From the Chair

As I write this column, I can say with absolute certainty that I have survived one year and one month. My sanity may not be completely intact; to say that my duties as chair have been unusually heavy would be like saying a black hole is unusually massive. We have just completed filling four staff vacancies created by retirements since last December: Linda Savedge (Dec 23rd), Ted Putnam (May 24th), Louise Menges (June 24th), and Lynda Stitzel (July 24th). It is one thing to lose so much combined experience; however, I was not prepared for the bureaucratic challenge to replace these positions. Needless to say, there are a lot of hoops to jump through to hire just one staff member. Not helping this situation was the fact that two of the position descriptions were changed. We are very fortunate to have been able to hire Beverly Laws as our fiscal assistant, Susan Mulholland as our department administrator, Jeff Molloy as the director of laboratories and instrumentation and Janet Hopkins as our second laboratory specialist. All of these people have a special connection with the College. Beverly has worked with the College for over twenty years, most recently with VIMS. Susan’s husband is a faculty member in the economics department. Both Jeff and Janet are chemistry graduates (’90 and ’77, respectively). Beverly started in late January, Susan started in late July, and Jeff and Janet started in August—just under the wire for the fall semester, and allowing me finally to be able to get some sleep at night.

On the faculty side, both Bob Orwoll and Steve Knudson retired in May. I was pretty sure that this was true because I went to a dinner given by the President and Provost in honor of faculty retiring this year; there I heard the resolution passed by the Board of Visitors which ended in their being promoted to the status of professor emeritus. Usually, the Board is the final word on everything at the College. But, because of a snafu with the Virginia Retirement System, the administration offered all the faculty who had signed retirement agreements the possibility of either un-retiring or coming back to work part-time. Both Bob and Steve took them up on this offer. And so, we now have five emeriti who remain active with the department. The other three are Dick Kiefer and Bill Starnes, who have active research projects, and Dave Kranbuehl, who begins his second year of a phased retirement agreement involving both research and teaching. There was a big retirement party held at Dick Kiefer’s home on May 1st to honor the five retiring faculty and staff.

As with the previous year, one of the hires was postponed. We were successful with the remaining search and were fortunate to have Kristin Wustholz accept our offer. Kristin is a physical chemist and will be teaching Physical Chemistry I this fall. She is also our first bone fide laser spectroscopist, as evidenced by the fact that her personal website is entitled ‘laserastic.’ We have been given permission for another search for the upcoming year (and for anyone who is counting, this would be my 6th hire in a year and a half). JC Poutsma, who was promoted to full professor this year, will take over the duties for Physical Chemistry II.

Not much has changed with our facilities and instrumentation. We have grown accustomed to our new digs in ISC 1. The building still looks in good shape. Having said this, I can also add that if one were interested in deliberately increasing the rate of depreciation for a building, then having a chemistry department occupy the building would be an ideal choice. We have finally convinced the administration to allow us to apply for an NSF grant to replace our current NMR spectrometer, and have requested a 500MHz system which was quoted at just over half a million.

This year we graduated nearly fifty students in chemistry; this number is roughly our average over the last decade. Many of the students this year chose to go on to graduate school in chemistry. The destinations for all of our classes are available online at the department’s website. The number of chemistry concentrators has been trending upwards recently; this trend typically tracks the economy. The freshman class had an unusually high percentage wanting to take chemistry courses; in fact, neither of our tracks the economy. The freshman class had an unusually high percentage wanting to take chemistry courses; in fact, neither of our two chemistry sections is already full. The other two faculty retiring this year; there I heard the resolution passed by the Board of Visitors which ended in their being promoted to the status of professor emeritus. Usually, the Board is the final word on everything at the College. But, because of a snafu with the Virginia Retirement System, the administration offered all the faculty who had signed retirement agreements the possibility of either un-retiring or coming back to work part-time. Both Bob and Steve took them up on this offer. And so, we now have five emeriti who remain active with the department. The other three are Dick Kiefer and Bill Starnes, who have active research projects, and Dave Kranbuehl, who begins his second year of a phased retirement agreement involving both research and teaching. There was a big retirement party held at Dick Kiefer’s home on May 1st to honor the five retiring faculty and staff.

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Lastly, while Louise retired in June, she graciously volunteered to be the editor for this newsletter. Louise has been in charge of getting the newsletter together for many years now, and we are fortunate to have her expertise in this turbulent time of transition.

I am personally looking forward to the start of fall semester, when I can finally relax with merely a normal schedule.

Chris Abelt

Current Faculty

Chris Abelt, organic, chair
Carey Bagdassarian, biophysical
Debbie Bebout, biochemistry
Randy Coleman, organic, biochem
Gary DeFotis, physical
Elizabeth Harbron, organic
Rob Hinkle, organic
Lisa Landino, biochemistry
Coco Faculty Fellow
Bob Pike, inorganic
Garrett-Robb-Guy Professor
J. C. Poutsma, analytical
Margaret L. Hamilton Professor

cjabel@wm.edu
ckbagd@wm.edu
dcbebo@wm.edu
racole@wm.edu
gxdefo@wm.edu
ejharb@wm.edu
rdpike@wm.edu
jcpout@wm.edu

Gary Rice, analytical
gwrice@wm.edu
Jonathan Scheerer, organic
jrscheerer@wm.edu
Dave Thompson, inorganic
dwthom@wm.edu
Kristin Wustholz, physical
kwustholz@wm.edu

