PAUL CONFORTI '92 HAS FOUND SWEET SUCCESS IN HIS HIGH-END DESSERTERIE
THE EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER rises in the southwestern corner of the Rensselaer campus. EMPAC will anchor what is becoming an arts corridor along Eighth Street, with the arts department now housed in the newly renovated West Hall.
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Nanotechnology has been called the next industrial revolution. Rensselaer researchers are part of a pre-eminent group of scientists around the world behind the small-scale revolution.
Musical Collaboration Inspires Hope for Rebuilding

This April, just eight months after Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans, Yacub Addy, adjunct professor of Ghanaian drumming at Rensselaer, and world-renowned jazz musician Wynton Marsalis traveled to the city for the world premiere of their musical collaboration, “Congo Square.”

The musicians played the piece with the help of Odadaa!, Addy’s group of percussionists and dancers from Ghana, and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, which Marsalis directs. The performance was held in the place for which the composition was named, New Orleans’ Congo Square—a place many consider the birthplace of American jazz.

“I knew about New Orleans and Congo Square long before I came to the United States, and I’ve always imagined the music that was played there,” said Addy—a native of Ghana—during an interview with the Albany Times Union earlier this year. “Without the Congo Square music there is no jazz or blues.”

The 80-minute composition was co-written by Addy and Marsalis in an attempt to fuse together traditional African music, rhythms, and chants with American jazz music.

“It’s been very interesting to bring our different grooves together,” Marsalis told the Times Union. “I think ‘Congo Square’ is different than anything that’s been heard before, [and] hope this music is a step toward bringing New Orleans back from the disaster of Katrina.”
The Global University and the Future

With recent partnerships, Rensselaer is taking its place as a research and innovation leader.

Ideas about global leadership and innovation took center stage at the Colloquy the evening before May Commencement on the Troy campus. In a broad-ranging dialogue the Commencement honorees—renowned architects Santiago Calatrava and Peter Bohlin ’58 along with retired General Wesley Clark—discussed the challenges inherent in balancing the local and the global, the public and the private, the drive for competitiveness and the need to maintain environmental responsibility. All of these topics are especially pertinent to Rensselaer’s role as a national and, increasingly, global university.

In his book The World is Flat, New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman calls our present era “Globalization 3.0”—a time marked by “a newfound power for individuals to collaborate and compete globally.” He believes “Individuals must, and can, now ask, ‘Where do I fit into the global competition and opportunities of the day, and how can I, on my own, collaborate with others globally?’” These are questions which Rensselaer must answer as well.

Interestingly, The Rensselaer Plan, launched six years ago, was prescient in outlining the challenges that the 21st century would bring to a technological research university. However, little did we know at the time that those challenges would be so immediate, and, in some cases, so dire. The dot.com bust, the events of September 11, 2001, economic downturn, soaring energy prices, climate change, war, and terrorism have altered our understanding of the world—and our relationship to it. The good news is that Rensselaer is changing to meet these ever-more-complex demands of globalization, energy security, health and safety, and homeland security, among many challenges.

Two recent partnerships epitomize Rensselaer’s emergence as a research and innovation leader. This spring brought the very exciting announcement of the $100 million partnership between Rensselaer, IBM, and New York state to create the world’s most powerful, university-based supercomputing center and a top 10 supercomputing center of any kind in the world. The Computational Center for Nanotechnology Innovations (CCNI) will be a hub, bringing together university and industry researchers and providing them with leading-edge tools to solve critical problems across disciplinary boundaries. This collaboration will allow researchers to make a global impact in information technology and in areas as diverse as energy, homeland security, biotechnology, medicine, and the arts. You can read more about this center on page 7.

A collaboration between Rensselaer and the Cleveland Clinic Lerner Research Institute will further research at the intersection of the life sciences, the physical sciences, and engineering. Research will be conducted in several areas, including nano-medicine, nano-bio materials, smart orthopaedic implants, biomolecular imaging, and development of drug-delivery devices. This partnership enhances the Institute’s growing strength in the life sciences, while building on traditional strengths in engineering and the physical sciences, enabling medical researchers to make major breakthroughs.

Meanwhile, Rensselaer continues to reach out to regions of the world where the impact of the increasingly global economy has been most dramatic. This spring I led a delegation from Rensselaer to India, where I saw the power—and the potential—of the Institute in the global arena. We met with the President of India, as well as with prominent leaders in science-related government agencies, leading universities and research institutes, and companies. Throughout, we raised awareness and understanding of Rensselaer educational and research opportunities. We explored, and signed memoranda of understanding for, future collaborative educational and research efforts. We attended alumni events in Mumbai, New Delhi, and Bangalore where we were inspired to see the global reach—and the global impact—of Rensselaer alumni and alumnae as we did during our trip to China, Singapore, and Malaysia last year.

For Rensselaer, being a global university is not just a dream, it is a fact and a necessity in this more complex and interconnected world. In that spirit we continue the transformation of Rensselaer, charting a course toward a better future for all.
Tom Phelan’s Touch

I did not know the Reverend Thomas Phelan, RPI chaplain for more than 40 years, who died on March 31 [Rensselaer, Spring 2006]; but I remember him fondly for an object lesson he taught me and many fellow RPI students in 1969-1970. Those were years of intense feelings against the Vietnam War. Father Phelan joined us at several weekly silent antiwar vigils on Fifteenth Street, in front of the then-new Student Union. At first there was only a handful of protesters, but as the war continued the weekly protests grew to a much larger group.

In the spring of 1969, a large antiwar rally was held at the RPI Field House, and many students spontaneously started to hand in their U.S. military draft cards as a symbol of protest. I saw Father Phelan move to collect the draft cards from the floor himself. After the rally, I wondered what would become of the draft cards: would they somehow wind up at the draft board?

After returning home for the summer, I received a plain white envelope in the mail, addressed to me with no return address. Inside was nothing but my draft card. It must have been from Father Phelan, protecting us idealistic but callow youths even from ourselves.

ALEX ECKMANN ’70
Washington, D.C.

Road Trip!

I read with interest about the special trip made by “Jack” Newkirk ’41 on a motorcycle in the summer of 1939 [“The Road From Rensselaer”]. What are the odds of another similar trip occurring in the summer of 1939? This one was by automobile and it was after I graduated from RPI in 1939. In August, accompanied by my mother, we set out to take a trip from Connecticut to California and back.

The car was a 1939 Mercury V-8, the first of the Mercury Series. This trip spanned 30 days and we traversed over 8,000 miles. At that time there were only a handful of motels in the entire country, and we took advantage of that luxury in California. Gasoline mileage was 21 mpg and we averaged 21 cents per gallon. A 30-day trip of 8,000 miles cost (for two) the magnificent sum of $80 for fuel, $80 for food, and $80 for lodging, or a total of $240. Most nights we stayed at tourist homes on the outskirts of cities along the way at a cost of 75 cents or $1. In the motels the rate was about $4 or $5 per night.

We went out on the northern route through Chicago, Yellowstone, Reno, and San Francisco. We returned via Las Vegas, Hoover Dam, and the Grand Canyon. While in San Francisco, we saw the Golden Gate Exposition, and of course visited the New York World’s Fair in 1939 too.

This same trip taken today could cost upwards of $6,000.

LOU SHORNICK ’39
Madison, Miss.

Science Can Explain Everything

I read recently with some dismay your cover story on spiritual faith in the Spring ’06 Alumni/ae Magazine. I think it unfortunate that you chose to feature twice in that article a particular quote by Kristen Clark ’09 (both in the third paragraph of the article as well as in a legend to one of the figures).

I am referring to the following sentence: “Science can’t explain everything.”

I firmly disagree. Science can and will eventually explain everything. The simple fact that science has not yet explained everything does not automatically prove the existence of a creator or the weakness of the scientific method. In choosing to feature that particular point of view in your piece on students and their religious obsessions, you provide tacit approval to those who would elevate faith over science.

I expected a publication produced by one of the nation’s leading technological universities to have a more forward thinking point of view. What can I expect in the next issue, a cover story promoting intelligent design?

ROGER SLOBODA ’74
IRA ALLEN EASTMAN PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
Hanover, N.H.

The Future of Energy: Wrong Solution Again?

The Rensselaer community must understand that the problem of energy is a social one, not a technical one. The central question is not “What kind of energy technologies do we need?” Rather, it is “What kind of world do we want to live in?” The answers will not be found through research and development in the classroom, laboratory, or engineering firm but through civic engagement in the town hall.

RPI is home to one of the world’s leading departments for Science and Technology Studies. If the Institute hopes to contribute any significant and lasting solutions to the energy problem, it would do well to engage those faculty and students instead of joining the mad dash for the illusive—ultimately unachievable—technological fix.

BRENT VOELKER ’91
New Hartford, Conn.

We’d love to hear from you! To provide space for as many letters as possible, we often must edit them for length. Contact us at: Rensselaer Magazine, Office of Communications, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY 12180, alum.mag@rpi.edu, or call (518) 276-6531.
A team of researchers from Rensselaer has received $1.8 million in federal funding to improve the energy efficiency of green light-emitting diodes (LEDs). As part of the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Solid-State Lighting Program, the team aims to close the “green gap” in LED technology by doubling or tripling the power output of green LEDs in three years, an advance that ultimately could lead to the replacement of incandescent and fluorescent lamps in general illumination applications.

“Making lighting more efficient is one of the biggest challenges we face,” says Christian Wetzel, the Wellfleet Career Development Constellation Professor, Future Chips, and associate professor of physics at Rensselaer. “Substantial reductions in the nation’s dependence on primary energy imports will be possible once highly efficient solid-state light sources replace wasteful incandescent and fluorescent lighting.”

Wetzel will be leading a team of scientists and engineers attempting to help meet the aggressive performance targets laid out in DOE’s solid-state lighting accelerated roadmap, which calls for the development by 2025 of advanced solid-state lighting technologies that are much more energy efficient, longer lasting, and cost competitive than conventional lighting technologies. The prime contender to meet this goal, according to Wetzel, is a white-light unit made from a combination of high-performance red, blue, and green LEDs. Researchers have made major strides in advancing the design of red and blue LEDs, but the technology behind green LEDs has lagged behind substantially, he says.

Wetzel notes that green light is an essential piece of the puzzle because it addresses the peak of the human eye’s sensitivity, providing balance to the colors of red and blue light. He plans to focus on aspects of the “piezoelectric effect”—a property of some materials that causes them to produce an electrical field when pressure is applied. By controlling this effect, he and his colleagues hope to develop a process to make higher-intensity green LEDs that convert electricity into light more efficiently.
SUPERCOMPUTING

Powerful Center To Advance the Science of Nanotechnology

In May, Rensselaer announced a $100 million partnership with IBM and New York state to create the world’s most powerful university-based supercomputing center, and a top 10 supercomputing center of any kind in the world.

The Computational Center for Nanotechnology Innovations (CCNI), based on the Rensselaer campus and in the Rensselaer Technology Park, is designed both to help continue the impressive advances in shrinking device dimensions seen by electronics manufacturers, and to extend this model to a wide array of industries that could benefit from nanotechnology, according to the partners.

Cadence Design Systems, a leader in electronic design automation (EDA) software, and AMD, a leader in advanced microprocessor technology and products, will collaborate with Rensselaer and IBM at the supercomputing center in advanced simulation and modeling of nanoelectronic devices and circuitry.

The CCNI will focus on reducing the time and costs associated with designing and manufacturing nanoscale materials, devices, and systems.

“This new supercomputing center dedicated to nanotechnology will have global impact by finding innovative solutions to the challenges facing the continued productivity growth of the semiconductor industry and enabling key nanotechnology innovations in the fields of energy, biotechnology, arts, and medicine,” said President Jackson.

The center will be an important resource for companies of any size—from start-ups to established firms—to perform research that would be impossible without both the computing power and the expert researchers at CCNI.

The computing power also will benefit a wide array of faculty and student research projects at Rensselaer, such as in biocomputation, which involves the modeling and simulation of tissue, cell, and genetic behavior. These computing tools will offer powerful new methods to understand the complex behavior of living organisms.

The CCNI system will be capable of more than 70 trillion calculations per second. It would take one person with a calculator almost 60 million years to tabulate the number of calculations that the new system can handle in a single second.

The CCNI system will be made up of massively parallel Blue Gene supercomputers, POWER-based Linux clusters, and AMD Opteron processor-based clusters, providing more than 70 teraFLOPS of computing muscle.

JEANETTE SIMMONDS, a doctoral candidate in the department of Science and Technology Studies, has been awarded a Fulbright U.S. Student scholarship to Australia in the field of Cultural and Intellectual History. She will use the grant to travel to Australia to conduct research on biological nitrogen fixation (BNF)—an interdisciplinary field of agricultural science that aims to understand the relationship between legumes and soil bacteria (Rhizobia).

Simmonds will focus on the work of Australian scientists based in Brisbane, Perth, Sydney, Canberra, and Adelaide. She will interview scientists, attend conferences, visit labs throughout the region, and conduct archival research. Her findings will complement her dissertation that will focus on a 20th century comparative history of BNF research in Australia, Western Europe, the United States, and Mexico.

“A primary aim of BNF research is to improve soil fertility and agricultural productivity without the use of nitrogen fertilizers, which are costly, energy intensive to produce and transport, and have adverse health and environmental effects,” says Simmonds. “This award presents an opportunity to research Australia’s agricultural system that does not depend substantially on nitrogen fertilizers, to better understand localized, historically specific practices, and to study alternative methods of sustainable agricultural development.”

“The Fulbright award is a tremendous honor and validation—for Jeanette, for the field of the history of science, and for the department of Science and Technology Studies, an interdisciplinary field that examines the historical, cultural, and political dimensions of science and technology,” says Mike Fortun, associate professor and Simmonds’ adviser.

“Jeanette’s scholarship makes a unique contribution to the history of plant sciences in general, and particularly to the long tradition of Australian research on the scientifically and economically important process of nitrogen fixation.”
ATRENSSELAER

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Phi Iota Alpha Celebrates 75 Years of Brotherhood

PHI IOTA ALPHA—THE OLDEST LATINO fraternity in existence—was formed at Rensselaer on Dec. 28, 1931. With chapters throughout the United States and in Puerto Rico, Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, and Belgium, the organization quickly became the strongest international fraternity of its time.

During the 1960s, the effects of World War II and the Vietnam War drastically reduced the enrollment of Latin American students into American universities.

The significant decline of potential members took a toll on Phi Iota Alpha, and by 1968 the Rensselaer chapter was the Latino fraternity’s last survivor.

In 1973 the last active secretary of Phi Iota Alpha graduated from Rensselaer. When he left, he took with him the fraternity’s official documents and Phi Iota Alpha closed its doors.

Ten years later, the Poly ran an article about the power and influence that Phi Iota Alpha held during its peak years. A group of Latin students became interested in the fraternity. After conducting further research, they decided to bring Phi Iota Alpha back to Rensselaer.

“I cannot tell you how disappointed we were when my friends and I discovered that there was a Latino fraternity at Rensselaer that closed its doors a decade before we arrived,” says William Feliciano ’87. “I am Puerto Rican, and I grew up in the South Bronx neighborhood of New York City. When I got to Rensselaer, I befriended some Latino classmates and we studied and socialized together. Given the influence of Greek life at RPI, we dreamed of starting a fraternity.”

In 1984 the students—now called the “Founding Fathers”—became the next generation of Phi Iota Alpha. They re-established the fraternity at Rensselaer and worked to rebuild the organization’s infrastructure and expand its reach to other universities. Currently Phi Iota Alpha has chartered 31 chapters across the United States.

“Our struggle to establish this fraternity and spread it to other campuses was rewarded by a closeness and formation of brotherly bonds that will last a lifetime,” recalls Feliciano, who says he is honored to be a Founding Father.

Phi Iota Alpha will celebrate 75 years at Rensselaer in October. For details, visit www.phiota.net.

GAME STUDIES

Designing Better Game Characters

LOOKING BEYOND GORGEOUS GRAPHICS AND SOPHISTICATED storylines, experts in the game industry are placing greater emphasis on developing games that involve players at the emotional level. A new book written by Katherine Isbister, associate professor of language, literature, and communication, explains how concepts from psychology and social science can be applied to character design to create powerful social and emotional connections with players.

Better Game Characters by Design (Morgan Kaufmann, June 2006) reveals that the key to good character design is leveraging player psychology. Designers who understand what’s memorable, exciting, and useful to a person about real-life social interactions, and can then integrate that knowledge into their designs, can create more realistic characters that players can identify with on an emotional level, according to Isbister.

“It’s not uncommon for moviegoers to cry or cheer in response to the experiences of an individual they’re watching on screen. Why shouldn’t we develop game characters that are so lifelike they can elicit these emotions from players?” says Isbister.

“As we move from plot-driven action to more character-based stories, the ability to connect with players throughout the game-play—not just in cut scenes—will become essential.”

In the research-based book, Isbister explains how to carefully consider and appropriately assign a character’s traits—its voice, face, body, interactions with players and non-characters—to achieve the most realistic results. She also discusses how player factors such as gender and culture can influence character perception.

The book provides game design professionals and other interactive media designers with a framework for understanding how social roles and perceptions function in a variety of contexts, and for discussing the principles of sophisticated character design and interaction.

Better Game Characters by Design, which is accompanied by a DVD featuring clips from popular games as examples of concepts and best practices, includes extensive illustrations, game references, and interviews with game designers.
Hawk Talk

Engineers Welcome Hockey Coach

Surrounded by the men’s ice hockey team, with RPI hockey fans cheering and “Hail Dear Old Rensselaer” playing in the background, President Shirley Ann Jackson welcomed the Institute’s 12th men’s ice hockey coach—Seth Appert—to campus at a gathering in the Mueller Center April 21.

“Every day is a good day to be a Rensselaer hockey fan, but today is a particularly great day for Rensselaer hockey,” President Jackson said. “Seth Appert’s passion for the sport and commitment to education make him a perfect fit for the Institute and we enthusiastically welcome him into the Rensselaer family.”

Appert, who succeeds Dan Fridgen, is taking over a program that returns 18 players from the 2005-06 season, including two of the top three scorers and the starting goaltender. In addition, Kirk MacDonald, the team’s top scorer in 2004-05 who was a medical red-shirt last season, also is expected to return.

“I am honored to lead the hockey program at such a prestigious institution as Rensselaer,” said Appert. “I am confident that my goals for the hockey program are consistent with Rensselaer’s institutional vision that stresses the overall excellence of the students and the athletes. I am looking forward to the challenge of developing and maintaining a hockey program that both the institution and the community will be proud to call their own.”

Appert recently concluded his ninth season as an assistant coach at the University of Denver, where he was responsible for recruiting, on-ice coaching, video breakdown, and game analysis work. He also played a big role in the development of Denver’s goaltenders. Three of his goaltenders have been draft picks of the National Hockey League, including one Hobey Baker Award finalist. Two of those netminders played in the NHL this season.

Appert helped Denver sign nationally ranked recruiting classes each of the past seven years. The Pioneers have captured two NCAA National Championships, three WCHA playoff championships, and two WCHA regular-season titles in his years of coaching at Denver. A four-year letter-winner at Ferris State from 1992-96, Appert has signed a four-year contract with Rensselaer.

Researchers from Rensselaer and the University of Toronto have designed a nanoscale assembly of molecules that successfully counteracts and inhibits anthrax toxin in animal and laboratory experiments. The novel approach used to neutralize anthrax toxin could be applied in designing potent therapeutics for a variety of pathogens and toxins, including influenza and HIV, according to the researchers.

Anthrax toxin, secreted by the anthrax bacterium, is made of proteins and toxic enzymes that bind together to inflict damage on a host organism. The inhibitor works by preventing the assembly of toxic enzyme components, thereby blocking the formation of fully assembled anthrax toxin and neutralizing its activity.

“Our eventual goal is to use the inhibitor as a human therapeutic for anthrax exposure, one that can stop the toxin from functioning inside the body,” says Ravi Kane, the Merck Associate Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering at Rensselaer and a principal investigator of the project. “Combining the inhibitor with antibiotic therapy may increase the likelihood of survival for an infected person.”

The 2001 intentional release of anthrax spores via postal mail in the United States led to increased research on possible therapeutics and vaccines to treat toxins that could be used as biological weapons. The current treatment for anthrax exposure is antibiotics, but inhalation anthrax still has a fatality rate of 75 percent even after antibiotics are given, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Antibiotics slow the progression of infection by targeting the bacteria, but do not counter the advanced destructive effects of anthrax toxin in the body.

Anthrax toxin is a polyvalent protein complex in that it displays identical binding surfaces on the same structure. The inhibitor designed by the Rensselaer-Toronto team also is polyvalent and recognizes these surface patterns on the anthrax toxin molecular structure, allowing it to bind at multiple sites and become four orders of magnitude more potent than an inhibitor that binds to a single site.
A plaque honoring Ebenezer Emmons, Class of 1826, a renowned geologist and the Institute’s first professor of geology, was unveiled during a ceremony that took place on campus in April.

During his lifetime, Emmons—who studied the natural sciences under Rensselaer co-founder and well-known geologist Amos Eaton, and who graduated in Rensselaer’s first class—made a number of highly significant and influential contributions to the modern understanding of the geology of upstate New York.

Working as the chief geologist for the northern New York State Geological District, Emmons was responsible for naming the Adirondacks and the Taconic Mountains. He also organized and led the first recorded ascent of Mt. Marcy in 1837, naming the peak for New York State Governor William Learned Marcy. His extensive writings on the Adirondacks and the Taconic Mountains led to increased public awareness of the region.

While working with the New York State Geological Survey, Emmons recognized that the rocks that formed the Taconic Mountains and that were found in the easternmost part of New York and western Massachusetts were fundamentally different and much older than the rocks to their west. He named them the “Taconic sequence.”

On the Rensselaer campus, the aged rocks can still be seen today. The plaque honoring Emmons is appropriately placed atop them, on the thrust fault that runs between the Russell Sage Dining Hall and the pedestrian footbridge.

“We now know that the rocks on which we stand began their geological life over 100 kilometers to the east—probably somewhere around Springfield, Mass.—and were carried to their present resting place along a major thrust fault,” said Frank Spear, chair of the earth and environmental sciences department, during the ceremony, “That thrust fault runs just about through the end zone of [our] football field. It is by far the largest such fault in the northeastern United States. Appropriately, it is called Emmons’ line.”

“Thanks to the untiring work of Gerald Friedman, [professor emeritus of earth and environmental sciences], Ebenezer Emmons is [finally] getting credit for his contributions,” said Spear.

Surfaces Switch From Sticky to Slippery

Rensselaer researchers have created an “optically switchable” material that alters its surface characteristics from sticky to slippery when exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light. The new material could have a wide variety of applications, from a protein filter for biological mixtures to a tiny valve on a “lab-on-a-chip.” Georges Belfort, Rensselaer’s Russell Sage Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering, made the new materials by attaching spiropyran molecules to a widely used industrial polymer, poly(ether sulfone). Spiropyrans are a group of light-switchable organic molecules that exist in a colorless, “closed” form under visible light, but switch to a reddish-purple, “open” form when exposed to UV light.

