

THE COLLEGE

FALL 2007

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE • ANNAPOLIS • SANTA FE

Tocqueville

AND MODERN AMERICA



ST JOHN'S College

ANNAPOLIS · SANTA FE

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ON TOCQUEVILLE

"I confess that in America I saw more than America; I sought there an image of democracy itself, of its penchants, its character, its prejudices, its passions; I wanted to become acquainted with it only to know at least what we ought to hope or fear from it."

Alexis de Tocqueville's detailed observations raise such interesting questions for seminar discussions: Do Americans value equality over freedom? Are laws unstable unless they are rooted in the customs and traditions of a society? Is the tyranny of the majority a threat to democracy? Although Tocqueville began his travels in America 176 years ago, so many of his ideas seem relevant today. They prompt us to consider what has changed, what remains constant, and how we think about the American character.

Born into an aristocratic family (his father narrowly escaped execution during the Terror), Tocqueville was serving as a magistrate in Versailles when he and his good friend, Gustave de Beaumont, developed the idea to visit America to investigate its penal system. Not long after he landed on American shores in 1831, Tocqueville knew he had found much more to write about in the vast, wild, and complex young country he explored. His letters home were full of his adventures with Beaumont: getting the celebrity treatment in New York, witnessing Choctaw Indians being driven off their land in the South, nearly perishing in a riverboat accident, and visiting Andrew Jackson in the White House. Tocqueville wrote about prisons when he returned to France, but it was his great work *Democracy in America* that endures.

Tocqueville was critical of America in many ways. He perceived that the country had no great writers, had "good workers and few inventors," ambitious men but "so few great ambitions," and bombastic orators. Critics of modern society might agree the Americans are too concerned with material worth, as Tocqueville noted with great disdain in the early 19th century: "The inhabitant of the United States attaches himself to the goods of this world as if he were assured of not dying, and he rushes so precipitately to grasp those that pass within his reach that one would say he fears at each instant he will cease to live before he has enjoyed them."

After publishing *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville went on to a political career. He married Mary Mottley, a middle-class Englishwoman. He suffered through long bouts of illness in his later years and succumbed to tuberculosis on April 16, 1859.

In this issue of *The College*, Johnnies in many walks of life consider his ideas in light of their own work. A young foreign service officer on her way to Burma, where recent demonstrations for freedom were brutally squashed, offers her views. It's also interesting to hear from a county councilman who, like the New England township leaders who Tocqueville observed in action, believes that local government can make a difference in the everyday lives of its citizens.

—RH

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A MAN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

Jeffrey Bishop (1947-2007)

It was an extremely fortunate occurrence for St. John's College—always greatly admired, always struggling financially—that Jeffrey Bishop (HA87) and the college found each other. As a Philadelphia-based fundraising consultant, Mr. Bishop came to Annapolis to analyze the college's development efforts. Bill Dyal, then president, was so impressed that he invited him to come to Annapolis to carry out the development plan he proposed. Mr. Bishop served St. John's for two decades, putting the college on more solid financial footing than ever before.

Mr. Bishop lost an 11-year battle with kidney cancer on Saturday, July 7, 2007. At the

He savored everything that life had to offer.

time of his death, he was vice president for collegewide advancement, a position he held for five years. Before that, he served for 15 years as vice president for advancement in Annapolis. In his collegewide post, he coordinated development for the two campuses and focused his efforts on the most ambitious fundraising project in the college's history.

Mr. Bishop's first major undertaking was "The Campaign for our Fourth Century," at the time, the

college's most successful fund-raising campaign ever, raising \$35 million by 1996. Along with other key goals, it allowed the college to create the Greenfield Library out of the building that once housed Maryland's Hall of Records.

He was the architect of the current \$125 million capital campaign which has provided funding for the renovation of Mellon Hall, the construction of Gilliam and Spector halls, and substantial increases in funding for student financial aid, faculty development, and tutor salaries. One of his goals was to get the college endowment to \$100 million. The endowment reached that mark in 2006, almost a ten-fold increase from when he started at the college in 1987.

Mr. Bishop welcomed challenges—the bigger the better. In 1993, he convinced friends and colleagues including Annapolis President Christopher Nelson (SF70), college athletic director Leo Pickens (A78), and former Santa Fe vice president Jeff Morgan to bike from Santa Fe to Annapolis. At the trip's end, they were given a hero's welcome on campus and crowned with laurel leaves.



Two years later, Mr. Bishop completed the grueling Paris-Brest-Paris bicycle race.

He savored everything that life had to offer, especially spending time with friends. In 2004 he fulfilled a personal dream by purchasing a vineyard in southwestern France. He traveled to the vineyard numerous times to help with the harvest and production of his wine, Sanglier Volant.

With a charming smile and a genuine interest in others, Mr. Bishop rallied people behind his causes. He loved the college and its people. His degree was from the prestigious Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, but he was most proud of being an honorary alumnus of St. John's. At Homecoming in September, the Alumni Association honored him posthumously with its Alumni Award of Merit.

Mr. Bishop is survived by his wife, Susan McDonough Bishop (AGI99); his daughter Lauren (A99) and son-in-law Michael Campuzano; his daughter March; his sister, Cindi Macomber; and three nieces and nephews. ❀



IN HIS 20 YEARS WITH ST. JOHN'S, JEFFREY BISHOP NEVER PASSED UP A CHALLENGE, INCLUDING A 2,000-MILE BICYCLE TREK FROM THE SANTA FE CAMPUS TO ANNAPOLIS IN 1993 WITH COLLEAGUES INCLUDING ANNAPOLIS PRESIDENT CHRISTOPHER NELSON (LEFT).

BEYOND THE PROGRAM

Through Ariel Internships in Santa Fe and Hodson Internships in Annapolis, Johnnies devote a summer to exploring future careers and broadening their experiences.

DEVOTING ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Each morning last summer, Remy Maelen (SF09) entered the sanctuary of Green Lion Press in Santa Fe and considered how to approach the day: work on diagrams, set type, edit, research. Whatever she decided, she knew the task ahead would require painstaking attention to detail. The press, located in the home of press co-directors Dana Densmore and William Donahue, is especially conducive to quiet, focused work.

Green Lion specializes in publishing classic texts in the history of science and mathematics. Johnnies are familiar with their editions of Program works, Euclid's *Elements* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* among them. Maelen spent much of her summer working with Donahue on a new edition of his English translation of Kepler's *Astronomia Nova*, originally published by Cambridge University Press in 1992 but now out of print.

"Kepler was very meticulous," Maelen says. For example, "when he used italics he was writing as a mathematician," she explains, whereas non-italicized text signals Kepler the philosopher. She started delving into data files from the first edition in order to convert Cambridge's typesetting codes into those conforming to Green Lion's typesetting program. She was involved in nearly every aspect of preparing this second



VICTORIA SMITH

LAST SUMMER, REMY MAELEN (LEFT) EXPLORED THE PUBLISHING WORLD; JON KARA SYLVESTER-JOHNSON ESTABLISHED A LIFE REVIEW PROGRAM AT A VIRGINIA HOSPICE.

edition, from replicating Kepler's diagrams using professional computer drawing programs to suggesting improvements in the text. "I didn't realize what an important job I'd be doing, actually having an impact on the words in the book," she says. "I've come to learn the philosophy of the press, getting the text across as it was intended."

Presentation—the layout of each page of a book—is essential to communicating words and ideas, Maelen says. She predicts that her own creative writing will benefit from this understanding. "I've learned so many things about myself that I wouldn't have had access to," she says.

— DEBORAH SPIEGELMAN

LISTENING TO LIFE STORIES

One of the best skills that St. John's students develop is the ability to truly listen to other points of view. But few students are given the opportunity to apply that skill in so meaningful a way as Jon Kara Sylvester-Johnson (Ao8), who spent last summer recording the stories of terminally ill patients in the care of Good Samaritan Hospice in Virginia.

After observing the care her grandmother received in a

hospice program several years ago, Sylvester-Johnson was moved by the alternative model of treatment offered by palliative medicine and challenged by the question of how hospice centers could offer patients comparable spiritual care. "I really came to terms with the idea of not using extreme life-saving measures and the kind of sensitivity it takes to be in a situation where [one has to make] those kinds of choices," she says.

It was that sensitivity to the spiritual life of hospice patients that drew Sylvester-Johnson to the Pastoral Services department at Good Samaritan Hospice in her hometown of Roanoke, Va. But it was only by chance that the hospice had recently received a donation to create Memory Catchers, a "life review" program that allows patients to reflect on their lives and record their stories. With funding from the Hodson Internship Program, Sylvester-Johnson was hired to develop the project.

After researching life review programs around the country and reviewing psychological studies that underlie the practice, Sylvester-Johnson and her mentor, the hospice's Spiritual Director Marvin Barbre, introduced Memory Catchers. During the next two months,

she acquired audio equipment, wrote the program's guidelines, trained volunteers, informed nurses and social workers, and

began a comprehensive archive of patient testimonials.

But the most challenging part of her internship, she says, was conducting the interviews. Rather than beginning with a list of questions, Sylvester-Johnson tailored each visit to the individual's needs. "Sometimes if a patient has a small child, you can have a message recorded for that child for when they're older," she says. "We had one patient we wanted to record singing. Some of them just want to have a conversation with you."

As she returns to the seminar table for her senior year, Sylvester-Johnson is engaging in different types of conversations. But listening to the final testimonials of hospice patients has reminded her that at St. John's, "there has to be an element of self-exploration about what we do, as opposed to just what we think. If not, she adds, "our education is no more valuable than [that of] any other liberal arts college in the country."

— KEA WILSON (A09)

FLYING HIGH

Santa Fe Student Conducts Research in the Stratosphere

On July 27, Michael Curry (SF09) became the first undergraduate college student to fly on the National Science Foundation's HIAPER Gulfstream-V research aircraft. HIAPER, which stands for High-performance Instrumented Airborne Platform for Environmental Research, is a new "flying laboratory."

Curry's task was to help test a new laser-based moisture instrument during a nine-hour flight from Colorado to the central Gulf of Mexico and back. Scientists sampled conditions ranging from the marine atmosphere over the Gulf of Mexico to stratospheric conditions near 47,000 feet. In contrast, most

commercial aircraft fly around 35,000 feet, on rare occasions climbing to 40,000 feet. The purpose of the research is to develop better moisture measurements for weather and climate prediction. Curry was part of a team of about a dozen scientists testing new instruments for the aircraft.

The opportunity to join the expedition came about because Curry was working as a National Science Foundation REU (Research Experience for Undergraduates) intern under the supervision of Mark Zondlo, a senior research scientist at Southwest Sciences, Inc.

Curry was the second Johnnie to spend a fruitful summer at



Southwest Sciences, which is based in Santa Fe. Last year, Kate Brubaker (SF07) conducted similar studies with Zondlo. ❖

MICHAEL CURRY'S SUMMER INTERNSHIP INCLUDED A RESEARCH PROJECT ABOARD A FLYING LABORATORY FOR ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCE.

TRACKING GAMMA-RAYS

Annapolis Tutor Part of NASA Project

Sometime next spring, when NASA launches a powerful new space telescope, Annapolis tutor Jim Beall can claim a piece of this effort to illuminate some of the most persistent mysteries of the universe. An astrophysicist, Beall spends part of his time away from St. John's at the E.O. Hulburt Center for Space Research at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, D.C., where his own curiosity about space is directed toward long-running research projects.

The Gamma-Ray Large Area Space Telescope (GLAST) is quite different from the telescopes at the college observatory. This instrument will measure gamma-rays, the highest energy form of electromagnetic radiation, in an effort to understand more about

phenomena such as quasars, pulsars, and black holes. As part of a team of scientists working at universities and research centers all over the country, Beall has been helping to develop computers that can determine the direction of gamma-rays and convert data into a map in gamma-ray light.

In the 1990s, Beall worked on ARGOS, a satellite data collection system with computers that were the forerunners to those on GLAST. The challenge of this project, Beall says, is developing fast computers that can operate in the radiation of space. Scientists can then convert data collected from the computers into an image of gamma-rays in the night sky. Active galaxies and quasars emit other frequencies as well, such as radio and optical light.

Scientists can determine the physical parameters of the sources by combining radio and optical light with the detected gamma-rays in order to "see" the energy distribution over the entire electromagnetic spectrum. "The actual sources of the gamma-rays can change in brightness," he says. "This means that the image changes as a function of time, so we have to construct a time history as well as a complete spectrum from the data. This is then used to determine the source parameters, and ultimately to tell what causes the emission from black holes and quasars."

As part of the GLAST project, Beall has also been conducting research on jets—columns of material sent out from the cores of active galaxies or quasars, much like a jet of water from a fire hose. Over the past 25 years, astrophysicists have learned that much of the radiation detected from quasars comes from bi-directional jets

emitted from black holes. For much of those 25 years, Beall has been conducting research to understand the nature of these jets and how they affect the region near the quasars.

"If we understand how these jets affect the regions near the cores of quasars, we can perhaps tell what the jets are made of," says Beall. "This can ultimately allow us to speculate on how these jets are produced, a problem (among many others) that we have not solved to anyone's satisfaction."

At St. John's, Beall mentors students interested in astronomy and astrophysics, and has helped them to secure internships and apply to graduate schools. Erin Bonning (A97), who worked at the Naval Research Laboratory for two years before going off to earn a doctorate in general relativity, is now an astronomer at the Observatory of Paris at Meudon. ❖

BREAKING GROUND IN SANTA FE

Last July, Dr. Norman Levan (SFGI74), a physician in Sacramento, Calif., gave the college a \$5 million gift, announced during the Santa Fe kickoff of the college's \$125 million capital campaign. Exactly a year later, Dr. Levan joined members of the college community in a ceremonial groundbreaking for the center for the Graduate



JANE PHILLIPS

Institute that will bear his name. The Norman and Betty Levan Hall will house classrooms, offices and common rooms for the institute.

Dr. Levan is a professor emeritus and former chief of dermatology at the University of Southern California School of Medicine, where he earned his medical degree. He took time off to spend a summer at the institute, just to investigate the program, and found it so gratifying that he kept coming back. "The Graduate Institute changed my life," he said in announcing his gift.

The groundbreaking ceremony took place on the building site, located between Weigle Hall and the Fine Arts Building. More than a hundred people attended the ceremony. "We are honored by Dr. Levan's affiliation with us and our unique brand of education," said Michael Peters, president of the Santa Fe campus.

Campaign Chairman Ron Fielding (A70) spoke to how Dr. Levan's gift will serve the campus and future generations



JANE PHILLIPS

of Graduate Institute students. "One of the major priorities of the capital campaign is to fund building projects, and in that regard, the new Norman and Betty Levan Hall is a jewel in the campaign crown."

Dr. Levan joined Board of Visitors and Governors Chairman Sharon Bishop (Class of 1965), Annapolis President Christopher Nelson (SF70), Santa Fe Dean Victoria Mora, Mr. Peters, and Mr. Fielding in the ground-breaking ceremony. Under tents on Meem Placita, accompanied by a monsoon

DR. NORMAN LEVAN (THIRD FROM RIGHT AND BELOW) HELPED BREAK GROUND FOR THE NEW GRADUATE INSTITUTE CENTER IN SANTA FE.

rain, speeches and toasts were offered to Dr. Levan. His own words were brief, as he explained that at the Graduate Institute he found a place to nurture his desire to be a life-long learner.

—JENNY HANNIFIN

A REMARKABLE YEAR

Perhaps two great myths about St. John's College and fundraising can be put to rest forever: St. John's doesn't like to ask alumni for money, and alumni don't like to be asked for money. The evidence suggests otherwise:

- In 2006-07, the college recorded its most successful fundraising year ever, raising \$19,404,889 in gifts to the college's \$125 million capital campaign by the close of the fiscal year on June 30, 2007.

Fifty-four percent of the gifts came from alumni.

- As part of the campaign, alumni gave more to the Annual Fund than ever before, exceeding the \$2.89 million goal by about two percent.
- The total number of alumni gifts to the college has climbed significantly over the past seven years. In the last fiscal year, alumni made 3,004 gifts to the college, compared to about 2,000 gifts in the year 2000.

- In the summer of 2008, the college expects to announce a successful conclusion to the capital campaign, with a total of \$119.2 million in gifts and pledges raised as of October 1, 2007.
- Not only do the college's 8,300 alumni believe in supporting the college financially, but alumni themselves are also doing more to support the college's advancement efforts. Philanthropia, the alumni development council, has spearheaded a number of successful peer-to-peer efforts to inform

alumni about the college's financial needs and to boost support for the Annual Fund.

With Philanthropia's help, the college hopes to reach a new set of goals for the 2007-08 fiscal year, guaranteeing a successful end to the campaign. This year the mark is set at 40 percent giving and at least 3,400 gifts made. For more information about Philanthropia and how you can help, visit the college Web site: www.stjohns-college.edu. ☘

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONNECTING FINE ARTS AND LIBERAL ARTS

Just a few days after commencement in May, **Luke Kirkland** (SF07) and **Chelsea Batten** (A07) found themselves transported from the halls of St. John's to the studio of sculptor Greg Wyatt in the former crypt of St. John the Divine in New York City. It was only their first stop on the National Endowment for the Arts' inaugural Visual Arts/Liberal Arts workshop, which would take the two graduates from New York to Europe for a month-long program.

Santa Fe tutor **Grant Franks** (A77) and Annapolis tutor **Patricia Locke** were among the scholars and artists who designed the workshop, created to deepen the connections between the liberal arts and the fine arts. The experience centered on in-depth study of European writers and artists, with a special focus on the works of Shakespeare and Rembrandt. Participants were flown to Europe to sculpt alongside the works of Monet in the gardens of Giverny, study Rembrandt in Amsterdam, and discuss *King Lear* in the theaters of Stratford-on-Avon.

Six liberal arts students were selected to participate in the program, as well as six students studying visual arts or theatre. Regardless of their artistic inclinations, all students were required to pick up a paintbrush and attempt to replicate Rembrandt's colors. Similarly, the young artists were required to sit at a seminar table to discuss *Macbeth* with liberal arts students.

For Kirkland, the workshop was much more than a jaunt to Europe. "Exposure to and engagement with the tangible, with the explicit and physical reality of Rembrandt's work was a great exercise after the intellectual work of St. John's," he says.

Franks observed that the fine arts students also benefited by discussing texts in seminars. Through modeling "hands-on, interdisciplinary, discussion-based and self-motivated learning in the presence of classics, St. John's certainly made its mark," he said.

BROOKLYN COLLEGE HONORS EVA BRANN

At commencement ceremonies last May, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York honored tutor **Eva Brann**

(HA86) with its Distinguished Alumna Service Medal.

In accepting her award, Miss Brann noted a memorable teacher at Brooklyn College, Alice Kober, her professor for Classics 101. The course had a bad beginning when Miss Brann flunked her first exam, on Homer. "It took me down some and then sat me down to my assigned reading," she said. "And so I discovered Homer and began to attend to the unflamboyant fire of her classroom talk. I had no idea that she was a world-famous pioneer in the decipherment of the writing of Homer's heroes. But I became a classics major, eventually an archeologist."

NEW TUTORS, ANNAPOLIS

The Annapolis campus welcomed two new tutors this fall: **Amanda Printz** has a BA from Guilford College and a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Southern California. She was a teaching assistant at USC from 2000-2005. **Gregory Recco** has a BA from SUNY at Stony Brook and a PhD in Philosophy from Pennsylvania State University. He was a graduate instructor at Penn State from 1996-2003 and an assistant professor of Philosophy at Skidmore College from 2003-07.

NEW STAFF

Maggie Melson has joined the Annapolis staff as special assistant to President Christopher Nelson (SF70). She joins the college from Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Va., where she was director of external relations. Melson will act as a liaison to staff, faculty, students, and the wider community.

LUKE KIRKLAND (SF07) PRESENTS HIS WORK DURING AN NEA-SPONSORED WORKSHOP LAST SUMMER.

