

CONNECTIONS

SUMMER 2007

the means, the medium, the mark.

Casey V. Westbrook

an M.F.A. thesis exhibition

March 20 - April 1

Casey Westbrook, '07 M.F.A. art with an emphasis in metal sculpture



ARTS & SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY



Dear Alumni and Friends:

Greetings from Kansas State University's College of Arts and Sciences. For the past few years we have been proud of the fact that more Kansans choose to attend K-State than any other university. Every year students arrive here from all 105 Kansas counties. That tells us a lot about the pride our own residents feel toward our university. And it reinforces our belief that we're offering our students an excellent education.

However, there is a much larger piece to the K-State picture that is receiving lots of our current attention. We are not just a state university; we are a world university. Our current student body represents 104 different countries. We are committed to internationalizing our campus and ensuring that the College of Arts and Sciences plays a key role in an increasingly global society.

For our students to receive the education they are due from us — no matter where they're from — they need foreign language training, study-abroad experiences, classes that give them a general fluency in global issues, and exposure to fellow students from countries other than their own. For our faculty to prosper in teaching and research, they need to foster connections with colleagues not just at other American universities but all around the world.

This past spring, we put together a College report on the international activity of our faculty. I was struck by the surprisingly wide array of international connections. We have physicists who collaborate on a huge project involving 600 other researchers from 18 countries. We have one grassland biologist collaborating with researchers in South Africa on prairie grazers and fires, and another working on African grasslands and savannas with researchers at the University of Botswana.

One of our distinguished professors of chemistry has supported the travel of nine KSU students to Bulgaria for the past five years. We have geologists and geographers developing a digital geoscience atlas for Senegal. One of our political scientists just returned from meeting his research collaborators in Tanzania and Democratic Republic of Congo. A sociologist specializing in migration and social inequality has collaborators in the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Romania, Northern Transylvania and Hungary, his home country.

K-State is also in the midst of a multimillion-dollar project funded by the World Bank and USAID helping to rebuild Kabul University in Afghanistan. Both the departments of English and Modern Languages are playing prominent roles, and we plan to have some faculty exchanges in the near future. Even this short list suggests only a small fraction of the amazing variety of international activities that go on all the time in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Last year I had the privilege of joining eight other K-State faculty and administrators for ten days in China, evaluating a range of educational opportunities. Perhaps the most exciting part of the trip was an alumni gathering we all attended in Shanghai. The 25 or so K-Staters who lived in the area were all invited, and to our great delight we had a nearly perfect turnout. Just like alumni groups throughout Kansas or other parts of the country, they were thrilled to come together and reflect on their experiences in Manhattan. As you read through this issue of Connections magazine, we hope you'll comprehend how your Arts and Sciences degree puts you in good company all across the globe.

Like these supporters of K-State's College of Arts and Sciences, we thank you, our friends and alumni, for your continuing interest and support of your university. Enjoy this issue of Connections.

Best wishes,

Stephen E. White, dean

“We are not just a state university; we are a world university.”



ARTS & SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Produced by New Boston Creative Group, LLC
315 Houston Street, Suite E, Manhattan, Kansas
785.587.8185
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Photos by

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Tying Up Loose Ends

Accomplished photojournalist returns to K-State to address some unfinished business

by Jami Weisbender '01

When Pete Souza — national photographer for the Chicago Tribune’s Washington, D.C., bureau — left Kansas State University in 1979 to pursue a career in photojournalism, he was just one project shy of his master’s degree in journalism and mass communications.

Souza never planned to end up at K-State specifically, but instead sought a graduate school that could provide a teaching assistantship to help cover tuition. K-State fit the bill.

“Don Holt interviewed me on the phone and then offered me the job,” said Souza, who earned his B.S. in public communications from Boston University. “I didn’t know what I was getting myself into and all my friends thought I was crazy, but I packed up my Volvo and drove out to Kansas.”

Near the end of his graduate program, Souza felt the tug of a new career more than the pull of his final school project.

“I didn’t quite finish it up,” Souza said. “And at the time, the degree itself wasn’t that important to me. It was more important for me, at least in my mind, to get started working full time as a photojournalist.”

Over the last 28 years, Souza not only succeeded in making a living as a photographer, but also built a resume full of impressive credentials. After stints at the Hutchinson (Kan.) News, the Chanute (Kan.) Tribune and the Chicago Sun-Times, he landed in the White House as the official photographer for President Ronald Reagan in June 1983, just four years after departing from K-State to chase his dream.

Souza stayed on as White House photographer until the end of Reagan’s presidency in 1989. Since then, he has photographed for National Geographic Magazine and Life Magazine, and he has published three books. Souza’s coverage of President Reagan and, more recently, Illinois Senator Barack Obama, has earned him national recognition.