Emeriti

Cirila Djordjevic, 1992
rlkief@wm.edu
Dick Kiefer, 2003
skknud@wm.edu
Steve Knudson, 2010
raorwo@wm.edu
Bob Orwoll, 2010
whstar@wm.edu
Bill Starnes, 2006

Phased Retirement

Dave Kranbuehl, 2009–2012
dekran@wm.edu

On leave for 2010–2011
Carey Bagdassarian Fall 2010, Spring 2011

Adjunct Faculty, 2010–2011
Homer Smith Fall 2010, Spring 2011
Sirisoma Wanigatunga Fall 2010

Chemistry’s photochemical configuration, Spring 2010

Standing, left to right: Jonathan Scheerer, Rob Hinkle, Chris Abelt, Debbie Bebout, Bob Pike, Randy Coleman, Bill Starnes, Dick Kiefer, Pat Hilger, Elizabeth Harbron, Beverly Laws, Gary DeFotis, Dave Kranbuehl, JC Poutsma, DerHong Shieh, Dave Thompson, Gary Rice, Lisa Landino, Cary Bagdassarian.

Seated, left to right: Steve Knudson, Louise Menges, Ted Putnam, Lynda Sitzel and Bob Orwoll, all of whom retired this year. Missing from the lineup is Linda Savedge, who retired in December of 2009, before this photo was taken for The Colonial Echo.
Bob Orwell came to the Chemistry Department in 1969 as an Assistant Professor, after a B.A. from St. Olaf College and a Ph.D. from Stanford, where he worked with Nobel Laureate Paul Flory, and post-doctoral work at Dartmouth and the Institute of Materials Science at the University of Connecticut. Bob has pursued a successful research program in polymer chemistry throughout his career at William and Mary. Most recently, he has developed materials designed to shield humans from the effects of cosmic rays encountered in travel to the moon and beyond. Over the course of his career he was the author or co-author of successful research proposals totaling over 3 million dollars, and has involved students at all levels in his research. Bob has published a number of papers with many student co-authors and several chapters in reference books such as Polymer Handbook and Physical Properties of Polymers. Teaching has always been one of Bob’s strongest endeavors. He is respected by his colleagues as an excellent teacher who is truly interested in his students. His colleagues continue to be amazed by Bob’s ability to remember students from years ago. Bob was a leader in launching the Applied Science Program, which today is the Department of Applied Science, and spent two years as the Interim Director, followed by two years as Director. Later, he became Chair of the Chemistry Department. Bob served as an advisor throughout his tenure, and was named Outstanding Freshman-Sophomore Academic Advisor in 1992. This year the Class of 2010 selected Bob as one of their honorary marshals at graduation exercises.

Steve Knudson earned the B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Michigan in 1964 and a Ph.D. from MIT in 1969. He followed this with post-doctoral work at the University of California at Santa Barbara and at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario. In 1972 Steve joined the Chemistry faculty at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. For the 1979-80 academic year Steve was a Visiting Scholar at William and Mary, and in 1981 he came to William and Mary as Associate Professor. During his career at William and Mary, Steve’s research interests expanded from semi-empirical computational chemistry to embrace other computational chemistry venues, including semi-classical interpretations of chemical bonding, semi-classical treatment of highly excited atoms in external fields, and theoretical treatments of polymers. His most recent work informs the quantum description of chemical bonding with classical concepts. He has been a principal investigator for more than $270,000 in external funding at William and Mary, and has published 34 scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals. Steve has also been keenly interested in the use of computers to improve classroom and laboratory instruction and has published four articles in the Journal of Chemical Education. He has developed computer software implementing his pedagogical activities, and was also responsible for introducing into the curriculum a Chemical Physics track approved by the American Chemical Society. Steve served as Chair of the Chemistry Department from 1992 to 1995.

In December we said goodbye to Linda Savedge, our fiscal assistant from 2004 to 2009, who opted to retire and spend more time with her family, especially her 3 beautiful granddaughters, instead of coming in to work every day—imagine that! Although her stay with us was shorter than we would have liked, she did a wonderful job coordinating with Ted to keep our finances in order and make sure we did everything necessary to keep us in good standing with our Accounts Payable Department, which is no easy task. Linda’s pleasant personality and soft spoken demeanor made her a joy to work with. We wish her well in her retirement.

Ted Putnam retired in May, after 30 years at the College. Ted, with an undergraduate degree in chemistry from Maryville College in Tennessee and a M.S. from Auburn, took over the tasks of the Departmental Administrator in 1980, following the retirement of Ed Katz (see article on Page 5). He had worked at Standard Oil of Ohio and, a few years prior to that, at Ohio Northern University, where he was Director of Laboratories. Taking the position at W&M offered Ted the opportunity to return to an academic environment and to be closer to his home state of North Carolina.

Ted was certainly a Jack-of-All-Trades for us. He monitored the department budget; oversaw ordering, receiving and shipping; and made sure that the Chemistry building was well maintained. And Ted succeeded at his myriad responsibilities while serving with seven different department chairs!

Ted ensured that the building was ready before classes started each morning by being at his desk early—sometimes by 7 am, even on some Saturdays and Sundays. With his good humor, upbeat outlook and enthusiasm, he forged strong relationships with many across the campus, especially in Facilities Management and in Grants Administration, and with our suppliers. Consequently, Ted always seemed to have the inside track in getting a problem fixed with the building, resolving an issue over grant expenditures, or expediting a purchase order.

