

BY ANDREA LAMB
GREENFIELD LIBRARY DIRECTOR

A reputable academic library, regardless of its size or age, must convey upon scrutiny an informed and knowledgeable oversight of its collection. The legacy of the college librarians on the Annapolis campus reveal an informed, thoughtful pattern of decisions over time that have shaped the collection of today's Greenfield Library.

The selection, care, and preservation of a unique collection depends on adequate funding and a sustainable, long-range acquisitions budget. Every year 75 to 150 titles are lost or damaged irreparably. Book replacement costs are absorbed into a general books budget, and most years we exhaust the library's funds in acquiring multiple copies for replacements. Our paper-based periodicals increase in price 7 to 20 percent every year. Yet our needs extend beyond the *quid pro quo* replacement of books that circulate, or the acquisition of the periodicals that our community loves to read in the library's hidden nooks.

The age of the Annapolis campus' collection mandates that we acquire conservation funds for the rarer books that represent a real treasure for our campus and our college. We need to turn our attention to the urgent care and feeding of the older collection.

The library's primary collection remains, of course, the Program title works. We also acquire other works written by Program authors. We carefully select the original texts of contemporary authors of the canon authors. This historical continuity in our collection development contributes to the intrinsic value of our collection overall and defines the unique character of the library. Another of our legacies is a small but impressive collection of rare books, many of which have direct ties to Program readings.

For example, we are fortunate to have in our rare books collection a first edition of Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*, printed in 1651 in London by the Printer for Andrew Crooke at the Green



VICTORIA SMITH

A 17TH-CENTURY COPY OF *LEVIATHAN* IS AMONG THE GREENFIELD LIBRARY'S TREASURES.

Dragon in St. Paul's Church-yard. Its publication history reveals that there are three *Leviathan* editions bearing this same imprint. These editions are generally known as the "head," "bear," and "ornament," named for the ornaments that appear on the title pages. The "head" is the first edition, and this is our copy.

Our copy of the *Leviathan* is extremely valuable from a printing history perspective; it is also in disrepair. Its ailments include a previously leather reback of only modest quality, pervasive red rot, and damage from rodents. The frontispiece is detached, along with several leaves. The paper is soiled. It is an excellent candidate for restoration by a professional conservator.

Acquiring such funds for this book, and for the 100 or so notable other titles in our rare book collection is a worthy goal for additional library funds. The restoration of these titles, estimated at up to \$10,000 per book, should be a priority for the library over the next decade.

These rare books are directly related to the circulating collection in that they represent the

first appearance of a Program work, the first in the line of continuity. The *Leviathan's* imprint history includes the modern editions by Oakeshott, Lindsay, Waller, and Curley. We have these editions in our circulating collection.

Another book that is a prime candidate for conservation treatment is an incunabula title of St. Augustine, a 1486 Venice imprint of *De Civitate Dei*. Only three other identical works are known to exist in the world.

At St. John's College, "the books are the teachers," and the heart of the Greenfield Library's collection will always be the circulating collection. Books are the constant companions of our students and tutors, the friends of all friends. We who advocate for the library appreciate the continuing and valuable investment that alumni and friends of the college continue to make to the Greenfield Library. ❖

“SING, GODDESS”

Music and the Program

BY ROSEMARY HARTY

As they have for many years on the Annapolis campus, the freshman class gathered in the Great Hall for its spring choral performance. The last notes of *Sicut locutus est* from Bach's *Magnificat* hung in the air as the upperclassmen and tutors in the balcony sounded their approval. This year's performance—by an unusually large freshman class crowded into the hall—was outstanding, many told tutor Peter Kalkavage as he gathered up his scores. “They were very good, weren't they?” he agreed.

J.P. Snyder (Aro), who doesn't enjoy singing, was just relieved it was over. “I'm very flat, I'm just good at hiding it,” he confessed. Freshman chorus and sophomore music are parts of the Program he'll have to endure; laboratory and math have his passion. “Honestly? If I could avoid music, I would,” he confesses.

Music wasn't part of Barr and Buchanan's original plan when they came to St. John's in 1937; it first appeared in the 1949-50 academic year. Dynamic personalities such as Victor Zuckerkandl and tutor Douglas Allanbrook shaped the development of music in the early years in Annapolis, and the college's approach to music has been fine-tuned many times on both campuses. Music is an integral part of the Program, an essential liberal art, says Santa Fe Dean Victoria Mora. “Music is part of our humanity,” she says. “Our reason and our passions come together in the study of music. Fundamental questions about

this relationship between reason and the passions arise and are addressed.”

Both campuses are focusing their efforts on the music program this coming year. In the fall, Santa Fe will make changes in its approach to teaching music in freshman year. This summer, Santa Fe faculty will meet in a study group to refine and develop materials for sophomore music, with a goal of making them more broadly accessible and less reliant on individuals' expertise. “I don't think there is a big debate here in Santa Fe about trying to get more tutors to teach the music program,” says tutor John Cornell. “Our purpose is going to be to improve the access even further.”

In Annapolis, where there are no changes planned to freshman chorus, faculty will meet in a study group designed to better prepare tutors for teaching sophomore music for the first time. Proposed by Dean Michael Dink (A75) to address his concern that more faculty need to be involved in sophomore music, the study groups will be paired with released time to allow faculty to audit the second half of sophomore music. Plans call for an inter-campus exchange of faculty to learn from the innovations in place on each campus, and the college's joint Instruction Committee will review the results.

A NEW APPROACH IN SANTA FE

Cornell and tutor Ned Walpin in Santa Fe will lead the campus' revamped freshman music program, carrying out an idea developed by Peter Pesic, tutor and musician-in-residence. “We were at an impasse over what to do,” says Santa Fe tutor John Cornell

"Other tutors have said that chorus is often the place where the freshman class becomes a class."

TOM MAY, TUTOR



PETER HOWARD

says. "We could see our management of 110 freshman in chorus was not worthy of St. John's students. Peter had the brainstorm. It's somewhat daring, but at the same time, it's totally in keeping with the St. John's program of instruction: to sit at that common table."

Freshman music (its provisional name) will depart from the exclusively choral approach and will be organized as tutorials focusing on Gregorian chant and ancient music theory. The material in the first five weeks of sophomore music will move into the freshman year, but students will still sing, and often in combined groups. "Those five weeks are focused on the Gregorian chant, and a significant portion of the time is spent singing," says Walpin. "We'll have about six sections of freshman music and each tutorial will meet at the same time as another, so that there will be two tutorials meeting at the same time. Those tutorials will get together regularly to sing so that at least 30 people will be singing together at all times. Then, there will be all-college events where all freshmen will get together to sing as a whole chorus, and they will be singing the pieces that they have been studying and singing in their tutorials."

MUSIC IS INCLUDED ON THE ST. JOHN'S PROGRAM BECAUSE THE ANCIENTS ACCORDED MUSIC A PLACE AMONG THE LIBERAL ARTS; THEY UNDERSTOOD IT AS ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE MIND, ASSOCIATED WITH THE POWER TO GRASP NUMBER AND MEASURE.

Walpin expects that the tutorial approach will give students the fundamentals they need to get more out of singing, paving the way for an even more productive sophomore music tutorial. "With this new structure, we are giving them reasons to sing because they've been learning how to interpret a melody, what makes a piece have a beginning, middle, and end. When they understand what they're hearing, the singing will become crucially fulfilling for them."

A required freshman chorus, Pesic believes, is antithetical to the ideals of the Program. "Students come to St. John's to talk to each other," he says.

continued on p. 19

ON THE DOUBLE ORIGIN OF THE MUSIC TUTORIAL

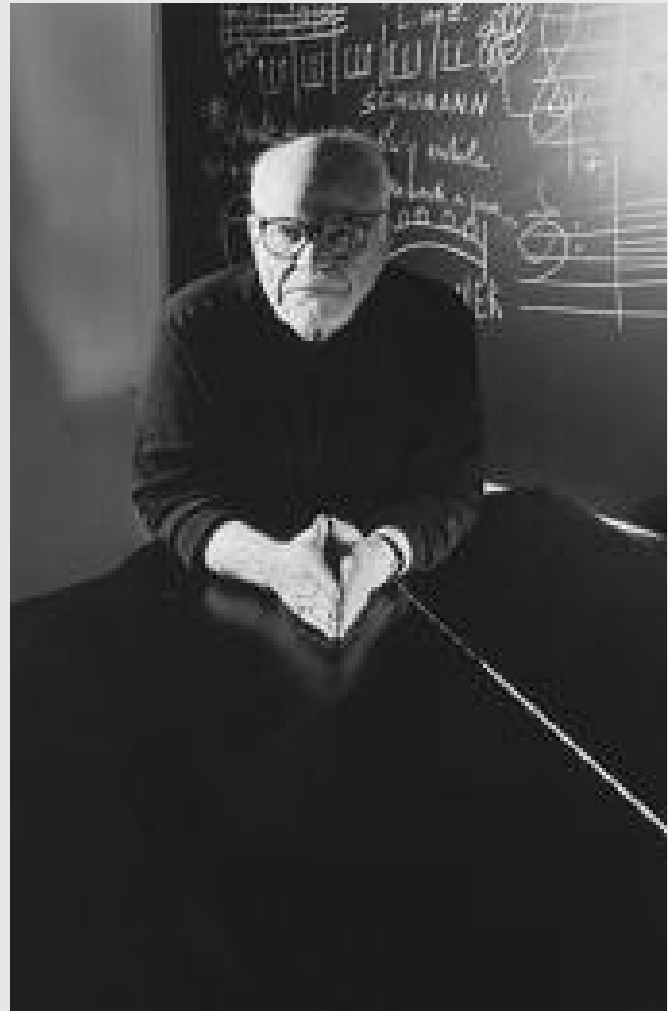
BY ELLIOTT ZUCKERMAN (HA95)
TUTOR EMERITUS

The three musical works that have been perennial in our seminar list are a passion, an opera, and a music-drama. They are all settings of narratives that can sustain a discussion apart from the music. But in the late 1950s the seminar list included quite a few works of music that were wordless, such as the *Goldberg Variations*, the *Rite of Spring*, and (along with the *Ninth*, that does blossom into verse) the *Fifth* and *Eighth Symphonies* of Beethoven. These works of so-called “pure” music were among the losses when (in the early ’60s) the list was decimated in order to make room for the preceptorials. As with some of the scientific readings, and the plays of Molière and Racine, we had the excuse that the works were already being discussed at length in the tutorials. But the lost music seminars were scarcely regretted, for it was widely thought that it required a particular talent to lead a seminar on a musical work that had no plot or poem to fall back on.

Yet Victor Zuckerkandl, who designed the music tutorial, said to me more than once that if we eliminated the music seminars from the program, the music tutorial should go, too. It was well known that Zuckerkandl himself could get any group of people to talk about music, as well as about almost anything else. But I gathered that for him the chief aim of the tutorial was to provide the students with the wherewithal for talking about music in the seminar, even when they didn’t have an inspiring conductor.

Zuckerkandl’s successor as leader of the music tutorial was Douglas Allanbrook, who disliked music seminars, and did nothing to defend them. At the same time, despite his fondness for Zuckerkandl and their friendship, he had an aversion to Zuckerkandl’s view of music, which Allanbrook characterized as *Ton-Wille*—the tones somehow had a will of their own—and attributed it to windy philosophical music-lovers such as Schopenhauer. Zuckerkandl’s notion of music as a message from another world was as remote as possible from Allanbrook’s down-to-earth New England view that composers put tones together to delight us, and possibly move us, with imitations of our own motions.

The music tutorial had to be justified as worth doing apart from music seminars. From the beginning, the most venerable justification lay easily at hand. Music, after all, had been part of the traditional liberal arts, and the music tutorial rounded out our study of the quadrivium. As in the laboratory and the mathematics tutorial (and, less systematically, in the language tutorial) we are invited to learn and think about the elements of a subject. The compounding of intervals gives us an audible example of the compounding of ratios in Book Five of Euclid. And there is a unique correspondence between the two-to-one ratio of pitches in the physical world, and the universal human response to that simplicity when we recognize the sameness as an octave.



ANNAPOLIS PHOTOGRAPHER DIMITRI FOTOS CAPTURES THIS PORTRAIT OF ELLIOT ZUCKERMAN (HA95) FOR FOTOS’ “FACING THE MUSIC” SERIES.

It is worth studying the first chapter of Zuckerkandl’s textbook—let alone his remarkable theoretical works—with a view to how little he accounts for the power of music by adducing the arithmetic correspondences that elated the Pythagoreans. I think I can safely assert that for him the Miracle of the Octave is something other than our response to the simple ratio.

We are fortunate to have a music tutorial with this double origin. We ought to become more aware of what it means to hold the Grand View or the Practical View, and embrace the argument between them as our domestic dialectic. ❀

continued

He believes the changes help make music a more integral part of freshman year. "This will happen just when students are discovering ancient mathematics and ancient philosophy, which I think is ideal in that way," he says. "It also allows the students to learn the elements of music as they're discussing what the elements really mean, as they do with Euclid and everything else."

Mora likes Pesic's approach and suggests that it more fully integrate music into the rest of the Program, particularly in freshman year. "Just as students come to understand the elements of mathematics by discussing them as well as by demonstrating them on the board, so too will they learn the elements of music by discussing them as well as practicing them by singing," she says.

A STUDY GROUP FOR SOPHOMORE MUSIC

While Annapolis plans to continue freshman chorus as it is, this summer it will take the first step toward making more tutors comfortable leading sophomore music. Dink understands why some tutors on his campus are intimidated. In his 26 years at St. John's, he has yet to lead sophomore music, although he audited it during one of his sabbaticals. As do many tutors, Dink worries his lack of musical training will hamper his effectiveness in class. "I may be at the extreme end of the spectrum in terms of lack of preparation, but there are people who have played an instrument who still feel sophomore music would be a challenge," he says.

Throughout the years in Annapolis, musical tutors have applied their expertise to reshaping sophomore music to make it more accessible for their nonmusical colleagues. When Bill Pastille came to St. John's in 1986 (with a PhD in music from Cornell), only about a dozen tutors were willing to teach music. When he revamped the curriculum in Annapolis in 1989, Pastille built the tutorial around Zuckerkandl's *The Sense of Music* and created a supplementary series of tapes for tutors and students. "We made the tutorial more accessible, and we did manage to sign up a whole bunch of new people," he says.

That curriculum lasted a decade in Annapolis, before it was changed again. Today, in addition to Zuckerkandl's text, the campus uses a manual called "Materials for Sophomore Music," an ordered sequence of readings and musical examples. Although it was designed to make the tutorial more accessible to more tutors, many are still reluctant to volunteer.

*"You were either
daring enough to
jump into music or
you weren't."*

PETER KALKAVAGE, TUTOR

However, the music tutorial needs true amateurs, Pastille says. "When I'm teaching something I'm not an expert in—say freshman lab—I can enter into class discussions on a level much closer to the students. It's almost impossible for me to do that in music," he says. "When you're too inclined to see things that the students probably can't see, you can let a lot of fundamental questions go unasked."

Beginning this summer, Annapolis will have in place a system for bringing more faculty into the tutorial. Seven tutors have signed up for an eight-week study group to be led by tutor Peter Kalkavage. In each of the 2007-08 and 2008-09 academic years, two tutors who have participated in the study group and who are teaching the tutorial in the first semester will gain a station of released time in the second semester in order to audit another music tutorial. "The college hasn't had something like this in place before," he says. "You were either daring enough to jump in to music, or you weren't," he says, acknowledging that "it can be scary. If you haven't had music training or you feel you don't have a taste for it, it can look like the most difficult part of the Program."

CHORUS GOES ON

Freshman chorus will continue as before in Annapolis; indeed, Tom May can't imagine the college without the freshman chorus. "I find it absolutely exhilarating," he says. May has spent much of his life immersed in music; as a seminarian, he was a choir director, and he later found a job singing sacred music in an Episcopal church. He has always been impressed by the place music held in the Program, and he believes that it is especially important now, at a time when public and private schools invest fewer resources in music.