Still, for a long time Souza could not forget the one endeavor from his past that he had not completed: his master’s degree from K-State.

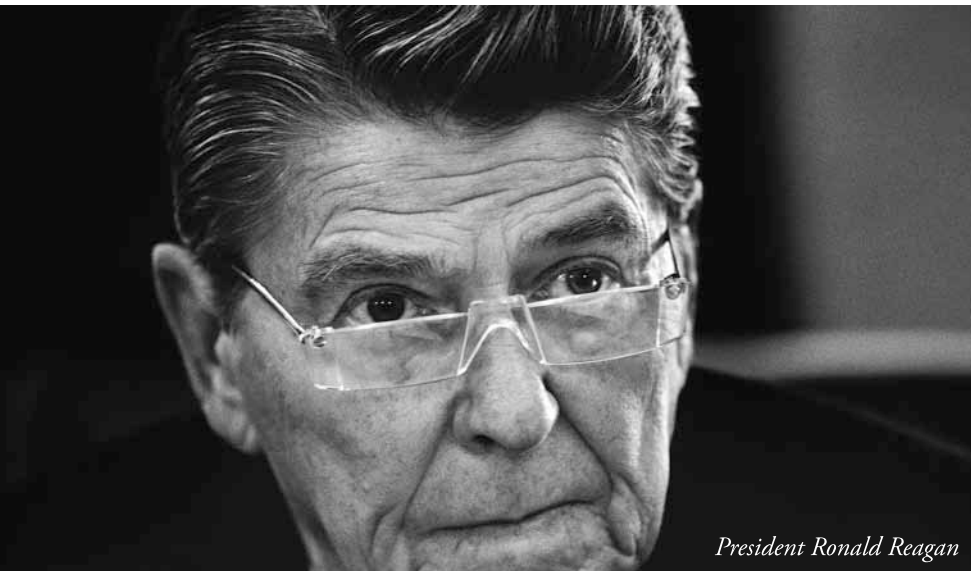
“I just started regretting that it was sort of one thing left undone, and I wanted to see if there was a way that I could finish and make it official,” he said.

“Over the years I’ve done a lot with K-State,” he continued. “We (K-State-affiliated photojournalists) did a book in 1986 for the University (‘A Week at Kansas State’). We’ve done numerous photojournalism workshops and I’m on the Journalism School Advisory

Council. I’ve always felt a part of K-State and I think that they feel the same about me.”

In 2005, this lasting connection to K-State led Souza to approach the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications about completing his master’s degree.

“For the final credits, they asked me to put together an exhibit for the university...sort of a mid-career retrospective, what I’ve done up to this point in my career,” Souza recalled. “They also asked if I would be willing to speak at graduation.”



President Ronald Reagan



Reagan family at President Reagan's funeral



Senator Barack Obama



New York City firefighter



Afghan fighter

“I’ve always felt a part of K-State and I think that they feel the same about me.”



Diana, Princess of Wales and John Travolta

Souza rose to the challenge, putting together a 36-photograph exhibit entitled “A Photojournalist on Assignment” — which was on display in the Kemper Art Gallery at the K-State Student Union from Nov. 30 to Dec. 21, 2006 — and finally earning his graduate degree from K-State in Dec. 2006. He also fulfilled the University’s other request, acting as the commencement speaker at his own graduation.

“In 2006, I went to four countries and to New Orleans three times for post-Katrina stories, so it’s not like I’m doing Washington stuff all the time,” Souza said.

Since 2004, he has been chronicling Democratic Senator and presidential candidate Barack Obama. Souza — who has traveled to seven countries photographing Obama — has enjoyed recording the daily moments of an up-and-coming junior senator.

“I think the interesting thing for me has been to document Obama at the start of his national political career when there isn’t the big bubble around him, when there isn’t the security that comes with a presidency. So that’s been really interesting to watch and photograph, and to see the excitement in people wanting to see him and meet him, shake his hand and kiss his cheek.”

Throughout his career, Souza’s work has been showcased at the National Archives, Smithsonian Museum of American History and Corcoran Gallery of Art. He has also been honored by the Pictures of the Year competition, National Press Photographers Association’s Best of Photojournalism contest and the White House News Photographers competition.



Million Man March on Washington

“Well, I didn’t realize I was the keynote speaker at first, until I reread the letter,” he laughed. “I thought I was just one of the speakers.”

Souza’s graduation speech emphasized the belief he frequently expresses when speaking at photojournalism schools around the country.

“My message is that journalism is often called a first rough draft of history and that photojournalism, I think, goes beyond that,” Souza asserted. “Often times, a photograph can become a symbol for a personality or for a historic event. People can identify more in a visceral way with a good photograph that captures a scene or a person.”

