Cheese Whizzes
Commencement 2013

On May 31, the 135th commencement exercises took place in the Academic Quad at Wellesley. As temperatures soared into the 90s, the green class of 2013 refused to wilt, fanning themselves with programs and enjoying their (long) moment in the sun.

Cheese Whizzes

By Louisa Kasdon '72

Every day, they say cheese. It’s their passion and their livelihood. Meet the growing circle of Wellesley alums centering their professional and personal lives on cheese, whether they’re cheesemakers, cheesemongers, cheese educators, or cheese activists.
Summer in the City

By Karen Grigsby Bates ’73, Eliza Borné ’09, Alice Bradley ’91, Paula Butturini ’73, Kate McCahill ’06, and Amy Yee ’96

Hot town, summer in the city. Six alumnae writers share their stories of the heat and grit—and joy and beauty—of urban living during the fairest season.

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Cover photography and goat photograph by Karl Schatz
AS I WRITE THIS COLUMN MID-MAY, it is clear we have reached the Incipit Vita Nova phase of the academic year. We see it all around us—in the rhododendron bursting into bloom, in the commencement robes worn for the final day of seniors’ classes, and in the spate of retirement parties across campus. Here begins new life.

A colleague who is phasing into retirement a couple days a week just popped into the office after one of his first free days. “It was a little odd having no schedule,” he said. “Should I eat lunch now, I wondered?” But he clearly had big plans for golf and face time with a grandbaby in the not-too-distant future.

A senior who has worked all year at the Alumnae Association’s front desk turned up last Friday, beaming. “As of 40 minutes ago, I’m finished!” she said, and then told me about her tentative plans for the next few months—as far as she could see down the road. Her words transported me back nearly 30 years, to my own collegiate finish line. It was as vivid as yesterday: that triumphant-yet-terrifying feeling of “I did it! But seriously, now I have to leave this place?”

Venturing forth—whether one is in one’s 20s or 60s—requires a little gumption. I’m sure our graduating seniors have moments of that same wobbly feeling I had decades ago, but many are also remarkably self-aware, which will go a long way in preparing them for the new worlds they are about to take on.

I’ve spoken recently with a number of seniors about what they consider the most enduring lesson of their time at Wellesley. I wish I had set out from college with some of their insights. For example, from Gabrielle Linnell ’13, a medieval and Renaissance studies major:

I learned there are only 24 hours in the day. Not one more, not one less; it’s non-negotiable. When I learned that, it became easier to say no to things that weren’t important and made it more meaningful to say yes to opportunities, activities, and people that were—the people being the most important of all.

Prioritize and just say no: We all need to do it, whatever our life path. And then there’s Rachel Insof ’13, a math major:

The most important lesson I learned at Wellesley is that it is perfectly OK not to be an expert on everything; admitting this in no way diminishes others’ perception of your intelligence. It is important to ask questions, because how else will you discover new interesting things?

How many of us have the humility to admit, “I don’t know squat about that. Will you teach me?” Another quality of thought useful when embarking on a new venture.

You’ll find this issue full of people launching forth—most obviously in the commencement coverage. But you’ll also see it in our cover story, “Cheese Whizzes.” Which, by the way, was one of the most fun stories we’ve edited in a long time—manchego? Baby goats? How can you miss? The article captures life on the wedge—alumnae who decided to leave it all to follow their passion for “fermented milk,” as one of them put it.

Whether you’re setting sail this season for your first job, retirement, or the terra incognita of “I don’t know what I’m going to do next,” your Wellesley lessons will serve you well on the journey. Send us a postcard when you get there.

—Alice M. Hummer, editor
Letters to the Editor

Wellesley welcomes short letters (a maximum length of 300 words) relating to articles or items that have appeared in recent issues of the magazine. Send your remarks to the Editor, Wellesley magazine, 106 Central St., Wellesley, MA 02481-8203, or email your comments to magazine@alum.wellesley.edu.

INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS
Thank you for devoting part of the spring ’13 issue of Wellesley magazine to the topic of people of color at Wellesley College (“The Whole Picture”). As a ’92 graduate, I’ll never forget trying to complete final exams and projects while also engaging with other students about the grief, fear, and fury erupting in Los Angeles in the wake of the Rodney King verdict. It was a difficult time, but also one in which I got to know my fellow students more deeply than I had at any time up to then.

Additionally, I appreciate the attention given to the contributions made by Dominick Duckett (“From the Editor”). Too often, we neglect to appreciate and celebrate the contributions made to Wellesley College by the talented and dedicated nonteaching members of the community.

Here, I especially wish to express my gratitude to the Wellesley College Police. Growing up, I spent part of my childhood in Mississippi during a time when police regularly harassed and hurt people of color and any whites who—like my family—aligned themselves with the movement for civil rights. I quickly learned that police were not safe and should be avoided at all costs.

When I became a resident of the off-campus French House and often stayed late at the theater or library, I had to rely on the Wellesley police to give me a ride home. At first, this was not easy to do. However, over the two years that I lived in French House, I slowly came to know and eventually trust the officers of this multicultural force who were clearly dedicated to keeping Wellesley College safe for everyone, regardless of their color. This seemingly insignificant interaction—a late night ride home for a student—had a lasting positive impact on how I have viewed and interacted with police ever since.

So, kudos to the invaluable contributions made by the nonteaching members of the Wellesley community. It may seem like you’re making little or no difference, but I can tell you from my personal experience that your interactions with the students can be life-changing.

Gitana Garofalo ’92
Seattle

THAT WELLESLEY NETWORK

I am writing to follow up on “Exits and Entrances,” the article about career changing that ran in the spring ’13 magazine. Melissa Ludtke ’73 neglected to mentioned that my blog about navigating a job search at the age of 50 all started in 1980 in McAfee Hall. There I met and became lifelong friends with Paula Demasi ’85, who was friends with AnnMarie Quintalgie McIlwain ’82. Thirty-three years later, when I was laid off from my job, Paula introduced me to AnnMarie, founder and CEO of Careerfuel.net, a comprehensive source of information and inspiration for jobseekers. AnnMarie encouraged me to blog—and published my blog, which led to all sorts of connections and opportunities. She and her staff also offered me support, ideas, and encouragement, and helped me navigate a very difficult time and find my voice. I could not have made it through without the McAfee connection and the wonderful support from Careerfuel! Wellesley RAH!

Deborah Brody Hamilton ’84
Arlington, Va.

MASTERFUL
The spring issue is a masterpiece! Thank you for the “Exits and Entrances” theme.

Susan Santangelo ’78
Somerville, Mass.

BEST EVER
The magazine this quarter (spring ’13) was the finest you’ve ever done! Congratulations.

Ruth Kramer Baden ’54
Chestnut Hill, Mass.

Continued on page 75

TWEETS TO THE EDITOR

* Reading the alum notes of the @Wellesleymag makes me feel inadequate with my postgrad plans of living in a box & eating ramen #womenwhowill
— @bridget_dunn (Bridget Dunn ’15)

* Just found this amazing Shakes reunion in @Wellesleymag. The undergrads send their love! Pic.twitter.com/aiBL0mV0cv
— @wellesleyshakes (Shakespeare Society)

* @wellesleyshakes @Wellesleymag Y’all are so sweet! Looking forward to reunion next month!
— @EdieCleve (Sara Stevenson ’98)

CONTRIBUTORS

KAREN GRUSBY BATES ’73
(‘Dead and Gone to the Movies,’ p. 34) is a Los Angeles-based correspondent for NPR News.

ELIZA BORNÉ ’09
(“Happiness Squared,” p. 33) is an associate editor at Oxford American magazine. She lives in Little Rock, Ark.

ALICE BRADLEY ’91

PAULA BUTTURINI ’73

LOUISA KASDEN ’72
(“Cheese Whizzes,” p. 20) is a food and health writer. A former restaurant owner, she won the M.F.K. Fisher Prize for excellence in Culinary Writing in 2008.

KATE MCCAHILL ’06
(“After the Rain,” p. 32) lives in New Mexico and teaches English at the Santa Fe Community College.

AMY YEE ’96
A New Chapter, Continued

LAST SUMMER, I wrote in these pages that Wellesley was about to add a new chapter to our story. I wrote about our plan to embark on a major, multiyear project to preserve what is best about our buildings and landscape, while reimagining our living, learning, and research spaces for the 21st century.

Much has happened in the past year, and I am pleased to report that Wellesley 2025: A Plan for Campus Renewal officially launched this summer with renovation work in Schneider Center. The Schneider renovation is considered an enabling project—being able to move administrative offices there will free up necessary space in Founders and Green halls for important future work in those buildings to support our students and faculty in the humanities.

With this first project under way, W2025 is already a visible presence on our campus. What is not visible, however—but is no less important—is the tremendous amount of planning that enabled us to define, prioritize, and sequence all the projects that will be part of W2025. The work that faculty, staff, students, and trustees contributed over the past two years yielded this spring an important framework, driven by our programmatic goals, that will guide us over the next 12 years and beyond. This framework is broad and flexible enough so that we can make future decisions about programs or buildings—decisions that we cannot now anticipate—while still holding to our overall vision.

What is planned for W2025? I envision a future campus that on the outside looks very much like Wellesley today. I see the best of our buildings upheld, the characteristic and iconic architectural details that have distinguished our campus maintained. But I also see interior spaces that have undergone a transformation to better support the exceptional quality of the academic and residential experience here. W2025 will support our institutional priorities and enable us to: enhance the academic excellence for which we are known; foster our sense of community; provide flexible space to meet current and anticipated program needs; ensure our buildings are open and welcoming to all; and demonstrate our commitment to sustainability.

The number and scope of projects included in W2025 will depend in large part on the amount of money the College is able to raise, borrow, and fund through our operating budget. At a minimum, we will be able to complete a sequence of projects that will make important progress toward our goals. Those projects include renovations to the field house; Simpson and Stone halls, Founders and Green halls (preliminary work); residence halls (Munger, Beebe, and Cazenove); Pendleton West; the Science Center; and Bates dining hall. In the coming years, if our funding capacity is realized, additional projects will be added. These may include: Tower Court East and West (and its dining hall); Keohane Sports Center; Founders and Green halls (additional work); additional residence halls; and the Science Center (additional work).

While this list of projects is indeed impressive, it still does not encompass all of our highest aspirations. The

‘We have inherited these beautiful buildings from those who came before us, and we must take care of our spaces, anticipating future needs, so that they serve Wellesley for the next 75 to 100 years.’ —President H. Kim Bottomly

H. Kim Bottomly
Stepsinging in the Rain

A little drizzle didn’t stop Catherine Guo ’13 and Luna Guo ’13 (no relation, left) from hamming it up outside the Houghton Memorial Chapel after Stepsinging on May 8, the last day of classes. They repurposed masks they made during the Italian Club’s Venetian Festival back in February. Lesson learned: Never throw away accessories in your class color.

Indeed, green dominated at Stepsinging, which was held inside the chapel due to the rain. “We’re big and green, one fighting machine,” the seniors cheered. In addition to the usual smack talk, students belted out all the classic College tunes, including “The Wellesley Composite,” “O Thou Typo!” and the famous tale of the Harvard man who ran (and won) the Hooprolling contest in 1939 in disguise, “Ballad of a Bold, Bad Man.”

Other last-day-of-classes events included ice cream on Severance Green (bad weather will never keep students away from an ice-cream truck) and a concert featuring Slauer, a U.J. best known for his viral (and controversial) sample-heavy hit “Harlem Shake.”

“We’re big and green, one fighting machine....”

— Lisa Scanlon ’99
LAST DECEMBER, when Mary Kenefake ’13 was deep in the bowels of Clapp Library—the first floor, row D4, to be precise—little did she know that her research would take her all the way to Doha, Qatar. But just a couple months after submitting the paper she had written for the history seminar World Economic Orders, 1918–2008, she got an all-expenses-paid trip to the Gulf to present the paper at a Middle Eastern studies conference.

“I’d never submitted to anything like that before, but I got a lot of encouragement from both my advisor, [history professor] Lidwien Kapteijns, and the professor who I was writing the paper for, [assistant professor of history Quinn] Slobodian, who thought that I might have a chance at it. And luckily, I did,” says Kenefake, a history major with a Middle Eastern studies minor. The conference, the Middle Eastern Studies Students’ Association Undergraduate Conference on Middle Eastern Affairs, is entirely run by students at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar. She was one of 22 students (and one of only two from liberal-arts schools) selected to present at the conference, all expenses covered.

Kenefake’s paper, “The Socioeconomic Transformation of Iran: Reform and Revolution 1973–1985,” examines the domestic economic conditions in Iran leading up to and immediately after the Islamic Revolution. Her thesis is that even though the social movement was based in part on economic concerns, Iranians were actually worse off economically after the revolution. “I didn’t talk about social issues, unless [they were] related to economics. That’s a whole other paper. But I focused on the actual income people were getting, the inflation rate, the gas prices, the food prices, how much food they were importing—all of that nitty-gritty stuff about the daily life,” explains Kenefake.