Chemistry is very grateful to Ted Putnam for his good efforts over the past 30 years to keep the Department running smoothly.
Louise Menges joined the department in 1973, after working in the chemistry research labs of the Dow-Badische Company in Williamsburg. This past June Louise retired from William and Mary. When she began her tenure here 37 years ago, she was assigned the responsibility for setting up the organic teaching laboratories. This was two buildings ago, when Chemistry was in the original Rogers Hall (now Tyler Hall) on the Old Campus. After a few years, her responsibilities shifted to doing the set ups for the analytical and physical chemistry teaching labs.

Louise maintained many of the instruments for these upper division labs. Thanks to her good care (and to an unrealistically small budget for equipment replacement), Chemistry used—and continues to use—these instruments beyond their expected lifetimes. Many times, after initially having been told by the manufacturer that it no longer serviced a particular model, Louise successfully cajoled the company into digging up a replacement part or letting us ship a no-longer-working instrument back with the possibility they might still repair it (and sometimes they did).

The department became aware of Louise's artistic skills shortly after she was hired. Consequently, she was given the role of drafts person to make pen and ink drawings for faculty publications. Then in the 1980s Louise happily discovered that the computer had rendered her T-square and Leroy lettering set obsolete. She became proficient with a Mac and her responsibilities grew. Each year over the past couple of decades she did the layout, illustrations, and arranged for the printing of the lab manuals for all 8 of our teaching labs. And each year Louise also put together our Chemistry Distillations, including the issue you are holding in your hands.

Over the years Louise maintained the bulletin boards in the main hallway with departmental information and photographs that she had taken of Chemistry faculty, staff, and current students. She also set up a display case near the main entry showing old chemistry glassware and instruments, some probably dating back 80 years or more. On the wall over the case she and Gary Rice mounted the 5-foot-long slide rule that, as alums born before ca. 1960 may remember, was hung (and used) in the main lecture hall of both Rogers Halls.

Finally, here are a few more reasons why we will miss having Louise around the department:

- her natural role as the go-to person when a department member was looking for something;
- her keen interest in words and the rules of English grammar;
- her excitement when she identified the genus and species of a mushroom that she had just come across (usually providing a specimen for examination);
- her knowledge of seemingly hundreds of different type fonts;
- her certainty that PCs are inferior imitations of Macs.

We welcome a new tenure track faculty member...

Kristin Wustholz attended Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania, where she obtained a B.A.S. in chemistry and philosophy in 2002. She completed a Ph.D. in chemistry with nanotechnology in 2007 at the University of Washington in the laboratories of Bart Kahr and Philip J. Reid. Her Ph.D. research focused on characterizing the photophysical properties of single molecules embedded in dyed salt crystals. As a postdoctoral fellow at Northwestern University with Richard Van Duyne, she studied surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy and plasmonics. At William and Mary, Kristin will teach physical chemistry and related courses. Her research group will focus on studying the optical properties of dyes in organic-based solar cells using single-molecule spectroscopy. In collaboration with the conservation lab at Colonial Williamsburg, she hopes to apply novel spectroscopic techniques to problems in art conservation.

Lynda Stitzel, who retired this July, received her B.S. in chemistry from Elon College, and prior to coming to William and Mary had industrial experience with two small pharmaceutical companies in San Diego, where her husband’s employment took them. Before that she taught chemistry and math in neighboring York County, Virginia.

Thousands of William and Mary students have interacted directly or indirectly with Lynda during her nearly 20 years as Laboratory Specialist in the Department. Her responsibilities were in the general chemistry and organic laboratory programs, and she prepared reagents, standardized solutions, and maintained an accurate inventory of the chemicals, glassware and instrumentation for the introductory labs. Both organic and general use the same laboratory room each week, so Lynda and co-worker DerHong Shieh worked on a tight schedule, setting up general chemistry experiments one day, then two days later taking those setups down in order to get the laboratory ready for the organic experiments later in the week. Some semesters the demand for chemistry labs made evening sessions necessary, and Lynda’s days lasted until 9 pm.

Chemistry faculty who have taught these labs are quick to point out that Lynda made it very easy for them. Each week they could count on the experiments running smoothly, thanks to her thoroughness. She was keenly aware of how the labs were working in the hands of our students. Over the years she suggested many procedural improvements that enhanced the experiments.

The current success of our lower division laboratory program owes a whole lot to Lynda Stitzel. The Department wishes Lynda well in her retirement.
Bev’s current hobbies are reading and working in her yard. Church and family are very important in her life, and she enjoys these two aspects very much.

Janet Hopkins, our new Laboratory Specialist, was a student at William and Mary and has returned to Williamsburg after many years. She is pleased to be able to work in the new laboratories of the Integrated Science Center, since she remembers doing organic lab in the building now named Tyler Hall!

We mourn the loss of Ed Katz

This spring we learned from his daughter Margaret that Ed Katz died in Blacksburg on March 5, at ninety-five.

Ed Katz, who was born in Brooklyn, received a B.S. in Chemistry from William and Mary in 1936. After graduation, Ed accepted a job in the W&M Chemistry Department. For 40 years until his retirement in 1980, he maintained the Chemistry stockroom, served as an instructor in the freshman labs, did the ordering for the department, was the go-to person when something went wrong (water leak, power failure, etc.), and carried out a host of other administrative tasks to keep the department running smoothly. His employment at W&M was interrupted during World War II when Ed served in the Army Medic Corps, transporting POWs by train across the country. In the 1950s, he worked during the summers at Jamestown, assisting with the conservation of artifacts uncovered there. In recognition of his service to William and Mary, Ed received the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award from the College in 1963.