Souza’s own images seem the best support for this argument. In addition to chronicling Ronald Reagan’s presidency, former First Lady Nancy Reagan asked Souza to act as the official photographer for Reagan’s funeral in June 2004. He documented the entire week, from the private grief of Mrs. Reagan and her family to the public salutes of soldiers and citizens.

“I had total access throughout the week and that’s a testament to, I think, the relationship that I maintained with Mrs. Reagan, and the trust. Because without that, I wouldn’t have been able to take a lot of those pictures,” Souza said.

Despite his considerable experience covering national politics, Souza’s work has not been confined to the Washington, D.C., scene. After leaving the White House in 1989, Souza focused on freelance work for nine years before joining the Chicago Tribune’s Washington, D.C., bureau in 1998. His work at the Tribune has taken him all over the world.



Kosovo

Souza’s thesis can now be added to his list of achievements. The Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations awarded him one of six 2007 Electronic Theses and Dissertations awards, which were presented at a June 2007 symposium in Uppsala, Sweden.

The new K-State alumnus declared that throughout his career and all of his travels, his link to the University has also endured.

“I think what finishing this degree does is just makes it official.”

To see more of Souza’s photography, visit his website, www.petesouza.com.

Alumni Fellows Share Wisdom and Experience with Next Generation

The publisher of Reppert Publications and two medicinal chemistry professors at the University of Arizona were honored as the 2007 Alumni Fellows by the K-State College of Arts and Sciences.

Jerry L. Reppert of Anna, Ill., and Myron “Mike” and Elaine L. Pearson Jacobson of Tucson, Ariz., were on campus Feb. 21-23. Alumni Fellows return to campus to present guest lectures, discuss current trends and meet informally with students and faculty. The Fellows are chosen based on their high levels of professional accomplishment and distinguished service in their respective careers.



Jerry L. Reppert

Reppert earned a bachelor's degree in journalism in 1969 from K-State. He has devoted most of his life to the newspaper owned by his family, The Gazette Democrat.

Reppert created his publications group with the addition of several area and regional community newspapers and specialty publications for tourism, real estate and taxidermy.

In the early 1970s, Reppert founded a cable television system and the Reppert's Office Furniture stores. In 2006, he served as president of the National Newspaper Association, a national voice for community newspapers with membership of more than 3,200 newspapers. His wife, Dianne Reppert, also works with him in the publishing business.

“I was honored to be recognized, and it was good to be back on campus,” Reppert said. “I haven't been back as much as I'd like, so it was good to be back in touch with the students and the faculty.

“I told them what I look for in college graduates, especially when it comes to information technology and how important it is for them to stay on the cutting edge, regardless of which type of journalism they get into. I'm looking for the people I hire to know a lot more about technology than I do,” he said.

Elaine Jacobson earned a bachelor of science degree in 1967 and a doctorate in 1971 from K-State.

Mike earned his doctorate from K-State in 1970.

They began their academic careers in the 1970s in Texas — Elaine at Texas Woman's University and Mike at the University of North Texas. They also were faculty at the University of North Texas Health Sciences Center and the University of Kentucky before moving to the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy in 2000.



Elaine Pearson Jacobson

Their research has focused on understanding the roles of niacin and niacin-derived molecules in human health. In 2005, they received an international award recognizing the discovery of new roles of nutrition in human health. Their research on new niacin functions led to the founding of a biotechnology company, Niadyne, Inc. The Jacobsons' technologies have contributed to the development of skin and hair care products, and drugs for dermatology conditions and prevention of cardiovascular diseases.



Mike Jacobson

“Our experience on campus was fabulous! The entire campus came out with great enthusiasm to welcome us,” Elaine said. “It was a tremendous opportunity to meet with students, teach a class, give two seminars, and meet with faculty to discuss their research.

“The Department of Biochemistry did a spectacular job. A lot of effort and work went into organizing our visit. It was a special time for me, especially since Charlie Hedgcoth (late Biochemistry department head) was my mentor and I hadn't been back to campus since his death. It was great to hear people talk about how they appreciated his years of effort and work,” she said.



1

Westbrook lines up his wood molds, a non-traditional casting medium, outside West Stadium, near the K-State Alumni



2

Center on a snowy February day. A gating system, strapped tightly to each mold, guides the hot metal into the crack.

In January 2007, Westbrook begins a new piece by enlarging a lengthwise crack in a chunk of cottonwood that served as a mold.



4

Scrap iron and other metal stored under the bleachers at West Stadium. This iron came from the renovation of Seaton Hall, a church in Pilsen, Kan., and many other sources. The metal sculpture program has recently moved into the basement of Willard Hall.



3

Westbrook with the cupola, or furnace, a device that was perfected in England and made the Industrial Revolution possible. Air will be forced into burning coke, a fuel derived from coal, heating it enough to melt iron.

