Greetings from a still chilly Oberlin. The editor must apologize for the delay in this year’s newsletter, the result of his advancing age and declining skills. But though tardy, this newsletter comes to you with the usual gratitude for your interest in and support of Classics. 2009-10 was another fine year for us, and 2010-11 is going well, too. We miss Hilary Becker, who replaced Drew Wilburn while he was on leave last year. She has taken up a position at Davidson and is clearly just as welcome there as she was here.

Jenn Thomas is finishing her second of two years as a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in our department, stepping up this spring to teach Roman history, thus sparing students from Tom Van Nortwick’s yellowing notes. Ben Lee is on leave for the year, having won a prestigious Loeb Fellowship. He is working on his commentary on book 11 of Apuleius’ Metamorphoses. Christopher Trinacty, who came to us for the year from Amherst to replace Ben, has been a major success as a teacher and is working to finish up his book on Seneca, due out soon in the American Philological Association Monographs series. He will take up a tenure-track position at the University of Missouri next fall.

Chris and Jenn have been wonderful colleagues, and we will miss them both next year. Drew Wilburn is back with us, after a year off, and is in the home stretch on his book on magic in the ancient world. Kirk Ormand has been, as usual, a skillful and patient chair for the department, plowing his way through piles of paper on our behalf with great equanimity. Your editor, meanwhile, has enjoyed getting to know his new colleagues and watching them flourish.

Commencement 2011 will be here in about a month. We hope this newsletter will have arrived in your mailbox or on your computer by then. In any event, we’re looking forward to seeing those of you who plan to attend. We’ll be in the King Courtyard, waiting to see you!
FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

TOM VAN NORTWICK has been enjoying his classes as usual. Classics 101 and 102 (Iliad and tragedy; Odyssey and comedy) have been filled with energetic, smart young people who keep supplying new ideas. Greek and Latin language courses have been equally lively and energizing for him. He has begun work on a book project on the last three plays of Sophocles and spent the summer of 2010 writing on Electra.

CHRIS TRINACTY has enjoyed his time at Oberlin tremendously. His course on the reception of Latin literature introduced students to the fruitful literary connections between authors such as Seneca and Shakespeare as well as Virgil and Dante. He gave a paper on Senecan tragedy at CAMWS southern section, continued his research on his book project, and has (almost) perfected his chocolate chip cookie recipe.

JENN THOMAS has found an exciting new way to motivate students to participate in large classes: assign them to conspire against you online! Her Age of Nero class last year spent two weeks in an online role-playing game called “Neropolis,” the brilliant invention of Obie alumna Clara Shaw Hardy ’83. Jenn played the emperor Nero while students tried to form or thwart conspiracies; although Nero survived (hooray?), the game must have been a success, since around a quarter of the class has signed up for Jenn’s current History of Rome course to get another crack at assassination. When not avoiding virtual daggers, Jenn is busy researching both “normal” topics and the Roman attitude toward marine mammals, particularly seals. She gave papers in Edinburgh, Scotland, and Honolulu, Hawaii. It’s a tough job, but someone has to do it.

BEN LEE has been enjoying his sabbatical. He is currently working on three projects that should appear in the next two years: a translation of an Italian book on Apuleius for Ohio State Press (Literature and Identity in Apuleius’ Metamorphoses, by Luca Graverini); a commentary on book 11 of the Apuleius’ Metamorphoses for the University of Michigan Press; and a co-edited volume of papers delivered at last year’s Apuleius and Africa conference, hosted at Oberlin with the generous support of the Mellon Foundation, the classics department, its alumni/ae, and friends. Ben misses teaching Latin and Greek and looks forward to returning in the fall.

DREW WILBURN is back to teaching this year after a very productive sabbatical. He reports that Alexander the Great failed yet again to rule his empire, and that more Obies are learning the proper way to curse an opposing charioteer. Drew’s book Materia Magica: The Archaeology of Magic in Egypt, Cyprus and Spain is nearly done, and should be hitting bookshelves in the next year. Drew also has been doing some speaking gigs in Maryland and Iowa, and is off to give a paper on magic in architecture at a conference on the Egyptian Fayum in Germany this coming May.

KIRK ORMAND spent a busy and spectacular summer (2010) leading one of the American School’s summer sessions through a six-week tour of Greek archaeological sites and museums. In the process he successfully navigated to a Hellenistic bridge on Crete using only local landmarks and a sketch map; he also developed valuable skills in arguing with Greek bus drivers and archaeological site guards. Now back in Oberlin, he is plugging away at editing the Blackwell Companion to Sophocles, writing articles on pseudo-Hesiod (because regular Hesiod is so 15 minutes ago), and teaching his course on Ancient Greek and Roman Sexuality.

