

Dear Friends of St. Olaf Classics,

A hearty summer greeting from St. Olaf College! The weather has finally warmed up in Minnesota, after a very long winter that spilled over into the spring; it was the first time in history that the Northfield schools declared a snow day in May! A plethora of Classics activities has kept us warm throughout the year, however, and has continued into the summer, with several students working on campus with faculty members on translation projects in Greek and Latin, and several more participating in ancient history and archaeology projects in Greece and Turkey. Meanwhile, professors have retreated to the quiet of their studies to embrace their research projects with fresh vigor.



The 2012-2013 edition of the Classics Department

We welcomed two familiar faces back to the Classics Department this year. Jennifer Starkey, who graduated from Saint Olaf in 2007, and recently successfully defended her Ph.D. dissertation on Sophoclean drama at the University of Colorado, taught a Greek and Roman Myth course for us in the fall. And Jim May returned to full-time teaching in the department after serving for a number of years as Dean and Provost of the College.

Jim's new *Cicero Reader* appeared this spring, just in time for him to use in an upper-level Latin course. Anne Groton's 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *From Alpha to Omega* also appeared this spring and is on order for a bumper crop of beginning Greek students this fall. Chris Brunelle took a leave of absence in the fall to work on an Oxford commentary on Ovid's *Ars*

*Amatoria*; he also finished translating the entire *Ars* into limericks and gave a three-hour performance of the entire work this spring. And I, Steve Reece, have taken over as chair of the department – something I somehow managed to avoid for eighteen years – so I have been spending much of my spare time approving my colleagues' telephone and photocopy bills and ordering cookies and cider for student events. I am passing the summer, though, by reading through the 6000 remnants of ancient letters on papyrus that have been discovered in the sands of Egypt; I hope to use them to cast some light on St. Paul's letter-writing techniques.

Interest in the ancient world remains high among Oles: we currently have 44 declared majors in Classics, Ancient Studies, and Medieval Studies. Our focus in the Classics Department continues to be on language instruction and philological training, but we've observed that students today seem fond of material culture too – perhaps because they spend most of the rest of their lives in a virtual world! Several of our recent graduates have gone into museum studies and library studies, and archaeology has also become very popular. Tim Howe, our ancient historian, is currently participating in an excavation in Turkey with a number of Oles.



"Greece with Reece" at Mycenae

Anne Groton directed a student production of Plautus' *Rudens* this fall in a delightful combination of English and Latin. The play was performed twice at St. Olaf and taken on tour to seven other schools throughout Minnesota.



Plautus in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

We took students to several lectures on the ancient world at the Minnesota Institute of Art this year, usually with a meal afterward at Christos Greek restaurant. We also sponsored three lectures on campus: Anne Derbes, Hood College, "Frescoes in the Baptistry in Padua," Nigel Pollard, Swansea University, "The Roman Legion," and Joanne Berry, Swansea University, "The People of Pompeii."

The social calendar for our Classics students was as busy as usual: Greek vs. Latin softball game, Classics vs. Ancient History Olympic games, Latin and Greek Christmas caroling, Classics and Ancient History lamb roast, Bacchanalia, Eta Sigma Phi and Groomis Latin and Greek translation contests, Eta Sigma Phi initiation and other events. Also, a group of Classics students shared dinner together almost every Monday evening and invited fellow students, alumni, faculty, and staff to offer presentations during the meal.

Three Classics students won top honors in the national Maurine Dallas Watkins Translation Contests: Grace Koch '15 won the Intermediate Greek category, while Chance Bonar '15 took second place in the same portion of the contest. Koch also took third place in both the Advanced Latin and Koine Greek categories. Kaitlin Coats '13 took second place in the Advanced Prose Composition portion of the contest. St. Olaf has had

at least one winner at the Watkins event every year since 1980 and has the best record in the competition of any school in the country.

Several alumni/ae and parents of former students gave financial gifts directly to the Classics Department this year. This is always heartening for us as faculty members, and it is helpful in a very tangible way to our students. Financial gifts have enabled us to give two need-based scholarships to Latin and Greek majors (\$4500), a full scholarship for one student to participate in the Interim in Greece (\$5000), discounts for three students to participate in the Interim in Greece (\$1500), two stipends for Classics-related summer projects (\$1000), and six translation awards (\$1200). Other gifts paid for transportation and meals for our speakers at the Monday evening Classics Conversation Table. If you would like to make a contribution to the Classics Department, here are some easy ways. You can be assured that your gift will go entirely and directly to enhancing the educational experience of our students. By credit card via phone at 800-733-6523. By credit card online at: <http://my.stolaf.edu/giving/online-giving-options> By check via mail: Donna Moen, Gift Coordinator, The St. Olaf Fund, St. Olaf College, 1520 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield MN 55057.



Latin vs. Greek softball game

For more news and many more great photos please visit our Classics Department website at: <http://wp.stolaf.edu/classics/> And, as always, keep in touch!

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