Preparing students with different backgrounds to tackle sophomore music together remains the prime focus of freshman music. Some students are experienced musicians; others can't read a note of music when they come to St. John's. "How are people with that wide a range going to be able to talk to each other? We have students who've had a great deal of technical training but they've never sung. Freshman chorus performs a similar role in the music program to that of the practica in the laboratory program, in giving a class a common experience of the phenomena—it's for this reason as much as any other that I believe chorus is such a vital part of the way we learn here," May says.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN ANCIENTS AND MODERNS

BY PETER PESIC

Among the diverse projects undertaken at St. John's College, none is more remarkable than our music program. Beside music conservatories, I know very few other colleges where all students study music. Moreover, our study of music is unique in its approach and scope, not simply "music appreciation," music history, or theory. I would like to describe how this approach has developed here in Santa Fe, where I have had the privilege of being involved with this program over the past 25 years.

Before then, our music program had been led by such distinguished and talented tutors as the late Michael Ossorgin and Sam Brown, accomplished musicians who emphasized certain masterworks that remain fixtures of our music tutorials: Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*—that unique trilogy about passion. About 1980, Dean Robert Bart asked Ralph Swentzell to rethink the music tutorial so that it would be more open to tutors who did not feel they had a specialized background in music. In his unforgettable way, Ralph took this project to heart and produced an amazing historical compendium of music and theoretical writings, the basis of the program we still do in Santa Fe, which remains indebted to Ralph's foundational vision, even as it has been shaped and refined by many colleagues since then.

In my view, the heart of our music program is a dialogue between ancients and moderns. For music is not simply the expressive art it became over the past centuries, but needs to be understood in reference to two parallel traditions, both extending back to antiquity. For clarity, let me use the terminology introduced by a crucial figure in the story, Vincenzo Galilei, Galileo's father, who distinguished two "practices" in ancient and modern music. His "first practice" (*prima prattica*) is exemplified by the ancient "music of the spheres," which is essentially passionless and eternal, a paragon



MUSIC IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE "GREAT ADVENTURE" THAT IS ST. JOHN'S, SAYS TUTOR PETER PESIC.

of beauty and cosmic order. Only a few fragments remain of ancient Greek music, but Gregorian chant represents this first practice. Chant is essentially monophonic, a single beautiful melodic line that generally does not aim for emotional expressivity. For example, the same chant melody could be used to set "sad" as well as "happy" texts.

Our sophomores begin with a month of singing various chants and reading Boethius (who transmitted ancient musical theory to the West), each student composing a chant to a given text, which the class then sings and discusses. Beginning with a kind of music unfamiliar to almost everyone (whether musically trained or not) allows fresh consideration of the elements of music. We then consider the momentous and mysterious transition to polyphony, the interweaving of several independent voices so characteristic of Western musical art, so strikingly absent from ancient practice (or from world music in general). This leads to a month devoted to the polyphonic art as developed by such masters as Palestrina and taught by Fux's

celebrated dialogue *Gradus ad Parnassum*, which taught Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven the art of counterpoint and whose exercises we also do. Our touchstone is Palestrina's motet "Sicut cervus," a theme-song on both campuses, its haunting beauty a fitting epitome of music's first practice.

The crucial transition between ancient and modern music may have begun even before the parallel, momentous transitions in mathematics, philosophy, and natural science that we study in other parts of our Program. Their seminal works date from around 1600; our music tutorials treat Claudio Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (1607) as the pivotal work. In it, La Musica herself steps forward and announces that she can inflame the iciest heart, "now with noble anger, now with love." Monteverdi here puts into action the aspirations of Vincenzo Galilei and others who wanted to revive the Greek drama and its incomparable emotional power, which they thought the first practice had wrongly ignored.

*“Our reason and
our passions
come together in
the study of
music.”*

VICTORIA MORA, SANTA FE DEAN

There’s another benefit as well, one important to the shaping of community. “It’s amazing that we ask all of our students to sing together,” he says. “Other tutors have said that chorus is often the place where the freshman class becomes a class.” During spring performances of the chorus, upperclassmen on the balcony will often chime in on some of the songs. During the Senior Dinner each spring, students join their tutors in singing favorite selections from freshman chorus, and alumni at Homecoming speak fondly of their freshman chorus memories, he says.

Students of lesser ability would be unlikely to have this experience to stretch themselves, he says. “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” says May. “Students get a sense of

being in the presence of music in a way that is ultimately unforgettable. At the end, they know if it’s going to work, we have to work hard—and they do, year after year.”

Kalkavage, who has shared chorus duties with May for many years, believes freshman chorus is not only a tradition in Annapolis, but an excellent way to introduce students to “making music.”

Certainly some students never take to music, yet he observed that year after year, many Johnnies develop confidence in their singing and discover a great love for great music. “It’s a thrill to get students together and watch them discover their musicality,” he says. ✧

Their “second practice” (*secunda prattica*) was explicitly designed to seize power over human passions, as La Musica had proclaimed, as Orfeo fatefully enacts. This new Orpheus is the master of a reborn art—opera— that can move mute stones and even infernal powers, but in the end Orfeo is mastered by his own passions, loosing Eurydice to a second death after having won her back from her first. Thus Monteverdi, crafting the first masterwork of the second practice, also foresaw its tragic dilemma, incarnate in Orfeo himself; near the same time, Francis Bacon’s mythical retellings also foresaw the powers and tragic possibilities of the new science he envisioned.

Thus emerged a deep dialogue between beauty (the ideal of the first practice) and power (the goal of the second), a dialogue that continues to this day and had in fact already begun in ancient times, for Plato described both the music of the spheres and earthly modes capable of ruining the soul through sensuous indulgence or firing it to courage. Our music tutorials explore the harmonic art that Monteverdi pioneered, an art that went on to empower the great masterworks of Bach, Mozart, and Wagner mentioned above. For them, the controlled use of ever-stronger and more unstable dissonances is crucial, reminding us of the transition from the fixed Aristotelian earth to the mysteriously movable condition of

Newtonian planets or from unalterable chemical elements to radioactive instability.

As we explore these works of musical and scientific imagination, we draw close to the sources of their immense powers and also confront the attendant questions those powers imply. In the story of Orpheus, the project of power reacts on itself; our music program concludes by considering modern masterworks that turn from ever-intensified expressivity to reconsider the first practice and its austere ecstasies, works by Debussy, Stravinsky, Webern, Messiaen, Arvo Pärt. Thus the opening question posed by the two practices—by beauty and power—resounds from past to future.

Throughout, we aspire to a complete musical experience, encompassing listening, singing, reading, discussing, composing, analyzing, playing. Next year, we will experiment in Santa Fe with a new format for freshman music as normal tutorials, rather than a single large chorus, so as to encourage the discussions that are the lifeblood of St. John’s classes.

As with so much of St. John’s Program, our study of music is rightly a work in progress, always trying to improve, grow, and deepen. This great adventure, artistic and philosophical, has opened new vistas for me, in my own education, as I hope it will continue to do for many others, now and in the future. ✧

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POP JOHNNIES

In the examined life, is there room for Shakespeare and Shakira?

BY EMILY DeBUSK (Ao6)

Pop culture is easy, fun, prevalent, comforting, and of-the-moment. The great books are dense, rigorous, distant, provocative, and old. Can they coexist without mocking each other? The question has implications beyond the movies Johnnies choose to see or music they download to their iPods. It touches on some deeply felt beliefs about a St. John's education and Johnnies in the wider world. Is it odd to finish up a seminar reading on, say, the gospel of John, and then settle down for a good listen to the new wave of Swedish death metal? Is it snobbish to think one shouldn't spend time on fleeting fads with so much rich material in the canon?

Consider the (apparent) tension between pop culture and the St. John's culture. In one corner, there is a peculiar St. John's culture where, according to the college's creeds, dialogue is king. The campus is characterized by the reading of great books, earnest conversations, tweedy traditions involving waltzing and pipe-smoking, and all-around bookishness. In the other corner, there is pop culture. A broad definition begins with media—music, TV shows, movies, and the pervasive buzz that the Internet and advertising emit—and its fundamental connection with certain key ingredients: mass appeal, commercialism, consumerism, and transience. In short, the St. John's culture is anchored where pop floats; limited, where pop is universal; and for the inner, where pop concerns itself with the outward. Nothing about what is done at St. John's is “quick!,” “e-z!,” or “for a limited time only!”

Pop culture is entertainment, not education. So why make the comparison? In 1937 Scott Buchanan, the first dean of St. John's under the new Program, wrote in the Bulletin of St. John's College: “Ultimately the ends of liberal education are the intellectual

virtues, the development of the capacities from which they come, and the integration of the characters to which they contribute.” That is, the intellectual virtues should not be left at the door as students exit the classroom. Stringfellow Barr (who published a novel and a cookbook along with academic works) said that while immersion in the Program will foster a taste for higher things, the St. John's alumnus can still find riches in the culture of his times: “From his constant association with the first-rate, he will have acquired a distaste for the second-rate, the intellectually cheap and tawdry; but he will have learned to discover meaning in things that most people write off as vulgar,” he wrote in a 1939 report.

The St. John's education seems to have the power to elevate higher pursuits over popular ones, but should it?

THREE VIEWS

As pop culture and the St. John's culture contend for attention, some tension arises. In a college-wide survey asking current students for their opinion about the relationship of pop culture and the St. John's culture, at least three differing viewpoints surfaced.

Many students saw no connection at all between what they do as students and what they do as pop culture consumers. These students turn to pop simply for relaxation and entertainment. “Pop culture functions like Reality,” says Kayla Gamin (Ao8). “It provides emotional release, social lubrication, and a way to group people into social sets distinguished by their tastes in music and entertainment.” There are many college-wide symptoms of pop culture, such as film clubs, video games, and dance parties. The relatively few TVs on campus (rapidly becoming obsolete thanks to laptops with streaming video and DVD players) have some faithful watchers. One group of students gathered every Tuesday night to follow the sensational life of the misanthropic House of the

“Art is a selective re-creation of reality according to an artist’s metaphysical value judgments. An artist recreates those aspects of reality which represent his fundamental view of man’s nature.”

MARCEL PROUST



RAPHAEL'S SCHOOL OF ATHENS DIGITALLY ADAPTED BY LORD THOMAS BURBRIDGE

*“I want to be an artist that everyone can relate to,
that’s young, happy and fun.”*

BRITNEY SPEARS, SINGER

“Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

“For me, just being on the cover of a magazine wasn’t enough. I began to think, what value is there in doing something in which you have no creative input?”

ELLE MACPHERSON, MODEL

onymous Fox TV show. (Again, the intertwining of pop and the Program was startling; one Johnnie read his lab manual during commercial breaks.)

Pop culture is also used as a source of information about what’s going “out there.” Cloistered by size, geography (Santa Fe), and a relatively closed curriculum, St. John’s can seem to be a world of its own, and it is a constant struggle to be engaged in the present as well as the past. “The world is so large,” says Annapolis tutor Eva Brann, an unapologetic fan of monster truck rallies, Louis L’Amour novels and *Law and Order*. “I don’t want to be totally out of it. Whatever it is they like, I want to know about it. Our students don’t want to cut themselves off.”

Another group of students views pop culture as a distraction. “I think the most disturbing part of [pop culture] is how reason just isn’t there,” says Liz Curry (Ao7). “There are things about it that should bother us. Everything is so emotionally driven, and it’s the very excess of emotion that is praised. I don’t think it should be studied, but engaged. We won’t always be reading and talking about these books, so there’s got to be a way for the things we do here to resonate with people in general. I think Johnnies in particular have the power to give another perspective from pop culture that’s not necessarily elitist or bookish. There’s a way that these books live for us as much as pop culture lives for others.”

Tristan Chambers (Sfo8) goes beyond wariness to outright disdain. He sees a connection between the nature of pop culture and the rhetorician Socrates warns about in his dialogues. “Most of pop media is morally debasing and it obfuscates the truth on all levels,” Chambers says. “I feel like pop culture panders to our vices as Socrates says the rhetorician panders to our vices and more animalistic urges. Pop media wants your attention, and its main means is to appeal to basic urges, which are harder to endure or manage. I think it’s bad for our souls. These media generators are unconcerned with what’s true or false, but are more interested in manipulating for effect. Pop reflects that rhetorical attitude in its sound bytes, one-sided stories, and advertising.”

Still others are simply not attracted to pop. This group chooses instead to be entertained and inspired by media that is too eclectic, old-fashioned, or avant-garde to rightly be called pop. Zack Hay (Ao8), for example, listens to records of Moondog, a blind musician who busked on the streets of New York City and made his own instruments—a far cry from *Billboard*’s Top 100. “I’ve just always had an inclination to look for things in obscurity, not things that are

readily available,” Hay explains, “because there is a tendency, I think, in all cultures, to overlook a lot of things, which do not deserve to be—if something is just a little bit weird, it just gets thrown by the wayside. I always take delight in knowing that there’s always a little pocket of these alternatively-minded people scattered about the world, now, and historically.”

FLEETING FADS VS. GREAT WORKS

In trying to pinpoint the tension between pop culture and the St. John’s culture, it is tempting to think it is simply a matter of aesthetic quality. Just compare the newest *American Idol*’s hit single to Mozart and *voilà!* the one withers in the shadow of the other. The music and literature of the Program is mainly “high” culture (Mozart, Milton) with a bit of counter culture (Marx, Baudelaire), and nothing that could be classified as modern pop. Yet it is too simplistic to take the omission as an a priori condemnation by St. John’s of pop culture. “There are obvious quality distinctions between the best and the worst forms of hip-hop, and this is true of classical music as well,” says Santa Fe tutor David Carl, who is routinely described as a “cool” tutor by students. “The best hip hop is better than the worst classical music, so aesthetic value cannot be determined simply based on what part of culture (popular or ‘high’) something participates in.”

Hollywood produces a few good films each year, the recording industry manages to produce work by good artists, and some television shows “are not simply a waste of time,” says Carl. “How to distinguish between what I would call ‘good’ and ‘bad’ culture (pop or otherwise) is the challenge,” he maintains.

Annapolis tutor Mera Flaumenhaft posits that the real danger of pop culture in the St. John’s community is more of a how than a what. “Everything goes so fast, everything is loud, and many things happen at once,” she says. “One of the best things we do at St. John’s is develop the habit of slowing down. This is a place where people look carefully at something: a tree, a sentence, a math demonstration, a difficult argument. We look for a long time and with other people. We ask questions, converse, and look again. This way of life makes our encounters with everything, including popular culture, more thoughtful and more interesting.”

Brann submits that these habits are the means to meet the challenge Carl speaks of: “Going through the Program is the shaping of taste,” she says. “If you have thought about really good works, it gives you the tools to think about the difference about the

“At the touch of love everyone becomes a poet.”

PLATO

“We all feel love, and that might sound kind of corny, but I really feel that’s what joins musicians together around the world.”

ENRIQUE IGLESIAS, SINGER

good and the bad. You ask yourself ‘What about this will pass away?’ What revives?’ ”

POP AND THE JOHNNIES

Pervading the general attitudes of St. John’s students towards pop on campus, there was a reluctance to treat pop culture as a single whole, to be entirely accepted or rejected. Perhaps this is because for those who tune into pop culture with their minds as well as their headphones (and some deliberately choose not to engage their minds) the movies, TV shows, and commercials born of pop are raw source of information about the human condition.

Kim Paffenroth (A88), an associate professor of Religious Studies at Iona College, devotee of heavy metal and classic TV science fiction, and author of (most recently) *Gospel of the Living Dead: George Romero’s Vision of Hell on Earth*, has found plenty of material in pop culture to engage him. “I think St. John’s teaches you to take ideas and texts seriously, analyzing them with habits of curiosity and interrogation,” he says. “I apply that to current pop culture. There is writing out there that tries to fit pop into some post-modern analysis, but I try not to bring any theoretical baggage. I just give it a close reading. I don’t think all of pop deserves this approach, but some does.” In Paffenroth’s opinion, to reject pop culture “guarantees that you are regarded as irrelevant and disconnected from the larger world that we live in. [At St. John’s] what one strives for is not so much to refine your taste, but to refine your analytical skills and to analyze what is valuable.”