Kenefake, who’s interested in journalism, used news reports from the Associated Press, the Globe and Mail, and the Guardian, which each had a reporter stationed in Tehran, to find much of this information. “You can see all of these events unfolding and what the economic conditions on the ground are,” she says.

Kenefake was thrilled to have a tour of Al Jazeera English while she was in Qatar. “It has the most beautiful studios I’ve ever seen,” says Kenefake, who’s done broadcast news internships in Chicago, Boston, and at home in Topeka, Kan. “I’ve written pretty extensively about Al Jazeera in several of my classes, so to actually see the compound and the building of the studio where it all happens for Al Jazeera English was really amazing and just a great opportunity to network while I was there. Wellesley really teaches you to network,” she says.

Having just graduated, Kenefake hopes to find a job in journalism, but she says, “I just have to kind of see where opportunities take me. I have to be open to everything.” Back at Wellesley, she was in “journalism heaven” last semester when CBS News Correspondent Michelle Miller and CNBC Chief International Correspondent Michelle Caruso-Cabrera ’91 each came to campus to speak. And during the Alumnae Achievement Awards, Kenefake was excited to sit at the same dinner table as broadcast journalist and award recipient Callie Crossley ’73 and her classmate Karen Grigsby Bates, a correspondent for NPR. “I was thrilled. I mean, how did I get to sit with these amazing women and learn from them about their careers? And it was very humbling, but also really great to hear career advice from them,” Kenefake says.

—Lisa Scanlon ’99
**Know-How for the Sharing**

“I am an intrinsically curious person,” says Ellen Bechtel ’14. And while she appreciates that Wellesley provides numerous opportunities for intellectual exchanges, she has often found herself wishing that there was a forum for learning practical skills—like gardening or bike repair—that aren’t typically taught in a college classroom. Friend and fellow environmental-studies major Elli Blaine ’13 has long thought the same, and last fall they joined forces to create the Three-College Skill Share, a collaborative event of Wellesley, Olin, and Babson colleges held on April 6 in Olin’s Academic Center.

The event’s stated mission was to share skills “to live more happy, creative, and sustainable lives,” and more than 20 students and faculty from the three colleges offered sessions on skills like knitting and crochet, soap making, and beekeeping. Mayrah Udvardi ’14 demonstrated how to build a cob oven from inexpensive materials—sand, clay, straw, glass bottles, bricks, and river stones. She taught herself how to build them in high school and says they are great for making pizza and bread.

Other skills were developed through more formal training and apprenticeship. Em Gamber ’14 offered Backcountry Ethics, in which she shared her experience living responsibly in the woods as a backcountry caretaker for the Appalachian Mountain Club—a job that required her to live on New Hampshire’s Mount Liberty for three months last summer in a canvas tent without electricity or plumbing. Environmental-studies major Carly Gayle ’13 presented on permaculture, a type of gardening that focuses on producing food and plants useful to humans and requiring little maintenance. She learned about permaculture at Wellesley and has helped to plan and plant Wellesley’s Edible Ecosystem Teaching Garden.

Support for the skill share came from the Mellon Presidential Innovation Project Fund, which exists to enhance the formal collaboration between Babson, Olin, and Wellesley. Bechtel and her fellow organizers from the three colleges have some money left over for next year and have compiled the skills into a zine (available at threecollege-skillsshare.org) that they expect to expand after next year’s event—and, they hope, for many years thereafter.

—Liz Johnson ’01

**The Wellesley/China Connection**

**IN JUNE, as part of a new Wellesley College/Peking University Partnership for Women’s Leadership, 20 Wellesley students, as well as some Wellesley faculty and staff, traveled to Beijing to participate in an intensive 10-day academic program with 20 female students from Peking University. Modeled on the curricular and pedagogical methods of Wellesley’s Madeleine Korbel Albright Institute for Global Affairs—and appropriately, the students enjoyed a visit and insights from Albright herself—the program was centered on the theme of “challenges of an urban future.” Students worked in teams of six to tackle issues ranging from affordable housing to cultural heritage. In this photo, students from Wellesley and PKU pose at Weiminghu, the lake at the PKU campus. (The rock bears the name of the lake, which translates to “No Name Lake.”) In 2014, students from PKU will travel to Wellesley.**
Commencement
FIFTY YEARS FROM NOW, when many of the details have faded from memory, the class of ’13 will likely remember one thing: the broiling heat of their commencement day. With the temperature topping 90 degrees, robes were shed, and more than a few programs were tented on heads as impromptu sun hats. But when all was said and done, 566 degrees were handed out, and the joy and pride were just the same. Speaker Valerie Jarrett, senior advisor to President Barack Obama, delivered the commencement address, urging the graduates, “Be flexible. Be resilient. And pace yourself.” President H. Kim Bottomly, in her parting words to the class, expressed the pride of the College, reminding them, “Tomorrow you will no longer be a Wellesley student. But I want you to take this last thought and carry it with you always: You are Wellesley. You will always be Wellesley. This will always be your campus. You will always belong here.”

The full texts of all the commencement speeches are posted at bit.ly/18fzb23. To view a slideshow of commencement pictures, visit www.youtube.com/WellesleyMagazine.
Signs of Peace

THROUGHOUT HER LIFE—indeed up until her very last days—Kathryn Wasserman Davis ’28, philanthropist and advocate for world peace, was concerned about whether or not she had done enough in her 106 years to further efforts of peace. A week after her April 23 death, a choir of origami hummingbirds went up on the Davis Museum walls, an installation of the Davis Peace Project called Charming. Artist Kathryn Sjursen created the hummingbirds, “symbols of tenacity and the power of small efforts to make big change,” according to the museum, as a tribute to Davis’s commitment to peace, justice, and art. An April workshop offered participants the chance to learn how to fold origami hummingbirds, then encouraged participants to share the knowledge with others and pass it on. Small efforts, big change.

Charming will remain on display, along with a 20-by-20-foot peace banner by Jenny Schmid on the exterior wall of the Davis, at least until fall, when an on-campus memorial service for Davis is planned.

—Jennifer Flint

PORTAL OF HUMANITY

A carved wooden door exerts a strong pull on a visitor’s attention as soon as she enters Harambee House, the College’s cultural center for students of African descent. The door, actually a 7-feet-tall, 2-feet-wide freestanding panel with images inscribed on both sides, is made from bubinga, an African rosewood thought to emit strength and blessings.

Florence Tobo Lobe ’69, a native of Cameroon, commissioned the door panel as a gift in honor of her 25th class reunion. She wanted to show her gratitude to Wellesley and at the same time create a tangible link between the women of Wellesley and Africa. After researching African women’s history, she decided to turn this information into drawings that would be carved into a door, because “women are the doors to life.”

Tobo Lobe hired a master woodcarver in Cameroon, who traced her designs onto the wood. It took him and a number of assistants several months, plus daily visits from her, to complete the project. Persistence comes naturally to Tobo Lobe: As an African woman trained in organic chemistry, she faced obstacles to advancing her career in a male-dominated field. Today she is president of the Rubisadt Foundation in Cameroon, which prepares talented African girls to study science at top secondary schools around the world.

The door carvings consist of seven separate circles or medallions, four on the front and three on the back. Inside these medallions are miniature pictures describing the major eras of African history through women’s eyes, from pre-colonial times to the present day. In traditional communities, women were seen as the “keepers of civilization”; they played roles vital to the functioning of society. But the importance of their role eroded as village life broke down during and after colonial rule. “Today, women are beginning, with the help of education, to regain the status they lost,” says Tobo Lobe.

A space on the door has been deliberately left blank for an eighth medallion, which “invites anyone to think about and contribute to the overall message,” according to Tobo Lobe. “The door is a hope for Africa and for the global search for peace and a better future.”

—April Austin
MOOC It Up With WellesleyX

WERE YOU SO BUSY finishing the requirements for your biology and French double major that you never got to take Shakespeare? Always wanted to learn about human evolution? Now’s your chance. No matter where you live in the world, you can tap into the Wellesley educational experience—and be part of a great experiment.

This spring, the College announced its first-ever offering of MOOCs—massively open online courses. They will be taught in 2013–14 under the auspices of EdX, a consortium founded by Harvard and MIT to offer high-quality online learning. Wellesley was the first liberal-arts college to join the group last December.

Leading the MOOC lineup in September 2013 will be Introduction to Human Evolution, taught by Adam Van Arsdale, a biological anthropologist. The assistant professor of anthropology will teach it concurrently with a class on campus for about 20 Wellesley students. The “bricks-and-mortar” class will launch first, with EdX recording the classroom sessions for MOOC learners to watch a few weeks later. Wellesley students will likely interact with online learners, and vice versa—leading to what the College hopes will be rich discussions that reach beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom. The syllabus for the course is still in the works, but the online experience may include virtual guided trips to archaeological dig sites and an interactive primer on how scientists measure skeletal remains.

“We’re experimenting with a new model of education,” says Provost and Dean of the College Andrew Shennan. Since these courses will not be for credit at the outset, he adds, the College can be “playful” in seeing what the technology can and can’t do to capture the unique liberal-arts experience. Will there be caps on enrollment rather than tens of thousands of learners, few of whom finish the course? Maybe, says Shennan. Crowd-sourced grading of writing assignments? Possibly. It’s all a work in progress.

“The instructors of those courses will be challenged to think creatively about what would be good ways of assessing students’ comprehension of the material, critical thinking about the material, growth in their understanding of the material,” Shennan says. “We’re putting this new model in the hands of instructors who have dedicated their professional lives to excellent undergraduate teaching. … Our faculty are interested in learning about how students learn [online].”

—Alice Hummer

MOOCs to You

FALL 2013
Introduction to Human Evolution. Taught by Adam Van Arsdale, assistant professor of anthropology. Begins September 2013

SPRING 2014
Was Alexander Great? The Life, Leadership, and Legacies of History’s Greatest Warrior. Taught by Guy Rogers, Mildred Lane Kemper Professor of Classics and History. Begins January 2014

FALL 2014
Introduction to Global Sociology. Taught by Smitha Radhakrishnan, assistant professor of sociology. Begins October 2014

To register, visit www.edx.org, where you can also find course descriptions.
Coach with the Most

JOHN BABINGTON retired in May after 26 years as Wellesley’s head coach of the cross-country team. Since 2010, he had also coached the track and field team after it was elevated from club to varsity status. Babington was voted coach of the year seven times by the New 8 and NEWMAC, and his athletes garnered 24 individual nationals qualifications and 12 All-American awards. Under his tutelage, Randelle Boots ’13 took the 2011 Division III national title in the women’s mile.

A runner himself who competed in the Boston Marathon 13 times, Babington served as head coach for the US national team at the 1990 World Cross Country Championships and assistant coach for the US Track and Field Team at the 1996 Olympic games in Atlanta. Prior to coming to Wellesley, Babington coached Lynn Jennings (bronze medalist in the 10K in the 1992 summer Olympics, and three-time world cross-country champion) as well as Joan Benoit Samuelson and Judy St. Hilaire.

To view a retirement tribute for Babington, visit bit.ly/14nYiKr.

SCHNEIDER CENTER will soon no longer be the building that time forgot. Once the bustling home of the student center famous for its greasy fries and vintage orange furniture, Schneider has stood empty for several years. This summer, full renovations are under way to create space for a constellation of offices that will serve students.

The building will bring together the registrar, the class deans, the international studies office, student financial services, the Students’ Aid Society, and the housing office. Students will be able to move more easily and quickly among the offices when they need advising, forms, and signatures for course registration, study abroad, and other events in their academic careers.

The renovation, which will be funded from the College’s 2012 bond issue of $100 million, is expected to be complete in the summer of 2014 and is the first step in implementing Wellesley 2025: A Plan for Campus Renewal (see “From the President,” page 4). W2025 also calls for an overhaul of the building envelope of the field house—roof, walls, lighting, floors, and built-in sports equipment—and preparatory work for that project will also begin this summer. Actual construction in the field house is set to begin in the spring of 2014.

—Alice Hummer

SPORTS SCOREBOARD

★ The Wellesley crew kept up its winning tradition this spring, taking home the 2013 NEWMAC Championship. The Blue nabbed the title with a win in the varsity-8+ race and also won the Florence Smith Points Trophy, both for the third straight year. After successful races at the New England and ECAC championships, the team earned its fourth-straight trip to the NCAA Championships, placing fifth in the nation.

★ The golf team had a solid spring season, which included a win and a runner-up finish at Myrtle Beach, and a third-place finish at the Liberty League Championships, both spring training events.

★ Wellesley lacrosse finished the season with a 7–7 overall record. Highlighting the spring for the Blue was a 17–14 victory over eventual ECAC Champion, Mount Holyoke.

★ The softball team had a solid season, finishing with a 22-14 overall record. Wellesley carried the highest team batting average in the conference and advanced to the second round of the NEWMAC tournament before bowing out.