A BURNING ZEAL FOR ART



8

The art students move in a careful rhythm, aware of the consequences of injudicious movements. It takes two students to handle the ladle, which holds up to 250 pounds of molten iron. Some students stand by to take over one end of the ladle if necessary, while others continually charge the cupola, replenishing its supply of coke and scrap metal. Artists that work in iron don't mind traveling to attend a good pour, and a contingent from Fort Hays State University journeyed to Manhattan for this one.

A spare wood mold is upended into a sandpit under the bleachers of West Stadium and filled. Here students pour off excess metal into the pit as flames flare up on the mold.



10



9

Metal sculptors are a resourceful lot, as demonstrated by duct-taped protective leggings. They often adapt common construction or shop equipment for their own needs, and are always grateful for donations of scrap metal. Dan Hunt's dream acquisitions would include a milling machine, a metal lathe, and a forklift to move the tons of iron, fuel and other paraphernalia his operation requires.

Photos courtesy of J&C Imaging

Daniel Hunt, associate professor of art, directs the metal sculpture program. A lifelong fan of hot metal, he lights up as he works with students who share his enthusiasm for this toughest of art forms.



5



6

Once the top of the coke bed glows orange, students pour buckets of scrap iron into the cupola. Slag, or impurities, rise and run out a slag hole on one side, allowing pure molten iron to flow from a spout into a waiting ladle.



7

Students pour the molten iron into a mold.



Casey Westbrook, May 2007 master of fine arts graduate in sculpture in the Department of Art, pours molten iron into chunks of wood. Though this sounds like reckless behavior in the extreme, the controlled burn that occurs when 2,700 degrees of hot metal fills a gap in a chunk of wood turns out to be a thing of beauty.

A newly poured piece smokes in the cold air, shrinking quickly in its mold. Westbrook can simply lift it out as soon as the metal loses color, in as few as five minutes. The charred wood retains the scorched impression, becoming an art piece itself.



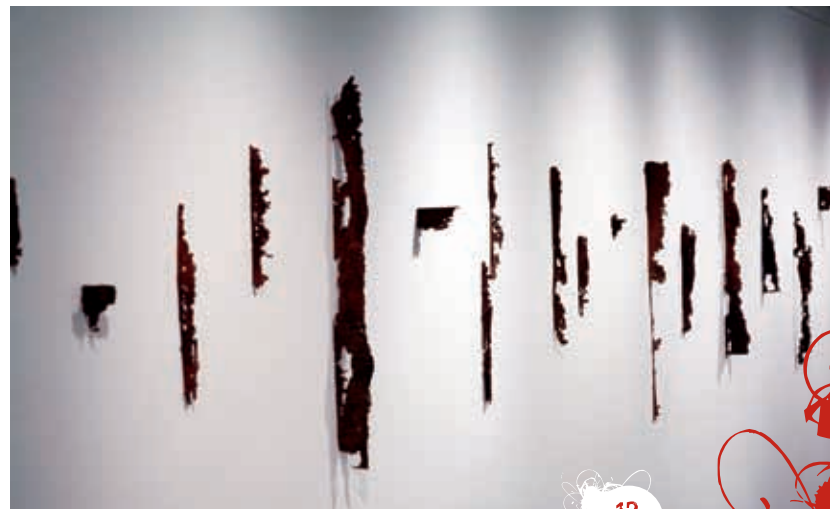
12



11

Westbrook douses a casting to cool it.

On Sept. 14, 2007, K-State will host the Third Annual Friends and Neighbors Pour, welcoming iron artists from Montana, Georgia, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Kansas and the United Kingdom. Please e-mail Daniel Hunt at dhunt@ksu.edu for more information. If you'd like to support the sculpture program or the Department of Art, please contact Mike Harders, senior director of development, mikeh@found.ksu.edu, 800-432-1578.



13

From Feb. 26 to Mar. 9, Westbrook displayed his metal sculptures, along with the wood he used to form them, in the Mark Chapman Gallery in Willard Hall, as part of his master of fine arts thesis exhibition.

Extraordinary Students, Extraordinary Stories

by Lisa Sisley '92



Lamees Al-Athari,
Gregory Eiselein,
Elizabeth Dodd



Aronka Seaverson, Andrea Blair

Lamees Al-Athari

Many K-State alumni know, from personal experience, that at K-State, the faculty and staff are committed to helping students who want a college education. However, many a young person, despite faculty support, has been derailed by the fairly routine challenges of young adulthood — a failed romance, uncertain finances, self-doubt. That's usually plenty to deal with.

A few years ago, a group of K-State faculty and administrators began to publicly recognize those students who overcome more than the usual trials. Horrible accidents, serious disabilities, war-torn homelands...there are students on campus who carry more than the typical burdens.