In other words, within the morass of pop lie shreds of the very same kinds of questions—of philosophy, art, political science,



ELIZABETH BURLINGTON (Ao8) TAKES A BREAK FROM HOBBS TO CATCH UP ON SLASH.

faith—that Johnnies bring to the seminar table. Carl points out that Shakespeare and Aristophanes might be considered the pop culture of their day. Someday, St. John’s students might be reading the lyrics of 21st-century pop songs or movie screenplays, but by then these works will have outgrown the pop label. Could students in some future tutorial be examining the film *Fight Club* for truths about the human condition in the same way we now consider *Fleurs de Mal*?

St. John’s treasures the old because it endures, but it doesn’t reject all in current times. “Pop culture is something like the Blob in that old Steve McQueen movie,” observes Carl. “It consumes everything in its path that it thinks it can get something from, and this means that a few truly good things (maybe even great things) will get consumed along with all the worthless trash.”

The real struggle between pop culture and the St. John’s culture seems one of dominance; “The

St. John’s way” has ambitions to be an integral part of a Johnnie’s life. So does pop culture. The consumer is meant to buy what he sees, think what she listens to, and not worry about time for dialogue or “unplugged” reflection. “Life is too short to listen to bad music and read bad books and watch bad movies,” says Carl. “Pop culture offers to do all the choosing for us, but I think we are better off getting out in the world and discovering for ourselves which music, books, television, and movies are worthy of our time.” This is where free people, living examined lives, politely decline pop’s offer. ✱

VISUAL THINKERS



Questioning is at the heart of discovery for these artists who move beyond words to shape clay, carve wood, and paint.

SMART HANDS

In 2005, Betsy Williams (SF87) and her partner Mark Saxe, a stone sculptor, opened Rift Gallery in Rinconada, N.M. Functional pieces designed for daily use are the foundation of her work, complemented by objects for contemplation and display.

When I graduated from St. John's, truth be told, I had no idea what to do in this world for the next several years. Not that I wasn't trying to figure it out. Circumstances eventually had me employed at a small Japanese regional bank with a branch in New York City, working as a trader on the money market. Then a co-worker invited me to an exhibit of 17th-century Korean ceramics at the Metropolitan Museum. Standing in front of a slightly asymmetrical celadon vase, I had what is perhaps best described simply as a profound moment, and my life took the direction that it has today. I scrimped and saved so that I could make a move to Japan

and study pottery seriously. I wanted to learn about traditional methods, digging clay, making glazes from natural materials and firing with wood. In 1994, I did make that leap, and managed to find a teacher, Mr. Yutaka Ohashi, in Karatsu, Japan, with whom I apprenticed over the next four years. I learned through observation, imitation, and lots of repetition.

In working at the wheel a surprising kind of knowledge was revealed to me gradually about just how smart my hands are. I made thousands and thousands of the same cylindrical cup, over and over, until after a couple of years I knew all about that cup, everything that could go wrong, every millimeter of the anatomy of that cup. With practice, one's hands and eyes can detect differences of less than a millimeter without conscious discrimination. Awareness of this physical sensibility helps hold conscious discrimination and corporeal knowledge in balance, and I believe the act of creating as a whole can also be described as this kind of balancing on a larger scale.

In 1999, I "graduated" from my apprenticeship, with the pronouncement, "Now you have the skills to teach yourself anything else that you may need to learn." So I returned to New Mexico, bought land in a remote mountainous region about an



hour north of Santa Fe, built a house and studio, and then my own wood-fired kiln. I've been working away ever since, trying to bring my well-trained self and my creative self into a kind of balance, while making a living doing it.

My work relies heavily, even now, on repetition, but in a new way: drawing on the visual impact that multiples carry. My wall-hung cup grids, which range in size from three cups to 180 cups, emphasize sameness and difference of their components at once. The cup becomes visible in its relationship with others in a way that one cup alone cannot. Currently I am working on a grouping of 52 teapots, one for every week of the year, for a show entitled "Imagine" that will open at our gallery in May. (www.rift-gallery.com)

St. John's continues to have a positive influence on my career. Over the past summer, St. John's student Carolyn Lobeck (SFO7) was an apprentice in my studio through the Ariel Internship Program. She was introduced to many of the basics that are essential to a career in clay, in accordance with what I learned during my own apprenticeship. This opportunity to pass on to another young woman some of what I have worked so hard to learn is really important to me. St. John's also presents one of my hand-made cups to each of the graduates of the Eastern Classics program every year. That the college recognizes the importance of the handmade object in today's society, its importance as a symbol and as a way of life, is huge.

AT LEFT, *MATTER AND TIME*, WALL-MOUNTED CUBES. ABOVE, BETSY WILLIAMS APPRENTICED IN JAPAN FOR FOUR YEARS BEFORE OPENING HER STUDIO IN NEW MEXICO. AT RIGHT, A 4-INCH TEA CADDY.





NATURAL PROOFS

Karina Noel Hean (Aoo) is a painter and teaches drawing, painting, and design as visiting instructor of art at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. She has exhibited in numerous solo and group shows. In fall 2008, she will complete a two-month artist fellowship at the Ballinglen Arts Center in Ballycastle, Ireland. Hean grew up near the Annapolis campus, where her mother, Miriam Callahan-Hean (AGI87), is graduate admissions officer for the college.

I am a planner. From eighth grade on, I took art-making seriously. As much as public school and free time allowed, that is what I did, taking every art class I could at my public school, earning scholarships to classes at the local art center, and, though it clearly has not improved my social skills, I spent most of my teen and pre-teen years alone in my room painting or drawing. While I was very concerned about what would happen to my “art career” if I did not attend an art school, I knew that St. John’s would provide me with the intellectual exposure, critical thinking, and verbal skills I would need to be an artist who was not only technically proficient but thoughtful as well.

When the conditions are right, I work 14-hour days in the studio. The rhythm of these days is paradise. The places my mind and hands may take me and the work fluctuate: unpre-

*“When the conditions are right,
I work 14-hour days in the studio.
The rhythm of these days
is paradise.”*

KARINA NOEL HEAN (A00)

dictable, exciting, reassuringly familiar, ridiculous, calm, transcendent.

For several years my work was concerned with communicating a sense of reverence for nature and understanding nature as a source of spirituality. My *Pendular Motion Series* monotypes and *Emotional Proof Series* explore the aesthetic and intellectual capacity of geometric and dynamics diagrams and theorems. Studying the history of Western mathematics and physical sciences at St. John’s exposed me to Euclid’s *Elements* and Huygens’ *On the Motion of Bodies from Impact* amongst other heavily diagrammed attempts to explain the nature of our world and how it functions. What initially strikes me about these proofs is the clear beauty of their lines and shapes. As a visual communicator, I am intrigued by the quantity and quality of information these images can convey. In addition to this is a skeptic’s pondering of the kind of knowing they claim to present.

The *Emotional Proof Series* are improvisations that riff off of the Euclidian proofs that I studied at St. John’s. These proofs are logical and predictable. My version of the proofs is a humorous comment on the contemporary desire to categorize and comprehend human emotions. They ask questions such as: How far can we take the relationship between word and image? How much distance exists between these two supposedly distinct forms of communication?

“Learn by doing and making mistakes” has become one of my pedagogical mottoes that stems from my own experience as an art student and artist. If you are not frustrated, you are probably not learning anything or challenging yourself.



KARINA NOEL HEAN IS DRAWN TO THE BEAUTY OF MATHEMATICAL PROOFS, AS SHOWN IN THESE UNTITLED WORKS.

DAJA MUSIC

Billy Lieb (class of 1945) attended film school at UCLA after his graduation from St. John's. Following graduate school and teaching film making, Lieb worked in Los Angeles as a motion picture cameraman and film editor until his retirement in 1984, when he began his career as a sculptor. His artwork includes two different media: assemblage (making things out of found objects) and abstract wood sculpture.

I have enjoyed collecting things since I was a kid. First it was postage stamps, then shells, rocks and minerals. As an adult I started to go to flea markets and swap meets where you could buy interesting things cheap. Gradually, I learned to put some of these things together to make constructions of assemblages.

After I retired from the film industry in 1984, I moved to the Ocean Park district—right on the Santa Monica beach. That summer there were storms that brought piles of driftwood onto the beach. I soon discovered that some of it was very heavy and was carvable. A surfer classmate of mine (from graduate school, UCLA) suggested I drive 20 miles north to the Malibu beaches. He was right. For the next 10 years, my best wood came from Malibu, mostly manzanita burls.

I had also started collecting art posers. I found out about the Picture Framers Guild, which would help you learn how to frame art posters. The next year, I started The Magic Picture Gallery, my own framing operation in Malibu.

Soon I started taking drawing and art history classes at Santa Monica College. There I learned about a new art school being founded at Santa Monica College, using an empty furniture factory for its classrooms. All of the faculty were professional artists, including Laddie Dill and George Herms, who became my favorite teacher.



A SURFER TOLD BILLY LIEB (CLASS OF 1945) WHERE TO FIND THE MANZANITA BURL—PRIZED BY SCULPTORS—THAT WASHES UP ON MALIBU BEACH. (UNTITLED)

I started exhibiting at the factory and local galleries. Meanwhile, Sony Music was building its West Coast headquarters on our block. When it was finished, the president of Sony Music invited our college, the Santa Monica College of Design, Art, and Architecture, to decorate their new building. They wanted us to submit art “with a musical theme.” As I started making *Silent Musical Instruments* they finally accepted 14 of my assemblages including *The Daja Music Machine* and *The Daja Guitar*. The word “Daja” became my brand name for my style of assemblage, being a sum of “Dada” and “Jazz.” I have entered several wood sculptures and assemblages in the alumni art show at St. John’s in Santa Fe.

PLAYING IN THE MUD

BY ELEANOR PETERS

Even as a small child I loved playing in the mud. My mother is an artist so there were always opportunities to try out new things at home. When Mike was in grad school in Seattle and our children were young there was a great recreation center program that included pottery classes—a place where adults were encouraged to play in the mud! Perfect. I was hooked in no time.

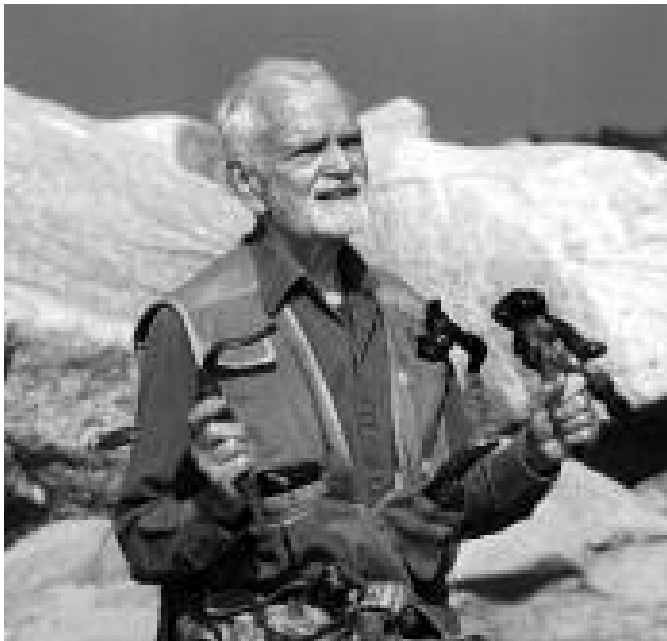
Long before Santa Fe was in the picture for us, I discovered the work of legendary San Ildefonso potter Maria Martinez and was intrigued by her work. I haven't adopted her Native American techniques but the respect and awe remain. I never dreamt that one day we would be practically in her neighborhood, surrounded by her legacy.

Imagine my delight when we arrived at St. John's to find a wonderful pottery right in the Fine Arts Building. Not only could one throw pots, but be variously serenaded by sophomore music, jazz groups, piano, bass, drums or horn playing. There is a very knowledgeable instructor in the person of local artist Sadiq Kahn. Our pottery assistant is Carolyn Lobeck (SFO7), who spent last summer as apprentice to Betsy Williams. A small but dedicated group of students find their way to the studio. Some become regulars; others come for a season as their class schedules allow. Some bring considerable pottery experience, and some are beginners. All bring enthusiasm. What I really enjoy is that our intersection in the Pottery Studio gives me an opportunity to get to know students in a non-academic setting. But, being Johnnies, it also means there are conversations about what they're



ELEANOR PETERS, WIFE OF SANTA FE PRESIDENT MICHAEL PETERS, IS A REGULAR AT THE CAMPUS POTTERY STUDIO. SHE ENTERED THESE WORKS IN THE SANTA FE COMMUNITY ART SHOW.

reading in seminar or the topic of their current paper, as well as how to throw a tall cylinder or make a plate. ❀



In August 2006, I bought a home in a senior mobile home park in Poway, California. I did this to be near my daughter Joy and my two great grandsons Danny and Alex. When my dear friend Jonnie Zheutlin learned of my move, she sent me funds to build an art studio as part of my new home. Few artists are lucky enough to be able to open their front door and enter their art studio! ❀

For color images of art by Betsy Dixon, Billy Lieb, and Karina Hean, visit the St. John's Web site; click on Publications and on The College magazine.

AN AVID COLLECTOR, BILLY LIEB SCULPTS DRIFTWOOD AND MAKES ECLECTIC SCULPTURES FROM ITEMS LOST AND FOUND.

IF JOHNNIES RULED THE WORLD

BY JENNIFER WRIGHT (Ao8)

With global events whirling around us, recently I have been putting thought into what the world would be like if run by Johnnies.

Initially euphoria overwhelmed me. The notion of a place run by “philosopher kings” most obviously points toward *The Republic*. I can’t imagine we would strictly follow Plato’s notions if only because we might prove woefully disinclined toward the whole martial aspect of Socrates’ utopia. But we could surely expect a society in which everyone at least knew of Plato and, when one exclaims that she loves him in the course of conversation no one would reply, “Yeah, I loved Play-doh too, but I kind of grew out of it.” When I mentioned this notion of a world run by Johnnies to other students, almost everyone responded with wild enthusiasm. “Can you imagine?” asked one boy. “Everyone everywhere would be really well read. Also, undeniably sexy in that way that Johnnies are.”

A freshman remarked, “Think about it—it would be amazing. We’d just go up to people in the streets, and instead of saying, ‘How are you?’ we’d say, ‘And how do you feel about the Cartesian Dichotomy?’”

Then I queried one of my best friends who may have been feeling a tiny bit bitter about writing her sophomore enabling essay that day. “Well,” she said, “I think we’d still be sitting around in caves. I think that if someone tried to free us from the cave, we wouldn’t notice, let alone kill him,



AFTER THREE YEARS’ ACQUAINTANCE WITH PROGRAM AUTHORS, JENNIFER WRIGHT (Ao8) HAS A FEW IDEAS ON HOW JOHNNIES WOULD RUN THINGS.

because we’d end up debating the definition of light, and whether or not it was a form. Then we’d debate the definition of, say, the rocks in front of us. We’d make some tepid attempt to figure out whether or not rocks were edible, using research gleaned from Harvey, which

would be totally irrelevant. The rocks wouldn’t be edible, but we’d end up talking about what it means to be ‘edible.’ Eventually, we’d all starve to death.” She sighed, and resumed writing about Dante’s depiction of God’s divine love.

She may well have had a point. But then can it really be the case that Johnnies are as wholly impractical as the cloud-dwelling Laputans of *Gulliver's Travels*? Would we be doomed to perish if left to our own erudite devices?

We might not starve to death, but in a world governed by the ideals of the Program we might have to deal with some substandard food, if the case of Glaucon or Cato is anything to go by. Relishes, we remember, are for the epicurean and indulgent. So we are going to have to begin frequenting cafés that make their food entirely without relishes, which, as ketchup-wielding modern Americans, might prove pretty difficult.