FACULTY NEWS

Tutor emeritus **Curtis Wilson** of the Annapolis campus took part in an August workshop marking the 300th anniversary of the work of Leonhard Euler, the 18th-century, Swiss-born mathematician. Held at the Mathematical Research Institute at Oberwolfach in Germany's Black Forest, the five-day gathering brought scholars from around the world. Wilson spoke on Euler's influence in the development of celestial mechanics.

Wilson also contributed to a collection of essays titled *Leonhard Euler: Life, Work, and Legacy*, written by Euler scholars from seven countries and published earlier this year by the Elsevier Press. Wilson's chapter is entitled "Euler and the Application of Analytical Mathematics in Astronomy."

CLASS GIFT UPDATE

The Santa Fe Class of 2004 has made progress in its ambitious plan to present the Santa Fe campus with an operational replica of 16th-century astronomer Tycho Brahe's armillary sphere. The class began with \$6,000 at the end of May 2004, and the college-managed account now totals \$26,800. The class needs to raise at least \$100,000.

The committee plans to work with artist David Harber to design and construct the 1.5-meter equatorial armillary sphere. As both a scientific instrument and a sculpture, the sphere will serve as a symbol and as a reminder of the unity of the sciences and the humanities.

To find out more about the project, please visit the SF04 Armillary Sphere Project homepage on SJC Alumni website (<http://alumni.stjohnscollege.edu>) or contact the committee at armillarysphere@alumni.stjohnscollege.edu. ❀



MUSIC IN THE 1940S

This is a slight quibble over your article “Sing Goddess” on music and the Program (Spring 2007). It leaves the impression that prior to 1949, thanks to their indifference to music, the founders of the Program had created a barren, music-less wasteland. While it is certainly true that music did not become “a formal part” of the Program in those early years, it was present in a number of ways.

First, because music is one of the quadrivium, in several of the most quixotic of the early laboratory classes there was a study of sound, music and their relationship to astronomy. Second, tutor Nicholas Nabokov recruited, conducted, and gave concerts with a student chorus throughout the war. He had been recruited by Buchanan especially for his musical abilities. Finally, Buchanan scheduled several concerts as formal lectures during the year. As students during the forties, we were privileged to hear several top-notch chamber groups. . . .

I don’t want to detract an iota from the magnificent contributions of Victor Zuckerkandl and Douglas Allanbrook in making music an integral part of the program. It is just that the forties were not quite a musical wasteland, and our esteemed founders did, indeed, have an appreciation for music.

GEORGE M. VAN SANT (CLASS OF 1947)

MUSICAL DIMENSIONS

I read with interest *The College* articles on the music curriculum [Spring 2007], mulling over the tutors’ struggles with that part of the Program, and reflecting on my student experience and on my subsequent work as a scholar librarian of music.

I have three observations. One is that many tutors who are passionate about music are also inarticulate according to the conventions of Program study and discussion. The result often is they make the subject of music

seem mystifying to their colleagues and students. . . . Peter Pesic’s contribution, “A Dialogue Between Ancients and Moderns,” is beautiful, but I doubt it is understandable to half of the college faculty. A second observation is that there seems to be an assumption, shared by many faculty, that one has to sing or perform music well in order to discuss music. According to that logic, one has to draw well in order to discuss geometry and its visual figures. To be sure, good drawing skills and singing practice may increase a student’s disposition for learning geometry and music. But in math tutorial practice, plane lines are rarely drawn straight on the chalkboard; nonetheless, the demonstrations are executed well enough to proceed from one proof to the next. Everyone should have the same confidence for learning in the music tutorial, even if their performing abilities are as bad as their drawing skills. The third is the trepidation that many of the quoted faculty feel, using words like “worry,” “scary,” the need to feel “more comfortable” . . . leading tutorials on music. All faculty should feel the same trepidation for every seminar and tutorial they supervise, not just for music. This is the very trepidation for the immeasurable task of education that Jacob Klein expressed before delivering several of his Friday night lectures.

In my thoughts, I begin with music as a perceptible if intangible entity. Then the first question that I ask is, “What are the dimensions of music?” From my research, I have to come to think there are three: melody (including time, rhythm, and words [that may be likened in notation to linear length]); harmony (that may be likened in notation to spatial width); and tone (including timbre and volume [that may be likened to depth, which is very difficult to render in notation]). There may be another dynamic, perhaps

unnamed dimension of music suggested by the phenomenon of harmonic overtones. As an audio-time art, music is too imperfect to demonstrate its properties through demonstrative propositions in the manner of Euclid. But . . . the identification of dimensions may enable some elements, postulates, axioms, and quantitative measures that could serve towards a foundation of reasoned, indeed “musical” study and discussion, as tools with which to examine examples of music of varying kinds and origins, and as bases of assessment of the various writings of music theory and performance practice, including the kind of dialogue between Grand View and Practical View that Elliot Zuckerman well describes in his article. Perhaps one may use the conventions acquired in freshman math of discussing planes and solids in order to discuss music according to its dimensional characteristics and properties.

I conclude from last issue’s articles that sober, reasoned work has yet to be done on the music tutorial. . . .

EDWARD KOMARA (A88)

REMEMBERING MUSIC

Your article “‘Sing, Goddess’: Music and the Program” suggests further research is needed in the teaching of music at St. John’s College before 1949. Certainly there were experts in music then. The composer Elliott Carter was a tutor, 1939-41, and Nicolas Nabokov 1941-44. Carter, whom I’ve had the great pleasure of meeting, told me—or maybe it was Victor Zuckerkandl—that music was studied somehow by looking at scores. Meanwhile, it’s good to learn that Zuckerkandl’s writing is now part of the prescribed canon. Carter’s exciting and distinguished music should also be.

EYVIND RONQUIST (CLASS OF 1961)

PREPARING TUTORS

The Spring 2007 article on the music program managed to convey much of its richness and complexity, as well as the challenge it poses to our commitment to teach and to learn across the full range of the liberal arts. I would like to offer one small clarification. Since the most recent revision of the Annapolis music tutorial by Elizabeth Blettner, with help from Michael Littleton, Peter Kalkavage, Bill Pastille, Tom May and others, more tutors have taught the tutorial for the first time than during any previous comparable period. Nonetheless, many tutors still find the challenge formidable and feel the need of assistance and encouragement to undertake it.

MICHAEL DINK (A75)
DEAN, ANNAPOLIS

NOT THE FIRST LADY

I enjoyed your coverage of the 25th St. John’s-Navy croquet match, but I did want to correct a couple of details. First of all, I do not go (nor have I ever gone) by the title of “First Lady Wicket.” And while John Ertle was the Imperial Wicket in the first inter-collegiate match, he was not the first Imperial Wicket for St. John’s. He inherited the title from Johnny Schiavo (A81), and there were others before him. John prefers the title of Imperial Wicket Emeritus, bestowed upon him by the Delegate Council in 1984. Finally, the unidentified “young boy” in your picture is our younger son David.

KATHY OGGINS ERTLE (A84)

Correction: In the article “Pop Johnnies,” (Spring 2007) a quote by Ayn Rand on art as a “selective re-creation of reality according to an artist’s meta-physical value judgments” was mistakenly attributed to Marcel Proust.

Send letters to *The College* at reharty.sjca.edu, or mail to 60 College Ave., Annapolis, MD 21401.

COMMENCEMENT

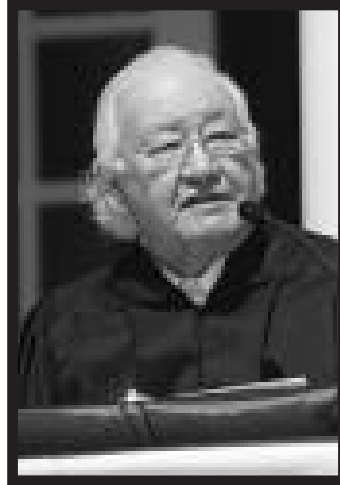
“WHEN DOGS COULD TALK”

N. Scott Momaday, author, poet, playwright, painter, and storyteller, gave the commencement address in Santa Fe on May 19. One hundred six undergraduates and 25 Graduate Institute students received their degrees.

A member of the college’s Board of Visitors and Governors, Momaday won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1969 for his first novel, *House Made of Dawn*. In his 1976 book, *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, Momaday combines stories of Kiowa Indian myth and history with his own personal reminiscences.

Momaday’s address, “When Dogs Could Talk: Among Words in a State of Grace,” described the history and characteristics of words in the oral tradition. Drawing his title from an expression used by Kiowa elders to refer to an event that happened long ago, Momaday explored the mystery inherent in one of mankind’s oldest art forms, the oral tradition.

Although modern literature has come to comfortably inhabit the world of the written word, Momaday argued that the oral



tradition has not died, suggesting instead that “to the extent that the deepest belief in the efficacy of language survives, it survives in the oral tradition.” In contemporary Western civilization, however, it is a dimension of language that is frequently neglected. He reminded the audience that “more than half the population of the world does without writing at this moment in time.” The oral tradition is present even within written works themselves, or wherever else language is invoked in all its power, creativity, and magic,



he said. He cited *Hamlet* and the Gettysburg Address as two significant and timeless written works whose vitality stems from their power in speech.

“In *Beowulf*, or in the Book of Job, or in the Navajo Prayer of the Night Chant, the language of story is the

language of poetry, plain, exalted, and oral,” he said. “It is the language of surfaces rather than symbols, faceted like the bright prisms of the dragon’s hoard.”

Exploring the language of surfaces rather than the language of symbols, Momaday found an enchanting dimension of words, which he suggests are as old as language itself. He feels that the oral tradition returns him to a time when language is just being born, “a time when dogs could talk,” and he likens himself to dwelling “among words in a state of grace.”

—CAROLINE CALDWELL (SF08)

ABOVE, M. SCOTT MOMADAY SPEAKS TO SANTA FE GRADUATES ABOUT THE BEAUTY OF THE ORAL TRADITION. ABOVE RIGHT, SANTA FE PRESIDENT MICHAEL PETERS CONGRATULATES ELISE HANRAHAN, WHILE AT LEFT, CAMILO ALBA NAVARRO AND RENEE ALBRECHT-MALLINGER AWAIT THEIR DEGREES.



PHOTOS BY TERI THOMSON RANDALL

“HOW BRAVE A NEW WORLD?”

In his commencement address in Annapolis on May 13, bioethicist, scholar, and former St. John’s tutor Leon Kass drew from Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* to explore how scientific progress bears upon the question of what it means to be human. He suggested to the 103 undergraduates and 40 Graduate Institute students that their education prepared them to think carefully about what may be sacrificed in the name of scientific progress.

Kass is now Addie Clark Harding Professor in the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago and Hertog Fellow in Social Thought at the American Enterprise Institute. He was chairman of the President’s Council on Bioethics from 2002 to 2005 and still serves on the council. For more than 30 years, he has been engaged with ethical and philosophical issues raised by biomedical advances, and, more recently, with broader moral and cultural issues.

Huxley’s novel remains an important cautionary tale, said Kass. The author depicts

a world in which man has become so dehumanized by technological achievements that while seemingly content, “he does not even realize what he has lost.”

The similarities “between Huxley’s fictional world and ours are increasingly disquieting, especially since our technologies of bio-psychoengineering are still in their infancy, yet vividly reveal what they might look like in their full maturity,” Kass said. “Moreover, the cultural changes technology has already wrought among us should make us worry even more than Huxley would have had us do.”

In Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, Kass pointed out, Prospero’s magic is no match for his innocent daughter’s view of humanity. “Not her father’s magical control of nature, but limited humankind’s reaching for understanding and association, precisely in response to our natural limitations, is—for Miranda and for us—the truly wondrous human achievement,” he said. “Recognition of our finitude becomes the source of aspiration, and mindfulness of mortality



ABOVE, JOSHUA SAKS AND KAREN TOBIN-IPPOLITO, NEWLY MINTED GI GRADUATES; BELOW LEFT, LEON KASS GAVE THE COMMENCEMENT SPEECH; BELOW RIGHT, BLAIR THOMPSON, LEFT, AND CHELSEA STIEGMAN (BOTH AO7) AWAIT THEIR DEGREES.

becomes our spur to love and transcendence.”

In our time, Kass said, “honest reflection” on the human experience isn’t enough to counter the dehumanizing effects of technology; Johnnies, however, have a foundation for reflection. “The great books education offered by this College is second to none in furnishing minds and hearts with the wherewithal for living . . . a thoughtful and richly human life, in defiance of the temptation to settle

for the degrading satisfactions of biotechnological happiness,” Kass said. “Only at this college do students and faculty still talk wholeheartedly and without embarrassment about the human soul.”

—EMILY DEBUSK (AO7)

Editor’s note: The complete commencement addresses are available on the college Web site: www.stjohnscollege.edu.



PHOTOS BY GARY PIERPOINT

“WITH A CLEAR AND SINGLE PURPOSE”

The Tutors and the Program

BY BARBARA GOYETTE (A73) AND ROSEMARY HARTY

With the vision of Virgil, the persistence of Socrates, the rigor of Euclid, and the insight of Shakespeare, St. John's tutors bring the program of instruction to life. Every era at St. John's since the 1937 inception of the New Program has had its memorable tutors, whom alumni remember long after they have graduated. Today, experienced and new tutors from many fields of studies lead students through the Program.

It is hard to describe the essence of what a tutor does in the classroom. Indeed, their “methods” in seminars, laboratories, and tutorials vary from intense engagement in class discussions to provocative silence on the issues at hand. Tutors guide, direct, nudge, inspire, and otherwise enable students to become full participants in the dialogue. Tutor Eva Brann, after five decades at St. John's, describes the life of a tutor as “an alternation of exhilaration and despair, as classes go well or ill, as we ourselves feel a sense of having gotten something or being confounded. That teacher's wave train is amplified by our . . . sense of responsibility without the power to compel by grades, or by lectures,” she wrote in her essay “Unique and Universal.”

Preparing for classes each week is only one of a tutor's tasks. Tutors participate in constant evaluation of the Program through weekly archon meetings and the Instruction Committee; they meet with students for paper conferences, advising, and guidance about graduate school or other opportunities; they participate in informal study groups, both with

their colleagues and with students. They spend Saturday mornings of Homecoming leading seminars for reunion classes and travel to other cities to lead Executive Seminars for business leaders seeking to learn from the great books.

In short, he tutors at St. John's College devote themselves to the Program.

A SPIRIT OF INQUIRY

During his tenure as dean in Annapolis (1986-90), tutor emeritus Thomas Slakey (HA86) read hundreds of letters from applicants for the handful of tutor openings each year at St. John's. More than two decades later, he still remembers a letter from a scholar who had written her dissertation on Portuguese literature and had been living among indigenous tribes in Brazil. "In terms of her background, she really didn't have any of the preparation you might expect, but she seemed like an interesting person," Slakey recalls. "We appointed her, and she was an immediate success."

Hiring Judy Seeger to join the faculty in 1990 is something Slakey is still proud of years later. Why was she so perfect for St. John's? "She has an inquiring mind," he says.

Slakey joined the college in 1959 and in 1964 went out to Santa Fe to become one of the founding faculty members there. He took a few "breaks" from the college over the years, becoming chief academic officer at St. Mary's College from 1971-76. He later spent three years in the early 1980s starting a program modeled on St. John's at a Kentucky university, then returned to Annapolis. "I was in and out of the college quite a bit, and I was always glad to get back," he says. "The thing that St. John's really does, and does well, is help people learn to read well, to pay attention to what a text says, one book at a time. That's the thing that makes teaching there so pleasant, reading and learning from the students."

However, colleagues at other institutions and other academics Slakey met over the years were puzzled by how tutors at St. John's teach across the curriculum. "Most academics think it's crazy," he says. "I was involved in a discus-



ANTHONY RUSSO

sion with a very great scholar on Dante, and when he discovered I was teaching Dante, and I couldn't read Italian, he thought I was a disgrace. Specialists don't understand someone like me teaching math and biology when I knew nothing about it when I came to St. John's."

Supporting tutors as they branch out beyond their discipline and keeping tutors' minds ripe for inquiry should be important goals for the college, Slakey says. "For me, a major difficulty was the variety of material and the difficulty of getting as much mastery as I would have liked. I know that I worked very hard and I struggled at times," he says.

To continue to attract the best tutors, the college must work harder to offer competitive

salaries. "We have to keep salaries competitive with similar institutions," he says. "No one is going to come to St. John's to try to get rich, but particularly when tutors are raising families in expensive cities, salaries have to be a priority."

AIMING FOR THE MEDIAN

For the sake of the students and the continued integrity of the Program, St. John's must be able to recruit and retain excellent tutors. Compensation is a major factor in drawing good teachers and keeping them at the college. The college has always lagged behind its peer institutions in the salary it has been able to pay tutors, primarily because endowment has been insufficient to meet this need.

At the time Annapolis President Christopher Nelson joined the college in 1991, St. John's occupied last place in the salaries it paid among a group of about 45 national liberal arts schools including Pomona, Amherst, Colby, Davidson, and Bucknell. Ten years ago, Santa Fe and Annapolis together averaged 26 percent below the median level of compensation. Through gradual and steady increases, by 2007 the college had reached six percent below the median of 44 peer colleges. "We never quite reached the median, but we've been climbing up the ranks," Nelson says. "When and if we hit that target

will depend on the growth of the endowment relative to these other colleges.”

Each one percent increase in tutor compensation (including salary and benefits) costs the college \$130,000 for the entire teaching faculty on both campuses. To close the six percent gap, the college would have to find another \$780,000 each year or a \$15.6 million increase in endowment, which can be spent at the rate of five percent annually in perpetuity.

The college's service-based salary system sets a minimum of \$52,500 for new tutors. It's a concern for Nelson that tutors on both campuses are struggling to meet housing costs and raise families in the expensive communities of Santa Fe and Annapolis. “We want our tutors to be able to live decent lives without taking second jobs, to buy a home in our communities, to be able to afford a babysitter so they can come to Friday lecture or enjoy a dinner out occasionally,” he says.

Until he became president of the Annapolis campus, Nelson says, he hadn't realized how much the college asks of its tutors. “As a student, I had no idea how deep, how well read, how interesting the tutors are at St. John's,” Nelson said. “I sat in on Instruction Committee interviews of prospective tutors, and I came to realize how engaged they are in learning both within and outside the Program.”

At St. John's, tutors spend more time in the classroom than their peers at liberal arts colleges, and although freed from publishing and research requirements, “they spend a lot of time outside the classroom working to help the students and improve the college,” he says.



DEMETRIOS FOTOS

ANNAPOLIS TUTOR
TOM MAY SHARES HIS
VIEWS ON THE *ODYSSEY*
WITH NICOLE MILLER
(AG108)

Since its beginnings, the Program was structured to make tutors available to students as part of a learning community—much different from the relationship between faculty and students at most institutions, he says. “There's no substitute for conversation with young people who are eager to learn, and that's what our tutors do so well,” he says.

“They listen, they question, and they guide.”

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Approaching 2,000-year-old texts afresh each semester is a challenge tutors meet with enthusiasm and energy. And yet, for their own development as learners in the Program and as scholars dedicated to venturing beyond the bounds of a single department of academic endeavor, they must continually renew their minds.

One way the college supports this effort is through faculty development, mainly in the form of study groups for which the leaders and participants receive compensation or release-time from a portion of their teaching. By meeting together with colleagues and working through an unfamiliar text, tutors expand their ability to address questions and to see connections between various parts of the program.

Study groups can prepare tutors to teach in areas where they have little or no experience, such as a 2005 summer study group led by tutor Howard Fisher in Santa Fe. For eight weeks the tutors worked through most of the experiments conducted

in the first semester of senior laboratory, a part of the Program that can be daunting for faculty who lack scientific backgrounds. “It’s sometimes the case that tutors who feel confident participating in a study of the papers read in senior year don’t feel very comfortable with the practical aspects,” explains Fisher. “The only way really to participate in the laboratory activity is practice; it’s the same for tutors as for students.”