RNA Found in Clam Centrosomes

Rensselaer researchers, working with the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) and Louisiana State University (LSU) Health Sciences Center, have discovered the presence of the genetic material RNA in the centrosome, the organizing structure inside each cell that assures proper cell division. The findings present evidence that individual centrosomes within a cell may carry their own genetic material. “Our results show there are at least five specific forms of RNA in the clam cell centrosome which could be related to structure, encoding of proteins, or the regulation of organism development,” says Robert Palazzo, professor of biology and acting provost at Rensselaer.
Architecture students inspire community members to help revitalize Troy's alleys.

ARCHITECTURE

Improving Neighborhood Aesthetics

On May 6, more than 100 participants from the community joined architecture students in Rensselaer’s Community Planning course on a walking tour of the Williams Street alley in downtown Troy. The tour was organized by the students to inspire and promote a revitalization of Troy’s alleys as neighborhood resources.

The students organized the event—called “Up Your Alley”—to mark the culmination of two semesters spent researching and developing proposals, in consultation with the community, to better utilize and care for the alleys in Troy and other cities. Their proposals for reuse of neglected buildings, re-population of commercial spaces, innovative parking and trash enclosures, and public and private recreation spaces were posted on the garage doors, buildings, and fences along the alley route.

Using paint, a brush, and a number assigned to them at the beginning of the tour, participating community members helped fill in seven paint-by-number murals prepared by the students at various locations along the four-block alley route.

“This project has the potential to make a real positive splash,” says Barbara Nelson ’80, an adjunct professor of architecture who co-teaches the Community Planning class. “Our hope is that neighborhoods in other towns will pick up on our idea and implement it in their own areas.”

Rensselaer’s Community Planning course allows students to interact directly with residents, professional planners, urban advocates, and community leaders to explore neighborhood revitalization through various community-based initiatives.

A free guidebook of ideas for alley revitalization was distributed during a book-release party in mid-June. Called Alley Improvement Project 2006, the book features ideas, plans, cost estimates, and sources of help and materials for parking, garage, low-maintenance landscaping, lighting, and safety and security alley enhancement projects.

MINUTIA FILE

Tiny Brushes Make Guinness Record Book

Pulickel Ajayan, the Henry Burlage Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, has made his way into the GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS. Working in collaboration with the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Ajayan has created “the smallest nanotube brushes with bristles more than a thousand times finer than a human hair.”

The brushes, which are composed of millions of carbon nanotubes, already have been tested in a variety of tasks that range from cleaning microscopic surfaces to serving as electrical contacts, and they eventually could be used in a host of electronic, biomedical, and environmental applications, Ajayan says.

The researchers have used the brushes to remove nanoparticles in microscopic grooves on various substrates, and they have cleaned and coated the inside of a 300-micrometer-wide capillary tube. Because carbon nanotubes conduct electricity, the brushes have been successfully used as electro-mechanical switches in micromotors and as electrical contacts. They also could be used to sweep away tiny particles and dust that cause static electricity, particularly nanosize particles that are difficult to remove by other means, Ajayan says. Static electricity due to particulate attraction is a bane to the electronics industry. From a biomedical perspective, the brushes are small enough to be used to clean up unwanted deposits in arteries and other blood vessels, Ajayan adds.

This is not the first big recognition for the tiny materials. Nature magazine selected a scanning electron micrograph of the brushes as one of its “favorite images from 2005.”
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Bolstering the First-Year Experience

One of the goals of the Rensselaer Plan is to create an engaging student experience, one that begins with a commitment to students’ success from their earliest contact with the Institute. Since its creation in 2001, the Office of the First-Year Experience (FYE) has transformed the student orientation process to help students build a connection to Rensselaer that begins freshman year and continues throughout undergraduate life.

Now, this award-winning program has gained its first endowed program fund with the creation of the Patricia and Louis Bellardo ’67 Fund for the First-Year Experience, a gift to support the Renaissance at Rensselaer Campaign.

“We are so happy to have these resources available to us, because they will provide that extra measure of support for student programs—and the students deserve it,” says Lisa Trahan, dean of FYE.

FYE administers a comprehensive array of programs for students as well as for parents and families. These include the Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond orientation program, Community Weekend, community service days, the Information and Personal Assistance Center, and the Community Advocate program, along with other community action initiatives, programs, and publications designed to help students and their families “navigate” Rensselaer.

“We are committed to our students’ success,” says Trahan. “We involve their parents and families, and we are here to be their ‘safety net.’ We manage an early warning counseling and advising system, working with staff in residence life, public safety, and other student support services so that we can be responsive to their needs.”

Bellardo earned his bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering at Rensselaer. He is a director of manufacturing technology for Cisco Systems, and assists in facilitating the company’s corporate relationship with Rensselaer, including the Cisco Academy, a provider of advanced hands-on learning in networking. He also is a member of the Rensselaer Key Executives and the Palmer C. Ricketts Society of the Patroons of Rensselaer.

LALLY SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Healthcare Leadership Program

Program Apollo, a new executive education program launched by the Lally School of Management and Technology, is arming leaders in the healthcare industry with the skills to create and execute visionary strategies in a complex marketplace.

The three-day program uses simulated scenarios set in a virtual hospital to test participants’ skills in identifying administrative, financial, and technological opportunities for growth and development within the healthcare industry.

The course also features a series of workshops and labs, including: the use of models to simulate economic relationships in the hospital and market environment, investment decision-making, organizational budget planning, and role-playing, among others.

All participants work in teams made up of healthcare executives and faculty members from the Lally School, and are awarded three Continuing Education Units upon graduation.

“Program Apollo is a wonderful illustration of experiential learning at its best,” said David Gautschi, dean of the Lally School. “The first of its kind to focus on the business of healthcare, Program Apollo [allows] participants to experience different scenarios that they may encounter while managing a hospital. It may be anything from deciding on the types of training programs to offer to physicians and nurses, to selecting new technologies, to identifying the healthcare needs of patients.

“The program takes a realistic approach to finding innovative solutions to complex challenges in healthcare management,” Gautschi said. “Changing times demand a new way to teach business leaders. Program Apollo is dedicated to the idea that management, technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship are critical to improving the quality of life.”

Program Apollo was developed under the sponsorship of Medtronic, and is powered by Strategy Laboratories®, a simulation platform created by Janus Enterprise International, LLC. The next Program Apollo session is planned for Oct. 8-12. For additional information, visit http://lallyschool.rpi.edu/programs.
Blazing a New Trail for an Aging Population

The head of the world’s first medical school for osteopathy, James McGovern ’66 wants his students to study healthy aging, not just illness, and to become involved community members as well as medical professionals. He’s spearheading a new intergenerational Wellness Trail that integrates students from Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, part of A.T. Still University of Health Sciences, into the town of Kirksville, Mo. McGovern, co-author with his wife, Rene, of Your Healer Within: A Unified Field Theory for Healthcare (Fenestra Books, 2003), talks about his philosophy of prevention for an aging population, and how public health policy may be failing our seniors.

Q. You’re careful to describe Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine as a medical school. Are osteopaths medical doctors?
A. Osteopathy is a mainstream medical profession, and a doctor of osteopathy (D.O.) gets the same training as an M.D. The real difference is that an M.D. focuses mainly on the body. A D.O. is trained to consider mind, body, and spirit. The United States now has about 55,000 D.O.s, certified in all 50 states.

Q. What inspired the Wellness Trail?
A. Kirksville College acquired 100 acres next to a student dorm to build a 50-room senior assisted-living center. A trail with benches and chin-up bars was there, because we encourage students to take study breaks and attend to their bodies, too. Seeing that path, we asked: ‘Shouldn’t seniors be able to at least go out for a walk?’ So we designed a mile-long, cement-paved trail, accessible to wheelchairs and walkers.

Q. As a visible symbol of your focus on prevention, how does the Wellness Trail introduce people to osteopathy and healthier living?
A. It think the “whole person concept” of health care is becoming better known. We’re teaching people to breathe, relax, take a walk. At our new assisted living center, two D.O.s have first-floor offices. Residents and townpeople are invited to come in and simply say, ‘I’m not feeling well.’

Q. You’ve been a physics professor, university vice president, and state director of health finance. What led you into medical education?
A. While I was vice president at Case Western Reserve University, an executive recruiter contacted me. I didn’t know anything about osteopathy. But I decided to go on the interview, and was very impressed with what I learned. The big appeal was osteopathy’s emphasis on patient-doctor interaction. I feel it’s important for a doctor to have a personal relationship with a patient.

Q. How have your ideas about American medicine changed?
A. At RPI, studying natural sciences like physics, chemistry, and biology had an impact. In a sense that gave me a big picture about laws of nature, and an optimism that some principles of nature could be found to help treat people. Later, as Illinois director of health finance, I saw a lot of unnecessary and very high expenses for drugs. They were overused. I think it’s a scandal the way American medicine has sunk to spending billions of dollars on pills and surgery, operating far too quickly and throwing all kinds of chemicals into people.

Q. What are your primary concerns about health issues related to the aging population?
A. The federal government is assuming that the Medicare Prescription Drug Program is the answer to elderly health needs. One of its problems is that it reverses what doctors have been learning. Now, if a medication isn’t working well, the dose is simply raised, or the patient shifted to another drug. This is a risk for elderly people—physical defense mechanisms grow less adaptable with age, so drugs become increasingly harmful with higher doses or switches to other drugs. Many medications also have major side effects especially harmful to older people. Instead of a focus on drugs, what we need are natural approaches like exercise, nutrition, humor, and meaning, which have positive “byproducts” and better results as different, natural remedies are added. These habits are cumulatively positive, while drugs are cumulatively negative. If you use exercise and nutrition, you get twice the benefit.

Q. How are your degree programs changing to meet these new needs?
A. We have recently completed a three-credit geriatrics course that all our students are required to take. We know from medical, psychological, and sociological research that the systems of the body, mind, and spirit change with advancing decades. Our students are taught what to expect in each age group, and how to analyze and treat all three systems accordingly. Our doctors learn that using logic to explain the need for good nutrition will just drive a patient into his or her defense system. You have to reach their values and attitudes, understand their motivation, and help them develop healthier behavior and a new structure.

Q. What role do you see for osteopathy in the coming years?
A. We have a medical revolution going on, and osteopathy is part of it. The body itself has the best pharmacy. It has endorphins and other natural aids. We’re arrogant to think we can come up with chemicals better than our own body’s. Sometimes our D.O.s can solve a headache by touch. And sometimes all you need is good nutrition and exercise so the body can do its work.
FOCUS ON:

Nag Patibandla: Focusing on Energy Solutions

Nag Patibandla knows what it’s like to live without electricity. “There was electricity in the schools, but not at my grandparents’ house for a long time. So it was kind of tough growing up,” says Patibandla, who was raised by his grandparents in a small village in south central India. “I always thought everyone should have electricity, a thought that stayed in the back of my mind.”

It’s now 2006. As the newly appointed director of Rensselaer’s Center for Future Energy Systems, Patibandla is leading the university’s global commitment to discover and develop cleaner, cheaper, and more reliable alternative energy sources.

The center, established in June 2005 in partnership with Cornell University and Brookhaven National Laboratory, aims to meet the energy challenges of the 21st century by focusing on innovation in and commercialization of energy conservation and renewable systems. Initial emphases will be on fuel cells and the hydrogen economy, smart lighting, and emerging renewable energy systems, such as solar and wind. New York state has pledged to invest $10 million in the center with designation as a Center for Advanced Technology.

Patibandla brings an extensive background in energy policy, management, and research, having worked in a variety of positions at the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), General Electric, and as a researcher at Rensselaer.

He began his career in the materials engineering field, earning his bachelor’s degree in metallurgical engineering at India’s National Institute of Technology, and his master’s and doctoral degrees in related materials and ceramic engineering fields at Rutgers University.

For his doctoral work, Patibandla studied the formation and development of protective coatings for applications and components subjected to high temperatures, from the blades in aircraft machines and power generator turbines, to improving the processes in making chemicals and plastics. He built on that research as a postdoctoral fellow at GE’s Research and Development Center in Schenectady, N.Y.

While a research engineer at Rensselaer in the early 1990s, Patibandla conducted research under a NYSERDA grant, which focused on reducing the amount of energy that goes into processing materials. Impressed with his work, the state agency hired him to head its new materials advancement program to oversee similar projects.

“I thought working for NYSERDA would be a good opportunity to use my background and to become involved in the energy field at the same time,” he says.

During his 12 years at NYSERDA, Patibandla managed multiple industry and research programs, from overseeing the development of new products and material processes to heading the state’s Distributed Generation Combined Heat and Power Program. In 2003, he was honored as a “CHP Champion” by the United States Combined Heat and Power Association.

Appointed as head of the Center for Future Energy Systems in March, Patibandla is enthused about his closer hands-on involvement in basic and applied research, particularly drawing on his years of materials science experience.

He already is working with DayStar Technologies in Malta, N.Y., to develop thinner and more efficient photovoltaic materials for solar panels. He also is working with IGC SuperPower in Schenectady, to improve the processing of new superconductor materials for wires and transformers so the electrical grid can handle new power systems.

“The overarching goal of the center is to transform scientific knowledge into economically competitive, pragmatic applications for the 21st century,” Patibandla says. “Promoting and implementing energy efficiency and renewable energy through education and training paves the most viable path to a more secure energy future for the state and the nation.”
JAMES NONDORF has been appointed vice president for enrollment. An accomplished entrepreneur, educator, and college administrator, he will be responsible for undergraduate and graduate admissions and will oversee the office of financial aid. Nondorf most recently served as the director of student outreach and associate director of admissions at Yale University. Additionally, he has served as a fellow at Yale’s Berkeley College, and as president of the Cambridge Technology Group. Nondorf received his bachelor’s in economics from Yale University and a master’s in ethics from Valparaiso University.

ANTOINETTE MANIATTY ’87, professor of mechanical, aerospace, and nuclear engineering, has been named a fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). The highest elected grade of membership in ASME, fellowship is conferred upon a member with at least 10 years of active engineering practice and who has made significant contributions to the profession. Maniatty’s research is based in the broad field of computational solid mechanics. Maniatty received a B.S. in mechanical engineering from Rensselaer in 1987, an M.S. from the University of Minnesota, and an M.S. and Ph.D. from Cornell University, all in mechanical engineering. She joined the Rensselaer faculty in 1992.

JAMES HENDLER, a renowned computer scientist and World Wide Web researcher, has been appointed senior constellation professor of Rensselaer’s Tetherless World Research Constellation. Hendler will focus the work of the new Tetherless World Constellation on increasing access to information at any time and place without the need for a “tether” to a specific computer or device. Researchers envision an increasingly Web-accessible world in which personal digital assistants (PDAs), cell phones, laptops, and other technologies converge to offer the user interactive information and communication. Widely recognized as one of the inventors of the “Semantic Web,” Hendler is currently director of the Joint Institute for Knowledge Discovery and co-director of the Maryland Information and Network Dynamics Laboratory at the University of Maryland. He will join Rensselaer Jan. 1, 2007.

ROBERT PALAZZO, director of the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies and professor of biology, has been named acting provost. In this position Palazzo will play an instrumental role in working with the campus community to advance the Institute’s mission. Since joining the Rensselaer faculty in 2002 Palazzo has been integral in elevating the prestige of Rensselaer’s Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies and in recruiting world-class faculty to lead the research taking place in the center. ROBERT LINHARDT, the Ann and John H. Broadbent Jr. ’59 Senior Constellation Professor in Biocatalysis and Metabolic Engineering, will assume Palazzo’s duties at the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies on an interim basis.

MURAT ARCAK, assistant professor of electrical, computer, and systems engineering, has received the 2006 Donald P. Eckman Award from the American Automatic Control Council. The award recognizes an outstanding young engineer in the field of automatic control. ArcaK joined the Rensselaer faculty in 2001 after receiving his Ph.D. in electrical and computer engineering from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

DONALD AULENBACH, professor emeritus of environmental engineering, has been elected to the New York Water Environment Association (NYWEA) Hall of Fame, in recognition of his exemplary commitment to improving the quality of the waters of New York state and providing many years of leadership to NYWEA. Aulenbach taught environmental engineering at Rensselaer from 1960 to 1990, as well as at Lexon Institute of Water Technology in Massachusetts. He is a diplomat of the American Academy of Environmental Engineers and a life member of the Water Environment Federation, the American Water Works Association, and the American Chemical Society.

JONAS BRAASCH, assistant professor of architectural acoustics, was awarded the Lothar Cremer Award during the annual German Acoustics Conference held in March. The award is the highest scientific honor given by the German Acoustical Society, and is designed to recognize young scientists who have demonstrated excellence in acoustics research.

JAMES LU, research associate professor of physics, applied physics, and astronomy, served as the chair and organizer of the 3D Packaging Workshop at the International Microelectronics and Packaging Society (IMAPS) Conference and Exhibition on Device Packaging March 20-23 in Scottsdale, Ariz. He received a plaque from the general chair of the IMAPS International Conference and Exhibition on Device Packaging in recognition of his service to the society.

MICHAEL ABBOTT ’60, professor emeritus of chemical engineering, died on May 31. Abbott was an internationally recognized expert in chemical thermodynamics, and he was the co-author of four textbooks, including the bestselling chemical engineering text of all time, INTRODUCTION TO CHEMICAL ENGINEERING THERMODYNAMICS, currently in its seventh edition. An adviser, professor, and mentor, Abbott was widely regarded as one of the Institute’s pre-eminent teachers. Throughout his career, he received numerous awards and recognition, including the first Outstanding Teaching Award given by the Rensselaer Alumni Association. In May, the Isermann Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering launched the annual Michael M. Abbott Lecture Series in his honor. Abbott earned his bachelor’s degree and doctorate at Rensselaer, where he was a member of Phi Mu Delta and made lifelong friends.

PETROS DRINEAS, assistant professor of computer science, has been awarded a Faculty Early Career Development Award (CAREER) from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Drineas will use the project—five-year, $400,000 grant to investigate novel computational algorithms for analyzing complex datasets with applications in health and medicine, computer science, and social sciences. The CAREER Award is given to faculty members at the beginning of their careers and is one of NSF’s most competitive and prestigious awards.
PAUL CONFORTI '92 wants to teach the world the value of a luscious dessert. "I want to educate people on the difference between a junky $4 piece of cake and a premium, $10 plated dessert," says Conforti, co-founder of Finale, a popular, upscale Boston eatery specializing in desserts.

So far, Conforti is getting his lesson across. Finale, which opened in 1998 in a location a block south of Boston Common, has not only survived in the notoriously tough restaurant business, but has thrived, adding branches in nearby Cambridge and Brookline, with plans for further expansion afoot. Finale has earned positive reviews from food critics, an armful of local awards for the best desserts in the Boston area, and even national press coverage for its variety of gourmet cakes, pastries, tarts, puddings, and sorbets, among other favorites, served in a casual but upscale atmosphere.

While Finale serves some light fare, it bills itself as a "desserterie" or, as Conforti sometimes calls it, a "dessert restaurant." Finale tries to lure diners to skip the cheaper, generic goodies of other cafés and to try something like its signature $10.95 Molten Chocolate Cake, a muffin-shaped concoction with a warm, creamy interior that reviewers have called "achingly rich," "intense," and "to die for." Or two people can dig into the two-person "Fantasia" plate, a combination of fruit tarts and tortes, chocolates, miniature cakes, crème caramel, pudding, and sorbet, for $16.95. Even Business Week has called Finale's food "creative." BY PETER DIZIKES

Paul Conforti '92 brings high-end dessert dining to Boston with sweet dreams of going nationwide.

More than Just Desserts
The idea for Finale was hatched as a yearlong project at Harvard Business School, where Conforti earned his graduate degree. Now that he’s identified a largely vacant niche in the restaurant industry, Conforti wants to make Finale a unique national chain.
The idea for Finale was hatched as a yearlong project at Harvard Business School, where Conforti earned his graduate degree while whipping up the concept. Conforti found that few companies have tried to stake out the culinary turf Finale aims to capture. Now that he’s identified a largely vacant niche in the restaurant industry, Conforti wants to make Finale a unique national chain—the place where you’ll find a dessert that costs a little more but the experience will make it worth the price.

Conforti’s mission is “to do for dessert what Starbucks has done for coffee.” Conforti explains, “Starbucks educated people about the difference between a 50-cent cup of coffee and a $3.50 latte.” Before the 1990s, millions of people habitually bought the former and then discovered they were willing to pay more for coffee specialties. So if Americans will behave not cake?

Rensselear might not seem like a starting point for a future purveyor of fine desserts. But Conforti says his undergraduate studies helped provide the platform for his career. “RPI is the backbone, it’s the foundation of whatever success I will have had,” he says. As a major in management, he adds, “I really liked that my courses were coming at things from an analytical perspective,” finding that his finance classes, for instance, gave him tools he still uses. Conforti also was elected president of the Rensselaer Union, a position he believes helped him develop leadership skills.

After Rensselear, Conforti started out in the insurance industry, and he soon found himself as a project manager for Travelers Insurance Company in Hartford, Conn., where, Conforti says, he had an epiphany one day as he walked past restaurants on his way to the office and realized the restaurant business might provide the right challenge for him. He was promoted to a position managing a call center in Albany, but kept being drawn to thoughts of the restaurant industry. While managing insurance operations was fine, it was not the ideal line of work for his personality. “I am more of a people person. I wanted that face-to-face contact you get in a retail or restaurant environment,” Conforti says.

Conforti sees the hand of good fortune in his success. “A ny entrepreneur who tells you there is no luck involved in being successful is not telling the truth,” he says. The first example of this luck was meeting a prospective business partner at Harvard Business School with equal enthusiasm for the idea of Finale—Kim Moore, a classmate with whom he developed a second-year project at Harvard called “Room for Dessert.” Conforti and Moore analyzed the prospects for a chain of upscale dessert eateries and found the idea had enough chance for success to turn it into reality after graduating with their MBA’s.

While their Harvard credentials have helped Conforti and Moore gain attention and connections, upon graduation both took jobs in restaurants to learn more about the business and to show potential investors they were serious about their plan. Conforti took a job as a waiter, while Moore got a job at The Cheesecake Factory plating desserts. “We joked we were the lowest-paid members of our graduating class,” says Conforti. “I was making $2.63 per hour plus tips, while Kim used her MBA to negotiate $9 an hour from the Cheesecake Factory, instead of their usual $8 starting wage.” Conforti took the job as a waiter to learn how to carry a tray full of dishes, open a bottle of wine, and speak the lingo of the industry. “I figured how can I, as a manager, ask my employees to do something if I myself don’t know what it entails?” Conforti adds.