However, if we pay attention to the Program sophomore year, we will happily realize that wine will be everywhere. Wine abounds in Shakespeare, it abounds in *The Canterbury Tales*, and it abounds especially in the Bible. To the relief, I'm certain, of our Reality archons, at no point in the Program do we come upon characters who don't love wine; even Socrates, our paragon of moderation, is particularly in his element at drinking parties. The abundance of alcohol in our brave new world may make us considerably less concerned—indeed indifferent to—the lack of relishes in our food.

A nation comprised of very hungry alcoholics might not seem like the best setting for, well, anything, but it would have certain redeeming features. The food of love, at least, would abound with all its relishes intact. Music would be everywhere, provided that the philosopher kings in charge were not paying overly close attention to St. Augustine. If they were, music lacking polyphony would be ubiquitous (but surely Palestrina put an end to that argument). Of course, it might not be the music that the vast majority of the nation listens to. We would relish our Mozart, our Brahms, our Shostakovich but whenever “Louie, Louie” came on the radio people would (and I find this truly tragic, as I love “Louie, Louie”) sniff dismissively and remark upon the simplistic 1-3-5 pattern. “Surely,” people would exclaim, “this piece is lacking in the dynamic qualities Zuckerkandl describes in *The Sense of Music*.” Classical stations would quickly become the most popular in the nation, and listening to “Louie, Louie” would prove one to be a harmless but quirky eccentric.

Other forms of entertainment would undergo drastic alterations as well. Reality shows and dating games would become passé in favor of PBS and the BBC, which would re-create our favorite literary pieces in loving, eight-hour miniseries. Buddy

comedies would feature a wily, irascible bloke named Socrates, and his timid pal Plato. Young women everywhere would stand in line for hours to see new interpretations of Jane Austen. (Johnnies must find it nice to note that many young women already do this, given the success of *Pride and Prejudice*, a selection featured proudly on the Program list, which is to say, we knew it was cool before the rest of America did.)

And as for sports? People would sigh and dismiss the rare sorts who wanted to toss a football around, but in the croquet players would reside the hopes and dreams of a dapperly dressed, hat-wearing nation. For every Johnnie knows that nothing says “athletic prowess” and also “hand-eye coordination” like croquet.

While I will save my notions on Johnnies in the boardroom and our diplomatic prowess, at least in the basics of life our rule will pursue the form of the good. We might wish that we did not have to spend another day eating Cato-approved portions of gruel. But then, we would realize that we could wear wonderful outfits and go to our local stadium or park to watch a rousing game of croquet, with Haydn blasting in our iPods. And whatever, the fact would remain that we would stay sexy in that undeniable way that Johnnies are sexy. ❀

When Johnnies are in charge:

The Johnnie Beauty Salon: No one who has ever seen a picture of Immanuel Kant can possibly think that beauticians would be frequently patronized by those who emulate the Program authors. Ultimately, beauticians will fade into obscurity, patronized only by those followers of Socrates who believe that beautiful people offer us insight into the good—and those people will mostly be regarded as drunken degenerates by anyone following the ideals of later Program authors. Hairdressers will become obsolete in favor of brain-dressers who will be capable of straightening the mess under the head of hair. They will be known (to those in the know) as ‘tutors.’ Of course, this may lead to a slightly less beautiful world.

The Johnnie Department Store: Despite the proponents of Karl Marx standing outside the store and adamantly

protesting that the items within it shouldn't exist (and those reading Kant and Hume declaring that that's fine, because they don't) everything would probably function as usual until people realize that mathematics tutorials have left Johnnie cashiers with an inability to do simple mathematics. Instead, they will be left trying to explain to patrons—eagerly awaiting change from the \$20 dollars they gave for a \$3 dollar purchase—what the nature of infinity and the ultimate actually are.

The Johnnie Music Store: These would be located in very close proximity to religious institutions, as sophomore year has taught us that the two are closely intertwined. Far from being a carefree environment, Johnnies would stand listening to bars of music playing over the intercom in such stores, and would nervously call out “1-3-5! 1-3-5!” Then they

would engage in fervent discussion about whether or not they had gleaned greater insight into the nature of the divine.

The Johnnie Grocery Store: The Johnnie grocery store would feature a fairly ordinary assortment of items save the fact that no apples would be sold, nor a variety of other “unclean” items. Johnnies, after all, have not spent an entire semester reading the Bible only to make the same mistake twice. The enormous supply of wines, however, would compensate for it.

The Johnnie Bookstore: Bookstores would immediately establish themselves as the social hub of the Johnnie society. The philosophy section in each of them would expand magnificently, and trashy paperbacks would be relegated to back corners, near the restroom. In a tribute to great writers past, everything would be categorized by the Greek alphabet. ❀

BACK TO BASICS

A Summer Crash Course for Readers

How to Read a Book

Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren, Simon and Schuster, 1940, revised 1976

How to Read a Page

I. A. Richards, W. W. Norton, 1942

How to Read Two Books

Erasmus G. Addlepate, Frederick Stokes Company, 1940 (out of print)

BY EMILY DeBUSK (Ao6)

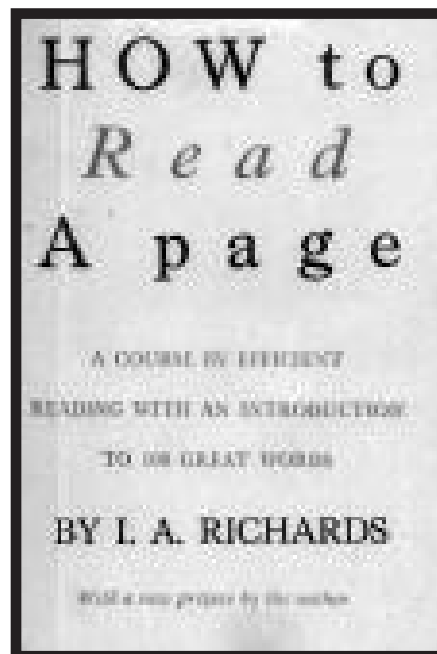
As long as St. John's is in the business of asking gadfly-ish questions, here is one to ponder: do you know how to read? Paradoxically, you must read to learn how to read.

It is no coincidence that the philosopher Mortimer Adler (HA86), a self-described "educational evangelist" and co-author of *How to Read a Book*, was instrumental to the shaping of the Great Books movement in the late 1930s. An underlying premise of Adler's book is

also the lifeblood of St. John's; as Einstein put it, "Information is not knowledge." Newspapers, encyclopedias, and textbooks, while valuable in a particular way, do not add up to the kind of knowledge valuable to a Johnnie. Nor will a single one of our great books magically radiate knowledge to the reader as soon as the first page is turned (with the possible exception of Lucretius). Ultimately, what is read is secondary to how it is read.

For Adler and co-author Charles Van Doren (class of 1946), reading well is something of a superpower. "With nothing but the power of your own mind, you operate on the symbols before you in such a way that you gradually lift yourself from a state of understanding less to one of understanding more." Skilled reading, the authors write, is our only defense against a pre-packaged opinion. *How to Read a Book* is an exhaustive presentation of the four levels of reading: elementary, inspectional, analytical, and syntopical. Elementary reading is what a kindergartener does, or a freshman just learning to piece together the Greek alphabet. Inspectional reading, or "time-bound, systematic skimming," is familiar to the student who procrastinates on a seminar reading and must try to piece it together in an impossible amount of time. (When not forced to take the place of analytical reading, inspectional reading is a valuable skill to have.) Analytical reading is the fount of a good seminar. This is reading for understanding, applied to material that is perhaps slightly out of the reader's grasp so that it takes analysis, first to get through the book and secondly, to talk about it. Finally, syntopical reading is analytical reading of multiple books, synthesizing ideas from various sources, which ideally leads the reader to a unique idea from the many.

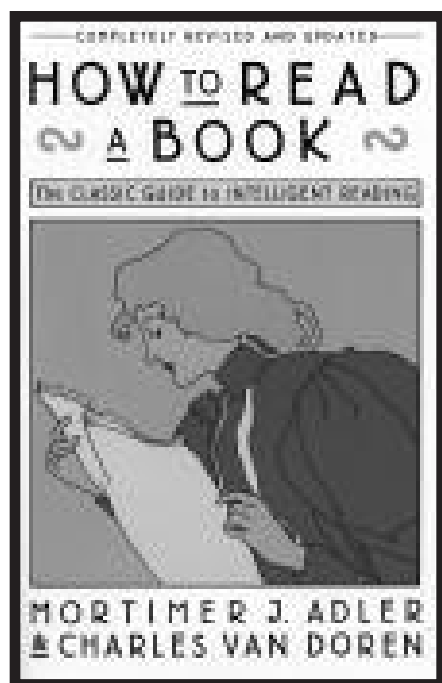
"The art of reading, in short, includes all of the same skills that are involved in the art of unaided discovery: keenness of observation, readily available memory, range of imagination, and, of course, an intellect trained in analysis and reflection," the authors write. What is at stake in the quality of your reading? If you are reading for more than just information, the authors posit that it is



What is at stake in the quality of your reading? If you are reading for more than just information, the authors posit that it is the life of your mind.

the life of your mind. If you ask a challenging book a question, "it answers you only to the extent that you do the work of thinking and analysis yourself."

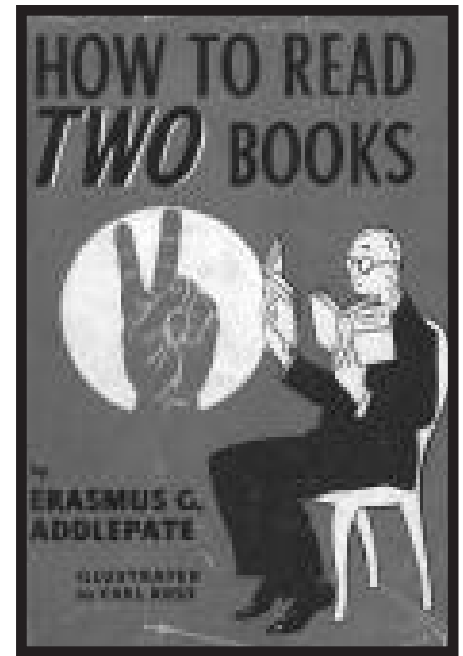
It is almost necessary to read *How to Read a Book* in order to read *How to Read a Page: A Course in Efficient Reading with an Introduction to 100 Great Words*, written by British literary critic and semanticist I.A. Richards in 1942. Like Adler and Van Doren, Richards offers his book as a remedy to poor reading, poor thinking, and the consequent downfall of civilization. "What is the point of toiling through thousands of pages, if the chief outcome is an accumulation of misunderstandings?" he asks. *How to Read a Page* delves deeply into the theory of language, uncovering the "systematic ambiguity



(or ‘resourcefulness’) of all our most important words” in order to read and think afresh. The book combines reading exercises with the gradual development of a doctrine of the fundamentals of reading. Nevertheless, Richards does not aim to strictly codify the art of reading. For Richards, as for Adler and Van Doren, reading is an almost sacred act of communion, not with authors, but with ideas. “There is no such thing as merely reading words; always through the words we are trafficking or trying to traffic with things—things gone by, present, to come, or eternal. So a person who sets up to teach reading should recognize that he may be more ambitious than he seems...”

Once the reading of a page and a book have been mastered, we may now move on to Erasmus G. Addlepate’s tongue-in-cheek parody, *How to Read Two Books*,

published in 1940. The book aims to show non-thinkers “how to become near-thinkers, part-time thinkers, and for those who wish to follow the Rules, how to become mental giants.” Although the author pokes fun at the idea of a “How To” book that aspires to true education (and although he would call I.A. Richards a practitioner of that “technique of thought



WHAT TUTORS ARE READING

We asked tutors from Santa Fe and Annapolis what non-Program books they were making time for: a few novels, many nonfiction works, and a book about a teddy bear made the list.

Basia Miller: “Céline’s *Mort à Crédit* is a long term project.” Also, W. Somerset Maugham’s *The Painted Veil*. “After seeing the movie version, I found the plot-lines simpler and more delicately woven [in the book].”

Emily Langston: *Obasan*, by Joy Kogawa, about Japanese Canadians interned during WWII. Also, *The Custom of the Country*, by Edith Wharton.

Jon Tuck: *Plowing the Dark*, by Richard Powers, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, *Pillar of Fire* by Taylor Branch, *The Last Samaurai* by Helen DeWitt, and *Motherless Brooklyn* by Jonathan Lethem.

Henry Higuera: *The Wild Ass’s Skin*, by Honoré de Balzac and *The Sot-Weed Factor* by John Barth. “As to why I read them: both were just to keep sane.”

Sherry Martin: *Winkie*, by Clifford Chase, “in which Meletus testifies at a trial of a teddy bear. Yes, really. On a recent road trip, I listened to the new Le Carré novel, *The Mission Song*. I like to read novels during the holidays to decompress.”

Joseph Macfarland (A87): *Before France and Germany: The Creation and Transformation of the Merovingian World* and *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe*, both by Patrick J. Geary.

Jacques Duvoisin: *The Ancient City*, by Fustel de Coulanges, “a classic study of the religious foundations of Ancient Greek and Roman cities. It is a real eye-opener. I heartily recommend it.”

Susan Stickney: *One Good Turn: A Natural History of the Screwdriver and the Screw*, by Witold Rybczynski; *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, by Michael Pollan; and *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters*, by David Hockney.

Greg Schneider: “Since I took a small group of Santa Fe campus folks on an alternative spring break experience in Haiti, I have been reading about the country. In particular, I recently read *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, by Edwidge Danticat, is a Haitian-American, and *Mountains Beyond Mountains*, by Tracy Kidder, a nonfiction book about improving health care in Haiti.”

David Starr: is doing some syntopical reading: Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History*; Margaret Barker, *The Great High Priest*; Robin Fox, *Pagans and Christians*; and Jean Danielou, *The Christian Centuries*, vol. I: The First Six Hundred Years.

“I am reading most of them because I am interested in the question, why the early Christians were willing to risk their lives for their faith. This, of course, presupposes the question, what was their faith (or Gospel)? I do not think it is very well understood by most modern and post-modern scholars—Christian or not.”

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CROQUET

BY EMILY DEBUSK (A06)

Need there be more reasons for merry-making on croquet day? In addition to the much-anticipated victory of the Johnnies over the Mids (5-0), the reunion of dear friends, delectable picnic spreads, flowing champagne, and springtime on the Annapolis campus, Johnnies had five more reasons to be of good cheer. The first is that it has been a quarter of a century since the fateful wager between St. John's student Kevin Heyburn (A86) and a Naval Academy officer that sparked the good-natured rivalry. Both Heyburn and the first Imperial Wicket for St. John's, John Ertle (A84) attended the 25th croquet match, along with Ertle's wife, Kathy, who goes by "First Lady Wicket." That first year, the Mids were clearly

outmatched, Imperial Wicket Ertle recalls with pride. "I did a chop shot and the Mid turned to his buddy and said, 'I think we're in trouble.'" Ertle points to a snapshot of the 1982 mallet-wielding teams on the steps on Barr Buchanan, which is eerily similar to the present day, complete with boater hats and the trophy securely held in a Johnnie's hands. Instead of trophies and mallets, this year Ertle and Heyburn held champagne flutes. The commemorative glasses were a gift to St. John's alumni in honor of croquet's 25th birthday.

OLD ROOTS, NEW TREE

The Liberty Tree that once stood on the front campus of St. John's was a piece of American history in our midst; each of the 13 colonies had a Liberty Tree, which patriots used as a

meeting place as well as a symbol of their revolutionary ideals. The 400-year-old Annapolis Liberty Tree, the last surviving tree, had to be taken down after it was critically damaged by Hurricane Floyd.

This year croquet spectators celebrated the dedication of a new Liberty Tree, a gift from the 2007 senior class. The senior class voted to purchase the tulip poplar, located between the Barr Buchanan Center and McDowell Hall, as a perennial gift to both St. John's and the Annapolis community. Before the start of the croquet match George Zahringer (A07), president of the Senior Class Gift Committee, spoke briefly on the seniors' choice. "Of all places, no ground is more receptive to this symbol of liberty; here, where the ideal of liberty in thought is so strong," he said. "It makes me proud as an American and as a member of this Polity to offer this tree on behalf of my class, to reinforce the ideal of liberty." President Nelson accepted the gift on behalf of the college, and the ceremony was made complete when an ensemble of Johnnies offered their rendition of "Liberty Tree," a poem by the famous revolutionary Thomas Paine.

