



The Bulletin

The Miami Valley School

Dayton, Ohio

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'Final phase' planned for campus

With initial phases of fund raising poised for launching, the school has announced a major capital building program that will complete long range plans for the Denise Drive campus and enhance space for learning at all levels. Final plans await approval by Washington Township officials.

"Here and Now: Building the Future" will expand student learning opportunities by creating separate middle school space and building a second gymnasium during the first stage of the building process, according to headmaster Tom Brereton. "The demand on common spaces that are shared by middle and upper school students is exceptional," he says. By creating two-story middle school classroom space around the existing student activity center (SAC), upper school as well as middle school programs will find relief for future learning. Other stages will bring expanded fine arts facilities and lower school space, as well as enhanced administrative areas.

Faculty, trustees, and administrators have given full support to the campaign with nearly 100 percent participation anticipated in the initial fund raising phase of the campaign. "This represents an important commitment by those closest to the school and its programs," says development director Kevin Klose, adding that this commitment is often a critical factor for other donors as they consider supporting the project.

Architectural renderings of the facilities that will be funded through the campaign were submitted to township officials for review, and are being shared with donors. The project would be completed in two or three phases, with funding from a broad base of support. The first phase of the campaign, planned for the next 18 months, will hope to generate \$5 to \$6 million.

The complete master plan, which includes a 400-seat auditorium and allows growth to about 632 students, will cost about \$12 million, Brereton says. Because the school has taken steps to change its conditional use zoning classification by moving the pre-school to another location and eliminating use of its tennis facilities for paid instruction, Brereton and trustees are hopeful that the township will grant the "permitted use" status.



This architectural plan shows major areas of expansion (shaded): an auditorium facility (1); lower school classrooms (2); gymnasium (3); and middle school classrooms (4).

Search continues for U.S. principal

Several prospective candidates for the position of upper school principal have visited the school in recent weeks, and the search committee hopes to complete its task by the early weeks of Immer-sion, according to headmaster Tom Brereton, who leads the process.

Candidates demonstrating a wealth of experience in diverse backgrounds promise "excellent choices" for the position, Brereton says. A committee of faculty members and parents was formed in late fall to pursue the search process.

Faculty input, solicited in a questionnaire distributed in October, has been taken seriously by the committee and has helped to frame the search.

Sam Wagner, interim principal, will return to his position as director of college counselling at the end of the academic year, after a new principal has been appointed. Wagner stepped into the position after the departure of Laura Mack at the conclusion of the 1999-2000 school year.

The upper school principal must have qualities that will enable positive interactions with a variety of constituencies, including students, teachers, parents, administrators, and trustees. The committee is looking for experienced leadership with qualities that will facilitate this interaction, as well as strength in curriculum design and planning that will help to shape the upper school program as it matures.

Members of the search committee are parents Nadia Malarkey; Chris McAtee, and Marvin Nephew, and teachers Barbara Cleary, Jon Graetz, Linda Kretzler, and Ralph Suiter.

Immersion process undergoes scrutiny, refinement

Immersion, considered among the “crown jewels” of the school’s programs, has matured and developed along with the school itself under ongoing scrutiny by the school community.

A faculty committee charged with oversight of the program has recommended improvements that it feels will sustain Immersion and bring even greater promise to its future.

Bryan Czarnota, upper school science teacher, has been appointed to direct a committee of faculty members along with Sam Wagner, interim upper school principal, to standardize best practices with the program and refine the selection process to assure that students can select from a variety of appropriate options. “There are issues of fairness that must be addressed on an ongoing basis,” he notes, adding that these are relevant not only to students and their parents, but to faculty members as well.

Since its inception in 1974, Immersion has continued to grow and change. Originally devised as a foreign-language “immersion,” the program depended in its earliest years on staffing by language teachers from the Experiment in International Living and other teaching programs, who addressed language skills in the program that was offered to grades 7-12.

As the school’s needs changed, so too did Immersion, becoming a focused program of experiential learning that emphasizes lifelong skills of exploring and understanding new opportunities with faculty members who design the courses.

The independent learning component, long a popular aspect of the Immersion program, has grown in popularity and in the variety of learning situations that students explore, while individual programs have reached out to include community service, travel, and focused learning in a specific area or discipline.

