The Scot Center
The College of Wooster’s new addition is functional, beautiful, and green.

Also inside
Independent Studies: Of War & Peace
Adventuresome Wooster alumni
I don’t know about you, but I can’t remember a time when higher education has been in the media crossfire as much as it is now. Today’s dismal economy combined with the specter of a student loan bubble, provides the perfect storm of issues for querulous pundits. Questions rage: Is the nation’s “college for all” policy responsible for dumbing down higher education? Has college lost its true value? And what is that value, anyway? Might it be different for different people? Has a “one size fits all” approach drained efficacy?

Because there has been little empirical research conducted to measure the effectiveness of higher education, a recently published book, Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa (University of Chicago Press), is receiving a lot of attention. One of the first studies of its kind, New York University sociologist Arum and a team of researchers followed 2,322 traditional undergraduates through four years of college from 2005-2009 and examined testing data and student surveys at a broad range of 24 U.S. colleges and universities. The team found that 45 percent of students made no significant improvement in higher order thinking skills (critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing) during the first two years of college. After four years, 36 percent showed no significant gains in these skills.

The study showed that students learned more when asked to do more. Students who majored in the traditional liberal arts—including the social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and mathematics—showed significantly greater gains in higher order thinking skills over time than students in other disciplines.

The news that essential independent thinking can be taught and practiced is hardly surprising to members of the Wooster community. (Haven’t we been saying it all along?) But research that reinforces our conviction is noteworthy.

I’m guessing that the higher education crossfire won’t abate any time soon. I’m guessing, too, that we’ll begin to see more research like Arum’s. And that’s a good thing.

KAROL CROSBIE
Editor, Wooster magazine
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On the cover
The Scot Center, with its new 200-meter track, is the largest facility project in the College’s history and the culmination of a vision years in the making.

COVER PHOTO: Matt Dilyard
Wooster’s Paleontologists

I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed reading the stories about Wooster’s paleontologists. Although I was a political science and urban studies double major, I have often spoken of Mark Wilson’s History of Life course as my absolute favorite that I took at Wooster. It was worth getting up for 8 a.m. lectures when Mark would pass around fossils, answer innumerable questions about the movie Jurassic Park (which had just come out that year), and I distinctly remember Mark pulling down a wall map to seriously and kindly respond to a student’s claim that the Continental Divide was in Ohio. The course was a fabulous example of interdisciplinary curriculum combining science and history. Mark Wilson is the type of professor whom I aspire to emulate myself as a university professor of education.

Thanks for a great magazine!

MARY BETH HENNING ’94
DEKALB, ILL.

Serving to Learn

Thank you for the excellent profiles highlighting Wooster’s community service emphasis. The education I received at Wooster was amazing because it went well beyond the classroom. What I learned and experienced in the clothing room at People to People, in the soup kitchen at The Salvation Army, in the Lowry basement office of the Wooster Volunteer Network, through a partnership with the Wayne County United Way, and during a fully funded non-profit immersion as part of Dr. Holliday’s course on leadership, set me on the path to do the work I do today. As I read the stories, I saw myself many years ago, and I know the compassion and the grace that these students are learning will be as (if not more) valuable than any degree.

FRITZ NELSON ’94

I just finished reading the article “Serving to Learn, Learning to Serve.” Such inspiring stories! My initial reaction was a pang of envy that the Wooster Volunteer Network, Center for Entrepreneurship, Interfaith Campus Ministries, and Global Social Entrepreneurship programs were not available when I was at Wooster in the 1960s. Of course, at that time there were numer-
meet the parents of the children we served and witnessed first-hand the realities of urban poverty and unequal educational opportunities for black children. It was an eye-opening and transforming experience, much like the service-based programs which Wooster continues to sponsor today.

I am proud and grateful to be a part of the long and varied tradition of volunteer service at Wooster and trust that this legacy will continue to stretch well into the future.

GINNY KEIM BROOKS ’66
HARRISVILLE, N.H.

I applaud Lauren Grimanis’ commitment to the people of Ghana. However, as a professor of African history, I do have several concerns about the article. At my home institution, I was part of a team that recommended discontinuing our Ghana Academic Service Learning Semester. One of our concerns was the ways in which our program was advertised. Unfortunately, it was very similar to your coverage of the Ghana Akaa project, using Grimanis’ heartwarming intentions and accompanying images to evoke an emotional response without much analysis of Ghanaian realities and agency. In my experience, our intentions in global service are often guided by unquestioned cultural ideas. One such idea is that Africans need our help.

It seems after a trip in high school Grimanis decided that she could help to solve this community’s problems. Rarely, in my experience, do we make the same assumptions so quickly in our home country. And, there were some obvious questions that were not addressed: Why were there no schools in Akaa? Does this mean that no one was getting an education? What happens to educated Ghanaians? (One-quarter of those with college degrees leave the country.) Often what appears as a deficit has a complex history and set of experiences behind it, including our complicity in systems that perpetuate Ghanaian poverty. Service learning often encourages the false notion that Northern college students can assist helpless Ghanaians with a relatively small commitment.

Images of children brought this message home as well. Featuring only the most vulnerable members of a society sends the message, unwittingly perhaps, that this vulnerable population cannot solve its own problems. Why were there no pictures of Grimanis’ host mother, likely a strong force behind the projects? Why weren’t there pictures of teachers who have taken up the task of educating children in Akaa?

The images also mask a possible negative consequence of service. Psychological studies have shown that a high rate of turnover in care-giving at a young age leaves children emotionally insecure. Children who beg to be picked up have likely been exposed to a series of short-term visitors with whom they bond only to find that the former return home, leaving the children and their strong emotional attachment to wither. Establishing a short-term connection with a Wooster college student, while perhaps meaningful for Liz Plumey, is possibly detrimental to three-year-old Morris.

I care that Africans have opportunities for personal and national growth but know from experience and research that rarely in African history have charitable outsiders successfully brought about long-term positive change. I applaud global awareness but encourage strong caution in ascribing too much value to limited exposure to and analysis of Ghanaian problems.

KATHLEEN R. SMYTHE ’88
CINCINNATI, OHIO

Service learning often encourages the false notion that Northern college students can assist helpless Ghanaians with a relatively small commitment. Images of children brought this message home as well. Featuring only the most vulnerable members of a society sends the message, unwittingly perhaps, that this vulnerable population cannot solve its own problems.

... Kathleen Smythe ’88
Welcoming our newest alumni

The 375 members of the class of 2012 walked through a sunlit Oak Grove for the College’s 142nd commencement ceremony. They were addressed by President Grant Cornwell, classmates Kathleen Blachman and Aaron Novick, and Alumni Board chair Erika Poethig ’93.

In addition, they heard from honorary degrees recipients Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Tom Alter. Mohanty, professor of women and gender studies at Syracuse University, is an internationally acclaimed scholar in her field. Alter, the son of missionaries, lives in India and is a popular TV and stage actor in that country. John Alter ’87 was his great-grandfather, Dave Alter ’43 was his uncle, and James Alter ’03 is his son.