Moore thinks this attitude is one of Conforti’s best business traits. “Paul has an enormous work ethic, and he’s a great leader by example,” she says. “We have a team culture. There’s no dictatorship at Finale.” A good example of the Conforti leadership style comes from a memo he gives all his managers, informally dubbed “Paul’s Profile,” about what to expect on the job, with items ranging from serious to lighthearted. “You’re allowed to make most any mistake once,” notes item 13. “If the same thing happens twice, we’ll probably talk about it.” The item 14 reads: “I sweat. Not because I’m stressed, but because I’m hot (it’s a genetic thing). Don’t read too much into it.” Conforti tends to focus on Finale’s finance and operations, while Moore generally works on the marketing and branding of the company.

By 1998, the duo had raised enough capital to open their first restaurant, figuring Boston’s nearby theater district would provide their customers. Instead, in another fortuitous development, several new restaurants opened within a few blocks of Finale. “If people come by after the theater,” says Conforti, “you might have a two-hour window of activity, after 10 p.m. With all these restaurants around, we now have a bigger window in the evening.” Many of their customers skip dessert at other restaurants and head for Finale instead, where table service begins in the early evening. During daytime hours, customers can stop by its bakery counter for baked goods they can carry out or eat at a table.

In October 2002, Conforti and Moore opened the second branch of Finale, in the ground floor of a building just off the center of Harvard Square in neighboring Cambridge, an area heavy with pedestrians willing to pay for a gourmet dessert (the average customer spends about $17). And this summer Finale opened its third branch in the Boston suburb of Brookline. According to Conforti, the first two branches have shown revenue growth every year, with the only period of decline coming in late 2002 and early 2003, during the wider economic slump that hit Boston. And now Finale’s owners are hoping to accelerate their expansion plans. Conforti is looking at locations in the Greater Boston market, as well as sites in Providence—near his hometown of Cranston, R.I.—and Connecticut as possibilities.

All Finale venues follow the same formula: airy dining spaces with a relaxed ambience. The Boston and Cambridge branches have light streaming in from plate-glass windows on two sides, illuminating yellow walls. Dark wood tables with black tops, brown and red seats, burgundy carpets, built-in wooden wine cabinets, and wait staff dressed in black all add a slightly more dress-up, formal feeling. Jazz, swing, and big band music plays in the background.

Finale’s own research shows a significant cluster of patrons around age 30, with more women than men visiting, and a high level of education; many customers have graduate degrees. But there is no stereotypical Finale customer. Visits to its branches reveal business executives discussing plans alongside students and senior citizens—a variety Conforti finds reassuring. The point of Finale, after all, is not to make fine food exclusively for the wealthy but to bring the joys of upscale desserts to the masses.

Paul Conforti’s goal is not to become as pervasive as a Starbucks on every corner, but to emulate the company’s success at persuading customers to opt for higher quality—and to provide that choice.
"It's true that it can cost $15 per person at Finale," says Conforti. "But it's $15. It's not $50 or $100. Maybe instead of going to Alinea for dinner, you eat in, but then come to Finale for dessert." And, he adds, breaking into a smile, "for $15, we can make you feel like a million bucks."

Visits to Finale, primarily the Cambridge branch, make it clear Conforti has a point. The Molfen Chocolate Cake earns its "to die for" rave, and even the pre-made treats at the bakery counter are excellent. The Ultimate Chocolate Cake, which seems to reveal a hint of cherry, and the Dark Chocolate Decadence cake, a creation akin to a truffle, are dangerously addictive and cost $6 for a solid piece three inches in diameter.

Conforti and his colleagues have also been bolstered by a large helping of positive media. Since 1998 Finale has been covered or reviewed in the Boston Globe, the Boston Phoenix, Time, USA Today, U.S.News & World Report, Bon Appetit, and Business Week. The company also earned an endorsement carrying more weight than just about any other in New England when Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, the two-time Super Bowl M.V.P., cited Finale as one of his favorite places to eat in the Boston area, deeming it "cool" in an interview for American Airlines' in-flight magazine.

Finale managed to gain some more yardage from the Brady connection with the quarter-back's Visa commercials featuring Finale desserts. Meanwhile, several Boston Red Sox players have patronized the place—outfielder Manny Ramirez has stopped by to pick up desserts for his family on his way home after ball games. A variety of other celebrities have been spotted in Finale as well, including actors John Lithgow, Charles Durning, and Dana Delaney. Even in Boston, which has some entrenched, prominent eateries, Finale may be on its way to becoming a local institution.

If Finale is flourishing now, though, Conforti and Moore still face the same types of questions as any business looking to expand. Is there a nationwide market for upscale "desserteries"? Or has Finale set its sights a bit high by looking to the example of Starbucks? The coffee chain giant, after all, has more than 11,000 stores in 36 countries. Conforti's goal is not to become as pervasive as a Starbucks on every corner, but to emulate the company's success at persuading customers to opt for higher quality—and to provide that choice.

In fact, in the restaurant industry, Finale is following a familiar pattern. A nationwide chain often starts out as a popular local eatery, establishes a strong reputation over many years, then expands locally and regionally. If a company has a good idea and good timing, it might succeed nationally. Starbucks opened in Seattle in 1971 and remained a local operation until 1987, when it still had a grand total of just 17 outlets. One of Starbucks' competitors, Peet's Coffee & Tea, opened as one cafe in Berkeley, Calif., in 1966, and is now a publically traded company with more than 120 outlets and customers intensely loyal to the brand.

Conforti thinks Finale can settle somewhere in between these two business models. "Are we going to have 11,000 locations?" he asks. "Probably not. We've been doing this eight years and we have three branches. But can we open a few hundred of these? I think so."

Conforti and Moore envision Finale having outlets in the 75 biggest metropolitan areas in the country. Indeed, adds Conforti, "That's why I'm interested in trying Providence. It is just about the 75th biggest market in the country. And it's close. We can supply Providence from here. If we open our next location in Omaha, hundreds of miles from the next-largest city, it might be a lot harder."

But could it be that Boston—a relatively affluent city with a host of upscale restaurants and a lot of "foot traffic"—is especially well-suited for a place like Finale? Conforti doubts it, asserting the concept should work all over. "Everybody loves dessert," he says. "Even those who say they don't like it can be tempted to give a sensational dessert a try."

Which means a Finale could be opening in a city near you in the future. Prepare to go back to school in dessert appreciation.

There is no stereotypical Finale customer. Business executives dine alongside students and senior citizens. The point of Finale, after all, is not to make fine food exclusively for the wealthy but to bring the joys of upscale desserts to the masses.
Collage artist and professor Michael Oatman collaborates with architecture students on genre-defying projects that move from the Greene Building to the art gallery—and beyond.

DRAWING CONNEC
WHEN MICHAEL OATMAN was in fourth grade he swiped a power cord from his school's wood shop. During recess he plugged it into an outlet, dug a trench, and buried it. In the fall he dug a 30-foot-long culvert wired with electricity so that when winter came he could have a working laboratory. He filled the tiny space with thermometers and test tubes, and used a Super8 film projector to show movies of ants carrying food and birds building nests using the snow as his screen. "At the time I thought I was playing scientist," Oatman says. "Now I realize that was my first installation as a multimedia artist." | Today as a clinical assistant professor of architecture at Rensselaer, Oatman is still immersed in the worlds of science, art, and design. As an artist, he infuses his work with elements of science and architecture. As an educator, he tries to empower Rensselaer's young architects to incorporate artistic introspection and reflection into their designs. BY AMBER CLEVELAND
“My things are not painterly—they are as precise as scientific illustrations. In my mind I focus on where there's a shocking sameness. I want you to look at this and be confronted by the image. If it's important to you that it's a collage, that's going to come later.” — Michael Oatman

A visitor need only look around his studio in downtown Troy to see that Oatman—a renowned collage and installation artist whose work has been exhibited at museums and galleries around the globe—draws inspiration from nearly everything he encounters. The space is filled with a wide range of obscure objects that seemingly have no business residing side by side. Upon further inspection it becomes apparent that the artist has meticulously organized the chaos of the space.

Rows of bookshelves line the walls, home to hundreds of dated manuals, reference materials, encyclopedias, and children's books from which Oatman pulls thousands of images for his collages. Clipped images yet to be used sit in labeled folders and filing cabinets strewn about the studio. Some files are plainly named for the contents inside—Diving Equipment, Tools, Food (Packaged), Beverages, Birds, Mammals, and Rocks. Others have more enigmatic names, like the file titled Keeping an Eye (Ear) on the Sky, which holds astronomy-related images.

Oatman compares his work collecting images to “a dowser looking for water”—only I dowse images and objects. Very often I’ll be looking for something in particular and then instead of finding what I had in mind, I’ll find something completely different, and it becomes apparent that it’s what I really wanted—and didn’t even know existed. When I work it seems I find what I need, not always what I want.”

Using only pictures from books published between the 1940s and the 1970s because of their similar image qualities, Oatman’s collages often leave viewers confused as to the genre of his work. “I can hear them asking ‘what is it exactly…is it a print…is it a computer-generated image?’ ”

In fact, Oatman understands the initial confusion. “I differ from a lot of collage artists who take things and tear them up and rough them up and use collage in a painterly way, focusing on where there is a jarring difference,” he says. “My things are not painterly—they are as precise as scientific illustrations. In my mind I focus on where there’s a shocking sameness. I want you to look at this and be confronted by the image. If it’s important to you that it’s a collage, that’s going to come later.”

Oatman’s Falling Anvil Studios, named for the collection of 40 anvils he’s amassed over the years, swells with objects and curios that many times make their way into his collages. Inspiration usually comes from his personal experiences and observations. “I read a lot, and I listen a lot, too. I write stuff down and sometimes it sits for years before I do anything with it,” Oatman says.

An artwork centered on the giant image of a hand is beginning to take shape in the far corner of the loft. A collection of images—prehistoric tools, rocks, fossils, and gemstones—scatter from the hand onto the blank black background of a collage not yet fully contrived.

“A ppleseed,” Oatman says, pointing to the work in progress. “It’s a four-panel collage, almost like a series of film stills. I’m recreating Johnny Appleseed’s hand spreading seed, but in this case he’s casting artifacts as we move backward toward geologic time.”

Oatman describes the piece as “an image that is looking at the confusion of science and religious belief, and the ways many of us go back and forth between those things but embrace them all at once. I like the idea of being a political cartoonist of the time using a different, more ambiguous media,” he says. “If I can create an image that is powerfully contradictory, then hopefully people will look at the time that they are in, in another way.”

“When you look at any piece of Michael Oatman’s work, you quickly recognize that he is an artist of extraordinary talent, but that’s just for starters,” says Pulitzer Prize-winning author William Kennedy. “The range of his imagination dazzles. He is a relentless seeker after what is new, and ‘new’ to Michael means a wrenching transformation of any expectations you might have based on whatever you know of his previous work. He is a dogged realist in his detail, but a surrealist in his conceptions, and the fusion has given us a body of work that is bountifully diverse and original.”

Discovering the artist in the architect

Named the “best local artist of 2005” by Metroland, a Capital Region newsweekly, and praised by the Albany Times Union for producing “some of the most ambitious, challenging work on the art scene,” Oatman has also gained acclaim for his dedication to his students in the classroom, where he challenges young architects to reflect on who they are as students, architects, and individuals, and to incorporate aspects of themselves into design.

“It’s interesting being the artist in the architecture department. It took me a long time to realize I didn’t have to tiptoe around with my interests,” says Oatman. “Yes, I have a different skill set than my colleagues, but it’s a necessary skill set.”

Oatman sees his role as encouraging students to figure out what interests and motivates them. “That’s going to make them more successful in their interests, and it’s going to make them more interesting as people. Increasingly my role has become about guiding young people toward being able to say ‘I have an interest, and my interest is this,’” he says.

“When I love about teaching undergrads is that I can re-educate them, in a way, to stop worrying about a right or a wrong answer, the popular culture, the common voice. My job is to get them to look at things from as many different ways as possible, on the way to looking at them personally—and I don’t think you figure out what personal is for a while, you have to be guided through different modes of seeing.”

Architecture Dean Alan Balfour praises Oatman’s unique contribution to the Greene Building. “Michael is a wonderful civilizing presence in the school. He nurtures and encourages each student’s creativity, often in surprising ways, and draws them into the world of art beyond architecture,” Balfour says. “His role reminds me of artists such as Edward M. Miller, Don Ochon, and the internationally admired George Rickey, who were members of the architecture faculty in the 50s and 60s. They are the names still mentioned when alumni reminisce.”

Oatman teaches the fundamentals of drawing and space, providing students with crucial skills for their architecture careers. But he takes his teaching role a step further to offer students opportunities to work on his projects. Recently he involved students from his Extreme Drawing class—a class he developed that challenges students to use unconventional methods to create collaborative works at extreme scales, inspired by the phenomenon of extreme sports—in a proposal he’s working on for
“A naiximander,” 2002, collage on paper with 40 framed micro-collages, 55 x 75 inches overall
“You move past Michael’s collages of gun-toting songbirds, or snowflakes made out of jet fighters, or an 18-foot-long greenhouse made of 2,500 glass plate negatives of criminal mug shots, or a mock biographical video installation in which he recounts how he turned into a criminal, and you realize that Michael Oatman is easily bored, not easily satisfied by life or work.” — William Kennedy
the MASS MoCA museum in North Adams, Mass.

Together the professor and students are developing a series of ideas and designs for a permanent installation on the roof of the museum using only photovoltaic cells. Ideas proposed include laying the cells out in the shape of land masses on a globe, and the students are excited about the opportunity to work on an installation of this size and visibility.

"Could I have done this project without my class? Yes. But this is an opportunity my students wouldn't ordinarily get—this is something for their portfolio, and something that will elicit their individual creativity," Oatman says.

This spring in a studio course called RxBox: O pen Source Architect are for a World in Transition, co-taught with Associate Professor Ted Krueger, 15 students converted a retired 8'x8'x20' cargo shipping container into a mobile medical facility that could be used to bring accessible healthcare to developing nations. Based on an idea called "Doc-in-a-Box," created by global health advocate Laurie Garrett, the transformed container was wired for electricity and fully lit. The repurposed container featured a water filtration system, a corrugated tin roofing system equipped with louvers for protection during inclement weather, a newly tiled floor, and conventional doors and windows.

From Rome to Rensselaer

For the past three years, Oatman has been collaborating with a small group of architecture students to create some of his most acclaimed work. During a 2003 trip to Italy to accompany architecture students who were studying in the school's Semester in Rome program, Oatman began to share his work with several students, allowing them to help with small tasks on upcoming art projects.

By the time the group returned to Troy, Erin Cusker '06, Matthew Fickett '06, and Stephanie Cramer '06 were playing more integral roles in the creation of Oatman's projects. Before long the group members became regulars in his studio, spending the summer working intensely on a large-scale installation project called "Conservatory."

An 18-foot-long greenhouse created from approximately 2,500 glass plate negatives of criminal mug shots from the turn of the 20th century, the construction of "Conservatory" required many months' worth of labor.

"My installations are sort of novels by a non-writer," says Oatman. "They are stories that I want to write, but I realize that I'm not a good writer. So I use art to create a scenario where you can go to the place physically where I report that things happen, but it's up to you to put the story in its order, and there is no specific order."

While Oatman sketched out ideas for the installation, the students began the daunting task of scanning and digitally cataloging nearly 18,000 glass negatives. Soon Oatman started to share his designs for "Conservatory" with them, enlisting their architectural skills to help assemble the edifice. The students designed and fabricated the greenhouse's steel structure and the panels that covered the walls and ceiling of the space.

W hile Oatman valued their architectural knowledge, he also welcomed their input into the work. "We tell Michael when things won't work," says Fickett, who was responsible for drafting the greenhouse's renderings. "He wanted to use mirrored Plexiglas for the whole greenhouse in 'Conservatory,' and we told him [we didn't think that was the best design]. When the final project got done, it was a good thing we didn't use the mirrors."

The group grew in number when the demands of the projects exceeded what Oatman and his three students were able to do. Over the last two years, the expanding team has worked to create a range of pieces—from an installation and documentary centered around a coin-operat-
In September 2001, the National Science Foundation selected Rensselaer as one of the six original sites nationwide for a new Nanoscale Science and Engineering Center. A part of the National Nanotechnology Initiative, the center is devoted to realizing the full potential of nanotechnology by creating new materials, architectures, devices, and systems from nanoscale building blocks.

IT’S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MATTER

Nanotechnology has been called the next industrial revolution, with potential for advances in pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, optics, environmental remediation, and more. Rensselaer researchers are part of a pre-eminent group of scientists around the world behind this small-scale revolution.

TO HELP PROMOTE THE TECHNOLOGY behind its “nano-enhanced” downhill skis, a major equipment manufacturer is urging consumers to imagine the size of the nanoscale: “Think very, very small. Now think even smaller.”

“Think even smaller” also could serve as the motto of the burgeoning research field of nanotechnology.

Nanotechnology involves manipulating matter at the scale of a nanometer, one billionth of a meter, or about 80,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair. But considering how the term has recently burst into the popular lexicon—from stain-proof “nano pants” to the State of the Union Address—researchers also are finding encouragement to think very, very big.

Some researchers claim that nanotechnology-derived products have reached the trillion-dollar threshold, while others frame the field as the next industrial revolution, with the potential for staggering advances in pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, optics, and environmental remediation, to name a few. Businesses are heavily investing in nanotechnology, with new companies sprouting up today like Internet and biotechnology companies did in the 1980s and 1990s. The U.S. government is also making nanotechnology a priority. But whatever might become of the buzz surrounding this millennial field, one thing is clear: Rensselaer researchers are key players among an international group of scientists working with atomic precision to make new materials and devices.

“Historically, Rensselaer has been known as a powerhouse in materials science and technology,” says Omkaram Nalamasu, vice president for research. “What we are doing with nanotechnology is building on this historic strength and heritage.”

In September 2001, the National Science Foundation (NSF) selected Rensselaer as one of the six original sites nationwide for a new Nanoscale Science and Engineering Center (NSEC). A part of the National Nanotechnology Initiative, the center is devoted to realizing the full potential of nanotechnology by creating new materials, architectures, devices, and systems from nanoscale building blocks. The five other original NSECs are located at Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, Northwestern, and Rice—each with a distinctive research focus.
In recent years, scientists have created a variety of nanoscale building blocks from atoms and molecules, but they have only just begun to assemble them into more complex structures. Much of the research at Rensselaer is distinguished by a focus on “directed assembly”—combining these building blocks in a controlled way to create materials with desired properties for a wide variety of applications, from artificial gecko feet to ultra-sensitive devices for detecting airborne toxins.

“Directed assembly of nanoscale building blocks into useful structures is the fundamental gateway to the eventual success of nanotechnology,” says Richard W. Siegel, the Robert W. Hunt Professor of Materials Science and Engineering and director of both the Rensselaer Nanotechnology Center and NSEC. “At Rensselaer, we actually make all of our own nanoscale building blocks, from nanoparticles to nanotubes to hybrid structures comprised of both. That gives us a tremendous advantage in terms of controlling the nature of these structures and how they relate to one another.”

**A Comprehensive Vision**

Carbon nanotubes are perhaps the most enticing class of nano-materials. These super-tiny cylinders, which bear an uncanny resemblance to rolled-up sheets of chicken wire, have been hailed as some of the lightest, strongest materials ever made.

“Nanotubes are a very versatile material with absolutely fascinating physical properties, all the way from ballistic conduction to really interesting mechanical behavior,” says Pulickel Ajayan, the Henry Burlage Professor of Materials Science and Engineering and a world-renowned expert in fabricating nanotube materials. “I don’t think we have ever come across a material with such a wide range of possibilities.”

Rensselaer researchers are exploiting this broad portfolio of properties across a variety of fields, beginning with the fundamental building blocks of matter and working up to devices and systems with a multiplicity of applications.

“One of Rensselaer’s unique contributions to nanotechnology is the ability to place the nanotubes where we want, with the control we want, and with the properties we would like to have,” Nalamasu says. “I think it is a very comprehensive vision.”

The vision is fast becoming a reality, as Rensselaer scientists and their collaborators continue to report significant advances in the field.

In a 2005 paper published in *Science*, researchers from Rensselaer, the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and the University of Florida showed that films of vertically aligned carbon nanotubes can act like a layer of “super-compressible” mattress springs, flexing and rebounding in response to a force. But unlike a mattress, which can sag and lose its springiness, these nanotube foams maintain their resilience even after thousands of compression cycles, opening the door to foam-like materials for just about any application where strength and flexibility are needed, from disposable coffee cups to the exterior of the space shuttle.

The foams are just the latest in a long line of nanotube-based materials that have been produced through collaborations with Ajayan’s lab, including tiny brushes with bristles made from carbon nanotubes. These brushes, which were described in *Nature Materials*, already have been tested in a variety of tasks that range from cleaning microscopic surfaces to serving as electrical contacts, and they eventually could be used in a whole host of electronic, biomedical, and environmental applications, Ajayan says.

Carbon nanotubes can carry large amounts of electrical current without losing heat, making them ideal materials for nanoscale wires. Along with colleagues in Germany, Mexico, the U.K., and Belgium, Rensselaer researchers have reported a way to weld these tiny tubes together end-to-end, overcoming a major obstacle to realizing nanotube-based electronic devices. By passing a high current through a thin film with nanotubes dispersed across its surface, they generated visible flashes of light—similar to the familiar arc from a welder’s torch. Further investigation revealed that the flashes occur at junctions where overlapping carbon nanotubes are welded together. Current methods to make nanowires require bombarding the surface with electrons or other charged particles, which may not be easily scalable. The team, which is led by Ganapathiraman Ramanath, associate professor of materials...
Researchers from realizing the full potential of nanotubes. "There is a lot of hype in this field, and it has been difficult to live up to," says Nikhil Koratkar, associate professor of mechanical, aerospace, and nuclear engineering. "Researchers have not been able to get the 10- to 20-fold increases in strength and stiffness that have been touted over traditional composites and materials."

One of the biggest engineering challenges comes when nanotubes are combined with other materials to make composites, according to Koratkar. The interface between the materials is not as strong as one might expect because it is difficult to disperse nanotubes in an orderly way. Single-walled nanotubes are particularly hard to disperse, since they tend to form clusters—like ropes where only the nanotubes on the outside layer come in contact with the other material. Ajayan and Koratkar are partnering with researchers across the campus—and around the world—to address some of these challenges.

Though much of the research has focused on improving the strength and stiffness of nanomaterials, Koratkar and his colleagues have directed their attention to another important property: damping, or the ability of a material to dissipate energy. They have found that dispersing nanotubes throughout traditional materials creates new composites with vastly improved damping capabilities. And in a recent paper published in the journal Nano Letters, the researchers have also shown for the first time that these damping properties are enhanced as the temperature increases. Traditional damping polymers perform poorly at elevated temperatures, so the new nanocomposites could fill an important gap for any kind of structure that is exposed to vibration, from high-performance parts for spacecraft and automobile engines, to golf clubs that don't sting and stereo speakers that don't buzz.