Each year, members of the K-State community nominate students for the Extraordinary Student Award, which brings with it a plaque and an evening of accolades for the winners. And for the past three years, the members of the executive board of the KSU Foundation have donated their own money to fund cash awards for the winners.

On May 2, in the Bluemont Room in the Union, Cia Verschelden, associate professor and director of the K-State Office of Assessment, hosted the eight winners and about 60 guests (including Provost Duane Nellis) at a banquet. Four of the eight winners were from the College of Arts and Sciences.

The nominators told the crowd a bit about each student, then most of the students spoke briefly, introducing their invited guests and saying a few words of thanks.

Lamees Al-Athari, Fulbright fellow and graduate student in English, was nominated by Elizabeth Dodd and Gregory Eiselein, faculty members in the Department of English. Al-Athari, a native of Baghdad whose son was born there 10 days before the war with the United States began, spent a large part of her childhood in the United States. Her husband, Esam Salim, is a graduate student in the grain science and industry program.

"I am actually surprised that my professors have nominated me, because it is the people here at K-State who deserve this honor," Al-Athari wrote in a letter to Verschelden. "I have always found in them a listening ear, ready

to hear my slightest distress, and they have helped me cope with the worst memories that followed me across the ocean. Their encouragement enabled me to get through the toughest times, always guiding me toward the best possible path."

"We think Lamees is fulfilling the ideals of the Fulbright exchange program with graciousness, integrity and good will," Dodd said from the podium. "She is doing this despite the fact that there is no stability and much danger for her to return to upon completion of her studies here with us."

Jacque Gibbons, associate professor of social work, spoke compellingly about Ed Brock, May 2007 graduate in social work and newly licensed Kansas social worker.

Brock, a husband and father from Morrill, Kan., enrolled in fall 2004, at the age of 47. His personal story includes foster care, adoption, an unhappy family situation, a career in carpentry and a terrible accident that robbed him of that career and left him with serious difficulty in walking. For a time, he could still get around campus on his own two feet.

"But in the fall of 2006, his mobility became imperiled by the failure of the



Stacy Smith



Ed Brock



Aronka Seaverson

Savanah Jennings



Jacque Gibbons,
Ed Brock

screws and wires that held his lower extremities together,” Gibbons said. “We watched him walk in great pain, and finally he returned to the surgeon who’d reconstructed his lower extremities to find out that not much could be done for him. He was forced at last to rely on a wheelchair for getting around a significant amount of the time.”

As if that weren’t enough, by late 2006, Brock had lost the vision in his right eye, and was losing the ability to read with his left eye. Ed found aids for his vision and used voice recognition technology so he could dictate his coursework. “He never once complained,” according to Gibbons. “He came to his instructors and asked what he needed to do to succeed....He is without doubt one of the finest men I have ever had as a student,” Gibbons concluded.

Stacy Smith, adaptive technology specialist in the Office of Disability Support Services, spoke about her former student Savannah Jennings, junior in sociology from Salina. Smith, previously with the Department of English, was Jennings’ expository writing II instructor.

“From the first day of class, one of the things that impressed me about

Savanah was her matter-of-fact attitude and her strong sense of self,” Smith told the group. “Students often have trouble choosing topics (to write about), yet Savannah never chose to write about what I thought would be the obvious and easy choice, the topic of her disability. Instead, she wrote about community issues such as the Salina pit bull ordinance, about which she has very strong opinions!”

Jennings sought out Smith repeatedly for help in enhancing her work. She constantly revised her writing, and consistently showed a great attitude with a real resolve to improve.

“Savanah is an independent and impressive part of K-State life....She is, as the plaque says, positive, determined and capable,” Smith said.

Andrea Blair, director of the Office of Disability Support Services, nominated Aronka Seaverson, junior in social science from Kansas City, Kan.

“Many of us grow up in an environment where attending college is expected, education is valued, and college may be planned for before we are even born,” Blair said. “Then there are others, like my friend Aronka, who must walk that road alone....They must find their own way to an institution like Kansas State.”

Seaverson, who credits God and her faith for her success, was the first person in her family to go to college. She graduated from high school in three years and arrived at K-State in 2004.

Blair described her as being “like the Energizer bunny” and full of questions: “Which class should I take? Will it count toward graduation? Do you think I can get a job with that major? How many hours do you think I should enroll in? Do you think this? Do you think that? Talk about being excited about a college education!”

The qualities Blair described in Seaverson — drive, strong will and a thirst for knowledge — were evident in all the honored students. Their fellow K-Staters were glad to say, “We’re proud to know you.”

If you’d like to discuss how you can help create opportunities for other extraordinary Arts and Sciences students like these, please contact Mike Harders, senior director of development, mikeh@found.ksu.edu. If you have questions about the Extraordinary Student Award, please contact Cia Verschelden, director of the Office of Student Assessment, cia@ksu.edu.