Classmate Novick spoke of the nature of education at Wooster: “The primary value of our education lies not in learning specific bits of knowledge, but in learning to adopt a particular orientation to the world,” the philosophy and biology double major told his peers. “This orientation lets us use any knowledge that we might learn.” Novick has been accepted into the Ph.D. program in history and philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh.

Aaron’s speech showed “a deep grasp of our mission” President Grant Cornwell wrote to the Board of Trustees. “To the extent that he speaks for his class, we are doing what we say we do.”

LEGACIES: Five students were presented diplomas by parents or grandparents, including (left) Laurie Marie Valencia and her grandfather, emeritus professor of Spanish Pablo Valencia; and (right) Andrew Christopher Smiles and his grandfather, Bill Baird, emeritus professor of economics.

Gideon Mabeny has secured an internship with ABS Materials in Wooster, an environmental water treatment company founded by Wooster professor of chemistry Paul Edmiston, based on a patented product discovered and developed on campus.

The most recent data from Career Services for the class of 2011 shows that 60 percent are employed, 28 percent are attending graduate school, 7 percent are engaged in internships or volunteering, and 5 percent are seeking employment.
Interfaith Campus Ministries seeks alumni input

In its most recent issue of the *Wooster Advocate* magazine, Rev. Linda Morgan-Clement, director of interfaith campus ministry and the Henry Jefferson Copeland campus chaplain, posed a series of questions to its readers (alumni and parents): “How should the institution support the religious dimension and how should the religious dimension play out in the institutional culture? What key attitudes and approaches are essential in the creation and support of a lively spiritual dimension that can truly equip our graduates to be leaders of character and influence in an interdependent global community?”

The magazine features essays by trustee Karen McCleary Cale Lockwood '72 and Christina Bowerman '13. Wooster, writes Lockwood, should be a “safe place to wonder and debate. . . . Our College’s position as the premier institution for mentored undergraduate research is all about that journey of independent wonder and answering. We recognize that good questions are endless in any field and that curiosity lies right next to scholarship.”

But Bowerman, a religious studies/women’s, gender and sexuality studies double major, writes that it doesn't feel “cool” to be religious at Wooster. Religious activities feel geographically isolated, she writes, and there are too few faculty and staff who model openness about their religious and spiritual life. “Why can’t people be as open about their religious and spiritual life as they are about their political leanings?” she asks.

Alumni input, writes Morgan-Clement, will be published in the next *Wooster Advocate*. In addition, “responses will be shared with an ad hoc group of trustees who are themselves engaged in the questions and with members of the Alumni Board, who discussed some of these topics briefly at their fall 2011 meeting.” Alumni may contact Clement with input at (ministries@wooster.edu). To read the *Wooster Advocate*, go to http://www.wooster.edu/Student-Life/Interfaith-Campus-Ministries/Publications.

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**Highlights from religious history timeline, *Wooster Advocate*, Vol. 6, Issue 2**

**Ownership by the Presbyterian Church**

1866: Wooster is founded as a school of the Presbyterian Church.

1969: The Presbyterian Synod of Ohio votes to release ownership of the college and its assets to the Board of Trustees. Today the College is a fully independent institution but continues a voluntary relationship with the Presbyterian Church through a memorandum of understanding with the synod.

**The Religious Dimension Committee**

1969: The Board of Trustees replaces the Synod Affairs Committee with the Religious Dimension Committee.

2010: Reorganization of the Board of Trustees’ committee structure eliminates the Religious Dimension Committee and incorporates its responsibilities into the Academic Mission and Student Development Committees.

**Required Presbyterian affiliation of Trustees**

In 1963, by-laws are amended to require that 75 percent of trustees be "communicant members" of the Presbyterian Church, rather than 100 percent. In 1979, the percentage is changed to 50 percent, and in 2010, to 25 percent.

**Required religious instruction**

1870: Three credit hours in the Old Testament and three in the New Testament are required.

Current: One religious perspective credit (out of 32) is required.

1870: For the first 100 years of the life of the College, chapel attendance is required. In the 1970s, the requirement is dropped.

1980: The Department of Religion becomes the Department of Religious Studies.
HAPPENINGS AROUND CAMPUS

O a k G r o v e

RETIREMENTS

Bob Rodda, director of the Lowry Center and student activities

What do students care about outside of class? No one knows better than Bob Rodda, whose vantage point for the past 22 years as director of Lowry Center and student activities, has allowed him to see student interests ebb, flow, falter, and flourish. He remembers with fondness, for example, the Bissman Wrestling Federation in the late 90s, made up primarily of football players, who organized and performed wrestling shows initially in their residence hall, and then to overflowing crowds in the Underground student hangout.

“What college administrators in their right minds would accommodate a bunch of football players who wanted to set up a wrestling ring in their residence hall lounge? But we did! And it was great.”

Rodda didn’t care if it was wrestling, swing dance—the most important measure of success was if students took responsibility for an event or activity, and creatively carried it out. “Doing things with students, rather than to them is where real buy-in and education occurs,” he said. “Saying ‘Hey! We did it!’ is as important outside of class as it is in.”

Rodda believed it was important to find ways to bring together faculty, students, and staff, and spearheaded special events for this purpose. For example, he proposed that everyone sign the ceiling beam now displayed in the new Scot Center. “It was unifying and completely positive,” he said.

Sometimes a special event, fundraising effort, or community initiative will be the thing that students remember most about their time at Wooster, Rodda says. “Sometimes long-term affects come about through serendipity and sometimes through intentionality.” For example, Rodda helped establish Common Grounds, an alcohol-free venue for student performances, and serves as its staff advisor; but he says that the success of the 13-year-old program lies with student ownership and commitment.

The Lowry Center, which celebrated its 40th birthday and underwent renovation during Rodda’s tenure, is the perfect student hub, he says. “It’s always been where we gathered to talk together as a community.

“When class is out, the Lowry Center is where students go.”

Photos: Matt Dilyard

Homecoming 2012
Sept. 21-23

Mark your calendars! Return to campus this fall to celebrate, reconnect with friends, participate in special events, and cheer on the Fighting Scots.

www.woosteralumni.org/homecoming 2012
David Gedalecia, professor of history and Asian studies

David Gedalecia sometimes jokes that to a certain extent he owes his 41 years at Wooster to Chairman Mao Zedong: "When the History department hired me in 1971, China was still very much a mystery, and people were fascinated with—and sometimes either attracted or repelled by—its leaders." Gedalecia came to Wooster straight out of Harvard graduate school, with expertise in the history of Mongol-ruled China in the 13th century.

He remembers that Harvard professor John Fairbank, dean of Chinese studies in the United States, and Bernard Solomon, his mentor at Queens College (CUNY), charged him with interesting as many people as he could in the field and conveying all that he had learned to his students. Forty years later, there is evidence that the multidisciplinary talents of a teacher once dubbed "different" have been substantial. "I was from New York, Jewish, married to a Chinese, and someone once said to me, 'you're different—and that's good!'"

Gedalecia helped to build an East Asian Studies program by developing nine courses on China and Japan, and his eclectic interests also enhanced other departments. His course in Chinese thought was offered exclusively in the Philosophy Department, and his course in U.S.-China relations was one of the initial offerings in the international relations major. He urged the College to begin teaching Chinese language more than 15 years ago, which helped the East Asia program "take off," he says.