As they conducted experiments such as the photoelectric effect, tutors could see the connections their students would be making in the classroom as they worked through modern atomic theories. “From a theoretical point of view, it’s quite wonderful that we find ourselves returning to questions that were central in the freshman year, the whole idea of the constitution of the atom, and what kind of explanation physical science should strive for. The very questions we began with,



GIFTS TO THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN SUPPORT FACULTY DEVELOPMENT, SUCH AS THIS STUDY GROUP ON SENIOR LABORATORY IN SANTA FE. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE: TUTORS JANET DOUGHERTY, STEPHEN VAN LUCHENE, HOWARD FISHER, AND LYNDA MYERS.

we return to in a very different context. It’s an ongoing demonstration that questioning doesn’t stop,” says Mr. Fisher.

The college is equally committed to providing these opportunities for formal study groups by granting tutors release time to plan and lead the groups, or compensating tutors for the additional time they spend in formal study during the summer. Through the capital campaign, the college hopes to raise \$8 million in endowment and Annual Fund gifts to support faculty development in the future. “We don’t appoint tutors because they have a specialty in a certain area,” Mr. Fisher notes. “We appoint tutors because they are interested in the kind of broad study that our students want. They want to study things and read books for the sake of wisdom. They need the opportunity to become fruitful students and fruitful leaders of classes.”

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As of September 30, 2007, the Campaign for St. John’s College has raised \$119.2 million in gifts and pledges toward the \$125 million goal. The campaign seeks to raise funds for three major priorities: to support students with need-based financial aid and improved services; to increase faculty salaries to the median of peer institutions and provide more faculty development opportunities; and to fund building projects, including renovations and additions, on the two campuses. Money raised through the campaign has already made a significant difference to the college, through growth in the Annual Fund (which provides operating expenses for instruction and financial aid), growth in the endowment, and new buildings.

These leadership gifts have contributed to the campaign’s success:

- Ronald Fielding (A70) made a \$10 million gift to fund scholarships. He has also pledged to give another \$2.5 million to the campaign if St. John’s alumni match

that amount through first-time or increased gifts as well as pledges to the college.

- Warren Spector (A81) provided funding for a new dormitory in Annapolis.
- A single anonymous donor contributed \$12 million, earmarked for the college’s annual spending needs and for endowment.
- The Hodson Trust has given \$11 million for the construction of Gilliam Hall and for Mellon Hall renovations, for student internships, for IT development, and for teacher fellowships to the Graduate Institute.
- Dr. Norman Levan (SFGI74) made a gift of \$5 million for the construction of a Graduate Institute center in Santa Fe.
- Alumni, friends of the college, and foundations have pledged \$26.5 million to help support faculty salaries and development, through the Eva Brann Tutorship and various grants for faculty study groups.

IN THE PRESENCE OF GREAT THINGS

Eric Salem (A77), Annapolis

The best thing about being a tutor at St. John's, says Eric Salem (A77), "is that you're always in the presence of things that are really great." The worst thing about being a tutor? Exactly the same thing, he says.

"You're in the presence of things that are great, but there's always a strain," Salem says, "You never feel as if you can stop and say, 'Ah, I'm ready for this class.' There's always more to think about."

If alumni remember how overwhelmed they sometimes felt trying to prepare for class, they understand the challenges tutors face. "You always have to try not just to get hold of what's going on in the book, but also to be open to what everyone else is saying, to respond to the best things in what people are saying—it's hard work," he says.

After graduating from St. John's, Salem went to the University

of Dallas for doctoral studies in politics and literature. Specializing in political theory was an "accident," Salem says. "What I really wanted to do was study a subset of the books I had been reading at St. John's, slow down and read carefully," he says. At the college, he developed a special interest in ideas raised by books including the *Nicomachean Ethics* (the relationship between thinking and acting) and *War and Peace* (families as part of a political community). "Reading that novel made me think that political questions were something I really needed to think hard about," he says.

Former St. John's tutor Thomas Slakey (HA94) recruited Salem to join him at Whitney Young College at Kentucky State University, where he was leading efforts to create a program similar to the St. John's program. Slakey stayed just a few years, but Salem spent seven years there before he became too frustrated by standard university bureaucracy.

"Then I had the opportunity to come to St. John's," Salem says. "I wanted to come back to this way of teaching and learning."

He was much more eager to teach across the curriculum than to be "the political theory guy" in a political science department, Salem says. But on the other hand, he gave up the ability to devote focused and prolonged attention to a book or idea. "That's what's so nice about these summer study groups," he says. "This is a way to do really concentrated work with your colleagues so that you can develop your own understanding of some of the books and texts that are central to the program. They really do help your thinking."

Over the years, Salem has taken part in groups on Chekhov, on Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*, on Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, on Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, and on Leibniz's mathematical papers. Salem earned a stipend to take part in some of the opportunities, but the group with whom he studied Aristotle for 10 years engaged in their endeavor just for the joy of it.

Most of Salem's outside pursuits center on reading. He also plays jazz and classical guitar, and runs regularly in his Annapolis neighborhood. He unwinds by reading novels in other languages and reads Plato, Aristotle, and Heidegger for enjoyment. "Right now, Peter Kalkavage, Eva Brann, and I are translating (and discussing endlessly) Plato's *Statesman*, an activity that combines pure fun and seriousness in just the right proportions," he says.

Asked to reflect on a single quality that makes a tutor right for St. John's, Salem proposes that it's the "willingness to start all over again, again and again."

"I'm eager to do it," Salem says. "But I rely on the students to help me remember that I don't really know much. I prize above all those moments—and they come in almost every class or study group meeting or conversation—when the bottom falls out of my understanding and when my students and colleagues force me to look at books and the world as if I were seeing them for the first time." ❖

—ROSEMARY HARTY



BILL DENISON

AT ST. JOHN'S TUTORS SUCH AS ERIC SALEM (A77) ENJOY LEARNING TOGETHER WITH STUDENTS SUCH AS EMMANUEL THOMAS (A09).

EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN

Jessica Jerome, Santa Fe

Last summer, under the auspices of a National Science Foundation grant, St. John's tutor Jessica Jerome spent nine weeks in the poorest neighborhoods of Fortaleza, Brazil, conducting fieldwork among HIV-positive mothers. The work was intellectually challenging and physically exhausting, made more so because Jerome was in the second trimester of her own first pregnancy.

The summer of 2007 was the first of two that Jerome will devote to the Brazil project, exploring the psychological, social, and economic motivations for reproductive and medical decision making among mothers with HIV. She conducted extensive interviews of women who have borne one or more children after learning of a positive HIV diagnosis. By providing qualitative data about these women's motivations to bear children and receive medical treatment in Fortaleza, the study will contribute greatly to the growing body of literature on reproductive and medical decision-making in the context of HIV.

Jerome is excited about the opportunity to connect what she's learned from the program at St. John's to her research.

"I believe that we should really think about our experience and our activity in the world, to be reflective about it," she says. "Lectures are more about transmitting facts, or a kind of knowledge that has already been produced. The interesting thing about the pedagogy at St. John's is that it assumes that the knowledge is not preexisting, and that you are creating it as you're talking. When that works, it's a beautiful thing."

Jerome plans to involve Johnnies in her research. She hopes to support students who are interested in careers in social science and public health policy and to widen opportunities for summer internships, such as those available under Santa Fe's Ariel Program. She currently serves on the committee that reviews applications for the program, which provides stipends for internships.

Between her graduate work on medical decision making and tutoring at St. John's, Jerome did a postdoctoral stint at the

MacLean Center for Bioethics. Her interest in international health care matched the MacLean Center's endeavors, and there she trained as a medical ethics consultant to hospital staff and patients at the University of Chicago.

"Working at MacLean was different from my previous training," she explains. "Most of the other people in the fellowship program were medical doctors, and I was thrown into the material with them. I think that prepared me for the experience of St. John's in terms of working closely with people of very different backgrounds and disciplines, and working with material that I wasn't already familiar with."

St. John's offered similar challenges for Jerome as a first-year tutor, when she taught freshman math, freshman seminar, and freshman laboratory. "I just assumed that I wouldn't be put directly in the math and science classes," she said. "When David Levine [then the dean] told me that St. John's threw tutors into the Program, that they wanted us to be learning with the students, I didn't realize how seriously they took that!"

The college takes seriously its mission to educate students in all fields, including math and science, for four years, observes Jerome. "There's something really generous, and something to be respected, in this belief that what we teach here is knowledge that anyone can learn," she says. "Anybody who puts her mind to it, and works with herself and others, should be able to get through this program. That is really encouraging."

Opportunities to acquire a broad liberal arts education in this country are narrowing, says Jerome. That's one of the things that drew her to the college. "St. John's offers students a valuable opportunity to take four years not just to learn about ideas, but also to gain confidence that they can learn, and to prepare themselves to face the world and move forward, no matter what they do," she says. ✨

—JENNY HANNIFIN



CHRISTOPHER QUINN

SANTA FE TUTOR JESSICA JEROME ENJOYS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ALONG WITH HER STUDENTS.

AFTER THE STORM

Rebuilding Alone Can't Fix the City Billy Sothern (A98) Loves

BY ROSEMARY HARTY

Along with Plantation Tours, Voodoo Tours and Ghost Tours, the Katrina bus tour remains a popular sightseeing option for visitors to New Orleans these days. Buses take tourists from the fine hotels in the French Quarter and the Garden District to the sites of one of America's most incomprehensible catastrophes, showing the devastation and the rebuilding underway in the worst-hit neighborhoods.

But take a tour with Billy Sothern (A98) in his Subaru station wagon, Zydeco music on the radio, and although you'll see many of the same places—the FEMA trailer parks, the Lower Ninth Ward, the places where the levees failed—you'll hear very different views. Commercial tour guides are unlikely to tell you that people are rebuilding in subdivisions that never should have been developed in the first place. They probably won't suggest that bringing residents home to devastated suburbs weakens a central city reeling from the loss of 40 percent of its population and a good chunk of its tax base.

As much as Sothern loves the city that he and his wife made their home six years ago, he is sharply critical of the way the federal, state, and local governments are handling the recovery. "I think there's a way we can redevelop the city so that everyone who wants to can return," Sothern says.

"My argument is that New Orleans should go back to its historic footprint, where people can live safely without massive and largely unsuccessful efforts to build bigger levees. The idea that we can beat back nature is flawed and hubristic. We've had people who tried that for a long time, and that dynamic always seems to end the same way—as it will again in New Orleans."

Since graduating from New York University Law School, Sothern has worked in New Orleans as a staff attorney at the Capital Appeals Project, a nonprofit organization that provides legal services to individuals facing capital punishment. Since Katrina slammed into the city on August 29, 2005, he's been sharing his views on New Orleans in *The Nation* and *The New York Times*, and on the online journal Salon.com. This summer, the University of California Press published his first book, *Down in New Orleans: Reflections From a Drowned City*. He begins with an account of his evacuation from New Orleans with his wife, Nikki Page (A98), describing how their lives changed after Katrina, and analyzes long-standing social problems that pose a more serious threat to the city than any force of nature.

In the book, Sothern celebrates all that he loves about the city, but he's cynical about why Louisiana has captured the nation's attention. "Part of the interest of the rest of the country in what happened is that New Orleans is this place with this interesting culture, music, food, Mardi Gras," he says. "But is New Orleans worthy of the country's attention because we make good food? We merit the assistance of the

“The idea that we can beat back nature is flawed and hubristic.”

BILLY SOTHERN (A98)



NIKKI PAGE

BILLY SOTHERN (A98), IN FRONT OF A SHUTTERED NEW ORLEANS HOUSING PROJECT, SAYS THE CITY CAN'T RECOVER UNTIL POVERTY AND INEQUALITY ARE REMEDIED.

rest of the country not merely by virtue of the fact that we're Americans, but merely because we're interesting? To me that would seem like a fairly poor reflection on American culture."

"WELCOME TO THE TWILIGHT ZONE"

On a steamy day in early June, with thunderstorms threatening and gray skies adding to the bleakness, Sothern drives into the Mid-City District, just a few miles from his downtown office. When the levees designed to protect the city failed, 80 percent of New Orleans was flooded, including this middle-class neighborhood. Watermarks, once brown from roiling muddy water, faded now to a sickly yellow, mark the facades at various levels. "Look how high the water got on that ranch house," he says, "right to the top of the window. It's almost to the roofline on that white house."

Many homes here are still boarded up, and "for sale" signs are plentiful, as are the spray-painted marks left on the houses by search teams who swept through flooded neighborhoods after the disaster. They marked how many people were found, dead and alive, and sometimes added other information—"dog on roof," for example.

From Mid-City, Sothern drives over ruined roads to Lakeview and the site of the 17th Street Canal, where the first levee breach took place. Unlike other levees, which were overtopped, the 17th Street Canal failed at its foundation. A U.S. Senate committee cited design flaws and a lack of regular inspections as contributory factors. For the most part, the neighborhoods here were underwater, and residents who tried to ride out the storm in their homes had to be rescued from their rooftops, Sothern says. "This was a high-density suburban community," Sothern says. "All these empty lots are the sites of cleared homes."

Most of the street signs in Lakeview are gone, though some residents have posted hand-made signs for people to

find them. The abandoned homes, bad roads and absent street signs are remnants of the storm, but even before Katrina, Sothern says, New Orleans lacked many of the services other well-governed cities take for granted. The schools were in disrepair, the parks were neglected, and weeds overran the highway medians—all thanks to "laissez-faire government," says Sothern.

"Down here, there's a different relationship between the government and the citizenry and a different bent of what people are entitled to in their daily lives," he says. "People get all excited about libertarianism, but is this guy supposed to come out and fix this road?" he asks, pointing to a man working on his home. "Are these people supposed to pool their resources and rebuild the levies themselves? It's an absurdity."

Next, Sothern turns into a more affluent neighborhood along Lake Ponchartrain, where the hurricane damaged homes but no flooding occurred because the subdivision was built on high ground. In this pleasant cul-de-sac, all the front yards are landscaped and carefully groomed, and cars are in every driveway. The normalcy is in sharp contrast to neighboring Gentilly, where many homes still sit empty. Flooding was extensive here, and along with the Ninth Ward, Gentilly saw the highest number of deaths. A sign on one lawn proclaims "The Road Home is a Dead End," reflecting a common opinion of the federally funded homeowner's compensation plan.

"This neighborhood is really struggling," Sothern observes. "You may have one or two families back on each block. It has to be scary here at night, scary to not get government services, scary to invest so much of your life and your future in a place where the prospects are genuinely unclear."

The ruts in the road get deeper near the London Avenue Canal, where two



NIKKI PAGE

HURRICANE KATRINA DESTROYED THIS WAREHOUSE FOR MARDI GRAS FLOATS.

“Huge portions of the city are no safer from catastrophic flooding than they were before.”

BILLY SOTHERN (A98)

A SURVIVOR ATTENDS A CEREMONY MARKING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE KATRINA, AUG. 29, 2006.

poor information. Huge portions of the city are no safer from catastrophic flooding than they were before the storm.”

That includes New Orleans East, a sprawling development built on cypress wetlands that were drained by the Army Corps of Engineers. In the 1970s, the developer of this area attracted buyers from deteriorating and dangerous inner city neighborhoods with the promise of offering a safe place to raise families. “This was supposed to be the American dream,” Sothern says. The land was virtually worthless until the federal government spent millions draining the wetlands. Within a few years, the folly of building in a swamp was evident in sinking driveways and cracked foundations. Flooding after Katrina was



NIKKI PAGE

breaches of the levee allowed water from the industrial canal to flood the neighborhoods here. “Welcome to the Twilight Zone” is scrawled in spray paint across the front of one abandoned house. A resident watches warily as Sothern drives slowly down his street, perhaps tired of curiosity-seekers and tourists. It’s natural for Americans to admire the resiliency of those determined to rebuild, Sothern says. “The gut reaction any person would have would be to root for these people and see them return to their homes but those choices have to be tempered with reason, and I think they haven’t been,” he says. “People are investing their entire futures and the safety of their families, and it’s all predicated on very

extensive here, and now more government resources are reviving an area that in Sothern’s view never should have been built.

If a struggling city wants to grow stronger, its policies should bring residents back to the urban core of New Orleans, to viable neighborhoods built on high ground. Yet nothing is being done at any level of government to encourage that, he says. That’s what frustrates him the most—government and citizens together clinging to a cycle of disaster. “When these people go back to their homes, they need water, they need garbage pick-up, they need police out here, and it’s all going to put a strain on New Orleans,”



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Sothern says. “Yet there’s nothing vaguely resembling a tax base that would support this, and it’s hard to imagine that after two years, any more people are going to come back.”

From Gentilly, Sothern heads outside the city limits to St. Bernard Parish. With a staggering loss of population (76 percent, according to census data) and diminished revenues, the government here is struggling to provide basic services. “I read that 95 percent of the homes here flooded,” Sothern says. The government complex has not been rebuilt, so the parish council meets in a trailer, and each of the council members lost his or her home.

Sothern crosses the parish line back into the city, into the famous Lower Ninth Ward. Here, entire blocks are reverting to nature, with only remnants of driveways, concrete steps, and the pilings of foundations poking through the weeds. “No neighborhood bears the scars of Katrina as vividly,” says Sothern. “The force of the water was pretty strong here, that’s why there’s nothing. When Nikki and I first came down

A SCENE TYPICAL OF THE DESTRUCTION IN THE LOWER NINTH WARD. “NO NEIGHBORHOOD BEARS THE SCARS OF KATRINA MORE VIVIDLY,” SOTHERN SAYS.

here, houses were on top of cars, cars were on top of houses—it was outrageous. It looks better now, empty.”

Through the national media, the Lower Ninth became emblematic of the misery that followed Katrina, but Sothern believes Americans should focus more on the problems this neighborhood struggled with before, poverty in particular. Because this land was prone to flooding, it was one of the few places where the city’s poorest residents, many of them elderly, could afford to live. According to 2000 U.S. census data, half of the neighborhood’s residents lived on incomes of less than \$20,000 a year. After Katrina, residents feared a land grab in the Ninth Ward. Rumors circulated that developers would buy up the land for casinos. “That didn’t happen,” Sothern says. “No one wants this land.”

PROVIDING CONTEXT

Whether he’s writing about the Ninth Ward for *The Nation*, or preparing a brief in a death penalty case for the Louisiana Supreme Court, Sothern seeks to look deeply at issues to try to get at the basic truths behind events and opinions. “I view this as the core value of my St. John’s education,” he says. “The harder you look at things, the more complicated they become. Everything I write is always about providing context. It’s a consequence of reading books with other people, for days and weeks and months, where we never arrived at something that was unambiguously true.”

In the seven years he’s worked with Death Row inmates and defendants in capital cases, Sothern has come to know their families and their communities. He has seen how crime, poverty, and substandard schools factor in their stories, and it’s made him reflect on his own path in life. As a teenager, Sothern was caught selling drugs. Instead of going to jail, he ended up reading the great books at St. John’s.

After his legal issues were resolved, Sothern was living in New York’s Little Italy, a high school dropout trying to educate himself by reading everything he could find, books like Augustine’s *Confessions*. A friend who had attended the college steered him to St. John’s, where Sothern thrived. “Attending St. John’s was the single best decision I ever made,” he says. “I went from being a street kid to the person I am today.”

After graduation, Sothern earned his law degree at NYU, where one summer he interned with the Capital Appeals Project. In 2001, he joined the project as a staff attorney, a job he loves despite the long hours and low pay. “I knew I wanted to do criminal work, and after

coming down here I could see I wanted to do death penalty work,” he explains. “Looking back, it’s something I would be attracted to fighting against—it’s the most severe, the most heinous type of punishment.”