In 2004, Koratkar received an NSF Faculty Early Career Development Award to fund the development of these new materials, and during the next phase of the grant he plans to move into "hybrid" systems. These structures will combine the high stiffness of carbon fiber composites with the damping properties of nanotubes, leading to a class of materials that truly offers "the best of both worlds."

Meanwhile, Linda Schadler, professor of materials science and engineering, is leading a group that is working to improve the optical and mechanical behavior of polymers for packaging materials by filling them with nanoparticles. And as part of a joint research project with the University of Florida, Schadler and her colleagues are developing a new generation of synthetic lubricant coatings for aircraft and spacecraft. The coatings, which are made of thin layers of carbon nanotubes, polymers, and ceramics, will be sensitive to changes in the environment that a spacecraft experiences, with the potential to reduce the rate of wear by 1,000 times or more.

Other teams are working to exploit another interesting property of nanotubes called "field emission." When a voltage is applied to certain materials, electrons are pulled out from the surface, making these materials useful in electronic displays. "Nanotubes are very good field emitters because they have a low threshold for emission and they produce high currents," says Swastik Kar, a post-doctoral researcher in materials science and engineering. Kar and a team of researchers from Rensselaer, Northeastern, and New Mexico State have developed a new process to make flexible, conducting "nano skins" based on field emission for a variety of applications, from electronic paper to sensors for detecting chemical and biological agents. The materials can be bent, flexed, and rolled up like a scroll, all while maintaining their ability to conduct electricity, which makes them ideal materials for flexible electronics, according to the researchers. Nanotube arrays normally are held together by weak forces that don't always maintain their shape when transferred, but the team has developed a new procedure that allows them to transfer arrays of nanotubes into a soft polymer matrix without disturbing the shape, size, or alignment of the nanotubes.

Ajayan, working with researchers at the University of Akron, is using a similar process to mimic the agile gecko, with its uncanny ability...
A team of researchers have developed a new process to make flexible, conducting “nano skins” based on field emission for a variety of applications, from electronic paper to sensors for detecting chemical and biological agents. The materials can be bent, flexed, and rolled up like a scroll, all while maintaining their ability to conduct electricity, which makes them ideal materials for flexible electronics, according to the researchers.

**Defining New Interfaces**

Rensselaer’s traditional interdisciplinary approach to research also gives the Institute another advantage. “We have tremendous strength in terms of the depth of our scientific knowledge in the various areas of physics, chemistry, materials, and biology,” Siegel says, “but also a tremendous level of interaction that takes place among the group—and that’s actually quite remarkable.”

An example is the interface of medicine and the physical sciences, which is becoming a key focus of many research efforts at Rensselaer. “At an engineering school, we are trying to define new interfaces, and one of the interfaces is nanomedicine,” Nalamasu says. “The nano toolbox is a unique medium to be able to understand this particular interface.”

Shekhar Garde, associate professor of chemical and biological engineering, and Pawel Keblinski, associate professor of materials science and engineering, discovered that heat may actually move better across interfaces between liquids than it does between solids, which could have immediate practical application for cancer therapy. “Scientists are developing cancer treatments based on nanoparticles that attach to specific tissues, which are then heated to kill the cancerous cells,” Keblinski says. “It is vital to understand how heat flows in these systems, because too much heat applied in the wrong spot can kill healthy cells.”

To create artificial bones and other biomaterials, scientists need specially designed scaffolds that can direct how cells grow into body tissues. Siegel and his colleagues are conducting a study that could provide much-needed insight into this process at the intersection of biotechnology and nanotechnology. They are examining the behavior of mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs), which are derived from bone marrow, on a number of ceramic materials that could be used as scaffolds. They have found that the size and chemistry of the nanoparticles that make up the ceramic materials has an impact on the way MSCs stick to the surfaces, and that one protein is primarily responsible for this impact: vitronectin, one of the major adhesive proteins found in human blood. This fundamental knowledge will help tissue-engineering researchers design the next generation of biomaterials for orthopedic applications, according to Siegel.

**Macroscale Effects**

Rensselaer researchers are collaborating with industry to bring this technology to the marketplace. “We are not only developing the fundamental science and engineering concepts related to nanotechnology, but in real time we are exploring the utility of these materials to solve important problems in different disciplines,” Nalamasu says. The Center for Integrated Electronics, for example, is contributing to the science and technology of interconnects, semiconductor devices, architectures, and packaging, by accelerating the production of the next generation of micro- and nanoelectronic devices. The research focus on discovering solutions to help the semiconductor industry transcend the roadblocks that will come from shrinking device dimensions below 100 nanometers.

And nanotechnology researchers of all fields received a major boon with the establishment of the Computational Center for Nanotechnology Innovations (CCNI)—a partnership between Rensselaer, IBM, and New York state to create the world’s most powerful university-based supercomputing center (see page 7). The $100 million project will provide a platform for researchers to perform a broad range of computational simulations, from the interactions between atoms and molecules up to the behavior of the complete device. These simulations will employ new computational tools that are becoming increasingly central to scientists’ efforts to manipulate matter at the atomic level. In much the same way as cars and planes are designed with computer models before they are built, the tools will allow researchers to build simulations of new nanotechnology-based products.

“The computational and intellectual resources at CCNI will be made available to companies from New York state and across the globe,” Nalamasu says. “The goal of this center is to define a new engineering design paradigm that will provide chip manufacturers the ability to predict device performance through integrated nanoscale simulation and fabrication.”
Rensselaer researchers have discovered a simple method for rapidly creating different shapes of carbon nanotube structures. The new method is based on a commonly used chemical vapor deposition method, resulting in foamlike structures that are stable and elastic. The foams could be used in a variety of applications, including new microchips and wherever strength and flexibility are needed, from repairing bone joints to reinforcing carbon-fiber-based aerospace products.
RAA Visa Card and Financial Services

The new RAA Visa Card, issued by U.S. Bank, provides competitive rates while at the same time supporting the programs of the RAA. Apply online at www.alumni.rpi.edu.

Alumni Chapters Plan A Busy Summer

Each year, alumni chapters all over the country host a variety of events that range from picnics to sporting events to wine tastings to tours. These get-togethers are a wonderful opportunity for alumni who live in the same area to network and to socialize, and some events even welcome incoming freshmen in the area to the Rensselaer family. For a complete list of all the great summer alumni events being planned, visit @RPInet at https://arpinet.rpi.edu/events.

School of Management Offers Fast-Track MBAs for Engineering and Science Alumni

Beginning in fall 2006, the Lally School of Management and Technology will offer School of Engineering and School of Science alumni fast-track admission to the school’s MBA program. The standard GMAT requirement will be waived. For more information, visit the alumni home page at www.alumni.rpi.edu.

Raa Worldwide Travel Program: 2006 Tours

Visit some of the most exciting and beautiful destinations on Earth with people who share your interests—fellow Rensselaer alumni. Contact the Alumni Office at alumni@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6205 for more information on the following trips: Romance of the Blue Danube (Sept. 6-19); China & the Yangtze River (Oct. 15); From the Outback to the Glaciers (Oct. 17); Splendors of South America: Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil (Nov. 6); Budapest & Prague (Nov. 9-17).

Come Back to Campus for FallFest

The weekend of Oct. 13-15 will be a busy one on the Troy campus. Family Weekend, Alumni MusicFest, Phi Iota Alpha’s 75th anniversary, and more are combining to create one festive weekend.

FallFest features events that are open to everyone, including an International Festival on Saturday afternoon that features traditional food, clothing, photos, and more, from countries around the world. There also will be a buffet dinner prior to the men’s hockey game vs. Boston University.

The Alumni MusicFest will bring together former members of campus music groups such as the Rensselyrics, the Pep Band, Orchestra, etc. Music alumni may enjoy a dinner and concert on Friday night, and campus tours and a luncheon on Saturday. Also on Saturday, music alumni will perform at the RPI vs. Boston University hockey game. (Rensselaer magazine is collecting stories from music alumni; please see page 40.)

Phi Iota Alpha, the nation’s oldest Latino fraternity, will hold a cocktail reception on Friday night; Saturday will feature a gala celebration of the fraternity’s 75th anniversary. A golf outing and closing ceremonies will round out the weekend on Sunday.

Current students and their parents will celebrate academic achievement at Honors Convocation, and on Saturday, events will include the Legacy Reception for those students who have family members who have attended Rensselaer.

Other events taking place over the weekend include the Entrepreneur of the Year Celebration, RAA Board of Trustees meetings, the Athletics Hall of Fame banquet, concerts, dancing, tours, and more.

“We hope that alumni will mark their calendars and plan to join us for what is shaping up to be an action-packed weekend on the Rensselaer campus,” says Jeff Schanz, director of alumni relations.

It’s an exciting time to be on campus. For more information on FallFest activities, contact Peter Pedone at (518) 276-6061 or pedonp@rpi.edu.
Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond.
First-year students begin a nearly weeklong orientation program designed to introduce them to Rensselaer, to the area, and to each other. The program includes adventure-based experiences, historical and cultural activities, and community service opportunities designed to help with the transition to Rensselaer. Additional activities include a welcome barbecue, Freshman Convocation, and offerings from clubs and departments across campus. www.rpi.edu/fye/nrb2006

Legacy Move-in Day Reception.
Rensselaer “legacies” (those with a relative who went to Rensselaer) will have the opportunity to meet other first-year legacies and their families as they begin their Rensselaer experience. Heffner Alumni House. For information, contact Lindsay Shea at sheal@rpi.edu or (518) 276-8719.

Class of 2010 Convocation. Rensselaer’s newest class is officially welcomed into the community at this campus event. ‘86 Field.

Nanotechnology 2006 Conference. Students and alumni are welcome to attend a conference exploring the opportunities in commercialization of nanoscience, nanotechnology, and related science and engineering fields. Sponsored by the Rensselaer Nanotechnology Center, Office of Alumni Relations, Bawa Biotechnology Consulting, and Foley Lardner. www.alumni.rpi.edu/nanotech2006.html.

FallFest. The weekend of Oct. 13-16 will be a busy one on the Troy campus. Homecoming, Family Weekend, the RAA Board meeting, the Legacy Reception, a gathering of music alumni, and the 75th anniversary of the founding of Phi Iota Alpha fraternity will all be rolled into one. For more information, contact Peter Pedone at pedonp@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6061.

Alumni MusicFest. Former members of RPI’s music groups are invited to get together on campus during FallFest weekend. Scheduled activities include receptions and buffet dinners, campus tours, and a chance to perform at the RPI vs. BU hockey game. Contact Howard Henze ’69 at bchhenze@bellsouth.net or Peter Pedone at pedonp@rpi.edu to be sure you’re on the mailing list.

75th Anniversary of Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity. As part of FallFest weekend, Phi Iota Alpha will celebrate 75 years at Rensselaer. For details, contact Hansel Baez ’06 at hansel@alum.rpi.edu or Victor Marrero at marrev@rpi.edu, or visit www.phiota.net.

Legacy Reception. Join with other Rensselaer legacy students and their families for a special afternoon. Heffner Alumni House. For information, contact Lindsay Shea at sheal@rpi.edu or (518) 276-8719.

RAA Worldwide Travel Program Visits China. Last year’s program was a huge success, with 50 Rensselaer alums and family members participating in what all agreed was “the trip of a lifetime.” This year’s trip will visit Beijing, Xi’an, Hangzhou, Shanghai, the Yangtze River, Guilin, and Hong Kong. Contact Alumni Relations at alumni@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6205. www.alumni.rpi.edu/ap/travel.html.

Men’s Hockey at the University of Denver. Join other RPI fans in the area for pre- and post-game events, and meet Seth Appert, the new men’s hockey coach. Contact Peter Pedone at pedonp@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6061 to be sure you are on the mailing list to get more details when they are available.

RAA Worldwide Travel Program Visits South America: Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. Visit Buenos Aires, Colonia del Sacramento, Iguazu Falls, and Rio, among other sites on this tour of the best of South America. Contact Alumni Relations at alumni@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6205. www.alumni.rpi.edu/ap/travel.html.

RAA Worldwide Travel Program Visits Budapest & Prague. Spend three nights in Budapest (Hungary) at a deluxe five-star hotel; then travel by first-class rail to Prague to spend four nights at the InterContinental Prague Hotel. Contact Alumni Relations at alumni@rpi.edu or (518) 276-6205. www.alumni.rpi.edu/ap/travel.html.
Class Notes

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I have been in touch with most of the “Survivors” who have e-mail, and trying to get in touch with some of the rest if they will cooperate. Will probably get out another mailing for the next issue.

Henry Mitchell (BME) writes to me regularly. He makes his home in the winter at Bradenton Tropical Palms, a mobile home park, and expects to go back to his Lake George home in summer at Dunham’s Bay. Met his son, Phil ’79, at the Reunion, and he makes paper pulp from trees in Glens Falls, N.Y. He is still able to drive at night.

Bob Jenny (BAE) has had two cataract operations, is still able to get around, and lives in a top-floor apartment overlooking Lake Washington in Seattle. Has had his share of illness, and holding up well considering that he is 89, a year older than I am. He has children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren in the area to look in on him, and tells me that he has a workbench where he enjoys experimenting, making metal parts and boat and airplane models. He misses his patent work, which he did for many years in the Seattle area. One grandson, married, lives in Boston and has two great-grandchildren there. He exercises on a treadmill, which is something all seniors should do, that is, exercise. I do mine by walking in the mall or in large grocery stores.

Charles Gurley Estey (BME), ’39 and ’41, does a lot of driving day and night, sails a 25-foot sloop on a lake near Amsterdam. He swims in the summer and shovel snow in the winter, and is a volunteer for the local Senior Wheelchair Van for eight hours every Thursday. Has two daughters in the San Francisco Bay area and one son lives near him. Last year he joined with two men of the Class of ’38 (Jack Muddiman and Braham Norwich) and helped celebrate the 75th anniversary of the RPI Players.

Bob Cox, (BEE) ’39 and (MEE) ’40, lives in Kansas City, living in a villa where outside maintenance is provided. Keeping up with five children and six grandchildren keeps him occupied. During the summer he drives to Michigan where he does a lot of sailing and walking. They used to go south for the winter, but not for the last couple of years, as the winters have not been as severe. He participated in the “Collins net” on the ham radio bands, but when he moved to the villa, they allowed no outside antennas, which cut out that activity that already had been reduced from 20 participants to about three.

Doug Andrews (BAE), already 90 years old, has the usual problems of age. He had a hip replacement and where he lives in the Windham Falls Estates retirement home he does not need a car. Although in good shape, Doug uses a walker at times to help steady his walking, until he gets a little stronger.

Dick Trepp (BCH) has stopped taking new clients for clock repair, as he stays as busy as he wants to be with the people who depend on him to keep their time accurate. His wife, Wilma, is recovering nicely from her hip problem. I talk to Dick once in a while on the telephone and get e-mails from him at least once a week. At times he sends me several jokes in a day. I visited him after the 2004 (65th) Reunion, on my way down to see friends and relatives in the Connecticut and New York area, before flying back to Mississippi.

Bob Hedstrom (BIE) writes via e-mail that he swims a lot, no longer water skis, but likes to jet ski. Goes to cardiac rehab and is on a treadmill for 35 minutes twice a week. Drives locally at night, lives in the house he built in 1951. Fantastic, as I have lived in six different places since 1953. Bob has five sons and many grandchildren (granddaughters and one grandson). He does a lot of volunteer work, such as preparing income tax at Baptist Village, is a member of OHS, which is the Pipe Organ Historical Society, and SAG, which is Swedish American Genealogists. He has many other hobbies, which will be reported in later columns. Bob received additional education at Wallace College (local), Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill., and BYU in Utah. When I first contacted Bob almost four years ago, he was with his family business in Alabama, where they produced toys, baby carriages, cribs, and other products. The Hedstrom name is very familiar to those who have used baby products. During WWII they produced ailerons for the Corsair, and hundreds of parts used in helicopters. He would like to hear from other industrial engineers. He can be reached at hedstrom@ada.net.

A short note on the difference between 1939 and 2006. In 1939, after graduation, I drove to California and back with my mother, as we had never before that been west of Chicago. We drove in a ’39 Mercury, were gone 30 days, and traveled 8,000 miles. Staying at “tourist homes,” which was the norm before motels, just on the outskirts of cities we passed through, as there were no Interstates. Went the northern route going out, seeing Rushmore Memorial (still under construction), Yellowstone National Park, San Francisco, and from Los Angeles we came back on the southern route, visiting the Hoover Dam and Grand Canyon. This trip originated in Connecticut where I grew up. The cost was $240 for food, gasoline, and lodging for
mencement exercises May 20, approximately 1,300 students were awarded their degrees, including 928 bachelor’s, 286 master’s, and 98 doctorates.
two. That figured 1 cent a mile for gasoline, as the average was 21 mpg and 21 per gallon. I cent a mile for food and 1 cent a mile for lodging. Today it could cost upwards of $6,000 to take the same trip.

I invite you to look at my new photography Web site. It covers the details of my 80 years of photography and at the same time a link takes you to RPI and other places. Since going digital in 2000, I have done a lot of photography, and even included the albino squirrel caught digitally in June 2004 at my 65th Reunion. The short bio tells you a bit about what I did after graduation, except that it covers photography mostly, especially the personal page. The link to my site is http://loushornick.com/.

Send news to: Lou Shornick ’39, 108 Royal Garden Terrace, Madison, MS 39110-7637; h: (601) 853-0265; loushorn@ mindspring.com

41 Stephanie Schnatz, daughter of Fred Schnatz, who died in October 2003, was looking forward to talking with classmates of her dad at Reunion ’06. She wrote: "I would love to record their stories about my Dad’s years at RPI. He loved RPI and I can remember attending reunions as a child with him. My cousin’s son was accepted early admittance to RPI for the fall so I am glad we are keeping this a tradition in the family. The whole family is thrilled that Andy will be attending RPI. His parents are hoping Dad will be looking over Andy’s shoulder with a little help. RPI is tough!"

“I would appreciate any news about former classmates or football players who may be attending the reunion. Dad was captain and quarterback of the team.” Stephanie can be reached at chelseaalfy@hotmail.com.

Marjorie Hopkins sent the following news about her parents: “Art Johnson and his wife, Betty, are in residence at the Van Rensselaer Manor in Troy, N.Y. They just celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary on April 5. Dad always has great memories of his days at RPI and about being a PKE brother. He can be contacted by calling me at (518) 462-0399.”

“Following the mention of their old friends, Kitty and Bob Havens, in the Fall issue, I contacted the Havenses and we shared updated photos. They probably aren’t too many ‘41s left to attend the Reunion, but they are still chugging along.”

Send news to: Class Notes, Office of Communications, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY 12180; phone: (518) 276-8574; gallim@rpi.edu

42 65th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007 I’m sure all you young World War II types remember the story of a sailor, just arriving on shore, who asked a shipmate for a nickel to call a friend. The mate replied, “Here’s a dime; call all your friends.”

I had an idea. Suppose I offer each one of you who writes in about his latest activities $2 as a one-time incentive, and you get your postage back and be able to write to “all your friends” with the remaining money. I’m serious, and can afford your avalanche of writings to come, since I am neither rich nor broke. Actually, you’d be surprised how one person’s writing triggers an interest in someone in our class or surrounding classes.

Oh, the last time I noted Ben Stein’s impending move. It is a fete accomplished (I can’t spell in French). His new address is: The Shelburne Bay Senior Living Center, 185 Pine Haven Shore Road, Apt. 223, Shelburne, VT 05482. New phone is (802) 846-9243.

Mail coming into our house is swamping us. Almost none of it personal, generally. Any of you ever get a letter from a politician asking for money? Ha!

Last Reunion, Helen and I had a nice talk with Dor (D’Orville) Doty and his wife while at the art exhibit upstairs in the Student Union and I wrote to them about Reunion next year. That letter came back, I found a better address, and this time Dor received my letter and sent back a nice letter in return.

Dor said he was finally closing his tent on technical committee work for ASME, AWS, and NB&SPVI. The last one, the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors, had just recognized him for an unprecedented 26 years of service on the National Board Advisory Committee. The executive director said Dor’s knowledge of the welding industry is unmatched.

Dor writes: “From now on, it is full-time play. We have a daughter and a son. Both are married. Our daughter has a Ph.D. in sociology from Columbia and works for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. Our son has a B.Mech.E. from RPI, Class of ’72, and a M.Civil.E. from U. of Michigan. He is executive VP for Vectron, a large public utility in Indiana. Both of our children are married and we have three granddaughters. One is married, one is about 15 years old.”

Dor retired in 1985 as senior metallurgical and product consultant for U.S. Steel Corp., then formed Doty and Associates. He and his wife, Yvonne, live in Pittsburgh. They hope to join us at our next Reunion in 2007.

In 10 little months, I want to see all you “sick, lame, and lazy” survivors in Troy. Even if you’ve passed away, send your ghost, and we’ll skip the registration fee. Since I must live to be 120 years old to clean up my basement, I’ll be there. Be well.

Send news to: Ed Koenig, P.E. ’42, 31 Stone Fence Road, Bernardsvile, NJ 07924-1713; h: (908) 766-1117

43 You probably caught the “In Memoriam” item in the last magazine about Frank Knudson’s death last fall. Frank served as class correspondent after Paul Witbeck passed away in 2001 and then passed the duties along to me some months back when his Parkinson’s affliction made it too tough for him to continue. He’s been a tough act to follow.

Frank went into the Navy after graduation and then into a family business. His interest in education led him to an M.A. from Columbia in that field in 1967 and he spent the next 18 years teaching history and social studies in Lakeland High School in Shrub Oak, N.Y. His expertise in the field was highly regarded by both students and colleagues. Outside of education, Frank was a passionate fan of baseball at all levels. A faithful follower of Major League seasons, he also coached Little League teams for many years.

He embraced the National Hockey League with equal passion. He was a great help to me in getting set up to keep tabs on the whereabouts of the Class of 1943.

Speaking of whereabouts, the news is getting pretty spotty. How about loosening up and sharing some of your doings with your fellow classmates? As for me, I should be out on the golf course and trekking my archery range by the time you read this. One thing about these “lifetime sports”, you don’t outgrow them and as your memory fades, you don’t realize how bad you’ve gotten, so they are still a lot of fun.

Send news to: Dick Sage ’43, 82 Hunter Lane, Queensbury, NY 12804; dicsage@adelphia.net

44 In the past I have complained about not hearing from you gentlemen and thus having to use my ample supply of you-know-what to fill out a column. I hate to see a name and a year and nothing else for ‘44 in the magazine. For once since I have been doing this job, I have a case of writer’s block.