Since its inception, the program has had unwavering support from faculty, administrators, and students. Alumni unfailingly cite

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Alumni unfailingly cite Immersion among their most valuable learning experiences in the school.

Immersion among their most important learning experiences in the school. An endowment fund named for former principal Thomas N. Elmer helps to generate income for student scholarships. About 10 students took advantage of this opportunity last year.

Among the offerings for 2001 Immersion are a Habitat for Humanity project in South Carolina, a jazz course that will explore music venues in Chicago and Dayton, photography

study that utilizes local community resources to help students build creative portfolios, an integrated popular culture-science course entitled “Sex, Lies, and Videotapes,” and a film appreciation class, as well as group travel courses to Peru, southern Europe, and Ireland.

“We’ve tried to nail down specific objectives for the offerings, not only as articulated by the designers of these offerings, but for students themselves, so they have a clear intention as they enroll in specific courses,” Czarnota says.

Among the MVS alumni group, there is tremendous support for Immersion, which is often among the fondest learning memories that the school’s graduates hold.

Intensive learning experiences, such as this visit to a school in India (MVS student Sylvia Tozbikian ('01) in the foreground), give students insights about the world and themselves that support the school's mission in a variety of ways. Teachers Dr. Ashwi Birdi and Bill Glisson led this program last year during Immersion.

Students will share Immersion experiences at month's end

To bring a ‘sense of closure’ to their participation in Immersion 2001, all students will share their experiences in a upper-school-wide presentation on the final day of the program. All students are expected to be on campus that day, and classes will have opportunities to talk about their experiences, share photos where possible, and learn about their fellow students’ programs, according to interim principal Sam Wagner. The traditional Immersion open house for parents will take place on April 9.

Assessment: An ongoing examination, no final grade yet

It may be hard to find universal agreement among teachers about much of anything, but one area of common response is that of grading student work and assessing their performance in the classroom.

"It's a necessity that we live with," says math teacher Maria Ferraro, "But it's not easy. In fact, it's a pain in the neck sometimes."

A school-wide committee on assessment, under the leadership of parent Jo McDermott, is examining the ways in which assessment of student performance is pursued in the school and considering options for improvement of communication about assessment.

Led by headmaster Tom Brereton, faculty members Kim Gunlock, Bruce Huntsbarger, Becky Nienaber, Elizabeth Bruner, Ralph Suiter, and Barbara Cleary, as well as lower school principal Kathy Mecoli attended sessions on assessment at the annual conference of the Independent Schools of the Central States in Chicago in November. A faculty

professional day on January 3 focused on discussions of assessment theory and practice.

Grant Wiggins, who has written widely about assessment as well as other aspects of professional practice, was a speaker at the ISACS conference. His presentation offered the kick-off point for faculty discussion in January as well.

Among the questions considered by teachers and administrators in these sessions were those related to the audience for assessment (parents? students? other teachers? college admissions offices?); the purpose of assessment (report past performance? provide guidance for future performance? predict future behaviors?); and standards that are used in assessing student work (the teachers' own criteria? state standards? guidelines offered by professional organizations?).

With increasing demands for "accountability" from schools and even individual teachers, states like Ohio have moved toward standard-

ized proficiency testing, intended to demonstrate student mastery over information related to civics, as well as skills of reading and computation. Independent schools have resisted applying these standards to their students, since the schools' own standards tend to be more demanding and student performance is well documented in a variety of more useful ways. Ohio Association of Independent Schools (OAIS) lost its legal battle in 1997 and has administered the ninth grade proficiency test since then. (This test will move to tenth grade beginning next year.)