★ The Wellesley tennis team finished their 2012-13 season with an 11-10 overall record. The Blue finished second at the Seven Sisters Championship, picking up wins over Mount Holyoke, Smith, and Bryn Mawr, before falling in a tight match to Vassar.

★ In his final season as head coach, Wellesley’s John Babington led the track and field team through a solid outdoor season. The team finished sixth overall at the NEWMAC Championships, scoring points in nine of the 15 events entered. Regionally, 15 student-athletes qualified to compete at either the New England or ECAC championships, with the 4 x 800-meter relay team earning All-Region honors.
THE RUHLMAN HOTLIST

You never know what you’re going to learn at the Ruhlman Conference, the College’s annual celebration of student research. This year, nearly 400 students participated in presentations, panels, poster sessions, and performances on topics ranging from memory in songbirds to medieval Hindu poetry. Here’s a sampling of some of the tidbits a careful listener could have gleaned at this April’s conference.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was the first American to translate Dante’s *The Divine Comedy*, in 1867—and Special Collections owns a first edition. (Cassandra Hoef ’15, Dominique Ledoux ’14, Morgan Moore ’15, and Polina Soskin ’14)

Impact craters, which are caused by meteorites, are the most widespread geological feature in the solar system, found everywhere from planets to asteroids. (Lynn Geiger ’13)

The Davis Museum owns a collection of European textiles dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries—17 French or Italian vestments and 146 textile fragments. (Sara Putterman ’13)

Maine is the most prepared state in the Union for sea rise caused by global warming, as measured by policies and regulations already in place. (From a presentation by Kelly Mercer ’15)

In the early 1800s, the slave trade in the US was worth $3 billion. That’s $14 trillion in today’s dollars. (Elizabeth Brown ’13)

Before ever writing a novel, Ernest Hemingway penned about 200 articles for his high-school newspaper and the *Kansas City Star*, and as the *Toronto Star’s* first foreign correspondent—in Paris. (Sara Simon ’13)

As of 2010, there were approximately 400,000 children in the foster-care system in the US. (Catalina Santos ’13)

PROFESSOR CECILE DE BANKE retired in 1955, but her legacy is still in full bloom right on the corner of the Clapp Library’s main desk. After the professor’s 1965 death, friends and alumnae created an endowed fund with $10,880 in donations. With income from the fund, a fresh arrangement is delivered every week that the College is in session (and for reunion).

De Banke joined the speech department in 1932 and became a pioneer in the field of choral speaking, as well as the dramatic coach for Barnswallows and Shakespeare Society. Remembered for her vivid personality, her charm, zest, and gaiety, as well as her “lovely hair and hats,” she was beloved. In an attempt to live up to her example, the flower fund was intended to provide “a spot of color and beauty in an unexpected place to give a lift to the working day of all who pass.”

—Jennifer Flint
Hoop Dee Doo

This year's Hooprolling champion, Alex Nagourney '13, had her eye on the finish line before she even got to Wellesley. She wrote about the time-honored tradition in her application essay. Nagourney, a physics and math major, rolled her way into the history books thanks to some help from her Wellesley little sister, who snagged a prime starting spot on Tupelo Lane at 6 A.M. on the morning of the race. As she took an early—but wobbly—lead and realized she had a good shot at winning, Nagourney's strategy was to simply go for it. "I was so shocked that this might actually become a reality that I just sprinted!" she says. To ensure that her experience didn't end with the winner's bouquet, Nagourney's friends carried her piggyback down to the lake and threw her in. As Nagourney put it, "They probably ruined their shoes ... all for keeping the Wellesley tradition alive!"

—Sidrah Baloch '14

Object of Our Attention

Scrappy women

The Wellesley College Archives is chock-full of history relating to the College, but few items capture the day-to-day life at Wellesley as vibrantly as students' scrapbooks. Archives has over 300 scrapbooks in its collection, most from the 1940s and 1950s, and in preliminary talks with other Seven Sisters schools to collaborate on a project to digitize all their scrapbooks and make them available online. Most documents in archives are very "formal" and "staged," says Ian Graham, former head of archives and the College's new director of library collections. But if you're able to look at hundreds of scrapbooks, a different version of life at a women's college is revealed. "Trends start to emerge," he says.

Jann Goehner Packard '48 made some of the most intricate scrapbooks in the collection. She collected all manner of ephemera: table decorations from Christmas dinner in Tower Court, a handbook for student leaders who were working on the 75th anniversary fund (which included a justification for building the "New Dorms"), a pressed pink candle from a classmate's birthday party, and her daily planner. When asked what motivated her to create the scrapbooks, Packard says, "I'm not sure! Maybe it is one of those things I started, and once you started, you had to keep doing."

—Lisa Scanlon '99
**REPORTS FROM AROUND CAMPUS**

**College Road**

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**CROSS-TRAINING CHAMPION**

**SHARON NG ‘16 KNOWS HOW**

To make a birdie fly. This spring, she competed at the 2013 National Collegiate Badminton Championships and placed second. Not bad for someone who says she “didn’t get to train that much for badminton this year.” Ng is also a member of the College’s cross-country and track teams, which compete throughout the academic year—meaning that badminton sometimes has to take a back seat. When she doesn’t have time to get to the courts across town at the Maugus Club, Ng practices footwork and conditioning on her own. “Running helps me with badminton, and badminton helps me with running,” she says. “Since I run consistently, I was able to at least maintain my endurance.” Evidently, Ng will represent the US this summer at the World University Games.

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**OVERHEARD**

‘**Katelyn Campbell, Wellesley is excited to welcome you this fall.**’

—Facebook message from the College to an accepted student who got into a public tussle with her principal for speaking out against a mandatory abstinence-only assembly at her high school.

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**PROGRAMMING CHAMPS**

**IT WAS ANOTHER WELLESLEY FIRST:** The first all-women’s team to win a programming competition sponsored by the Consortium for Computing Sciences in Colleges Northeast Region. Team Wellesley—Emily Erdman ’13, Michelle Ferreira ’13, and Erin Davis ’14—was given a computer and three hours to tackle six programming problems. In a field of 33 teams from 30 different schools, they were the only group to solve five of the six problems.

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**BUMPER CROP**

**28%**

**WELLESLEY RECEIVED** a record number of applications for the class of 2017—4,794—and admitted just 28 percent. It was the College’s most selective admittance rate in more than 30 years.
or Michael Jeffries, Knafl Assistant Professor of Social Sciences and Assistant Professor of American Studies, writing a book about Barack Obama wasn’t about teasing out the president’s political philosophy or exploring details of his personal life; it was a chance to deepen the conversation around race in America. “We all know about Obama,” Jeffries says. “He’s such a popular figure around the globe. I was interested in using the Obama phenomenon as a tool to think about race in combination with other social forces and ideas.”

In his new book, *Paint the White House Black*, Jeffries says we can’t truly discuss race without discussing “intersectionality”—an idea that arose from the work of 20th-century black feminists. Intersectionality means evaluating the ways that the perceptions of race and other forces like gender, class, and nationality inform and transform each other. The racist stereotypes that have plagued the Obamas are an example of this. In our political culture, “it’s no longer OK to just openly express explicitly racist ideas—the injection of race in political campaigns in particular takes place undercover. So you have someone like Newt Gingrich saying Obama is a ‘food-stamp president’ as a way to send out a racist signal to his constituents,” Jeffries says. Gingrich is saying something about class—but his listeners understand it is also about race.

How people react to Michelle Obama in particular is a great way to explore these intersections. “Michelle being treated as a superwoman seems like a huge compliment, especially in comparison to past demeaning portrayals of black women as hypersexual, angry, and deviant in all sorts of ways,” Jeffries says. But this image disguises the way she and other black women continue to be discriminated against. Michelle came from a working-class background, and her detractors cast her as undeserving and ungrateful of her position as first lady. Her success is seen as coming at the expense of “more deserving” others, usually white.

Antiblack and anti-Hispanic sentiment slightly worsened during Obama’s first term, according to opinion polls, but racism is not just about language or about personal attitudes. It’s also about institutional outcomes. There are significant, racially based gaps in health and wellness, education, incarceration, income, and wealth. Jeffries notes that these quantifiable indicators “are even more important and more damaging in terms of the actual living conditions people of color are dealing with.” He emphasizes that to address these issues we need to think about racism as an institutional problem instead of just a problem of personal responsibility, and look at the organizations and institutions—like banks, schools, hospitals—that order our lives.

Though Obama has been criticized for not doing more about racial inequality, Jeffries notes, “the president is working within a severe set of constraints. For anyone to expect him to wave a magic wand and change all these things is completely unrealistic.”

Yet there are “two big things” the president—and all of us—can do, Jeffries says. “The first is to make a conscious effort to talk about race in combination with other social forces, class and gender in particular. The second is to focus on identifying and dismantling the institutions that produce racist outcomes. I don’t think the president has done that as well as he could, and I don’t think most everyday citizens do that as well as we could.”

—Jennifer Vanasco ’94
Internet piracy is supposedly the scourge of the online seas, but it’s hard to feel sorry for its biggest victims—the music and movies industries—in part because it’s so difficult to judge the economic impact of piracy. Studios claim to have lost billions of dollars to illegal downloads, but many in the general public are skeptical. It’s unclear how many sales there would have been had opportunities to pirate not existed. Recently, Brett Danaher, an assistant professor in the economics department, was presented with a unique opportunity to find out.

In January 2012, the US Department of Justice shut down Megaupload, one of the biggest “cyber lockers” used for online filesharing—and routinely misused for sharing movies protected by copyright. This provided Danaher with a natural opportunity for measuring the economic losses of piracy, because he could cleanly test the before and after. Two movie studios (who, alas, remain anonymous) allowed Danaher a rare peek at their digital sales and rentals across 12 countries for the 18 weeks following the shutdown. Analyzing the data in a recent paper, he and a colleague at Carnegie Mellon found that the studios’ rental and digital movie revenues spiked 6 to 10 percent above the pre-shutdown sales trend.

“The big question in internet piracy is: Is it like a game of whack-a-mole, where if you shut down one of these major piracy sites, people will just go and find another?” says Danaher. “We found that when you shut down one of these major piracy sites, some percent of them actually go and buy it legally.”

Internet piracy and the digitization of media industries is a niche field, to be sure. As a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, Danaher discovered that it was one he was well-suited to, given his facility with technology and his own love of music. Unlike a lot of his mentors, who were on the far side of the great digital divide, he understood how to navigate the uncharted waters of illegal filesharing sites. But he insists that even though he is an “off the charts” fan of music, he himself never pirates: “I’m probably the only person who visits filesharing sites all the time who doesn’t have pirated files!”

—Sarah Ligon ’03

Faculty Retirements

William “Flick” Coleman Professor of Chemistry, 34 years of service
One of the “great joys” of Professor Coleman’s career has been “the opportunity to develop and teach a variety of courses spanning several fields, working with marvelous colleagues and wonderful students,” he says. “I will miss many aspects of my teaching and scholarship. I will not miss grading one bit.” His plans for retirement include travel, photography, chemistry, and spending time in Maine with his wife, Sandie, “much to the fear of many lobsters.”

Nancy Kolodny Nellie Zuckerman Cohen and Anne Cohen Heller Professor of Health Sciences; Professor of Chemistry, 44 years of service
Upon leaving what she calls “truly the best job in the world,” Professor Kolodny says she will miss the thrill of learning something new every day. She plans to continue to do research on campus “in applications of magnetic resonance,” and she looks forward to spending more time with friends and family, particularly her 12 grandchildren.

Vicki Mistacco Professor of French, 45 years of service
Among many things, Professor Mistacco will miss “seeing the pride in a student’s face when she has finally broken away from the difficulties she first had in a course and gone on to produce a stellar piece of work.” But retirement will also afford her more time for travel—“There is so much to learn about this world of ours,” she says—and uninterrupted time to devote to research, as well as creative outlets that had been shifted to the back burner: photography, gardening, and cooking, for starters.

Other Teaching Retirements

John Babington Cross-country and Track Coach, 26 years of service
See more on p. 12.

Ken Loewit Production Manager, Theater Studies, 19 years of service
Although eager to return to the tropics of South Florida and its beaches, Loewit says he will “miss most the students who gave me 19 years of joy, wonder, and challenge.”

Carol Ann Paul Senior Instructor in Science Laboratory, 30 years of service
L’Amour Toujours

Both erudite and playful, written from the head and heart, How the French Invented Love: Nine Hundred Years of Passion and Romance by Marilyn Koenick Yalom ’54 did not start out as a book about love.

Yalom, feminist scholar, cultural historian, and a 2013 Alumnae Achievement Award recipient, had proposed an epochal examination of France’s literature and culture—a rereading of the classics she’d begun studying as a French major six decades earlier. Her literary agent, attuned to the current complications of modern bookselling, suggested she devise a narrower lens to focus her idea.