Got a nice note from Walt Dankhoff and an accompanying transcript of an interview he had in November 2000 at a time he was selected as one of our Space Pioneers. After reading this transcript I can say unequivocally that it was an honor long overdue. With all those Roman candles he has played with over the years, it’s a wonder one of them didn’t blow up and relieve him of some part of his anatomy.

Walt was one of the original ROTC class to be graduated and commissioned in December ’43. Since he asked for sea duty, he was assigned to a Jeep carrier with the 7th fleet. The ship got kamikazed in the Sulu Sea while escorting old “I Shall Return” back to the Philippines. In the resulting mess the Navy lost track of Walt and he was reported MIA. But since RPI guys watch our for each other, Wes DeCarteret knew he was on the New Mexico and he was found much to the relief of his family back in Troy.

After getting his master’s at RPI he went to work for GE studying and designing ramjet propulsion systems. Part of the job was using liberated V-2s as flying test beds and working with liberated German engineers including the well-known Wernher von Braun. Walt was at the front door of rockets and ramjets in the U.S. in the post-war era. While GE sort of blew their advantage Walt stuck with it and what a career it gave him. Incidentally when one of these unguided V-2s got off course they had the distinction of bombing a cemetery in Juarez, Mexico.

From GE he moved on to Marquardt where he worked on a boron hydride-fueled ramjet for the Bomarc missile. From boron hydride he moved on to liquid air cycle propulsion for the Aero Spaceplane project. That program represented our first real thoughts of traveling in outer space. They still haven’t given up on the propulsion system today although the whole thing is just too heavy to do the job.

When NACA became NASA Walt went to work for NASA Lewis where he became project manager on the M-1, a million-and-a-half-pound hydrogen-
On the Bookshelf: RECENT BOOKS BY ALUMNI AUTHORS

The Wynants Kill: a small stream, but mighty
Robert J. Lilly ‘39 • AGatherin’, 2005

The Wynants Kill is a minor tributary of the Hudson River in Rensselaer County, N.Y., but the history of its 300 years of industrial development is rich in both narratives and themes, and its contribution to the growth of both Troy and Albany is important.

The author has researched property records, published histories, newspaper accounts, and local lore to understand the complexities of the story. In this book he weaves together the fortunes of the mills that were built along its banks with the development of cooperation among the mill owners, by a close examination of the papers of the Wynants Kill (Improvement) Association.

Robert Lilly ‘39 is a retired engineer with the New York State Office of General Services and a resident of Glass Lake in the Wynants Kill watershed.

Adrenaline
John Benedict, M.D. ’78 • Sterling House, 2005

In this medical thriller/murder mystery, patients start dying unexpectedly in the OR at Mercy Hospital, and anesthesiologist Doug Landry finds himself the focus of the blame. As Landry struggles to clear his name and unravel the secret of the mysterious deaths, it becomes clear that someone will stop at nothing to keep him from exposing the truth.

John Benedict ’78, M.D., is an anesthesiologist in private practice in Harrisburg, Pa. ADRENALINE is his first novel.

The Best Practices Enterprise
James Kerr ’87 • J. Ross Publishing, 2006

This guide to achieving sustainable world-class performance provides guiding principles to senior executives and best practices to managers that can transform a firm into an organization capable of dominating its industry. The author asserts that there are seven best practices that are indispensable in this era of rapid change, increasing customer demands, and intense global competition. These best practices are supported by nearly 50 real examples and excerpts from actual projects to demonstrate how multiple organizations have institutionalized them.

James Kerr, M.S. ’87, is the managing partner at Kerr Consulting Group, and an adjunct professor at Rensselaer at Hartford.

Fundamentals of Industrial Catalytic Processes
Robert Farrauto ’68 and C.H. Bartholomew • Wiley and Sons, 2005

Fundamentals of Industrial Catalytic Processes, second edition, is a combination handbook and textbook that presents an up-to-date account of important catalyst, reactor, and process technologies for important catalytic processes practiced in a wide range of industries, including the chemical, petroleum, electric utility, food, transportation, and emission-control industries. Integrating science fundamentals necessary to the design and practice of these processes, the book addresses important basic principles of heterogeneous, homogenous, enzymatic, and polymer catalysis.

Robert Farrauto, Ph.D. ’68, is a research fellow with Engelhard Corp. and an adjunct professor of earth and environmental engineering at Columbia University.

Fluorinated Coatings and Finishes Handbook
Laurence W. McKeen ’73 • William Andrew Publishing, 2006

The Handbook of Fluorinated Coatings and Finishes: The Definitive User’s Guide is both a reference and a tutorial for understanding fluoropolymer coatings. It discusses the basics of fluoro-coating formulations, including ingredients and production processes. Also covered are the coating and curing processes, and defects and trouble-shooting solutions, testing performance, and sample commercial applications. The book addresses questions frequently posed by end-user design engineers, coaters, and coatings suppliers.

Laurence McKeen ’73 began his career with DuPont in 1978 as a mass spectrometrist, but moved into product development in the Teflon Finishes Group in 1980. His efforts have led to dozens of commercial products.

When the Navy sent “Orders” to the NROTC students at RPI and others signed up for the V-12 program, they shaped the careers of many of us. They kept us on track toward a degree, but at the same time presented a whole new set of opportunities. As you can see below it made a dedicated Seabee out of David Cunning. Thanks to Dick Reich ’47, who sent along the following news about David.

David P. Cunning, captain, Civil Engineer Corps, United States Navy, died Jan. 30 after a long battle with prostate cancer, in his home in La Mesa, Calif. He wanted to be remembered as a “Seabee,” a loving father and husband, and a man who contributed to not only the U.S. Navy but to the larger San Diego community.

Captain Cunning was recognized with the Meritorious Service Medal by the President of the United States for “outstandingly meritorious service as Public Works Officer, Naval Air Station, North Island 1967 to 1971.” David was also decorated with the Legion of Merit, with Combat ‘V’ in recognition of his “extraordinary meritorious conduct in the performance as Director of Construction, Qui Nhon, Vietnam 1966 to 1967.”

David headed the successful Master Plan for the Naval Air Station, North Island. It had been under development for over 10 years and was completed by David. He was committed to the community of San Diego beyond his role in the U.S. Navy. While still a captain, Civil Engineer Corps, he was made a member of the National Association of Superintendents of the U.S. Naval Shore Establishments—the first time that a Public Works Officer of any Navy activity in the San Diego area has ever been so honored.
CLASSNOTES

In the President’s and many other commendations, David has been described as: “professional, competent, resourceful, selfless, possessing broad vision, experienced, having managerial ability and dynamic personal leadership, and devoted to duty.”

After retiring from the Navy, David joined the firm of M.L. Chilcote grading and land development, for over five years (retiring in 1988). As executive vice president in charge of land development and acting liaison to city and county agencies, he met with multiple civic leaders and helped to create and enhance local communities.

He was a scholar-athlete. David captained his high school ice hockey team, played varsity baseball, and was a member of the 1939 New England American Legion Baseball Champions. He was awarded the Elks Scholar Athlete Scholarship. David attended the University of New Hampshire where he was a leader on the ice hockey team and catcher of the 1943 New England baseball championship team. The Navy sent him to Rensselaer to complete his engineering studies in the Navy V-12 program, receiving his B.S. in civil engineering in 1944 and his M.S. from the University of Illinois in 1954.

David loved golf! His golf partners over many years remember him as “a gentleman to the end.” David joins his parents and his siblings in heaven.

David passed away of cancer in 1972. David is survived by his wife, Patricia Gress Cunning, and his four children.

46 Herb Englehardt dropped me a nice New Year’s note saying he was planning on joining us at the Class Reunion. Hopefully with his wife, Ann. His letter came as I was leaving for Florida to do some canoeing, which I am sure Herb and Ann would have enjoyed. It is a great time of year for canoeing as there are no bugs and the ‘gators are dormant.

47 Another note came from George Meyer (BMet) said: “Just got the Winter edition of Rensselaer. The campus sure looks different (and better) than it did in ’41 and ’47.

“I am off to Belgium again to participate in Memorial Day celebrations at the military cemeteries, visit with the many friends that I have made over the years and many visits, and to do a little more eating and drinking than normal. I am taking an old buddy and Navy vet with me, so it will be another invasion, but from the West.

“A few months ago, people from Boulder, Colo., bought the house next door. Yep, you guessed it—Class of ’53, an ME. I have also run into other RPI grads at the local MOAA meetings (Military Officers Assoc. Am.). We do get around!

“I am wearing out a little, but going strong. I am still into auto restoration, but I do think that I have just finished my last one. I just can’t lift those V-8s any more!”

“I still live in the village of Willow Street, just south of Lancaster, Pa.”

Send your news and/or story to me, at the address below. If you have questions, call (805) 937-0628.

Send news to: Herb Asbury ‘45, 4435 Foxenwood Lane, Santa Maria, CA 93455-6718; h: (805) 937-0628; asbaryh@aol.com

Send news to: Ed Miller ‘46, Apt. 112, Belmont Living Center, 6 Winners Circle, Albany, NY 12205; Miller430@aol.com

60th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007

First, the bad news. Had several exchanges with Audrey Kremzier. Her husband, Emil Kremzier, died on Feb. 3. The primary cause was pneumonia. Emil was a Schenectady native, born Jan. 7, 1923. I first met Emil at the Lewis Propulsion Tunnel in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1954; I was there on a test for Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Co., later known as Convair. Emil and I compared notes after he noticed my RPI class ring. A few years later, he came to Convair to join the group I was in—thermodynamics. He got his BAE in February 1947. I came back to RPI in February 1947 and finished the requirements for my BAE in June 1947. Emil had been in NROTC at RPI and been commissioned and served on the USS Bunker Hill. His studies at RPI were interrupted and he had to come back to finish his BAE. Sometime later, he got a pilot’s license and enjoyed recreational flying. In addition to Convair, Emil worked for Hughes and Ryan. After retiring, Emil and Audrey moved to Cottonwood, Ariz. They celebrated their 55th anniversary in September 2005. They had no children. Audrey was born in Ohio and they met while Emil was at Lewis Lab. Audrey wrote about Emil’s passing; she may eventually move back to Ohio. Her address is: Audrey M. Kremzier, 5260 East Whisper Ridge, Cornville, AZ 86352-4810.

On a lighter note, the visit to San Diego by Gloria and George Powell mentioned in my previous report came to be in the last week of March, I had also talked with good friend Dr. C. Budd Cohen about the Powell visit and Budd and Bea were happy to join us for a mini-reunion. The Cohens arrived early on the 30th and stayed in a hotel close to the restaurant where we would have dinner. Mary and I joined the Powells and the Cohens and it was a fun time. After dinner, we adjourned to the Reich residence for dessert and more talk. Budd brought along a few pictures featuring George in Church 3 dorm during the V-12 days. George is holding a slide rule—remember those! We did not talk about a 60th reunion in ’07—is anyone thinking about one? If so, where? We are not getting any younger, that’s for sure! The visitors all went home the next day, the 31st.

Send Us Your Musical Memories

All alumni who were members of campus music organizations during their student years are invited to attend the Alumni MusicFest, which will take place during FallFest 2006, Oct. 13-15. Activities will include campus tours, a reception for Friends of Joel Dolven, a hockey game, and of course, rehearsals and performances.

Rensselaer magazine invites those who plan to participate in the weekend, as well as those who are unable to attend, to write about the special, noteworthy experiences you remember from your student musical days. We’d love to see photos, too.

Send your memories to: Meg Gallien Office of Strategic Communications and External Relations RPI 110 8th Street Troy, NY 12180

For more information on the weekend’s festivities, contact Howard Henze ’69 at bchhenze@bellsouth.net or Peter Pedone at pedonp@rpi.edu.
Ed Flanagan and his wife, Cille, live in Ormond Beach, Fla., from October to May (for the weather) and in Groton, Conn., from June through September (for the off-season). Ed has agreed to serve as Class of ’49 correspondent, but avers that no one could truly succeed the late Joe Clark. He asks that ’49 classmates “help the old man out” by sending updates to his summer address or his winter address (both listed at end of column).

Ed submitted the following column to get things started:

Ralph Bodie retired as works manager for Midway Co., Lodi, N.J., where he developed manufacturing methods for experimental components for the aerospace industry. His efforts to serve in WWII make for a compelling story:

Having a partially paralyzed left arm since birth, he was rejected for enlistment after Pearl Harbor. He left home with $1.05 in his pocket and hitch-hiked from Lansingburgh to Los Angeles, where he arrived broke but grateful for random acts of kindness along the way. He was rebuffed by the merchant marine, washed dishes, learned the sheet metal trade at night school, then worked at North American Aviation on the B-25 auxiliary bomb bay fuel tanks. Homesick, Ralph hitchhiked back East and worked in Troy as a junior draftsman.

Still under 20, he was accepted for limited military service, attended Bombsight and Autopilot School, and served at Whitehorse Air Force Base in the Yukon, a stopover for new aircraft being flown by women pilots to Russia. He went to Kearney, Neb., and flew with new B-17 and B-29 crews to check autopilot operation. There, he met his first wife and mother of his three daughters, two of whom arrived while he studied for his management degree and lived in Rensselaer.

Losing two wives, Ralph met Doris while playing duplicate bridge; they married in 1996. They have seven grandchildren and eight greats. They live in Westport, N.Y., and Ralph still enjoys fishing and bridge. He credits his Troy boyhood peers who ignored his disability and treated him like anyone else, as did the Air Force. Says Ralph, “I was very happy about that.”

Following three years as a Naval flight officer, Richard Pfundstein earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Rensselaer leading to an interesting career in geotechnical engineering and civil design for transportation and tunnel projects in many states. He received an ISPE Professional Management Award in 1990.

Dick and Clem (now recovering well from a knee replacement) have five children, 21 grandchildren, and six greats! One grandson graduated from RPI in 2004. Oldest daughter Joanne’s two sons and daughter are West Point graduates, two of them veterans of Iraq. Another daughter, Cathy Gray, is currently president of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

Dick serves on the board of directors of Marklund Children’s Home for multiple-handicapped children, and he continues to work part time for a Wheaton, Ill., civil engineering firm, reviewing projects for standards and code compliance. His family keeps his hobby of photography well-employed.

Dick Burnstead and his wife, Marylou, are moving to a retirement community west of Media, Pa., having sold their Wallingford home to their daughter and family. Dick’s entire career with Piasecki/Vertol/Boeing associated him with various helicopter designs, including the CH-46 (Sea Knight) and CH-47 (Chinook), which are deployed in Iraq. He attends nearby meetings of the American Helicopter Society and lunches with other Boeing retirees.

He speaks warmly of joining the RPI Glee Club under Joel Dolven, who led his singing with the Delaware (Pa.) County Choral Society, Sailing, photography, genealogy, four children, and nine grandchildren keep him active. Although Dick sometimes thought he should have majored in management, he credits his great background in aeronautical engineering at RPI with his long and successful career. He fondly remembers fraternity life, as treasurer and president of Chi Phi.

Burlington, Vt., has become the principal residence of Donald Robinson and his wife, Mary Lou, who chose it over Melbourne, Fla., and the hurricanes. They have five children and seven grandchildren. Biking, swimming, and travel have been their main outdoor activities.

Don’s interesting career began with a B.Ch.E. and B.Mgmt. at RPI. After a stint with Eastman Kodak and four years in the Army during the Korean War, he obtained an M.D. at U. of Penn. After 17 years in academic medicine, he became VP and head of CNS Drug Development for Bristol-Myers Squibb and continues as an independent consultant to the pharmaceutical industry.

Don and his wife enjoy all of the arts— theater and music especially. He recalls Dick Burnstead and agrees that Joel Dolven’s one-semester course increased his appreciation immensely. Dolven’s son was the school master of Hamden Hall when the Robinson’s’ daughter Sara attended there in the ’80s. Don is in touch with Theta Chi brothers Tom Evans and Bill Thoen, of the Class of ’50, and Nancy Delove Fitzroy, who attended Pittsfield High School along with Don and Tom.

Send news to: Ed Flanagan ’49, 75 Crown Knoll Court, #97, Groton, CT 06340 (June through Sept.); 203 S. Orchard St., Apt. 5B, Ormond Beach, FL 32174 (Oct. through May); edflndl@netzero.com

John Arcate (BEE) wanted to let his friends know that he and his wife, Márcia, have moved into a new house after 43 years. It’s in the same town, Sleepy Hollow, but the new home has a great view overlooking the Hudson River to the south and to the west. Remembering my offer to help look up old RPI friends, he asked about Bob Armstrong. (Unfortunately Bob is listed as deceased in the 2005 directory.) John became a VP at Verizon after 40 years before he retired in 1989. He then started a second career as owner and president of Complan Associates, a telco consulting company, and was active in Puerto Rico, and in Europe from Helsinki to Istanbul. He retired again in 1999.

Fred Edwards (BME) says that what he remembers most of his days at RPI was playing in the band. He writes that he loved the halftime band maneuvers at the football and lacrosse games. Fred retired from Grumman Aerospace after 41 years in structural design and analysis. He also played a role in Grumman Corp. as director of mergers and acquisitions. His leisure time activities in Holland, Pa.,
include gardening, reading, and church activities.

John (Jack) Maisch (BME), in his reunion update, wrote that the last reunion he attended was his 50th. He regrets that he was unable to make the 55th. He retired from Electric Boat (Div. of General Dynamics) after 36 years. He still lives in Groton, Conn., and stays active sailing a small boat (22-foot), kayaking, and skiing in the wintertime. He serves as chair of the local zoning board.

John Conrad Hofelich (BS, Phys.) specialized in developing abrasive products at Norton Co., Coated Abrasives Div. He retired after 35 years and now lives in Spartanburg, S.C. He writes that he didn’t have many memories of RPI as he was married and lived off campus. He was kept busy working mostly at the treasurer’s office at school. He does remember going to one of the proms and dancing to the music of Vaughn Monroe. Before he retired he lived in Sand Lake, N.Y., where he was active with the Little League and Boy Scouts. Since his retirement, his wife, Katherine, says he takes care of the gardening outside while she takes care of the inside. He also tries to get in some golf.

In my store of long-lost treasures, I found a concert-size handmade ukulele in mint condition. A genuine Kamaka Uke given to me by my old buddy Fred Kamaka when he and I hung out together in New York after the Korean War. He and his brother Sam took over their father’s firm, the famous Kamaka Ukulele Co. Now Virginia wants me to stave off Alzheimer’s by learning to play the ukulele, with absolutely no musical background. Does anyone have any suggestions of how to start?

I’m sure your classmates wish to hear from all of you, and letters are few. I want to let people know how you all are doing—so please write.

Send news to: Herb Kee ’50, 354 Broome Street, New York, NY 10013; h: (212) 219-8461; xnnlkkke @jimo.com

George Wheeler, chairman of the Reunion Committee, helped plan a Class of 1951 dinner buffer, Meet the Transfer Scholarship Recipients, and demonstrations by our Teacher Endowment Award winners: Drs. Philip Casabella ’54 and Deepak Vashisht. Dr. Casabella presented a power point program showing how teaching undergraduate physics classes has moved into the new millennium, and Dr. Vashisht’s power point program demonstrated how a new millennium bio-med subject is taught.

John Martin says that he had planned to attend the 50th, but a hip replacement wouldn’t allow that to happen; he hoped to make the 55th. John took ROTC to pay for gasoline for his LaSalle, went in the Army in mid-July ‘51 and eventually to Korea with many other alumni. He came back home and married Beth Nestler and worked a year at Texaco Labs. He went to MIT for a master’s in ME, combustion and engines. Then John worked on all kinds of diesel engines, and ended up in Phoenix in ’78 at Garrett working on all kinds of aircraft diesel engines; he is now consulting on that subject. He and Beth have a son and daughter. They have two granddaughters who bring them great joy. He and Beth are both in good health.

Bill Harris e-mails with the sad news of the passing of Bob Tiel on Jan. 6, 2006. Bob had retired in 2000 after seven years with Dassault Systems, preceded by a 33-year career with IBM, preceded by eight years in the USAF. The alumni of 1951 wish to express our condolences to Bob’s family.

Stan Goodman e-mails for the first time from Israel. His address is goodo@hashkedim.com and he invites those that wish to contact him to please do so. He had just received the Fall 2005 issue of the alumni magazine and explains the delay as follows: The way the distribution works in the local case is that a stack of magazines is shipped as surface freight to an alumnus in Jerusalem, who places each copy into its own envelope, stamps and addresses it (in handwriting—no computer printed labels for him) and mails them. Sometimes two issues show up in a single envelope. The Winter issue probably arrived by about May. Stan says that he is still functional in most senses, enjoying a quiet retirement, traveling abroad (U.S. and Europe) at least once per year.

Robert Hall, who lives in Grass Valley, Calif., wrote that they had snow in their front yard and sent a picture to prove it. He says that that is very unusual. At least, Bob, you wrote, so please don’t hesitate to do it again.

Finally, Ruth and I and our golden retriever plus our diabetic cat traveled to our daughter’s in Michigan and had a great time. I even let my 15-year-old granddaughter, who has a driving permit, drive several times while there. Ruth obtained her blue point Himalayan kitten while there, making it an interesting, but wonderful trip home. The new kitten and our dog get along famously, washing each other’s faces and eating out of the same dish.

Send news to: Fred Comstock ’51, 168 Main Street North, Bethlehem, CT 06751-1401; comstockf51c @msn.com

I recently traveled through Hawaii and California wearing my RPI logo hat and jacket. I was amazed at how many people approached me with some comment like “terrible school” or “do you know so and so.” It is a great opener and you meet some of the nicest people. Great promotion for RPI.

Herb Beller sent a note correcting my spelling of D.B. Steinman (nice to be back in school). Craig Woodworth requested the graduation speech and commented, “concerning engineering research, leadership, and ideals—it is just as applicable today as it was 53 years ago.” Craig retired 18 years ago from Niagara Mohawk (now National Grid) after a 35-year career. He still works part time at the Buffalo Cable Department with various titles such as employee, contractor, part-timer, and Kelley Services (Kelley “Girl”). He trains cable splicers. Craig and his wife, Ruth, were awarded the “1997 Persons of the Year” from the Kenmore Presbyterian Church. They both volunteer for Habitat for Humanity. His railroad hobby has led them to train trips through Canada, New Zealand, and Hawaii. Next stop is Alaska. Craig has been a presenter at historical and church groups. He even made a major speech at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). They also stay young as their nine grandchildren all live nearby. Craig keeps up with Lou Erwin from Jackson, Mich.

Hank Asch has developed a wonderful new career as a part-time feature writer for the Lakeland Ledger in Auburndale, Fla. His columns are called “First Person.” Some of his subjects have been intriguing design, look-alikes, time on a dude ranch, wanderlust, family ties, and a treat to work (volunteer) in Yellowstone Park. You can download Lake- land Ledger and look for Hank Asch articles, which are quite excellent.