Gedalecia's contributions to his profession have included scholarly publications and international affiliations. But none of his work has been more rewarding than the close relationships formed with students through the approximately 175 Independent Study projects he has supervised. A bluegrass banjo, dobro, and guitar player who has performed in Chicago, New York, Ohio, and China, Gedalecia found himself in demand over the years for a wide range of I.S. projects—from American music, to Mussolini, to Deng Xiaoping, and, most recently, to the history of bourbon and speakeasies.

"I was very fortunate to have been involved in I.S. at Wooster; it has been extraordinarily rewarding."

Student scholars represent Wooster

- Under the mentorship of **Dean Fraga**, professor of biology, biochemistry, and molecular biology, and **Mark Snider**, associate professor of chemistry, biochemistry, and molecular biology, six students presented their research at the annual American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in San Diego.

- **Nikolai Radzinski**, a junior biochemistry and molecular biology major, and **Lindsey Bowman**, a senior geology major, were two of 73 students selected from 850 applicants to present their research and spread the good news about undergraduate research at the Council on Undergraduate Research Posters (CUR) on the Hill, in Washington, D.C. "It's easy for members of Congress to recognize the importance of funding undergraduate research when they see that these students represent the future of science and research in America," said **Meagan Pollock**, assistant professor of geology and CUR councilor.

- Eight archaeology majors and one anthropology major presented their Independent Study projects at the Central States Anthropological Society in Toronto. Their mentor, **Nick Kardulias**, professor of sociology, anthropology, and archaeology, served as program chair for the conference and chaired a session, titled "Historical Archaeology in the New World."

- **Samuel Kitara**, a sophomore biology major, and **Erin Plews-Ogan**, a junior anthropology major, received a Lilly Grant to attend the annual Global Health and Innovation Conference, organized by United for Sight and hosted by Yale University.
Alumni, family, and friends attended Alumni Weekend to honor and thank their classmates, have fun, and reconnect. As was the tradition, Distinguished Alumni awardees (featured in the spring magazine), *Ron C. Hughes* '70, *Irwin Reese* '75, and *Tom Welty* '65, led the parade of classes.

**THANK YOU’S were given . . .**

. . . to *Emmanuel P. Sterling* '07, recipient of the Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

. . . to *Douglas C. Topping* '67, recipient of the John D. McKee Alumni Volunteer Award.

. . . to the more than 950 alumni, family, and friends who attended, and the organizers and staff who helped to make the weekend a smash.

. . . to *Stanley C. Gault* and *Flo Kurtz Gault* '48s, who were presented the inaugural *Sara L. Patton Stewardship Award* by *Buck Smith* '56. "Colleges do not grow by themselves," said Smith, president of Davis and Elkins College and former vice president for development at Wooster. “They are built by people who believe in them.”

. . . to the *Class of 1962* for its $8 million dollar 50th reunion gift and the *Class of 1987* for its 25th gift of $72,000.
FUN was had, FOOD was eaten . . .

CONNECTIONS were made . . .

LEARNING took place . . .

- How to March with a Piper with Victor Welsch ’15
- When Everything Changed: 50 Years of Women’s Lives, a panel discussion by the class of ’62 moderated by Nancy Grace, Prof. of English
- Singing in the Brain: Cognitive Connections Between Music and Language, faculty lecture by John Neuhoff, psychology
- Child Abuse: Perspectives Across Time and Place, alumni lecture by Ron Hughes ’70
- The Secrets of Aging Successfully, alumni lecture by Carl W. Cotman ’62
- Sustainability: Campus, Community, World, panel discussion moderated by Paul Edmiston, Prof. of Chemistry

Photos: Matt Dilyard, Libby Fackler ’13, Karol Crossie
THE SCOT CENTER: 524 tons of structural steel; 275,000 face bricks; 6,364 cubic yards of concrete; 17,445 square feet of ultra high efficiency glass; 17.8 miles of conduit; 95.9 miles of electrical and IT wiring; 212,940 person hours of work.
“Some things really are worth waiting for.”

Stan Gault, Chairman Emeritus, The College of Wooster Board of Trustees
(CLOCKWISE, L to R) The Andrew Family Studios are used for employee and student wellness classes; the Ruth W. & A. Morris Williams, Jr. Fitness Center attracted 24,000 visits in its first three months of operation; the Richard J. Bell Lobby honors the accomplishments of the Fighting Scots; the track is reflected in a wall of windows.
When President Grant Cornwell cut the ribbon to open the Scot Center in January, students, faculty, and staff poured through the doors to get their first look at the rows of gleaming Cybex machines in the Ruth W. and A. Morris Williams, Jr. Fitness Center and the breathtaking expanse of the Gault Recreation Center, with its four multipurpose courts and 200-meter track.

They have been pouring through ever since, with more than 24,000 visits to the fitness center alone in its first three months of operation. From faculty and staff who arrive to exercise before work to students who prefer a late night workout, from intramurals and club sports to events like Relay for Life, the Scot Center is alive each day from dawn until almost midnight.

“It’s nice to be able to switch between the free weights and the machines, so you can focus your workouts,” said Adam Finck ’13, “and you never have to wait for one of the machines.”

“I spend more time there than in my own room,” said Paige Parker ’14, a volleyball player who also works at the Scot Center.

Fighting Scot varsity athletes and coaches say the new facility is making a huge difference. For example, in order to practice during the winter, the cross-country team used to meet at 10 p.m. and then run two miles to the Wooster High School to use their indoor track. Until this year, the track team had never been able to host a meet.

“We’re able to train together as a team for the first time,” said Casey Green ’12, “and for the first time, in January, people could come and see us compete indoors. It was an amazing feeling.”

It promises to be a game changer for admissions as well. From prospective students’ first glimpse of the Gunning Family Tower, to their first step into the Richard J. Bell Lobby, the Scot Center evokes a uniform response: “Wow!”
“The personal commitment of individual trustees was absolutely pivotal in getting this job done.”

DAVE GUNNING, BOARD CHAIRMAN

The Foster Family Women’s Locker Suite and other new locker rooms, the Andrew Family Studio for dance and aerobics, the James R. Wilson Governance Room, and the coaches’ offices, with their views into the recreation center, are woven together with bright colors and abundant natural light into a seamless whole.

“Prospective students and their families respond with a sense of joyful awe at the building,” said President Cornwell, “because we have created something that is not only delightfully functional but also beautiful.”

Make that functional, beautiful, and green. The college anticipates that the new facility will receive Gold LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The Scot Center’s 20,000-square-foot rooftop solar array may get all the headlines, but the commitment to sustainability goes much deeper, including structural steel and exterior masonry walls that are 84 percent recycled content, and sophisticated lighting, electrical, and HVAC systems that adjust in real time to match outdoor temperature, sunlight levels, and building occupancy and usage.

At $30 million, the Scot Center is the largest facility project in the College’s history and the culmination of a vision years in the making. Taken on in a time of great economic uncertainty, as the country was emerging from recession, it was made possible by the extraordinary commitment and generosity of Wooster’s loyal donors, especially its Board of Trustees.

“The personal commitment of individual trustees was absolutely pivotal in getting this job done,” said Dave Gunning, the board’s chairman, at the Scot Center’s formal dedication on April 28.