“When I came up with love,” Yalom said during an April talk to the Wellesley Club of France, “my agent said, ‘That’s it, I can sell that!’”

Anything but a dry, scholarly treatise, How the French Invented Love is Yalom’s exploration of the way romantic love has been treated in French literature since the 12th century. Puritan it is not; she says the French have never thought that women were any less passionate than men. “One defining feature of love à la française is its forthright insistence on sexual pleasure,” she writes, tracing that thread through the centuries. “Even older French men and women cling to a vision of love grounded in the flesh.”

Particularly illuminating is her playing of French ideas about love off their more straight-laced counterparts in America. Citing a recent poll of US and French citizens aged 50 to 64, as published in AARP The Magazine, Yalom writes that 85 percent of US respondents agreed that “true love can exist without a radiant sex life” as compared to only 34 percent of the French respondents, and that the emphasis on “carnal satisfaction” strikes tighter-laced Americans as “deliciously naughty.”

From the 12th century’s Abélard and Héloïse and the troubadors of southern France, Yalom examines the courtly ideas of the Middle Ages, the French invention of the heart as a symbol of love in the 14th century, the idea of serial lovers in the 17th century, and libertinage—“the sheer pleasure of voluptuous lovemaking” in serial seductions free of even the pretense of true love—in the 18th. By the 19th century, French romantics are offering “love or death, love and death, love in death, love, love, love as the supreme value in life.” The Oscar Wilde scandal leads to her examination of same-sex love literature in the 20th century, to Sartre and de Beauvoir, and to her favorite author on the subject, Marguerite Duras.

Yalom herself is one of the book’s greatest charms as she looks back, not only at French literature, but also at her own experience of it. Personal memories and glimpses of her French friends and their complicated love stories ground the book in life rather than the mere printed word. Her personal stories captivate and help us experience her intellectual tour through her eyes and heart, as well as her brain.

Reading How the French Invented Love brought back memories of the best professors of my intellectual life. Better yet, the story is told in the wise and witty tones of a close, intelligent, and warm-hearted friend.

—Paula Butturini ’73

Butturini has lived in France since 1999 and is the author of Keeping the Feast: One Couple’s Story of Love, Food, and Healing in Italy.
In 2008, Jean Van’t Hul ’99 started a little blog to help coordinate a toddler art class she was running out of her home in North Carolina. Today that blog, The Artful Parent, has become a popular destination among the creative-parenting set, with about 350,000 pageviews a month. It has also led to a book, where Van’t Hul has distilled some of her best ideas into a photo-filled guide for making art with your own kids every day.

What’s your best advice for injecting a little art into daily family life?
Just make simple art materials accessible. You don’t have to do an elaborate activity or have fancy materials. Often, parents put away the supplies because they worry too much about marks on the walls. I don’t want to be washing the walls either, but at the same time, supplies need to be accessible and kids need to feel it’s OK to use them.

Did you have a particularly “artful” childhood yourself?
When I was very little we lived in a fishing boat in Alaska and, later, in a cabin, which most people would call a shack. We didn’t have many toys or art supplies, and we never had a TV, but that opened up a whole world for the imagination. There was a lot of creative play, reading, and art making.

Your book champions process-oriented art, as opposed to product-oriented art. Why?
When I was in grade school, a lot of what passed for art was color construction paper with pre-printed lines and instructions: paste eyes here, cut the nose and paste it there. That’s not art at all. Process-oriented art allows the child to direct how the materials are used and how the finished product looks. So you could put out paints and Q-tips or brushes and paper or collage materials, and the result would look different each time. There are no rules about what’s right and wrong and how it should be done.

With all this blogging, book writing, and “artful parenting,” do you have time to make your own art?
Until recently I would have said no, but I started to feel a bit like a hypocrite. I was encouraging art in my kids and telling everyone how important art making is, but my own artist was curled up in a corner. So, a few months ago, I signed up for a course, and it has really inspired me to start making art. I feel like a new person.

Young at Art

JEAN VAN’T HUL ’99
The Artful Parent: Simple Ways to Fill Your Family’s Life with Art & Creativity
Roost Books, 320 pages, $21.95

By Sarah Ligon ’03 | Ligon is a writer and mother living in Alberta, Canada.

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SEND US YOUR BOOKS
If you’ve published a book and you’d like to have it listed in “Fresh Ink” and considered for review, please send two copies to Lisa Scanlon ’99, Wellesley magazine, 106 Central St., Wellesley, MA 02481-8203.
Meet the growing group of alumnae—from cheesemakers to cheesemongers—who live life on the wedge.

by Louisa Kasdon ’72

CHEESE WHIZZES
By the time I find my way to Ten Apple Farm in Gray, Maine, the chèvre is cooling in its triangular molds and the manchego is simmering. “You have to slowly warm the goat milk to 86 degrees,” Margaret Hathaway ’98 says, whisking figure eights calmly in the big pot on her kitchen stove. It’s morning in Maine, and she’s already milked the goats in the backyard and fed the chickens. Four-year-old Beatrice colors in the dining room, baby Sadie is napping, and big sister Charlotte is at first grade in Portland.

Pushing back her bandanna, Hathaway takes a quick look at the clock. It’s time to add in the culture packet—a microbe-rich mixture of rennet (enzymes), culture, and salt. “Making cheese is really straightforward,” she says. “All it really is is good fresh milk (ours comes straight from the goat and is unpasteurized), seasoning, and culture—and patience.”

This morning, Hathaway is a little worried about her cheese. She made bread earlier in the morning, and it’s conceivable that the microbes that form the yeast in the bread may have hijacked the microbes in the cheese culture. “Making bread and cheese at the same time is considered a no-no in cheesemaking, but I wanted bread for lunch,” she says. We’ll have to wait and see if the manchego explodes instead of condensing when it comes time to put the milk in the cheese press.

Hathaway and her husband, photographer Karl Schatz, had good jobs. An English major back from a Fulbright in Tunisia, she worked briefly in publishing and then went on to manage a cupcake bakery while she worked on a novel. He was an online photo editor at Time magazine. One day, at home in Brooklyn, eating chèvre at the kitchen table, the two were suddenly seized by the fantasy of leaving “all that” and becoming goat farmers. They left their jobs, put their stuff in storage, borrowed a car from Schatz’s parents, and headed out on a quest documented in Hathaway’s first book, The Year of the Goat: 40,000 Miles and the Quest for the Perfect Cheese. One farm, many goats, and three children later, they are now homesteading in Maine, making cheese and teaching others how to do the same. “It was never meant to be a profit-making venture. More of a way of life,” Hathaway says. When we last spoke in early May, she was mucking the goat stalls and planting her vegetable garden. She was checking email in between baby naps and cheese timers. “Spring is surprisingly busy on the farm.”

Hathaway is part of a growing circle of Wellesley alums centering their professional and personal lives on cheese: small-scale farmstead cheesemakers like Hathaway and Mary Bartholomay Raynolds ’74, and large-scale cheesemaker Lisa Horwitz Schwartz ’77 of Rainbeau Ridge farm in Bedford, N.Y.; cheesemongers like Elena Santogade ’04, Katie Bartunek ’09, and Kate Demase ’02; cheese educators like Nora Singley ’03; cheese buyers like Bronwen Bromberger Percival ’11; and cheese activists like attorney Veronique Chau Kherian ’05. Together they form a cluster of Wellesley alumnae who call themselves “cheese nerds.”

We understand the natural affinity of educated women around food, but why cheese? Why not wine, or bread, or chocolate?

Kherian has one answer: “Cheese attracts thoughtful people. Cheese requires precise and delicate work—handling the curds, understanding the timing, the shipping, the selling, many nuances, lots of skills,” she says. And why does cheese seem to attract so many younger Wellesley women? “American cheese is a new frontier, a new industry. Wellesley women are very good at being at the vanguard.”

Margaret Hathaway has another thought: “The American artisanal cheese movement was started by women, following in the whole female tradition of milk, the whole ‘milkmaid thing.’ Maybe it has something to do with the fact that women lactate. Having three young daughters and any number of goats and kids, sometimes it feels as if our farm is one big lactation factory.”

—Margaret Hathaway ’98
Making cheese is really straightforward. All it really is is good fresh milk (ours comes straight from the goat and is unpasteurized), seasoning, and culture—and patience.’

—Margaret Hathaway ’98
**The Cheesemonger’s Life**

Elena Santogade ’04 says her college friends consider her the most successful of them all, since she made her career decision based on “being happy and content, not pursuing power and money.” She is also the one who makes the least decision based on “being happy and content, not pursuing parts of my brain—my creative skills, my sensual analysis, my business shrewdness, my need to be around humans and not at a desk.”

Straight out of college, Santogade went to New York and into the publishing industry, eventually landing a position that allowed her to travel through Europe and Scandinavia and spend all her spare time and money in cheese shops. When she wasn’t traveling, she started a “cheese club”; every few weeks, two people in the group would bring a different cheese for the others to try. She was in sensory overload, but hooked on cheese.

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**‘You don’t go into cheese to get rich. You do it for the passion.’**
—Elena Santogade ’04

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Soon, a good friend with a cheese store offered her a job, but Santogade was moving up at her publishing job and didn’t take him seriously. Meanwhile, a self-described “classic Wellesley overachiever,” she started to study and make cheese in her apartment. By the second year, she was teaching classes in making mozzarella, had two cheese caves going, and began hosting beer and cheesemaking events in her kitchen. “I was already working 50 hours a week at my real job, and was now selling cheese semi-secretly at my friend’s cheese shop,” she says. Six months later, cheese won out, and she has been cheesemongering ever since.

In June 2013, Santogade became the manager and cheese buyer at Campbell Cheese & Grocery, a tiny storefront cheese and grocery store in the middle of hipster Williamsburg in Brooklyn. It’s her third post as a cheesemonger. The shop is still under construction when we visit. In Santogade’s mind, every screw is in place and every centimeter jammed with fabulous cheese.

“He’s where the marble counter starts … this space, that’s for the refrigeration unit ….” The store will focus on old-world cheese and American classics made by “exceptional and innovative artisanal cheese makers.”

“He’s the thing about beautiful cheese,” she says. “It’s an affordable luxury that doesn’t break the bank.”

Last year, Santogade was a member of the inaugural class of Certified Cheese Professionals, graduating after a blindfolded tasting certification exam sponsored by the American Cheese Society, similar to the test for professional wine sommeliers. Santogade calls herself a cheese lifer, deep into the exclusive network of cheese professionals—those who make it and those who sell it.
Singley, who says cheese makes her “heart beat,” hopes to teach cooking classes out of her home.
From Cheese Counter to TV

Nora Singley ’03 had an epiphany about cheese in high school on a family trip to France. “I wondered how anything could taste this good,” she says. Passionate about her palate, she considered other fermented products—beer, wine, and bread—but “cheese made my heart beat.”

An art-history and Italian major at Wellesley, Singley took her first out-of-college job in real estate. “It just never felt right,” she says. She wanted to do something where she didn’t need to leave her work at work, she says, and that led her to the cheese counter at Murray’s, the oldest cheese shop in New York. With hundreds of cheeses to learn, Singley felt alive. “It was a dream job for me—the only way you can reach cheese still has a very special place in her heart. “It’s what made me stand out,” she says.

Singley has simple advice for novice cheese lovers: “The only way to learn about cheese is by tasting, tasting, tasting. Taste every style from every country and learn how to talk about cheese. That’s how you’ll discover your palate.”

CHEESE TIP
How to Taste With All Your Senses

Learning how to taste will teach you more about cheese. But what exactly is tasting, and what makes it different from eating?

Tasting employs nearly all of the senses. It’s a mindful, analytical experience.

First, look at your cheese. A stark white cheese is probably made from goat’s milk, while one that is deep yellow is a rich and buttery cow’s milk cheese. Cheeses with white, fluffy rinds will probably taste like mushrooms and sweet cream. The area directly beneath the rind on some cheeses appears creamier and softer than the center, indicating its high level of ripeness. Analyzing the rind, the color of the inner paste, and the visual characteristics of a cheese’s texture will inform your palate.

Then, touch your cheese, paying close attention to the texture of the rind and interior. Is it high in moisture or dry and crumbly? Is the inside chalky but the rind soft? The more detail you take in, the more you’ll enjoy the nuances of each bite.

Next, smell. Smelling is more important than actual eating, since the tongue can only detect bitter, sour, sweet, salty, and umami. The nose, on the other hand, carries anywhere from 5,000 to 10,000 different smell receptors. Think about what you’re smelling: Is it fruity, grassy, or gamey? Creamy, nutty, or tropical? Sure, your tongue may tell you that the cheese tastes sweet and slightly salty, but it’s the nose that picks up on the details.

Now, take a bite. Let the cheese linger in your mouth and analyze what you’re tasting. Breathe out through your nose, which will stimulate the retronasal passage and trigger sensation and reaction in your brain. As you swallow, wait for the finish, and think. Do you like the cheese? What words would you use to describe it?