After 20 years as a Maryland Democratic legislator (eight in the House and 12 as a senator), Len Teitelbaum has decided to retire. His career dis-
played particular excellence in the economy, ethics, and the environment among many of his accomplishments. A frenzy has developed in the Democratic party to fill his seat. Len also has a successful business career as an entrepreneur distributing computer products. His son runs the business. Behind every successful man is a great “Abigail Adams.” Len and Marilyn have been married more than 50 years and they have two grandchildren. Len is living proof that engineers make fine politicians. To begin their retirement they will celebrate with a trip they won to Budapest and Prague. Bon voyage!

Send news to: Arthur Goldstein ’53, 940 Sylvan Lane, Mamaroneck, NY 10543; w: (914) 833-1039; h: (914) 777-0009; fax: (914) 833-1048; agaett@aol.com

I received an annual greeting from Lee Harris Pomeroy Architects that pictures their proposal (one of six proposals in a limited international architectural competition for a signature building in the heart of China’s Tianjin Economic Development Area). The vertically twisted exterior steel façade design for this twin, 100-story mixed-use tower looks back into the future with this newest entry.

With the advent of computers, many people have been working on their family’s genealogies. Two of our classmates have done so (and I’m certain that there are many others that I haven’t heard of). Augusto “Gus” Gautier and his wife, Nydia, have traced Gus’s family tree back six generations of those born in Puerto Rico. Edgar Noguera and his wife, Sibyl, who have lived for many years in Annapolis, Md., lived, I believe they told me, next door to each other as children in a small town outside Bogota, Colombia, S.A. But soon after Edgar graduated from RPI and returned home, he decided to return to the U.S. and make it his home as an architect. They have done an extensive genealogy on their family.

Who else out there has completed and/or is working on one for their family? I have had the Geurtze family name history traced via research called onomastics (not a genealogy) that found my name derived from the spelling of three origins of our name. The earliest accounting of our spelling of our name was 1657 when Gerard, Matthias, and Wilhelm Geurtze died. Apparently our name found its way from mastics (not a genealogy) that found my name derived from the spelling of three origins of our name. The earliest accounting of our spelling of our name was 1657 when Gerard, Matthias, and Wilhelm Geurtze died. Apparently our name found its way from Switzerland, through Hamburg, Germany, and on to Amsterdam, Holland, where the bulk of my ancestors came from. Have any of you classmates found any famous or unusual characters in your family genealogies? Send me your story and we can share it with all our alumni.

The RPI 50 Year Club lunch held on Feb. 15, 2006, at the Holiday Inn, Highland Beach (East Coast), Fla., was well attended by 39 alumni who came to hear Frank Devine ’43, former ambassador to El Salvador, share several of his adventures from his days in that position. Attendees were S.C. Adams ’55 and Jo Adams, Paul Alpert ’56 and David Fischer, Harriet Archbald ’50 and Robert Archbald, Joseph Bauman ’48, Leon Brown ’49 and Elizabeth Brown, Michael Cahill ’49 and Elsie Cahill, Robert Cook ’48, Dr. Nancy DeLoye Fitzroy ’49, Elliott Fine ’48, Stan Greenblanth ’46 and Mary Greenblath, George Lesson ’49, Joseph Leggett ’40 and Jane Leggett, Julius Levatich ’55 and Frieda Staudinger, Robert Longbine ’46, Norris MacFarland ’50, Richard Madye ’43, Douglas Porto ’52 and Ruth Porto, Jerome Reinitz ’56, Louis Sansaricq ’53 and Colette Sansaricq, Peter Scharfenberg ’58 and Marilyn Scharfenberg, Leo Sherry ’46, Jerold Skopp ’56, William R. Smith ’49 and Dorothy Smith, Eric Wieler ’54 and Edna Wieler.

The next day the 50 Year Club lunch shifted over to the West Coast where it was held at Michaels On East, Sarasota, Fla. Here, Carl Westerdahl, former alumni relations director, hosted an “Antiques Road-show” for us where all of us were invited to bring Rensselaer memorabilia that could be displayed in the display case in the Rensselaer Union or Rensselaer archives. Carl showed a slide of RPI events, organization pictures, and other old-time memories. Carl invited Coach Ned Harkness up to join him to talk about that great 1954 NCAA hockey team while he showed several slides of the team members. Those attending included Hank Asch ’53, C. Lloyd Bauer ’55 and Janet Bauer, Frederick Beyrlein ’52, Fred Doery ’54 and Lynda Doery, William Frank ’51 and Helen Marie Frank, Garrett Geurtze ’54 (me) and Anna Geurtze, John Hanrahan ’54, Howard Isermann ’42, Robert Lupi ’54, Rob McIntosh ’60, Randy Mitchelson ’93, Tom Rippere ’75, Gerard Titterington ’51 and Vera Titterington, Edward Winter ’40 and Mary Winter.

Bob Meyers sent news about yet another gathering in Florida:

“Sunday evening, Feb. 19, 2006, saw the third annual RPI-AEPi Winter Reunion, at the home of Larry Hefter ’57 and his wife, Jackie, in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. The Class of ’54 was well represented, with Henry Rosenblatt and his wife, Yola, Zev Rosen and his wife, Fran, and Bob Meyers and his wife, Pearl, all present. Also attending were Martin Rogers ’56, Mel Hirsch ’57 and his wife, Dottie, Jerry Schneider ’59 and his wife, Ruth, and Leah Silverstein, widow of Phil Silverstein ’55. The evening started off with a CD version of ‘Hail Dear Old Rensselaer,’ and at dinner we all joined in the cheer ‘e to the x.’ Dessert and coffee was followed by a spirited

The National Academy of Engineering (NAE) announced the election of 76 new members in February, including three Rensselaer alumni. Election to the NAE is among the highest professional distinctions accorded to an engineer. Academy membership honors those who have made outstanding contributions to engineering research, practice, or education, and to the pioneering of new and developing fields of technology.

David Goodman ’60, professor of electrical and computer engineering at Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, N.Y., was cited for “contributions to the theory and practice of wireless communications and digital signal processing.” He currently holds a temporary position as program director in the Computer and Network Systems Division of the National Science Foundation. Before moving to the NSF in February, he was director of the NSF Wireless Internet Center for Advanced Technology. He has made fundamental contributions to digital signal processing, speech coding, and wireless information networks.

Sau-Hai (Harvey) Lam ’54 is the Edwin Wilsey ’04 Professor Emeritus of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Princeton University. The Academy cited him “for contributions to aerospace engineering in the areas of plasma flows, combustion, turbulence, and adaptive controls.” Lam, who received his Ph.D. from Princeton in 1958, joined the Princeton faculty two years later. He led an active career as a teacher, researcher, and administrator for four decades, transferring to emeritus status in 1999. His current research interests include fluid mechanics, plasmas, chemical kinetics, Lagrangian dynamics, nonlinear control theory, and singular perturbation methodologies.

John Linehan, M.M.E. ’62, is a consulting professor of bioengineering at Stanford University and the executive editor of bmesource.org, a new open-source Web portal in biomedical engineering. He was recognized for “research on the pulmonary mechanics and metabolism of critical bioactive agents and for innovations in bioengineering education and professional development.” Linehan was vice president of the Whitaker Foundation from 1998-2005. Prior to joining the foundation, he was the Bagozzi professor of biomedical engineering and the founding chairman of the department of biomedical engineering at Marquette University. He also was adjunct professor of physiology and medicine (pulmonary and critical care) at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

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Irrepressible Ted Baglin has dual citizenship, starting out in the RPI Class of ’51 and after U.S. Navy service graduating with us in ’55. He writes that he enjoyed our 50th Reunion, particularly since he managed to get some of the student hosts to take him on a “pub crawl” of downtown Troy. Ted now winters at a Colorado ski resort, skiing there and in Europe, and is a scuba diver in the Caribbean and the Pacific—“so I’m a lucky person.”

Matthew Fox earned an MBA, was a partner in Coopers & Lybrand, managed capital investments at American Home Products, and now heads his own broker-dealer firm handling real estate and deals. After working at American Home Products, and now heads his own broker-dealer firm handling real estate and deals. At American Home Products, Matt led a team that was responsible for investment activities. Today, he is managing his own firm that focuses on real estate and deals. He and his wife, who also has an MBA, have three children and four grandchildren. They enjoy traveling, especially to the Caribbean and the Pacific, where they have purchased a condo for their retirement years.

Robert Stoyer worked 34 years for Chicago Bridge & Iron, supervising design and engineering of cryogenic facilities and high vacuum satellite test facilities. After retirement, he worked as a consultant for the government and for a local business. He and his wife have five children and ten grandchildren. They enjoy traveling to Europe and the Caribbean, where they spend their winters.

Donald Kava changed careers in the mid-1960s, from chemical engineering to computer applications. After working for Eastman Kodak and the Department of Defense he spent 29 years at the Atomic Energy Commission’s site at Rocky Flats, and then another 16 years at Chicago Bridge & Iron. He worked as a consultant for several companies, including IBM and Raytheon, and served as a consultant to the military. Donald is a retired consultant and enjoys traveling to Europe and to the Caribbean. He has five children and ten grandchildren.

John Laffan worked on optical equipment for military use and as a consultant for the government on military intelligence, with positions at GE, Raytheon, Sanders, Quest Research, and MIT’s Lincoln Laboratories. After retirement he is now in Temple Terrace, Fla., and enjoys overseas travel as well as camping and Elderhostel trips with his eight grandchildren.

Larry Leonard may be our only classmate still actively engaged in breeding. He and Carmen are relocating from the Chicago area to Scottsville, Ky., to escape cold winters and continue their avocation of raising collies. Carmen is one of the top collie breeders in the country, with 30 current dogs and over 200 earning their AKC Championships during the past 25 years. Larry is her chief Kennel Helper. After RPI he served in the Navy, earned an MBA at Harvard, and performed management advisory services for 34 years at Deloitte & Touche. Retiring in 1993 as a partner, he got cabin fever and embarked on a 10-year “second career” at Northern Illinois Medical Center, where he designed and implemented a costing system and performed financial analysis and other decision support activities.

Richard Marshall earned an M.S.M.E. at RPI and spent 38 years at Pratt & Whitney, working as a section manager and specializing in combustion and jet engine development. Rick and Kathie, married five years, have 15 grandchildren and divide their time between Narragansett, R.I., and Bonita Springs, Fla. They enjoy golf, tennis, and travel.

Roger Mullins is retired from a career in municipal engineering, most recently as public works director for East Hartford, Conn. He works out at a health center and skis regularly, enjoying ski outings with six of his grandchildren last winter. Other activities include weekly food pickups for a church food kitchen and singing at senior centers and nursing homes with his Rotary Club choral group.

Helmuth Schultze was a chemistry lab instructor for many of us as he worked toward earning his Ph.D. in 1955. He remembers taking several freshmen from chem lab to the hospital after their unsuccessful efforts to insert a glass tube through a rubber cork. “Dutch” went on to a career in market development and management in the chemical industry, working for Union Carbide and then serving as president of Michigan Chemical, group VP of Allied Chemical, and president of the Chlorine Institute. He later was vice chairman of Ethan Allen furniture, and now manages one of several businesses he has acquired.

Robert Stoyer worked 34 years for Chicago Bridge & Iron, supervising design and engineering of cryogenic facilities and high vacuum satellite test facilities. After retirement, he and Suzanne have spent 14 years as full-time volunteers for Habitat for Humanity in Pensacola, Fla., he as construction manager and she as volunteer coordinator. They increased the output from four homes per year to 45, building 435 homes in all, as well as building their own house and houses for each of their three children. Avid sailors, this summer they are taking their 34-foot catamaran on a cruise of more than 5,000 miles, traveling up the East Coast, through the Erie Canal to the Great Lakes, and down the Mississippi and Tennessee Rivers to Mobile, Ala.

Send news to: John Schmidt ’55, 11 Honey Lake Drive, Princeton, NJ 08540-7435; h: (609) 737-1588; theschmidts2@hotmail.com
They weren’t able to attend our 50th Reunion in Troy in early June as they had a granddaughter in PA who graduated from high school on June 9, and the family planned a big pig roast on Sat., June 10.

The Noyes will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in NY in early August. They hope that Verne McGuffey, who was their best man, will be able to join them in South Glens Falls, N.Y., for that occasion. The real anniversary date is Oct. 12, so the Noyes will have another big celebration in Florida about that time. Congratulations, and thanks for writing.

Nice to hear from Paul Pillsbury. Paul and his wife of 44 years, Alice, are living in retirement in historic Bucks County, Pa., in order to be near to their daughter and son-in-law. They provide daily child care for their two grandchildren so that their offspring can be a two-career family. They were looking forward to attending the 50th Reunion of the class in June. It was Paul’s first visit to campus in 20 years.

Paul’s working years were spent in: Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Florida, where he was with Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, Westinghouse Combustion Turbines, and Siemens Power Generation, from which he retired in 2001. During his Westinghouse and Siemens years he specialized in designing combustors for synthetic fuels made from coal (and other alternative fuels). Paul would be especially interested in hearing news about Class of ’56 members who were in the subset that included mechanical engineering and NROTC. If you want to reach Paul, e-mail me at ArtCastro@alum.rpi.edu and I will send you Paul’s e-mail address.

Got a letter and photo from Howard Schneider. Realizing they wouldn’t be able to be together for the 50th Reunion at RPI, some of the Alpha Chi Chi class of ’56 decided to hold their own reunion this past January. Pictured on the front porch of Prof. Barry Taylor’s home in St. Petersburg, Fla., are, left to right, Richard Anderson, Barry Taylor, Howard Schneider, and James Miller. They reported, and I quote, “lively technical discussions and highly educational programs were the order of the day.”

Thanks, Howard!

Jim Nerric sent the following: “Notes from the long lost: Retired to Wolfeboro, N.H., after 30 years of federal service and eight years of private industry. After RPI, completed pilot training in Pensacola, spent two+ years in the Navy Hurricane Hunters, then four years at Texaco Research Center concurrently with three years in anti-submarine reserve squadrons, 26 years as a Navy civilian engineer analyzing explosive weapons and aircraft for non-obvious accident causes, eventually arriving at the top of that miniscule food chain. Interesting life which required close technical involvement with nearly all of the Navy conventional weapon systems and aircraft programs, a few of those ’weddontalkaboutem’ programs, and a short tour in the Secretary of Defense Office in the Pentagon. Interrupted Navy stuff for a four-year stint with an Air Force ICBM contractor. Didn’t get rich but there was never a dull moment. Would love to do it all over again.” Good to hear from you, Jim.

And through the RPI alumni Web site, we received news from Jay Mendell ’56, Ph. D. ’64, who is a professor in the School of Public Administration at Florida Atlantic University, where he teaches about nonprofit management. He recently issued a report on how stigmatized nonprofits must reform their fundraising efforts. The report, “Black Sheep Fundraising: Rethinking Major Gifts for Your Stigmatized Nonprofit,” is available as a free download from the Internet at http://black-sheep-library.com. According to Dr. Mendell, such charities as addiction recovery and HIV treatment are notorious for their difficulty in raising donations. The community treats their clients as undeserving, and prospective donors shy away from being associated with their causes. In response, these black sheep of the charitable world may further antagonize willing donors. In his report, Dr. Mendell diagnoses the problem and prescribes a cure.

Send news to: Art Castro ’56, 6698 Lynx Cove, Littleton, CO 80124; h: (303) 386-3295; artcastro@alum.rpi.edu

Van C.S. Mow ’62 was awarded the 2006 Davies Medal for Engineering Achievement at a ceremony on campus April 7. First presented in 1980, the Davies Medal is the highest award for an alumnus given by the School of Engineering. A world-renowned biomedical scientist and engineer, Mow is the Stanley Dicker Professor and founding chair of the Department of Biomedical Engineering at Columbia University.

Congratulations to Dr. Marty Weinstein who has been selected to receive the RAA Fellows Award for 2006. That award “honors those alumni who, by their achievements in a chosen profession or endeavor or by their service to the Institute, have set an example for Rensselaer men and women to emulate.” Marty is vice chairman and CEO of Sequa Corp., a $1.8 billion diversified manufacturer of aerospace, automotive, metal coating, specialty chemicals, and industrial machinery products. After his RPI B.S. in metallurgy, Marty went on to MIT for his M.S. and Sc.D. in metallurgy (61). He is the recipient of NASA’s Merit Award for work on thermonuclear power modules, and has 121 patents on diffusion coatings for jet engine and gas turbine materials and components.

Congratulations, also, to Horace Pops, who has been named a fellow of ASM International. He was cited for “exceptional contributions to the metals industry through practical research and alloy development for nonferrous metal wire.” Horace is director of the Metals Laboratory, Essex Group.

At this writing it’s only about 10 months till we gather in Troy for our 50th. Your reunion committee is hard at it. In addition to some excellent reunion organizing discussions during our increasingly regular conference calls, we are all having some fun reminiscing about our experiences 50+ years ago. With that as a prelude for a great time in June ’07, do some planning now to be there!

Send news to: J.R. “Buzz” Campbell ’57, 5 Militia Drive, Lexington, MA 02421; fax: (781) 863-9411; JRCampbell2@cs.com

Robert Johnson, M.S. ’57, Ph.D. ’58, is retired after 38-plus years at GE. How he got his degrees without planning for them may be of interest. After being put on the staff of the GE Research Laboratory without an advanced degree, he felt he needed more education in the physical sciences. He took various courses of interest at RPI in the evening while working days. After about four years his faculty adviser suggested he write an M.S. thesis on how he developed his hypersonic helium wind tunnel (Mach 40+). For it he got 15 hours credit, an M.S. degree, and was nominated into the Society of Sigma Xi. With this he found he needed only three more courses, and with an agreement with GE and RPI, he was able to use some of his hypersonic...
research as a thesis topic. So he got a Ph.D. without striving for it.

Send news to: John Canady ’58, 3293 Madison Ave., #S-106, Boulder, CO 80303-2033; h: (303) 442-4544; jcanady@alum.rpi.edu or canady2017@msn.com

No news is not always good news—send some. Send news to: Bob Styczynski ’59, 10 Sunset Drive, Latham, NY 12110; tel: (518) 783-5683; fax: (518) 782-1219; rjs@capital.net

David Kavanaugh authored a guest essay recently for USA Today on the merits of a la carte cable subscriptions.
quickly than fast-forwarding a video recording, and (2) a method of linking a recording of a live presentation to the notes of an attendee.

But all work and no play would make Peter a lopsided person. So in his free time, he bikes, tickles the ivories, and designs and builds hardwood furniture. He makes his home in Menlo Park in “Silicon Valley.”

Send news to: Jay Winderman ’62, 1868 Bridgeport Ave., Claremont, CA 91711-2520; h: (909) 624-9985; jburw@earthlink.net

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If you have not been back to Troy to visit the campus, you have missed seeing the impressive growth in our university. In May I attended my great niece’s graduation with the Class of 2006. Kate Sallenger gave her uncle an insider’s tour. I was amazed at the new construction and the renovation of the old. My nephew, Christopher Tiley, Class of 1993, and his wife, Cheryl, are expecting their first child in August, yet another legacy engineer in the making.

Kenneth Manning sent me a note telling me that he is enjoying his tenure as CEO of Sensient Technologies. His board of directors recently extended his term for another five years. Ken was the driving force in transforming the company from a food commodities firm to a tech-oriented specialty chemicals business. Along the way the company changed its name from Universal Foods to Sensient to reflect its new direction. Ken is an active member of his church both in Milwaukee and at Rensselaer. He has served as a trustee of the Rensselaer Newman Foundation. Among his many honors, he is especially proud of his membership in the thousand-year-old Roman Catholic Order of the Knights of Malta. He and Maureen have three sons and three daughters.

In January, Wallace Wade was selected to receive the Edward N. Cole Award for Automotive Engineering Innovation. The award was presented on April 3 of this year. During his career at Ford Motor Co., Wally had over 25 patents and he is a leading authority on powertrain research and development.

Send news to: Jack Tiley ’63, 151 Hamilton Ave., Watertown, CT 06795-2402; h: (860) 274-3897; rtp63@specialops.com

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Send news to: John L. Shahdahian, Esq. ’64, 114 Essex Street, Rockelle Park, NJ 07662; fax: (201) 843-1884; SHAHDN1ESQ@aol.com

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James Saunders reported that he has happily retired from Technip USA, Houston, and is now enjoying life in Mexico City. His new address is: Calacita 23-2, Col. Hipódromo, 06100 México D.F., Mexico.

Mark von Wodtke, now a professor emeritus at Cal Poly Pomona after teaching there for 35 years, seems to be as busy as ever in “retirement.” A feature article in a recent issue of the Claremont (Calif.) Courier described his central role in the ACORN Project, an oak woodland regeneration project in the Claremont Wilderness Park. Mark is also a co-founding principal of the Claremont Environmental Design Group Inc.; and the founder of Energy Harvester, a business that employs both his sons and designs and installs renewable energy systems. He and his wife, Carla, also manage to do a good bit of traveling—to time shares in Hawaii and Canada and to visit their family and her family in Italy.

Jim Wintner was the subject of an article in the Jan. 18 issue of the Village Voice, in which he took the reporter on a tour of his digs at the South Street Seaport. Jim is the founder, president, and CEO of BenefitEvents.com, which offers online auction services for nonprofits.

Send news to: Erik Pettersen ’65, 2821 DuMont Court, Annapolis, MD 21401-7825; w: (410) 571-0789; erik.pettersen@comcast.net

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Richard Aurelio is chairman of Varian Semiconductor Equipment Associates, and has just recently been appointed to the board of directors of Fairchild Semiconductor in South Portland, Maine. Under Rich’s leadership, Varian is a designer and manufacturer of semiconductor processing equipment for virtually all of the major semiconductor manufacturers worldwide.

Rocqui “Roc” Van Guider was promoted to vice president of Hanson Professional Services Inc., a national employee-owned consulting firm providing architectural, engineering, and management services from its headquarters in Springfield, Ill.

Send news to: Walter Grube ’66, 149 Overlook Road, Glastonbury, CT 06033-3651; walgrube@cox.net

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40th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007 Send news to: Jack Lippert ’67, 18 S. Main Street, Franklinville, NY 14737-1222; LippertLaw@aol.com

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Alan Falk sent an update on his move last summer from California to North Carolina, which included driving cross-country three times, with his Prius pulling a trailer and hauling all the gear for two dogs and weeks on the road. He and Claudia bought their dream house in Raleigh, surrounded by wonderful neighbors, with some old friends and relatives nearby.

Send news to: Linda Lebsack ’67, 1795 Oneida Street, Denver, CO 80221-1754; LinLebs@COI.com

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Dave Carnevale has been named vice president of marketing for American Technology Corp., a manufacturer of directed sound products and technologies. Previously, he had been with Mitsubishi Electronics.

Dale Thuillez, a partner of the Albany New York law firm Thuillez, Ford, Gold Johnson & Butler, was appointed to the Albany Law School board of trustees.