The dream of an athletic and recreational facility at the heart of campus to be used by every student, every day at long last has become a reality.

As Stan Gault looked out on a sea of happy faces at the dedication, the chairman emeritus of Wooster’s board summed it up: “Some things really are worth waiting for.”
Wooster alumni are an adventuresome lot—and, as always—we wish we had more space to tell more stories. Bikers abound: There is Kathryn Lehner ’07 who biked the length of New Zealand with a childhood friend, and Graham Rayman ’88 who biked about 550 miles in five days from Lake Tahoe to the eastern border of Nevada. Nancy Rosenberger ’70 is researching Russian women who are small-scale entrepreneurs, and her inquiry took her to Tajikistan for two months, where a 16-hour trip involved hanging onto ropes far above roaring rivers. We caught up with Clint Morrison ’70 (married to Nancy) after he had run a marathon in Mumbai: “Five minutes ago,” he writes, “I got off the back of a Mumbai motorbike after my guide had sped between cars, around dowagers, past slums and elite apartments, through red lights and around ‘less mobile’ traffic by swerving into the oncoming lane.” And of course there are many more. But for now, meet five Scots with a zest for life.
Nicole Greene was free diving with blacktip reef sharks near Durban, South Africa this past winter, and remembered the cardinal rule for close encounters: Always make eye contact. (Sharks like to sneak up on playthings and/or prey; if they think you can see them, they’ll leave you alone.)

“But all of a sudden, there were about 50 sharks, moving in a circle around me,” she remembers. “I was overwhelmed, spinning around in the water, and wondering ‘How is this going to turn out?’”

Greene and a good friend had chosen to visit South Africa because of their passion for sharks; the blacktip reef shark encounter was the second on the trip. Cage diving with great whites near Cape Town, while less dangerous, was no less enthralling. “They moved just inches from me,” she recalls. “They were curious, majestic, and just beautiful. I looked into a black eye of one of the closest ones, and it was the most incredible experience.”

Self-described “shark dorks,” the two friends struck up an acquaintance with a local shark expert who, although he didn’t usually take tourists free diving, agreed to guide them on a blacktip expedition, with the promise that they might also see a tiger shark. Blacktips are so abundant that their guide referred to them as “water gnats.” Between five and seven feet, they’re considerably smaller than the 18 feet great whites. But when one of the 50 curious circlers hit Greene on the shin, gnat comparisons did not come to mind. “I felt like I’d been hit by a two-by-four,” she remembers. “I thought they’d be softer.”

Greene has loved sharks ever since she was a child, and a trip to Cape Town during her junior year at Wooster was memorable because of the great whites she saw on an early morning expedition. “They breach like whales,” she says. “I saw multiple-ton sharks come flying out of the water.

“The fascinating thing about sharks is how little they have evolved over time—they have remained virtually unchanged for millions of years, which makes them one of the most incredible creatures on earth. They’re also one of the most misunderstood. They’re on the top of the food chain in the ocean ecosystem and they regulate its natural balance. But they’re getting killed at such a rate that I don’t know how we can maintain this balance.

“A lot of people are advocating for them, but the process is slow moving and by the time the rules and regulations are finally in place, I’m concerned that it will be too late.

“It’s so important to see them in their natural environment; they’re just amazing.”

\[Image: Nicole Greene, a political science major who studied South African politics for her Independent Study, recently returned to that country to spend time with one of her great passions—sharks.\]
UIup

Wall's daughter and son, in full rope team and glacier travel gear, on the way down Mt. Rainier. With good training and a healthy attitude, mountain climbing can be a safe, rewarding family activity, says Wall.

Walls on top of Longs Peak, Colorado, with the mountain range in the background, at about 14,255 feet, during his first climb of the mountain.
Bentley Wall ’88
Climbing Glaciers

The first mountain the Wall family climbed together was in Scotland, where bagpiper Bentley Wall was competing in the world pipe band championships. He remembers his son and daughter, then ages 10 and 12, “scrambled to the top of Ben Nevis like mountain goats.”

If this tale sounds as if Wall approaches mountaineering even a tiny bit romantically, dismiss the notion. Wall, a scientist with the Liquid Crystal Institute at Kent State University, uses the same hardheaded scientific method with his hobby that he does in his profession.

Ten years ago, Wall was fit and athletic but had never done high-altitude climbing. When a professional conference took him to Washington and a (naïve) colleague invited him to climb glacial Mt. Rainier, Wall responded in characteristic information-gathering mode. “I called a friend who told me, ‘You have no business trying to climb that mountain.’”

While Wall accepted the answer, he wasn’t happy with it. “There’s something about being told, ‘No, you can’t do that,’” Wall says. So he set about training and preparing himself and his two children, both physically and intellectually. Climbs of Longs Peak, Col. (same altitude as Mt. Rainier, minus the snow and ice) helped the family determine that they could withstand high altitudes. Hikes with 45-90 pound backpacks helped train muscles. And Wall checked out books, scoured the Internet, and interviewed experienced climbers.

He has climbed Rainier twice, once by himself, and then with his family, but has not yet reached the summit. Bad weather the first time and an inner-ear infection that hampered his son the second time resulted in turning back. But everyone was still happy with the experience, Wall said, and a willingness to turn back can be life-saving. “Between 50-75 percent of accidents happen on the way down a mountain,” says Wall, “because people are so stubborn to get to the top that they exert every last calorie and mental dedication focus they’ve got to get up there and then they have nothing left to come down with.”

Climbing glaciers requires that teams use ropes, because if someone falls down they become human sleds, explains Wall. “You will slide, and slide, and slide, until you hit something or fall into a crevasse. If someone falls, everybody else drops down into an anchor position to stop the rest of the group from sliding.”

Wall and his kids (wife Gayle Marcin ’91 is “protectively leary,” Wall says) hope to return to Rainier sometime soon and are also looking forward to tackling Mt. Whitney in the Sierra Nevada Range. Wall has plans to hike to Mt. Everest’s base camp in Nepal in October and Alaska’s Denali in 2014.

Wall teaches a mountaineering special topics class at Kent State, and his advice to students is exactly what he practices for himself and his family: “Use your skills and level-headed brain to mitigate risks so you aren’t that ill-prepared or stubborn person that has to be rescued.”

Max Selby ’51
Skydiving

Max Selby ’51 has always been afraid of heights. If he’s on the edge of a cliff, for example, he can only look over if he’s lying on his stomach. And working on his roof? Forget about it. So he has a hard time explaining why, driving to his home in Bay Village, Ohio following a reunion of destroyer escort sailors in Philadelphia, he saw a sign advertising skydiving and decided to sign up. A Korean War veteran, Selby has always liked to fly. “So I thought, why not give it a whirl?”

Three hours later, 81-year-old Selby was free-falling at 125 miles an hour from 13,000 feet, in a tandem jump. “I didn’t have time to be scared,” he says. “We jumped, pulled the strap, the chute opened, and we floated down.

“What they didn’t tell me was to remember to shut my mouth before we jumped,” he recalls. “The rush of wind was so intense that I couldn’t shut my mouth and my cheeks were flapping like sails in the breeze.”