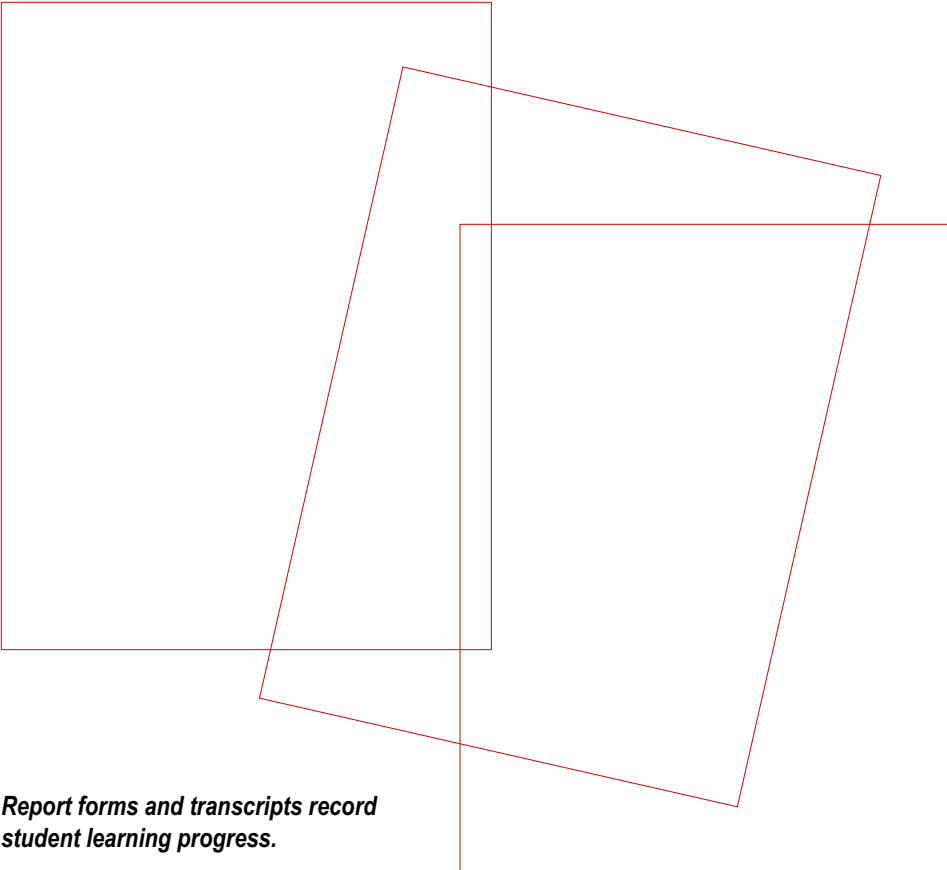
"A test that indicates where a student needs attention—for example, with subtraction—is far more useful in the instructional process than simple pass-fail barometers or information-based questions that do not discriminate among areas of difficulty," says headmaster Tom Brereton. The school uses a variety of testing approaches to convey information about student learning to teachers, who may be in a position to intervene and to provide appropriate support for remediating areas of weakness. "If a student is having trouble identifying diphthong sounds, he or she can benefit from specific teaching in that area, rather than being failed for reading," Brereton adds.

Good tests also help the school understand where its program can be improved and where teaching emphasis might be expanded. Standardized tests such as the Ohio proficiency exams, on the other hand, are criterion-based tests that do not demand higher level thinking processes, says Brereton.

Narrative comments are written by teachers in all divisions as part of their assessment practice, and while students and parents may focus on the "bottom line" of the grade itself, these comments provide genuine support for student learning and analysis of deficiencies, teachers say.

Assessment remains an area of ongoing scrutiny in the school, with the goal of continuing to understand and improve evaluation and assessment practices, according to Brereton.

"We're not ready to put the final grade on the system," he adds.



Report forms and transcripts record student learning progress.

Notes from school

Cindy Hattan's Immersion course, "Through the Eyes of a Body," will be featured March 15 at an open house highlighting facilities of Five Seasons Country Club. Students will demonstrate the workout strategies and approaches to healthy lifestyle that they have learned in the program under Hattan's direction.

Rebecca Kessler, upper school math teacher, was part of a team that developed a module on geometric proof for the Historical Modules Project sponsored by the Mathematical Association of America. The project, supported by the National Science Foundation, developed units intended to show teachers how to use the history of mathematics in their classrooms. According to Kessler, "seeing how mathematical concepts have developed fosters further understanding" of mathematics. The project was featured in the November issue of *Mathematics Teacher*.

Parents' Association events highlight the spring calendar. Spring Fling, the annual spring fair, and the association's flower sale, will take place May 11. Other activities include Tuesday in the Garden, an opportunity to spend time with other parents in maintaining the school's reflective garden, sales of MVS spirit items, and support of Grandparents' Day.

The school is looking for a family to host an AFS exchange student next year. It is only through the generosity of families that the school is able to provide this enriching experience to our students and to a young person from abroad. We were unable to identify a family for the 2000-01 school year, so we are especially hopeful that we will be able to host a student for 2001-02. Please call Barbara Cleary for more information.