In Louisiana in 2007, 88 inmates were on Death Row, including Sothern’s client Shon Miller. In March 1999, after shooting his mother-in-law at her home, Miller walked into a church in Gonzales, La., and shot his two-year-old son, his estranged wife, and a church deacon. After he was found guilty of four counts of first-degree murder, Miller was sentenced to death by lethal injection.

During his apprehension, Miller was shot in the back, and his injuries left him a paraplegic. Held in an isolation cell of the hospital wing at Angola, he developed osteomyelitis, a painful condition attacking his bones. Sothern met Miller when he was assigned to try to work with the prison to get better health care and living conditions for Miller. “When I went to meet him, I was outraged by the conditions he was living in, and that they were only because he was disabled,”

he said. “He’s in very bad physical and psychological shape.”

After Sothern filed suit under the American Disabilities Act, the prison made some concessions, including allowing Miller some time outdoors. Now life is “marginally better” for his client, Sothern says. A year ago Sothern filed a brief with the Louisiana Supreme Court, seeking a new trial for Miller. He argued that Miller was denied a fair trial for two reasons: he was not permitted to enter a plea of not guilty by reason of insanity, in spite of a long history of mental illness, and the court refused to allow a nationally known criminal defense attorney to represent Miller.

“WE MISS IT EVERY DAY”

In August 2005, Mathieu de Schutter (SF94) was a resident at Children’s Hospital in New Orleans, while his wife, Sara Roahen (SF94), worked as a food and restaurant writer for the weekly *Gambit*, an alternative newspaper. They had moved to New Orleans so that he could attend medical school at Tulane. They evacuated during the storm and plans to have Mathieu do his residency in New Orleans changed when the program there was discontinued. Now they are living in Philadelphia, where he is in his second year of an anesthesia residency at the University of Pennsylvania. “He has two to three years of training left, depending on whether he chooses to do a fellowship,” reports Roahen. “We still own our house in New Orleans and miss it every day. We hope to live there again, but after what Katrina did to our long-term plans, we are a little gun shy about making other plans at the moment.”

Roahen visits Louisiana often and still writes about food and culture. Currently, she is at work on an oral history initiative with gumbo and boudain makers there. Her book, *Gumbo Tales: Finding My Place at the New Orleans Table*, will be published at Mardi Gras time in February 2008. “You may pre-order it on Amazon already!” she says. ✿

“It was an objectively horrifying crime,” Sothorn acknowledges, “but it’s in situations like this when the Constitution and rights afforded to the defendant become most important because there’s the greatest chance of passion and prejudice.”

In working for his clients, Sothorn draws on “the complexities of their lives” and the context in which their acts should be considered. Both of Miller’s parents were dead by the time Miller was three. He was raised by a foster family, spent time in mental institutions, and never received good mental health care.

Last May, Sothorn argued his case before the Louisiana Supreme Court. “I started the story with how police found Shon in a shed, talking and hearing voices that weren’t there, because the issues that were most important were related to his mental illness on the night of the crime,” he says. “The state comes into court and says, ‘This is a cold-blooded killer, he deserves to die.’ It’s my job to reframe that issue so that we view this event, this crime, in context.”

On June 29, the Supreme Court reversed Miller’s conviction, ruling that the trial court judge’s refusal to allow Miller to plead not guilty by reason of insanity led to a “constitutionally flawed jury trial.” The state plans to retry Miller later this year. If the case does get to court, Sothorn hopes his client will escape the death penalty this time, but



NIKKI PAGE AND BILLY SOTHERN, IN THE LUSH GARDEN OF THEIR IRISH CHANNEL HOME.

the reality is that Miller is more likely to die from his illness in prison.

Sothorn often gives books to his clients—Shakespeare or Thucydides, for example. Miller isn’t a reader, but Sothorn gave him a recording of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, believing that its Christian themes would resonate with his client. “I love talking about books with prisoners, about the Bible, about anything. Death Row is a lonely place, and it’s amazing to see such remarkable thoughts and ideas coming from such a dark place. I find it consistently impressive—not just about my clients, but about humanity—how people are able to transcend their circumstances.”

TRYING TO MOVE ON

Like many who love New Orleans, Billy Sothorn and Nikki Page are staying in the city, looking ahead, and making plans for the future. Their house on Carondelet Street, a few blocks from the Superdome, was damaged by Katrina’s winds, but their neighborhood stayed dry. They were able to come back to the city within a few weeks after the storm, though some of their good friends have left the city for good.

Page spotted their new home in the historic Irish Channel neighborhood while she was driving through the city, looking at houses for a friend. The building needed a lot of work, but she could see the former glory in the 1850s Ital-

ianate “double-gallery” with high ceilings, elegant parlors, and a second-story porch that looks out on a lively street. The backyard is a gardener’s paradise, with banana trees, bearded palms, Japanese magnolia, swamp lilies, spray roses, and bird of paradise plants. The barbed wire around the backyard fence, Sothern says, will soon come down. They rent out their other home because the market is too bad to try to sell it right now.

If Sothern coped with his anger over the storm and its aftermath by writing, Page, an artist, tried to make sense of the disaster through her camera lens. When the couple drove back to the city at nighttime in mid-October, she was shocked by what greeted her. “The first thing I noticed was the smell, and then the lack of light, the trash piles,” she says. “The city was really eerie, pregnant with that sense of death.”

Originally from Maine, Page attended a state university before finding her way to St. John’s, where she spotted her future husband from across the room at a party in Annapolis. She taught in New York and New Orleans, but now devotes herself full time to an art career. She takes classes at the New Orleans Academy of Art and gives private lessons in the studio she created in their new home. “That was the first room we finished,” she says.

HOPING FOR PROGRESS

Hazel (A69) and Larry Schlueter (A67) stayed in their Uptown home during Katrina with Hazel’s mother, who was 91 at the time. Hazel is a musician; Larry is retired from the U.S. Customs Service, and they lead a bluegrass band called “Hazel and the Delta Ramblers.” The hurricane damaged their roof, windows blew out, and Larry and Hazel patched up and mopped up as water poured in.

Two days after the storm, with water cut off and power still out, they left the city. Hazel recalls driving across the Greater New Orleans Bridge, watching people trying to walk out of the flooded city. “It was heartbreaking,” she says. “There were people on crutches. A woman was dragging her babies across in a cardboard box. It didn’t feel like this was America.”

They settled temporarily in Dallas with their son, Charles (A90), and his family. They moved back to the city almost as soon as they were allowed back in. Their small insurance settlement wasn’t even enough to pay for the new roof, so Larry has done most of the work himself.

“Where we live, the area is in comparatively good shape, but right on my square there are five houses where the roofs have not been repaired and the houses are just sitting there, empty,” says Hazel. “There was a fire in our neighborhood and the water pressure was low. There’s hardly anybody employed by the city. Much of the work and progress is by personal citizens spending their own money.”

Because many families have left the city for good, she has lost all her music students and her income from private lessons. But Hazel and the Delta Ramblers are still in demand, playing at clubs, festivals, and farmer’s markets around town. For a while, a musician’s fund subsidized their gigs. “I think we’ll stay, but it’s almost like every day there’s something different to consider,” Hazel says, a little wearily. “You’d think there’d be more progress by now. It just wears you down.” ❀

When *Down in New Orleans* came out, Sothern gave interviews on NPR and other radio stations, and signed his book at local bookstores. While he spent the first anniversary of Katrina attending a commemoration, he spent the second anniversary painting his dining room. “It’s been such an awful couple of years,” he says, that he decided to mark the anniversary “by trying to move on.”

Things have to change in New Orleans, and in spite of it all, Sothern believes they can. In his book, he points to the 1911 fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company as an example of a tragedy that shook people into action—though it took 20 years for the New Deal to seriously address poverty and improve working conditions in America.

Sothern hopes it won’t take that long for New Orleans. “I continue to have this hope that the city could be a focal point, where it could change our country for the better,” he says. “Because if it doesn’t, then all this suffering will have been in vain.” ❀

CONSIDERING TOCQUEVILLE

BY PATRICIA DEMPSEY

How many of Alexis de Tocqueville's keen observations of America's spirited, burgeoning democracy hold true today? These six Johnnies—who work in human rights law, government, public service, the ministry, and the military—reflect on passages from *Democracy in America*.

THE MANNER IN WHICH AMERICAN DEMOCRACY CONDUCTS FOREIGN AFFAIRS

“Foreign policy demands the use of scarcely any of the qualities and characteristics of a democracy. . . .”

Raised by a Korean mother and an American father (Santa Fe tutor Michael Bybee), Foreign Service Officer Chelsia Wheeler (SFO3) observed cultural misunderstandings in her household “on a daily basis,” she says. Today she seeks to build understanding among different cultures. Before joining the Foreign Service, Wheeler interned with the

U.S. Embassy in Singapore and taught English in Korea. In September, Wheeler went on assignment to Burma where she will travel the country “to engage the locals in conversations about democracy.” (The views expressed in this article do not reflect the official policy of the U.S. government.)

Tocqueville is talking about the aristocracy when he describes a continuity of power. The aristocracy has continuity of memory—an institutional memory. You don't have a change every four years; you don't have ever-changing leadership. In this regard the Foreign Service is like an aristocracy because there is a continuity of institutional memory; we're not political appointees, so we provide that continuity that in Tocqueville's day the aristocracy would provide. In the U.S., there is some continuity in government institutions—what Tocqueville describes as aristocratic institutions—I hate to use the word “aristocratic” and I certainly don't feel like one, but I do think that in some sense that's what our Foreign Service jobs are. We provide the continuity. When I worked in Singapore, there was an amazing institutional memory. You don't always see this in a country that is not a pure democracy. The institutional continuity of the government has been good for Singapore. In our country our government policies swing back and forth as public perceptions change.

When Tocqueville talks about the need for secrecy and patience in foreign affairs, I think he is right. It's hard for



CHELSIA WHEELER (SF03) WILL SEE HOW HER VIEWS ON FOREIGN POLICY PLAY OUT IN HER CURRENT ASSIGNMENT, IN BURMA.

Tocqueville was very much a product of his time. Tocqueville is not always completely accurate, but what he has gotten right is very important. It's interesting what he takes out of foreign policy. It was largely true at the time he was writing that Americans were isolationists. It was for our own survival. And I think that it is in some ways true today. Yes, we do get involved and we give help and we have alliances, but we do value our independence.

It wasn't until after World War II, when we were economically dominant and secure, that our isolationism changed. Tocqueville talks about isolation as a way for the United States not to bend to other countries. We are still trying to keep ourselves independent in many ways. However, [to be neutral] is not possible for a

country such as the United States because we are politically and economically important. Other countries look to us for leadership.

In the early 1800s Americans sent huge numbers of missionaries abroad, and that's the first time that we appeared to be less isolated. Another example, besides the missionaries, is relief to other countries. In World War I, the Red Cross went abroad. Private Americans citizens are always at the forefront of giving aid and relief.

me to accept on some levels, but it is true that if you put everything out there for people to vote on, including very sensitive issues of foreign policy, you would not get anything done. Even policies in Congress go through so slowly. So foreign policy needs to be streamlined. In the case of the Iraq War, for instance, there are many non-sexy topics that do not go through Congress quickly. Iraq waits around for Congress to vote on the budget to increase our aid. There are many, many countries who must wait on budget decisions, and they're waiting on the U.S. timetable to find out if they are getting any aid. These countries are often not in the press.

GARY PIERPOINT

“We still may not be able, even as a majority, to stop certain things from happening. The majority, for instance, may want to stop the war in Iraq, but yet they can’t.”

PETER WEISS (CLASS OF 1946)

TYRANNY OF THE MAJORITY

“I place the origin of all powers in the will of the majority. . . One universal law has been made . . . that is the law of justice.”

Peter Weiss (class of 1946), a retired intellectual property attorney, now devotes himself to human rights and nuclear disarmament issues from his New York City home. When Weiss was 21, tutor James Martin, who had worked with the Bureau of Economic Warfare during World War II and later headed the office created to break up the cartels that financed Hitler, brought Weiss to Berlin to work as a translator. “This brought me face-to-face with what had happened in Nazi Germany,” says Weiss. “I lost part of my family to the Holocaust, and of course there was the later era, the McCarthy period, here in the United States, and my reaction to it—all these shaped my work as a human rights activist.”

[Tocqueville] says that the tyranny of the majority is absolute, and that if it were checked somehow we could have a working democracy that is just. What I find missing in this discussion is the fact that in the United States this check is supposed to come from the Constitution. The Constitution enshrines with the force of law a set of values that were created during enlightened times in the history of this country. While history proceeds in one direction, the norms and values may



CHRISTOPHER HUSTON

move in another direction; so we still may not be able, even as a majority, to stop certain things from happening. The majority, for instance, may want to stop the war in Iraq, but yet they can’t. And this is because today there is too much power in the executive office.

Tocqueville was writing about 30 years after *Marbury v. Madison*, which establishes that the Constitution overrides the will of the majority and of the executive. There are not many countries where this is the case and it may not even be the case in this country at this particular time. This is the great thing about the American system. Yet the majority is guided by an aggressive executive. I’m talking

about the state of things in the United States today. Arthur Schlesinger called it “the imperial presidency.” The American Constitution was written with checks and balances, yet it fails so often, particularly in the case of a strong executive.

Tocqueville is correct when he describes a general, universal law, the law of justice. Antigone is an example of this when she says to Creon that she does not have to obey his law because there is a law from the gods that trumps that. In the case of human rights, I don’t care where this more just law comes from; whether from the gods, the Constitution, or a treaty. It needs to be respected. Since the Nuremberg trials, there’s been progress, there’s

IN RETIREMENT, LAWYER PETER WEISS (CLASS OF 1946) DEVOTES EVEN MORE TIME TO HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY.



GARY PIERPOINT

THE REV. ADRIEN DAWSON (A96) ENCOURAGES THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONING AS A WAY OF DEEPENING ONE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

been the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. So now there are certain things that are universally accepted as human rights violations: for example torture, slavery or rape, just like piracy 200 years ago. Tocqueville is right in this regard. There is a universal law of mankind.

The watchwords of tyranny are “by any means necessary.” This implies extreme actions, such as those going on in Guantanamo Bay. Yet I have not given up hope. So many attorneys have come forward to help defend these [detained] individuals, and that is when I can’t help but be proud of the American system, the American legal establishment. And I hope that the next 10 years will be a period of enlightenment.

**HOW RELIGION IN THE UNITED STATES
MAKES FULL USE OF DEMOCRATIC
TENDENCIES**

“The first object . . . of religions is to provide for each of these essential questions a tidy solution.”

The Rev. Adrien Dawson (A96), who is rector of St. Mark’s on the Hill in Pikesville, Md., was surprised at her career

choice. “Being an Episcopal priest is the last thing I would have expected I’d be. Both of my parents were hippie refugees from religion, and by the time they got married they had sworn off church,” she says. At St. John’s, Dawson was converted by the Old Testament. “The human condition pieces in the Old Testament are powerful—the way in which God keeps saying, ‘I’m still with you, I’m not going to abandon you.’ A central question for me has always been: Why is it that some people have faith and some don’t?”

When I read about how the first object of religion is to furnish a solution, I laughed out loud. I thought, “Wow. If only.” Tocqueville’s premise is that religion’s job is to have tidy answers for these existential, philosophical, first-mover kind of questions. Where I differ from Tocqueville is that I see religion much more as a framework in which all of your doubts and uncertainties can exist and be chal-

*“For Tocqueville religion is the schoolmarm
of people’s passions.”*

THE REV. ADRIEN DAWSON (A96)

lenged; it gives you a safe place to wrestle with all of that. There are religions of practice and religions of answers. I say, “We don’t have all the answers. Come join us in this practice.” Tocqueville is looking at all religions as religions that have answers.

The world view that Tocqueville describes is one in which religious and social/political spheres don’t meet. The priests stay in their realm and don’t ever venture into the political; they don’t leave the steps of the church. While the Koran gets political, the Gospels [do not]. [Yet] so much of what gets described in the Gospels is Jesus challenging the social and political norms of the day. He’s killed as a rebel against Rome, not because he has some sort of faith practice—it’s his political power that gets him crucified. In restricting the realm of religion, Tocqueville makes a safe religion that keeps everybody in check. You don’t get too extreme in your love of worldly possessions because we have religion here that’s going to reign you in, teach you about charity. For Tocqueville religion is the schoolmarm of people’s passions. And then, get out of the way—because the rest of the political sphere belongs to a purely secular world.

I don’t agree with Tocqueville’s read on what the Gospel offers. There are plenty of times when people of faith have stood up and said, “I can do no other, because my faith, the Scripture, tells me this is wrong. I have to challenge what’s going on.” So there are all different ways in which the Gospel has come out to challenge the authority of the social/political context. In our own context today of watching democracy unfold, religion gets bandied about a lot. Today the politicians choose hot-button issues such as abortion, gay marriage, the death penalty—and cite religious reasons for their political positions.

**WHAT MAKES DEMOCRATIC ARMIES
WEAKER THAN OTHER ARMIES AT THE
OUTSET OF A CAMPAIGN AND MORE
DANGEROUS IN PROLONGED WARFARE**

“Equality allows all to be ambitious while death makes sure that there are continuing opportunities to satisfy that ambition.”

Lieutenant Colonel (Hon.) Frank Giuseffi (SFG196), keeps issues of The College on a coffee table in his office at the Missouri Military Academy, where he is academic dean. “I want visitors to know how important the liberal arts are to the intellectual formation of our students,” he says. Giuseffi, whose father is a retired Marine, chose a slightly different path—military education. Along with his duties as dean, Giuseffi teaches history and uses readings such as Democracy in America to help the cadets grapple with fundamental questions. “These cadets are facing life-and-death issues,” he says. “They sense that the age of heroism may be waning, yet they want their service in the military, and their lives, to have meaning.”



LT. COL. (HON.) FRANK GIUSEFFI (SFG196), LEFT, SHARES TOCQUEVILLE’S IDEAS WITH CADETS AT THE MISSOURI MILITARY ACADEMY.

“I find this point particularly ironic: Equality can open the door to greatness. It is this very equality that fosters some to lead and some to follow. That’s part of the military culture in a democracy.”

LT. COL. (HON.) FRANK GIUSEFFI (SFGI96)

It is true that during war soldiers and officers have an opportunity to prove their military greatness more. There are certain accolades that one receives during war depending on how well one performs. So there may be some ambition there. I would say Tocqueville in some ways is correct. But I cannot be inside the mind of a general or a colonel. I would say it depends a lot on the individual. It depends a lot on how the public sees this war. In many ways, soldiers are affected by the level of cynicism towards a war. Perhaps then ambition becomes more important than honor. By the same token, there were many who were known [in Vietnam] to be great military heroes no matter what the public feeling was about the war.

I have to question if ambition is really what is behind what motivates someone to serve. I have seen this with many cadets; I think they want to test themselves. They want to test their mettle and courage. A student here a couple years ago was incredibly eager to go to war. He’s done two tours in Iraq and he’s back and he said he has had enough. He doesn’t necessarily articulate why that is and why it was that he went to begin with. But he and many of his fellow cadets are willing to face the fact that they are going to be putting their lives on the line. This is not about ambition and this is not about the debates in the media or among politicians. It’s about fighting and finding out for yourself that you are going to be able to do this.

Tocqueville makes a point about the principle of equality of conditions in a democracy in the military. What’s interesting is that in an aristocracy, your rank in the military is based on birth. In a democracy, your career is built out of a base of equality. You are part of a group that started on equal footing, [which] opens the door of ambition to all. I find this point particularly ironic: Equality can open the door to greatness. It is this very equality that fosters some to lead and some to follow. That’s part of the military culture in a democracy. You see the extraordinary leaders come forth. They have to take their orders as a subordinate, but they become heroes and do extraordinary things and break out of the ranks, so to speak, in ways they

deem necessary. So the military gives one the opportunity to become courageous, to be a leader, to be altruistic, to save lives, to heal the wounded, to help someone out. It gives one an opportunity to wrestle with the things that make us all more human.