These people are pumped up because they are in the Department of Modern Languages, the sixth-largest producer of student credit hours at K-State, providing about 18,500 hours per academic year to about 3,450 students.

Their 45 faculty members, graduate teaching assistants and support staff represent 20 countries and teach 11 languages.

They're proud that Modern Languages is the department providing the most sought-after minors and secondary majors. Thousands of K-State students recognize the value of combining a degree in agriculture, engineering, architecture, physics, journalism and many other fields with a language.

In 2006, three Modern Languages students won Fulbright fellowships, two others won highly competitive Udall scholarships, and one was awarded the prestigious Truman scholarship.

Since 2000, this department has published dozens of articles and seven books. And they publish the journal *Studies in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature*, with a worldwide subscription base.

Here's a sampling of the many people who make up the Department of Modern Languages. Get to know these intriguing people a little better, and stop by Eisenhower Hall to say "hello" the next time you're on campus.

We Speak Your Language!

And we teach Spanish, French, German, Russian, Czech, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, Swahili, and Latin!

a Brad Shaw, professor of Spanish, tried out for both the Kansas City Athletics (in the pre-Royals days) and the Cincinnati Reds.

b Oana Najjar, administrative assistant, hails from Romania and met her husband at the Eiffel Tower.

c Doug Benson, professor of Spanish, is originally from Taos, N.M., and is an avid mountain hiker and snowshoe aficionado.

d Amanda Barr, graduate teaching assistant in Spanish, can perform hypnosis and has visited 9 countries.

e Amy Hubbell, assistant professor of French, has globe-trotted to 16 countries.

f Angelique Courbou, instructor of Spanish, is actually a native French speaker and serves as the department factotum.

g Mary Mba, graduate teaching assistant in French, is from Nigeria and greatly appreciates the personal freedoms U.S. women have.

h Bob Corum, professor of French and department head, is an old-car buff and has restored and sold 5 Studebakers.

i Derek Hillard, assistant professor of German, studies sacrifice and violence in culture, is originally from Seattle and fortunately likes rain.

j Svetlana Ben-Itzhak, instructor of French, has visited 5 continents and lived on 3.

k Lorena Barboza, instructor of Spanish and director of the Language Learning Center, engages her students with music, videos and dance.

l Wei Wu, instructor in Chinese, celebrates Chinese New Year in her classes with musical performances.

m Jennifer Askey, assistant professor of German, is originally from Omaha and can order a beer in Slovak.

n María Teresa Martínez-Ortiz, assistant professor of Spanish, is also a doctor of veterinary medicine.

o Sandra Contreras, graduate teaching assistant in Spanish, enjoys playing the flute between her visits to over 30 countries.

p Charlotte Stephens, administrative officer, is a Desert Storm veteran who served for 6 years in the U.S. Army Reserve, studied French for 3 years and plans further study.

q Claire Dehon, professor of French, specializes in French-language novels written by authors from sub-Saharan Africa.

r Lucia Garavito, associate professor of Spanish, has won 2 Fulbright scholarships but modestly prefers to maintain some anonymity.



FRIENDS AND ALUMNI

1930s

Charlotte (Buchmann) Christensen Stagner, Clay Center, Kansas, '35 B.S. journalism and '63 M.S. secondary education, is retired. She is a member of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, a professional honor society of women educators, and works on community projects.

Alma (Bennett) Fair, Alden, Kansas, '38 B.S. home economics (human ecology), is retired.

1940s

Dean McCandless, La Quinta, California, '41 B.S. pre-medicine, served as a U.S. Army paratrooper from 1941 to 1946, and earned his M.D. from Duke University in 1950. He retired after 39 years as a family physician in southern California. Dean and his wife Polly have three children, five grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Grace (Christiansen) Loyd, Columbus, Kansas, '46 B.S. industrial journalism (journalism and mass communications), is retired.

Harriett F. Taylor, Lenexa, Kansas, '48 B.S. medical technology, is retired. She has two sons, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Nira Scarborough Watkins, Kalamazoo, Michigan, '48 B.S. chemistry, earned her M.S.L.S. from Wayne State University in 1970. She is retired from the Library Government Printing Office in Washington, D.C.

Wilbur E. Levering, Topeka, Kansas, '49 B.S. agriculture, also earned his master's in banking from the University of Wisconsin in 1968. He is a retired agricultural banker and was honored as a distinguished alumnus by the K-State College of Agriculture in 1996. Wilbur and wife Ann's son Dale earned his B.S. in business administration and M.S. at K-State and is currently pursuing his Ph.D.

1950s

Joseph P. Henderson, Overland Park, Kansas, '51 B.S. journalism and mass communications, is retired after a 39-year career writing for the Kansas City Star and 38 years covering the U.S. Courts in Kansas City. He currently spends time doing freelance writing.