In his spare time Ed traveled, hiked, camped, gardened, did carpentry, photography and dark room work, and was an avid bird watcher. In the 1950s Ed and his wife Norma purchased property in an unpopulated part of the county a couple of
miles west of Williamsburg. Ed cleared the land and did much of the construction there on a home for his family. They lived there until 1990, when Ed and Norma sold it to developers who used the property for part of what is now Windsormeade Marketplace. Ed and Norma moved to Seven Lakes, NC. Norma died in 2000; in 2002 Ed relocated to Blacksburg near daughter Margaret. We remember Ed’s dedication, wisdom and integrity. We would like to hear recollections of Ed from former students. Please send us some; we would be delighted to include them in our next newsletter.

Congratulations to JC Poutsma…

JC was promoted to full professor this year. JC calls himself lucky in that he is living the life he envisioned for himself when he was 19 years old. The fact that William and Mary had an opening when JC was applying for a teaching position was, likewise, fortuitous. He had wanted to come to a liberal arts college small enough to allow him to inspire students in laboratories and in classrooms. At the same time, he sought a university large enough to let him perform his own research. William & Mary, he says, is the perfect fit.

JC’s teaching is the subject of an article on Chemistry’s website titled “Explosive Chemistry,” complete with a You Tube video of …you guessed it…a demonstration of an explosive chemical reaction!


and to Gary DeFotis

Gary was the recipient of a Plumeri Award for Faculty Excellence in recognition of his achievements in teaching, research and service.

A physical chemist who has amassed a substantial record in both research and mentoring students, Gary has supervised the undergraduate honors research and senior research of more than 100 students and has co-published numerous scientific papers with students. His areas of specialization include magnetochemistry, magnetic phase transitions, mixed magnetic systems, lower dimensional magnetic systems, and spin glasses. His large paper on solid oxygen—“Magnetism of Solid Oxygen” (Physical Review, 1981)—has been remarkably widely cited. He has also undertaken research on unusual pentacoordinate Fe(III) bis dithiocarbamate and bis diselenocarbamate systems and developed a significant body of work in the area of mixed magnetic systems. Gary was recognized with the 1998 Outstanding Faculty Award of the Commonwealth of Virginia; the 1997 American Chemical Society Award for Research at an Undergraduate Institution; and the 1989 Dreyfus Mentorship/Fellowship, the first given to a faculty member at a public institution. Gary holds a doctorate in physical chemistry from the University of Chicago.

Support Chemistry!

Gifts for programs like the Plumeri Award make a significant impact on our educational enterprise. Annual giving offers some level of financial security and allows the department the opportunity to conduct longer term planning. If you are interested in contributing to the needs of the department on a regular or annual basis, please consider donating to the unrestricted Chemistry Fund (Account 2967) or the Alfred Armstrong Memorial Fund (Account 2020). There are two mechanisms through which you can make such contributions. To contribute by mail, make your check payable to The College of William and Mary Foundation. Please be sure in your check’s memo area to note how you are designating your gift. Mailing address: The College of William and Mary, P.O. Box 1693, Williamsburg, VA 23187-1693

In addition, online donations can easily be made as well by going to the chemistry web site at www.wm.edu/chemistry and clicking support chemistry in the left navigation bar.

News of Our Alums

It is wonderful to hear from you—please continue to keep us up to date with what is going on in your life! Information about how to contact the Department is on the back page of this newsletter, or you can contact your favorite professor, who will forward the message. ( ál indicates an alum who attended last fall’s reception.)

Attention W&M Chemistry alums who are on Facebook! Consider joining the “William and Mary Chemistry Alumni” Facebook interest group—joining our interest group is a good way to keep in touch with the department and with other Chem alumni who have already joined.

Class of 1955

In honor of a lifetime of commitment to the College and sustained excellence in his professional life, John Marsh received the 2009 Alumni Service Award at a June 25 ceremony at the Alumni House.

On graduation from W&M, John entered medical school at the Yale University School of Medicine, and he joined the faculty there in 1967, serving a variety of roles, eventually as the director of the gastrointestinal cancer unit.
In 1999, he and his wife Carol ’54 moved back to Williamsburg and became involved with the College’s Christopher Wren Association, as John continued his medical pursuits as an adjunct professor at the Medical College of Virginia. John was chairman of the activities committee for his 50th Reunion in 2005.

Class of 1958
We saw an obituary for Virginia Holsinger in the October 12, 2009 issue of C&E News. Virginia received her Ph.D. from Ohio State and spent her career at the USDA, where she led a program on the chemistry and technology of milk and dairy foods until her retirement in 1999. Her work on the milk enzyme lactase led to the commercialization of products such as Lactaid, and her research was instrumental in the development of a natural mozzarella cheese with half the fat of previous products.

David Pond (Ph.D. 1968, U. South Carolina) and his wife Susan (Chemistry BS, U. South Carolina) live in Kingsport, Tennessee. David worked for Eastman Kodak for more than 30 years, joining Eastman Chemical, where he became VP for Research, when Kodak split in 1994. After retiring from Eastman in 2003, he joined the faculty at the U. South Carolina, and retired as Managing Director of the USC Nanotechnology Center in 2007, where he remains Adjunct Research Professor of Chemistry. David and Susan have three children, two of whom earned bachelor’s degrees in chemistry (a daughter went on for a biochem Ph.D. and a son completed dentistry school). Their third child, the only one who attended W&M (and apparently the victim of a genetic flaw), majored in English before earning a law degree.