PUBLIC SPIRIT IN THE UNITED STATES

“There is nothing more irksome . . . than the irritable patriotism Americans have.”

Noah Kroloff (SF95), deputy chief of staff for Governor Janet Napolitano of Arizona, found his way into public service through teaching. His first job after St. John’s was with Teach for America in the South Bronx. “I got eaten alive by the kids, but it was rewarding,” he says. Kroloff then worked for the speaker of the New York State Assembly on public policy issues and campaigns. In 2000 Kroloff, who has a law degree from Arizona State University College of Law, joined Governor Napolitano’s staff.

Tocqueville suggests it is in one’s self-interest to work for one’s government. I don’t understand what Tocqueville means in that regard. Is there anything anyone does that is *not* in some way in one’s self-interest? Everything comes through the governor’s office: issues of public education, natural resources, transportation, health care, economic development. It helps my family, my children, our community, and the wider community if for instance we work to create more education. It is in everyone’s self-interest to contribute to the success of government—this is the backbone of a free society.

Tocqueville has amazing observations on society, but they are hard to apply at a practical level. The theoretical is just that. It offers a framework for values, a moral compass. But it is not a good manual on how to get done the day-to-day business of the people. In some ways Tocqueville places the patriotism of citizens in opposition with those who govern. Yet so often, the alignment between public zeal and the elected official—such as the

governor of Arizona—must exist since that official was elected by the public. In this case, governing and enforcing laws is not difficult because of the public's zeal and patriotism. If the public is for education, then is the governor going to decimate it? A thoughtful public official will have a dialogue.

I am very patriotic, but patriotism is not one's duty. It is not one's responsibility to be involved with government. Patriotism takes many forms; this is the great thing about our country. One has a right to be or not to be involved if one wishes. We should encourage patriotism, but there are different notions of what patriotism is. Sometimes it means to take action. Yet what one thinks is a patriotic act might infringe on the rights of others. Sometimes it means a great or heroic act. But the great thing is the way our laws and judicial systems work to balance actions that may or may not infringe on the liberties of others.

I have never felt in any way constrained to speak out on any issue. Social constraints exist but there are no legal constraints on voting on every issue, which I think Tocqueville celebrated. However since Tocqueville's day, the boundaries of our post-9/11 world are more defined; now there are instances where free speech in the United States is limited. Yet we still live in a society whose government allows people to say and speak and think what they choose.



NOAH KROLOFF (SF95) PUTS HIS PATRIOTISM INTO ACTION IN ARIZONA'S STATE GOVERNMENT.

THE USE AMERICANS MAKE OF PUBLIC ASSOCIATIONS IN CIVIL LIFE

"Americans of all ages, conditions, and all dispositions constantly unite together."

As a freshman in Santa Fe, Josh Cohen (SF94) campaigned for the student government by going from table to table in the cafeteria saying, "I'm running for government to get government off our backs." It worked. Back in Annapolis, after serving on a neighborhood board, Cohen was hooked on grassroots politics. "It was a revelation," he says.

"I thought, 'Wow, people actually spend their lives devoted to the issues that affect communities and jobs.'" Cohen, who grew up in Annapolis (his father, Joseph, is a tutor), served two terms on the Annapolis City Council and in 2006 was elected to the Anne Arundel County Council.

Unlike our American democracy 200 years ago, other countries had aristocracies where a small number of very influential people were able to issue edicts to direct money and resources toward causes. But in America, with the absence of this nobility, the only way people could get things done in the same way was to form groups. America needs these associations because we lack the administrative structure that an aristocracy has to get things done. This has a lot to do with the big-government, small-government debate that is around today, maybe in a different form. But it's the debate of "Should government be doing this or should we let the private sector handle this?" This issue that Tocqueville points out is still an issue today.

“Special interests really are just collections of people advocating for a specific cause or issue; people are more effective that way. I couldn’t imagine our local government without associations.”

JOSH COHEN (SF94)

In our society, we talk a lot about special interests and how politics need to be separate from special interests. But special interests really are just collections of people advocating for a specific cause or issue; people are more effective that way. I couldn’t imagine our local government without associations. It’s the whole notion of having a representative democracy where elected officials are representatives. But within the constituency that these elected officials represent, there are all these different stakeholder groups that sometimes overlap and offer ways that issues can be debated. People can work to find common ground.

[Yet] I think sometimes individual acts are necessary, like Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat. You need individual actions sometimes to spur movements, and groups need leaders who can negotiate and compromise on behalf of the group.

Tocqueville talks mainly about commercial and business enterprises, which 200 years ago were the main reasons why people got together to advocate. In today’s culture, people form groups to advocate for a wide variety of issues. The traditional definition of civic groups are those like the Kiwanis and Lions [clubs], these are benevolent groups, just like the Elks, where they form for goodwill purposes. But I think the commercial and industrial associations have more widespread appeal. In every homeowners’ meeting that you attend the subject of property values is going to come up, so in a lot of ways it is an economic association.

I think a lot of people my age—I’m 33—are only just now starting to take an

interest in civic life because they’re just starting to own their own homes and they’re just starting to have kids who go to public schools. Those are the two biggest self-interest motivators: your child’s education and your home. So I don’t really see that people are apathetic. There are always going to be people who say, “Oh, it doesn’t matter,” but to me that says that by and large our system works really well. Even though we have problems to address, in time we come to address them. It’s really at the local level that people see their actions having the most direct impact. As Tocqueville says they form a common goal. ✦



DIMITRI FOTOS

AS AN ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBER, JOSH COHEN (SF94) SEEKS TO MAKE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORK FOR ITS CITIZENS.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF TOMORROW: ARCHITECTURE AND THE SPIRIT OF PLACE

by Travis Price (SF71)
Earth Aware Editions (2006)

When you step inside architect Travis Price's home in Washington, D.C., you can't see the tree forts Price built and played in as a kid growing up in Georgia, but you can feel their presence. As he puts it, "the building tells a story." Walls of smooth plywood and glass stretch to a leafy canopy of oak trees along Rock Creek Park. The dappled light and elegantly simple amalgam of sustainable materials—there is no sheetrock or paint—makes one feel "wrapped in a tree," Price writes in his new book, *The Archaeology of Tomorrow: Architecture and the Spirit of Place*. His four-story, copper-clad residence is almost suspended in the air, tethered by weighted steel cables to a steep slope. "It is floating silence," says Price. "The design means I can fly, both in the Western sense and in a more Asian, spiritual sense."

A pioneering green architect who designed one of the world's largest solar buildings, the office complex for the Tennessee Valley Authority in Chattanooga, Tenn., Price is also a cultural steward. He is adjunct professor and



KENNETH M. WYNER

director of the Cultural Studies/Sacred Spaces program at Catholic University's School of Architecture and Planning. Price treks with his students to sacred sites around the globe to create designs that speak to indigenous cultural stories. In *The Archaeology of Tomorrow*, Price describes the delicate balance it takes to create a space that is environmentally and culturally sustainable, that radiates mystery, emotion, a spirit of place. "You move through it like a dance. It triggers all kinds of perceptions."

The book features stunning architectural photographs interspersed with phrases that describe each space's poetry. There is of course Price's residence ("Floating steel soul"); the light-filled atrium of the Greenfield Library on the Annapolis campus ("Guardian of the light of Plato's cave"); National Geographic Explorers Hall in Washington, D.C. ("Earth's flagship of steward-

ship"); and private residences, including one with a traditional street-side facade that opens to a modern glass-walled addition in the back ("Unseen trees made visible"). But Price's book is more than a coffee-table compendium of poetry, photography, and design. It is a passionate argument for a future that includes the "mythic modern," a design that interprets sacred stories and myths in a way that is meaningful, vibrant, and relevant.

"I have spent the last 30 years on the ecosphere. The next 30 I want to dedicate to the 'ethnosphere,'" he says. By "ethnosphere," a word coined by Price, Wade Davis and tutor Eva Brann, he means all the beliefs, myths, archetypes, and stories spawned since the dawn of civilization. "It's the geography of human imagination," says Price. "Great architecture always has stories behind it. Chichen Itza, Machu Picchu, Angkor Wat—they are all replete with sacred but still metaphysical and metaphorical tales. The job of an architect is to grab the cultural voice of his time and try to make it architecture, spatially carve that experience from big, bold ideas about shapes, right down to textures and materials. You have to search every culture, every locale. Even in cities such as Rome and Washington, you have to look at the layers and crusts of the stories. You will find things that describe that culture if you question enough."

In a chapter titled "Assault on the Spirit: Sprawl, Mall and Tall," Price traces the development of architecture that is devoid of story and meaning, characterized by ubiquitous shopping malls decorated with faux Greco columns and other remnants of "old stories" that in Price's view are disconnected from our culture's heart and soul. "During the Industrial Revolution, the metaphor was the machine," he says. "I'm not criticizing technology; like nuclear power it was a glorious moment, but there was a down side: the machine as metaphor is sterile and empty. There was no poetry left in architecture."

Price presents a new vision that honors an authentic sense of place. "Let's revisit the myths, the sacred," he says. "How do I get day-to-day architecture to have this kind of storytelling?" To find the answer, Price looks at architecture through three lenses: the Stillness of Metaphor and Myth (universal truths); the Time-fullness of Movement (technology); and the



KENNETH M. WYNER

ABOVE, TRAVIS PRICE'S WASHINGTON, D.C., RESIDENCE. LEFT, THE MACKENZIE HOUSE, AN EXPLORER'S RETREAT ON VARGAS ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA.



CHRIS BANIER

Timelessness of Nature (the physical world). “Time-fullness is about pushing the limits of technology,” he explains. “In my residence, for example, you’re hanging on a bare thread of steel. That alone is dynamic change. The Stillness of Metaphor and Myth is apparent because there is a tranquility that overcomes you. The technology feeds the metaphor but is not overdone.”

The design of his home embraces the third lens, Nature, through its use of sustainable insulating techniques and also in more subtle, lyrical ways. Windows are placed so that one can observe the moon in all its phases. Steel scuppers shaped like leaves catch rainwater from the roof and send it tumbling like a waterfall savored from the warm, dry interior. As Price describes it, “You are in the waterfall.”

To illustrate architectural design that uses these three lenses, Price takes the reader to places that are familiar, even iconic, such as the Vatican, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater, and the Church of the Light in Osaka, Japan. Price devotes much of his book to sacred places that “permeate mind, heart, and matter.” Among them are the Naga Shrine in Nepal, Lake Ealue in British Columbia, and the mystical “thin places” in Ireland.

The early Celts believed in sacred “thin places” where past, present, and future are one. Today on Ireland’s west coast, the locals still revere the “thin places” and visitors like Price are compelled to wander the rain-soaked land near the smashing sea to find them. In *The Archaeology of Tomorrow*, Price describes several

ON A “SPIRIT OF PLACE” EXPEDITION IN NEPAL, PRICE AND HIS STUDENTS DESIGNED THIS MEDITATION PLATFORM, CANTILEVERED OVER A 100-FOOT DROP. BELOW LEFT, PRICE’S LIVING ROOM FEATURES A SOARING GLASS WALL.

expeditions he has led to these mystical sites to look for cultural metaphors in the landscapes. Price and his students, in concert with the local owners, design and build sculptural structures that are in essence shrines. One, in Doonamoe, is a stone path that leads above a blowhole in the ground, where the sea spews forth 110 feet from the coast. Another landscape sculpture, completed this summer, is called “Temples of the Tides of Time.” Like the “thin places” themselves, it connects one with past, present, and future time.

“When you actually walk through it you feel a certain reverence,” says Price. “I want to spend the rest of my life doing this—opening the door to the sacred.”

—PATRICIA DEMPSEY



KENNETH M. WYNER

COMING HOME

Fall Fiesta in Santa Fe, Crab Feast in Annapolis

For Lee Perlman (A73), the logic is irrefutable: He has been attending Homecoming every year since 2003. He is still alive. Therefore, Homecoming keeps him alive.

He's unwilling to test what he calls the "Perlman Principle" by staying home one year, but he's also had such a good time that he doesn't mind being bound by superstition. Perlman drives down to Annapolis every year from Boston, where he teaches philosophy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, picking up his friend, Peter Squitieri (A73), in Connecticut along the way.

"It's a little like *Groundhog Day*," Perlman said. "I come back every year, so every year a few more people know me."

The college works hard to plan a Homecoming that will appeal to all alumni as well as those who come back during a reunion year to see their classmates. This year, the event in Santa Fe sprang forward into fall, to September 14-16, so that alumni and students could again share the campus. Not without some controversy, the move from July didn't seem to deter attendance: about 150 participants (alumni and families) came back to enjoy offerings such as the Fiesta



AMY RAAB PHOTOGRAPHY

LEFT, ANNAPOLIS ALUMNI CONNECT AT THE SATURDAY CRAB FEAST; BELOW, KIMBERLY HERB (SF98) AND BOB NASH (SCHROEDER, SF97) AT THE FIESTA PICNIC IN SANTA FE.

Picnic on the soccer field, the All-Alumni Art Show (the Fibonacci Sequence was the theme this year), children's activities, and a Homecoming Dinner Dance. On Saturday, photographer Craig Varjabe-dian and writer Robin Jones (SF84) shared photographs of Southwest landscapes and the stories behind them. Santa Fe artist Eli Levin (SFG19t) remi-

niscised in his Speaking Volumes Lecture, titled "A Townie Interacts with the College on the Hill."

In Annapolis September 28-30, the college hosted 400 alumni and guests. Alumni devoured hundreds of Chesapeake Bay crabs after their morning seminars. Children roamed from face-painting and games to pony rides and a petting zoo. And in the Great Hall, tutors, alumni, and current students marked tutor Eva Brann's 50th year at the college during the presentation of a Festschrift in her honor. Brann seemed both pleased and abashed by the tribute: "I have spent fifty/seventy-eighth of my life here, roughly 18,250 days," she said. "To tell the truth, they seem as one day, the earthly counterpart of the *nunc stans* of eternity, the 'standing now' of heaven. People ask me when some event took place. I've taken to saying "about 25 years ago," figuring that the mean can stand for any year. But ask me "who" and "where" and usually a bright image will arise—students, alumni, seminar partners are all in place, my year with them coalesced in one fixed image."

Both campuses welcomed returning Graduate Institute alumni with special celebrations marking the 40th anniversary of the founding of the G.I. in Santa Fe and the 30th anniversary in Annapolis. On both campuses, former alumni, current students and faculty toasted the longevity and vitality of the college's graduate program.

Patricia Sollars attended both Homecomings and greatly prefers seeing students and alumni enjoy the weekend together. Alumni enjoy talking with current students about their tutors, their classes, and their future careers, she said. "An enormous benefit of returning to St. John's is to see that the Program is alive and well, and still thriving in ever-renewing populations of youthful minds and spirits," she said. ❀



TERI THOMSON RANDALL

AT A GLANCE: HOMECOMING 2007

	<i>Annapolis</i>	<i>Santa Fe</i>
In-Demand Seminars	Nietzsche's "On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense," led by Eva Brann (HA89)	Exodus 24-40 and Euripides' <i>Bacchae</i> , led by Robert Sacks (A84)
The Lecture	"Knowledge, Ignorance and Imitation in Book Ten of Plato's <i>Republic</i> ," David McNeill (A89)	"Jihad: the Muslim Concept of Holy War," tutor Ken Wolfe (SF94)
The Schwag	Snappy orange lunch tote	Snappy orange lunch tote
Honorary Alumni	Robert Hunt and Alton ("Red") Waldron, who have attended the college's community seminars for more than five decades	Tutor emerita Georgia "Susu" Knight, who devoted 33 years to the college
Substitute for a Football Game	Alumni vs. students soccer game	Family nature hike up Monte Sol



AMY RAAB PHOTOGRAPHY

ABOVE, TOP: TUTOR EMERITA GEORGIA S. KNIGHT BECAME AN HONORARY ALUMNA. BOTTOM, SUSAN BISHOP (AGI99) RECEIVED THE AWARD OF MERIT ON BEHALF OF HER LATE HUSBAND, JEFFREY BISHOP, WHO DIED IN JULY; AWARD OF MERIT WINNER LOVEJOY DURYEA (A67) ALSO RECEIVED AN AWARD OF MERIT. LEFT: A STORYTELLER DELIGHTS CHILDREN IN ANNAPOLIS; BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT, LEE MUNSON (SF97) GREETES A FRIEND IN SANTA FE; ANNAPOLIS CRABS; PEGGY JONES (SFGI94) AND CONSUELO SAÑUDO (SFGI00) TOAST THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE.



AMY RAAB PHOTOGRAPHY



TERI THOMSON RANDALL



AMY RAAB PHOTOGRAPHY



TERI THOMSON RANDALL

QUESTIONING ESTABLISHED BELIEFS

Jim Jarvis (A75) Researches Juvenile Diseases

BY PATRICIA DEMPSEY

Among Dr. Jim Jarvis' prized possessions is a postcard from Paris sent to him by a former patient. "The first time I met her she was 16, sitting on a hospital bed crying; she had systemic lupus and was worried she would not be able to go on a class trip to France the following year. We made a partnership and set a goal—her trip," says Jarvis.

As a consulting pediatric rheumatologist at the W.W. Hastings Indian Hospital in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and the Children's Hospital of Oklahoma, Jarvis builds close relationships with children who have chronic diseases and has insight into the challenges they face and treatments they need. As a professor of pediatrics at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Jarvis mentors medical students and conducts groundbreaking research to advance the understanding of juvenile chronic diseases.

Jarvis, who became a pediatric rheumatologist in the early 1980s when there were fewer than a dozen such practitioners in the country, is proud of the fact that he's seen as an iconoclast, especially for his work with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. "This is a good place to be in science, questioning established beliefs," says Jarvis. "My career has come full circle. I began at St. John's with big-picture questions like, 'What is the meaning of health?' Then as a medical student I asked, 'What is the meaning of wellness?'"

Today, Jarvis has zeroed in on an urgent

question: Why is the rate of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis higher in certain American Indian tribes? His interest stems in part from his own heritage, as his great-great-grandmother, a Mohawk Indian, was born on the Akwesasne Reservation in upstate New York. To discover the answers, Jarvis has introduced a systemic, generational perspective to the treatment of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis through research that uses systems biology. "I observe how things are connected. Aristotle suggests in Book I, Chapter 1 of the *Parts of Animals* that biology is connectedness, a study of form and function," he says. Jarvis believes that one of the reasons Native American populations have such a high rate of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis has to do with generational trauma.

"Rheumatoid arthritis runs in families and groups, but it is not genetic, and not contagious," he explains. "Data has emerged that shows that when a people has

been marginalized, abused, and humiliated as some Native American populations have, this may set up a reaction *in utero*. The infant *in utero* responds to the stress, which jazzes up the fetal immune system and hits triggers that can increase the risk for rheumatoid arthritis."

While Jarvis' generational approach is significant to the prevention of rheumatoid arthritis, he is also working to help children already afflicted with the disease by targeting individual treatments. This research is funded in part by a grant from the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology. By using systems biology tools—computer models show every gene that a cell is expressing—Jarvis hopes to predict which drugs will be most effective on certain patients.

"Right now it is a trial-and-error process. It's expensive, and several months go by before it becomes clear whether a drug is working. I would like to develop an assay to optimize therapy and treatment from the moment of diagnosis," says Jarvis. With juvenile patients, the need to conserve time is crucial. "Several months, even several weeks have a much larger impact on an adolescent's life than on an adult's. This is time from school and important developmental milestones are missed, even special class trips." ❖



JAMES JARVIS (A75), SECOND FROM RIGHT, SHOWN HERE IN HIS LAB WITH STUDENTS AND RESEARCH COLLEAGUES, EXPLORES LINKS BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT AND JUVENILE RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS.