Having an educated palate is the best way to make the most of cheese.

—Nora Singley ’03

The Cheese Tracker

Here’s how to follow the goings-on of these Wellesley cheese whizzes.

Margaret Hathaway ’98
livingwithgoats.com
Twitter: @tenapplefarm
Facebook: Ten Apple Farm

Veronique Chau Kherian ’05
misscheesemonger.com
Twitter: @msscheesemonger
Facebook: Miss Cheesemonger

Elena Santogade ’04
wannabemonger.com,
campbellcheese.com
Twitter: @ElenaSantogade,
@campbellcheese
Facebook: WannabeMonger,
Campbell Cheese & Grocery

Lisa Horwitz Schwartz ’77
www.rainbeauridge.com
Twitter: @rainbeauridge
Facebook: Rainbeau Ridge

Schwartz is on sabbatical, living in China, and the farm is currently operating on a smaller scale. She hopes to resume her cheesemaking upon her return.

Nora Singley ’03
www.thekitchn.com/authors/nsingley
Kherian plays with a two-week-old kid during a visit to Achadinha Cheese Company in Petaluma, Calif.
The Legal Side of Cheese

A California girl, Veronique Chau Kherian ’05 spent her junior year in Aix-en-Provence. It became her window into the world of cheese. “I learned about the seasonality of cheese, the varieties of milk. I learned, for example, that the best time for fresh goat milk is Easter, in kidding season,” she says. After college, she headed to law school and then ended up in San Francisco, a hothouse for mad young foodies with particular interest in provenance, where artisanal food comes from. “There’s such a heightened awareness around food in my age group. Cheese especially. It may be a little over the top in San Francisco,” she says.

While studying for the bar, waiting for results, and applying for law jobs in a down economy, Kherian took a counter job at a cheese store in San Clemente, Calif. She loved it. Loved meeting the cheesemakers, talking to the customers, mastering the double-handled cheese knife. “I was sucked into cheese,” she says. Returning to San Francisco, she started a cheese blog (misscheesemonger.com) and deepened her friendships with California’s cheesemakers by joining the Regulatory Affairs Committee of the California Artisan Cheese Guild.

‘Cheese attracts thoughtful people.
Cheese requires precise and delicate work—handling the curds, understanding the timing, the shipping, the selling, many nuances, lots of skills.’ —Veronique Chau Kherian ’05

As a practicing attorney, Kherian has supported the industry as it sorts through recent FDA legislation, the Food Safety Modernization Act. The key piece of the legislation, she says, “gives expanded authority to the FDA for recalls and inspections and requires the cheesemakers to take expensive preventive steps.” Kherian says that most artisan cheesemakers are small business of 10 people or fewer, all scrambling to survive. They worry that the new legislation will be a financial burden, a big time commitment, and require record keeping that will strain their administrative capacities. “Most cheesemakers are mom-and-pop operations,” she says. “The new regs will be a burden, but still they will have to comply.” Kherian sees her role as helping smaller producers respond to the proposed regulations, get a heads-up on what might be coming, and figure out steps to compliance.

When we spoke, Kherian was in Berlin, spending a month learning about German cheesemaking and trying to plot the next steps of her career. “I’m thinking about taking the plunge. Leaving my law practice, working on cheese and cheese issues full-time,” she says. Maybe starting an export-import business bringing the best of American artisanal cheese to Europe. “The Europeans know next-to-nothing about American cheese,” she adds with a slice of disdain.

Farmer and Cheesemaker

What began as a passion for sustainable farming became a post-9/11 professional career path for Lisa Horwitz Schwartz ’77, founder of the Rainbeau Ridge farm in Bedford, N.Y. For the last 10 years, her goat cheese has been served in many of the finest restaurants in New York and carried by cheese stores up and down the East Coast.

In 2001, Schwartz returned from a stint in Japan, working as a management consultant, “searching for the next chapter” in her life. “What could be a better way to heal and protect than building a sustainable life?” she asked herself. So with no farming knowledge but a huge sense of purpose, Schwartz took over an adjoining property and started to cultivate vegetables and fruit, and then raise chickens. She realized that she had missed a food group, and decided, using Goldilocks’ logic, that cows were too big, sheep too small, but goats were just right. She talked to every farmer and cheesemaker she could find. A serious rookie cheesemaker, she began producing her own award-winning cheese at Rainbeau Ridge.

It’s not a fairy tale, Schwartz says. “So many people have told me I was living their dream. I say, be careful what you wish for. Working 24/7 is not dream-like.” Her advice to other alums: Start young.

Quite a number of recent graduates have also seen the wisdom of breaking into the cheese industry early. We suspect that many more cheesemongers, cheesemakers, cheese advocates, and entrepreneurs are in the alumnae pipeline as the appetite and appreciation for good food continues to crest among well-educated young Americans. Why cheese for Wellesley women? Well, why not? Food unites us all.

Schwartz selling her goat cheese at a farmers’ market in Yorktown, N.Y.

Louisa Kasdon ’72 is a writer based in Cambridge, Mass. She loves to write about people who have passion, especially around food. Kasdon is the founder and CEO of Let’s Talk About Food LLC.
Get out your shades, refresh your lemonade, and put your feet up. Writers from around the globe serve up the pleasures and pursuits of the fairest season.

Illustrations by Emma Brownjohn
All day it’s been hot; you can’t walk from the market to your room—just three blocks in total—without needing a shower at the end of it. Why isn’t anyone else dripping with sweat, you wonder as you walk as slowly as you can down the shady side of the street. You imagine that the black-and-white tiled sidewalks might feel cool if your feet were bare, and by mid-afternoon you are feeling slightly nauseated, your muscles weak, despite the bottles of water you’ve been scrupulous about drinking throughout the day. You lie down on your bed in your darkened rented room, and you wait for the whirring fan to cool you down, but it’s too hot to sleep, and when you rise again, your throat is dry once more, and it’s so hard to find cold water here, here in the city of Granada. Even the huge Lake Nicaragua isn’t sending any breezes your way, and the city chokes in dusty heat.

But when you step out onto the streets once more, just when the bells of the churches are announcing 5 o’clock, you know that it’s finally cooling down. The clouds above you are moving again, and the sun is almost down. And you’re lucky: Your month-long visit has coincided with an international poetry festival, so in the plaza the booksellers are showcasing their collections under big white tents. White plastic chairs are strewn all around beneath the mango trees, and people are sitting and talking, reading, smoking, drinking, feeding their babies. One man plays his guitar and sings. You run into the Chilean you met at last night’s reading; he’s wearing the same scarf around his neck, and his bones hold that same delicate grace that they did the evening before, under the lights. He smiles at you, remembers your name, kisses your cheek. The rain begins, lightly, to fall. You watch it drop on his skin, on your skin, and you can feel the air growing cooler. The Chilean tells you he’s wandered all over the city today; he’s seen churches, markets, schools, beggars, galleries. He’s fallen in love, he tells you, and you can see in his eyes that it’s true. You can tell by the way he walks away after your conversation that if he could, he would wander these streets forever.

The scent of the rain is everywhere now: on the streets, in the walls of the rose- and gold-colored buildings, in the leaves of the trees. On the people. It’s a scent like earthworms, like the lake, like moss, and it is cooling your body down. You walk and walk, slowly, slowly, down one street and up another, past ladies sitting out in the street in rocking chairs, past kids playing soccer in the dirt, past horse-drawn carts, past baskets of bananas, past stacks of apples. You round a corner, and there is the church, Antiguo Convento San Francisco, its massive façade so simple, so lovely. You think that you’ve never seen a building more beautiful, but maybe it’s just because of this evening light, and the way the setting sun has made pink cracks in the clouds, so that everything, this church included, seems to glow. You are certain that you’ve never stood beneath a sky like this one. The scent of the rain, the wet streets, the drops on your skin and in your hair. These churches, these poets, and pineapple juice on your fingers. As you turn, finally, to walk toward home, you look up once more, up to the honey-colored clouds, the final glints of sun, and you realize that you, too, have fallen in love.
Twenty minutes outside of Nashville, down a little state highway where you can’t see the city lights anymore, is a farm called Bells Bend. My sister worked there during the summer she roomed with me. This was the summer of the 13-year cicadas in Nashville, when those crunchy brown bugs swarmed our yards and trees and sidewalks, whirring and buzzing like an army of lawn mowers on the other side of the window, invading our imaginations and making me want to stay firmly indoors.

Not my sister.

I was 24, and she was 20. I tend toward caution, and she leans forward in search of adventure, though we get along with an ease I’ve heard can inspire envy from only children and sisters who bicker. That summer, in my one-bedroom apartment near Music Row, our life together seemed like some mildly hilarious hybrid of Grey Gardens and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, on account of my sister’s decision to skip the air mattress and sleep next to me in my double bed. Sometimes she would slip out in the mornings at 5 o’clock to go to the farm, bringing back onions still caked with dirt. She’d batter and fry them when I got home from work, and we’d eat them together when they were piping hot and dripping with grease, the best kind of onion rings, consumed in front of a high-powered fan.

After my sister moved out and the cicadas had mated and died and their offspring were burrowed into the ground, not to emerge for 13 more years, I bought a share in the farm’s community-supported agriculture program. Besides learning what to do with garlic scapes and how to handle more squash than could reasonably fit in my crisper, I started going to the farm’s regular square dances, where we’d celebrate the bounty of the year’s tomato harvest by promenading and do-si-do-ing while a man named T-Claw called the squares next to a lively fiddle band. The gentility of the dances thrilled me—the bowing to our partners, the polite invitations to waltz with a stranger, the gratitude expressed toward our farmers—and I came to love the simple fun of spinning under the stars. I loved that the dancers were young and old, in cowboy boots and Tevas and tennis shoes, Hawaiian shirts and Western shirts and country dresses that could have belonged to Patsy Cline but probably came from Goodwill. We drank beer brewed with hops from the farm, and there was always someone to dance with. Once I laughed when a guy from the band said something like, “Man, it feels good to hold a woman in your arms again.” All I could think was: Man, it feels good to be alive on this scuffed-up dance floor, where the air is clear and the crops are close by, and a city that I adore is just minutes away. I missed my sister, but it was so lovely out there at the farm.

I learned a new word recently—coruscation: to give forth flashes of light; to glitter; to exhibit sparkling virtuosity. Can a person coruscate? We coruscated under the moon. Or maybe: Our laughter coruscated into the night, wild and bright, and it was hot outside, though not so bad once the sun had set, and it smelled like dirt and grass, and we were happy.
Dead and Gone to the Movies
Los Angeles, California
you can do a lot of things in Los Angeles year-round: Drive with the top down. Enjoy your latte at a sidewalk table. Garden. Grill your fish in the backyard without having to shovel a path from your kitchen door to the barbecue. Jog on the beach.

But you can only watch movies with the dead in the summer.

Watching films on a summer evening within the walls of Hollywood Forever, an iconic cemetery whose permanent residents range from Douglas Fairbanks to Golden Girls’ Estelle Getty, is a cherished tradition among area cinephiles. And it’s become a summer ritual that some visitors make special trips to enjoy.

From May to October, Cinespia, a nonprofit that shows classic films in classic settings, joins with the cemetery to screen movies like La Dolce Vita and The Third Man. Drive down Melrose Boulevard, not far from Paramount Pictures’ famous wrought-iron gates—the same ones Norma Desmond drove through when she regally declared herself back in business in Sunset Boulevard—and if it’s movie night, you can tell right away. Well before the cemetery’s gates open, around 7 P.M., a long line snakes around the block. The people in it are lugging low-profile lawn chairs, blankets, and picnic baskets. They’ve all paid around $10 for the privilege of sitting on the cemetery’s lush lawns.

The grounds are so beautiful they’re often used in movies and television series, like Six Feet Under and 90210. The cemetery is a popular destination for nearby families who stroll the grounds, enjoying the manicured lawns and the quiet—a respite from the densely crowded neighborhoods around the place. The grand lodge often hosts small concerts, and if you come by on some Saturdays, you’ll see happy wedding couples exchanging vows on the small island in the middle of the cemetery’s lake.

Cemetery owner Tyler Cassity once told me he likes the undead visitors, and he thinks his permanent residents do, too. “I think the dead get lonely just like us; they probably enjoy a little company from time to time.” Too, Cassity admires how cemeteries in Latin American countries are integrated into life: “People visit even when there’s no funeral. They bring the family on Sundays, sometimes they picnic.” He wants Americans to get comfortable doing things in cemeteries other than burying their loved ones. The movies, the celebrations, are a way to get Angelenos to wade in.

It’s almost twilight when the gates open, and the visitors stream in the main roadway lined with majestic palm trees. People pick their way carefully around the marble tombstones and stately mausoleums to a clearing near a large swath of whitewashed stucco wall. Blankets are spread. Hampers are opened. Wine is uncorked (yes, wine is OK here), and a lively pre-movie dinner party commences. It’s very friendly; there’s a DJ. People pass samples to their neighbors. (“We found this at the farmers’ market last week and loved it so much we bought two pounds! Have some.”)