Karen Barnes, Tom Van Nortwick, Jenn Thomas, Kirk Ormand, Chris Trinacty, Drew Wilburn pose with Homer

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Kirk outside the Corycian cave, near Delphi
2011 GRADUATING SENIORS

We have a record number of graduating majors and minors this year, as the department has threatened reach 50 majors total:

CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION
- Genevieve Apfel
- Michael Balentekin
- Doug Goldstein
- Jordan Jankosek
- Elin Rummel
- Shauna Siggelkow
- Robin Taxier
- Jonathan Vimr
- Madeleine Wahrman
- Laura Wilke

LATIN
- Lauren Clark
- Alex Densmore
- Hilary Finedore
- Sara Perez
- Amanda Vivian

ADD TO THAT SEVERAL MINORS!
- Dexter Brown (Greek)
- Mona Morau (Latin)
- Jennifer Sherman (Latin)
- Emily Wilson (Latin)

GREEK
- Augustus (Gus) Beall
- Katelynn Kundrata

ALUMNI NEWS

Thanks to the miracle of Facebook, we have an even richer trove of updates this year than usual. If any of you are on FB but are not yet a “friend” of mine, please consider “friending” me. There’s nothing like seeing your face and hearing your voice all the time!

MARGO FREISTADT (Class. Civ. ’78) wrote recently to say that she and her husband, Lynn, are planning to visit their daughter Kenny ’13 this winter during the annual Bardic marathon. We look forward to seeing them!

SANDY COFFIN (Latin ’82) continues to pursue her musical career. She sent us this news in October: “I am still living, performing, and teaching in NYC. While officially the Director of brass band at a private middle school in Manhattan, I also teach Latin when a sub is needed and infuse most band classes with a dose of Latin and Greek vocabulary and derivations. (Have to get these kids into good high schools, after all!) I helped provide translations of some Latin texts for Gabriel Casssone’s The Trumpet Book (published last year). And I’m writing a (vaguely theater) piece for solo trumpet based (quite loosely) on the Oracle at Delphi (or at least on (mis?)conceptions of the same.) Slow going in between performances and auditions, but progress is being made! And I run a small summer concert series on Lake George (Adirondacks).”

SARA MYERS (Latin ’83) is Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Virginia. Her commentary on Book 14 of Ovid’s Metamorphoses was published last January by Cambridge University Press. She lives in Charlottesville with her husband, John Dillery (Greek ’83), Associate Professor of Classics at UVa, and their two sons, Peter and Nikolas. She and John will be returning to Oberlin to give lectures in 2011-12 as part of our “Distinguished Alumni in Classics” series. We look forward to seeing them both!

CLARA HARDY (Latin ’83) and Rob Hardy (Latin ’86) have been busy as usual. They sent this update recently: “Our most exciting news is child-related: our oldest son, Will, is just off to spend a year in Lop Buri, Thailand, on a Rotary Youth Exchange, and then carrying on to St. Olaf (!). Rob is blogging for Dickinson College’s Civil War blog, “A Blog Divided,” on topics related to classical education. You can check out his contributions here: http://housedivided.dickinson.edu/sites/blogdivided/tag/education-culture/. I [Clara] just published an article, or really more of an essay, on classics and epistemology in The History Teacher.”

JON BERRY (Greek ’84) keeps us on our toes with excellent political posts on FB. He recently sent this update: “Family:
Emma is almost 12 and in sixth grade; Eli is almost 6 and in kindergarten. She plays the flute (Oberlin double-degree someday?); he plays soccer. Joan continues to be an independent sales rep for various yarn companies, and still knits and cooks a lot. Professional: I’m still at Mount Carmel High School in Chicago. I was partly administrative for two years (Dean of English and World Languages), but, as a result of budget cuts, I’m back in the classroom full time (which I prefer). This year I’m teaching Latin IV (AP Vergil); Latin III (focusing on Caesar and Ovid this year); and 11th-grade English (American lit). We are a private Catholic boys school a few blocks south of Hyde Park in Chicago. I have many, many former students who have continued studying Latin in college (unfortunately not at Oberlin, however). During the summers, I hang out with the kids, work in the garden, swim laps, and, on occasions, ‘compete’ in triathlons. This summer, I began work on a novel, something which has been percolating for years. It will likely take many years to complete, since I can only work on it during the summers.”

CHRISTIANE NELSON BAKER (Latin ’90) stopped by the department last month with her husband, Todd Baker. They both looked great. Christiane continues to teach Latin in Columbus and promised to send us some students soon.

ERIKA NELSON (Greek/Comp. Lit. ’90) is Assistant Professor of German at Union College. She sent this excellent update: “I’m teaching German Studies at Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., although I also spend a lot of time in Dallas, where my partner, Neil, lives. I still draw upon my classics background all the time, especially the Orpheus myth. I love my job, and Union reminds me a lot of Oberlin. My colleague Michele Ricci-Bell even spent two years teaching German at Oberlin before coming to Union. I really enjoy teaching and take students to Freiburg and Berlin regularly.”

EMILY STONE (Latin ’90) wrote with some news: “My short film, Photo Op, recently screened at the LA Shorts fest and will screen in November at the Big Apple Film Fest in Tribeca. Link is on my facebook page.”

BRONWEN WICKISER (Latin ’91) is Assistant Professor of Classics at Vanderbilt, where she is teaching Eush Tayco (Greek ’09) and Alice Sharpless (Latin ’09). She tells us she had a fabulous time catching up with Kirk Ormand in Athens this past summer.
Hilary Becker’s Latin Class re-enacts the Ides of March

MOLLY PASCO-PRANGER (Latin ’92) is Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of Mississippi. She reports that Sadie just turned 10, Asa is 6, and that she and Chris continue to happily homeschool.