For my fellow musicians, I need to hear from you about the Alumni MusicFest coming in October. You know who you are and how much fun you had with the Glee Club or the Orchestra or Band. Aside from just getting together, we’ll also be talking about a memorial for our dear friend, Joel Dolven. Let me hear from you!

Send news to: Howard Henze ’69, 7 Turnberry Place, Arden, NC 28704; h: (828) 687-2356; bch@bellsouth.net

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Bob Reith saw my APB in the last alumni magazine and wrote to say that he’s alive and well and living in northern New Jersey. Following RPI, he taught for seven months at Hackett Junior High in Albany while awaiting appointment to Navy OCS in Newport. Upon commissioning he was detailed to the U.S. Naval Academy where he taught introductory anthropology courses as well as world and American naval history recitation sections, working under the renowned naval historian E.B. Potter. Bob recalls being one of the few liberal arts (anthro-soc) majors during the waning ’60s.
Following the end of his tour, Bob married Margie Mahlow and left the Navy to pursue a degree at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. For nearly 25 years following he taught high school subjects ranging from cabinet making to biblical studies to geography to computer science and networking. Along the way he received a couple of yearbook appreciations and dedications from senior classes.

Bob left teaching in 2001 to prepare networking proposals for a local networking firm and is currently a freelance writer. He also works extensively in the local Orthodox Presbyterian Church as an elder and teacher, and edits the newsletter and publications for the state homeschooling organization in New Jersey. Both his daughter and son were homeschooled and have graduated with music degrees, Evelyn from Covenant College with a B.A. and Andrew with a B.Mus. in piano performance. Margie is currently a medical writer and editor.

Now, on to more news. Eric Geller and his wife, Jean, live in Lexington, Mass. He is president of Elite Video in Woburn, Mass., and in his spare time golfs and plays softball. When asked to comment on the highlights of his life, he reflected on his wife and his two daughters who are graduates of UMass and Skidmore. His most important memory of his time at Rensselaer is that “I learned how to think! (I think!)”

Bill Guerriero lives in Saint Charles, Ill. His son went to Notre Dame and his daughter is in high school. He captains a B-777 for United Airlines using his aerospace engineering degree well. He has diversified and is also president and CEO of West Side Video. In his spare time he golfs and is also an avid remote control airplane hobbyist. His best memories of his time at RPI focus on his coaches Goodyear and Jontos and being a varsity athlete on both the lacrosse and soccer teams.

George Harrison and his wife, Rose, live in Dillsburg, Pa., with their 17-year-old son who is a junior in high school. George has spent the last 34 years as an actuary, 24 in the stressful world of mergers, reorganizations, and divestitures and the last 10 years in the more stable public environment. He was recently nominated for the presidency of the Central Pennsylvania Actuarial Association. He continues to sing for his church choir and pursues his interest in the American Civil War.

Jim Ingleson and his wife, Carolyn, live in Altamont, N.Y. They have two daughters, one who has received her master’s in social work, the other working on her master’s in secondary education. Jim is senior operations engineer with NY Independent Systems.

John Kolts and his wife, Anna Battenhouse, are living in Austin, Texas, with their five dogs. John is a senior software engineer for Evolutionary Technologies International. On one side, he remembers his experiences and contributions to the social transformations of the ’60s at RPI while on the flipside he remembers watching, with apartment mates Jack Kelly and Brian Lee, the RPI hockey team beat Ken Dryden and mighty Cornell.

Jack Kelly and his wife, Marie Tymrak, live in Phoenix, certainly not the same weather as Troy. He is a senior design engineer for Motorola. As he reflects on his life and career, he mentioned not only his four U.S. and one Japanese patents but also his Peace Corps volunteer experience in the Philippines.

Anyone seen Buddy Windell lately? How about Joel Barmish or Mike Kramer? Please write me because I would love to update the class on your whereabouts or any classmate who you have the inside information on. Until next time, hope you have a great summer.

Send news to: Rick Hartt ’70, Rensselaer Union, RPI, Troy, NY 12180-3590; h: (518) 272-1430; w: (518) 276-6505; harrtt@rpi.edu

Anna Campas writes: “I recently took ownership of a one-bedroom flat on the Greek island of Hydra in the Aegean Sea. Hydra is a unique island in that no cars, bikes, or mopeds are allowed. It is also very rocky and has a fantastic amphitheater-like harbor with views of the Peloponnese. The subject of my RPI bachelor of architecture thesis was the use of energy conservation principles in the design of a tourist community on Hydra. The site chosen was a peninsula adjacent to the harbor. Now 30+ years later the front porch of my flat looks out at the harbor and peninsula. I am currently a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) accredited professional and an appointed member of Governor Pataki’s Green Building Workgroup. I have created and presented a number of talks concerning the effect of buildings on the planet’s problems of global warming and elevated carbon dioxide levels." P.S. Anna’s flat can be rented! If you are interested please contact her at penciuse@nycap.rr.com. See her photo in the online magazine.

From the Daily Astorian (Astoria, Ore.): John Benson had filed for election to the District 5 seat on the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners. John has performed extensive community service work following his retirement from Tektronix. John said that his engineering background gives him skills (analyzing data, decision making, and planning) that would be useful on the board of commissioners.

I am sad to relay that we lost a good friend in the passing of Daniel Goggins, who had a sudden heart attack on March 14. Our hearts go out to his family and we will cherish our wonderful memories of Dan. It gives us all resolve to stay better in touch with our RPI friends.

Send news to: Bob Evans ’71, 50 Greenwood Ave., Needham, MA 02492; h: (781) 449-8021; w: (508) 660-8295; evansrjevans@aol.com

35th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007 Send news to: Bob Dvorak ’72, 2 Mill Lane, Saugerties, NY 12477-1128; bdvorak@hvc.rr.com or rdvorak@coxandco.com
Claudia Seligman recently went in for hip replacement. She is doing great. About this time I imagine most of us will be going in for a replacement of something or another. I can’t help but marvel how far along medicine has come thanks to some of the biomedical engineers in our class. If anyone of the readers of this column has been involved in engineering replacement joints, write to me and tell us all about it.

On the topic of replacements, Victor Lopiano was named a vice president of American Centrifuge, which handles uranium enrichment technology.

Send news to: James C. Wernicke, P.E., ’74, 11 Kelly Lynn Drive, Sandia Park, NM 87047-9326; h: (505) 281-3181; wernickejc@yahoo.com

Fred Apple wrote that he saw our Winter class notes were sparse and sent the following update. “My oldest daughter, Liz, has been accepted into the art school as a freshman at Syracuse University starting this fall. My fourth grader, Molly, has her sights on the U.S. Tennis Open one day. My wife, Jan, is thinking about opening an art boutique, along with her psychiatry practice. As a home-grown Troy resident, it is fun to watch the RPI campus grow every year I come home to visit. I keep in touch with Scott (Boz) Green, who practices dentistry in Montana. As for me, my research in cardiovascular biomarkers goes well, and I was a visiting professor at Harvard Medical School recently, lecturing on the role of cardiac troponin for risk outcomes analysis in patients with heart disease. Finally, so far the 50s aren’t so bad, and I’ve kept my handicap index at 4.6. I never stop telling stories about school in the early ’70s. Regards to all.”

Please keep the news and updates coming!

Send news to: Loris Johnston Chen ’75, 4-28 Grunauer Place, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410-3049; LChen428@aol.com

Robert Badger (rbadger1@nycaprv.com) is now a partner at Clough, Harbour & Associates LLP in Albany, N.Y. (no longer in East Amherst). He is still married to Mary, the sweet girl from HVCC that he met over 30 years ago at Chi Phi. They have two kids, Mike, 20, a sophomore at University of Buffalo, and Kelle, 15, a freshman at Shenendehowa. Robert reports that life is good and that he was looking forward to seeing everyone at the reunion.

Send news to: Michael Mino ’76, 110 Merrifield Court, Greenville, SC 29615-3434; h: (864) 234-2526; w: (864) 297-7661 x26; fax: (864) 297-7047; manino@propertyboss.com

Three Alumni Team Up To Build a Better Hospital

Ellis Hospital, located in Schenectady, N.Y., boasts a brand new intensive care unit thanks to the collaborative work of three Rensselaer alumni. ENVISION Architects Managing Principal Ted Mallin ’73, Jensen Industries President John Jensen ’66, and Don McLaughlin Jr. ’75, Ellis Hospital Divisional Director of Support Services (shown left to right), have overseen the $17 million, 30,000-square-foot ICU project from start to finish. Although these alumni did not cross paths at Rensselaer, they came together as a team in Schenectady, delivering the finished project on-budget and on-schedule.

McLaughlin acknowledges that the project’s success had a lot to do with the collegial and professional values that Rensselaer instilled in them. “There’s a certain level of trust and responsibility that has developed,” he says. “With a project that requires a tremendous amount of attention to detail, our ability to problem solve and collaborate has been great.”

The new 36-bed two-story ICU, which opened in May, features more space, modern equipment and technology, private rooms and enlarged family waiting areas, among other improvements and updates.
returned to Ireland to mark their last visit 20 years ago when Chuck was Chris’s best man. The Van Ettens were dragged from “billy to jack” during their Easter holidays enduring hikes up the Burren, the Cliffs of Moher, Bunratty, shopping in Galway, oysters and Guinness at Moran’s, pub crawls, and sailing in Kinvara. Best of the visit was the night when “King Chuck and Queen Debbie” hosted a party of 50 at the medieval banquet in Dunguaire Castle and the day spent falconing at Ashford Castle. See photo in the online magazine.

**Send news to:** Kathy Pratt Harrington ’80, 179 Wyman Rd., Groton, MA 01450-1401; dharrington@charter.net

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Tim Green sent the following news:

“On March 13, 2005, I became the proud grandfather of a beautiful baby girl named Madison Victoria. Although I am far too young to be a grandpa, I have found it to be a wonderful experience. On the professional front, I am currently working for EDS as a program manager and I received my PMP certification as well as my J.D. from Concord Law School this past year. As I write this letter I am preparing to take the California bar. I plan to take the bar later this year and leverage the excellent Rensselaer engineering education to practice intellectual property law, with an occasional foray into criminal law. I wish you and my classmates the best in the coming years.”

Sharon Fisher wrote from Kuna, Idaho: “After getting laid off from Gartner, the world’s largest IT consultancy, in March 2005, I started Gem State Community Development and focused on my education, starting a graduate minor in GIS, and completing the internship required for my master’s in public administration at Boise State University by working for the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee in the Idaho State Legislature during the 2006 legislative session. I just accepted a job as a senior writer for Computerworld, and will cover storage, working out of my farmhouse about 20 minutes from downtown Boise. My daughter Maggie will start first grade in September.”

Rick Roseberry ’81 organized a gathering of three alumni with Rensselaer’s softball team, which traveled to southwest Florida in March (see photo). Cheering on the team were Randy Mitchelson ’93, MBA ’98, who owns Vanderbilt Mortgage Group, LLC in Naples; John Kilduff ’94, who owns JFK & Associates, an engineering firm in Cape Coral, and Rick, a retired Coast Guard officer, who teaches American history at Dunbar High School in Fort Myers.

Send news to: Marc Glasser ’81, 17 Puddingstone Lane, Millington, NJ 07946; marc.glasser@unilever.com

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**25th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007**

William Blake was selected to receive the 2006 AIAA Aerodynamics Award. The award is presented for meritorious achievement in the field of applied aerodynamics, recognizing notable contributions in the development, application, and evaluation of aerodynamic concepts and methods. The award was presented June 6 at the AIAA Fluid Dynamics Conference in San Francisco. The inscription read: “For exceptional contributions to applied aerodynamic predictions through experimentation and empirical and engineering modeling.”

William is a senior aerospace engineer at the Air Force Research Laboratory located at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio. He has 24 years experience working on many programs including F-15 STOL/MTD, AGM-136, C-17, Advanced Theater Transport, T-38 Formation Flight, and Automated Aerial Refueling.

Send news to: Sue Markowski Lubais ’82, 1771 University Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301; Sue@Lubais.com or SueSkl@aol.com

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In March I returned from vacation at Disney World, my first paid vacation in five years. One minute it’s 80 and sunny, the next it’s pushing freezing. As I was driving between Orlando and Charlotte (11 hours), I couldn’t help but think how my Rensselaer education helped me appreciate a place like Disney World all the more. Think about the engineering skills needed to design and build the rides (and the effort that goes into making waiting on line almost tolerable), the IT skills needed to keep things from hotels to firework displays to animal preserves going, and the management skills needed to keep 50,000 cast members working productively and make a profit at the same time. Think about that when you’re making a 50 turn on the crash test simulator.

Chuck Hawkins writes: “Although I graduated early in December of ’82 and RPI sometimes calls me Class of ’82, I was most definitely a member of the Class of ’83, biomedical engineering, with an NROTC scholarship. Upon graduating I spent five years in the Navy, spent two years studying theology, and then taught ESL for five years in Japan. After returning to the States, I took up computers and am now the data architect for Jenzabar Inc.’s EX product—a total-package higher education software product used in 200+ colleges and universities across the country. I’m a published author and speak regularly at Microsoft SQL Server conferences. I am the husband of Kathy (from upstate New York) and the father of three teenage girls. We live in Staunton, Va., in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. In addition to my day job, my wife and I own and manage vacation rentals at the Massanutten resort. Google ‘Hawkins Haven.’ A four-season resort with skiing, two golf courses, and the East Coast’s largest indoor water park, it’s a wonderfully convenient place for people wanting a break from the hustle and bustle of metropolitan and beltbway life. We’ll give a 10 percent rental discount to RPI alumni who reference this Class Note.”

Steven Rouhana, Ph.D. ’83, was recently elected a fellow of the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE). One of only 32 electees from the auto industry around the country, he is a senior technical leader and group leader of Ford Motor Co.’s Biomechanics and Occupant Protection group. Steven is internationally recognized for pioneering research in the area of human response to impact, particularly with regard to abdominal injuries and air bag noise. He has written more than 50 technical papers in the areas of basic biomechanical research, crash test dummy development, and seat belts. At Ford, he is leading the development of advanced belt systems, including four-point belts and the inflatable belt, in which a small, tubular-shaped inflatable bag can deploy inside a shoulder belt in the event of a crash.

We’re doing interesting things outside of work as well. By day, Robert Gierka manages tech publications at NC State; by night, he serves as a pet chaplain at their vet school. NPR did a piece on him in March. See www.petchapl.com.

That’s all I’ve heard from anyone. If you’ve been hired, moved, had a child, had a grandchild (ack, we’re getting old), gotten married, taken an interesting trip, or just want people to know you’re still alive, drop me a line. If you work at Wachovia, I’d be interested to know how many we are around here. Look me up in the corporate directory.

Send news to: Jeffrey Freed ’83, 105F Northbend Drive, Charlotte, NC 28262; h: (704) 503-0423; w: (704) 715-1512; jfreed@hotmail.com

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Barry Wu received the Herbert S. Waxman Award for Outstanding Medical Educator from the American College of Physicians on April 6, 2006, in Philadelphia. He is only the second recipient of this award that was initiated in April 2005. Barry is an associate clinical professor of medicine at Yale University School of Medicine.

Sean Lydon sent the following news items:

Michael Hurle just returned from an extensive tour of Italy but has not shared pictures with any of his friends.

Chuck (sorry, Mom) Bucci and wife Shannon are busy raising their four children (two of each!) in the home they just built in Rutland, Mass. Chuck plans to resume his pursuit of his master’s degree as soon as the dog gives back his homework. He keeps the semiconductor fab running for Allegro Microsystems in nearby Worcester.

Louis Agro recently transferred from Manhattan to the Verizon office in Valhalla, N.Y., closer to
After getting

I was recently promoted to laboratory services manager, so now in addition to managing the metallography/microscopy/R&D lab, I supervise other lab workers and am the technical services interface for all HIP customers and point of contact for technical support to all of the Bodycote HIP (hot isostatic pressing) and heat treating plants in North America. I have also held the position of secretary of the Worcester chapter of ASM International for several years; in May we held our first ever ASM Materials Camp for high school students to try to spark an interest in entering the field of materials engineering.

Send news to: Jane LaGoy '86, 28 Nashua Road, Pepperell, MA 01463-1404; tantalam73@juno.com

20th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007

Congratulations to two of our classmates. Temi Bova has taken a new position as executive director of U-Start, the business incubator associated with Union College in Schenectady, N.Y. U-Start was created in 1999 to help fledging high-tech companies by providing space, technical assistance, and other resources. To date, two companies have graduated from U-Start to their own office space. Temi looks forward to developing the program further to produce successful graduates and businesses that will contribute to the community. She was previously a marketing manager for General Electric.

Thomas Lembck has been promoted to vice president of information technology at ViroPharma Inc., a pharmaceutical company in Exton, Pa. He was formerly executive director of information technology, and joined the company in 2001.


Enjoy your summer, and keep the news coming!

Send news to: Laura Ryder '87, 75 Pinewoods Avenue, Troy, NY 12180; h: (518) 270-5048; ryder@mail.alum.rpi.edu

Send news to: Karen Glasgow Parnham '88, 6 Beavers Rd., Califon, NJ 07830; Rihan2@aol.com

Send news to: Robert Flansburg, who is president of Dreamscapes Unlimited, was recently written about in the Business Review (Albany, N.Y.). The article details his achievements from undergraduate studies to his current expertise in special custom home designing. He currently lives in the Albany area with his wife, Tina, daughter, Whitney, and three sons, Robbie and identical twins Schuyler and Spencer.

Send news to: Joseph Hom '89, 3 Granada Crescent #3-9, White Plains, NY 10603; joehom@flash.net

I was happy to attend the Rensselaer vs. Princeton hockey game with the Delaware Valley Alumni Chapter. A great game it was; the team really played hard. I met the Pep Band and got to know some of the new chapter members.

Sreenivas Alampalli, director of the Bridge Program and Evaluation Services Bureau of the NYS Department of Transportation, was awarded the ASNT Fellow award for 2005. Sreenivas is also a director at large on the board of directors of ASNT.

Patty Gray (BSME) was hired by Conceptus in December 2005 as vice president, R&D and Operations. She will be responsible for the research and development and operations of the Essure system.

Send news to: Michelle Dvorak-Held '90, 15 David Road, Holland, PA 18966; mg@metrony.com

Send news to: Richard Vehlow '91, P.E., MBA, 100 McChesney Ave., Apt. H8, Troy, NY 12180; h: (518) 273-3451; w: (518) 486-1510; vehlor@alum.rpi.edu; rev1969@gmail.com (for photos)

15th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007 Greetings, classmates! It has been a while since we’ve had a good chunk of news.

So let’s get right to it.

Steve Schwalje (steve.schwalje@alfalaval.com) and his wife, Zoe, had a baby boy on Oct. 29. Taylor Jesse weighed in at 6 pounds, 10 ounces. The glowing parents have had a chance to get some sleep since the happy event now and would love to hear from you.

In the news, from the norwichbulletin.com, Tony Madeira was recently hired as an accountant in the city of Norwich finance office. Tony lives in Voluntown, Conn., with his wife, Erin. He serves as a trustee for the Thames Valley Council for Community Action.

John McFarland (jmcfarland@workingbuildings.com) was recognized as one of the Architectural/Engineering/Construction industry’s rising stars in the 40 Under 40 Award by Building Design & Construction (bdcnetwork.com/article/CA6316252.html). John is the director of engineered systems at WorkingBuildings, a building commissioning firm in Atlanta, Ga.

Folks, that’s what we’ve got for now. I hope things are going your way. Peace.

Send news to: Gregg Nichols '92, 3094 Rosefield Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108, gnichols@alum.rpi.edu

Thank you, again, to all of you faithful readers. I am always surprised to see how many of you read this column. I am even more surprised when the readers turn into writers and drop me an update! Thank you.

David Miller wrote in from Denver, Colo., over
the winter. He had recently been promoted to associate professor of radiology at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, and is the technical director of the brain imaging research laboratory. No kids to report on, but he and his partner adopted an awesome Cane Corso (Italian mastiff) pup that is growing at a monstrous rate and snores.

Keisuke Hoashi returns to New York and has become one of the founding members of a brand-new music camp, the New York Summer Music Festival (NYSMF), which begins this summer in Oneonta, N.Y. More information can be found at www.nysmf.org. Keisuke teaches the “Hollywood in the Catskills” program—kids learn the basics of writing songs, lyrics, music, comedy, skits, and plays, and then write their own original works for biweekly productions. He also teaches filmmaking and acting classes. The main focus of the camp is pro-level performance. Keisuke is also the director of communications. During the past year he has appeared in many shows, including The King of Queens; Jake In Progress; How I Met Your Mother; Boston Legal; The State Life of Zach and Cody; and the PBS documentary Japan: Memoirs of a Secret Empire. You may have also seen him in some commercials for Southwest Airlines; ING (“Shakespeare in the Park”); KFC; DIRECTV (“NFL Sunday Ticket”); and ESPN (“Gospel X-Games”.

Sandra (King) and her husband, Joel Holt, have announced the arrival of twins this past February. Needless to say, with their other daughters, Caroline, 4, and Josephine, 2-1/2, their household has been pretty exciting! Sandra is currently working as the senior supplier quality assurance engineer at Aerojet General Corp. in Camden, Ark. Aerojet is one of the leading manufacturers of solid rocket fuel in support of the U.S. military. Joel is the chief plant engineer at Entegra/Union Power Partners in Calion, Ark. It is one of the two largest combined cycle power plants in the country capable of producing an excess of 2,220 megawatts of power.

We also heard from Madelaine Perri Kasden, who is the mother of our classmate Neill Perri who passed away in 1995 from a probable viral infection affecting the heart. Along with eight other bereaved mothers and a newspaper columnist, Madelaine has completed a book, Beyond Tears: Living After Losing a Child. There is also a Web site available at www.beyondtears.net. Thank you for sharing this information with us, Madelaine.

Jennifer (Lang) Murphy and Mark (B.S.Env.E.) are still in the Virginia Beach area and announced the birth of their third child, Jill, who was born this past January. She was their smallest child weighing in at 11 pounds, 8 ounces, and 10 pounds, 15, respectively. The King of Queens

Jim Pennington was named deputy general manager of Lakeland (Fla.) Electric on March 6. Jim previously served as assistant finance director for Lakeland Electric.

Asilia (Hill) Dinkins and her husband, Michael, welcomed their first child, Bilal Miguel Dinkins, on Jan. 29, 2006. Bilal weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces, and was 20 inches long. Asilia resides in Maryland near Washington, D.C., and works as a software consultant for the Department of Treasury.

Michelle (Duquette) Lucas and Jim Lucas welcomed the arrival of their second child, Emily Nicole Lucas, on Nov. 18, 2005. Michelle is employed at Jeffofs Steel and Engineering as the fabrication operations manager and Jim now works for Stantec Consulting Inc.

Fernando Quintero, his wife, Maria, and their daughter Maritere recently moved to San Juan, Puerto Rico, from the Washington, D.C., area as a result of a promotion with Motorola. Fernando is now the regional business manager for Motorola’s Government & Enterprise business in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Dominican Republic.