Then, once the evening reaches what the French call l’heure bleu—that deep, Prussian-blue that links the dying day with night’s onset—a back wall comes to life. Showtime!

Be prepared for whispers that aren’t always sotto voce—explanations of when or where something was filmed, the obscure biographical detail about an actor’s life—but the sharing is part of the fun. And anyway, it’s L.A. That kind of commentary is going to happen in almost any movie theater in the city. Everybody’s a critic. And if they’re not, they’re a film historian.

At the end of the night, the blankets are gathered; the hampers, lighter now, are repacked. The lawn chairs are folded. And the cemetery’s temporary visitors walk back down the darkened path, through the tall gates, back into real life. Outside, Melrose Boulevard is lined with strip malls, Laundromats, convenience stores, and small restaurants selling food from Guatemala and Mexico and Manila. There’s traffic, billboards.

But for a few hours, we’ve forgotten all that. And the dead have had some company.
In summer, I wait for night before daring to venture outside, after the belligerent Indian sun retreats and withdraws its oppressive heat. I become a summertime vampire who finds evening a convenient time for errands: the market, pharmacy, and ATM. On one of these languid, nocturnal jaunts in my Delhi neighborhood, I noticed that even the geckoes sought refuge in the ATM booth’s decently cool air-conditioning, clustered on the walls like magnets. Outside, a street dog slept sprawled on the roof of a parked car, desperate for an elusive scrap of cool in the 100-degree heat, even at 10 P.M.

Daytime temperatures top 110 degrees in May and June, and things go haywire, become slightly surreal, like a Dali painting of drooping clocks. In a toiletry bag left in a hot car, a toothbrush melts, scattering its white bristles in its death throes. The metal latch of my front gate gets scorching hot, so I use a piece of cloth like a potholder to lift it.

A normally skittish street cat slowly crosses the road in a daze then practically plunges her face into a bowl of water that a kind neighbor left on the sidewalk. Metal hoop earrings are unwearable because they singe your cheek and neck. Step off an airplane into the Delhi heat and the blast of oven-like air makes eyeballs stiffen in instant dessication. A foolishly long run in the early morning ends in goose bumps and chills, as the body blares a warning to simply stop.

There is summer before monsoon and after monsoon. Before the monsoon, there are few mosquitoes, as though they’ve been incinerated into puffs of dust. By late June or early July, monsoon brings no easy relief. Temperatures dip but humidity boilerplates the air, and mosquitoes gallivant in swarms. A tickle on the back of my legs is not an insect, but sweat dripping from new, improbable sources. Sweat doesn’t evaporate the way it did pre-monsoon, and now it trickles in rivulets even when I’m standing still.

In my first years in Delhi, after arriving from New York in 2006, I sometimes left the office past 10 P.M. After a long day at work, the walk in the tranquil dark to the nearby taxi stand offered solace. One summer night, the Sikh drivers at the taxi stand were already asleep and snoring loudly while outstretched on the back seats of their bulbous black Ambassador sedans.

Summer’s heat is unbearable to me even with air conditioning, but the scene was a humbling reminder that only the well-off in India enjoy such luxuries. For the masses, sleeping outdoors is the only way to get some relief.

The taxi I approached contained an older man with a bushy grey-white beard. He slept while sitting serenely upright behind the steering wheel and wore only voluminous boxer shorts. I tapped on the window of his car. He woke from his slumber without a grumble, and I turned away as he dressed and affixed his turban back on his head.

The taxi roared to life and sped down Delhi’s wide, tree-lined avenues, blissfully free of traffic. Wind whipped through the open windows and fanned our glistening faces. Night’s hot breath and the comforting darkness offered us both a few moments of relief.
When August finally arrives in my little corner of France, it’s time for one of my favorite family rituals: scouting out and laying in bunches of fresh, redolent basil, to make enough of the vibrant green pesto that will help keep summer’s light with us throughout the endless gray of our northern French winter.

During the years my husband, daughter, and I lived in Rome, pesto—at its simplest, a creamy, heady concoction of fresh basil, garlic, olive oil, and cheese—was nothing more than one of summer’s many gifts. We devoured it unthinkingly, tossed it with homemade fettuccine, factory-made spaghetti, or potato gnocchi. We loved it thoughtlessly, stirred into homemade soups or spooned onto thin scallops of chicken or veal.

It wasn’t until we left Rome’s light and heat, moving north to Paris some 14 years ago, that producing pesto began to assume ritual meaning. Today it’s my truest measure of knowing when northern France’s fleeting summer is at its peak, about to turn inexorably toward autumn. That may not sound like much if you live in the Sunbelt, but it’s a crucial bit of information for those of us who never realized, until too late, that moving from Rome to Paris meant giving up sunlight for much of the year. Autumn in Rome means blessed relief from sun and heat; autumn in Paris means impending descent into gray and damp.

I never had to search for basil in Rome; market vendors tossed in free stalks with my daily purchases, and except in the dead of winter, fresh basilico was as easy to buy as parsley or lettuce. But in chilly Paris, setting out to buy endless bunches of fresh basilique often resembles a quest, one that is rarely successful until deep summer. It is only then that prices fall from astronomical to semi-reasonable, only then that I feel driven to put enough pesto by to fill our freezer.

I try avoiding the quest each spring by sowing basil seeds in the kitchen garden of our little stone farmhouse that lies along the banks of the lazy River Claise. When the seeds manage to sprout and survive the intermittent droughts caused by our numerous absences in June and July, we can gorge on pesto throughout August without worrying about where I’ll find enough basil for the next meal or how much it costs.

But when my own crop fails, as it often does, we’re largely stuck, because basil, which thrives on strong sunshine and balmy nights, is not widely eaten in our corner of central France, where the climate favors sturdier herbs like thyme, parsley, tarragon, and bay laurel (though pesto’s southern French cousin, pistou, is widely eaten in Provence). Basil fails to thrive in cool, damp weather, so it’s rarely available in my local farmers’ markets or in our country supermarkets, where stockers assume that herbs are grown at home.

So whenever my basil crop fails, I wait until we move back to Paris at the end of August to address our pesto needs for the coming winter. Early on the first Saturday we’re back, I haul my old-lady grocery cart to the organic farmers’ market that sets up once a week on the Boulevard des Batignolles. It’s there I try to stretch out summer—or at least the taste of it—by buying masses of basil, then making multiple batches of pesto, stored in family-sized portions until the freezer is full.

We eat pesto like crazy all September, as if storing summer’s sun and heat. As the month winds down, I find myself muttering prayers and incantations against an early frost. Each week my prayers are answered, I return to my Saturday market before the rest of the city is up and lug home more basil for even more pesto, all in the hope of keeping the memory of summer with us well into the cold, gray gloom that’s on its way.

I try to keep at least one jar untouched in the freezer until May, until I’m convinced that spring has arrived, and I can plant my own basil again. But last winter was the grayest and coldest we’d ever experienced in Paris, and in a sun-starved frenzy, I used up my last jar in early April, even though the weather had us still in parkas, hats, and gloves.

Pesto, for me, is both hope of next summer’s sun and warmth, and memory of last summer’s light and heat—a perfect dish for Paris, which shares more with the gray clouds of London than it does with the blue skies of Rome. Devouring pesto’s bright green pungency, we survive till spring.

By Paula Butturini ’73

Butturini is a writer with a particular interest in food. For nearly 14 years, she has lived, food shopped, and cooked near one of Paris’s biggest organic markets.
Brooklyn has been my home ever since I left college, except for a brief and misguided detour into the suburbs. I wouldn’t live anywhere else. Around mid-July to late August, however, our charming town morphs into Garbagey Smellville, The Place Where Everyone Is Angry. Anyone with an ounce of sense and/or disposable income escapes for as long as they can. My husband and I are lucky if our summer work schedules allow us a long weekend, so here we remain, questioning every life decision that led to our lack of getaway options.

Fortunately, our son can escape. For one month, Henry attends sleepaway camp, where he roams free in the country—swimming, canoeing, making new friends, overdosing on s’mores, enjoying nightly tick checks. (Also, evidently, locating all the itch-causing plants and rolling around in them, as if he were a dog.) Sleepaway camp is, by far, the highlight of his year.

It’s great for us, too, of course, but it took some getting used to. After all these years of parenting, it’s strange to revert back to unfettered freedom. We’re used to our letter. We love our letter.

The first year he attended, my anxiety kicked in as soon as we pulled away from the camp. We abandoned our child in the woods, I thought. A certified camp in the woods, but still. We gave him to strangers. Quaker strangers, but still.

Within days, I was sick with longing. Phone calls to camp are discouraged; instead, you’re to become your child’s pen pal, which in our case meant writing to him and wondering what or who was keeping him from replying. “It’s because he’s having so much fun,” my husband and friends and the cashier at the drugstore said, but I had my doubts. Maybe it was because his stationery was hopelessly tear-stained.

When he finally wrote, his letter was cheerful enough, if brief. (He was having a great time! He would see us soon! Love, Henry!) But underneath, we could make out a poorly erased previous draft: I have no shirts. You forgot to pack shirts. I only have this one shirt. Please send me shirts. What did this ghost-message mean, I wondered. Was the camp staffed by shirt-thieves? Could he really not see the stack of shirts carefully arranged in his footlocker? My poor, confused, filthy boy!

Fortunately, by then we were at the end of his session, and by the time we arrived for pickup, he had clearly located his shirts and rolled around in the mud in each of them. Camp, he said, was the best time of his life.

Naturally, we signed him up for the next summer. This time we were prepared: We made sure he knew where his shirts (and other clothing items) were stored; we commanded him to write at least once a week. As we pulled away, we high-fived and vowed that this year, we’d enjoy our freedom. Right? “Right, Alice?” my husband said.

And I did, sort of! We enjoyed summer in the city in ways we couldn’t when our kid was around. We went out for the kinds of exotic meals Henry hated (read: anything that isn’t macaroni and cheese). We watched foreign films in the park. We met grown-up friends for cocktails on the High Line.

Meanwhile, I had maybe one or a few panic attacks. (My low point was when we had a week of nonstop thunderstorms, and meanwhile my son was surrounded by trees, lightning’s favorite target.) But then, I’m naturally anxious and always on the lookout for a distraction from my deadlines. Fretting over my son’s well-being is an activity I can really sink my teeth into.

This year should be even easier, but I’m expecting a few brief worry-fests. It seems to be how I’m wired. It’s all worth it, however, for that moment when he comes home, filthy and happy, singing camp songs. And as I shake dead earwigs out of his laundry bag, I remember why I like being here in the city, even when it smells.

By Alice Bradley ’91
Bradley is a writer in Brooklyn, N.Y. She vows to spend July and August engaged in activities that are more fun than hand-wringing.
WCAA Board Members

BETH MCKINNON ’72
Washington, D.C.
- Retired in 2010 as deputy associate commissioner for management, Social Security Administration Office of Disability Review and Adjudication
- Active with DC Wellesley Club (positions held include president and vice president, publications), class annual-giving volunteer
- Client-services volunteer for the Mautner Project, providing services for women with life-threatening illness

MARI MYER ’83
Atlanta
- Attorney, the Myer Firm, with more than 20 years of litigation experience in Georgia
- Active with the Atlanta Wellesley Club (positions held include president, vice president, and treasurer); Alumnae Admissions representative
- Parent volunteer in local schools and youth soccer association

SUSAN BATCHELDER PLIMPTON ’65
Minneapolis
- Retired in 2000 as vice president, American Express Financial Advisors
- Active with the Wellesley Club of Minnesota (positions held include vice president, Minneapolis); former member of Wellesley Development and Outreach Council, Class Special Gifts Committee, campaign fund committees
- Member of the board of trustees, Minnesota Medical Foundation, University of Minnesota; chair emerita, board of trustees, World Learning

Alumnae Calendar
The Alumnae Association announces the following events for 2013–14. Unless otherwise noted, events take place at the College. For more information, call the Alumnae Office at 781-283-2331.

2013

JULY
25
Class of ’10 happy hour in New York City, at The Liberty, 29 West 35th St., 7–9 P.M. For more information, contact Kaitlin Lebbad at kaitlin.lebbad@gmail.com.

AUGUST
28
Class of ’10 Boston trivia night at the Mass Ave Tavern, 94 Mass. Ave., 7:30 P.M. For more information, contact Kaitlin Lebbad at kaitlin.lebbad@gmail.com.

SEPTEMBER
17
Class of ’10 happy hour in Washington, D.C., at Cuba Libre, 801 9th St. NW, Suite A, 6:30–8:30 P.M. For more information, contact Kaitlin Lebbad at kaitlin.lebbad@gmail.com.
21
Day to Make a Difference, Wellesley’s worldwide community-service event

2014

FEBRUARY
27
Alumnae Achievement Awards
27–28
WCAA winter board meeting

JUNE
6–8
Reunion for classes ending in 4s and 9s

To learn more about the activities of the WCAA, visit www.wellesley.edu/web/Alumnae.
THE
MAINE EVENT

The Western Maine Wellesley Club gathered at the President’s House in Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, in 1934. Devoted alumna Edith Koon Sills ’11 was married to Kenneth C.M. Sills, the eighth Bowdoin president.