Kate Nelson ('01) and Greg Mecoli ('02) performed with the Dayton

See 'Notes from School,' page five.

Elected to new terms on the Board of Trustees are Dan German, DDS, James Clift, Carolyn Chisano, and Burt Saidel, DDS.

MVS students who participated in the Dayton Peace March on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day included Katie Kersh, Sarah Woodyard, Caitlin Powell, and Kelvin Corbin. Other participants were Matt White, Kanu Birdi, Lauren Gorsky, and Dr. Ashwi Birdi. Dr. Birdi is the school's representative to the Centerville-Washington Diversity Council that organized a breakfast and transportation to the march.

Notes from school



Fourth graders Jimmy Watson and Siddarth Goyal worked with puppeteer Jo McLaughlin (Voyager Puppets) and art teacher Anne Brooks to make puppets and create performances with their characters.

Mimist Curtis Zimmerman leads lower school students through an imitative mime exercise. Funded by a grant from the Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District, Zimmerman worked with kindergarten and first grade students in their classrooms.



'Notes from School,' from page four.

Youth Philharmonic in a concert in December. Earlier last month, the Kettering Children's Choir performed Bach's "St. Matthew's Passion" with the Dayton Philharmonic Chamber Choir, the Dayton Bach Society, and the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. Students who are members of the choir include Meredith Blanhenshiem, Jenny Moore ('03), and Erick DeVore ('07). The upper school choir performed at several venues during the holiday season, under the direction of Stephen Popa, and both upper and middle school music programs were featured in concert. .

The eighth grade Power of the Pen team, led by teacher Karen Rinn, placed second among 16 schools in district competition. Members of the team are Carly Chenoweth, Francis Ellenbogen, Anna Kersh, Erin Powell, Amanda Jameson, and Ian Rymer. Rymer placed fifth in the individual competition among eighth grade writers.

An academic challenge team, coached by teacher Bob Flavin, won first place in the Sydney Social Studies Shootout on February 3. Students Andrew Bernie ('01), Robin Buerki ('02), Shai Gruber ('02), and Arthur Zeyda ('03) represented MVS in the competition.

Several members of the delegation to the ISACS conference joined Vicki Verity for dinner during their stay in Chicago. Verity, former president of the Parents' Association, and her husband Jon, president of the Board of Trustees from 1986 to 1990, moved to Chicago six years ago. Their children, Jed ('90) and Vivi ('95), are living in San Francisco and New York, respectively.

"Red on Blue," the school's annual auction-gala, will take place March 10 at the Ponitz Center, Sinclair College. Raffle tickets for the 50/50 Raffle are on sale at the school.

Sure, we have sports. But what about fitness?

Asserting its commitment to lifelong learning, the school's mission statement says that MVS equips its students with knowledge and skills needed for college and for life's journey beyond college. One area that is critical to this journey lies in physical and health education programs that support appreciations of fitness throughout life.

While some may see sports and physical education as simply play and exercise, they offer opportunities to develop a variety of skills, appreciations, and understandings. Middle schoolers are introduced, for example, to dance (with Rhythm and Shoes dancer Beth Butler), as well as hockey, boxing, table tennis, and a variety of traditional team sports, according to teacher Brenna Bretscher.

Athletic director Joy Barnett, who also chairs the physical education department, points out that P.E. does far more than exercise students' bodies. "In health and physical education, we often emphasize decision making skills, and these apply not only to choices about nutrition, but to decisions about drug and alcohol use and sexual activity as well." Teacher Cindy Hattan, a triathlete herself, has introduced her students to fitness programs available in the Dayton area to help them understand the options they have in maintaining good health.

In fact, the program at all levels in the school integrates a variety of character traits and skills that apply to students' lives, both in school and in "life's journey." Lower school physical

education teacher Shannon Tully points out that students learn conflict resolution, respect for differences, and sportsmanship through team activities as well as individual play. The LEAD program (Leadership through Education and Athletic Development) has been implemented as a PE-based, character skills development program involving martial arts with Matt Pasquinilli of the Asian Arts Center.

