

Alumnae Poets Return to Wheaton

Two distinguished alumnae poets returned to campus last November to share their own work and bring others together to celebrate the joy of creative expression. Paloma Capanna '88, cofounder of Poets for Peace, and Wendy Wilder Larsen '62 each led evenings of readings and discussion.

Larsen, author of *Shallow Graves: Two Women and Vietnam*, read from new and previously published works at the invitation of Professor Sue Standing and spoke at length about the sources of inspiration for her poetry.

"This college is very important to me, as I had the best teachers of my life here," Larsen said. "Curtis Dahl taught me about *Moby-Dick*; Louise Barr MacKenzie taught me about Shakespeare and poetry; Katherine Burton was my mentor, convincing me I was smart enough for Harvard."

The natural world plays a vital role in Larsen's poetry, and much of her recent work centers on the relationship between humans and animals. "Mother and Child" and "Love Story," for example, consider news coverage of an elephant and moose, respectively, as they accidentally wander into the

developed world. Other works derived their creative energy from Central Park, California beaches, and a dragonfly that reminded the author to "be still."

Capanna led a Poets for Peace reading in response to Sept.

11 that included nearly 30 students, faculty and staff. Her organization was born of the belief that poetry is a common voice of humanity, unique in its ability to distill problems and share wisdom, and Capanna believes that the Wheaton reading bore that out.

"The reading was magic," she said. "So many people came together—so many courageous voices, some participating for the first time in a poetry reading. There was a surprising intensity to the work, and you could feel hope spreading across the room."

Capanna composed a 12-poem manuscript for the event, offering it as a "small gift" to the college. "Returning to Wheaton for this reading was more than I can describe," she said. "It was

wonderful to see my professors again and talk with them of the value of their lessons."

Poets for Peace plans an annual fall reading series. For more information about the group, visit www.poetsforpeace.com.



Far off
a loon lands
then dives.
I know his shape
his think bill.
Loon
deep diver
for my deep song,
dragonfly,
swift flying
lake hoverer
now grounded
at my side.
We have our places.

From "Where the Wounded Dragonfly Led" by Wendy Wilder Larsen

Admission Continues to Smash Records

WHEATON'S ADMISSION OFFICE, still deep in the process of selecting the Class of 2006, reported in January that the number of Early Decision applicants—200—surpassed last year's record by nearly 70 percent, allowing the college to begin enrollment of its most selective class yet.

"This is another sign of Wheaton's increasing popularity as a first-choice college," said Gail Berson, director of admission and student financial aid. "It also means that we face a daunting challenge in our regular decision pool as we become increasingly selective—all good news!

"These numbers enable us to enroll at least 25 percent of the class through this application plan," Berson added.

The regular decision deadline also brought more records, with 3,550 total applications received, up 12 percent from last year. The college plans to enroll 425 new students this year—roughly 400 first-years and 25 transfers.

"The ED pool was the strongest I've seen in my 16 years here," reported Amy Markham, director of admission. "More kids are committing to Wheaton."

Another noticeable difference in this year's Early Decision pool is the increase in legacy students, particularly children of alums. A full listing of legacy admissions will be available in the winter 2003 *Quarterly*.

Builed Better Than They Knew

Squarely placing Wheaton College among the premier arts facilities in the region, Watson Fine Arts Center reopened this semester after a three-year, \$20 million construction project that also included Mars Arts and Humanities. On the other side of campus, students settled into Beard Hall, the new 100-bed residence at the foot of Howard Street.



Art history major Sandy Cross '03 works at a bank of light tables in the new slide library in Watson.

Watson is now home to the music, theatre and art history programs, as well as several outside arts organizations and performing ensembles, such as the Southeastern Massachusetts Wind Symphony. The project represents a 38 percent increase in campus

space dedicated to the arts, allowing the college not only to better serve the needs of current students and faculty, but also to attract the best new students to Norton.

“The arts programs have been getting huge numbers of students and our facilities were substandard,” Andrew Howard, chairman of the studio art and art history department, told the *Boston Globe*. “If our reputation was to grow, we needed this space. I think we now have state-of-the-art facilities that rival almost anywhere.”

Among the many highlights of the new space are the Dorothy Littlefield Weber '38 Theatre, the Beard Gallery and the Weil Gallery. The theatre was transformed into a classical performance space, and was christened in February with the dance company's performance of “Breaking Bounds.” The galleries offer nearly twice the display space of the original; one section will display works from the permanent collection on a rotating basis, and the other section will feature new exhibits. The first gallery exhibit, “Bingo: Art Created through Play,” features the work of Emily McHugh '94 and her students and runs through April 6. For a complete arts calendar, visit Wheaton's Web site at

www.wheatoncollege.edu.