The Wooster political science major hopes that his next adventure will be hot air ballooning. (And, he says, the two choices are probably related.)

To see a video of Max’s jump, go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CazJAPwOkso
ever heard of a HangBoard? Its small group of inventors and developers, including Charles Buchwald, are confident that you soon will. So young that its patents are pending (early on-slope experimentation was done in secret on moonlit nights), the hangboard combines elements of hang-gliding, snowboarding, and mountain biking. Some sport enthusiasts compare it to flying headfirst down a mountain, some (more conservatively) say it’s like tobogganing headfirst.

Buchwald, an award-winning designer of software, tools, and clothing who has worked on projects for Disney, BMW, and Pillsbury, joined the hangboard inventors in 2004. An art major and former ski inspector, Buchwald helped take a clunky prototype, and after countless tests, new designs, and hand fabrications, turn it into a sleek, lightweight, safe “snow flying machine.”

The rig’s safety lies with its maneuverability. In addition, says Buchwald, the wild ride isn’t as wild as it feels. “You’re so close to the snow that any given speed feels much faster than it actually is. In other words, to get a thrill you don’t have to achieve breakneck speeds.”

To see a Discover Channel segment on hangboarding, go to http://www.hangboard.ca/blog/

Charles Buchwald, co-designer of the hangboard, demonstrates the new sport. A hangboard bolts to a standard snowboard, and the pilot—wearing a harness—hangs from a t-shaped bar. Steering and control comes from the handlebars in front (similar to hang gliding) and from feet-operated rudders in the back.
ill Lange has had his share of adventures. There was, for example, the time he and his canoeing buddies waited for three days on the Canadian Arctic tundra for unreliable pilots who had been commissioned to pick them up. “You become what you’re capable of in these kind of situations—for better or for worse,” says Lange. “And I love that.”

But Lange, who defines an adventure as “the unexpected,” doesn’t describe his treks hosting New Hampshire NPR’s “Windows to the Wild” as adventures. The half-hour shows, created to take viewers off the beaten track and into New England wild places, send the 77-year-old Lange and a video crew from riverbed to mountaintop. “You can bet if there’s a camera aimed at you and it appears on TV, nothing very dangerous is happening,” says the author, and broadcast commentator. “It’s candy-ass, sissy sort of stuff.”

But you can tell he loves it. In the approximately 80 segments of the 10-year-old, award-winning series, Lange hikes, floats, flies, and fishes—all whilst commenting on the ecology and history of New England wilderness. Zip-lining Mount Washington, dog-sledding the Wilderness Corridor, hot air ballooning over New Hampshire foliage—Lange has done it all. And it may be that he loves it because his viewers love it. “Most of my mail comes from old-timers—people who had given up—but who said to themselves, ‘If that old fart can do it, by god, I can too.’ And they get up and they do it!”

Lange’s style and tone on the show is conversational and wry. “New Englanders love irony,” he says. “Water might be dripping off my nose and the snow piling up, and I’ll say, ‘Ain’t this a beautiful day for a hike?’ Or I’ll say, ‘You can always count on a headwind when you’re canoeing; it doesn’t matter what direction you’re going. But so what? It keeps the bugs off.’

“I try to look at the yin and yang of every situation. It works for me.”

Lange, who often walks with a cane or hiking poles, calls himself a “hobbling testimonial to getting back on the trail.” Four knee replacements, two femur fracture repairs, two hip replacements, and a pelvis surgery dictate that Lange’s days of rock climbing are in the past. Canoeing is a favorite activity. “My Adirondack guideboat goes five miles an hour all day long—it’s like rowing in an armchair.”

In an Emmy-nominated video about his guideboat, Lange tells about being introduced to this style of 19th-century boat in his youth, and buying one 40 years later. He closes with these words: “If you’ve got a beautiful dream, don’t wait till it’s too late. You’ll be a long time gone, you know.”
In August of 1941, Angelina (Lina) Bartoli, a 21-year-old French girl, was waiting in Saigon for an ocean liner. She had with her a few suitcases, a note stating who she was, and another note that read: “I’m going to Wooster, Ohio.” Angelina had never been to Wooster. She’d never been to the United States. She could barely speak English.

Waiting with her were her mother, her father—an officer in the French Foreign Legion—and her fiancé, King Hamilton, a 30-year-old American Foreign Service employee and a 1933 graduate of The College of Wooster.

Lina had spent much of her life in Saigon. Her father’s service in the French Foreign Legion had forced their family to move back and forth between Saigon and Paris, their hometown. King had been stationed in Saigon since February 1940, where he served as the American vice-consul, doing political and economic reporting for the U.S. State Department.

The two met in late 1940, beside a pool. After that first meeting, they spent more time together, riding bicycles, going to the beach, dances, and parties. They spoke in French, their shared language, and began to fall in love.

But while they were falling in love, war was approaching. At the beginning of 1941, the Japanese began moving south from northern French Indochina, toward Saigon. By spring, people were looking for a way out of the city.

Kingsley could not leave. He was obligated to continue serving as vice-consul. Angelina had no reason to remain in Saigon, and her family wanted her to be safe. Lina had lived in only two cities in her lifetime, and both were seized by war. Her hometown was occupied by Germany; the Japanese were moving into Saigon. Safety lay far from home. In the summer of 1941, Wooster, Ohio, was safe, secure, and King knew it well.
KING HAMILTON’S WOOSTER

The son of Presbyterian missionaries, King was born and grew up in Manila, the Philippines. He came to Wooster to attend high school and lived at Livingston Lodge (“The Inky”), the College’s home for sons of Presbyterian missionaries. He went on to attend The College of Wooster, where he ran track, swam, and studied with Aileen Dunham, professor of history, who encouraged him to apply to the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, a new school that Harvard and Tufts were forming. King was accepted into the school’s inaugural class, and four years later, he entered the Foreign Service.

So Wooster was a place that King identified with security and personal growth. In 1941, his parents, Charles and Edith, were retired and living there. The town—and the College—seemed like good destinations for Lina. She had received a French baccalaureate, which King thought might qualify her to enter the college as an upperclassman. And since his parents lived there, they could help her adjust to the College and American life.

In the spring of 1941, the College approved Lina’s application. She could go to Wooster, where she had not heard from since the U.S. So Wooster was a place that King identified with security and personal growth. In 1941, his parents, Charles and Edith, were retired and living there. The town—and the College—seemed like good destinations for Lina. She had received a French baccalaureate, which King thought might qualify her to enter the college as an upperclassman. And since his parents lived there, they could help her adjust to the College and American life.

In the spring of 1941, the College approved Lina’s application. She could go to Wooster while King finished his service in Saigon, and if all went well, they could reunite and get married in the U.S.

By August, the Japanese had occupied the Saigon airport, and there was increased military activity in the harbor. Shipping schedules were unreliable. Lina waited for days until she finally got a spot on a boat and sailed away from Saigon, King, and her family. She made the three-week journey alone—on an ocean liner, plane, and finally train to Wooster, Ohio, where Charles and Edith were waiting for her. They greeted her and took her to their home, an apartment on Beall Avenue (which still stands today). Over the next few months, while she adjusted to life in Wooster, they served as surrogate parents. They took her shopping for clothes, helped her set up a bank account, and took her to church.