A GIFT FROM THE CROQUET GODS

In 2005, the unthinkable happened: the St. John's croquet team lost the Annapolis Cup to the Mids. The match was two for two on that drizzly day, and victory in the fifth game depended on partners Christopher Mules and Tristan Evans-Wilent, both juniors at the time. They lost. "We were so distraught when we lost, we took a year off from school," Evans-Wilent says. Two years later, Mules and Evans-Wilent were back on the team, sporting Springsteen-inspired "Born in the USA" attire, determined to make this match a victory for St. John's. The croquet gods smiled upon them. "I went rover, then Tristan played a great turn," an ecstatic Mules says after their triumph.

CHRISTOPHER MULES (A07) DEMONSTRATES THE "WHACK-N-WATCH" POSE ADOPTED BY MANY PLAYERS AFTER A TENSE SHOT.



GARY PIERPOINT

"We [lost] the decisive game five two years ago, so this is retribution. I feel amazing!"

LOVE IS IN THE AIR

While the croquet teams might have had the jitters about the day's competition, no one was as nervous as G. August Deimel (Ao4). Deimel had been planning for weeks to propose to his girlfriend of two years, Sara Wagner (Ao8). He and some friends tricked her into looking for stereo speakers in Barr Buchanan while Deimel and Wagner's families, both from Pittsburgh, were brought out from hiding. When she emerged from the building, Wagner was puzzled to see her family. "Then August got on one knee and asked me and I said yes, of course," she recounts. After a champagne toast, the couple—planning to marry next summer—danced in front of Barr Buchanan.

PEOPLE WATCHING, BALZAC STYLE

Nostalgia, the Annapolis Cup, champagne glasses, Liberty Trees, divine justice and romance—what more? Croquet 2007 also had its usual fantastic parade of characters. "I love the endless variety of people," said Bryan Smith (Ao8) as he surveyed the teeming assembly of Johnnies, Mids, alumni from both institutions, and Annapolitans. "It's like entering a Balzac novel; you get a whole social scene with all their foibles and eccentricities," he said. ❖



CLOCKWISE: SOUVENIR GLASSES CELEBRATE A SILVER ANNIVERSARY; THE ORIGINAL IMPERIAL WICKET JOHN ERTLE (A84); GEORGE ZARINGER (Ao7), ERIC HONOR (Ao10), SARA LUELL (Ao9), LINDSAY WYETT, RACHEL BARTGIS (Ao9); LINING UP THE SHOT; THE PRIZED CUP; YOUNG BOY; A SPRINGSTEEN-INSPIRED TEAM; THE ORIGINAL 1982 CROQUET TEAM.

PHOTOS BY GARY PIERPOINT



A HUMANITARIAN CALLING

Christian Acemah (SF05)

BY ROSEMARY HARTY

That he would pursue a career in the field of international development was essentially a foregone conclusion for Christian Acemah (SF05), a native of Uganda. His father was a deputy ambassador for his country; his mother had worked as an attaché to the U.N. Security Council.

That he was able to land his first professional job based in Geneva, Switzerland, with an international nonprofit was beyond expectation. His studies at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service played a role in that good fortune, he says. But as a foreign student who suffered several personal tragedies, he wouldn't have gotten to Georgetown or Geneva without the support and encouragement he found at St. John's.

Acemah won two merit-based scholarships to attend Georgetown University's highly regarded Walsh School of Foreign Service. Being at Georgetown was a wonderful experience, if a little intimidating, he says. His fellow students were serious, ambitious, and already quite accomplished. "I was the youngest one there," he says. "I entered my first class and the professor started to talk about Thucydides—everyone else in the class had no idea what she was talking about. I could at least relate to what she was saying, and that was great."

As a graduate student, Acemah conducted research and worked as a teaching assistant in the African Studies Program. In the summer of 2006, he served an internship with the Lutheran World Federation in the Uganda/Sudan Country Office. He analyzed the federation's health policy in the context of Uganda's national policy and helped provide health workshops. Through Georgetown, he heard about a job with a division within UNICEF that worked to get vaccines and immunizations to children in developing countries. After he put in his application, he heard nothing for months, and he braced himself for disappointment. Finally, a call came for an interview, and Acemah eventually landed the job, which was based in Geneva and would start in a matter of weeks. Because it



CHRISTIAN ACEMAH (SF05) GREETES FORMER UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL KOFI ANNAN DURING AN EVENT ACEMAH ORGANIZED AT GEORGETOWN. THE EVENT CELEBRATED ANNAN'S LASTING LEGACY TO AFRICA.

would mean interrupting his studies, he consulted his graduate adviser, who urged him to accept the job. "It would have taken me eight years to get to this level, and even to get into the UN system is so difficult. Most people give up along the way," he says.

Acemah's official title is Executive Officer, Policy and Research, for the GAVI Alliance Secretariat. The GAVI alliance is a public-private partnership focused on increasing children's access to vaccines in poor countries. GAVI unites UNICEF, the World Bank, and major international foundations in setting mutual goals, sharing strategies, and coordinating efforts. "We bring principles from the private sector and apply them to the public sector," he says.

One of the agency's goals is to improve the mechanisms involved with getting new vaccines out on the market as soon as they are ready. It also seeks to create sustainable, long-term financing for immunization programs in the countries in which it works. "Being in such an intense environment is

quite interesting for me. We work from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on almost any given working day," he says. "There are constant briefings and writing pieces to compose. Travel is also a huge part of this office. I cannot believe the amount of responsibility I have been given." Most recently, Acemah is working on HPV vaccine advocacy and leads GAVI's relationships with African initiatives.

Though he grew up with privileges, Acemah was raised to be aware of responsibilities and obligations to others. He undertook his education with those goals in mind. In Uganda, aptitude tests identified him as gifted in science and mathematics, but Acemah wanted to study literature and was stubborn about it. "My mother came to the school and told them, 'he knows what he wants to do, and it's going to be difficult to change his mind,'" Acemah recalls. The school wouldn't budge, so Acemah found himself at Olney Friends School in Ohio, where he learned about St. John's.

He had already accepted a full scholarship

1944

CARL S. HAMMEN, a Maryland scholarship student at St. John's College, married Deborah Reinhold-Kazor on March 31, 2007, in St. Petersburg, Fla. Since retirement from the University of Rhode Island, he has served as a tax-return preparer, census enumerator, and adjunct professor at several Florida colleges. Carl likes to run, and in 2006 was ranked second in the state, in the men's 80 age division in the 10K and third in the 15K. Deborah won the 1500-m run in December 2004 at the state senior games, where they met. She is an equestrienne, and her quadrille team was second in the nation in 2001.

SURROUNDED BY MOUNTAINS

After 15 years as head of school at Friends School of Minnesota, **MARK NIEDERMIER** (A84) has moved on. He is now head of school at Pacific Northern Academy in Anchorage, Alaska. His 8-year-old daughter, Sophie, is a second-grader at the school, and his 3-year-old son, Caleb, will soon enroll as well. Mark's wife, Karen, is a nurse practitioner at Anchorage Midwifery and Women's Health, and they all enjoy an active lifestyle, surrounded by mountains and wildlife. ❖

Carl is the father of five children, four living, all highly successful, and the grandfather of seven, all of whom he dearly loves. Deborah and Carl, when he completes his duties as teacher of "creative geometry" at Ringling School of Art & Design in Sarasota, will travel to Portugal, Spain, France, and England.

1960

MARY CAMPBELL GALLAGHER presented "Easier than IRAC: The Under-Here-Therefore Legal Writing System" at the Rocky Mountain Legal Writing Conference at the University of Nevada Las Vegas on March 10. Mary first

described her writing system, which is based on Aristotelian logic, in the first edition of her book *Scoring High on Bar Exam Essays*, published by ARCO in 1991. BarWrite Press brought out the third edition in 2006.

1967

LARRY (A) and HAZEL SCHLUETER (A69) report from New Orleans: "Hazel has an old-time country and bluegrass music show every Sunday morning, 10 a.m. to noon at www.wwoz.org on the Web for her style of what is happening in New Orleans post-Katrina. We are restoring the house and enjoying having all the family here."

to Earlham College, but St. John's intrigued him. He called the Santa Fe Admissions office, rushed to get his material in, and was offered admission. Acemah says he was drawn to St. John's primarily because he could pursue all his varied interests. "The place spoke to me from the first moment I learned of it," says Acemah, though it took some time for him to feel confident in the Program. "I was very scared at first, reading Euclid. David Carl was my math tutor, and by the time he called on me to do a proposition, I did it my own way, and it worked. From that moment, I just enjoyed everything."

Acemah experienced two great losses during his St. John's years. His mother, Monique Kwagala, died when he was a sophomore. As a foreign services officer in Uganda, she had helped people escape the regime of Idi Amin. "She had always been the anchor of my life," he explains. "The day she died, I got up and went to class, and I got called to do a very long proposition of Apollonius. Continuing at St. John's was important to me. I think that strength came from her, saying I have to go on."

A year later, Acemah lost his grandfather, Nicholas Magoola. Acemah had spent several years living and working with his grandfather on his farm, and he learned how to observe and respect the natural world through him. "He was one of those people

who can just see right through you, see the things you can do, and try to encourage you to look fear in the face," says Acemah. "Now, my second anchor was gone."

His tutors and friends saw through his stoic demeanor, Acemah says. "They would always check in with me, and that was a good thing," he says. When it seemed finances would force him to drop out, his tutors went to the administration on his behalf, and then-president John Balkcom (SFG100) found money for Acemah to continue.

Career Services Director Margaret O'Dell watched Acemah evolve from a "quiet, polite freshman into a mischievous, determined, self-assured senior who would not let any obstacles stand in his path to Georgetown University and graduate school. He needed to take two economics classes as prerequisites before entering Georgetown," she explains. "Most students would have taken a year off and finished those classes in a leisurely fashion, but not Christian. He found the classes he needed at the University of New Mexico, figured out how to manage the tuition, found a way to commute to Albuquerque, convinced the professors to let him enroll for the summer session, and passed both classes with flying colors in the space of eight weeks."

Odell is not surprised Acemah is already serving a humanitarian cause; she has

always felt that Acemah's drive stemmed from his desire to return to Uganda and work to improve the lives of others. "This inner drive could have made him dour or overly intense but in reality the intensity you felt from Christian was his love for learning and for his friends," she says.

At St. John's, Acemah met his fiancée, Marie Craig (SF05), who now teaches at Olney Friends School and will begin graduate studies at Columbia University in the fall. They will marry this July at a lodge on Murchison Falls in northwest Uganda. Many of his classmates and tutors are planning to attend, he says.

In the meantime, Acemah is adjusting to life in Geneva, where finding affordable housing is a challenge. "The city is very beautiful, very clean, so many gardens, and it has a multicultural feel to it because the UN is here. I can eat the food that I would eat in Uganda! My favorite is green bananas with chicken—I can buy it at the grocery store, go home and prepare it for myself."

Living closer to his father, Harold Acemah, ambassador to the European Union in Brussels, is another plus to his location.

In the long run, Acemah wants to find a happy medium between conducting field work and policymaking. "I don't know yet what that blend will look like," he says. "I hope it will be exciting and challenging." ❖

1968

A good long classnote from **JOSHUA GILLELAN** (A) covers a lot of ground: "I finally made my escape from the Office of the Solicitor of Labor in June 2004, to start my own practice, the grandiosely entitled Longshore Claimants' National Law Center, practicing primarily before the federal courts of appeals and the Supreme Court. I can't imagine why I waited so long (except, of course, that the new practice, though busy from the start, produced almost no cash flow for the first two years). My wife, writer Allison Blake (be sure to get the current edition of her widely available *Chesapeake Bay Book: A Complete Guide* before your next trip to the area), and I have a second home in New Orleans (bought four months before Katrina—great timing—but in the 'sliver by the river' that didn't flood, though it was an anxious two and a half weeks before we could make sure it was still there and not pancaked by the water oak in the back yard or the live oak in the neighbor yard), and intend to spend half the year there (appellate practice is wonderfully portable) from now

on. Daughter **HANNA** (A96, Georgetown Law '01) had a beautiful wedding on Tilghman Island to Stephen Goldstein in November 2005, in which I participated in Highland dress plus yarmulke; they live on Capitol Hill, and it's great to be nearby. Catch us at the New Orleans Jazzfest!"

1975

Publishing news from **ERIC SCIGLIANO** (SF): "Been grounded in Seattle, helping start a magazine (*Seattle Metropolitan*, nominal position 'news editor'). Article "The Mind of an Octopus" picked for Best American Science Writing anthology. Last book, *Michaelangelo's Mountain*, was finalist for Washington State Book Award. Lost to Tim Egan's *The Worst Hard Time*, which went on to win the National Book Award."

1976

ALICE JOY BROWN (A) works as an office assistant while doing promotions for the Kabbalah

FIRE TRUCKS AND HELICOPTERS

CRYSTAL (SANDERS) SOKOLOV (SF02) and her husband, Christopher, welcomed their second son, Gregory, on November 22, 2006. He joins his brother, Nicholas, in contemplating the two greatest inventions of the Western world: fire trucks and helicopters. ✦

Institute of St. Louis (www.kabbalahmadeeasy.com), along with publishing poetry: "In 2005, my poem was featured alongside Maya Angelou's in a poetry anthology called, *Cosmic Brownies—Poems about Lessons Learned in Life*. In 2006, I was the original winner of the only scholarship (based solely on merit) given by the Washington University Summer Writer's Institute, which I turned down because it wasn't a full scholarship and due to health reasons at the time. I also help one of my friends with her matchmaking business."

friends, including half a dozen Johnnies from the infamous class of A88."

In March, **KIM PAFFENROTH** (A) was named a recipient of the Bram Stoker Award for his nonfiction work, *Gospel of the Living Dead: George Romero's Visions of Hell on Earth* (Baylor, 2006). His book tied with *Final Exits: The Illustrated Encyclopedia of How We Die*, by Michael Largo. The award is bestowed in recognition of "superior achievement" by the Horror Writers Association. Winning the award puts Paffenroth in the company of writer Stephen King, and he takes home an award that is an eight-inch replica of a haunted house with a door that opens to reveal a brass plaque engraved with the name of the winning work and its author. *Gospel of the Living Dead* is a non-fiction book connecting social and religious views with the classic American zombie and horror genre; it has attracted much critical acclaim.

1988

For the last year and a half, **JULIET BURCH** (A) has been working at the National Center for Jewish Film, an archive located at Brandeis University and dedicated to the preservation and restoration of Jewish-themed films. "I feel as though I've really found my niche in this interesting and quirky collection," she writes. "It's great to have a job I love!"

ERIN MILNES (A) writes that she was married in June 2006 to Chuck Guest, a writer and musician, in Oakland, Calif.: "We had more fun than anyone should all weekend, with family and great

ANOTHER CROQUET FAN

Theodore Gammon (A28 or A30 if he is slow like his father; SF28 if contrary like his mother) reports that his parents, **ALEX** and **BETH** (both A94), are doing well in Baltimore. Other places, too. He is trying to teach them that as long as you sit under the maple once a day, get dirty once a day, eat some currants and dance a little, you should smile more than frown. ✦



1991

JONARNO LAWSON (A) has received the 2007 The Lion and the Unicorn Award for excellence in North American poetry for his book *Black Stars in a White Night Sky*.

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WHAT WAS SO SPECIAL ABOUT THE CLASS OF '66?