John O. Thisler, Tulsa, Oklahoma, '57 B.S. journalism, is a retired Army officer.

1960s

Charles K. Ellison, Atchison, Kansas, '60 B.A. social sciences and '65 M.S. secondary education, is retired following a 35-year career in teaching and counseling at the junior high/middle school level. He is an active community volunteer.

Ellen Claydon, Albutis, Pennsylvania, '63 B.A. journalism, earned her J.D. from Washburn University in 1979.

Leila (Marcellus) Adams, Littleton, Colorado, '65 B.S. general art, is an antique dealer specializing in Native American Indian arts. She was awarded a scholarship to the Fontainebleau School of Music and Fine Arts in France, where she studied painting. Leila also volunteers at her mother's Alzheimer's facility. She has one son, Paul, who graduated from Cal Poly in 2005 after attending school on a track scholarship. Leila's son works for Northrop Grumman in Los Angeles, California, as a quality engineer and volunteers as a high school track coach.

Robert S. Shelor, Ojai, California, '68 B.A. psychology, is self-employed with RSS Development Services.

1970s

Martha-Jean Rockey, Troy, Kansas, '70 B.A. English, is a teacher in USD 429. She wrote the history program for Troy's sesquicentennial celebration.

Leonard H. Le Blanc III, '73 B.S. geography, is serving as a senior security specialist in Baghdad, Iraq, at Camp Liberty.

Michael Stewart, Lorton, Virginia, '74 B.S. political science, works for the SAIC Operational Intelligence Solutions Business Unit. He retired from the U.S. Army on September 30, 2005.

Susan Jane (Reneau) Harper, Lewistown, Illinois, '75 B.S. education, is a multimedia teacher in District 150, Peoria, Illinois. She is married and has one son.

Valerie (Euker) Garcia, Colorado Springs, Colorado, '77 B.S. physical education (kinesiology), also earned her M.A. in school administration in 1986 from the University of Colorado. She recently retired from her position as an elementary school principal after 26 years in the Harrison School District. Valerie is married with two children who are in high school.

Tim Lindemuth, Manhattan, Kansas, '77 M.S. journalism and mass communications, won his first international gold medal in 2006 for his entry of the 20-cent U.S. flag stamp of 1981 at the once-a-decade international stamp show in Washington, D.C.

Doug Rupe, Wichita, Kansas, '77 radio and television/journalism, is the senior vice president of Valve Place Hotels. His son Grant is a freshman at K-State.

Catherine Silva, Leavenworth, Kansas, '77 B.S. chemical science and pre-medicine, earned her M.D. in 1980 and her family practice residency in 1984, both from KU Medical Center. She was employed for 20

Please return the card inserted in this issue so we can update people on your life since graduation!

years as a staff family physician at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. She is married to Chris C. Haller, M.D., and has three children.

Susan K. Rogers, Topeka, Kansas, '78 M.S. educational administration and '81 Ph.D. education, is an associate professor at Baker University School of Professional and Graduate Studies.

1980s

Theresa Washington, Tulsa, Oklahoma, '81 B.S. medical technology, went on to earn her M.P.H. in public health/health administration in 1992 from the University of Oklahoma. She is the medical technology program director for the Saint Francis Hospital School of Medical Technology. Theresa is married, has two children with spouses, and two grandsons.

Mark C. Meyer, M.D., Lenexa, Kansas, '84 B.S. pre-medicine/life science, is the associate dean for student affairs at the KU School of Medicine. He was awarded the 2004 Early Career Achievement Award from the KU Medical Alumni Association. Mark is a member of the KSU Foundation board of trustees and a past member of the K-State Alumni Association board of directors.

David L. Schmitz, Kingman, Arizona, '84 B.S. life science, also earned his B.S. in physical therapy from Wichita State University in 1986. He is the director of rehabilitation at The Gardens Campus of Care.

Craig Lloyd Hunter, Junction City, Kansas, '85 A.A. humanities, recently retired from the Department of the Army at Fort Riley, Kansas.

1990s

Lora (Gilliland) Schneider, Lawrence, Kansas, '93 B.S. radio and television, is the director of new business development for national advertising agency Gragg Advertising in Kansas City. She also earned an M.B.A. from Baker University in 2006.

Chris Ostrom, Solomon, Kansas, '93 English and philosophy, is a project manager for New Boston Creative Group in Manhattan.

Jeffrey W. Geist, Salina, Kansas, '95 B.S. geology, is a licensed geologist (P.G.) and works for KDOT Geology. He and his wife Brenda have two daughters, Diana and Kaitlyn.

Karen Gonzalez, San Juan, Puerto Rico, '95 Ph.D. biology, is the dean of science at Universidad Metropolitana in Puerto Rico. She is married to fellow K-State alumnus Dr. Rafael Charneco, '90 B.S. animal science and industry, '92 M.S. animal science, '97 D.V.M.