ELLEN CRAIG (Latin ’95) is living and working in San Francisco. She’s been posting gorgeous pictures of the Bay Area and wine country on Facebook, causing envy in her friends. She is also, of course, deep in the throes of World Series celebration.

MATTHEW DUVALL (Clas. Civ. ’95) continues to have great success as part of eighth blackbird, the groundbreaking musical ensemble he helped to found in 1995. He sent this welcome update: “Still very happily married to Margret Kinkead Duvall, also an Obie. We have two kids, Julian, 3 (yes, I named my boy Julian, something any Classics prof should be proud of), and Eva, 7. Recently we started taking a weekly music lesson together, all playing guitar.” Professionally, Matt plays percussion with eighth blackbird, now in its 15th season. The group commissioned “Double Sextet” by Steve Reich (winner of the Pulitzer Prize) and recently released the work on Nonesuch Records; commissioned “On a Wire” by Jennifer Higdon and premiered and recorded it with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra; served as ensemble in residence at the University of Chicago and the University of Richmond; and hosted MusicX, a chamber music festival, in Blonay, Switzerland. Matt also made his acting debut performing the role of Pierrot in a new production of Schoenberg’s Pierrot Lunaire.

HERICA VALLADARES (Greek ’95) continues as Assistant Professor of Classics at Johns Hopkins. She wrote us recently with this news: “Last spring, my students and I put together an online exhibition, “The Authority of Ruins,” which traces the emergence of archaeology as a modern discipline. Check it out at http://sites.google.com/site/theauthorityofruins/. There has also been a lot of moving lately. In July, Mike and I moved to a new apartment in Baltimore (we’re now in Mount Vernon, near the Walters Art Museum), and the Department of Classics moved back to the newly renovated Gilman Hall. Yet, somehow, amidst all this to and fro of boxes, I managed to finish two articles over the summer: one on Latin elegy and Roman wall painting and another on Ovid’s myth of Narcissus and Pompeian pictorial ensembles. Now that school has started up again, I’ve been hard at work on my new classes—a graduate seminar on Ovid’s Heroïdes and an undergraduate seminar on Roman landscapes. I’ve also been helping out with the re-installation of the Johns Hopkins University Archaeological Museum. Last, but not least, I continue to work on my book manuscript, tentatively titled The Roman Aesthetic of Tenderness: Painting and Poetry in the Early Empire. As you can see, there is never a dull moment around here.”

NANCY WEISSMAN GALLER (Class. Civ. ’95) and her husband, Bruce Galler, live and work in Palmdale, Calif. She sent this welcome update recently: “Bruce and I are still teaching history in middle school and high school. Our daughter, Anna, is in first grade, doing well, and our son is enjoying preschool. We love our new house.”

TOFA BORREGAARD (Class. Arch. ’98) lives in northern California and is busy! Here’s her latest: “Had three books come out this year, two of which hit the New York Times bestseller list. I’m still hoping to continue excavating; in
highland Peru these days, but not certain I’ll manage it with several more books due next year. Could have worse problems. Left off both teaching and the PhD in order to write, and I’m back living in California wine country after a glorious book tour that took me to New Zealand and Australia. (In reply to my asking what kind of books she has been publishing, she replied, “steampunk.” This answer did not help my antiquated brain, and so she supplied this further clarification: “Steampunk are urban fantasy comedies of manners. Imagine Jane Austen and PG Wodehouse had a love child that dabbled in the supernatural and alternate history.” I’m sold!)

RENE FALKNER (Greek ’98) finished her MMus in viola at Yale in 2001. She played in the New Haven Symphony until 2007, when she moved to Gainesville, Fla. That same year, she married Steven Thomas, whom she met in New Haven and who is now a Professor of cello at the University of Florida. Margaret Marshall (Greek ’98) was in attendance at the wedding. Renate is in her second year of a doctoral program in viola at Florida State University and holds the position of adjunct Professor of viola at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville. She has developed an interest in Baroque performance and plays with the Boston Baroque, while also playing concerts in Boston, Connecticut, and Baltimore. She and Steven spend summers playing in music festivals in Bellingham, Wash., and have visited his family in Europe.

STACEY CARTER (Class. Civ. ’99) stopped by for visits this fall. She has begun an exciting new phase in her teaching career: “I left Hawken School last May to take a job as a school administrator. It’s my dream job, and I am looking forward to the challenge of learning what it takes to lead a high performing charter school in the Cleveland area. I accepted a position with I CAN SCHOOLS, a new charter school management network in the area. We opened two K-8 schools this fall: Cleveland College Preparatory School in Slavic Village, and Northeast Ohio College Preparatory School in Tremont. I am co-director of the school and the dean of student life and management for grades K-4 at the Tremont Campus.”

JASON CUNNINGHAM (Class. Civ. ’99) continues to live and work in Indianapolis as an insurance auditor. We keep up with him through his FB page, where recently we saw birthday greetings to him from his friends. He continues to be a popular man!