1935

RICHARD S. WOODMAN enjoys keeping in touch with the college, particularly with the St. John's/Naval Academy croquet rivalry. "I'm still active practicing law in this small, beautiful village [Waterville, N.Y.] and traveling to foreign countries with one or more of my two children," he writes. "They're both Middlebury College graduates, and one has two grandchildren, which makes me a great-grandfather."

1942

"My classmates will not believe first place—at the age of 86," **ERNEST J. HEINMULLER** writes of his first-place showing in the adult category of a poetry-writing contest last spring. "See what St. John's does for you!" The contest was sponsored by the Friends of the St. Michael's Library in partnership with the county historical society.

1945

Writes **EDWARD W. MULLINIX**: "Although I retired as an active partner in Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis LLP of Philadelphia on January 1, 1993, I continue being active professionally as senior counsel to the firm, doing some things for the firm, participating in case-management programs in the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County and the federal district court for Eastern Pennsylvania (where I serve as a member of its Civil Justice Advisory Group), and taking an occasional engagement to mediate complex commercial disputes.

Most recently, the president of the American College of Trial Lawyers has appointed me to a

new college task force that is to collaborate with the University of Denver's Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System on a program to recommend changes in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure to reduce the burdens and expense of pretrial discovery."

1946

JAMES W. SHARP writes: "During almost five decades of employment in the human resources departments of three businesses, 53 years of marriage, and helping to raise two daughters and four grandchildren, I was a 'prodigal' Johnnie. Eight years ago I again became interested in theology and philosophy. Since December 2005 I have been working my way through Bertrand Russell's *A History of Philosophy*. For those who have lost touch with their St. John's College heritage, it provides a delightful 'Remembrance of Things Past.'"

1947

"My wife, Elizabeth, and I took a two-week trip to France in April and drove through Burgundy and Normandy," writes **H. GERALD HOXB**. "We visited our son Bair and his wife, Caroline, in Vezelay where they had rented a house for a year while on sabbatical from Harvard. They are each writing a book while there. We all had a lot of fun and had some great meals besides seeing more than enough chateaus and churches."

1948

PETER J. DAVIES and his wife, Phyllis, took a trip in May to Mozambique via Lisbon to attend the high school graduation of

THE ART OF SAYING NO

Class of 1955 alumnus **HAROLD BAUER**'s "next life" as a painter has landed him as president of the Board of Trustees at the prestigious Evanston Art Center. "St. John's did not sufficiently instruct in the art of saying no," he writes. This fall, he will conduct *Princess Ida* by Gilbert and Sullivan for the Evanston Savoyaires and will stage *Amahl and the Night Visitors* for Chicago's Ars Viva. ✨

their second-eldest grandson and to celebrate Peter's 80th birthday with his son, daughter-in-law, and five grandchildren. Also in May, he attended the funeral of **PETER WEISS**' mother, Paula, who died at age 104.

1950

JOHN R. GARLAND borrowed some lines from G.K. Chesterton for his note to the College: "... for there's good news yet to be heard and fine things to be seen,/ Before we go to Paradise by way of Kensal Green."

1953

Two years ago, **CHARLES POWLESKE** officially "retired" from the Business Council for International Understanding, where he has worked since 1960. "A few years passed, mostly in Mexico, before I found myself once again active in those familiar offices as 'senior advisory and past president.'

I then teamed up with a long-time business friend, who also continues to be very involved in BCIU, and we incorporated InterPlan Consulting, Inc. At any given time, we find ourselves working on various interesting projects including a major solar energy enterprise that is about to contract for its first commercial installation."

1954

DAVID KAPLAN is still in business management investments.

1955

CAROLYN E. BANKS-LEEUEWENBURGH writes: "Over these many years, I've known many St. Johnnies, from my class, from the tours we take together, from many summers in Santa Fe and social events. I often think of those people with good feelings. I want to say hello to all and wish them all the best of everything."

1956

Last year, **GEORGE SAUER** was elected to his sixth term on the Republican Central Committee of Montgomery County, Maryland.

1957

It was a busy May and June for **CORNELIA HOFFMAN REESE**: One grandchild graduated from college, one is entering her senior year at Miami, one grandson graduated from high school and has been accepted at college, one granddaughter is entering her sophomore year of college, and another granddaughter is serving in the Peace Corps in Senegal. "Since I'm from a large family,

we also had graduations of nieces and nephews—busy, busy time, but very rewarding and a delight to see education carried on,” she writes. “Looking forward to the 50th reunion at St. John’s and seeing Mary Sullivan Blomberg and her husband, Peter, again.”

1960

“I recently completed the four-year basic program at the University of Chicago,” says **PETER RUEL**. “Discussing the great books brings back fond memories of nearly 50 years ago. The St. John’s imprint never leaves us. This year we are completing all of Plato’s dialogues with our instructor emeritus, George Anastaplo, who is known by some of the St. John’s tutors. Our 50th reunion will be in 2010. See you all then.”

1961

CYNTHIA BLEDSOE DALEY has retired to a small working horse farm in Greer, S.C., where she races Arabian horses. “I happily invite any Johnnies in the area to visit,” she writes.

1962

MICHAEL ELIAS writes, “My play *The Catskill Sonata*—about a Catskill hotel during the black-listing period in the 1950s—had a successful run in L.A. It was directed by Paul Mazursky and will open in New York next spring.”

JOHN POUNDSTONE is back from a trip: “We have just returned from a visit to China to visit our daughter, who works in Beijing for the World Health Organization as an AIDs epidemiologist.

It was an amazing visit.” He wonders if China is “ready for the Great Books.”

1964

CHRISTINE KUBACKI GRIECO is deputy director at Philadelphia’s history museum, the Atwater Kent Museum, following a long career in educational advocacy. She was happily remarried six years ago.

JUDITH WOOD writes: “I’m still working for Tulane County Library in the San Joaquin Valley of California. I am a reference librarian. I am just putting the finishing touches on a three-year project, getting over 100 oral histories about life in this county from 1941 to 1946. This will probably be the highlight of my entire career, first as an accountant, then as a librarian!”

DAVID RANDOLPH JORDAN writes: “A few years ago, I was the guest organizer of a conference held at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, its works published in *The World of Ancient Magic* (Borger 1999). From March through August of 2006, I was a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem as part of a group thinking about “Occult Power in Near Eastern Culture.” I am a little disappointed that St. John’s no longer sends the annual college catalogue to

alumni. Why does it not? Is it ashamed of the tutors’ credentials?”

1966

IAN HARRIS has retired from being a professor of Educational Policy and Community Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee after 32 years. In January he taught a class in Peace Education at the University of Jaume Primero in Castelló de la Plana, Spain. He plans to remain in Milwaukee with his wife, Sara, in spite of having grandchildren on both coasts. He will continue to be president of the International Peace Research Association Foundation. His latest publication is *Global Directory of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution Programs* (with Amy Shuster), San Francisco: Peace and Justice Studies Association, 2006.

1968

MARILYNNE (MAURIE WILLS SCHELL) SCOTT (SF) writes that her younger daughter, Emily Scott, graduated from Yale Divinity School in May 2006 with a Master of Divinity degree. “She now works as a liturgical coordinator for Yale Divinity School and Yale University, planning worship services. For the past two summers she has worked on the “New Music Project” under the direction of the **REV. DONALD**

SHELL (SF68), rector of St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco. My husband, David, and I are planning a trip to Alaska this summer where (if all goes well), we’ll meet **RICK WICKS** (SF68) and his family in Anchorage—a pre-reunion reunion.”

CHARLES B. WATSON (A) writes: “#1 son, Ivan, continues to report on world affairs for NPR from Istanbul and places like Bulgaria, Northern Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, etc. #2 son, Misha, recently rebuilt a house and re-roofed, floored, shingled, windowed, etc., our second home on Martha’s Vineyard. Our daughter, Anya, starts graduate work in marine biology at Avery Point on Long Island Sound, with the University of Connecticut. She has spent a year in Boston, as MIT junior faculty, diving instructor, etc. Now living in Mystic, medical practice, teaching hospital, affairs are almost all-absorbing. We long for a sabbatical. Look us up and propose one?”

1969

JOSEPH P. BARATTA (A) gave an address, “World Government or Global Governance? The United Nations Project in Historical Perspective,” at a conference on U.N. reform in June in Turin, Italy. In 2006, he spent the month of July in Siena studying Italian: “*Estata un ezperienze molto utilo*,” he writes.

MEREDITH (ARTIS) ANTHONY (A) has published a thriller, *Ladykiller* (Oceanview Publishing, 2007), co-authored with her husband, Lawrence Light. “It is a dark tale of a serial killer investigation set in New York City in 1991,” she writes. For more information, you can visit her Web site at www.meredithanthony.com.

BREATHING DEEPLY

Changes for **ANNETTE TULLIER STAUBS** (A75): “After seven years of managing my husband’s solo family practice office, I am leaving the stress of the medical business to breathe deeply and have fun. Charles has joined Marshfield Clinic in Wisconsin, where he will continue to practice family medicine and teach. I will be free to pursue my avocations among the rolling hills and dairy farms of central Wisconsin. I also plan to do volunteer work.” ❀

1970

SHEILA BOBBS ARMSTRONG (SF, EC95) is now on the college’s Board of Visitors and Governors. “My oldest son, Ian, just graduated from the Santa Fe campus,” she writes, and the two were headed on a trip to Bhutan and West Bengal late last spring. “Still living in Bobbsville with my Aussie husband, Mike, still traveling, still forgetting what I just read. Younger two sons doing fine—all’s well,” she writes.

This year, Alfred Knopf published **NORA GALLAGHER**’s (SF) first novel, *Changing Light*, which is set in Santa Fe and Los Alamos during the making of the bomb.

SUSHEILA HORWITZ (SF) is still a member of the Madonna House, a Catholic lay apostolate. “I was seven years in the far east of Russia in a small city created to serve the needs of the Gulag. The people there were wonderful. I’m moving now to our house in Edmonton, Alberta.”

1971

GEORGE ELIAS (A) reports on the family: “My 26-year-old daughter is working as an apprentice farmer in Northern California. My 15-year-old daughter attends a Jesuit high school in San Francisco, where her 12-year-old sister hopes to join her next year.”

1972

“Hope to make it to Homecoming this year. Number 35—wow!” writes **CLAUDE MARTIN** (A).

1973

MARY L. BATTEEN (A) has been professor and chair of the Oceanography Department at the Naval Postgraduate School since 2001. She joined the department in 1984 and has enjoyed advising many Naval Academy graduates. She publishes papers on ocean currents off west coasts including North America, South America, Australia, and Europe.

1974

ROGER BURK (A) is a visiting professor this year at the Center for Innovation in Engineering Education at Princeton University, where he is developing a course on space flight for non-engineering students. **ROBIN KOWALCHUK BURK** (A72) has started work on her dissertation on robotic information processing at SUNY-Albany.

JEFF VICTOROFF (A) writes with news of children. “Maia is just finishing kindergarten and very excited about pony camp. Ivan tore a memorable swath through preschool and is very excited about Hot Wheels demolition.”

1975

CYNTHIA SWISS (A) is making a career change: “After 30 years of teaching music, I decided it was time for a change. I am taking courses to become a dietician. I have always loved cooking and I want to help people make healthy food choices. On June 16 I will start my new job at Northwest Hospital in Reisterstown, Md. I will continue my freelance work as a violinist and give private lessons at home.”

1977

LURIE ALEXANDER (A) earned her PhD in entomology from the University of Maryland, College Park.

LORIN CUOCO (SFGI) produced her first audiobook, *The Tunnel*, as read by the author, William Gass: “Dalkey Archive Press brought it out in 2006. Forty-five hours long, on three MP3 CDs. Historical, man,” she writes.

“My work with the American Sleep Apnea Association is going well,” writes **EDWARD GRANDI** (A). “More active with the D.C. alumni seminar—great books, great people, good times.”

JIMMIE COLSON JACKSON (SFGI) was inducted into the District of Columbia Teachers Hall of Fame in May 2007.

1978

“I completed my first triathlon, the Lake Placid Ironman, in July 2006, and my second, the Arizona Ironman, in April 2007,” writes **ROBERT PERRY** (A).

1982

PETER B. GRIGGS (A) has published his first novel, *No Pink Concept*, available at xlibris.com.

“James Rowley and I married on June 27, 2006,” writes **KELLY GENOVA** (SF). “We are very happy. **STEPHEN LOACH** (SF) and his fiancée, Sally Blixt, joined us to celebrate. I still practice law in Albuquerque, as does James. Stephen teaches at UT-Pan Am.”

1984

FATHER ROBERT NICOLETTI (SF) writes, “Many thanks for your correspondence. Alumni have been very generous with my mission in Ukraine and I would like to thank them. If anyone can still help these orphanages, please consider it.”

DAVID WALWORTH (A) writes that he and his wife, Michelle, are still living in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. She recently received “tenure-in-waiting” as there are not any tenure slots open at the university. “My naval architecture business is going well. The most recent project will be launched in July this year in Bristol, R.I. It is a two-foot owner-designed yawl. The owner designed the lines and look of the boat; I did the structural engineering. We are in the early stages of designing a house to build farther up the hill from where we currently live. It will be totally off the grid. The land faces dead into the trade winds for wind power and at 17 degrees 44 min N, there is plenty of sun for solar panels. Basically a West Indies Danish cottage is the design inspiration.”

1985

ANNA L. DAVIS (A) writes: “2007 was a great year! My son, Aaron Gordon, celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in May, and I graduated from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health with a Master of Public Health.”

MAGGIE KINSER (A), writing as Maggie Kinser Hohle (www.maggiertext.com), moved to California in July. Her husband, Brad, took a position in digital cinema at the headquarters of Dolby Laboratories in San

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A METAPHOR FOR LIFE

Myra Krien (SF88) Helps Young Women Gain Confidence

BY DEBORAH SPIEGELMAN

To be in the presence of Myra Krien (SF88) is to step into a warm, confident embrace, a rare gift in this frantic world. It is a gift that she shares with every person who steps through the doors of Pomegranate Studios in Santa Fe, founded by Krien in 1996. Here, women of all ages learn the art of belly dancing.

“Dance is a metaphor for living life,” says Krien, who began belly dancing at the age of three. In the style of dance she teaches, the emphasis is not on one’s physical form, but rather on the creation of line and beauty achieved by focusing and disciplining the body.

Krien is an acclaimed international performer, a sought-after dance instructor and choreographer, and founder of four dance companies. However, she is most proud of the nonprofit youth development organization that she established in 2001. SEEDS (Self-esteem, Empowerment and Education through Dance) demonstrates the power of dance to bring about positive change. Each academic year, up to 25 young women between the ages of 15 and 18 participate in Krien’s three-times-a-week after-school program. Teaching these women American Tribal Style dance, which embraces the musical, cultural, and artistic influences of India, the Middle East, North Africa, and Spain, is simply Krien’s starting point.

In designing her program, Krien shaped it to the needs of the teenage girls who gravitated to her studio, many of whom couldn’t afford classes. Recognizing a need beyond dance instruction, Krien launched the program to help young women develop self-confidence, be ready to manage their personal finances, and work toward their goals. Students credit Krien’s program with changing their lives. “The studio is their sanctuary,” she says.

Similarly, Krien’s four years at St. John’s were “totally life changing.” Born in San Francisco into a bohemian family (her maternal grandfather was the philosopher and writer Alan Watts), Krien saw her life change after her parents divorced. To help



her family, she worked a variety of jobs, including pecan picking and performing. She graduated early from high school and found herself out on her own at the age of 15, supporting herself by acting and singing. She grew curious about the college that many of her high school friends were attending. “I didn’t realize a school like St. John’s existed,” she says. With the college’s emphasis on education through dialogue, “this was my family all over.”

On the day she received her acceptance letter, she also received an offer to pursue a singing career in California. Two doors opened to her, and she chose the one leading to St. John’s. Krien sold her exquisite belly-dancing costumes to help finance

DANCE IS A GATEWAY TO SELF-EXPLORATION FOR THE YOUNG WOMEN WHO PARTICIPATE IN MYRA KRIEN’S SEEDS PROGRAM.

her freshman year; scholarships and several part-time jobs saw her through the college. Upon graduation, she rededicated herself to her professional goals with an “absolute focus and discipline” that she attributes to her college experience.

St. John’s helped her discover she could tackle difficult things, such as running a business. She also found that the college teaches tolerance and helps each student discover his or her “authentic voice.” Krien

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Francisco, after 16 years in film sound in the company's New York office, so the whole family (six in all) is moving to Petaluma, in Sonoma County. Maggie is happy to finally be leaving the winters of the Northeast behind, and to be moving closer to most of her extended family, originally Californians, though she'll miss "the city" (NYC), an environment she really loves. Maggie will continue to write nonfiction pieces for magazines on design and architecture, as well as books, and may well finally be able to put into words her 15-year adventure in Japan, too. Any Johnnies in the Bay Area would be thanked immensely for contacting Maggie with any pointers on living and writing there. Keep in touch with her: 973-668-9446; or maggietext@comcast.net.

GWENDOLYN J. CHEATHAM (SFGI) has written a book titled *Give Your Teacher This Note: Parents Say the Funniest Things*, which can be found on Amazon.com. She recently completed a seminar on Greek and Latin lyric at Harvard University.

BARBARA ROBERTS (SFGI) writes: "In the summers of 2005 and 2006, I completed pilgrimages to the tomb-shrine, pilgrim center and disciples of Avatar Meher Baba, located in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra State, India. I continue to live in Denver, Colo., where I work as an elementary special education teacher."

director for Ford. This summer, William Heinemann is publishing *Sharp Teeth*, Barlow's epic poem about lycanthropes living in Los Angeles (it will be released in the U.S. by Harper-Collins in early 2008). "But the most exciting news," he writes, "is that Nora Barlow is enrolling at the Annapolis campus this fall."

"Montana is beautiful! Hope to complete dissertation this year. Looking at use of 'Math Dialogues' with high school students," writes **SUSANN BRADFORD** (SF).

ELAINE PINKERTON COLEMAN (SFGI) has been writing and speaking. Along with other local women writers, Elaine was part of a reading titled "Dear Diary" in September at the Santa Fe Film Center. She later gave a

presentation of "A Journey on the Royal Road into Mexico" at the Travel Bug in Santa Fe.

"My wife, Klara, and I celebrated the birth of our son, Dimitry, on April 29, 2007," says **SPYROS RITSINIAS** (A).

1990

VIRGINIA BEHREND (AGI) did some traveling to take in two grandsons' high school graduations last spring, one in Seoul, South Korea, and another in San Diego, Calif. "Son #1 teaches for DOD, thus three trips to Korea, a gem of a spot. Now he is in transit to Ramstein, Germany, so we are looking forward to exploring Germany."

KEN TURNBULL (A) is living in Washington, D.C., and now has a second daughter, Zoe Turnbull, born on March 29, 2007, in addition to older sister Fiona. "My wife, Leslie, and I are doing well," he writes.

1988

THOMAS JEFFERSON BARLOW (SF) is living in downtown Detroit, working as creative

1986

KRISTEN CAVEN (SF) is "still passionately in love with books," though she is now writing more than reading. "I expect two books and a musical to reach the world in 2008," she writes. "I even lectured this year on antique cookbooks! Johnnies are welcome to visit my Web site at www.kristencaven.com."

MISSING CLASSMATES

SABINE (SCHWEIDT) CRANMER (SF80) sends an update: "I am still living in Pennsylvania near Philadelphia with my husband, Charlie, and now 11-year-old daughter, Lucy. Lucy will begin middle school at a nearby Quaker school in the fall. We've been working on landscaping projects, restoring a meadow and trying to grow vegetables. I work with a community-based open-space organization and tutor an Adult Basic Education student in reading, which I find very interesting. I finally gave in to my daughter's pleas for a dog, and we are now raising a puppy for the Seeing Eye. In June we are hosting a picnic seminar for the Philadelphia Chapter of the Alumni Association. I wonder if I'll see many people from other periods of my connection to SJC? I miss my former classmates and wish you all well, wherever you are." ❀

1991

DEIRDRE ROUTH (A) represented the Omaha Public Library on the Precision Book Cart Drill Team in the Cinco de Mayo Parade on May 5, 2007, in Omaha, Neb.

