

**Classics Newsletter – St. Olaf College
July, 2024**

Biggest news of the past year: Kyle Helms received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Hooray!



The photo shows him in his sacred chicken outfit, taking the auspices during his World of the Ancient Romans class and looking forward to his year-long sabbatical in 2024-25. In addition, we survived the decennial self-study of our Classics program and earned a thumbs-up from our two outside reviewers, Profs. Sonia Sabnis (Reed College) and Bret Mulligan (Haverford College).

We had 11 senior majors this year: 2 Classics, 1 Greek, 1 Latin, 1 Latin/Medieval Studies, 2 Medieval Studies, and 4 Ancient Studies. Two will be attending graduate school this fall:



Erica Collin (pictured in her volleyball uniform) at Bryn Mawr College (Ph.D. in Classical Studies) and Ruth Hailey (pictured in her Zamboni driver's uniform) at Oxford (M.St. in Greek). Another one of them, Eli Moore (yes, son of James Moore '86), earned distinction in Classics with a paper on Jerome's Translation of Mark. We also had two winners in the national Maurine Dallas Watkins Translation Contests: Keri Hoatson '27 (second prize, Intermediate Latin) and Emmett Van Houten '25 (third prize, Latin Prose Composition). Congratulations!



When Anne Groton's plans for a first-year seminar fell through, she returned to her old model of producing an ancient play with a volunteer student cast, taking the show on tour to eight schools in just two days (400

miles!) plus performing twice at St. Olaf. The play, Sophocles' *Ichneutae* ("The Trackers"), was a fragmentary "moo-sical" about Apollo's lost cows and Hermes' invention of the lyre. Roughly 1,000 people saw the show, April 24-27. If you would like to watch a video of it, Anne will gladly give you online access.

Classical Studies in Italy, back again after having been put on hold during the pandemic, was a great success.

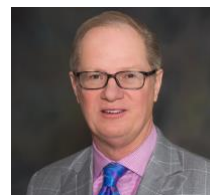
The 30 students selected for the program, seen here taking notes en route to the Temple of Apollo Sosianus in Rome, were led by Kyle Helms, who had revised the course syllabus to make the site visits more chronological and to extend the time spent on the Bay of Naples. We now have a new group of 30 (selected from 79 applicants) who are signed up to take Classical Studies in Greece with Anne Groton in January, 2025.



Jim May's long-time friend and collaborator Jakob Wisse, Prof. of Latin Language and Literature at Newcastle University, gave the 7th Annual James M. May Lecture in Classics, "Not in that imaginary Republic of Plato's": Rhetoric, Lies, and Morality in Cicero," on Wed., April 17. During his time in Northfield, Jaap sat in on classes and had meals with students and faculty. Jon Solomon, Prof. of Classics, Medieval Studies, and Media and Cinema Studies at U. of Illinois, has agreed to deliver the next May Lecture (date and details forthcoming).



We co-sponsored "Archaeology, the Bible, and Classical Antiquity in the 19th Century," a lecture by Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar Suzanne Marchand (LSU), and a workshop on Printing the Bible, organized by Prof. Noam Sienna (Relig. Dept.); a mob of students waited eagerly in line to try out the two letterpresses in the Kings' Room!



Our Eta Sigma Phi chapter was quite active this year. Guests at its weekly Classics Conversation Table included Charles Bressman '79, who spoke about his career as a courtroom lawyer and his love of collecting ancient coins.



Thanks to a generous donation from Judy Ulland '68, we could afford to fly three of our student officers to the honor society's national convention, held at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA. Our students' bid to host the 2025 convention was successful, so Delta Chi will be welcoming

100+ guests to St. Olaf on March 14-16; the photo shows how friendly the four officers for 2024-25 are.

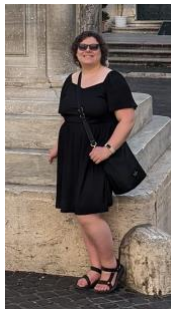
Greg Randall '96 and Toni Wilkes once again funded two scholarships based on "academic achievement and commitment to Classics"; the lucky winners were Sofia Albrecht '25 (at right) and Lucia Iurino '25 (at left). Thanks a million, Greg and Toni! We have now created a Groomis [Groton & Loomis] Scholarship for a deserving Classics student with high financial need; when combined with funds from the Smith Center, the scholarship covers the full program fee for Classical Studies in Greece or Italy. The winner for 2025 is Classics/Music major MaKenzie Kuckkan '26.



Groomis earnings also provided the prize money for our annual St. Olaf Latin/Greek contests and for seven awards, ranging from \$50 to \$500, to defray the cost of a summer project. Five of the students are participating in digs: three in Turkey, one in Nikopoli, Greece (see photo), and one in Illinois.



We had strong enrollments this year. Medieval Latin, for example, was packed with 28 students, intrigued by Kyle Helms's enthusiasm for the Latin biographies of Saints Cnut, Erik, and Olaf. Kyle will be translating and commenting on those in his book, *Royal Martyrs of Scandinavia* (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library). He has been experimenting with having our Greek students translate an ancient Greek version of *Harry Potter* and having our Latin students translate very old Latin inscriptions and curse tablets!



Hilary Bouxsein '09 won the prize for teaching our largest course: World of the Ancient Greeks (40 students). She and her fiancé Coulter George just returned from Rome, where this photo was taken, under Bernini's elephant by the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. Hilary has been our faithful Phi Beta Kappa chapter secretary and helps with everything. We are delighted that she will be with us for two more years.

It will be doubly delightful to have another '09 Ole, Peter Moench (Ph.D., U. of Virginia), as a colleague while Kyle is on sabbatical. Peter, his wife Sarah Strasen '09, son Felix, and daughter Silvia are admiring the view in this photo from Colorado.



A third source of delight: our adjunct colleague Kathryn Steed did a great job teaching Greek & Roman Myth during January and "Law and Society in the Ancient World" in the spring. She has kindly agreed to teach Advanced Latin (Lucretius) for us in the fall.

Retirees Jim and Donna May are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary this month and have a new granddaughter named Christina. They continue to lead an Alumni & Family Travel tour to Greece each spring; they went to France on a pilgrimage last fall and to Alaska on a cruise last month. In the photo, you can see them accepting hospitality from a bear in Ketchikan.



Retiree Steve Reece, who celebrated his 40th wedding anniversary with Rhonda in June, spends much of his time expertly driving the Zamboni in St. Olaf's ice arena. In the photo, taken during a family reunion, he demonstrates his talent with paddles in Idaho. On May 8 he served as the online respondent to a set of scholarly papers presented in Rome, most of them in Italian, all of them inspired by his book, *The Formal Education of the Author of Luke-Acts* (T&T Clark, 2022). Bravissimo!



Anne Groton is relieved to be done with her year of chairing the Faculty Governance Committee and hopes to be able to complete the fifth edition of her Greek textbook soon. As always, she enjoyed directing our Latin/Greek caroling and was pleased to be invited to bring the mob of singers to the St. Olaf President's House. Anne has a new grandnephew named Wildflower "Wild" Moon!

Two sad notes to end with: Prof. Emeritus Richard (R.G.) Peterson died on March 10; Connie Gunderson, Lloyd's wife, died on June 9. *Requiescant in pace*. Best wishes to all of you and your families. Come visit us!