REBECCA GERSHOWITZ COOLONG (Class. Civ. ’99) checked in this fall with lots of happy news: “I got married in April 2008 to a wonderful guy named Bob Coolong, and on October 29, 2009, we welcomed our son, Robert Payne Coolong. I am currently in the process of planning the first birthday/Halloween costume party. I am still working at the Springfield Jewish Community Center (Mass.) as the elementary director, running all K-6 and family programs. In my free time...(hmm, who I am kidding, I have an 11-month-old baby, and I work full time, who has free time!) What a crazy, wonderful life! And we are just starting to build a house, which, with any luck, will be ready by Christmas. It really has been a busy few years!”

STEFAN KAMOLA (Greek & Latin ’01) wrote recently with splendid news: “In September 2009, I went to one of the most lovely spots in the world, Lopez Island in the north Puget Sound, and married one of the loveliest ladies around, Mia Karpov. A week later I was back at my desk preparing for qualifying exams, which I passed (with honors!) in May. Now I am newly immersed in a dissertation project on the life and impact of a certain Persian administrator, doctor, and historian active at the turn of the 14th century. In the spring I will be teaching a senior history colloquium [at the University of Washington] with the working title “The Mongol Empire: Story and History.” I can be reached at kamola@uw.edu.”

SARAH BIBER (Greek ’03) writes: “I just moved to Bozeman, Mont., where I’m the new tenure-track Assistant Professor of cello and theory at Montana State University. New hobbies will include hiking, skiing, and snowman-making. I just saw my first black bear last night, sitting outside my garage door. He looked just like he was
Nate Greenberg with Ruth Shaw at the open house

waiting for it to go up.” [Mary and Tom VN went through Bozeman not too long ago and can testify to its many charms!]

ELIAS KRELL (Greek ’03) came through Oberlin late last summer, and Tom VN had the pleasure of seeing him for the first time since he graduated. He is performing his own music in and around Chicago (see myspace.com/eliaskrell) and is also in a second band, the Homoticons, that toured internationally last summer, and in which he mostly plays accordion. Elias is in his third year of his PhD program in performance studies at Northwestern, researching music, identity, and politics in transgender musicians performing in North America. He is teaching and taking courses for the last year.

REBECCA THOMPSON SAHLIN (Latin ’03) got in touch this past fall with some news: “I’m still in Vermont (eighth year!) teaching Latin, a bit of Greek, and history at Lyndon Institute where I’m also a dorm parent. I’ve also been working on some writing and art projects, and I occasionally have a burning desire to return to academia (maybe grad school once and for all?). I hope that all is well and bustling in your neck of the woods! Our new boarding students just arrived, so the days are packed.”

MOLLY SAMUEL (Greek’04) has been on our mind for a couple of reasons. First, because of this excellent update: “I’m working full time as a freelance public radio reporter, doing about half arts reporting, half science, and loving all of it. Most stories air on the two local NPR affiliates here (where?), KQED and KALW, though some occasionally air nationally. I’m also working on a radio documentary as a fellow with Middlebury Fellowships in Environmental Journalism. It’s about islands and other isolated island-like places in California. This actually doesn’t feel like such a stretch from reading Homer, especially after reading Homer alongside westerns, though it’s less about a hero heading into the sunset, and more about small cute animals and enormous trees holding on for dear life. Amazingly enough, a FOURTH Samuel child has just applied to Oberlin. She had the gall to apply to other schools as well, but I’m crossing my fingers and hoping she’ll end up in Ohio next fall. I’ve threatened her with excommunication from the Samuel family if she chooses to go somewhere else. We’ll see if that works.”

This second paragraph concerns the other reason we’ve been thinking of Molly even more than usual. Lily Samuel has indeed enrolled at Oberlin, and was a student in Tom VN’s class on the Iliad and ancient tragedy this fall. The genetic predisposition to classics is already quite evident!

PATRICK SCHWEMMER (Greek & Latin ’04) was in touch recently with welcome news: “I had a challenging and rewarding first year in Princeton CompLit’s PhD program, during which I completed coursework on ancient and medieval Japanese and late-antique Greek and Syriac religious performance. I spent the summer learning to read manuscripts related to Noh drama in Tokyo, and while there, I dropped in on a seminar on the Omorosōshi, a collection of state ritual songs from the Shuri Court in Okinawa that are written in the only known relative to the Japanese language. This reawakened in me an old interest in identity and exchange in the pre-modern Pacific, and so this semester I am reviving my Chinese and thinking about pivoting into a more ‘regional’ comparative project for my dissertation (“Substitutions Along an Island Chain”?), though I couldn’t
Brandon, Gabe, Maggie, and Emily at the picnic

ALUMNI NEWS, cont.

resist taking Tom Hare’s introduction to middle Egyptian, so my brain remains as cluttered as ever. Another highlight of this semester is a seminar on the tea ceremony with my fellow Obie, Professor Andy Watsky. My fondest regards and best wishes to all for the latter half of 2010.”

SAMANTHA GRACE (Greek ’05) wrote from Tucson, Ariz.: “I’m on track with my program, which means that if I don’t screw up, I’ll have a PhD in another four or five years...anthropology is a long haul! Luckily, Guille (my husband who graduated from Oberlin in ’04) will be out of his MBA by next year, so there’ll be a little more balance in our lives. Oh! I hang out with Max Lieberman ’05 here in Tucson, and we started hanging out after we took Kirk’s sexuality class together. Small world.”