ON OCT. 23, 1913, 14 WELLESLEY ALUMNAE met at the home of Elizabeth Conant ’09, marking the creation of the Western Maine Wellesley Club (WMWC). Almost 100 years later, over 100 alums gathered at the Portland Country Club to celebrate the WMWC’s centennial. The festive gathering on May 4 featured a fashion show highlighting the trends of the past 100 years (a Gatsby-worthy dropped-waist dress representing 1923, a power suit for 1993), a talk by President H. Kim Bottomly, and a video chronicling the life and times of the WMWC and its members.

The video, made by Marcy Barack Black ’71 and Alison Parker Kenway ’70, features interviews with club members and historical photos and stories gleaned from Wellesley College Archives and many Maine archives, and from individual alums and their family members. “We didn’t restrict our research to club presidents. We wanted to tie the club’s history to that of the College, the nation, and the world during the past century,” says Black. The video captures the changing times as it tells the story of the WMWC, from a 1914 talk with a Wellesley professor held just days after the Great Fire that destroyed old College Hall, spurring alums to donate to the rebuilding effort; to relief efforts during World War I and World War II; to a program on finding one’s place in the workforce in the 1970s. Some things don’t change, however. “There’s nothing like everybody sitting around having tea,” says club member Margaret Hathaway ’98. “I love Facebook, but it’s not the same thing.”

—Lisa Scanlon ’99
To see the video, visit bit.ly/1ckto5.

The Return of the W

AFTER Torrential rains at the launch of reunion 2013, the sun broke through on Saturday afternoon, creating a glorious day for rowing on Lake Waban. Alumnae from a wide range of classes revived Float Night, an old Wellesley tradition—forming a W with crew shells, raising their oars upright, and singing the alma mater. Breaking out of formation, the alums, many of whom hadn’t rowed for decades, tested their muscle memory by taking a brisk row across the lake. The award for most spontaneous rower goes to a member of the class of ‘48 who happened to be wandering by the boathouse. When asked whether she’d like to be part of the W, she said, “I’m 88 years old, but why not? I’ve rowed for years.” She got lithely into a shell and pulled her oar in fine form. Women who will… row—at any age.
2013 Syrena Stackpole Award

Given annually at reunion by the WCAA, the Syrena Stackpole Award honors dedicated service and exceptional commitment to Wellesley. The 2013 winners are:

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<th>Barbara Martini Johnson ’58</th>
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<td>Frequently moving with her family throughout her life, Rieben always found that local Wellesley clubs were the perfect entrance into each new community. She volunteered her leadership and organizational skills to many clubs and founded the club in Madison, Wis., serving as its president. In addition, she has served her class as president, treasurer, nominating chair, and co-chair of the class’s 50th reunion in 2008. Rieben is also a former member of the WCAA Board of Directors.</td>
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<td>Constance Follett Rieben ’58</td>
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Faculty-Staff Service Award

**THE ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION** was pleased to present the 2013 Faculty-Staff Service Award to John “Jack” McCarthy, service manager in the physical plant. In his 20 years at the College, McCarthy has held several positions, earning himself the reputation as a true jack-of-all-trades. He has been invaluable in helping the Alumnae Association through all of its key events—reunion, the Alumnae Achievement Awards, and Alumnae Leadership Council—assisting everywhere along the way from the planning stages to execution and evaluation. “Consistently, Jack goes above and beyond what his title implies and provides a level of service and attention to detail that are apparent during College events,” says WCAA Executive Director Susan Challenger ’76. “For all that he has done and continues to do for the Wellesley College alumnae, it gives me great pleasure to recognize and thank Jack McCarthy.”

Young Alumnae Trustee Elected

**THIS SPRING,** Diamond Sharp ’11 was elected by the classes of 2011, 2012, and 2013 to serve as young alumnae trustee from 2013–16. Sharp is doing community outreach and event planning at the nonprofit Art in Praxis in Washington, D.C. She is assisting the organization’s founder launch a project called Match DC, which partners artists in DC with local nonprofits. She has deferred acceptance into Sarah Lawrence’s M.F.A. in creative writing until 2014.

Asked about her interest in serving on the College’s board of trustees, Sharp says, “I hope to bring a viewpoint inclusive of my alumnae cohort to the board.”
Reunion Album 2013

To see a slideshow of reunion photos visit www.youtube.com/WellesleyMagazine.
Barbara Brenzel, professor of education, emerita, died on March 3, after a long bout with multiple sclerosis. With a 1963 B.A. in English from the University of Toronto, Barbara was proud of her Canadian heritage. She was also proud of being a left wing on the University of Toronto’s women’s hockey team. After graduation, Barbara taught at the high-school level, where she encountered boys and girls with special needs, an experience that sparked her interest in education and in studying the history of children whom society and schools term difficult or “deviant.” She enrolled in a part-time master’s program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, where she was encouraged to come to the United States to study the history of education.

Barbara eventually received her master’s and Ed.D. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. While at Harvard, she helped teach a series of seminars on education and social services for a group of Harvard undergraduates who were working in schools, tenant organizations, health clinics, and other social programs. This experience solidified her sense of the importance of teachers and teacher education.

At Wellesley, where she began teaching in 1978, Barbara chaired the Education Department for many years. She was known for her devotion to her students. Her courses on the history of education, history of childhood, education policy, and youth and student activism were very popular. A passionate and caring teacher, Barbara kept long office hours, wrote countless recommendations, and stayed in touch with many of her students for many years. She helped expand course offerings in education and made connections with other programs and faculty. Over her almost 30 years at the College, she was known for her sense of humor and trenchant comments on how American society mistreated disadvantaged children, a subject she studied in depth.

Barbara was well respected for her research in the field of history of education. Her book, *Daughters of the State: A Social Portrait of the First Reform School for Girls in North America, 1856–1905* (MIT Press, 1983), and other publications focused on the plight of dependent children and families. Much cited, her book describes the difficulties of so-called “wayward” girls and documents how they were treated. Barbara served on the board of directors of the History of Education Society and was a reviewer for *History of Education Quarterly*.

Edward Stettner, 1940–2013

For more than four decades, Edward Stettner gave unstintingly to Wellesley College and to us all. He passed away on March 10, taken far too soon from the pleasures of retirement he had only begun to explore. Ed deserved many more years for himself, for the music he and his wife, Laura, loved, for the children and grandchildren on whom he doted.

Ed earned a B.A. from Brown University in 1962 and a Ph.D. from Princeton University in 1968. He joined the Department of Political Science in 1966 and initiated generations of Wellesley students into the rigors and rewards of political theory, for which he was awarded the Pinanski Teaching Prize in 1997. He assumed the duties of chair of the department no fewer than three times and served in the dean’s office on several different occasions, including as dean of the faculty from 1984 to 1988, and associate dean of the College from 1977 to 1986.

Ed’s kindness and courtesy toward all, from the most junior to the most senior among us, was legendary. For those at the College feeling a bit stranded, marginalized, or beaten down, Ed provided both refuge and wisdom. It was always easy to find him in his office—more often than not actually reading a book behind his desk, rather than a computer screen—and easier still to talk with him about whatever was troubling you. In very short order, he had constructed an understanding of the problem so rich with experience and free from ill-will or harsh judgment that it became possible to see beyond your own confusions.

Moreover, his inexhaustible knowledge of the rules and folkways of the College, in all of their bewildering complexity and detail, was unparalleled. During his stint in the dean’s office, faculty members knew that Ed was the one to ask, the one to consult, and the one who was often the first to know. It is not an overstatement to say that, at that time, Ed was the single most essential human ingredient in the dynamic that kept the faculty and administration working effectively together to advance the mission of the institution.

Ed was also a model of collegial citizenship, giving generously of his time, energy, and abilities whenever the need arose, from stepping in to teach a writing course to directing the now legendary Washington Internship Program for more than a decade, to helping devise the early-retirement plan for faculty. Equally crucial, Ed understood the importance of transparency and process in governance as well as in the financial matters of the College.

Continued on page 75
Kathryn Staples Hildreth ’31 died on April 20.

Kathryn lived a long and rewarding life and always wondered how she managed to live to be 103. As a devoted alumna of Wellesley, Kay served on the Alumnae Association board and as a frequent class officer. As an English major, she treasured good books: In the last few years, with vision in only one eye, she read War and Peace, Anna Karenina, and Moby Dick, as well as many other books. A world traveler, fine bridge player, lifelong Red Sox fan, and caring family member, she will be missed by everyone.

Nancy Hastings Miles ’63

Jean White Vanderbilt ’43 died on Dec. 16, 2012.

Jean’s parents were friends of Mildred McAfee Horton. When Jean announced that she wanted to go to Vassar, Horton’s alma mater, “Aunt Millie” suggested she visit Wellesley. It was love at first sight. Two caregivers assisted Jean to her 69th reunion in 2008, but when she was there—and for weeks thereafter—she became 20 again. Every day for the last few years, she sang the Wellesley songs, encouraging her caregivers to sing along, the more spirited the better. And when she died, there next to her reading chair was the information on her forthcoming 70th reunion and her yearbook.

Marjorie W. Vanderbilt ’69


Kotsie and I were opposites in interests and temperament but conflict-free in the four years we roomed together. Self-confident and light-hearted, Kotsie saw the humor in difficult situations and was seldom judgmental. We took none of the same elective courses, but the seeds of my lifelong love of classical music were planted by her. Music 101, as well as the practice of her boisterous ballet flights atop our dorm furniture, as I manned the record player.

Since her onset of cruel Alzheimer’s disease and the death of her soul mate, Dick, I have sorely missed our lifelong communications and annual reunions.

Kathy Lamme Stevens ’49

Day Ely Ravenscroft ’51 died on Dec. 11, 2012.

I will always remember Day for her enthusiastic intellectual curiosity and her zest for living. Born into privilege, she led a life of commitment and service. She and her husband, Jackson, opened their home to hundreds of people from all over the world, as had Day’s parents. In their homes, you inquired of each other’s day, their week, their month, and their year. And when Day died, there was no more reason to anticipate the next day, nor the next month, nor the next year.

Bette Lu Cox Lancaster ’51

Georgene Mathewson Maxwell ’51 died on April 13.

Gee Gee and I first met in the fall of 1947 at Eliot House, in the Vil. She was the quintessential “life of the party,” with her cheerful disposition and quick, creative wit. Later, I was privileged to room with her in Beebe and in a New York City apartment. Such wonderful times. Over the years when we occasionally got together, her upbeat attitude and happy outlook never dimmed.

She was a devoted, supportive wife to Hamish and a loving, involved mother to Graham and Robin. Her four grandchildren adored her. Her legion of friends remember her with sorrow and affection.

Harriet Johnson Redman ’51

Joanne Hequembourg Boyd ’64 died after a lengthy illness on April 23.

Joanne and I met when she was working the front-door desk for a mixer at McAfee Hall. She majored in mathematics and participated in crew and carillon playing. Joanne enjoyed being a housewife, mother to our three children, an active member of the Sixth Church of Christ, Scientist
in Indianapolis, and a favorite substitute teacher in local schools. Survivors include our children and five grandchildren. She was among the super-majority of women who do not identify themselves as feminists. Sadly, Joanne did not live to see a grandson start as an MIT freshman.

Donald Boyd

Lois Benson Rosenfeld ’69 died on Feb. 18, in Kirkwood, Mo.

A lifelong mental-health worker, she is remembered for her care for people and animals. She volunteered for the Ethical Society and OASIS, helping young children learn to love reading as she did. She enjoyed the study of dance history and for years participated in historic dance performances in period costume. Lois was particularly interested in Andrew Wyeth, collecting many of his prints, which adorn our walls. Her personal style and creativity are reflected throughout our home. Loving Paris in April and June in New York, Lois had a flair that is missed.

Jack Spellacy

Grace Hagood Downs ’93 died on April 20.

Grace was a lover of storytelling, the theater, and words—all kinds. We had many memorable adventures at Wellesley, the National Theater Institute, and in London. When we got together, it was a “laugh out loud, hold your stomach, wine shoots out your nose, ‘I think I just pee my pants’” kind of time. In true Wellesley fashion, I had to ask for an extension to write her memorial, which I’m sure she’d find fitting and funny. I’m a better person for having known her. Grace, you will be dearly missed.

Genevieve Sterbenz ’93

Marilyn Andrea Burns CE/DS ’72 died on March 16.