BY EMILY DEBUSK (A06)

Constance (Bell) Lindgreen (A66) and her classmates came of age during an extraordinary time of metamorphosis in America. Growing up in tumultuous times, and immersed in the great books as they were, they were bound for great things. Connie retired as a vice president in IBM's European operation and took on the role of "class leader" for her reunion last year. Collecting news of her classmates inspired her to reflect. She writes:

We came to St. John's from having marched with Martin Luther King on a hot day, holding hands, singing 'We Shall Overcome.' Kennedy was President. Bras were to be burned. We had come to St. John's as prospectives, gone to seminar, become converts. We came to the college, the Program, with something resembling religious reverence. I can't speak for my classmates, but my guess is that it was more the rule than the exception.

We read seminar with Jacob Klein, complete with pipe and joyous love of Plato; sang in freshman chorus for/with Victor Zuckerkindl, who had but to lift his hand for us all to feel held by angels; studied the Bible in small groups with Mr. Kaplan, whose humanity almost eclipsed his brilliance; read Greek with John Kieffer, whose cadence still echoes. Elliott Zuckerman, Joe Cohen, and John Sarkissian were the 'young ones.' Al Main was in charge of the laboratory. Bob Bart, Charles Bell, Paul Scofield, were our guides, with Winfree Smith, and Sam Kutler, Beate Ruhm van Oppen, Douglas Allanbrook, Tom MacDonald. Life with them was totally engrossing. We were obsessed with books, dialogue, discovery.

Annapolis was tacky and rundown, not at all its up-market today self. McDonald's was new and had just sold a million burgers. The night the Cuban missile crisis threatened, there was silence around the seminar table until Mr. Klein broke in with the opening question and we were off, again, in the traditional search. Afterwards, we sat in a dormitory room, listening to the radio. The Russian fleet turned back. And later,

Kennedy was shot. The only television on campus was turned on, day and night. I didn't watch, but that was a choice I'm not sure I don't regret. Anyway, in 1963, or maybe it was 1964, we heard the first Beatles recording wafting out from Humphrey.

We sat and watched the sunsets over College Creek, and fell asleep reading Aristotle or Kant or Cervantes or Tolstoy (all four just the right size for a pillow), drank coffee in the eponymous shop, and partied as soon as lecture—or sometimes the question period—was over, making good use of the Sin Bins in Campbell, and walked down to the shabby dock dubbed 'Piraeus.' I guess sometime in there, we grew up—sort of—and then, of course, we left.

Where did the class of 1966 go and what did they do? Like every graduating class, the diverse career paths taken by alumni reflect the versatility of their education: a news executive, several clergy members, an internationally acclaimed playwright, doctors, lawyers, artists, and even a lighting technician for Grateful Dead concerts.

For Lindgreen's classmate Mel Kline, it was sophomore seminar on the Bible that was an especially formative experience. "Sophomore seminar, when you face the Bible and religious questions, had a strong effect on me and my Jewish roots," Kline says. Soon after graduation, he moved to Israel, where he lives today. "St. John's really helped me find my life's work. About 25 years ago I began a research project dealing with Jewish texts without commentaries, which is unheard of in Jewish studies. I made a number of discoveries utilizing the tools of inquiry I developed at St. John's."

Theodora Carlile echoes Lindgreen's memories of cultural change: "When I entered in 1962, Beatnik folk was the cutting edge of music. By the time I left, it was The Stones, Dylan, The Beatles. As far as the Program goes, it was a charmed experience for me. I was thrilled with the conversations." So much so that Carlile went on to become a professor in the liberal arts program at Saint Mary's College in



BRUCE PRESTON (A65)

IRENE (LINDERMAYER) DORTCH AND CONNIE (BELL) LINDGREEN, BOTH CLASS OF 1966.

California, a position recommended to her by Brother Robert Smith. "I get to go through the Program over and over again," she says. "I never really left in a way. I also remember that my class was known as 'the Matriarchy' because of the many wonderful and strong-minded women in the class."

Margaret Winter was one of them. "In late '66 there was beginning to be a lot of political ferment," Winter recalls. "I wanted to work for social justice. I decided the best thing to do after St. John's was to go to law school and use that as a tool for political activism." Today, as the associate director of the National Prison Project of the ACLU, she works to protect the constitutional rights of prisoners. ✱

To exchange memories, post pictures, and help tell the story of your class, visit and join the online community of alumni.
<http://alumni.stjohnscollege.edu/?AlumniAssociation>

PLANTING SEEDS OF PEACE

Munir Hussein (Ago)

BY PATRICIA DEMPSEY

Dressed in khaki shorts and sneakers, he could easily have passed as one of the camp counselors. But Munir Hussein (Ago) a real estate dealmaker, had come to this peaceful spread of tall pines and clear lakes near Lewiston, Maine, to observe. As a guest of Seeds of Peace summer camp, he quietly listened to a tense dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian teenagers.

"The professional facilitator opened with a question: 'What do you think about the wall between Israel and the West Bank?' There were 14 teenagers from Israel and about 10 from Palestine," recalls Hussein, a Palestinian American. "They were probably on their best behavior because there were visitors in the room, but it was a very open, candid dialogue. They bunk together, sail, do the ropes course, and have discussions that remind me in some ways of a St. John's seminar-starting off with a question."

As a managing director in real estate acquisition and development for a private equity firm in Manhattan, Hussein skillfully arranges financing and structures lucrative real estate deals. Yet for all the delicate negotiations he has managed, nothing prepared him for this first visit to Seeds of Peace in 2003. The camp brings together teenagers from both sides of a conflict area, such as Palestine and Israel, India and Pakistan, the United States and Iraq, and the Balkans, in order to foster mutual understanding. "I was dazzled," Hussein says. "Here's an organization that is really doing something about the problems in the world. They're seeking to educate

and expose young people to their 'enemies' at a time in their life when they're forming their opinions and perceptions. Hopefully this will help create a new generation of leaders who will be wiser and perhaps less judgmental of someone's looks or beliefs."

He discovered the organization while studying for his MBA at Columbia University, through a Jewish colleague who was serving on the Seeds of Peace board. "He came to me and said, 'I think you will really appreciate what this organization is doing,'" Hussein says. Observing the camp in action inspired Hussein to offer his considerable management skills to Seeds of Peace. He volunteered on the Young Leadership Committee, managing fundraisers in Manhattan and mentors former "Seeds" with career advice. Last year, Hussein joined the organization's board of directors and is currently its only Palestinian American member.

As a board member, Hussein hopes to provide a leadership model for teenagers who come from Palestine. "I want to set a good example and use my Palestinian heritage as a positive thing," he says. "There are many occasions—business meetings, parties—when I'll hear comments

or someone will ask 'where are you from?' I say, 'Rye, New York' and they say, 'No, where are you really from?' It depends how diplomatic people are, but in this climate of fear the tiniest little difference stands out. I want people to see that I'm not just like an American, I am an American."

Last summer Seeds of Peace touched Hussein personally when his then 13-year old cousin Dana attended the camp in Maine. "She lives in a small village in Palestine, Zeita, near Nablus, of about 2,000 people," says Hussein who has numerous relatives on his father's side who live on the West Bank. Hussein has visited Palestine several times, and when he traveled there in 2000 with his parents he spent time with Dana, whom he describes as "exceptionally bright." Yet the opportunities for a young woman like Dana in her village were, and still are, limited. "The tiny village where Dana was growing up has dirt roads, stone houses, olive trees, and chicken farmers," Hussein says. "The women are raised in a totally traditional Middle Eastern culture and handle the children and household chores. Although they are given the opportunity to go to college, they typically do not have the same choices that men do."

Hussein's father, a Palestinian immigrant who spent his career with large consumer product companies, and his mother, a classics professor at Montclair State University in New Jersey and an advocate for woman's rights, later returned to Palestine to convince Dana's parents to let her attend the program. "Her father was cautious," says



CHRISTOPHER HUSTON

HIS CORPORATE LIFE IS ABOUT DEAL MAKING, BUT WITH SEEDS OF PEACE, HUSSEIN BUILDS BRIDGES.

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1993

RACHEL BLISTEIN (A) is in Michigan: "I completed my master's degree in Landscape Architecture at Morgan State University in Baltimore, graduating in 2003. After working in Baltimore for several years, I met my future husband, Paul Alexander, and decided to re-locate to Ann Arbor, Mich., where he was completing his PhD in Mechanical Engineering. We were married in October of 2004 and, one and a half years later, bought our first house in nearby Ypsilanti. My husband works for General Motors as a research engineer and I recently began my own residential design firm, Veris Landscape Design, L.L.C. We love Michigan, despite the cold winters and troubled economy. The surroundings are beautiful, the people are friendly, there's a funky local music scene and lots of great food (it goes with the cold winters). Anyone who wants to get in touch is welcome to reach me at rblistein@yahoo.com."

OMAR S. MANEJWALA, M.D., (A) writes: "Over the last six years (since finishing up as Chief Resident in psychiatry at Duke) I've become very interested in the treatment of addicted healthcare

professionals. In July 2006, I moved to Virginia to become the Associate Medical Director of the William J. Farley center, a program for chemically dependent professionals. I also spend a few days a month lecturing across the country on various topics in addiction medicine. This is exciting and rewarding work, as about half of my patients are addicted medical professionals including physicians, pharmacists, veterinarians, dentists, etc. It's really been an honor and a privilege to participate in their

recovery. When I'm not working I'm still traveling like crazy. Last year I climbed Kilimanjaro and hiked the overland track in Tasmania. Last month I returned from my fourth trip to India, this time to attend my brother's marriage at the Taj Mahal."

1997

DOMINIC CRAPUCHETTES (A) has been encountering great success in the board game business: "Our latest party game, "Wits &

Wages," won 11 industry awards last year including *Games* magazine's 'Party Game of the Year,' " he writes. "It will be carried nationwide at Target starting in August! I am very excited."

1998

JEAN (TULLY) FLAHERTY (A) and her husband, Seamus, joyfully announce the births of their three children, Aoife Marie, born December 1, 2003; George Anthony, born March 26, 2005; and Saoirse Anne, born October 7, 2006. They live in Plantation, Fla., and will move to South Bend, Ind., this autumn.

DAWN (SHUMAN) BORCHELT (A), Matthew, and Wolfgang welcomed their new son and brother, Robin Wylde Borchelt to the world in their new home on May 2, 2006. He was 7 lbs. 9 ounces and 20 inches long.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

KEVIN BROCK (SF96) and **KHIN KHIN GUYOT BROCK (SF88)** hope to add a new member to their family soon: "We married in 2004, after meeting in a summer alumni seminar on Jane Austen in 2000 and in several more over the following years. For our honeymoon we did the Coast-to-Coast walk in England, a 200-mile hike from the North Sea to the Irish Sea through Yorkshire and the Lake Country. We live in Mountain View, Calif." Kevin is a software engineer with a networking start-up in Santa Cruz and Khin teaches first grade in a local public school.

"We are currently trying to adopt an infant through domestic open adoption," he adds. "Open adoption is very different from international adoption, because the birth mother and the adoptive parents know more about each other, and there is usually some degree of continuing contact after the baby is born. The birth mother chooses the adoptive parents who she wants to raise her child, so there's a lot of uncertainty involved while waiting for a match. The biggest challenge is getting the word out, so if you know someone who is pregnant and considering adoption, please feel free to give them our contact information: 408-806-9190; brock@kevin.com." ❀

2000

ALEXIS BROWN (SF, ECO3) recently joined the Board of Directors of Creative Santa Fe. She has added this to her list of other volunteer efforts at the Santa Fe Rape Crisis and Trauma Treatment Center, Santa Fe Cares and AIDS Walk, and High

Hussein. "She'd never been out of the village and it's a big leap to go from this tiny village in the Palestinian countryside—not only to go to the United States, but to a camp where she would be bunking with roommates from Israel." By June 2006 Dana joined fellow Palestinian "Seeds" at an orientation session before they took a plane from Tel Aviv to the United States with the teenage Israeli "Seeds."

Hussein, his parents, and his uncle from Boston visited Dana on her second day of camp in Maine in part to reassure her

parents that she was thriving. "She was wearing her headscarf and she was a little nervous, but she got out and was playing soccer with the kids. She'd never been swimming before; she played all kinds of sports and went boating and did crafts, and of course they do a ropes course, where you're learning to spot one another and build trust."

Hussein says Dana's English, along with her confidence and world outlook, reached new heights. "Now she's back in her village and she's started a Seeds of Peace type

program there," he says. "It's had a tremendous impact on her life and broadening her horizons."

"It's funny," Hussein adds, "back when I was at St. John's, I was never aware of being that different in college. People were just people. This is the way I was brought up, a face is a face, a mind is a mind, an idea is an idea, you don't look at a person's culture or ethnicity—you look at who they are as a human being." ❀

A JOURNEY TO CHINA

BENNETT TURNER (EC03) has been accepted to CIEE's Teach in China program. He will teach Oral English and American Literature classes at Jiaxing University in the city of Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province. "Beginning this August, this appointment will last an entire academic year (10 months), and I couldn't be more excited," he writes. "I took classical Chinese courses under the eminent Mike Bybee at the Santa Fe campus, and his classes were the initial impetus for this journey of mine. Apart from my teaching load, I intend to diligently study Mandarin with a private tutor, thereby returning to the States slightly more fluent than I am now.

"Not only did I want to share my good fortune with the Johnnie community, but I also wanted to invite others to offer their advice and suggestions. If any others have embarked on similar experiences, I would love to glean some sage advice with regard to living conditions, textbook choices, etc.: bennett.turner@gmail.com." ✨

Mayhem Emerging Arts Studio. She is excited to work on promoting the prosperity of Santa Fe's creative industries and their economic potential. If you want more information on Creative Santa Fe, please feel free to contact Alexis at: alexis_i_brown@yahoo.com.

media, I guess—typed on pieces of a cocktail napkin (their idea, not mine). Another short story was just nominated for the Pushcart Prize. I feel a bit cheesy telling you all, but is the phrase *alma mater* meaningless? Can't I brag to my *mater*?"

2001

"I'd like to give an update on my whereabouts to my fellow alumni," writes **WILL BONNER** (SF). "In February 2007 my wife and I moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina. We keep a daily blog about the experience at www.willbonner.com."

"This is just a shameless note to let you all in on some personal news," writes **NATHAN WILSON** (AGI). "I recently signed a four-book deal with Random House for young adult novels, the first of which (*Leepike Ridge*) will release May 22. I shamelessly rip-off some of the greats in service of my plot (Twain and Homer mainly). In a very different market, I also have a piece of short fiction in the February issue of *Esquire*. It's sort of mixed-

2002

STEVE ROSE (AGI) sent in a note for himself and **MAILI SHAFFER** (AGI), who look forward to traveling together in Europe this summer: "Ms. Shaffer, after teaching first grade since graduation in May 2000 is about to finish her first year of law school at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Her first-year summer law position will be in Baltimore, and she is looking forward to beautiful evenings in Annapolis. Maili would be delighted to hear from classmates or Johnnies interested in UM Law School. For myself, I have been teaching in Annapolis since May 2000, with two lengthy interruptions for visits to Iraq with B Company, 4th Light Armored Recon Battalion. Our most recent vacation was to keep the rivers and lakes safe for fishermen and

farmers, and we received many thanks from the Iraqis for providing some small measure of security. I'm delighted to be home and look forward not only to hearing from former classmates, but most of all to backpacking through Europe with Maili in August."

SHELLEY (WALKER) SAXEN (SFGI, EC03) writes: "Doug Saxen and I are now married and enjoying all the skiing and hiking we can get while in Montana for another year. While I finish up my doctorate in Natural Resources Management, Doug is in the throes of writing a children's book series. There's always room for SFGI alumni at our place if you happen to be in western Montana and we would love to hear from you."

Since last spring **MICHAEL SULLIVAN** (A) has been trying to teach Plato, Aristotle, Boethius, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, and Nietzsche to semi-grateful freshmen at Marymount University in Arlington, Va., and at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He is also working on his doctoral dissertation, on the debate over universal hylomorphism in 13th-century metaphysics, for Catholic University.

RACHEL ROCCIA SULLIVAN (A) is nearing the end of her third year of medical school at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) in Bethesda, Md. Options for specialization remain open, but she is strongly considering a future in psychiatry.