Nutrition is a critical ingredient of good health, and Barnett says the program emphasizes the concepts of "fueling" the body for athletic activity, classroom learning, and energy throughout the day. "Skipping breakfast—something that many students do—deprives the brain of the energy it requires just to think," she emphasizes.

Rahul Ballal gained skills for success in MVS classrooms

by Aileen Wagner, alumni coordinator

"The days of dot-com glory are over," says Rahul Ballal, Class of 1995. Despite his assertion, Ballal is attempting to carve out a niche in the on-line market place.

Last February, Ballal moved to San Francisco where he and his friend Michael Yang started "tossing around ideas for Internet companies." The pair decided to put their plans to the

test by entering their proposals in internet start-up competitions. After a few less successful attempts, they found a hit with Redmind, a business-to-business marketplace.

"We wanted to improve buying on the Internet for businesses," Ballal explains. "We created an artificial intelligence algorithm to match buyers and suppliers based on variables such as price, supplier reliability, and return locations."

Ballal and Yang were both working in other jobs at the time, and devoted their weekends to plans for their business. By summer, their work was paying off. Redmind was awarded third place, with a prize of \$5,000, in the Morgan Stanley Dean Witter National Business Plan Contest 2000 in May. They improved on that performance when Ballal flew to Barcelona in June for the Commerce Net International Business Plan Contest 2000. He presented the plan before a panel of judges who then had the opportunity to ask questions. Ballal and Redmind were rewarded with second place, thanks to his ability to improvise a "Ricky Martin-like song" when he was asked to *sing* his business plan.

A real triumph came when Redmind placed first in the Boston.competition in November. The

company was awarded \$50,000 and profiled in the online version of the *Boston Globe*. Throughout this process, Ballal spent his days working in marketing for MyPersonal.com and spent lunch pitching his business plan for Redmind to venture capitalists.

Potential investors have been surprised and even put off by the ages of Redmind's leaders. Ballal is 23 and Yang is 25. "But," Ballal says, "they finally caved in." Since October, Ballal has made Redmind his full-time business and life. With contest awards and the Series A funding from institutional sources, Redmind has moved beyond the proposal stage. Ballal and his partners are working on their web site and developing technology and client partnerships to build Redmind into a lasting company.

Ballal says that he thinks often of his years at the school. "MVS provided early leadership opportunities, in particular our student council years." As a former student council president, Ballal says, in the tongue-in-cheek tone for which he was known at the school, that the experience of "having to convince Tom B. and [student council advisor] Fran Inbody was never an easy thing; those challenges replay themselves in venture financing."

Rahul Ballal as student government president during his MVS days. Seated behind him at the dedication of the Ervin C. Nutter Science center in 1994 are department chair Mary Heuser and Nutter.

Alumni/æ NOTES

Note: Please keep in touch with Aileen Wagner ('95), alumni coordinator. Send your news and current address, and share what you know about classmates and other alumni. Aileen can be reached at wagna@mvschool.com or by phone at (937) 434-4444.

Class of 1975

Bruce Heyman became a managing director of Goldman, Sachs & Co. last year. He is now in management in the firm's Private Wealth Management Group in Chicago.

Judi Marks Cohen is a social worker in an Ontario outpatient program that specializes in the treatment of depressed elderly persons.

Class of 1984

Cathy Allen Tyson has her "dream job" telecommuting for a small company that makes custom imaging software for county governments. She lives in Loxahatchee, Florida with her husband Bill, and her daughters Elizabeth, 7, and Carol, 5.

Lisa Sotir has returned to the Washington, DC area where she is associate general counsel for Blackboard Inc. She married Dr. Ozgur Ozkan in May 1999.

Anne Turner and her husband, Alan Riffkin, welcomed their baby Hallie in March.

Class of 1988

Haleh Tabrah is living in Gainesville, Florida where she is in her last year of residency in psychiatry at the University of Florida. She plans to pursue a fellowship next year in addiction psychiatry.

Carla Wilder celebrated her marriage to Reginal Hawkins on November 18.



Members of the class of 1992 gathered at the Holiday Gala in December: Shelly Lofino, Julie Huey, Andre Pabarue, Anne Witty Reid, Eunice Kim, Melissa Beasley.

Class of 1989

Ashley Kent married Bryan Stone in September 1999. They live in Los Angeles where Ashley is a pediatric nurse practitioner in the primary care clinic at Harbor UCLA Medical Center. She is also clinical coordinator for the medical genetics clinic.