SARAH KESSLER (Class. Civ. ’05) sent us some wonderful news: “The big news is that I recently got engaged! Nick and I are very excited about getting started with all the planning. We haven’t set an official date yet, but we are thinking of fall 2012. In March, we’ll be taking a much-anticipated trip to Maui with Rebecca Fulop ’04. There will be snorkeling, ziplining, whale watching, and other exciting activities that we’re really looking forward to. I’m still working at the animal hospital and enjoying it. Yesterday I met a puppy that weighed less than 1 pound! Nick is still working at Barnard and going to library school with Bacilio Mendez ’04.”

JESSICA TRON (Greek ’05) sent us a welcome update: “I took a couple of years off after graduation. I was working at a radio station in small-town Indiana until I got the itch to get back to school. I spent a year and a half at a Bible college in Germany, but I wasn’t feeling challenged and I was going broke, so I came back home for a while and wokred as a housekeeping supervisor at a hotel. Still, I couldn’t get away from my addiction to school and my need to explore new places, so I am back in the academic game. I just moved to Texas to attend the Dallas Theological Seminary. Starting this fall, I’ll be studying for a master’s in Biblical exegesis and linguistics, and in a few years, I’m hoping to work in Central or Western Africa training native workers to translate the Bible into their mother tongues. My Greek major is being put to good use: I’ve saved a semester of study by testing out of many of the Greek language requirements.” We are so happy to be back in touch with Jess and hope to see her here soon!

LINDSAY BARUFFA (Class. Civ. ’06) visited us while working for the successful reelection campaign of Representative Betty Sutton. She sent a good update this fall: “Last summer, I got a great summer job with a UN court. I worked in the Office of the Co-Prosecutor at the Khmer Rouge tribunal (the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia) in Phnom Penh. While I was there, Duch (the head of S-21 prison) was on trial, and on some days when I wasn’t in the office doing boring old lawyering work, I got to go into the courtroom with the prosecution team. What an amazing experience! I loved Cambodia more than I ever expected to (it was my first time in Asia), and the work I was doing was incredible. I came back for my third year of law school, and I took part in the criminal law clinic at Case Western. I got to defend three cases, and I even prosecuted a case in North Olmsted. I actually really like criminal law work, and I think I’d love to do it for a while. It can be very emotionally draining (even for low level offenses like I had), though, so I don’t know if it’s something I’d want to stick with for a long time. In any case, I graduated in May. I was planning to move to New York, but in the end, I decided to stay in Ohio. I’m planning to take the Ohio Bar next year. I took off for the month of August (which was wonderful) and got a job with Betty Sutton’s congressional campaign a few weeks ago. Since I’ll only be around until Election Day, I’m staying with a great host family in Lorain and working in Elyria.”

TODD FOLEY (Greek ’06) reported in: “Well, it’s now year three for me in the PhD program in East Asian studies at NYU. I spent last semester in Beijing taking graduate courses in literature at Peking University (which meant Facebook was banned for me, and I haven’t really gotten back into the habit of using it, which is probably good
news for my productivity!) I’m in my last year of classes and, if everything goes right, will hopefully take my exams in the spring, which will then pave the way for a move out of the city for a return to the shores of the Great Lakes. My girlfriend Sharon (from Oberlin) is in medical school at Rochester, so I’m hoping I can base myself there next year.” Rochester is practically next door, so we’ll expect a visit next year!

MAE GACKSTETTER (Latin minor ’06): sent a good update: “I am currently in my second (and final) year of my master’s program at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, which is north of Chicago. By the end of May I should have a MS as a pathologist assistant. This means I will be doing autopsies and working with pathologists to provide the gross descriptions and select tissue used for diagnosis in surgical situations. I continue to hop states, as I am currently doing my clinical year at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Fort Wayne, Ind., and will be finishing up the last five months at St. Mary’s hospital in Duluth, Minn. I am not sure where I will end up after that. Currently, I am trying to figure out how my car will survive a Northern Minnesota winter. My biggest recent Obie highlight was getting to attend Max Teitel-Paule and Sara Lindner’s wedding in Tappan Square. It was simple, elegant, and relaxed, and the reception was at the Feve. It felt like home getting to see some dearly-missed faces. I still fence when I can. I am hoping to make it back for the class reunion in May. In some ways, it doesn’t feel like five years.” We’ll be delighted to see her this spring!

CHLOE LIOTTA-JONES (Latin & Class. Civ. ’06) has lots of news for us: “In May, I graduated from the library science program at Queens College with a degree in archival studies. I wrote a thesis and everything! ‘Sex, Film, and Rock ’n Roll: A Comparative Study of Community Archives in the U.S.’ It was really a capstone project; we didn’t need to defend it to anybody, it just got graded. Then, I moved to Seattle, the land of really good coffee and chocolatiers, and I am currently working for the King County Library System. As a New Yorker, I find all the laid-back people a little strange, but it’s working out for me so far.” Chloe has also been doing a lot of baking of late, and sent us some pictures that have caused serious mouthwatering around here.

MAX TEITEL-PAULE (Greek & Latin ’06) is beginning his Ph.D dissertation in Classics at Ohio State. He and Sara Lindner were married in Oberlin on June 12, 2010. Tom VN had a good visit with them both then, and can report that they were flourishing. Love and congratulations to them from us all!