Their younger daughter, Grace, has had two eye surgeries and a heart surgery since her birth last July, but she's doing very well; their older daughter, Clare, is, hopefully, coming out of her terrible twos as her third birthday approaches.

2004

GIDEON CULMAN (SFGI, EC05) is living in the District of Columbia and organizing alumni gatherings every week; alumni in the D.C. area should look him up to get on his e-mail list. The group provides networking opportunities, camaraderie, and fun get-togethers with other Johnnies.

2005

CHARLES CLAUNCH (SFGI), now in the master's program in politics at the University of Dallas, has been accepted to that school's PhD program for the fall term in 2007. If anyone has any interest in this program, please direct questions to him at cclaunch@alumni.stjohnscollege.edu.

JOHN PETERSON (A) and **CAROLYN ANN STRIPLING** (SF07) were married in July 2006. ✨

WHAT'S UP?

The College wants to hear from you. Call us, write us, e-mail us. Let your classmates know what you're doing. The next issue will be published in October; deadline for the alumni notes section is August 10.

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A GREEK ADVENTURE RUNS AGROUND

Jack Ladd Carr, class of 1950, and his wife, Lois, had been looking forward to a stimulating trip to the “Greek Islands and Beyond,” as the tour operator billed it. But on the day that their cruise ship, the *Sea Diamond*, was scheduled to make an afternoon trip to Santorini, the excursion provided a bit more excitement than they had bargained for. Just a few days into their two-week trip, the couple had already visited several Aegean islands and made stops in Patmos and Crete. “We were to sail into the harbor at Santorini,” Carr recalls. “The island is spectacularly beautiful; there are these very unusual cliffs, and they go straight down into this deep caldera. We were preparing to disembark for a brief run to the island when for some reason the ship struck a rock ledge.”

While the crew prepared to evacuate passengers, the ship began listing to starboard. “Everybody was calm,” he says. “The crew managed to calm every one down. There were some youngsters, teenagers from a school in North Carolina, and they were in good spirits, clowning around, snapping each other’s pictures.”

Carr and his wife are both in their 80s, and another passenger, a young French woman took notice of them, got them life jackets, and made sure the couple were safe. “She made certain that in the crush of people that we were not pushed down, and

she took her own life jacket off and put it on Lois,” Carr says. “She spoke no English, and we speak no French, but we managed to communicate our gratitude to her.”

While many passengers climbed down ropes to rescue vessels, the Carrs were evacuated to a waiting ferry by means of a makeshift chute, assembled of mattresses, which linked the automobile ramps of both ships.

“Thank God I didn’t have to climb down a ladder,” says Carr.

“The last time I climbed down a ladder into the boat was during the second World War when I climbed down cargo nets into landing boats, which I did several times. It was scary when I was 19, and it would be a lot scarier at 82.”

Carr has read many reports that people panicked, that there was chaos, and that the crew wasn’t helpful, but their experience was much better. They saw no panic and thought the crew acted professionally. “We decided to keep calm and observed everything with great interest,” he recalls. “We were separated—they did the women-and-children thing. That’s when I began to feel that I was on the *Titanic*. By this time, the ship was listing at 15 degrees.”

Lois was rescued first; Jack a little while later, and their tour group of 39 was brought ashore together. “Our tour guide was a wonderful Greek



JACK AND LOIS CARR ON DRY GROUND AFTER THE DISASTER, AND BELOW, LOIS, AFTER SLIDING TO SAFETY.



woman named Rea, and Rea arranged for our group to go to a very nice, new hotel in the village,” says Carr.

“We got there by going up the cliff in a sort of funicular, and after a short walk through the village, caught a bus that took us to the hotel. They gave us dinner, a room, and breakfast the next morning. And at breakfast, I found out the ship had sunk. That was the only time we sensed any fear.”

Carr had a shoulder bag with some euros, credit cards, and glasses. The couple’s clothing and everything else in their suitcase, including souvenirs, were lost. The group’s passports were also safe and returned to them on the next leg of their trip. Each passenger was provided with 200 euros to pick up some clothing and other items in Athens. Then they continued their trip for another 11 days. “We lost only one day of the tour,” Carr says.

The accident won’t stop the Carrs from traveling, says Carr. “I’m not superstitious,” he says. “But I could do with less adventure.” ❀

—ROSEMARY HARTY

LILLIAN VANOUS NUTT
FRIEND OF THE COLLEGE

Lillian Vanous Nutt, who died earlier this spring at age 99, was a generous and dedicated supporter of St. John's College in Annapolis. Her gifts supported scholarships for St. John's students, helped establish the Mitchell Gallery, and underwrote the renovation of a room in the Greenfield Library to serve as the Nutt Room, a second exhibition space for art on the Annapolis campus which also serves as an elegant reading room.

The following excerpt, from a eulogy given at her memorial service by Annapolis President Christopher Nelson, celebrates Mrs. Nutt's many contributions:

"Lillian was born four weeks shy of 100 years ago in a small wooden house on the corner of Taylor Avenue and Annapolis Street. She grew up in a home her parents soon thereafter built on Revell Street. Lillian remembered it for its central heating with gold radiators and two bathrooms, but also for its large fishpond with a fountain in the middle. She recalls the parties at the outdoor fireplace, and the use of red-checked tablecloths and cloth napkins, not the paper products of today which she shuddered to call "throw-aways." No one who knew Lillian could forget her abhorrence of throwaways: Everything to its purpose, at least twice over . . .

"Lillian remained at home until 1943 when she was married to Hi, a marriage that lasted for her remaining 64 years. She attended the Peabody Institute for her music lessons, traveling back and forth to Baltimore on the old B&A Railway. She even remembered giving a recital at age 13 in McDowell Hall at St. John's College. She also remembered her youthful parties at St. John's and the Naval Academy. By the time she was 20, she had her own car and began teaching piano, something she did for three generations of Annapolitans . . .



LILLIAN VANOUS NUTT

"Of course, Lillian also loved to paint, and exhibited in juried shows all over the area. I imagine that I have seen thousands of her water-colors, mostly on note cards, pieces of paper not-to-be-thrown-away. And in the last 10 years, I've been pleased to gaze upon hundreds of painted "jolins", flowers designed by Lillian as a gift in honor of my wife, Joyce Olin . . . four years ago, we added to our personal collection of framed "jolins" and other "still-lives," a bell pull, hand-painted by Lillian with beautiful roses. I still pull on the darn thing, but nobody comes a-running. I suspect Lillian knew that too. 'Each of us was meant to attend to his own needs,' I can hear her say.

"I have loved Lillian's colorful and vivid imagination . . . In 1964, Lillian wrote a brief poem about herself. I think it captured her rather well. It was titled, "Me" and opened as follows: 'If I am anything/ I certainly am prolific/ No matter what the merit/ My output is terrific!'

"Indeed, it was. How many of us in this room have received envelopes stuffed with hand-painted note cards (on recycled paper) to be used for friendly "thank yous" or just to lift the spirit. She was generous but tough and always faced down the advance of age. . . She befriended St. John's College many years ago and generously provided student scholarships for those with need. She also underwrote the renovation of the Lillian Vanous Nutt Room in the Greenfield Library, where regular shows of local artists are exhibited through the year. Her gifts are put to use over and over and for multiple purposes . . .

"A small group of us gathered in Lillian's and Hi's home last May for her 99th birthday. Anna Greenberg (HA96) asked her what she considered was the most important thing she had accomplished in her lifetime. She answered quickly, 'without a doubt, it was my teaching children to play the piano and appreciate art!'"

DR. PETER HAMILL
CLASS OF 1949

Dr. Peter VanVechten Hamill, class of 1949, died on March 10, 2007, at the age of 80. He had forged a remarkable life and career as a scholar and scientist, an avid sportsman, accomplished sailor, and collector of fine wines.

Dr. Hamill was born in Baltimore in 1926, and grew up in Detroit. He earned a bachelor's in philosophy from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and medical degrees from Michigan and Johns Hopkins University. He served in the Navy during World War II and had a career as a commissioned officer in the United States



DR. PETER HAMILL

Public Health Service. He was the scientific director of the Surgeon General's Study on

Smoking and Health and also designed the Growth and Development charts for use in charting the growth of juveniles.

Eva Brann, who spoke at Dr. Hamill's memorial service, described him as "first and last" a Johnnie, with an "acute, detailed and wickedly judgmental memory."

In 2002, Dr. Hamill sent Miss Brann an oral history of his role in the 1962-64 study on smoking, which is now in the JFK Library in Boston. The study was the first declaration from the government that smoking causes cancer, as the Senior Surgeon in the Commissioned Officer Corps of

the Public Health Service. Dr. Hamill played a key role in establishing the criteria for the study and assembling the staff and professional personnel for the committee, but the oral history also demonstrates qualities far beyond professional ability:

"He was passionately engaged as Peter the man and desperately objective as Peter the scientist. He was impatiently temperamental as a man with a mission and generously understanding as a man with an administrative charge. He was naively forthright and dutifully cunning, fascinated and repelled by personal and bureaucratic obstructionism. . .

"But besides personalities there was Peter's main principle, which, I imagine, made everything work. He was a believer in dialogue. 'When I say dialogue,' he told his recorder, 'remember I'm a St. Johnnie and the dialectic process of antithesis and eventually synthesis is part of my whole being.' And this was a true self-description: Peter was passion tempered by appreciation, prejudgment mitigated by receptivity, spiritedness leavened by self-doubt."

Dr. Hamill is survived by his wife of 54 years, Margot Henry Hamill; four children, and 11 grandchildren.

**GEORGE TRIMBLE
CLASS OF 1948**

George R. Trimble, a pioneer in computer development, died March 13, 2007, at the age of 77. He made many original contributions to both the design and application of data processing equipment in a career that spanned the computer industry from ENIAC in 1949 to the most advanced large-scale computer systems. After graduating from St. John's he studied numerical methods at the University of Delaware and in 1951 earned a master's degree in mathematics.

Mr. Trimble developed mathematical analyses and machine applications for a variety of the earliest electronic computers, including ENIAC, EDVAC, and ORDVAC, to minimize data reduction errors in rocket trajectory calculations for captured German V-2 rockets. As a senior staff member in IBM's Applied Science Division, 1952-1956, Mr. Trimble was involved in the logical design and application requirements of virtually every computer made by IBM in the early 1950s. Between 1955 and 1966, he was involved in the development of numerous

successive "most powerful" computers in their time.

He was also the first corporate technical director at Computer Usage Company, the world's first software company. He was system engineer on the first large electronic publishing system.

His experience spanned the full spectrum of systems software and support packages and included a tremendous variety of disciplines, including system programming, data communications, publishing, command and control systems, scientific/engineering applications, statistics, and operations research.

KENNETH KRONBERG (SF68)

Kenneth Kronberg, a member of the first graduating class of St. John's College in Santa Fe, died April 11, 2007, at the age of 58. He was the husband of Marielle (Molly) Hammett Kronberg (A70) of Leesburg and the father of Max Kronberg, a 2006 Annapolis graduate.

After graduating from St. John's, Mr. Kronberg spent a year as a junior fellow at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, Calif., and later did graduate work at the New School for Social Research in New York.

He was an editor for the American Institute of Physics and for John Wiley & Sons before founding WorldComp in 1978. He had been a member of the National Caucus of Labor Committees since 1974.

He directed amateur theater, and taught poetry and drama classes to children and adults for many years. He edited *The Campaigner*, a cultural magazine, for a number of years. In 1992 he co-founded *Fidelio*, a quarterly journal of poetry, science and statecraft, which he edited until 2006.



KENNETH KRONBERG

At his memorial service on April 19, his wife, Molly, described him as "a man of character, honor, and integrity—old-fashioned virtues. He was a man of his word.

"He weighed words carefully, always trying to say precisely what he meant, because he understood the connection between morality and right use of language, and on the other hand, the enormous damage done to truth and therefore people by perversion of language. His love of language reached back to his earliest childhood—for example, his discovery at the age of eight of the poems of Emily Dickinson and Christina Rossetti. By the time that, barely 16, he went off to college, he was a practicing poet himself, a calling he followed for many years thereafter.

"Ken's poetic instinct could be found in everything he did: his efforts to make every publication on which he worked a harmonious composition; his efforts to bring beauty in visual form to the printed page; in written form to the articles he wrote or edited; in aural form to the audiences of the dramas he directed.

"The same beauty could be found in his gentleness, his abhorrence of brutality, his kindness to all who encountered him (kindness

mixed with the sardonic brusqueness he deployed as an educational device), and his truthfulness. His enthusiasm for learning and teaching, for new ideas and for the more precise expression and rigorous examination of venerable ones, was the content of the Socratic art of midwifery he practiced in directing plays or in editing. He was like the Clerk of Oxford of whom Chaucer writes, 'And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.'

ALSO NOTED

REV. DUNCAN BROCKWAY (CLASS OF 1953), JANUARY 23, 2007

JEREMY DAWES (SF01), JANUARY 15, 2007

NANCY FARIDANY (CLASS OF 1962), SEPTEMBER 23, 2005

ROBERT GOLDBERG (CLASS OF 1950), SEPTEMBER 3, 2006

JOHN GORECKI (CLASS OF 1960), DECEMBER 12, 2006

JOSEPH HOFMANN (CLASS OF 1942), APRIL 2, 2007

MARION JENKINS (SFGI89), JANUARY 13, 2007

ANDREW KLIPPER (A80), JANUARY 22, 2007

JOSEPH LEGUM (CLASS OF 1933), JULY 26, 2006

SUSAN LEUBUSCHER (A68), FEBRUARY 28, 2007

DOROTHY LUTTRELL (CLASS OF 1960), MARCH 26, 2007

VICTOR PERRETTA (CLASS OF 1932), APRIL 13, 2007

ALBERT POPPITI (CLASS OF 1942), FEBRUARY 9, 2007

RAY SMITH (A94), MARCH 1, 2003

DOLORES STRICKLAND (SF71), MARCH 16, 2007

EVEN THE DEAD KNOW NO END OF WAR

A Reporter in Iraq

Nelson Hernandez (Agg), a reporter on the Washington Post's Metro desk, covered the war in Iraq from late December 2005 to February 2006, and again from mid-April to mid-June 2006. The Post has assigned some Metro reporters to two-month rotations in Iraq; Hernandez was the first to volunteer. He agreed to a second rotation because his younger brother, Thomas, a Marine reservist, would be serving at the same time. "I wanted to relate to him when he got back," Hernandez says.

Hernandez interned for the newspaper while at St. John's and joined the Post staff after graduation; he took a year of leave in 2004-05 to earn a master's degree in history at Yale. He now covers education in Prince George's County, Maryland. The events described in his essay took place on May 9-10, 2006.

Minutes after leaving the port of Umm Qasr at the southeastern tip of Iraq, the land turned to desert. The convoy sped north to Baghdad.

Outside the window of a pickup truck, the earth, flat and pale and lifeless, met a dull gray-blue sky. It could be Mars.

In this wasteland the road was like a river. Food and money flowed up and down it, allowing life to cling to its edges. Sometimes this took the form of thin, yellow grass that grew like peach fuzz, or mud huts with thatched roofs. Weathered men in red-checked kaffiyehs tended sheep and camels; they were as hungry and filthy as their animals. Barefoot boys ran out to the side of the road as we flew past, waving. The guards riding in the beds of the trucks, helmeted men cradling machine guns, flung ration packs to them without slowing down.

That was the closest connection they had with the people of Iraq. For the private security contractor in the front passenger seat, a Welshman named Mark, every sign of life by the road was a potential threat. The mujaheddin stalk these lands. Every parked car could be a



NELSON HERNANDEZ VOLUNTEERED TO COVER THE WAR IN IRAQ.

bomb, every highway overpass an ambush and every man, woman and child a killer. The insurgents have sometimes hidden bombs in the carcasses of animals lying by the roadside. In Iraq, even the dead do not know the end of war.

They made a brief stop. I walked a few yards off the road, out into a desert barren as far as the eye could see. Mark urinated on the tire of his pickup truck.

"Don't get too far away," he warned. "We don't know what's out there."