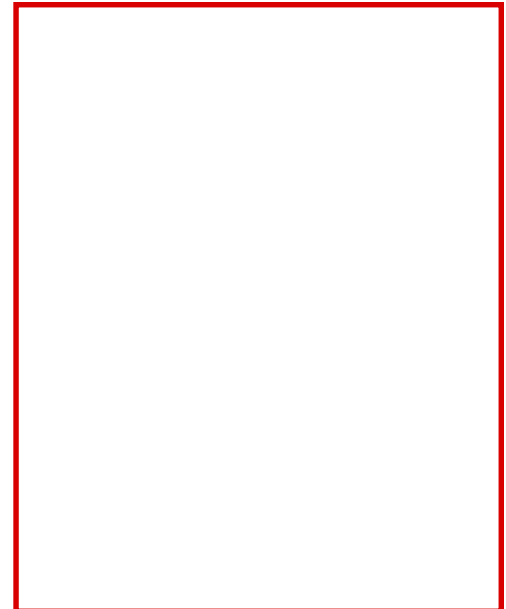
Class of 1992

Meredith Glueck is attending the University of Texas at Austin where she is pursuing a master's degree in Latin American studies. She is a graduate research associate at the Latin American Network Information Center. Last summer she was selected as a Special Fellow and worked in New York City at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

Class of 1993

Steve Collier received a departmental fellowship from Indiana University, where he is in the M.A./Ph.D. program in English literature.

Manish Kalvakota released his second CD, titled "Manish Kalvakota" on the label Voltage Recordings, run by fellow MVS alumnus Alex McAulay '92, known professionally as Charles Douglas. The CD was reviewed in the Dayton Daily News last fall. Manish also works as editor of the University



David Montgomery ('90) celebrated his marriage to Mary Meadows on November 4. Both attorneys, David's position is with Pickrel, Schaeffer & Ebeling, while Mary is an assistant prosecutor for Montgomery County.

of Cincinnati College of Medicine's web site.

William King received his M.A. in Central Asian Studies in March and is now working on a double Ph.D. in Central Asian studies and Near Eastern languages and cultures.

Jason Schmall is a copywriter with the Columbus advertising agency HMS

More alumni news on page eight.

Alumni news, continued from page 7.

Hallmark. He recently completed work on a series of television commercials for Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The spots have been recognized in the August 2000 edition of *Ad Week*.

Class of 1994

Zach Glueck is a corporate trainee for Quad/Graphics, involved in rotations throughout the company's productive and administrative departments. He is currently working in Saratoga Springs as a corporate customer service representative.

Becki Quam will graduate from Ohio State in June with a master's in mechanical engineering. She is working for Ward Engineering in Grandview on what she calls "an interesting bone project."

Class of 1995

Bentley Cooper graduated from Miami University with degrees in finance and general business. He is working for Wright-Patt Credit Union, Inc. in a project management capacity.

Amy Glisson completed her master's degree in criminal justice at Kent State University in December 2000.

Ben Hutsell graduated with honors from Purdue University in May with a degree in mechanical engineering. He works for Honda in research and development and lives in Dublin, Ohio.

Netsanet Kiffle spent last year working for NCR in sales in Atlanta. She is currently employed as a financial analyst for Lend Lease Real Estate Investments.

Ouliana Lagounova recently moved to Portland, Oregon where she works as a business analyst/cost accountant for Sulzer Pumps.

Tim Shaw is living in northern Wisconsin and working as director of a ski school in the winter and a therapeutic wilderness guide the remainder of the year.

Class of 1997

David West has been named Company Commander of the 22nd Company at the U.S. Naval Academy. He is one of a select group of 30 First Classmen to

lead the entire brigade of 4,000 midshipmen.

Class of 1998

Sarah Enterline danced the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy in the Central Ohio Youth Ballet production of *The Nutcracker* in November.

Class of 1999

Alex Brown spent his summer in Washington, DC as a Junior Fellow in the Joint Program in Survey Methodology/Federal Statistical System Program working for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Betsy West was inducted into the National Honor Society for freshmen at Wittenberg University. She has since transferred to Ohio University.



Harrison Hobart ('84) and his son Harry with classmate Dexter Mead and daughter Lydia.



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