Karen (Wessel) Hesse, Clarinda, Iowa, '96 B.S. psychology, is a school psychologist for the Loess Hills Area Education Agency. She is married to Brian Hesse, '95 B.A. political science, and they have a daughter, Amelia Jane, born April 4, 2006.

Jeffrey Strahm, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, '96 B.S. kinesiology, married alumna Sarah Wolfe, '95 B.S. life science, in 2000. Their son, Levi Logan, was born in June 2005.

Eileen (Klaus) Milkey, Sylva, North Carolina, '99 B.A. music education, is an intervention specialist who works with special needs kids ages birth to three. She is married and has two sons.

2000s

Jillyn (Peters) Schmidt, Manhattan, Kansas, '01 B.S. psychology, is the general manager at Panera Bread.

Paul Arnhold, Shawnee, Kansas, '02 B.S. journalism and mass communications, is a public relations specialist for Perceptive Software. He is married to fellow K-State graduate Shana Straily, '04 B.S. kinesiology.

Sheena Lynch, Wichita, Kansas, '03 B.S. sociology, works at Sedgwick County Government as senior human resource project assistant. She also earned her master of public administration from Wichita State University in May 2005.

Samantha Howard, Manhattan, Kansas, '05 B.A. art, is the senior graphic designer for New Boston Creative Group in Manhattan.

Arts and Sciences alumni rely on Connections to answer questions that keep them awake at night. Whatever happened to that cute guy who sat in the front row in Chem 101? Did your old roommate finally land a real job? Was it actually the girl from your sorority who received the Nobel Peace Prize? Please fill out the reply card in this issue and pop it in the mail. A quick update from you could mean a better night's sleep for others!



Rod Walker, recently retired professor of music and director of choral studies and activities, was honored March 5 with a Kansas Senate Resolution commending him on his 41 years of service to K-State. In addition, the K-State Choirs Alumni Advisory Council has established an endowed scholarship in Walker's honor.

The resolution was presented to Walker in Topeka by sponsors Sens. Stephen R. Morris, Senate president, Hugoton, and Roger Reitz, Manhattan. The resolution, No. 1832, serves to "congratulate and commend Rod Walker for his long and distinguished career as a director and professor of music, thank him for the inspiration and joy he has given the thousands of students who benefited from his direction and his passion for music, and offer him our very best wishes for a fulfilling and well-deserved retirement."

"It was very nice," Walker said. "It's an honor to be recognized in this way and I am very grateful." Sen. Morris' daughter was Walker's student and, according to the resolution, treasures her memories and experiences as a member of the K-State Choir.

The K-State Choirs Alumni Advisory Council established the Rod Walker Scholarship for Excellence in Choral Music to commemorate Walker's influence on thousands of K-Staters. The scholarship is for the benefit of an undergraduate or graduate student in any major who is a member of the K-State Concert Choir.

"It was just amazing how he expressed himself musically and how he got students to sing the way they did," said Ralph Weber, chairman of the advisory council and managing partner of Hume Music in Kansas City. "His personal influence on my life has been far-reaching. He brought the highest caliber



guest conductors to K-State, including Robert Shaw of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus as well as John Alldis of the London Symphony Chorus. To sing with those names and tour with the choir were really great experiences."

Walker joined K-State in 1966 and has been busy making music ever since.

He conducted the K-State Choir and Chorale and headed the undergraduate and graduate choral conducting program. Walker has served as artistic director of International Seminars in Music, a summer performance program

abroad for selected choirs, singers and choral directors, and is founder-director of the Summer Choral Institute for Gifted High School Singers at K-State. In addition, he is founder and director of the American Symposium for Choral Music.

As a guest conductor, lecturer and adjudicator, Walker has traveled to 31 states and 13 foreign countries. He has been a guest conductor at Carnegie Hall twice and has edited dozens of choral selections for publication, including his own Rod Walker Choral Series.

Federated Music Clubs of Kansas named Walker the Kansas Educator of the Year for 1989. In 1994 he was awarded the first Archie Jones Award for his "leadership, inspiration and service" to the American Choral Directors Association Southwestern Division. He also was the 1994 recipient of the Harry Robert Wilson Award from the Kansas Choral Directors Association. He has served as president of the Southwestern Division and the Kansas chapter of the American Choral Directors Association.

Walker received a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska, a master's degree from the Municipal University of Wichita and has done advanced study at the University of Colorado, University of Iowa and Indiana University.

If you'd like to support talented young singers by contributing to the Rod Walker Scholarship for Excellence in Choral Music, please contact Mike Harders, senior director of development, at mikeh@found.ksu.edu or 800-432-1578.



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