Class of 1968
Meichuan Tang Chou has retired from her job at Pfizer as a Staff Analytical Chemist, and says she is “doing some exercise daily to keep my body moving”.

Class of 1969
Carolyn Koehler Offut has recently retired from the EPA. Her daughter was a 2007 graduate of W&M.

Class of 1970
In 2009, technology developed by NASA Langley Research Center scientist David Schryer and co-researchers was named the Center’s Invention of the Year. The technology involves a catalyst which oxidizes toxic carbon monoxide to non-toxic carbon dioxide at ambient temperatures, and was licensed by Penske Racing for use by NASCAR drivers to protect them from carbon monoxide poisoning while racing.

Class of 1975
Rick Stimfple has retired as a Senior Research Scientist from Harvard.

Class of 1979
Keith Ilia Christman, Lieutenant Commander USN (ret), has just graduated from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and reports that his wife is now serving in Iraq.

Kathy Dalton Mika is a pediatrician; her daughter Alison is a member of the W&M Class of 2009.

Joann Reynolds has just begun her Master’s in Education.

Class of 1980
Susan Kauzlarich, Professor of Chemistry at the University of California, Davis was the recipient of a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring awarded by President Obama in January at a ceremony in the East Room of the White House.

In this group photo taken with President Obama in the White House’s East Room, Susan is standing fourth from the left.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM) is a program administered by NSF for the White House. Awards are made each year to individuals or organizations in recognition of the crucial role that mentoring plays in the academic and personal development of students studying science or engineering who belong to minorities underrepresented in those fields. Candidates for the presidential mentoring award are nominated by colleagues, administrators and students from their home institutions. The mentoring can involve students at any grade level from elementary through graduate school.

Susan has been Professor of Chemistry at the University of California, Davis since 1987 and was a 1997 recipient of the Maria Goepptt Mayer Distinguished Scholar Award from Argonne National Laboratory. She has built and continues to develop a pipeline that effectively steers women and underrepresented students into chemistry classes and careers from high school through graduate study and beyond, and has received two awards for her mentoring efforts from the University of California, Davis: the Outstanding Mentor Award from the Consortium for Women and Research (2002) and the Distinguished Graduate Mentorship Program award (2005). Susan’s one-on-one approach to mentoring has been highly successful; among her graduates are 25 Ph.D. and four Master’s degree students as well as 13 postdoctoral fellows. Her award-winning students have been extremely well prepared as they have gone on to enter the science, engineering and mathematics workforce through academia and industry.

From an article about distance learning in the September 7, 2009 C&E News, we learned that U. of Colorado Denver Associate Professor Doris Kimbrough and James Reeves, a chemist at UNC Wilmington, have developed a series of experiments which can be done with common household items such as baking soda and vinegar. Students at UNC Wilming-
ton enrolled in the nonmajors online general chemistry course do the lab experiments at home and complete their lecture and homework assignments online. The collaborators report (J. Chem Educ. 2006, 83, 501) that these students did as well on exams as those who did the traditional labs on campus. Doris is also co-author of a student text, Laboratory Manual for Introductory Chemistry, now in its third edition.

In a rather strange turn of events, life presented me with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hit the road with a successful touring indie rock band to pursue a lifelong dream of becoming a professional recording and touring musical artist at the national level. So, in 2003, I took a leave of absence from the Ph.D. program to pursue rock stardom. It was a thrill ride-a-second for the next 4 years, with the band (Red Metric) signing an indie recording contract, recording and releasing several CDs and touring the entire US several times to play for thousands of appreciative fans. During that time, we were privileged to perform in every major market in the US (repeatedly) and to share the stage with some amazing national acts, including Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, The Smithereens, Metallica, Godsmack, The Pat McGee Band and so many more.

I left the fast-paced and rather unorthodox world of professional rock and roll in 2007 to be a stay-at-home dad to my first child and start my own educational consulting company focusing on private individual and group teaching/tutoring. I have since taught/tutored 70+ students in about ten different subjects, including Chemistry, Biology, Statistics, Mathematics, Physics etc. Mentoring kids (and even a few adults) and being a positive role model in their lives has been extremely rewarding and the experience I have gained as a teacher has been invaluable. That said, since embarking upon my academic career too darned many years ago to openly admit, I have always yearned and the experience I have gained as a teacher has been invaluable. That said, since embarking upon my academic career too darned many years ago to openly admit, I have always yearned to teach, mentor and conduct research at the college/university level and I knew that I could not achieve that goal without completing my Ph.D. Thus, I returned to complete my Ph.D. program in January 2009 and I will graduate in May 2010.

To say that it’s been a long strange (and wondrous) trip bath in the nectar of life would be gross understatement. I’ve enjoyed every second of it! But, it is indeed good to be back once again in the loving embrace of The College community.

Kevin Shug, Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the University of Texas, Arlington, was the recipient of the 2010 Young Investigator Award presented by the Analytical Chemistry Academic Contact Committee of Eli Lilly & Co, and received an unrestricted grant of $50,000, renewable for a second year. Kevin researches fundamental, theoretical, and applied aspects of analytical chemistry that involve modern liquid-phase separation, sample preparation, and molecular mass spectrometry techniques.
Jennifer Dial is teaching at Tidewater Community College in Virginia Beach. She has been married for eight years, and has two boys: Andy, 3, and Jack, 1.