She entered the College as a senior, lived in Babcock, and majored in French. Her limited English caused her to struggle with her studies, but she was well supported by French professors Frances Guille and Pauline Ihrig.

Hers was not the typical student life. She visited with Charles and Edith almost every week, and over the course of the year, they shared news about King.

Most of it wasn’t good. In late November, they learned that the American consulate in Saigon had been bombed, but there was no word about King. Then on December 7 came the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the United States’ declaration of war on Japan. In mid-January, a representative from the Daily Record called Charles to tell him he’d received word that King was being confined by the Japanese at the British Consulate in Saigon. Because of King’s status as a Foreign Service officer, Lina was optimistic about his safety. But she was afraid for her parents, whom she had not heard from since the U.S. joined the war.

The spring went on. Angelina tried to focus on her studies, all the while worrying about the safety of her fiancé and parents.

A week before graduation, Charles heard over the radio that a Japanese ship planning to pick up diplomats in the Far East was in Shanghai, waiting to leave for Saigon before continuing on to Portuguese East Africa, where the exchange of officers would take place. A few days later, Lina received a radio message from her father that King should be sailing on the Japanese ship scheduled to take part in the officer exchange.

Lina still had to get through finals. She was struggling with her grades and wasn’t sure she would graduate. But she was successful, and nine months after she’d arrived in the U.S., she became a college graduate.

Following graduation, she took courses at the college in French-to-English translation and typing, and accepted a six-week summer job in Cleveland with Prof. Guille, teaching French.

In Saigon, on July 4, after being imprisoned by the Japanese for seven months, King boarded a Japanese exchange ship, the Asama Maru, and began the 18,000-mile trip home. The exchange of prisoners—Americans and British for Japanese—took place in Portuguese East Africa, where King boarded the Gripsholm, which took him around Cape Horn, north on the Atlantic, to New York City. On August 25, the ship sailed past the Statue of Liberty.

Several weeks later, Lina and King were reunited in Wooster. Nearly two years after they met beside a pool in Saigon, they married in a small ceremony at the College’s Memorial Chapel. Lina and King had circled the globe to arrive together again in Wooster, on the campus and in the town that had given them the safety, security, and support that they needed to endure the challenges of war.
This year’s annual coverage of Independent Studies focuses on research that wrestles with the complex issues of war and peace.

All students featured received a grant from the Henry J. Copeland Fund for Independent Study to conduct their research.
The first time Kris Fronzak went to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, her reason for doing so was no different from that of almost every other American teen living there: her father’s job took the family to the military base on Kwajalein Island. “As an American civilian, there was a lot I didn’t see,” she recalls. She returned a year later, this time with different eyes—as a researcher and a journalist.

Kris’ Independent Study is a 44-page four-color magazine that tells stories of a tropical paradise forever changed by war. Independent since 1986, the tiny island nation in the middle of the Pacific has been occupied by many countries. Of all its occupiers, none has been more destructive than the United States, which tested 67 nuclear weapons on the islands, making them the most radioactively contaminated region in the world.

United States government assistance is the mainstay of the Republic of the Marshall Islands’ (RMI) economy, and Kris could find almost no one living on the islands willing to be interviewed about the American nuclear legacy. “Civilians on Kwajalein Island feared being misquoted or appearing hostile to the military’s actions,” she writes. “Military personnel were reluctant to show opposition in a publication that could be read by their superiors, and Marshallese citizens did not want to taint or undermine the relationship between the RMI and its protector, the U.S.”

Most Americans live on the main military base, which Kris describes as “a country club in the middle of the Third World.” The most populous of the islands, Ebeye, is a half-mile wide and holds 13,000 people. “It’s pretty horrifying,” she says.

But while much of this paradise has been destroyed or changed forever, Kris identifies a distinctive spirit that survives. “Despite all that has happened to them, the people are happy. They live for the moment. We Americans kill ourselves trying to better ourselves with more money, more power, and better jobs. We could learn a lot from them.”

Kris’s magazine, titled Marshallese Time (because real time is overrated), includes features on the RMI’s history, socioeconomic challenges, cultural practices, and the climate change that will someday put the islands under water. But the magazine doesn’t feel gloomy. Most editorial commentary focuses on Kris’ personal experiences, and she includes lighter stories on island living—language, social practices, food, and even a recipe for Marshallese moonshine. The magazine reflects Kris’ background in writing, graphic design, and photography.

Kris is pursuing a career in journalism or book publishing and plans to submit articles from Marshallese Time to a variety of publication outlets. And, of course, she will send copies back to her friends on the islands.

The United States tested 67 nuclear weapons on the islands, making them the most radioactively contaminated region in the world.
Willa Cary was adopted by an American couple when she was eight months old. She was taken from her birthplace—a Tibetan refugee camp in Kathmandu, Nepal—and grew up in America, where her adopted parents encouraged her to maintain ties with her biological mother.

Willa’s grandmother, Labdun, fled Tibet with her two-year-old daughter (Willa’s mother) to escape the Chinese ethnocide that resulted in the massacre of between 200,000 and 1,000,000 people, including Labdun’s husband. Like many of the 43.7 million forcibly displaced Tibetans, Willa’s grandmother settled in Nepal, which has welcomed refugees into large resettlement camps.

It was a confusing heritage. Willa had visited her Nepalese/Tibetan mother four times before she spent a month in her home in the Jawalakhel camp in Kathmandu, Nepal, to research her Independent Study. “Nepal had always been my frame of reference in terms of my culture and heritage, not Tibet. Nepal was what I saw and experienced and associated with my biological family when I visited them,” says Willa. “In previous visits, we didn’t talk about Tibet. But with this visit, there was a new sense of maturity; I was fascinated to learn about Tibetan culture and the history of my mother and grandmother.”

As Willa studied the effects of displacement and resettlement on Tibetan cultural identity, she realized that she was looking at a rare sociological occurrence: There was little to no overlap of cultural experiences between generations. When she interviewed elders who had once lived in Tibet and then interviewed the next generation, who had never been to Tibet and had been raised in refugee camps in Nepal, she found completely different cultural identities, played out in dress, food, language, and national emotional attachment.

Although her mother spoke almost no English, there was a deep bond between them, Willa said. “I look just like her—there was a seamless connection.” There was also instant rapport with her siblings. Willa’s eldest sister said. “In previous visits, we didn’t talk about Tibet. But with this visit, there was a new sense of maturity; I was fascinated to learn about Tibetan culture and the history of my mother and grandmother.” — Willa Cary
and her brother live with their mother in the Jawalakhel camp; the second oldest sister was adopted by the same American family as Willa was.

**A MONTH AT JAWALAKHEL**

In a country where extreme poverty is predominant, in some ways, “gated community” describes the Tibetan community Willa was born in better than the cliché-burdened descriptor “refugee camp.” Because of international aid, living conditions are much higher in the camps than in the cities that surround them, said Willa. “Many Nepalese live in dirt, on the street, or in hovels with no bathrooms. Behind the walls of the camp is a relatively clean, safe haven.”

Behind the walls, the elders remember a nomadic culture in which they worked the land, took care of livestock, and grew what they ate. “They told me, ‘Our children today would die trying to live as we lived,’” said Willa. “Tibetans growing up in Nepal live in a hyper-urban environment.”