MICHAEL BERKOWITZ (Greek & Latin ’07) has joined the burgeoning classics outpost in Boston. Here’s some good news from him: “I moved to Boston at the beginning of August, I’m working as a web developer for a company called PatientsLikeMe (www.patientslikeme.com) and playing as much music as I can. My website, with my performance schedule and mailing list, can be found at www.songsaboutsnow.com.” We hope to see him performing here soon!

ALLISON CHOAT (Latin ’07) sent a welcome update from Boston, with news about herself and also some other friends we miss: “I am still living and working in and around Boston, a town that I adore. I’m continuing my goal of becoming a lifelong double-degree student, dividing my time between my day job as a travel and event planner and my night job as theatrical director. This summer I was once again able to make a second home with the Oberlin in Italy program in Arezzo. It was wonderful to be back in Italy, and I feel very lucky to be able to stay connected to the musical side of my life. I’m actually the designer and photographer for Oberlin in Italy’s new advertisement, which will be in upcoming issues of Classical Singer magazine. Okay, it’s not TIME, but I’ll take what publicity I can get. After running a marathon (I still can’t believe it!) in April 2009, I am training for a half-marathon in November—although at the rate my motivation is going, it will probably be more like a 10-mile amble followed by a guilt-ridden 2-mile sprint to the high-carb snacks. Highlights from this year have included discovering a passion for yoga, hiking in the Snaefellsness Peninsula of Iceland, and eating my way through most of Boston’s restaurants. Meanwhile, the Oberlin classics crew remains strong. I recently swapped e-mails with Krishni
and continue to see Dan, Karen, and new Bostonian Michael Berkowitz on regular occasions. The Herodotus jokes fly fast and furiously."

SARAH DUNN (Latin ’07) sent a good update: “I spend my days working as the marketing director for a consulting firm based in New York City that supports sustainable growth in an urban context. I have lived in Brooklyn with fellow classics alum Sara Edmunds ’07 for the past 2-plus years.” Sarah hopes to return to Oberlin this spring for her reunion. We’ll be delighted to see her.

SARAH EDMUNDS (Class. Civ. ’07) also got in touch with some welcome news: “I am in the second year of a master’s program in Near Eastern studies at NYU, and I focus on contemporary politics and culture in Lebanon. I’ve spent the last two summers in Beirut studying Arabic, first at the Lebanese American University and then at the Saifi Institute.” We’re hoping that she’ll come back for reunion, too.

DANNY KANE (Greek & Latin ’07) sent us a good update: “I’m beginning my fourth year teaching at Tottenville High School in Staten Island. I finished my master’s degree in Education at the College of Staten Island in June, winning Education Master’s Thesis of the year. More importantly, my students from our chapter of the National Junior Classical League won the first annual New York City Dionysia with their adaptation of Oedipus Tyrannos. I’m hoping to take my first group of students to Italy in the next two years, possibly this summer.” Congratulations to Danny and his students!

ANNA LEINBERGER (Greek & Latin ’07) writes: “I just returned from living in Argentina, where I was studying dance. Before that, I was in Jordan teaching history for a year. I have just relocated to the Bay Area [Calif.] and love it.”

ALICE NORDQUIST (Latin major, Greek minor ’07) got back in touch, to our delight, with this excellent update: “I’m writing from New York City where I’m currently working as a senior recruitment associate with Teach for America. Basically my job is to set vision/strategy and manage our recruitment campaigns at several colleges and universities in the Midwest (unfortunately, Oberlin is not one of them). I’ve found this work incredibly challenging and deeply rewarding. It’s interesting to see that the same skills I used to analyze ancient Latin and Greek texts are now allowing me to interpret data, analyze trends, and realize great successes in my current work. After graduating, I moved home to Los Angeles, where I started up my own tutoring operation, worked at a gourmet cheese shop (yum), and interned in development with AIDS Project Los Angeles. The following summer I accepted a job with Teach for America and have been working with the organization ever since. In this role I

been doing: “We made it safely to Baltimore, arriving on August 1, our first wedding anniversary. We are renting a rather nice apartment in Hampden, a pleasant area just west of the JHU campus, so that Nathan can walk to school. Nathan’s brother and our sister-in-law live in D.C., and we have certainly enjoyed visiting them. Nathan is enjoying his studies immensely, and I am working as a long-term substitute teacher of K-5 general music and 4th/5th grade choir. The school is located in Howard County, well outside of Baltimore to the south and west, so I have a long (mind-numbing at times) commute. However, music education is alive and well in this area. The arts are well-funded and supported, which is a most welcome change after working in California for three years. Hopefully my work as a substitute will lead to a full-time salaried position next year.”