Mara Jacobs wrote Gary Rice this September: “How have you been? I want to thank you again for all your help while I finished my M.S. After 180 applications and a handful of phone interviews, I have accepted an offer for a position as an Analytical Chemist at a contract lab in Wilson, NC. I am moving in two weeks. I am very excited. Thank you for all the years I spent at W&M, both undergrad and grad school. I hope you’re well.”

From Sarah Prunier Law last fall: “Dear Family and Friends, David and I are so happy to announce the birth of our son, Nathaniel David on Wednesday, August 19th at 12:46 am. He weighed 8.5 lbs and was 20.5˝ long. We are all healthy and resting at home.”

Bob Orwoll received news from Meisa Koshbin Salaita: “It’s good to hear from you, as well. I wanted to make sure my info was updated because I love receiving the chemistry newsletter—helps keep me connected!

I followed on in chemistry and earned my Ph.D. at Northwestern. Not only did I get my degree there, but I met my husband in our research group. After graduating, he went on to postdoc at UC Berkeley, and I taught high school chemistry in San Francisco. I really fell in love with teaching and my school there. But, as is the case with postdocs, the position was temporary, and my husband just got a faculty position at Emory. So I followed him down here and am trying really hard to find a job in science education. It’s my dream to work in a science museum, but alas...Atlanta has none. But who knows...maybe I’ll start one!

Hope all is well with you and that William and Mary is just as awesome as it always was. I still think about your wooden periodic table and have dreams of making one for my husband’s office one day!”

Skip Brenzovich is a postdoc at UC Berkeley working with Prof. Dean Toste. Last October Skip paid us a visit, and touched base again this summer with an email:

“It has been a while, and it definitely has been crazy here at Berkeley for the last few months. Since January I have submitted four papers (three are already published) and the project just keeps rolling along. I have been working in the area of oxidative gold chemistry, and discovered an interesting reaction mechanism that has opened up a lot of new chemistry for the lab,

How are things going at W&M? How is the job of department chair treating you? The new building looked really nice last fall when I stopped by.

I am starting to apply for jobs, and I have decided to apply to several faculty positions at smaller schools like William and Mary. My experience at William and Mary was amazing, and I would like to be a part of passing it on to the next generation of students.

I head back to Richmond a few times a year, so if you’re ever looking for an alumnus to give a lecture or talk about the graduate school experience, I am more than happy to stop by. Thank you again.”

Kristin Plichta did a weekend R and R in Williamsburg this September. She and husband Ethan Kuperman are at the Penn State College of Medicine in Hershey. This summer Kristin completed the Ph.D. (in cell and molecular biology) part of her MD/PhD program there. She has two more years left on the MD component, and is deciding between pediatrics and radiation oncology. Ethan, whom Kristin met at Hershey, is doing a residency at Hershey while Kristin finishes.

Katie Nussbaum Scanlon is now a physician’s assistant at the DuPont Children’s Hospital in Philadelphia. She received her M.S. from George Washington U in 2006.

Diana West was a speaker at our seminar series last fall, with a talk entitled “Developing Small Molecule Procaspase Activators as a Personalized Anti-Cancer Strategy”.

Diana has been in the Hergenrother lab at UI at Urbana-Champaign for 4 years as a graduate student in the Department of Chemistry. Her research group is hoping to use small molecule activators of procaspases to induce cell death in cancer cells and is working on a clinical trial with pet dog patients suffering from lymphoma. Diana has evaluated a novel class of trioxane sulfone dimers as anti-cancer agents, and was part of the team that discovered the mechanism by which the compound PAC-1 activates procaspase-3 and -7. Diana also developed a gram-scale solution-phase synthesis of the Ac-DEVD-pNA caspase-3/-7 substrate. Her expected Ph.D. completion is in Spring 2011, and she hopes to start a postdoctoral position after a vacation to Vietnam.

Jen Dertinger Fitzgerald stopped by for a visit in May. She is in the Ph.D. program in chemistry at Washington U-St. Louis, and currently working in a laboratory at U Texas, Dallas, in the materials science department. Jen expects to defend in December of this year, and her husband has just begun work at Texas A&M on his Ph.D. in accounting. Jen thinks she recognized the oddly proportioned flask in last year’s newsletter: it’s a culture flask! (Thanks, Jen!)

Tony Ly wrote to Gary Rice: “I wanted to let you know that I passed my dissertation defense yesterday (UC Riverside)! I head back to Richmond a few times a year, so if you’re ever looking for an alumnus to give a lecture or talk about the graduate school experience, I am more than happy to stop by. Thank you again.”
Woohoo! Next up is a 3-month postdoc at the University of Wollongong for the summer, where I'll be studying ion-molecule reactions, and then (hopefully) a postdoc in proteomics at the University of Dundee in Scotland. As you can tell, I have a hard time settling on just one research subject…

Anyway, I hope all is well! It certainly must be better since I last talked to you with the responsibilities of chair now turned over to Abelt :)

Hillary Huttenhower earned her Ph.D. from Georgia Tech this spring, and started employment at Pratt-Whitney in Connecticut in June, conducting materials research on aircraft engines.