That’s all the news! Don’t forget to send in the news. I hope to have more to report in the fall. Enjoy the summer!!! PEACE!

Send news to: Bill Wheeler ’94, 832 W. Argusite Ave., Unit 1N, Chicago, IL 60640; h: (773) 271-8209; w: (312) 886-1621; William_Wheeler@yahoo.com

Keep the updates coming. Anthony Artino Jr. is in New England working on his Ph.D. in human cognition at the University of Connecticut. Tony is still on active duty as an aerospace physiologist in the U.S. Navy, in school for the Medical Service Corps. Tony and his wife, Teri, have two kids, Isabella, 3, and Tre, 18 months. They were also expecting another baby boy in May. Congratulations to Tony and Teri.

Sean Sullivan (sean@soussullivan.com) writes: “I still live in Portland, Ore., and I work for a supply chain management company. I was recently diagnosed with avascular necrosis in both of my hips. I will be undergoing hip surgery in Baltimore to correct the problem. In July 2006, I will be speaking at the O’Reilly Open Source Conference in Portland.”

Robert Feller, MBA ’95, has been included in the latest edition of The Best Lawyers in America, in the environmental law category. Robert is senior counsel of the Albany law firm of Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC, and concentrates his practice in environmental law, land use, and municipal law.

Marcia Harris writes: “Just got my first novel published as an e-book! The hardcover will come out later this year, but in the meantime, you can check out my Web site at www.marciacolette.com or visit www.double-dragon-ebooks.com/index.asp.”

Send news to: Michael Van Poots ’95, 257 Francis Lane, Breinigsville, PA 18031; h: (610) 737-3868; Michael@VanPoots.com; www.vanpoots.com

I hope you were able to attend Reunion; if not, I hope you plan to attend in 2011. Here are the updates…

Susan Galvin wrote in to say that she and her family are moving to Ohio this summer. Her husband, Steve Galvin, is being transferred to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Susan expects to start practicing medicine again part time once they get settled. If anyone is in the Dayton, Ohio, area, they encourage you to look them up.

Maura Newell founded a new full-service architecture firm, 72 Architects, LLC, in Danbury, Conn. The firm specializes in commercial architecture, including new and renovated buildings, zoning and code consulting, architectural visualization, and design feasibility studies. Prior to starting her firm, Maura was employed as senior architect, DCA Architects/Planners LLC in Ridgefield, Conn.

Denise Penkalski Brown wrote in with this message: “On Feb. 26, 2006, I was married in Nashua, N.H., in a small ceremony with about 60 in attendance. Yes, he’s a geek like me; more details upon request! We’ll have a gathering/delayed reception/housewarming/graduation from acupuncture school in NH this summer. If you’d like to send us your well wishes or would like to attend our gathering this summer, drop me an e-mail at penkald@alum.rpi.edu.”

Now on to the birth announcements. First, congratulations to Sean and Meg Trask on the birth of their second child, Julia Ellen Trask, on Jan. 10. She was 7 pounds, 15 ounces. Big sister, Ava, is adjusting to her new role. According to Meg the two girls are keeping her very busy.

Also celebrating a new arrival are Kevin and Jen (’97) Miller. Jason Anthony Miller was born on Feb. 12. Jason was 7 pounds, 4 ounces, and 21.25 inches. The Millers are living in Parker, Colo., where Kevin is the vice president-business operations for the Colorado region of Comcast. Jen is taking several months off and will then return part time to the Arapahoe County Detention Center, working in their library and teaching math.

Congratulations to all of the new and repeat parents. Watch for post-Reunion updates in the next issue!

Send news to: Hank Carbone ’96, 701 Cottage Avenue W, St. Paul, MN 55117; h: (651) 340-2451; hcarbone@hotmail.com

10th Reunion: June 7-10, 2007! Hello, everyone! Can you believe we are less than one year away from our 10th Reunion?! Time flies, and I’m sure we’re going to get the planning under way soon—let us know if you want to be involved in the planning process.

Angelina Errico presented her paper, “The Risk of Saving Lives: How Automotive Technology Has Impacted the Rescue Worker,” in April at the SAE World Congress 2006, and said it went very well.

In other news, Riyadh (Dee Dee) Muhammad wrote in that she has now completed medical school.
Send news to:  Kristen Fitzpatrick ’97, 57 Union Street, Watertown, MA 02472; h: (617) 924-6647; kfitzpatrick@mbs2003.hbs.edu

Greetings! I hope everyone is enjoying the summer months. If you get a chance, drop me a line. I’m sure we would all like to know what you are up to these days!

On to the news with lots of births to announce...Doug and Elinor (Kolbenz) Riggs are the proud parents of a second son, Drew Michael Riggs, who was born on April 24, 2005. Elinor is now working as a technology lead at Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceuticals, a division of Johnson & Johnson. Also celebrating a new child are Thomas Heffernan and his wife, Cheryl. Their daughter Hannah was born on April 14, 2005. Chris and Kristina (Wines) Grossman also have a new daughter. Kaitlyn Riley Grossman was born April 2, 2005. Kristina writes that “Kaitlyn is a very happy baby.”

Norah Anne McCauliffe was born Oct. 20 to Shane and Allison (St. Pierre) McCauliffe. Allison says Norah is happy and healthy and “mom and dad are totally amazed by her!” Tim Buckley and his wife, Rachel (Bass), are the proud parents of a daughter, Natalie Faith, who was born Dec. 18. Tim is currently assigned to Submarine NR ONE, which is undergoing scheduled maintenance at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. He will be attending Submarine Officers Advanced Course until August, in preparation for returning to sea duty as a department head on a submarine.

Theda Kim (Chantrasuk) Moore and her husband, Mark, announce the birth of their son, Jason Sawang Moore, on July 20, 2005. She writes, “He couldn’t wait to be born considering he was born four weeks premature at 5 pounds, 6 ounces, and 17 inches long. He is doing well and growing as he should.”

I got a short note from Annette Romei. She recently completed Six Sigma Black Belt training through Honeywell International and was also credentialed as a Project Management Professional through the Project Management Institute. She is now working as a manager within Honeywell’s Six Sigma organization, while her husband, Craig, has accepted a new position as a Software Validation Engineer at Intel. He is testing both production and next-generation microprocessors.

Tobey Clarkin’s mom sent me an update. Tobey recently left the Air Force as a captain after five years and tours in South Korea, Germany, Iraq, and Kuwait. Last winter, he spent four months in the Andes, roaming from country to country and taking in all the wildlife. He is now attending graduate school at the University of Washington.

I also received news from Deanna Capobianco. She is engaged to Erik Glaser (Ohio State ’93) and is planning an August 2006 wedding. Deanna received her MSE in mechanical engineering in 2004 from the University of Michigan. She is currently working for GE Healthcare in Lawrence, Mass. Both Erik and Deanna are part-time MBA students at Babson College. They reside in Waltham, Mass.

Nadene Mills was recently promoted to technical lead of the Custom Automation Technology group at Pfizer, making special order fabrications and devices for pharmaceutical scientists.

Congratulations to Krishaun Gilmore and Bethany Weiser who were both inducted into Rensselaer’s Athletics Hall of Fame.

Beth Gyuurovits (beth_gyuurovits@yahoo.com) wrote: “What happened to the EMAC graduates? Well, a lot! It’s been a wild trip since graduation. My first job as an Internet specialist was for Warner-Lambert (now Pfizer) in Morris Plains, N.J. It was a great opportunity, until EDS hired me and relocated me to Colorado to support the Maxtor account as the global Web program manager in IT in 2000. What a great opportunity! I spent 4-1/2 years there before landing a job at Johns Manville, a Berkshire Hathaway company in Denver, essentially doing the same, but also branching into cyber intellectual property protection with the support of the legal department. So far, so good! Any other EMAC’ers doing their thing? I’d love to hear from you!”

Send news to:  Mike Johnson ’98, 116 Catlin Ave., Port Allegany, PA 16743; mjohnson@alum.rpi.edu

Sian Fennessy writes: “I just completed my Ph.D. in polymer science and engineering at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and I am presently heading to Minneapolis, Minn. I have accepted a position at the 3M Co. in their Corporate Research and Processing Laboratories in their Nonwoven division. Present e-mail is fenes2@alum.rpi.edu.”

Send news to:  Erica Kulesza ’99, 221 West 22nd Street, Apartment C2, New York, NY 10011 ekulesza99@alum.rpi.edu
Hello, Class of 2001! If you made it to Reunion ’06, what a time we had! If you didn’t you wanted to set it on your calendar for 2011. More reunion updates in the Fall issue.

Pat Blount wrote in with a career update saying that he’s “living in Baltimore and commuting an hour to an awesome new 100 percent commission mortgage brokerage job in VA.” Steve Flanagan checked in and is still in the Army Special Forces Qualification Course at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Congratulations to Todd Dombrowski who earned his M.D. degree from the American University of the Caribbean in April. Todd begins his residency in internal medicine at Albany Medical Center in July.

We also had some engagements and weddings!

Chandra Benjamin wrote, “I engaged to Keith Tschohl, who is a grad student in mechanical engineering at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He’s graduating with his master’s in May and then will be starting a new job at Hutchinson Technology in Hutchinson, Minn., in July. I’m looking for a job in the Twin Cities area and will be moving out there in the next couple months to be with Keith. We will be getting married in December.”

Erin Jatko married Eduardo Lucero in Fort Collins, Colo., on May 28. The happy couple resides in Arvada, Colo., where they are both practicing architects.

Josh Hort married Kristin Denner ‘02 on April 29, 2006, in Nashua, N.H. RPI alumni in attendance included Mike Trahan ’00, Chris Ryan, Dave Altman; Mike Comer ’05, Erica (Hamel) Vellone ’02, and Jennifer (Barton) Kugler ’02, among many others. The couple resides in Lowell, Mass. Congratulations to all!

We’ll have lots more updates and more Reunion ’06 stories to share in the Fall issue. Have a great summer!

Send news to: Mike Cooke ’01, 113 1st Ave. NW, Lutz, FL 33549; cooke@m.alum.rpi.edu

While the class notes have not been updated for some time I assure you that has not been for lack of events in the lives of ’03 alumni. Starting in the northeast, our friend John Blauvelt and Marisa DiDonato were married on May 13 at St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel on the University of Connecticut campus in Storrs, Conn. Tim Vanderpoel and Jared Goldstein were groomsmen, and David vonEiff was also in attendance. John is a project manager at Computer Sciences Corp. in Norwich, Conn., and Marisa is pursuing her Ph.D. in chemistry at UConn. Not far from Storrs, Rebecca Senecal, who graduated with a master’s in technical communication and a certificate in graphic design, is making her mark on the publishing world. After RPI she moved back to her hometown area of central Massachusetts and spent two years in the publishing industry working on product design as well as educational book production. She recently began an exciting new job in November as the associate director of public relations and marketing at Worcester State College.

Staying in New England, Laura Blake was appointed assistant professor at Mitchell College, where she will be teaching in the college’s Small Business Studies Program. She has been a marketing communications consultant for such companies as Canon USA and Sonalyts Consulting.

Moving a little farther west, I recently accidentally met with a father of an alum who came to us from San Francisco—truly one of those “small world” moments. The alum in question is Jamil Valliani. I caught up with him over e-mail and he wrote: “Redmond is a pretty nice place… For my first 2.5 years, I worked on Microsoft’s security team—we were put in charge of making sure that none of our new products had the security problems/worms that plagued our customers in XP and 2003. We really made big changes in the way the company develops software, which is super cool. You’ll notice that some of our newer major products have no vulnerabilities recorded against them which is a real testament to what we accomplished. A few months ago, I decided to take on another big challenge where Microsoft needs to play catch-up: Search. In particular, I am the program manager for News & Blogs search. Basically I am helping design a search engine that will identify, classify, and index any news or blog entry on the Web in near real-time.”

Congratulations to Tom Buckton and his wife, Amy (Vincent—Russell Sage ’02), who had a daughter, Chloe Marie, on Nov. 12, 2005. She was 7 pounds, 6 ounces, and 20 inches long.

Before I end this issue’s notes, I wanted to give you a quick update on myself and the one fellow classmate I see frequently. I graduated from GE’s IML program in August and stayed on as a project manager for Corporate Finance Systems in Fairfield, Conn. I am living in downtown New Haven where I enjoy the restaurants, theaters (we have more restaurants per square foot than any other city in the U.S., I am convinced), and frequent walks on green. Working with me in Connecticut is Mary Mattiacci, who is also a project manager for legal systems. Both Mary and I went up to Troy at the end of May to witness our sisters’ graduation. Mary and I both agree, there was nothing in the ’06 graduation to rival our glorious day in ’03 (including the B2 flyby). Nonetheless, it was good to see another great class walk across the Harkness Field. Congratulations to all our new graduates!

Send news to: Soumeya Benghanem ’03, 13 Shinnecock Hills Dr., Albany, NY 12205; soumeya@alum.rpi.edu

As time goes by, it seems that I am hearing more and more success stories about our class, which means our years at Rensselaer are being put to good use! Many of us are finding success in the private sector, and I have heard reports from several people who, like myself, are soon to be securing graduate degrees.

Jim Keba recently accepted a position at Genentech, a biotechnology firm, at their main campus in the city of South San Francisco, Calif. Jim is now an associate engineer in their Late Stage Purification Department.

Congratulations are in order for Scott Parsons, who is now married to Hayley Beers and has just purchased a new house in Pittsburgh, Pa. Scott is now studying for his Ph.D. at Carnegie Mellon University.

Melanie Sayer finished her master’s degree at the University of Connecticut in May, obtaining a degree in biomedical engineering. She is now working as a clinical specialist with Medtronic, one of the world’s largest medical technology companies, on Long Island.

Scott Brinkerhoff recently joined an elite group of networking professionals. On his first try, Scott passed a difficult eight-hour exam to become a Cisco Certified Internet Expert. This group is so prestigious that each person who passes the exam gets their own unique and distinct number. Scott is now a security team leader at Cisco’s facility at Research Triangle Park, just outside of Durham, N.C.

As for myself, it’s more Army training for me—a month at Ft. Lewis just outside of Seattle this summer, and three weeks at Ft. Benning in Georgia for airborne school. I look forward to the challenge, and I hope to hear from many more of you in the upcoming months.

Send news to: Tom Reale ’04, 464 County Rte. 56, Ticonderoga, NY 12883; realet@gmail.com

It is hard to believe that it’s been a year since we walked across the stage and finally received our diplomas! I hope it has been a great year for all.

Gavin Gyle, after graduating in December, is working in prime brokerage at Bank of America in Manhattan. Jody Conrado has been working this year as an assistant coordinator of student activities for the RPI Union, but she will be leaving this summer to go to Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Congratulations to Gavin on his new job and to Jody on her acceptance to medical school!

Send news to: Shannon Hitchcock ’05, Barnard College, 3001 Broadway #2459, New York, NY 10027; shhitchcock@gmail.com
Robert T. Chatterton ’33, retired head electrical engineer, American Can Co., who enjoyed farming in his retirement; April 23. Allen I. Barry ’38, former chemical engineer at Pfizer, where he was instrumental in the development of industrial scale processes to produce penicillin, later founder of Barry and Associates Inc., a manufacturers representative firm, and avid sailor; March 3. Schuyler W. Bacon ’39, retired chief engineer, Ingber Mechanical Inc.; June 16, 2004.


Juan Barcelo-Mora ’51, of Arecibo, Puerto Rico; April 13, 2005.


David L. Weaver ’58, professor of biophysics and former chair, physics and astronomy, Tufts University; April 4.

Michael M. Abbott ’60, Ph.D. ’65, professor emeritus, chemical engineering, Rensselaer (see page 15); May 31. Theodore M. Jungreis ’60, mathematician, computer programmer, and entrepreneur; Aug. 10, 2005.


Sally I. Fox, Ph.D. ’67, retired professor of microbiology, College of St. Rose, first Ph.D. student in biology at Rensselaer; April 27.


Daniel J. Goggins ’71, retired Coast Guard captain, and director of treasury services for A. Schulman Inc., Akron; March 14. Brent D. Beckley ’72, former leader, technology strategy programs, GE; Feb. 4.

George H. Kindler ’72, light and sound specialist for Miss America pageants and many Las Vegas establishments, including the Mirage, Treasure Island, MGM Grand, and the Bellagio; May 21. Mary E. Emery, M.S. ’73, assistant professor of English, State University of New York, Cobleskill; Feb. 21. James R. Cooley ’74, M.E. ’75, principal engineer, AAI Corp., where he designed radar system simulators, and avid hiker; March 13.

P. Gordon ’79, vice president, Northrop Grumman, where he led advanced systems and technology for the integrated systems division, and a Rensselaer Key Executive; May 28.

Linda S. Marcy Marchisotto ’80, senior materials and process engineer in Northrop Grumman’s space technology division; May 28. James W. Atkinson, M.S. ’86, environmentalist, formerly with the New York State Energy Research & Development Authority, instructor with Rensselaer’s environmental management and policy program, co-founder of the Rensselaer-Taconic Land Conservancy, Eagle Scout, and avid outdoorsman; May 10.


Curtis V. Green, retired associate professor, language, literature, and communication, at Rensselaer; May 11. Henry T. Nagamatsu, professor emeritus of mechanical engineering at Rensselaer, internationally recognized pioneer in hypersonic research, former research associate, G.E. R&D Center, and former senior research fellow, Caltech; May 15.

Graham Williams ’52: Professor, Architect, Alumnus

Graham Williams ’52, professor emeritus of architecture at Rensselaer, where he taught for 35 years prior to his retirement in 1998, died May 5. He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Rensselaer and after time in the Navy and in practice, joined the faculty in the early 1960s.

“Over the years, Williams was central and formative to the School of Architecture and several programs, most notably the development of the Design Development Studio—that comprehensive, integrated experience designed to equip bright minds and creative thinkers with the ability to accomplish their architectural ambitions,” said Mark Mistur ’83, associate professor of architecture, who paid tribute to Williams at the school’s 75th anniversary celebration in May.

Throughout his career, Williams had an active architectural practice, designing residential, religious, and educational buildings. He was also an active member of the community, serving on numerous boards, and was instrumental in establishing the Rensselaer County Council for the Arts, now the Arts Center of the Capital Region.

A lifelong sailor, he started the sailing program on Forest Lake, where his family resided each summer. Williams served as president of the Class of ’52, and remained active in alumni activities throughout his life.
The Square Stone

Or, how my college ring saved my job | by John Shahdanian ’64

My decision to attend Rensselaer was made in 1949, at age 7. I was in the park behind our apartment with my father. He was talking to a good friend, asking him about engineering schools. My father’s friend, an engineer himself, said: “Well, Rensselaer, in Troy, is a very good school.” The words “Rensselaer” and “Troy” meant nothing to a 7-year-old. However, they nestled in a place in the back of my cerebral cortex and slept there for the next 10 years.

Fast Forward: Middle of my junior year, high school. Time to start thinking about colleges. Dad still wants me to be an engineer. “Rensselaer,” “Troy.” Oh, yeah. Good engineering school. Let’s apply there. My high school counselor was not thrilled with my top choice. He was pushing for one of those 20,000-student giants, like Michigan. Told me RPI was out of my reach. However, a confluence of coincidences assured my acceptance... The clincher came from the brother of my best friend, who was a sophomore at RPI. When he got his 1960 Transit, he called home to tell them that there was a full-page picture of me in the yearbook, taken when I was touring campus. Then and there, I knew that no college would put a picture of a student they were not going to accept into their yearbook! Two days later, my counselor let me know I had been accepted by RPI.

Fast Forward II. June 1964. I was not cut out to be an engineer. Something about Thermodynamics and Physics IV at the same time. But I had an aptitude for Psychology, and I earned my B.S. in that major. It was then that The Ring entered my life. The Class of 1964 college ring was unique. When we compared rings after graduation, all of my high school buddies had rings that looked like small hills, surmounted by small, colored stones. My ring was massive in comparison. It had a large, square stone (actually, a 3:2 rectangle) over an even larger body. On one side was the RPI logo; on the other, the torch of learning, with a VI and a IV making up either side of the flame. I still wear it with pride today.

Fast Forward III. Fall of 1968. I had completed all my course work for my MBA in Industrial Psychology, with just a thesis left to write. My specialty was self-instructional materials (the forerunner of today’s computer-assisted instruction). I received a job offer from Westinghouse Learning Corporation (WLC), in Pittsburgh. Westinghouse was moving its nuclear pressure vessel manufacturing operation from Philadelphia to Tampa, Fla., and was automating the method of production. They needed self-instructional programs to train arc welders on the use of automatic welding equipment. I was instructed to spend two weeks at the Philadelphia plant to learn all I could about welding and the manufacture of nuclear pressure vessels. I knew absolutely nothing about welding, so I asked for and received two books on welding and a copy of the welding code book. In the week before I left for Philly, I waded through the welding books. The night before I met with the people at the plant, I read the code book from cover to cover.

Monday morning, I arrived at the plant and was escorted to a conference room where I was introduced to five senior welding engineers. As I began to question them about the mechanics of welding nuclear pressure vessels, I sensed an antagonism and a reluctance to answer my questions, other than in cursory terms. I neither knew, nor understood, that their jobs were going to be eliminated by my finished product, that the plant was to be closed, and that all their friends and co-workers would soon be unemployed. To them, I was just a writer whose books threatened their livelihood!

By 11:30, we were still proceeding at a snail’s pace. In response to one question, the senior member of the group gave an answer that, from my reading of the welding code the night before, did not sound correct. I challenged the answer with the comment: “That’s not to code.” The engineer was enraged. “Of course it’s to code!” he responded. Somewhat, from the depths of my short-term memory, I quoted the code section which I thought applied. He stormed out of the room to retrieve his copy of the code.

When he returned to the room, he was still angry, but contrite. He acknowledged that his answer was not to code, but that it represented the way they actually did things on the job. One of the other engineers looked me in the eye and asked: “How did you know that the procedure was not to code?” I was about to tell him that I had read the code the night before, but then I looked at his hand and saw a square red stone. Instead of giving my original, somewhat unsatisfactory response, I simply said: “Your ring is the same as mine!”

The change in the group’s attitude was instantaneous. As a Rensselaer graduate, I was accepted into the circle of welding engineers. (Fortunately, they never inquired as to my major!) That afternoon, the round-table became productive, their answers became more complete, and my learning curve expanded exponentially. By the end of the two weeks, I had more than enough information to develop the training programs, and I had established five personal resources.

My employers at WLC in Pittsburgh were amazed at the reception I received in Philadelphia. Knowing the situation, they had expected me to receive no cooperation at all. My initial research on the welding project established my credentials immediately with the WLC staff.

Little did they know that I owed it all to a square red stone.

John Shahdanian ’64 is a real estate attorney in Rochelle Park, N.J.