MICHAEL PELCH (Latin major, Greek minor ’07) got back in touch, to our delight, with this excellent update: “I’m writing from New York City where I’m currently working as a senior recruitment associate with Teach for America. Basically my job is to set vision/strategy and manage our recruitment campaigns at several colleges and universities in the Midwest (unfortunately, Oberlin is not one of them). I’ve found this work incredibly challenging and deeply rewarding. It’s interesting to see that the same skills I used to analyze ancient Latin and Greek texts are now allowing me to interpret data, analyze trends, and realize great successes in my current work. After graduating, I moved home to Los Angeles, where I started up my own tutoring operation, worked at a gourmet cheese shop (yum), and interned in development with AIDS Project Los Angeles. The following summer I accepted a job with Teach for America and have been working with the organization ever since. In this role I
have become more familiar with the deep inequities that plague our nation’s education system and the urgent need for change. As a result I have just confirmed my offer to join Teach for America’s corps in Los Angeles (back across the country again!), where I will begin teaching secondary English in a low-income community next fall (2011).” Michael will also be back in May for the reunion. Take note, classmates from 05/-06/-07!

BENJAMIN REITZ (Greek ’07) is living in Oberlin, after working as a Shansi rep in China. Tom VN had the pleasure of his company for coffee several times. He wrote this update in January 2010, which will deliver the news of his travels and work more accurately: “I finished my two years of teaching English in Taigu, Shanxi Province of China, last July. My brother and my dad came over to meet me in China and we traveled around the country for a few weeks before coming back to the U.S. I’ve landed in Oberlin for the next several months, where I’m working as a translator (English/Chinese) for www.skritter.com (a startup website for teaching people how to write Chinese and Japanese characters) and also teaching ESL in Elyria, Ohio, to five Chinese high school and junior high students. I’m planning to head back to China in May to look for another teaching gig.” He did indeed return to China last summer and has been back with us since September. He plans to move at the end of the school year, destination depending on several factors as yet undetermined. Stay tuned!

TOM BUCK (Greek & Latin minor ’08) sent news both academic and athletic: “I’m finishing up at Maryland this year (if everything goes as planned) with an MA in Latin and Greek. This fall I’m giving a paper with two other graduate students at a conference on “Reading Comparatively” through the English department. It’s a sort of follow-up to the panel I was on last year, and it’s on Thornton Wilder’s debt to Sophocles in his novel The Ides of March. Professor Hallett set this all up for me. I’ve also joined the triathlon team at Maryland. I’m the fattest, slowest guy they’ve got, but it’s a lot of fun. I’m competing in the Pinehurst Triathlon in North Carolina next month as well as the Marine Corps Marathon. I’m thinking I’ll take a break from school and start working next year, so I’m already casually trawling the ACL website for high school teaching jobs (If you know of anything, let me know! I’d love to be back in Ohio). Matt Harbert recently moved out here, so he’s living with us now, and he’s got some good leads on elementary teaching jobs in D.C.”

KAREN FRENCHU (Greek & Class. Civ. ’08) wrote (twice! — elderly editor problem) with welcome news: “I am in Boston, which is fast becoming the Oberlin classics capital of the world (or perhaps just your strongest colony). When I am not hanging out with classicists, I’m a librarian at a company that helps bridge the gap between health knowledge and health practice in the developing world. My boss (a former history teacher) reminds me as often as possible that it was my skill with dead languages that got me the job. So feel free to pass on this alternative to project manager to your classes.”

NOAH MLOTEK (Greek ’08) wrote from D.C. and provided a user-friendly third-person report: “Noah just finished his first year working in the publications department at Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection in D.C., where he helps to edit books in Byzantine Studies. This job lets him use and build on the first-class education in classics he received at Oberlin, as he explores the fascinations of medieval Greek and the Byzantine world, with its priests, emperors, eunuchs, and many other fabulous people. He also loves working amid the beautiful art, architecture, and gardens at Dumbarton Oaks, rather an upgrade from the infamous “box” he had feared was his fate as a classics major. Noah enjoyed catching up with his professors in the department while in town last winter for the Collegium Musicum reunion, and he hopes to go back soon.” We hope he comes back soon, too!

RANI MOLLA (Latin ’08) wrote from Santa Fe, N.M: “I’m the arts editor at the Santa Fe Reporter and am recently their arts critic, which has been a lot of fun. It’s a totally new type of writing for me.” We have been reading her work on the web and can testify that she’s quite good at it!

PLOY KEENER (Latin ’09) wrote us about her new and successful career: “I am starting my second and final year in the Wilcox Fellowship program at Concord Academy.
ALUMNI NEWS, cont.

The fellowship is offered mostly to recent graduates interested in teaching who bring diversity to the school. Being from the midwest, I'd say I bring some diversity to this small New England town! I am teaching Latin 1, Latin 3, and an independent study in Greek this year, as well as participating as a member of the community and equity team (C&E promotes diversity and equality among the community, as well as awareness of social justice issue). I love teaching much more than anticipated, and plan to apply for an M.A.T. program soon. I also love living in the Boston area and hope to stay here for a while.” OK, but we hope to see her here when she comes to Ohio!

CHRIS MOTZ (Latin '09) also wrote us with some welcome news from Boston: “I spent the last year taking a break from school and working various IT jobs in the Boston area. Ploy and I are now living in Concord, Mass., and I’ve just started my first year of the master’s program in classical archaeology at Tufts.”