She had a zest for life and a singularly gracious style. Blessed with a quick sense of humor, Marilyn was a proud progressive Democrat and a lover of poetry. One of Wellesley’s first Davis Scholars, she managed to complete her degree while raising five daughters. After graduation, she attended the Radcliffe Institute and later began a career in real estate. She cherished every season of life on Nantucket, where she moved permanently in 2002.

Marilyn’s husband, Paul, predeceased her. In addition to her daughters, she leaves 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Nancy Burns-Fusaro

Connie Kallman ’72

HOW TO SUBMIT A MEMORIAL

Wellesley welcomes memorials for alumnae written by friends or family members. Please contact the appropriate class secretary and/or the magazine staff (magazine2@alum.wellesley.edu or 781-283-2344) before writing or submitting a memorial.

Memorials in Wellesley magazine are limited to 100 words. The magazine does not accept eulogies or previously published obituaries for adaptation. All submissions may be edited.

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BARBARA BRENZEL

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Barbara had great personal flair. She dressed beautifully, in a unique, dramatic style, and loved the arts. After retiring in 2007, she returned to Canada, where she took up painting. Barbara will be remembered for her wit, scholarship, and great insight into the history of the lives of girls in the 19th century, whose stories she brought vividly to life. It is both touching and sad that Professor Brenzel passed away so soon after her colleague James Wilson Rayen from the art department, a close friend.

—Barbara Beatty, professor of education

EDWARD STETTNER

Continued from page 73

These qualities are not flashy, and neither was Ed. Gentlemanly and judicious, he preferred understated persuasion to impassioned argument. He invariably counseled restraint, calm, and a sense of proportion over quick action and reaction. His natural impulse was to “do it right,” rather than maneuver for personal gain. His word was eminently reliable, his advice temperate, his constancy a bedrock of the department. Students cherished his patience and clarity, often describing him as a force of stability both in the classroom and out.

Indeed, Ed was unique in the American academy for his unfailing honor, balance, and professionalism. He brought these qualities to virtually every matter, to those that may have seemed small and trivial but especially to those

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued from page 3

THE BEAUTIFUL DANCER

A full-page photo of a beautiful woman in South Indian dance costume that appears on page 34 of the spring ’13 issue of Wellesley magazine purports to be of a “student dancer, 1977.” Actually, it is a photo of my wife, Pushpa Nand Schwartz, who was in the Wellesley class of ’57. She met an untimely death in 2003 at age 66.

Pushpa’s parents sent her to study in the US after her graduation from high school in New Delhi, India, at age 16. At Wellesley, she majored in economics, was an excellent student, and was active in extracurricular activities, including serving as president of the Wellesley Forum. She adored Wellesley and gloved whenever its name was mentioned.

Pushpa and I settled in Washington, D.C., after our marriage in New Delhi in 1962. She enjoyed a distinguished career as an accomplished graduate of Wellesley and the School of International Affairs at Columbia University.

Robert Schwartz

Bethesda, Md.

Editor’s Note: We first heard from several members of the classes of ’57 and ’58 that the picture might be mislabeled, which we subsequently verified. It was actually taken in 1955, and we apologize for the error. We were later delighted to hear from Mr. Schwartz and definitively learn the identity of the dancer.

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KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Bravo to those responsible for the Winter Session program Freedom Project that promotes “more pluralism in intellectual diversity” and a greater interaction with different political ideas (“Room for Debate,” spring ’13). Perhaps a statement unintentionally underscores the real need for the program came from a participant, who remarked that “even the students who were comfortably entrenched in their own viewpoints” were willing to take part.
FACEBOOK POST

An ‘07 alum reposted the following tweet from the Massachusetts State Police, and then made a comment:

@MassStatePolice
MSP proud to report Troopers assist in delivery of a child in the breakdown lane of Rte 3SB in Braintree. All appear to be healthy.

The MA State Police tweeted yesterday about delivering a baby in a vehicle. They would have found the Wellesley magazine article about how to deliver a baby in a cab helpful, I bet.

Hikki Tracy ’07

Isn’t there something unsettling and even intellectually sinister in being “entrenched” in one’s viewpoint at so young an age? Colleges should foster—and treasure—a variety of opinion along with other forms of diversity. Sadly, a closed mind becomes a form of crippling baggage on life’s long journey.

Doris Schaffer O’Brien ’54
Pasadena, Calif.

WOMANISM AND BFFS

I am so taken with the Wellesley Centers for Women director’s notion of “womanism” (“Moving the Needle on Women’s Issues,” spring ’13). I believe it points a direction for feminism to go. My own focus is more and more on my spiritual development, aging feminist that I am, but I’d love to see an article by her on the subject in a near-future issue.

Also, loved the Endnote (“The End of BFFs?”). It’s true: We can have it all, almost. But there’s absolutely no time or energy left to nurture those amazing friendships. But not to worry, they do bloom back!

Kevin Ryan Bellows ’39
Beverly Hills, Calif.

REMEMBERING TONY MARTIN

I read the spring ’13 issue’s memorial for Professor Tony Martin. I particularly appreciate the comprehensive tribute by Professor Selwyn Cudjoe, who eloquently presented at Wellesley’s May 1 memorial service for Professor Martin. The Africana Studies Department largely exists due to Professor Martin’s efforts to secure the hiring of more black professors and increased course offerings. He was a courageous and resilient educator who inspired students to learn about and take pride in our race, history, and cultures throughout the African diaspora. With his keen intellect and firm approach, Professor Martin influenced us to not blindly accept historical assertions; he taught us to question authority by perusing books’ bibliographies to check references of the references cited. Professor Martin then challenged us to apply these same principles when making assertions in our own writings.

Professor Martin’s teachings transcended the classroom: a photographer, he peppered class discussions with photographs he took of the pyramids of Giza. He took students to Afrocentric conferences in London; he presented history lectures all over the world at universities, churches, community centers, and even at a Trinidadian power plant during lunchtime. And he celebrated successful completion of semesters by inviting us into his home, feeding us Caribbean meals, and providing musical entertainment by black musicians from James Brown to Oliver Mtukudzi.

Professor Martin was my teacher, mentor, confidante, and one of my closest, kindest friends. I am devastated by his passing but am grateful he continues to touch many lives. On May 9, the Trinidad & Tobago High Commissioner in London held a tribute in his honor. An effort is underway to ensure incorporation of his works into Jamaica’s recently announced yet long overdue inclusion of Garveyism teachings in its school curriculum. Professor Martin forever changed my life. I pray God rests his soul in peace.

Azizah Yasin ’94
Brockton, Mass.

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Announcing an innovative giving program that yields great rewards: for Wellesley, for your family, and for yourself. An exclusive opportunity to invest in Wellesley’s world-class endowment...and watch it grow.

When you establish a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) through the College, you create something much bigger than yourself. By partnering with Wellesley and with thousands of others who have helped build its robust endowment, you amplify your giving—and benefit future generations of strong and promising young women.

CRTs are easy to set up. With a minimum gift of $100,000, managed by Wellesley’s select investment professionals, you’ll enjoy significant tax benefits and a steady income stream for life — with no investment fees.

Visit www.wellesley.edu/CRT to see why alumnae and friends are calling this a win-win all around. Then give us a call to see if a CRT is right for you.

How it works:
1. Jane creates a CRT with a gift of $100,000. Wellesley College adds the gift to its endowment, manages it wisely and helps it grow.
2. Jane (or her designee) receives tax benefits and a steady income.
3. At the end of Jane’s life, the original gift and its income live on, benefitting generations of Wellesley students to come.

For additional information, please contact our Office of Gift Planning:
800.358.3543
email: pg@wellesley.edu
www.wellesley.edu/CRT

The information presented is not offered as legal or tax advice. We suggest that you consult your tax, legal and/or financial advisors to determine if a particular planned gift is appropriate for you.
Lead the way.

The parade of Wellesley College’s class of 1917, of which Madame Chiang Kai-shek is a member, marched without uniforms, sending the funds usually expended on uniforms to Madame Chiang Kai-shek in China. June 18, 1942.
Lead the world.

This June, Wellesley’s tradition of cultivating women leaders reaches around the world with the launch of our new global initiative Women World Partners in Beijing, China. Creating the next generation of women leaders is only possible thanks to your gift. Please give generously.

www.wellesley.edu/wwp
Endnote

The Purple Umbrella

Four young Tibetan Bon pilgrims come barreling down the incline. “So, so, so, so, so,” they sing as they run. When they are directly in front of me, they raise their hands. “Tashi delek,” they say. “Blessings and good luck.”

I am in western Tibet, on the path leading up to the highest point along the Mount Kailash pilgrimage route, or Kora, important to many faiths—Buddhists, Hindus, Bonpo, and Jains. I carry my karma with me—a 40-pound backpack filled with assorted books, clothes, notebooks, snacks; a Canon 550D; and a 35-pound tripod. With the aid of two expedition members, I am researching the material culture of pilgrimage—the offerings left by pilgrims along the sacred route around Mount Kailash and the rituals associated with placing these offerings at distinct points along the Kora. The path around the mountain is 53 kilometers long. It snakes around boulders, past monasteries, up over a pass, and finally through a valley and along a gorge back to Darchen, the lone town at the mountain’s base. For the past two days we have been trekking up to Drolma La Pass—the apex of the Kora, at 5,636 meters.

The Kora is littered with cairns, prayer flags, and articles of clothing. Occasionally, there is blood. The Hindu pilgrims on the route are poorly acclimatized and physically unfit for travel. Lured by tour operators who minimize the consequences of altitude, they arrive with limited knowledge of the journey. Time and time again, we see men and women on horseback, gray-faced and swaying. Many experience severe nosebleeds and other symptoms of acute altitude sickness. More often than not, these pilgrims have to turn back.

At the various chaktel gangs—sacred prostration points where pilgrims bow to the mountain—mounds of old clothing, offering bowls, and Red Bull cans create colorful peaks in the landscape. Drolma La Pass is the most sacred point along the Kora. It represents the point of rebirth, at which Drolma La, or Tara, the Mother of Mercy and Bodhisattva of compassion and action, forgives the sins of the pilgrims who cross. In the middle of the site a large, square rock juts out of the earth. This rock, the Phawang Mebar, into which the 21 manifestations of Tara are said to have disappeared, is littered with prayer flags. They carpet the pass in red, green, yellow, and white.

I make my way up the incline toward Drolma La for the second time. The last time I climbed up to the pass, on our first Kora, the wind bit my face and the path was littered with new-fallen snow. This time the rocks are clear; the sky is cornflower blue. Behind me, Lara Yeo ’11, the other woman on the expedition, breathes in and out. Her breath keeps time with her feet.

I hear her stop to rest and turn around to find her smiling and gesturing at a young Tibetan Buddhist pilgrim with a baby strapped to her back. The Tibetan woman holds a bright purple umbrella. The baby gurgles. Lara offers the pilgrim a sip of her water, but she declines with a broad smile and instead makes a gesture to help Lara up the steep path. I hear them progress behind me. I turn to see the woman nod encouragement at Lara before agilely moving up the mountainside.

When I am almost at the top of the pass, the sun hits my back. I find myself gasping for air. Around me Buddhist pilgrims bless the sky with lungtas, or five-inch paper images of the Tibetan “windhorse,” thrown into the air like confetti. Bonpo pilgrims simultaneously sing their mantras and shake strands of prayer flags to honor the sacred mountain. A small urn smokes; the smell of juniper mingles with the clear smell of Kailash. In Tibet, juniper, which grows at high altitude and is easily accessible to harvesters, is believed to possess healing and restorative qualities.

As I pass a large rock littered with prayer flags and other pilgrims’ mementoes, I see the woman with the purple umbrella. She sits by her baby, picking tufts of juniper. The baby is sheltered under the purple arc. When the pilgrim looks up to see me coming toward her, she stands and approaches me with a small plastic bag filled with juniper; she gestures at me to watch. She takes the juniper from the bag, rubs it between her fingers, and throws it into the air. “Ah,” she says. “Ah.” Then she gathers a bundle of the savory green shoots and places it in my palm. She carefully closes my hand with her hand, looks right through me, and nods. When her baby begins to wail, she turns away, and my gesture of thanks goes unnoticed.

Drolma La Pass, in the mid-morning, is full of pilgrims. Together we sit—to share snacks, to smile when communication falters, and to watch others learn the landscape. Rebirth is everywhere.

Augusta Thomson ’11 spent her first year at Wellesley before transferring to Oxford University in England. She made a documentary about pilgrimage practices in Tibet, Turning the Wheel, after her expedition.
Leslie Dansker Toepfer ’68, sporting her class’s insignia, a red fascinator, smiles for the camera during the alumnae parade on June 9.
Hot Tam!
The night before a very warm graduation, Carly Gayle ’13 and her friends in the Sustainability Cooperative created pins, stoles, and crowns to commemorate their favorite parts of their Wellesley experiences. Gayle used chives from the Edible Ecosystem Teaching Garden, a place dear to her heart, to decorate her tam. “Crafting and laughing with friends was a beautiful way to spend my last night at Wellesley,” she says.