The convoy was on a mission of peace. Mark and his group of British and Iraqi contractors were escorting a convoy of

about a dozen water trucks. The trucks were made in Texas and cost over \$120,000 apiece. They were a gift from you, the American taxpayer, to the people of Iraq. Such convoys are not shepherded on their way by the military, but by an invisible army of private contractors: drivers, engineers, logistics specialists, stevedores and security men, usually former soldiers. This convoy had a journalist attached. That was me.

As the sun set, we arrived at an oasis called Camp Scania. It is the major refueling stop in southern Iraq, a massive gas station run by the U.S. military. Here,

in the middle of the desert, are parked hundreds of trucks that carry supplies of every kind up and down the road. The cost of creating and maintaining this piece of America on a patch of sand across the globe is stupefying. Sophocles had a point: Many are the wonders, but none is more wondrous than man.

The Iraqi drivers and guards, who made up the majority of the convoy's crew, slept outside the base. They settled down to meals of rice and chicken, sleeping in the cabs of their trucks. The four British security men, all ex-soldiers, went inside the base and ate what was, by Iraqi standards, a delicious repast: Cornish hen, potatoes, fruit smoothies, ice cream—the base's cafeteria was well stocked.

Mark ran into another team returning from a delivery. On their way home a bomb exploded in the road, destroying one of the heavily armored pickups. The bomb was four artillery shells tied together, enough to obliterate the front half of the truck. Everyone in the truck survived unhurt—a miracle—and they showed off a picture of a man standing in the waist-deep crater left by the bomb.

Hours passed in a large tent filled with cheap bunk beds. Mark watched a movie, *Big Momma's House*, while another man in his team, Leon, played a video game. In the back of the tent, the other team was still talking about their close call.

"You used up one of your nine lives today, lads," one of the men said quietly.

For the first time I felt a quiver of fear. I imagined what it would be like to be driving along the road one moment, and in an instant be torn apart by flying shards of jagged steel. Would it hurt? Would I have time to give a noble soliloquy or expire with an undignified groan?

The feeling was fleeting. I wish I could say for you that having read the Great Books gave me some preternatural calm. It would make for a better story. War is full of such concessions to romantic imagination. But in war, the physical trumps the philosophical. So it was with me: I was too dirty and tired by that point to care about something so totally beyond my control, and so I went to sleep.

At midnight, the tent began flapping madly. The air tasted like dust. Then water began flying in horizontally. Outside, a massive storm was bearing down on the camp. The tent shook savagely as the desert tried to scrub itself

clean of us. Half-awake men grunted at the tent entrance, trying to seal it shut. Outside, sentries scurried for cover. Eventually they gave up and moved beds farther away from the entrance. And in half an hour, the storm blew itself out.

In the morning we rode for Baghdad. The country was no longer desert. The convoy had entered the verdant valley between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers—the cradle of civilization, and a place more dangerous for being more habitable.

The journey was tense but uneventful. When the convoy rolled into the water directorate, a large, walled compound

*"I imagined what it
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NELSON HERNANDEZ (A99)

with a heavy iron gate, Mark arranged the trucks in a defensive perimeter. The gate was closed, the better to protect against car bombers, and the Iraqis began slowly unloading the trucks.

Mark gave the director an envelope carrying the keys to the trucks. The unsmiling director, a corpulent man with an arm in a sling, counted the keys twice, seemingly suspicious of being cheated. He refused to say anything to me. A boy walking by greeted my wave with a blank stare. We soon discovered the reason for the chilly reception. Our hosts were planning to kill us.

Some time later, a rocket-propelled grenade exploded nearby.

"Get in the truck!" Leon screamed.

The contractors fired back at unseen enemies as the civilians scattered, running for cover. I crawled over a pile of lunches and body armor in the truck's back seat, lunging at the doors to close them. By the time I turned on my video camera, the shooting had reached a crescendo of long machine gun bursts and cracking rifle shots. An Iraqi guard standing in front of my truck fired his rifle wildly, clearly terrified and having no idea what to do.

After this spasm of violence, the firing died down. Only the frenzied gunner atop our truck kept shooting, ripping chunks of concrete out of a nearby building.

"Tell him to stop firing!" Leon yelled at the Iraqi driver. Mark ran at our car, raised his hand, and cried "Stop!" The gunner stopped shooting.

Leon shouted at the frightened Iraqi contractor. "You!" He hit the truck's horn twice to get his attention. "Get in here!" The young man did, breathing heavily and shaking as he sat next to me. As he slammed the door shut, the shooting started again.

The next few minutes were a babble of urgent commands, shouting in Arabic, scratchy radio chatter, gunfire, confusion, confusion. Why were the guards shooting it out with them? Why weren't we moving? What was going on?

"Mark, are we gonna get out of here or what?" a voice over the radio pleaded.

They were trapped because the gate to the complex was closed, though I did not understand that until later. Under fire, one of the British guards ran out to the gate to open it. This act of heroism allowed them to escape. The gunfire continued on the way out and down the highway. The whole engagement had lasted about five minutes.

"Is everybody okay?" Mark asked over the radio.

Yes. They raced past election posters and checkpoints to safety. Behind us they left two dead insurgents. Behind us they left the Iraqi truck drivers they were escorting; three or four did not make it back. Behind us they left the water trucks. All we were left with was our lives, and this memory I have related to you.

Every day, as it reels past in my mind, I give thanks that the desert was so generous. ❀

FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT



In January in Santa Fe and April in Annapolis, the Alumni Association hosted our annual senior dinners with the senior class. These events offer a chance for 15-25 alumni to toast and celebrate the upcoming graduations, when students become “permanent members” of the college as alumni. We also now provide the students with brief bios of the hosting alumni. In Annapolis, a senior I spoke with was thrilled to find that she was not alone in her interest in neuroscience; she had an opportunity to meet an alumna and speak at length about her career path.

This is a key first step the Association takes to help Johnnies in the transition from the warm confines of the campuses to the seemingly daunting world. We are working to expand our outreach to recent

graduates (more than 50 percent of our alumni have graduated in the last two decades), through programs tailored to appeal to Johnnies beginning their lives and careers, and who often want to take a break from seminar readings. In New York for many years we’ve had a recent graduates’ reception each fall, where newly arrived alumni can reconnect with classmates and meet alumni established in the region. This year in Portland, Oregon, and New York City, we’ve begun chapter “bar nights,” open to all but sponsored by the Recent Graduates group leaders and at very casual locations that help build a community of younger alums in these cities.

On the campuses, we’ve been working to enhance the events welcoming alumni back, for both intellectual and social pursuits. This spring we introduced the “Piraeus” program, several long-weekends of alumni seminars. Within two months after announcing the program, the first April weekend was a terrific success and the June and January 2008 weekends had filled to capacity. A waitlist has begun with the possibility of opening a second set of seminars to satisfy alumni demand for those weekends.

In addition, we are working as advocates for the alumni community as the college develops its strategic plan. In 2008, the college will conclude its most successful capital campaign in St. John’s history. The tremendous success is overwhelmingly due to the contributions of alumni. About

“We are working to expand our outreach to recent graduates...”

JASON WALSH (A85)

two-thirds of the funds are from alumni, and the percentage of alumni giving has grown remarkably. These funds will support the institution through capital improvement projects (including new dormitories, a Graduate Institute center, and much-needed enhancements to buildings and grounds, especially in Santa Fe); increased endowment to support financial aid, and additional support for increases to faculty salaries.

With the conclusion of the campaign approaching, the college has embarked on a broad strategic planning process. The Alumni Association, along with the Alumni Relations committee of the Board of Visitors and Governors, will be actively involved in this process to articulate the specific programs that can better support our alumni throughout their lives.

These are all part of the Alumni Association’s mission to foster opportunities for more Alumni to connect more often and more richly. ✱

Jason Walsh (A85)
Alumni Association President

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PROVIDING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR MORE ALUMNI
TO CONNECT
MORE OFTEN AND
MORE RICHLY

CELEBRATING CHICAGO

In a Cultural Mecca, a Chapter Thrives

BY PATRICIA DEMPSEY

In his rare free time when he isn't providing video and editorial content from the Midwest for ABC news, including shows such as "Good Morning America" and "World News," television producer Kevin Kraus (A82) reads reams of newspapers, periodicals, and online reports. Yet Kraus, one of five Chicago chapter officers, says, "It's a different experience to read Plato or Thomas Mann. The news-related material isn't truly thought-provoking." Kraus, who moved to Chicago six years ago from southern Florida, where at that time there was no alumni chapter, says he was "starved for substantial reading and conversation." The long-established (since 1982) Chicago chapter offered him both – and a chance to share his love of architecture with fellow Johnnies who live in this urban cultural Mecca.

In 2005 Kraus helped organize a well-attended chapter visit to his "favorite building in America," the Farnsworth House by architect Mies van der Rohe. For another event, the group visited the late 19th-century Auditorium Building, which houses a National Historic Landmark, the Auditorium Theater. While the chapter members do not usually have a formal

seminar on the architectural sites they visit, they do typically "duck into a restaurant afterwards to talk about it," says Kraus. "We're all architecture junkies," says Rick Lightburn (SF76), current Chicago chapter president and a self-employed marketing strategist for consumer groups. "In August, we have an annual potluck picnic and business meeting. We have it with the Grant Park Music Festival held downtown in Millennium Park, beneath a fabulous trellis designed by Frank Gehry."

These architectural jaunts complement the traditional seminars that focus on readings as diverse as the city itself. "This fall we're hoping to start the year with a children's literature piece. We also try to relate to events in this fabulous city," says Lightburn. "For instance we had a science reading on Mendel's paper and tied this to a visit to an exhibit on Mendel's research at the Field Museum." Along with Kraus and Lightburn, readings are suggested by chapter officers Elizabeth Long (A86), a University of Chicago librarian and an artist; Barbara Schmittle (A76), a librarian for the city of Chicago; and Paul Frank (SF82), an editor at the American Medical Association.

The chapter hosts most of its monthly seminars on Sunday afternoons at The Great Books Foundation, where Don Whitfield (SF68, SFGI84) is the director of college programs. "Don was one of the rugged pioneers who attended Santa Fe in the early years and he very kindly allows us to use rooms at the foundation," says Lightburn. Typically, about a dozen Johnnies attend the seminars. "We always have more, of course, when a tutor is here to lead it," says Lightburn.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

All alumni have automatic membership in the St. John's College Alumni Association. The Alumni Association is an independent organization, with a Board of Directors elected by and from the alumni body. The board meets four times a year, twice on each campus, to plan programs and coordinate the affairs of the association. This newsletter within *The College* magazine is sponsored by the Alumni Association and communicates association news and events of interest.

President – Jason Walsh (A85)

Vice President – Steve Thomas (SF74)

Secretary – Joanne Murray (SFGI95)

Treasurer – Richard Cowles (A70)

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In April the chapter hosted a seminar on Plato's *Phaedo*, led by Annapolis tutor Robert Druecker. Lightburn says Druecker first led the chapter in a seminar two years ago in a reading from Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*, and they were delighted to have him back. The seminar on Plato's *Phaedo* used the translation by Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem. Among those who attended are younger members including Stassia Sullivan (SFO6), Grae Drake (SFO5) and Tom Hammerman (A93). The Chicago chapter officers seek to attract more young members, but they realize young alumni don't have the time to commit; they're busy establishing careers and raising families.

Lightburn, who is self-employed and has a more flexible schedule than his fellow officers, serves as the chapter's de facto president. "We have a revolving group of officers," he explains. "We shared the responsibility of president except for Paul [Frank], who was doing such a good job as treasurer it made sense for him to continue. None of us really wanted to be chapter president because we didn't have the time. I became de facto president, but how would we like our future president to be chosen? That's been established in our bylaws. Those are online on the Alumni Web site, for everyone to see and use for other chapters." ❀

SENIOR DINNERS



CLASS OF 2007 MEMBERS, NOW ALUMNI: FROM LEFT, ERIC TORGERSON, CHRISTOPHER BEA, ANDREW ROMITI, JOHN DODGE, LEE BRANNER.



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SEVENTY YEARS OF GENUINE CONVERSATION

In the summer of 1937, Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan arrived in Annapolis, preparing to launch a “radical” new academic program at a small college that had lost its accreditation and teetered on the brink of bankruptcy.

Neither of the two men, according to various reports, wished to be president. However, Barr proved very good at it: telling the St. John’s story to outside audiences and to the media, wooing prospective donors and foundation executives, and working with Maryland’s legislature and the college’s Board of Visitors and Governors to set the college on firm ground.

Far from a figurehead, Barr always made time to be part of the community of learners, as Charles Nelson (class of 1944) writes in *Stringfellow Barr: A Centennial Appreciation of His Life and Work*:

“...Barr, despite the heavy travel and speaking schedule, regularly led seminars, tutored in Greek and French, and could often be found in the coffee shop to converse with students and tutors about the coming war, the relevance to the European crisis of the Melian Conference in Thucydides’ account of the Peloponnesian War, or perhaps the meaning of the allegory of the cave in Plato’s *Republic*.”

After leaving St. John’s in 1946, following a successful fight to protect the college from annexation by the Navy, Barr joined Buchanan in attempting to establish another college based on the St. John’s model; however, their efforts did not come to fruition. Barr later served as president of the Foundation for World Government, taught at the University of Virginia and at Rutgers, and later was a fellow at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in California. He died 25 years ago, in Alexandria, Virginia. ✦

ALUMNI CALENDAR

Santa Fe Homecoming 2007 September 14-16

Friday, September 14

- 9 a.m. Dixon Studio and Winery tour
- 3 p.m. Registration
- Wine and cheese reception for alumni, tutors, GIs, and undergraduate upper-classmen to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Graduate Institute
- 5:30 p.m. 40th Anniversary Celebration for the Graduate Institute
- 8 p.m. Homecoming lecture
- 10 p.m. Coffee Cabaret & open mic

Saturday, September 15

- 8 a.m. Yoga
- 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration
- 10:30 a.m. Seminars
- 12 p.m. Fiesta Picnic
- 1 p.m. Search and Rescue Team open house
- 1:30 p.m. Family nature hike around Monte Sol or a hike to Atalaya Mountain Peak
- 2 p.m. Family Fun afternoon
- 5 p.m. "Speaking Volumes" lecture
- 6 p.m. Seventh Annual All-Alumni Art Show and Reception
- 7 p.m. Homecoming dinner dance

Sunday, September 16

- 8 a.m. Yoga
- 11 a.m. President's Brunch

Annapolis Homecoming 2007 September 28-October 1

Friday, September 28

- 1 to 6 p.m. Water activities (sailing, boating)
- 4 to 8 p.m. Registration
- 5 p.m. Barbecue for the Class of 1982
- 5 p.m. Dinner for the classes of the '30s and '40s
- 5:45 p.m. Fiftieth Reunion Dinner for the Class of 1957
- 6 p.m. Welcome reception for Graduate Institute
- 8:15 p.m. Homecoming Lecture
- Rock Party

Saturday, September 29

- 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration
- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Water activities
- 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. Breakfast and All-Alumni Meeting
- 10:30 a.m. Seminars

12 p.m. Lunch

- 12 p.m. Classes of the '30s and '40s luncheon
- 1 to 5 p.m. Activities for children
- 2 p.m. Freshman chorus, Revisited
- 3 p.m. Mitchell Gallery tour
- 4 p.m. Alumni booksigning
- 4 p.m. Soccer Classic
- 6 p.m. Cocktail party
- 7:30 p.m. Alumni Association Banquet Evening Waltz/Swing Party and Rock Party

Sunday, October 1

- 11 a.m. President's brunch
- 1 to 5 p.m. Water activities

Questions

For more information about Homecoming logistics, details, and events, contact the alumni office at 410-626-2531 or alumni@sjca.edu.



JOANNA STONE (A07), HER HUSBAND DONALD STONE (A06), AND TRAVIS PRICE (A71) AT THE WASHINGTON, D.C., CAMPAIGN EVENT IN APRIL.

Back cover photo by Chelsea Stiegman

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