KOLLEEN NELLETT (Latin minor '09) is also in Boston and gave us the latest news: “I’m in my second year at Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. I use my Latin vocab and some Greek that I picked up by osmosis to decipher what the crazy anatomy terms and disease names actually mean (also when I go into Boston and go to museums with Karen)! My other big news is that I won an Army Health Professions Scholarship last spring, so they are paying for my last three years of school. I owe them three years of active duty and five years reserve service in the Vet Corps after I graduate. I’m officially a second lieutenant until I graduate when I get promoted to captain.” Well done, Kolleen!

ALICE SHARPLESS (Latin ’09) is in the master’s program in classics at Vanderbilt with along with Eush Tayco ’09 (see below).

SHOSHANA SILVERMAN (Greek ’09) is working as student coordinator for Hillel here at Oberlin, and so, happily, we get to see her frequently. She is keeping her classics chops polished by tutoring middle school students in Latin.

EUSH TAYCO (Greek ’09) is in the master’s program in classics at Vanderbilt and sent us this news: “I’m in my second and final year with Vanderbilt. Alice Sharpless has just come down to join me, and Professor Wickkiser is back teaching our Greek seminar, so Oberlin is slowly taking over Vanderbilt classics. I spent an awesome summer in Rome with the AAR, and I still have the tan I got there.” Her pictures from Rome this past summer on FB were beautiful!

EMILY BRUNSTEN (Latin ’10) has moved to Brooklyn, another place we are annexing for the department. She wrote this fall to let us know how that’s going: “After graduation I moved straight to Brooklyn. I’ve spent most of my time exploring the city and tutoring (and still trying to find a full-time job, but I’m not really sure I want that detail in the newsletter.). Also, I live with Jesse Shapell, and Tim Platt just moved a few blocks away, so we’re starting a Latin reading group.” Looks good so far.

GABE BAKER (Greek ’10) writes: I worked at Stanford and Amherst at the Great Books Summer Program for my third year. I’ve been moving up the ranks there and continued to teach classics-based mini courses. I also gave two lectures to the entire program (one on Seneca, the other on Thucydides'/Pericles' funeral oration). My weeklong classes were successful. One
was on Plato’s *Laches*, the other on Ovid’s exile and literary theoretical issues raised by Ovid’s defense of his poems found in the *Tristia*. Great, easily accessible stuff as we spoke about censorship, authors, readers, and reader-response theory. I have since situated myself firmly in Los Angeles, where I have begun preparing for my upcoming teaching gig. My course run-down is as follows: seventh-grade Latin (first year of Latin for them), sixth-grade ancient history, ninth-grade English, ninth-grade English honors, and effective communication (grammar class for students who are usually ESL). For ancient history, I have a few units mapped out. The first is on ancient calendars, because there is some very interesting stuff there, which has, as an ulterior motive, granted me the opportunity to dig pretty deep into Caesar’s calendar reform and also Ovid’s *Fasti* on my own time. As soon as things get into the Greco-Roman, I will generally use Drew’s method of mixing primary and historical sources that he used in Roman History, and try to adopt his reflective attitude towards primary sources and roman historiography.

9th Grade English is going to start with the Epic of Gilgamesh and a few other Babylonian/Sumerian flood narratives that are swirling about in generally horrendous shape. Excellent stuff, and I find myself picking up on many of the threads that TVN would often hint at in his *Iliad* and *Tragedy* course about the relationship between Gilgamesh/Enkidu/Death and Achilles/Patroclus/Death. The flood narratives provide a good way to take a comparative look at a number of “foundational” texts (the class is supposed to be the “foundations of literature”)....Ovid’s account of the flood in *Metamorphosis*, the Near Eastern stuff, *Genesis*, Native American mythology (!!!), etc. After Homer I am doing a quick lesson on Greek lyric poetry (culling the florilegia from Kirk’s class) so as to give us a breath of fresh, non-epic air before we plunge into the depths of Sophoclean tragedy (*Philoctetes! Ajax!*).

For Latin I am going to be taking Wheelock at an unbearably slow pace, along with the Wheelock accompaniment text “scribes and scribblers”, which syncs up with wheelocks and provides additional, fun readings; they are taken usually from graffiti and other such things, and so might give at least a glimpse of Rome’s underbelly and keep our perspectives broad.

I am, as always, keeping up with the state of Platonic scholarship, and got my library card at UCLA’s graduate research library to ensure that I can do so. Still practicing Italian, anche.”

Whew! We’re delighted to see that Gabe’s energy continues unabated!

**OLIVER PECHENIK** (Greek minor ’10) has moved to the University of Illinois. We were afraid that grad school in math would preclude his continuing to read Greek, but this update had better news: “I’m in a math PhD program at UIUC. I thought about auditing some classics here, but figured I would be too busy. Turns out I’m not that busy after all. In fact, graduate school is not nearly as hard as people made it out to be. I will probably be picking my Greek back up in the spring!” Tom VN heard Oliver’s senior honors presentation in math last spring, and it seemed plenty hard to him! Since he’s still in the Midwest, we hope to see him sometime soon.

**DESIRAE SWEET** (Greek ’10) sent us a brief but bracing update this fall from New Haven: “I'm enjoying my Biblical studies MA program at Yale, but for the record, I would definitely identify myself as an Obie before calling myself a Yalie.” Tom VN, having tried both places, endorses Desirae’s choice for Obie over Yalie!
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