Billy Bylund emailed Chris Abelt last fall: “I had stopped by WM 4 weeks ago but missed you guys (as the department was in Friday seminar and I was going out for a bike ride). Louise got a picture of me, though. I wonder if she told you guys. (Of course she did.) I just flew back from a San Diego/Chicago trip for residency interviewing and taking my last board exam! It’s quite exciting that all those big things are over with now—thank goodness. On my return last night the woman next to me reminded me to write this email. She asked whether WM Chemistry was useful for medical school. Though chemistry might have helped a bit first year, I think it was just WM in general that really helped me. I learned a lot there about time management, learning methods, and how to think about any problem. For medical school (and probably any graduate degree), I think those things help you more than the specific degree. Medical school at the Uniformed Services University has gone by really fast. It certainly has been my biggest academic challenge, but totally worth the effort. It’s hard to believe it’s really been almost 4 years since WM. I think I’m going to be doing orthopedic surgery at the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth if all goes as planned (I find out for sure on December 16th). I can let you know. I really love the physics and biomechanical aspects of orthopedics. Now I’m teaching the first year students human anatomy. It’s an absolute blast! Teaching is awesome. I’m still running some, but not nearly like I did at WM. School and a little knee trouble have kept me away. I’ve been cycling just as much though, and will go out for a ride in a few minutes. Let me know how WM is going. Thanks for everything! I still remember the classes you taught and the little research I did with you :)

Class of 2006

Billy in his cycling gear.

News from Megan Kardine: “I left my position as a lab chemist at Ciba Chemicals in Suffolk, VA and moved to Chicago in June 2008, where I am presently working on my Ph.D. at Northwestern University. I am in the Physical division working for Professor Emily Weiss, where our research is on charge and energy transport in semiconductor quantum dots. Additionally, I’m a joint student with the Materials Science Department, on fellowship in the NSF’s IGERT (Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship) Program working on incorporating nanoparticles into various fabricated materials. Things are very exciting, and my research experience at W&M has proved invaluable!”

Alex Zestos (BS 2007, MS 2008) received the 2009 Best Paper Award of The Society of Plastics Engineers, Vinyl Plastics Division, for his oral presentation about the discovery of new, environmentally innocuous fire retardants for vinyl (PVC) products at a national SPE conference in Chicago. Alex entered the Chemistry Ph.D. program at UVA last fall.

Class of 2009

Gary Rice heard from Michael Yakovac recently: “First off I’d like to tell you thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you did to help me along the way as a Chemistry major who probably didn’t belong anywhere near Rogers Hall to begin with. You always had a very subtle way of dealing with my baloney but you were very understanding and for that I’ll always be thankful. I’m sure you hear this often, but you weren’t just my favorite professor, I looked at you as a friend and that is what I think any professor should strive for. I trusted you and confided in you when things were looking grim and you were there to help/lead me in the right direction. Although your recommendation didn’t work, I did take the summer course with you, and even if it was a general course, I’m sure you didn’t mind one bit handing me an A so I could head on my way.

I’ve graduated, received my degree (which hangs on my wall, and is still cherished daily) and I feel I owe a lot of that to you. Again, thank you.

After graduating I moved back home with my parents while working full time for a remodeling/construction company. I always enjoyed hands on work, and this was no different. After 9 months of job searching and some help from my father, I landed a job as a Logistics Engineer with Raytheon, a defense contracting company based out of Tewksbury, Massachusetts. I have received my secret clearance and work on the PATRIOT air missile defense system. I write requirement documents and storyboards for soldiers in Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, who are training to become Technicians for the missile system in tactical conditions (in the field/at war). It pays well for a first job and I’m very happy to be employed.

I currently live in Waltham, MA, but I am moving September 5th into the heart of Boston. I’m not sure if you’ve ever been here but its a great city and full of young life. I am really warming up to it since I moved here 6 months ago. I also purchased a new BMW as a “graduation gift” for myself. I’m inviting you, and would love if you are ever in the area to give me a call and we can make a Sox game, if it’s that time of year, or have dinner. I’d love to catch up and hear how your Chemistry teaching/program is coming along.”
Snapshots from our 2009 Chemistry Homecoming Reception

At the reception but not caught in a photo were Charlotte Galson ’76, Lori Small ’84, Jennie Gundersen ’85, Heather Rowe Joyce ’98, Jan Jones ’99, and Jennifer Dial, ’99.

Chemistry was prepared for the onslaught—

Michelle McKently ’11 was on hand to greet alums as they arrived and encourage them to sign our guest book.

Dick Kiefer inspects the buffet offerings.

Bring on the alums—the Big Cheese and JC are ready!

Bob Orwoll provided copies of (and solutions for) the Chemistry Crossword Puzzle from last year’s newsletter.

Dave Thompson chats with Carolyn Koehler Offutt ’69 and her husband Bill.

KT Moynihan ’04

Dave Thompson has the attention of Kathy Dalton Mika ’79.

Susan Ritenour Barker ’94 holds their son while she and her husband Nicolas visit with Dick Kiefer.

Karen Luebs Gartman ’84 and her husband Dale.

John and Joann Gray Reynolds ’79 reminisce with Bob Orwoll.

Kathy Dalton Mika ’79

Dave Thompson has the attention of Kathy Dalton Mika ’79.

Kathy Dalton Mika ’79

Prof. Hinkle enjoys having his picture taken—can you tell?

Charlie Wilkes ’76 and his wife talk with Dick Kiefer.

Emily Harbert, ’08, MS ’10

Norah Bate, ’09

Rick Stimpfle ’75 shows Bob Orwoll photos he took while he was a student.