And just as the younger generation could not survive the mountains of Tibet, neither can their elders survive the city of Katmandu, where they depend on their children to serve as translators and negotiate business transactions.

As long as Tibetans are in exile, their culture will continue to disappear, concludes Willa. “The lack of homeland is an insurmountable obstacle to retaining culture,” she writes. “The huge cultural loss that has occurred between the two different generation units can be attributed in large part to separation from not just a piece of land but an entirely different climate, environment, and way of life.

“Displacement and resettlement of Tibetan refugees to Nepal can be paralleled to the displacement and resettlement of polar bears to Florida. The land of Tibet is the key to the sacred and swiftly vanishing Tibetan culture.”

“A young refugee keeps Buddhist traditions alive.

**Entrance to the Tibetan refugee camp in Kathmandu, Nepal.**

*PHOTOS BY WILLA CARY*

**BIG BROTHERS AND BARBARIANS**

The role of images and perceptions in Russia’s foreign policy

Advisers: Yuri Corrigan, assistant professor of German and Russian studies; Jeff Lantis, professor of political science and international relations

When Arielle Neu studied Russian at St. Petersburg University the fall semester of her junior year, she had many conversations with her Russian host mother.

“She blamed American capitalism and perestroika for almost every social problem,” remembers Arielle. “I was very aware of the cultural differences between our countries, and I began to wonder what that meant for foreign policy.”

Arielle compared and analyzed Russian relations in two conflicts that centered on natural gas. The first was the gas wars with Ukraine in 2006 and 2009; the second also involved natural gas policy—but this time with Russia’s smaller neighbor, the Republic of Belarus. The conflict with Ukraine was hostile, a no-win situation for both countries; on the other hand, gas policies in Belarus were resolved peacefully. Why the difference?

Using classic theoretic models, Arielle analyzed cultures, policies, and outcomes. Rulers and citizens in Russia and Ukraine perceive that their basic cultural values are very different; on the other hand, Russia and Belarus see each other as being much more similar. She found that the literature provided a perfect descriptive fit . . . most of the time. For example, the classic descriptor of “barbarian” fit well with how Ukraine viewed Russia; “dependent” described how Russia viewed the Ukraine. But when she attempted to describe relations between Russia and Belarus using classic image theories, Arielle found some holes. Dubbing the relationship between the two countries “Big Brother/Little Brother,” she concluded that there are theoretical gaps in the literature, which fails to describe the type of positive interactions she had documented.

Arielle, who has received a Fulbright grant to teach English in Russia, says cultural exchanges are vital. “Cultural diplomacy affects image, and image affects policy. It’s important.”
“The elders respected what I was doing and knew they were making a valuable contribution. There was mutual respect. And that is key to the oral history process.” — Leann Do

SURVIVING WAR, SURVIVING MEMORY
Four Vietnamese civilians share oral histories.

Leann Do, the daughter of Vietnamese immigrants, was raised in Portland, Ore. Her parents sent their very American child to Saturday classes to learn to read, write, and speak Vietnamese, but “it didn’t take hold,” she says. “I’m not very good at it.” Nonetheless, her facility with her native language, her understanding of the culture, and her curiosity about her heritage led Leann to her Independent Study—interviewing four Vietnamese civilians about their experiences during the Vietnam War.

A debater on the College’s Moot Court team who professes to liking “the linear style of logical reasoning—the succinct language of the legal brief and memo,” Leann was at first wary of using oral histories as a research method. But she can pinpoint the history professors—Peter Pozefsky and Jeff Roche—who encouraged her in the research method that would send her to Vietnam for three weeks. “In his class on Russia in World War II, Dr. Pozefsky talked about the fluid nature of memory, how it is malleable, and how people can recreate a memory of war in order to normalize it—to make the experience less difficult. “I was worried that if I interviewed family members, it would be a clichéd family history. But Dr. Roche told me, ‘Every story is important, unique, and deserves to be told.’”

Leann acknowledges a limitation of her study: There wasn’t enough time to interview her respondents more than once. But she is also fully aware of a key advantage: Access to and understanding of the culture. “In Vietnam, there is a lot of emphasis on learning. Confucius said, ‘A scholar is a blessing for every family.’ So everyone was interested in my I.S. The elders respected what I was doing and knew they were making a valuable contribution. There was mutual respect. And that is key to the oral history process.” The memories that Leann’s respondents shared with her had been constructed, to a large degree, to give their lives normalcy. But one of her respondents, an elderly man, let his guard drop. “I was ready to conclude the interview,” remembers Leann, “and I asked him if he had anything to add. He said, ‘I saw a lot of death.’ And then he went into specific details, talking about bodies, and blood, and the sound of gunfire. And then he stopped, and looked at his watch, and said that we needed to go now and join my cousins for a beer. And that was the end. He had shut the door on that line of memory.”

Leann’s father, who was a member of the South Vietnamese military and spent seven years in a “reeducation” prison camp, has shared no memories of his experience with her, says Leann. She hopes to study reeducation camps using oral histories at the University of California Riverside, where she has been admitted to the Ph.D. program in oral and public history.

“Many Americans have reported on their Vietnam War experience, she says. “But there is a gap in American scholarship; the voice of the Vietnamese is largely missing.”

Leann presented her research, including a video of interviews she conducted, at the College’s Senior Research Symposium.

PHOTO: KAROL CROSBE
She was studying in Paris in the fall of 2010, during a period following a series of threats from Islamist groups against the French government. The entire city, including monuments, museums, parks, and public transportation, was under heavy military guard. “The presence of the military made me feel safer,” she says, “but it also made the danger of terrorism seem all the more real and immediate.”

Kathrin paid attention to both her feelings and her questions, and settled on a topic for her Independent Study—a comparison of how France and the United States have responded to terrorism. Specifically, she looked at how the two countries’ cultures of national security and the nature of their governments affected their responses after a major global terrorist incident.

Kathrin, a French and political science double major, studied France’s white papers, major legislation, and an interview with former French President Jacques Chirac following the international terrorist attack in Paris in 1995. Her analysis of the France case study is written in French. For the United States case study, she examined a defense document, a counter-terrorism strategy document, major legislation, and President George W. Bush’s 9/11 address.

The United States focused their efforts on preemptive strikes abroad, while France concentrated on preventative measures within their borders. While the U.S. dubbed their effort a “war,” France did not. “After the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. engaged in a global war on terror, suggesting that the American government views terrorism as an ‘enemy,’ necessitating a militaristic response,” writes Kathrin. “On the other hand, France avoids the phrase ‘war on terror,’ because it views it as another crime, similar to drug trafficking, necessitating a penal deterrent strategy to eradicate it. …

“It is not surprising that there is no consensus on the definition of terrorism and on how to adequately respond to an international terrorist attack.”

Kathrin, who has lived in Europe, traveled to China, and interned in South Africa, is pursuing a career in international diplomacy. She has been accepted at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland.

“The presence of the military made me feel safer, but it also made the danger of terrorism seem all the more real and immediate.” — Kathrin Reed
At first, Kristen Connors planned to study political rhetoric, violence, and terrorism. But she heeded some deep-seated institutional advice: If you don’t like your topic, the I.S. journey will be an exceptionally long trip.