“I hope these new facilities will stimulate faculty (both within and outside of the art department) to think of new ways of utilizing the collection in their teaching, thus enabling students to benefit from the experience of studying original works of art rather than only slides,” said Ann Murray, professor of art history. “Short of having a museum, this is the next best thing!”

Beard Hall, named in honor of trustee Anson Beard Jr. for his leadership and generosity to Wheaton, completes the Gebbie-Keefe residential area at the Howard Street entrance to campus. The residence—Wheaton's first all-nonsmoking dorm—offers singles and doubles, laundry services and a study on each floor, as well as wireless Internet access in the near future. The first floor of the hall also houses a large common room and reception area.

Assistant Professor of Philosophy John Partridge will serve as Beard's first residence faculty member. He and his family will live in an apartment on the first floor, and he will facilitate some academic programs for student residents.



Students moved into Beard Hall in late January.



Alumnae/i Web site unveiled

Wheaton and its Alumnae/i Association premiered a redesigned OnLyon Web site last month, creating a one-stop portal for information about the college, its graduates, distance learning and volunteer opportunities for the entire community. Linked from the college's home page, the alumnae/i site offers OnLyon course information, the alumnae/i directory, change of address forms, giving opportunities, club news and events, staff and contact information, and much more. Visit the site at www.wheatoncollege.edu/alum.

PHOTOS BY NICKI PARDO

Wheaton Is State's First All-Steinway Campus

Nearing the fruition of a 21-year project, Professor of Music Ann Sears announced in January that Wheaton would be the state's first officially recognized all-Steinway campus, offering students and faculty instruments of unmatched quality. The announcement coincided with the news that Rhoda Hendricks '32 presented the college with a Steinway Model B (pictured), a gift in honor of her upcoming 70th reunion.

"So very many people use these instruments," Sears said. "Piano, voice and music theory students, performance groups, even students who just want to play informally. Our status as an all-Steinway campus reflects a commitment to quality that everyone recognizes."

Sears began the task of enhancing and restoring Wheaton's piano collection more than 21 years ago, when she discovered that the existing instruments were badly in need of maintenance. With the support of the college and the generosity of Debra Glidden '68, the estate of Wheaton friend Ariel Hall and many other patrons, Sears will see the last of the vintage Steinway pianos restored this year.

In addition to restoring the older instruments, the college has partnered with Steinway & Sons to complete the collection. Wheaton was able to purchase 10 new Steinways—the ability to buy 10 instruments at once garnered the college substantial savings—and through the piano maker's "Living

Legacy" program, Sears hopes to acquire three more and restore a nineteenth-century English Broadwood piano now stored in the college's archive, "giving students the opportunity to experience the sound and touch of a historically au-

thentic instrument from Beethoven's time," she said. The Living Legacy program allows piano owners to contribute funds or instruments to the college's endowment for the purchase of Steinways; full program details are available through Wheaton's Planned Giving office.

"We want to give our students the best learning experience possible," Sears said. "Just as science students benefit from the best lab equipment possible, music students benefit from the best instruments. Both disciplines call for the effective acquisition of information and skills, and we want to give our students the tools to make that happen. If we can provide superior equipment along with excellent teaching, we can truly encourage our students' best work."



New Leader for Annual Fund

ELLEN ANDERSON, former associate director of the annual fund at Connecticut College, joined the Wheaton Alumnae/i Relations staff last December as director of the Annual Fund, said Sharon Howard '87, director of Alumnae/i Relations and Annual Giving. She leads the office formerly headed by Heather Corbett '86, who will concentrate on regional and club activities as associate director of Alumnae/i Relations and Annual Giving.

"Ellen brings a wealth of experience in managing staff and volunteers, and articulating the college's goals and priorities to volunteers and donors," Howard said. "We are confident that her professionalism, expertise and collaborative style will help to take the Annual Fund to the next level."

Anderson served as director of reunion

giving, associate director of special gifts and associate director of the annual fund at Connecticut College since 1996. Prior to that she worked for the Williams College/Mystic Seaport Maritime Studies Program for 11 years as associate director of alumni relations and development.

"The warm welcome I've received from so many alumnae/i and Wheaton volunteers in my first weeks at the college has included an excitement for the Annual Fund which speaks eloquently to the loyalty Wheaton alumnae/i have for their alma mater," Anderson said. "As we



move forward, our goal is to educate all alumnae/i about the vital role the Annual Fund plays in the college's fiscal health."

Howard described Corbett as "the most interesting and qualified" candidate for the newly-created clubs leadership position. "Heather's work in annual giving during the Campaign for Wheaton paid great dividends; her continued work with volunteers and donors in this new role should yield equally excellent results," she added.

Corbett's first project is to develop a comprehensive parents program for Wheaton. "I am researching parent programs at other colleges while also working with a cross-divisional group of colleagues to conduct an audit of how we would like to involve parents in the life of the college," she said.