Ilia Christman, ’79

Eugene Aquino ’88, MA ’91 and his sister Eileen talk to Desmond Wichems ’90.

John Marsh ’55
2010 Chemistry Concentrators and Their Destinations

Rebecca Mikulas Allred
Alena Arkhipov
Austin Nizar Baraki
Benjamin Phelps Boyd
Douglas William Challener
Stephen Wen-Yan Chi
Christopher James Collins
Corey Lynn Compton
Christina Marie Davis
Ilya Arkadiyvich Dubovoy
Renata Kathleen Everett
John Patrick Giddens
Travis Jeremy Grubbs
Tara Dawn Hagedorn
Jillian Lynn Hamilton
Andrew Solberg Hampton
John-Andrew Samuel Hocker
Michael Todd Hovey
Roger Chi-Paul Hsu
James Stuart Jones
Kelly Clara Lane
Christina Lynne Langlois
Natasha Alisa Marple
John Joseph McCarthy
Michelle Leigh Mendelsohn
Hong An Ashley Nguyen
Kathryn Anne Peth
Lindsey Parker Pflugner
Mary Katherine Pircon
Margaret Louise Schmierer
Amy Marie Sirkis
Quinton Michael Smith
Tyler Scott Stukenbroeker
Brandon Leland Thompson
James David Thompson
Jasmine Renee Tutt
Katherine Van Haasteren
Jan-Pieter Verheul
Thomas John Wallin
Anna Jean Wirth
Colin Conroy Wollack
Matthew Phillip Yeager
Jonathan Jong-Sung Yu
Robert Evans Ziegler

graduate studies in chemistry, Yale U.
(interdisciplinary/chem) graduate studies, EVMS (physician’s assistant)
studies in medicine, Eastern Virginia Medical School
high school science teacher, Williamsburg, VA
studies in medicine, Medical College of Wisconsin
(bio/chem) not reported
graduate studies in organic chemistry, Purdue U.
graduate studies in biochemistry, Brown U.
graduate studies in chemistry, U. Texas at Austin
working and applying to medical school
graduate studies in chemistry, U. Michigan-Ann Arbor
(bio/chem) graduate studies in biochemistry, U. MD, Baltimore
high school science teacher, Warren County, VA, Public Schools
masters program in chemistry, W&M
graduate studies in nutrition, UNC Chapel Hill School of Public Health
graduate studies in chemistry, UNC-Chapel Hill
undecided
masters program in chemistry, W&M
(chem/bio) apply to medical school
graduate studies in chemistry, Texas A&M U.
undecided
graduate studies in environmental science & technology, U. MD
(Jan ’10) (classical studies/chem) not reported
travel
(chem/interdisciplinary) masters program in education, W&M
undecided
masters program in chemistry, W&M
graduate studies in health sciences, Drexel U.
undecided
graduate studies in chemistry and biochemistry, Arizona State U.
graduate studies in chemistry, UCLA
employment, then masters program in chemical engineering
(chem/econ) graduate studies in chemistry, Stanford U.
graduate studies in chemistry, Furman U.
(Jan ’10) medical school, Drexel College of Medicine
not reported
seeking gainful employment
(Jan ’10) (chem/Russian studies) not reported
(physics/chem) not reported
graduate studies in biological chemistry, U. Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
undecided
(chem/math) graduate studies in chemical engineering, U. New Hampshire
not reported
graduate studies in organic chemistry, Boston U.

2010 Master’s Candidates and Their Destinations

Joshua Abelard
Omar Hamdy
Emily Harbert
Ashley Janiga
Sara Kampfe

graduate studies in chemistry, Virginia Tech
(Aug. ’10) graduate studies in chemistry, UC-Riverside
work as a chemist for a subsidiary of Honeywell
(Aug. ’10) gainful employment
chemist, Applied Process Technology International; eventually seek a Ph.D.
in chemistry
The Puzzle Page

Here are photos of a couple of objects related to chemistry.

This should be an easy one. Which faculty member’s vehicle sports this bumper sticker? It almost looks as if someone who didn’t pass and so couldn’t honk may have thrown stones instead!

2010 Crossword Puzzle for Chemists

Another puzzle from Chemistry’s Puzzle Master, Bob Pike. As we did last year, we will post the solutions on our website and provide copies at this fall’s reception.

Glassware  Robert D. Pike

ACROSS  1. Glassware type  73. With 1 across, glassware  77. With 81 across, glassware  78. And then there were ___ 79. Old Ford  81. Glassware type  85. Struggled 89. Previously 90. Secondhand 91. Popular 90’s TV place 92. Pressure unit 93. Othello heavy 94. With 1 across, glassware


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Make our Chemistry reception part of your Homecoming 2010!

The Department is having its wine and cheese reception for chemistry graduates in ISC I on Friday, October 22, starting at 5:30 pm in the second floor lobby (above the Barksdale Field entrance). We look forward to seeing you there. If you can join us, please try to let us know by October 15. You can e-mail us at pxi@wm.edu, give us a call at 757-221-2540, or return this form to:

Patricia Hilger
Chemistry Department, College of William and Mary
P.O. Box 8795
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

Yes, I plan to attend the Chemistry reception on Friday, Oct. 22, 2010, at 5:30 pm.
Name _________________________________ Class of ______       No. of guests ___

Even if you’re unable to come, please consider using this space to let us know what you’re doing and mailing this form to us at the above address. We’d love to hear from you!