“I found I didn’t enjoy working on it,” she recalls. “It was just too negative. I wanted to do something happy.”

So Kristen added religious studies as a major and researched the role that religion plays in building peace when it is used in interfaith dialogue. Finding little research on the topic, she conducted much of her inquiry by interviewing one of the foremost experts on the topic, David Steele, who directed a conflict resolution program for the former Yugoslavia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

She conducted a historical overview of two countries—Bosnia-Herzegovina and Lebanon—that had each experienced a bloody civil war in which religion was a source of conflict and in which interfaith dialogue helped to repair wounds. She used war-wracked El Salvador as a comparative case because, although religion was a source of its conflict, the country had not used interfaith dialogue to help heal wounds.

Kristen constructed four hypotheses that she recommends for further testing to inform when and how interfaith dialogue might be most effective. First, she maintains that if religion or religious identity played a major role in building peace when it is used in interfaith dialogue.
factor in a conflict, then the use of either inter- or intra-faith dialogue will increase the success of reconciliation; second, that the presence of specific goals, such as reconciliation or refugee resettlement, enhances the probability of final, positive results; third, that the success of inter-faith dialogue depends on involvement from the population at high levels, mid-levels, grass roots, or all three; and finally, when specific goals are present, they may be most effectively reached at symposia, summer camps, and school curricula.

Kristen is attending Wooster’s Global Social Entrepreneurship program in India this summer and will pursue a master’s degree in peace studies. (At publication, she was deciding between two offers from universities in England and Ireland.)

Morag Neill shares about her own experience as an “educational immigrant” on the Wooster campus: “I identified more with being Motswana (from Botswana) and Zambian than when I was at home.

“I also noticed how Africans at The College of Wooster automatically have a connection with each other—one that may not have been so evident had we met on the continent. We reconstruct the little pieces of Africa that each of us represent to create our own community, our own support system.”

But, she wondered, how would it feel to miss the sunshine, the food, the culture of your home, and not be able to return? She was surprised to learn that Columbus was home to the second largest group of refugees who had fled the civil war in Somalia. “Here I am, less than two hours away, and I had no idea that they were there. It amazed me that there was such a lack of connection.”

A disproportionate number of Somali refugees are women, many of them victims of or escapees from gender violence. Morag interviewed five women, four of them heads of their households in Columbus.

What Morag saw in Laila, Umi, Farhia, Muntaha, and Hamdi was physical and emotional strength that supported their families in Columbus and also in Somalia.

“Family in Somalia is important because in times of war, in addition to maintaining simple human needs, family members also provide protection against war crimes and violence,” says Morag. One of the women she interviewed had been orphaned by the war.

Through their food, clothing, and language, the five women were custodians of their culture in Columbus, says Morag. “I was inspired by them. They had been entrusted by their families to recreate their culture. I saw that culture can survive war.”

Morag hopes to work in the area of human rights.

“Family in Somalia is important because in times of war, in addition to maintaining simple human needs, family members also provide protection against war crimes and violence.”

— Morag Neill
For her double-major senior Independent Study projects, Megan Lazorski combined her interests in art and chemistry. Under the direction of professor of art Walter Zurko, she executed original sculptures that stressed the multicultural nature of alchemy. One of these was Kekulé’s Dream, which she donated to the department of chemistry. For her chemistry laboratory project, advised by professor of chemistry Virginia Pett, she worked to develop a silver-based glaze for ceramics that would record images with ultraviolet light.

Lazorski’s fascination with light continues in her graduate work in chemistry at Colorado State University, where she is currently investigating copper complexes as dye-sensitizers for solar cells.

Lazorski’s career exemplifies a personal conviction: “Certainly, in science one must use creativity to adeptly manipulate materials and initiate novel chemical reactions,” she wrote. “On the other hand, artists must use logic and research to guide the intellectual goals and decisions that influence their creative work. Why then are these two disciplines construed as completely contrary?”
Kekulé’s Dream adorns the Saunders Pavilion of Severance Chemistry Building. The work suggests the structure of the cyclical benzene molecule. The six kidney-shaped stoneware vessels arranged in a hexagon represent the six carbon atoms; the copper tubing, reflected by the mirror, depicts the electron cloud that extends above and below the plane of the atoms. Decals on the vessels display the alchemical motifs of a snake or a dragon eating its own tail.

Kekulé was a chemist and artist who postulated the ring structure of the benzene molecule in 1865. His discovery was allegedly inspired by his dream of a tail-eating dragon. Writes Lazorski, “The tail-eating snake (ouroboros) is one of the oldest and most widely-used symbols in the alchemy of every culture, representing both the cyclical pattern of the stars and planets, and the infinite transformation and regeneration of matter.”

We hope that “Second Lives” will become an ongoing series. If you know of an Independent Study that has taken on a second life, please contact us at kcrosbie@wooster.edu.
Alphie and Parisa

They've been friends for a year—introduced through Worthy Questions, a program of Interfaith Campus Ministries, where Parisa worked as an intern and Alfie volunteers as a mentor. They are deeply interested in each other. Alfie lived much of her life in India, married to Ernie Campbell ’40, a Presbyterian missionary. Parisa, whose father is Iranian and mother is African American, grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and took many trips to Iran. An anthropology major, Parisa has already participated in Wooster study abroad programs in Kenya and Israel since she arrived at Wooster two years ago.

Alfie’s little house—her yard decorated with small Tibetan flags, her living room cozy with oriental rugs—offers a calm respite, says Parisa. And Parisa’s stories of campus life help keep Alfie young and connected.

This summer, Parisa is participating in the College’s social entrepreneurship program in India. She’s a little worried that the nine weeks that she will be there will seem too long, but Alfie reassures her. “What should I take?” Parisa asks her friend. “Just yourself,” says Alfie. “Just take yourself.”

The two love to compare today’s campus social scene with the 1940s Depression era one that Alfie experienced. Parisa hears of sock hops and necking, despite 9:30 curfews; Alfie learns of “grinding” couple’s dancing and a “hook-up” culture.

“Nothing shocks me,” says Alfie.

“I can tell you anything,” says Parisa.
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When you—our alumni, parents, and friends—choose to invest in Wooster, it is a vote of confidence in the power of a Wooster education.

“I give back to Wooster to say, ‘Thank You’ for providing me with an environment that worked perfectly for me as a student. I also give back so that future students can have opportunities that will be just as perfect for them. As an Alumni Board member, I can testify that the College remains the same in all the right ways. But over the years, it has also progressively and thoughtfully changed to be even better. I give because I know that the financial and volunteer support of alumni is vital to Wooster’s vibrant future.”

BARRY EISENBERG ’85
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
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In Closing

About that mulch: Living green
Instead of carting away leaves, branches, trees, and trimmings, grounds staff stockpile them on campus. The College contracts with a company that turns the pile into approximately 1,500 cubic yards of a rich mulch/compost mixture. By recycling yard waste, the annual cost of mulch is only about $5,500 instead of $40,000, says Beau Mastrine, director of grounds. Photos: Beau Mastrine and Karol Crosbie