ANNE SCHUCHMAN (A) and **JAMES BERRETTINI** (AGI93) are delighted to announce the birth

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adopted these benefits of the Program as key elements of SEEDS. "I want these girls to learn to take care of themselves, to esteem themselves, to make good decisions," Krien says.

Krien sees young girls dealing with exploding emotional energy as well as personal crises. Not only does dance help channel this energy, but it also helps one learn to respond thoughtfully, rather than

simply react to the apparent lack of control in one's life, she believes. Based on group effort, American Tribal Style dance is non-competitive. Girls alternately lead a particular series of movements, thereby creating a dance based on their contributions meshing together. "Everyone shines," Krien says, and in this way, the dancers solidify their sense of self and community.

This sense of community is reinforced through the supporting elements of the

SEEDS program. After dance instruction the girls take part in talking circles, very much like the seminars at St. John's, Krien says. Issues—whether personal or practical—are brought up in this setting as well as in one-on-one discussions with Krien. Over time, the girls become comfortable revealing their hopes and fears. "We talk about what dignity means, what integrity means, what community means," Krien says. ❀

of Veronica Mary on February 21, 2007. She joins Sam (8), Stella (4) and Gus (2).

1992

“I have recently moved from the Paris area to Bucharest, Romania, where my husband has taken a job in his brother’s business,” writes **ELYETTE (BLOCK) KIRBY** (SF). “My children are now ages six, four, and two, and for once they have cousins in the same city. We love living here and traveling in the local area. If any Johnnies live nearby, we’d love to meet you.”

TAEKO ONISHI (SF) is setting up shop in New York: “I’m working with a team of educators and opening a new school in September. Lyons Community School will be a 6-12 school in East Williamsburg in Brooklyn. Check out our Web site at www.brooklynhistory.org/education/lyonscs. Come visit!”

1993

KWAKU ACHEAMPONG (A) spent three weeks back home in Ghana last June. “I am very astonished by my observations,” he writes. “While many things and ways remain the same, some developments have been haphazard. Private housing and commercial structures are being erected anyhow and anywhere. Land can be found without proper planning. Affordability has allowed the operation of substantially more motor vehicles on the existing, inadequate number of roads. Unemployment and housing shortages destroy people’s dreams of the increasing accessibility to modern technology and lifestyles. Peace and stability, though, is assured.”



SANTA FE CLASSMATES TREKKED TO UGANDA TO JOIN FRIENDS AND FAMILY FOR THE WEDDING OF MARIE CRAIG (SF05, SHOWN ENJOYING A TRADITIONAL DANCE) AND CHRISTIAN ACEMEH (SF05) THIS PAST JULY.

J. CLAIRE DARLING (SF) writes, “Life is good. No big news. I love being self-employed as a massage therapist. Preparing to take 4th kyu test at my Aikido Dojo. Finally learning to play guitar.”

KEVIN JOHNSON (A) reports from Massachusetts: “After a long search, I’ve finally found a career direction that is both personally meaningful and practically sustainable. I begin a certificate of advanced graduate study in organizational development this fall. The past year has been very good to me, bringing a better job and a new girlfriend. We’ll be shacking up shortly; who knows, maybe eventually she’ll make an honest man out of me.”

1994

JEFFREY LANE EDWARDS (AGI), now working in international relations, married Jennifer

Dudley Keech on June 10, 2007, in Norfolk, Neb. They live in Annapolis.

COLIN RAY (A) and Emiko Ray write from Tokyo: “Our son, Thomas Michael Ray, was born on January 8, 2007. Our daughter, Marina (24 months old), loves taking care of him. She is mastering her English and Japanese language skills.”

1996

“I am in my second year as the Director of Studies at the Missouri Military Academy,” writes **FRANCESCO GIUSEFFI** (SFGI). “I recently earned a master’s in education and continue to find enjoyment in teaching an honors American history class. I keep the speeches of Lincoln and Alexis de Tocqueville on the minds of my students. Our cadets now study the Latin language and can expect a heavy dose of Shakespeare in

their literature classes. I find that my education at St. John’s was a valuable experience for the work I now do at the academy. My e-mail is fgiu@mma.mexico.mo.us.”

CHERYL HENEVELD (AGI) welcomes visitors to Vermont. “We have tons of books,” she writes. “Would love to have a great books discussion group nearby.”

KATIE (THORN) HIGSON (A) and Ted Higson welcomed a baby daughter, Ruby Thorn Higson, last year: “At 1, Ruby loves reading and talking. Eating dirt also ranks. To get in touch, e-mail Khigson@highland-hcg.com.”

MARTY AND LUCILLE WALKER (AGI) are living in Upper Marlboro, Md., with their sons Ian and Reese, ages 7 and 4. Marty is teaching at the Summit School in Edgewater, Md., and Lucille is an independent consultant currently assisting local farmers.

1997

KATE (GLASSMAN) BENNETT (A) lives in Las Vegas, where she is a freelance writer, specializing in popular culture, fashion, entertainment, and celebrity for a number of magazines. She is also editor-in-chief of the new *City Center Magazine*, a luxury magazine devoted to MGM Mirages’ massive \$7 billion urban resort complex, currently the largest privately funded construction project in the world. She’s still not sure how she feels about actually living in Las Vegas, but after eight years, it’s now become home. She and her husband, Cub, have a very inquisitive 2-year-old daughter, Tess. Visitors welcome! Kate8vegas@aol.com.

STEPHEN CONN (SF) is happy to announce that his Sgt. Pepper/ Great Books Authors shirt, as

A NEW DIRECTION

SARA BARKER (A98) writes, “A few months ago I was relaxing at my father’s farm and realized I wanted my life to go in a new direction. So from New York—where I’ve been working in theatre for the past three years—I’m moving to Washington, D.C., where I hope to use my strengths and abilities to promote a more peaceful world. Just recently, I accepted a position as the Communications & Development Coordinator at the Women’s Foreign Policy Group in Washington. WFPG (www.wfpg.org) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational membership organization that promotes global engagement and the leadership, visibility and participation of women in international affairs. I’d love to hear from other Johnnies working in or interested in foreign policy: mail@sarabarker.com.” ❀

well as Rolling Stones’ Great Books shirt “Some Books,” are now both available for sale online, on his Web site www.radioactiverabbi.com.

“My wife, Evie, and I had our second child, a girl, born on April 22, named Caroline Elizabeth,” writes **BRENTON HINRICHS** (AGI). “We reside in San Jose, Calif., where I am head of an independent school in Los Gatos, called Hillbrook School. My wife is a second-grade teacher at Hillbrook. I would love to hear from other AGIs from ’97. Patrick Wager? Pat Knight? Bill Buysse?”

1998

GLENN SCOTT COOPER (AGI) retired from teaching with Milwaukee Public Schools in June. He is working full time writing a novel and finished a short screenplay for Avant Guardian films.

TIM WINSLOW (A) and Celia Messing married in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 6, 2007. Celia is a graduate of The Catholic University of America and the cousin of **BEATRICE ROBBINS** (A98). Tim is a millionaire and owns 15 helicopters but still

welcomes your wedding gifts. You may congratulate him via tim@winslowdc.info.

1999

LORI KURTZYKA (AGI) and her husband, Mauricio Rojas, welcomed their baby boy, Matteo Nicholas, into the world on February 20.

PATRICK REED (AGI) and his family are living in Germany where his wife is stationed with the Air Force. They are expecting a second daughter this summer and welcome visitors.

2000

ANDRÉ RODRIGUEZ (SFGI) is currently the staff attorney at YMCA International Services and teaches Introduction to Mexican American Studies at the University of Houston’s main campus.

2001

PHILIP BOLDUC (SF) is serving his second tour of duty in Iraq in the U.S. Army. He is stationed in Baghdad.

“After briefly working for Fannie Mae in Washington, D.C., after graduation, I moved to my hometown of Chicago,” writes **DANIEL BRAITHWAITE** (A). “I’ve had a flexible part-time job with a dot-com for several years which has allowed me to travel and try out different things, including keeping up with aikido, farming, tutoring kids, and managing a small commercial kitchen. I’d be glad to know who’s near me in the Chicago area. I also visit Annapolis regularly.”

JESSICA K. REITZ (A) is delighted to announce her marriage to Christopher R. Wallace on July 21, 2007. Jessica and Chris live in Centreville, Va., with their son, William, now walking everywhere, and their two dogs, Bruce and Molly. Jessica was named Teacher of the Year for 2006-7 at James Madison High School in Vienna, Va., and this fall, she will continue teaching mathematics and coaching crew for her third consecutive year.

2002

CHRISTIAN BLOOD (SF) is writing his dissertation: “Oh! The secondary sources! Woe!”

LORI LYNN RUBELING (AGI) was just promoted to full professor of Art at Villa Julie College in Stevenson, Md.

2003

ALAIN ANTOINE (SFGI) is enrolled in the Eastern Classics program in Santa Fe.

SCOTT MCCARLEY (AGI) is teaching science, math, and Greek at a private school.

CHELSEA WHEELER (SF) joined the United States Foreign Service and spent the summer in training for her first post, in Rangoon, Burma. She was studying Burmese and planned a departure in late August or early September.

2004

TATIANA HARRISON (A) was published in *Newsweek*’s “My Turn” online column in January. “I’m happily legally disabled because it gives me all the time to write. I’m getting hand surgery done over the summer, which hopefully will result in less pain and increased function. I’m also proud to be a member of Third Haven Monthly Meeting, a Quaker Meetinghouse in Easton, Md. My grandfather, Dr. David Yesair, passed away on April 20. He’s a great loss for my family, as he was a great man.”

A short note from **CHRIS HENDERSON** (A) and **GENEVA HINKLE** (Ao6), from Saratoga Springs: “We’re poor, but happy.”

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 February; deadline for the alumni notes section is December 20.

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JUSTICE AND THE HUMAN COMEDY

JASON BIELAGUS (SF98) recently graduated from law school, was admitted to the New Mexico Bar, and began working as an assistant district attorney in First Judicial District in New Mexico. "In some ways it is a return to freshman year and Plato," Jason writes. "The Supreme Court has said a prosecutor's job is not necessarily to win cases, but to see that justice is done. I spend a lot of time trying to figure out what justice is and how it applies to a given situation. It's an opportunity to try to apply practically a lot of what we talked about in freshman year. There's a lot of Mills in it, too, in that the purpose of the system is to keep people from harming other people. It's good trial experience, and prosecuting cases in Santa Fe and Española has given me some insights into the human experience, the human comedy. A lot of the Española cases are funny and sad at the same time." ❀

PAUL McLAIN (SFGI) was awarded the Master of Divinity degree by Yale University on May 28, 2007. He was named one of

the four student marshals who led the procession of Divinity School graduates during the commencement exercises. Paul is now a

Postulant for Holy Orders in the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas. As part of his preparation and journey toward possible ordination as a priest, he is working as a hospital chaplain resident for one year at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita. Ruthie McLain, Paul's wife, is coordinator of volunteers at Faith Home Health and Hospice in Wichita.

the Helicon/You should read Anacreon/Ovid's *Metamorphoses*./Likewise Aristophanes/And the works of Juvenal./These are worth attention, all;/But, if you will be advised,/You will get them Bowdlerized!"

2006

CHRISTOPHER BENSON (AGI) is joining the inaugural team of a new Christian preparatory academy in Santa Barbara, Calif., called Providence Hall. "I will help in the design of an interdisciplinary curriculum based on the great books and teach both literature and philosophy," he writes. ❀

2005

CYNTHIA TOBIAS (AGI) played Lady Psyche, Professor of Humanities, in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Princess Ida*. She donned her G.I. cap and hood for the part. "I also designed the set," she writes. "Psyche's opening lines are: 'If you'd climb

{ OBITUARIES }

WILLIAM C. OWENS, M.D.
Class of 1938

William C. Owens, an ophthalmologist whose work helped prevent blindness in infants, died on June 20, 2006, in San Antonio, Texas.

Dr. Owens graduated from St. John's in 1938. He earned his medical degree from Johns Hopkins Medical School in 1942, where he served on the medical faculty until 1953. While at Hopkins, he and his wife, Ella, also an ophthalmologist, made an important discovery about retinal blindness in premature infants that led to methods of prevention. Dr. Owens spent two years in the army as assistant chief of ophthalmology at Walter Reed. In 1955 he opened a private practice in Easton, Penn., retiring to San Antonio in 1971. He is survived by his son, William C. Owens, Jr.

DOROTHY ROUDEBUSH
Former Member, BVC

Dorothy Roudebush, a women's rights activist and journalist, died on July 4, 2007, in Chesterfield, Mo., at the age of 95. Mrs. Roudebush served St. John's College as a member of the Board of Visitors and Governors from 1969-1982.

A native of St. Louis, Mrs. Roudebush earned a bachelor's degree in English and theater from Vassar College in 1932. She earned a journalism degree from the University of Missouri and joined the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* as a feature writer. After her marriage to George S. Roudebush in 1936, she became an educator. She taught English and directed publicity for the John Burroughs School. Later, she earned a master's degree in counseling and became a student counselor at Lindenwood College. Her many

accomplishments included working to repeal Missouri's law that prohibited married women from teaching in public schools.

An ardent champion of equal rights for women, Mrs. Roudebush worked to improve women's access to family planning services and served on the board of directors for Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis region. Planned Parenthood honored her by naming its headquarters in Maplewood, Missouri, the Dorothy Roudebush Education Center and Administration Office.

ALSO NOTED

GARNETT CLARK (Class of 1936), June 20, 2007
JEREMY DAWE (SF01), January 15, 2007
AARON FOGARTY (SF94), May 20, 2007
OSCAR LORD (Class of 1940), July 17, 2007
EDWARD LEGUM (Class of 1938), August 17, 2007
ELIZABETH JEAN MEISS (SF75), June 13, 2007
WILLIAM OGDEN (Class of 1946), July 26, 2006
CHERYL RAMSEY (A68), January 2007
GUSTAVE RATHE (SF81), May, 23, 2007
PAUL SCHEMEL (Class of 1944), May 2007
H.A. STAFFORD (Class of 1957), December 28, 2003
DONALD TAUBE (Class of 1965), July 9, 2007
RICHARD YOUNG (Class of 1949), March 21, 2007

A RACE ACROSS AMERICA

Andy Mead (Sfo4) Rides for a Cause

BY ROSEMARY HARTY

There were more than a few moments last summer when Andy Mead (Sfo4) wondered whether entering the Race Across America was such a good idea. Mead had joined with the seven other riders of “Team Type I” to compete in one of the toughest bicycle endurance competitions in the world. The team set out not only to win the relay race from Oceanside, Calif., to Atlantic City, N.J., but also to draw attention to Type I diabetes, a disease Mead was diagnosed with at age 16.

Taking his three-hour stints on the bike, Mead endured the desert heat of Southern California and the thin air and cold temperatures at 10,000 feet in the Colorado mountains. Mead sprinted ferociously on very little sleep—perhaps getting 15 hours in five days. “I didn’t see how we could keep going,” he says. When the team crossed the finish line in first place for their division, Mead was too exhausted to enjoy the celebration. “I went right from the finishing line to the hotel and slept for eight hours straight,” he said. All told, Mead put in about 500 miles on his bike.

Mead is now in his third year of a doctoral program in physiology/molecular biology at the University of Pennsylvania. Throughout the winter, he rose at 5 each morning to get in at least four hours of training before his classes or work in the laboratory. His commitment to the race was a strong one, inspired by his own experience with the disease.

“When I was 16, I got very sick, and they couldn’t figure out what was going on,” says Mead. “Fortunately, I lived in a town with a very good hospital. Since then, I’ve had to keep a good eye on what



“We’ve learned that people with Type 1 can basically do anything.”

ANDY MEAD (Sfo4)

I eat and how I treat my body, but it’s not that hard to live with.”

Treatment with insulin meant immediate improvement, but Mead had been a hockey player and very active as a youth, and he was initially concerned he’d have to scale back. “We’ve learned that people with Type 1 can basically do anything,” Mead says. “There are people who are afraid of taking risks with their bodies, afraid of participating in sports and exercising because of the fear of having low blood sugar. It’s a real balancing act

THE RACE ACROSS AMERICA WAS CRUELING, BUT THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK TO THOSE WHO HELPED HIM COPE WITH TYPE I DIABETES MADE THE SACRIFICE WORTHWHILE FOR ANDY MEAD (Sfo4).

between food and insulin and but it’s manageable.”

Mead’s 13-year-old brother, Charlie, also has the disease, and Mead raced in part to inspire his brother to feel that he can take on any challenges in his life. “A feeling of being handicapped and a fear of low blood sugar can keep kids with the condition from participating in activities and developing habits that would actually help them live healthier lives,” Mead says. “Providing a positive example is the team’s most important purpose.”

Halfway through his doctoral program, Mead is considering a career in research or teaching. At Penn, he has been impressed with “all the brilliant minds” of the

university, but he’s glad he attended St. John’s instead of a traditional biology or pre-med program. “The interesting thing to me is there aren’t that many conversations going on in the biomedical research world about the kinds of questions we ask about science and what kind of thinking we’re doing,” he says.

Mead hoped to raise \$4,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation with his own 100-mile ride in September. Being part of Team Type 1 and raising money on his own—even when it comes with sore muscles and sleep-deprivation—is immensely satisfying, Mead says: “It’s really the first time I’ve given back for all the excellent care I’ve had, all the lessons I’ve learned dealing with my own situation as an athlete and student. I’m really grateful.” ❀

LETTERS FROM CHINA

A Graduate's Adventures Teaching in the East

BY SUSAN SWIER (AG106)

OCTOBER 19, 2006

Beijing is fascinating. Parts of the city are modern and Westernized, and parts of it look like something from a century ago. It is amazing how many bicycles there are in the city. I considered getting one, but the drivers here are crazy. I saw an entire family of four riding on one little motor scooter! The first few weeks, I went to all the tourist places: the Forbidden City, Beihai Park, the Summer Palace, Tiananmen Square. On one really interesting street, vendors sell bizarre snacks on sticks. I ate three scorpions and a centipede; the scorpions weren't bad, but the centipede was disgusting.

The private primary school where I was supposed to teach first and third-graders was terrible. They have a set curriculum, which I thought would be good since I don't have experience. I could tell from the training that it was going to be bad, and when I started teaching it was even worse. It's rote memorization, and the kids don't learn anything except pronunciation. They push the students to get through so many pages of reading and don't care if the kids really comprehend what they're reading. My third-grade class read five sentences about a snail. When I asked if they knew what a snail was, one girl pointed to a nail in the blackboard. The first-graders were smart, could speak English on their own, and were able to think for themselves. The third-graders couldn't say anything except what they were told to repeat.

When I told the school I was quitting, they threatened to fine me and keep me from working anywhere else in China. Even after they found a replacement, they wanted me to pay the fine, but I was on my



SUSAN SWIER

way to another job, at a university in Harbin. The Foreign Affairs officer met me at the train station and said they would talk about a contract the next day. However, he sent his assistant to tell me that they didn't want me after all—I was too young.

Then I met a high school recruiter from Sui Fen He, on the Russian border. She said I could take the overnight train with her assistant, look at the school and then come back the next night and think about it. I figured I had nothing to lose, and it would be a chance to see another city.

But they had no intention of letting me go back and think things over! They left me at an apartment that had no kitchen, no real shower, and running water less than half of the time. I decided to find my own way out and took a train out the next day without telling anyone.

Fortunately the agency that found me that job sent me an e-mail telling me that they had jobs in Beijing. I had three interviews and three offers, and decided to take

SUSAN SWIER (AG106) USED HER BREAKS FROM TEACHING TO SIGHTSEE. SHE PHOTOGRAPHED THIS TEMPLE IN QUANZHOU.

a job teaching writing and oral English at China Youth University for Political Sciences, the university of the Communist party. It doesn't seem very "communist," except that "youth leaders" from various countries come here all the time. I teach three days a week, just 10 classes, with two groups of freshmen for the oral English class and two groups of sophomores for writing. I really don't know what I am doing yet.

OCTOBER 28, 2006

Last weekend, I went hiking with two students in Xiang Shan, the Fragrant Hills. The view was amazing. There were people all over the place and vendors selling laminated red leaves, even at the top of the mountain.

Since I teach just three mornings a week, I began tutoring: a group of four businessmen and a seven-year-old boy—quite an experience since neither the boy nor his mother speaks English at all. They come to my apartment and the boy runs wild most of the time, though his mother seems happy enough. Every other weekend, I read stories to children at the Bookworm, an English bookstore and café.

Books are amazingly cheap here, at least those printed in China, and most are classics. The library on campus has a fair selection of English books, but until yesterday I hadn't been in because of the guard at the door. (There are guards everywhere here, even at McDonald's.)

One week, important party officials came to inspect the school and the whole campus was worried. Students weren't allowed to leave and there was a meeting for all the teachers that sounded quite serious. We foreign teachers had to go, and the dean later summed up the meeting in just five minutes. Supposedly the inspection went well.

DECEMBER 10, 2006

The university just informed me that I don't have an agreement with them to teach until July, but only until the end of the term. The dean said the writing students had complained about my class. (No writing teacher has lasted more than a term here.)

My oral English class was fine; the students were participating and seemed to like me. Unfortunately the writing class went downhill. Though they have improved quite a bit since the beginning of the semester, they want to write perfectly. Since they don't, they blame me. They're under a lot of pressure because they have to memorize an entire dictionary to prepare for an exam next semester. The Chinese education system is so focused on memorization. For writing, I think they would like to have a list of rules to memorize and set phrases to use that would somehow make them write perfectly. Would I have done better if I could have been more authoritative?

I lined up another job at a public primary school in Quanzhou, Fujian Province. The English program is run by Australians, seems to be well run, and I gain a chance to see southern China.

DECEMBER 24, 2006

It doesn't feel much like Christmas here, though some stores put up tinsel and decorations. My freshmen threw a party that was fun, but a bit strange. We ate sunflower seeds, peanuts, and oranges, and played games: guess-the-Chinese pop song, musical chairs, and the three-legged race. There was a gift exchange at the end. The freshmen are a lot of fun, and I'll miss them.

I tried to make Christmas cookies yesterday only to find that the oven in my apartment doesn't work. On Christmas day, another English teacher and I are going to watch *It's a Wonderful Life* on DVD. And we bought real wine, which we haven't had in months. (Chinese wine tastes like Kool-Aid.)

China is strange but fascinating, an incongruous mix of ancient and modern things so close together. The people are fascinating too, though many are hard to trust. I'm reading *Alice in Wonderland* right now, and there are definite parallels

to China: The cards painting the roses red so the queen won't notice and chop off their heads is like the way people hide things and help each other get away with things. The Cheshire Cat says to Alice, "we're all mad here. They're mad, I'm mad, you're mad. . . if you weren't mad, you wouldn't have come."

DECEMBER 31, 2006

My freshmen had a going-away party for me in my apartment and gave me an umbrella because it rains so much in Fujian. The train trip to Xiamen (Quanzhou is so small that it has no train station) took 36 hours because the train had to go through so many mountains. As we traveled further south, the winter countryside gave way to spring. In the north, the cows have thick coats, but in the south, they have sagging necks and hairless gray skin. I took a bus from Xiamen to Quanzhou, and arrived in the evening of my second day of traveling.

Quanzhou is a quaint city. Marco Polo visited the city, and it used to be a major international trading port until the emperor forbid foreign visitors in about the late 14th century. There is a wide variety in the architecture, and temples for nearly every religion, even one of the last surviving Manichean temples.

It is possible to walk anywhere within an hour and a half, and there are cheap motorcycle taxis everywhere. They keep an extra helmet on their handlebars, and you flag them down, haggle over the price, and jump on the back.

I'm teaching in a private after-school program run by an Australian at a public school. Each class has 30-35 students, and I am teaching kids from first through sixth grades. Many of the students board at the school even if their parents live nearby because the parents work so much. Here the kids have no shower, just sinks with cold water. Perhaps because the kids don't get enough attention, they are extremely rowdy in class.

MARCH 5, 2007

Happy Chinese New Year! During our three-week spring break I traveled all



SWIER ENJOYS A NIGHT OUT IN BEIJING.



HER FRESHMAN ENGLISH STUDENTS MADE SWIER FEEL AT HOME WITH A CHRISTMAS PARTY IN DECEMBER 2006.

APRIL 27, 2007

Well, I got fired. I can't control 35 kids at once; the little ones run wild, and the older ones are bored and talk amongst themselves. Since the classes are so large, and I have more than 200 students, it's hard to remember the children as individuals. Even first-graders spend the whole class talking amongst themselves, and I can't shout over them. I made one kid stand in the back and he started doing cartwheels back there.

Almost every month, I've had to give tests, and I can see the students are doing worse than when I started. I know now that I do not want to teach such large classes of small kids ever again! I have a month's notice, but after that, I don't know what to do. I don't think it's a good idea to get another English teaching job, but at least the whole thing has been an adventure.

JUNE 27, 2007

It didn't really hit me that I was leaving China until I was at the airport. After stops in Bangkok and Seoul, I flew to Las Vegas, where my aunt lives. It was strange to hear people speaking English again and to see so many Caucasians. I haven't received scholarship funding to St. Andrews, so I'm not sure I can make it this fall. I miss China, and I would consider going back again.

I certainly don't want to be fired again, though. ❀

Postscript: Susan Swier was accepted to the doctoral program at St. Andrews, but without scholarship funding, couldn't attend. She flew to Scotland to try to work something out, but when she had visa trouble, she headed back to China. "I've accepted a job at a private school teaching small classes of adults," she wrote in September.

She hasn't given up on studying at St. Andrews, where she hopes to concentrate on Thomas Hardy.

over China. I started in Guilin, Guangxi, where I visited Seven Stars Cave Park, which has an amazing cavern and wild monkeys running everywhere. Though a sign said "these lovely monkeys are very bad tempered and sometimes attack tourists," I saw a small child feeding a monkey a banana right out of his hand.

The next day I took a train to Nanning, near Vietnam, and another to Kunming, the "City of Eternal Spring," in Yunnan Province, a city famous for its flowers and fruit. I bought a half-pineapple on a stick for just 50 cents.

That evening, I left on a bus for Lijiang, which has a beautiful Old Town that dates back to the Song Dynasty, almost 800 years ago. Most of the inhabitants are from the Naxi minority group, and many wear traditional costumes. Every few hours they performed traditional dances in the square near my inn, and musical groups performed in the evenings.

Next I took a bus to the famous Shangri-La, which didn't look exciting after all. Instead I tagged along with a Korean family and went to Meili Snow Mountain near Dequin, on the border of Yunnan and Tibet. That was the most exciting bus ride I ever had—six hours, up and around the mountains on narrow, unpaved roads, most of which had no guard rails. The Koreans, two Chinese girls, and I decided to go together to the mountain. We met a Tibetan taxi driver who said she would

drive us there and back the next day, and offered lodging in her family's farmhouse. Nearly a dozen half-drunk neighbors were gathered in the house's main hall to greet us. The girl's father offered us some of their local alcohol in a brass kettle, we drank several toasts, and they put white shawls on us to show we were honored guests. After dinner, we danced to traditional music.

It was raining the next day as we went up the mountain on horseback, so we rented raincoats and pants for the excursion. As we climbed higher, the rain changed to snow. We went as far as the horses could go and continued further up on foot before turning back. At the farmhouse, they had just killed a pig that day, so the meat was quite fresh.

A trip to China wouldn't be complete without seeing pandas, so I went to Chengdu, to the panda research and breeding center there. In a setting close to their natural habitat, there were red pandas, which look almost like foxes, and giant pandas.

I took the train home to Quanzhou the next morning: a 44-hour trip, and though I missed the New Year's festivities, I could see fireworks from the window.

With just a few months left here in China, I need to decide what to do next. I just finished applying to a literature PhD program at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

RETURN TO SHANXI

BY KRISHNAN VENKATESH
GRADUATE INSTITUTE DIRECTOR, SANTA FE

In March 2007, I returned to northern China after an absence of 18 years. From 1986-89, I had taught English literature and Western philosophy at Shanxi University, Taiyuan City, and forged strong, intimate bonds with about 100 inquisitive and idealistic young people. It turned out that none of those bonds had weakened through time and distance. All these people remain my close friends, and we picked up exactly where we left off, with discussions of life and books, and always over great food and drink. Now of course my former students are all in their 40s, with kids in high school or college, and they include university professors, teachers, managers, entrepreneurs, and translators. One of the wonderful things about China is the inviolable strength of the student-teacher relationship; I know that when I am 80 and my former students are 73, our bond will be unchanged and even deeper.

On this trip I had been invited to give a series of lectures on liberal education and great books, to upper-class undergraduates, graduates, and university instructors. They were eager to hear about Plato, Aristotle, and Thucydides, and more than



100 undergraduates stayed late to hear me explain Shakespeare's meter. The American teachers who pass through Chinese universities apparently do only language instruction and are usually not interested in books. Consequently, these students are hungry to learn how to think about big things, to examine their own ideals, and to discover new worlds through reading. Their intense curiosity about life outside China was very moving.

In visiting Taiyuan, Beijing, and some "smaller" cities, even on this short trip I could see the bustle and energy of a huge

country engaged in seizing the economic leadership of the world: hard-working people everywhere, roads bursting with aggressive cars and trucks (no longer the peaceful tides of bicycles), deals made on cell-phones as people walked the streets, buildings going up everywhere, many crowded restaurants. Service workers in restaurants, hotels, banks and airports were uniformly well-trained, efficient and friendly; you could see in their eyes that they knew they were going somewhere. China is no longer a sleeping giant; indeed, the sheer life-force of this toiling, wide-awake giant is all too evident and somewhat overwhelming. By the time I returned to the United States, it was America that seemed sleepily complacent and in decline.

Spend some time in China, and you will wake up. And to all of you recent St. John's graduates who already long for the college and miss the conversations you are used to: The world out there is an interesting and exciting place; go be part of it! ❖



KRISHNAN VENKATESH

ABOVE, THE GARDEN PAVILION OF A PRIVATE MANSION IN SHANXI. LEFT, KRISHNAN VENKATESH'S FORMER STUDENTS FROM SHANXI UNIVERSITY REUNITE WITH THEIR TEACHER 18 YEARS LATER.

FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT



The homecomings this year have just concluded, and the energy at both was revitalizing. I attended Santa Fe's, where there was a wide array of activities for returning alums. You could start the weekend with an art studio and winery tour, attend the lecture Friday night, choose from a range of seminars Saturday morning, toast your classmates and the college at the banquet, and dance the night away in the Great Hall.

This year's Santa Fe Homecoming benefited from the active presence of our community of learning—current students and faculty, joined by returning alumni—sharing the *energeia* of the Santa Fe campus, made possible by shifting the event

from summer to a time when the campus is in full session. The college staff, consulting with the Alumni Association, considered this change at great length over several years and announced this change in 2006. Like most changes, there were serious pros and cons to consider both as to changing the schedule and as to keeping things the same; unfortunately there was no single option that was ideal. In the end, after carefully weighing those pros and cons, we thought the benefits of having the full community present was of great importance to the essential nature of a homecoming for the St. John's community. To paraphrase Dean Mora's welcome to us: for the first time we were coming home to the Santa Fe campus when the college was fully there, rather than finding a key under the mat.

More than 150 people signed up for Homecoming, one of the highest attendance rates in years. On Friday night, alumni were able to attend (or to skip) Friday night lecture and the time-honored Question Period. On Saturday night, more than 100 alumni and guests enjoyed a fine dinner on the Meem Placita. When we moved indoors to the Great Hall for the dance, the enthusiasm of the many students attending enlivened the event for all. Tutors also were present throughout the weekend, at cocktail parties, the picnic, and brunch. Students were excited to see alumni who were not tutors: such strange beasts had been rumored before but never observed in the wild.

Annapolis also had a very fine Homecoming, with more than 400 attendees, and a full range of events.

On both campuses, the programming for children done by select students under the direction of the alumni office, including games, babysitting, and "Future Johnnie Seminars," encouraged more alumni to bring their families. We've heard from many parents who love this relatively new addition to the homecomings.

One of the key lessons from this year's schedule was that many alumni felt early September was too soon in the beginning of academic years. Next year, Annapolis Homecoming will take place September 26-28 and Santa Fe is scheduled for mid-October.

As the college did this year, it will take advantage of the more attractive pricing of Santa Fe hotels in the fall to negotiate block rates.

There have been many other great alumni programs this year, both around the country at our chapters and on campus through the Piraeus program. As the representative organization for alumni, we are driven by our mission to provide opportunities for more alumni to connect more often and more richly. We will continue to strive to make engagement with the college and our community a vital part of the lives of our alumni.

Jason Walsh (A85)
Alumni Association President

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

DOWN TO PIRAEUS—IN ANNAPOLIS

Last January, the Alumni Association joined with the college in offering a new continuing education program, Piraeus. In June, the association's secretary, **Joanne Murray** (A70), spent a long weekend revisiting the *Odyssey* with 17 other alumni in seminars led by Annapolis tutor Eva Brann (HAgo) and Santa Fe tutor David Carl.

Here's her commentary on Piraeus.

LIFE IN THE DORMS

Jo Ann (Mattson A87, alumni director) is the best hostess ever. In our dorm rooms she left flowerpots filled with wine, cheese, chocolate, grapes, treats. Settling into a dorm room is like having a clean slate for the weekend, a real break from daily responsibilities. Part of the fun of the whole weekend was living in the dorm and being around people that you're going to run into when you're brushing your teeth in the morning.

THE ODYSSEY

I was being pretty diligent in getting the reading done, but I was still finishing the last book right up to the last seminar. I still have the Fitzgerald translation that was very popular when I was a student. This was the first time re-reading it since freshman year with Elliott Zuckerman. (It really is awful to have to see the underlining and comments one made as a freshman, isn't it?)

BEST METAPHOR IN THE ODYSSEY

The night before Odysseus is going to take out the suitors, he could not sleep. He rocked, "rolling from side to side, as a cook turns a sausage, big with blood and fat, at a scorching blaze, without a pause, to broil it quick: So he rolled left and right, casting



about to see how he, alone, against the false outrageous crowd of suitors could press the fight."

THE SEMINARS

We met in the Barr-Buchanan Center—the library when I was a student—in the beautiful reading room. Of course, I knew Eva from way back, but David Carl was a new acquaintance who turned out to be an excellent tutor. He and Eva played back and forth across the table with evident pleasure.

It wasn't the same kind of discussion we had as freshmen. The conversations about Penelope were memorable: What were the difficulties of her position? Why did she have to outdo Odysseus himself in ruses? Even after he and Telemachus had killed the suitors, she had to test him one more time about moving the bed that he had built for their marriage. Only when he reacts to her saying that the bed had been moved ("what do mean you moved the bed?") can she resume the marriage. How do you resume a marriage after so many years of separation? That's something 18-year-olds don't really know much about, but at our age, now, we think we know at least a few things about marriage.

THE FEASTING

We had the campus to ourselves, and the chef made it a show-off occasion for the kitchen. He took out the crystal and the linens, and there were flowers on the table. How was the food? It was not just better than regular dining hall food, it was really, really good food. It was food worth photographing.

Saturday evening we made a pause in the seminar routine to feast on crabs down in

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 (A70)

Treasurer – Richard Cowles (A70)

Mailing address – Alumni Association, St. John's College, P.O. Box 2800, Annapolis, MD 21404, or 1160 Camino Cruz Blanca, Santa Fe, NM 87505-4599.

the boathouse. A few people said they'd had better crabs, but they said it elbow-deep in crab shells. They kept piling them up on their plates. Jo Ann and her husband Walter (A87), Chris Nelson, and the tutors joined us for the party.

We sat up talking in the common room, over a supply of wine and cheese that was magically replenished every evening. We talked about: what we'd been up to for the last 30 years, jobs, life, politics, the economy, the country, intellectual passions, and favorite amusements. For me it was a particular pleasure to see so many people from my class, and from classes a few years before and after us—people I really got to know for the first time.

The seminar is central for many of us, but that feeling of welcome—that's what the college does so well. And that's what made the weekend so memorable. ❀



LEFT, TREATS IN THE DORM. TOP, ELBOW DEEP IN CRABS. RIGHT, MISS BRANN AND THE AUTHOR.



MARION WARREN

SEVENTY YEARS OF GENUINE CONVERSATION

In 1957, a would-be archaeologist from Stanford University joined the faculty of St. John's College. Though she loved Greek archaeology and had been a member of the American Agora expedition in Athens, the young scholar decided she would rather spend her life "learning about the nature of things, instead of describing objects."

This year, when she sat down with her seminar partner to lead another group of freshmen through the *Iliad*, tutor Eva Brann marked her 50th year of teaching at St. John's. Miss Brann studied history at Brooklyn College, going on to earn a

master's in classics and a doctorate in archaeology from Yale University. When she came to St. John's for her first visit, Miss Brann recalls, "It was love at first sight."

Over the years she has served as the college's first female dean, has written several books and articles, and has been honored many times over. When she received the National Humanities Medal in 2005, presented by President George Bush in a White House ceremony, she characteristically turned attention away from herself and to St. John's. "I think the college had more to do with this than me," she said at the time.

At Homecoming this fall in Annapolis, Miss Brann was presented with a Festschrift, edited by tutors Peter Kalkavage and Eric Salem (A77). *The Envisioned Life: Essays in Honor of Eva Brann* comprises 23 essays from faculty from both campuses, friends, alumni, and Annapolis President Christopher Nelson (SF70). The book is available from Paul Dry Books in Philadelphia: www.pauldrybooks.com

The college has changed, and grown, and modernized somewhat since this photo was taken in the Coffee Shop in the late 1950s, but St. John's still concerns itself with the nature of things. ❀

ALUMNI CALENDAR

Piraeus

St. John's College, in cooperation with the Alumni Association, is pleased to offer Piraeus, a continuing education program that alternates between the two campuses and combines seminars with social activities.

January 18-20, 2008

Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote**

January 18-20, 2008

Santa Fe

Led by Henry Higuera and
Cary Stickney (A75)

As the first modern novel, *Don Quixote* had a great influence over later authors, from Dostoevsky to Mann to Nabokov. The program includes five seminars over three days. Seminars will meet in the morning and afternoon on both Friday and Saturday, concluding with a final seminar and brunch Sunday morning.

* *The seminar led by Victoria Mora and Peter Pesic has been filled.*

Cost: \$250 per person, includes all seminars, receptions, and brunch Saturday night dinner compliments of the Alumni Association.

Registration and payment deadline:
December 21, 2007

Croquet

St. John's vs. The Naval Academy,
Annapolis
April 19, 2008

Homecoming, Annapolis

September 26-28, 2008

Homecoming, Santa Fe

October 10-12, 2008



TERI THOMSON RANDALL



AMY RAAB PHOTOGRAPHY



TERI THOMSON RANDALL

CLOCKWISE: CHILDREN IN SANTA FE JOIN IN THE HOMECOMING GAMES; ALUMNI IN SANTA FE RELIVE THE GLORY DAYS THROUGH OLD YEAR-BOOKS AND PHOTOGRAPHS; JOEL ARD (A95) AND SON DAVID ENJOY A BEAUTIFUL SATURDAY AFTERNOON IN ANNAPOLIS.

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

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