

There once was a wise old man...

For nine months, from September 2003 to May 2004, I followed three Wheaton students—and their advisers, mentors, advocates—as they pursued some of the world’s most prestigious scholarships. The resulting story, “Of scholars and struggles” on page 18, captures only a small part of their journey, which extends far beyond their Wheaton experience. Just listen to Jared Duval ’05, one of those students, describe his Davis Fellowship experience in Tanzania his summer:

“If I have learned anything from my last summer with the Howard Dean campaign [funded by a Udall award] and from this summer in Tanzania it is that individuals do have the power to create lasting, positive and tangible change. Actually, the best way I can impart my thoughts on this subject is by retelling a Nigerian folktale that I read in a Kenyan newspaper:

“There once was a wise old man who would travel around the villages of Nigeria, offering to correctly answer any question or solve any problem that the community brought to him. His fame and reputation grew as he solved problems and answered seemingly unanswerable questions.

“One day a boy from a village that the old wise man had yet to visit heard of the wise man and devised a scheme to trick him. The boy would hold a butterfly in his palm with his hand clasped over it. He would then ask the old man if the butterfly inside was dead or alive. If the old man answered ‘dead,’ the boy would just open up his hand and let the butterfly fly out, alive. If the old man answered ‘alive,’ the boy would simply clench his fist, killing the butterfly inside.

“When the old man finally came to the village, the boy ran up to him and asked him the question with the butterfly in his hand. The old man paused for a second, then answered, ‘It all depends on you.’

“That is what we must all realize: changing our town, state, country and world depends on us. It will not and cannot change for the better without thoughtful, compassionate and committed people dedicating our lives to service. That doesn’t mean we all have to be Ghandi, but it does mean we all have to do our part.”

▶ LETTERS

Wheaton’s new president

I’ve just read the interview with Ronald Crutcher [summer 2004] and cast both these affirmative words and an Annual Fund gift—a fine interview and a fine person! I really like what he said. My connection with Wheaton goes back to the years of Tish Emerson’s presidency when I was a consultant to the college on a capital campaign. I developed a high regard for the college then, and have since via your magazine. Clearly Wheaton is entering a new stage in its life and I salute it, and you, with warmth and respect.

—Frederic Stott, Andover, Mass.

In recent years a global deluge of appeals for funds has chilled my charitable instincts. Except for a few “life-or-death” projects, even support for my alma mater has fallen under my own internal pressures. But don’t stop reading here! I had a most excellent education in what seemed at the time a very sheltered and “unreal” all-girl atmosphere. Some years later I realized that there was an important and broader lesson found in the presence of the scholarly faculty, which verified and nurtured the capacity of women to set and reach their goals.

Just a few days ago, after my years of quiescence, the daily mails brought the latest *Wheaton Quarterly* with the large-as-life portrait of Dr. Ronald Crutcher. I felt such a burst

of pride! My alma mater has found a leader with such broad and varied qualifications, talents, capabilities and accomplishments—and a cello, too! It is truly exciting.

Reading of the new president’s concerns, I thought back to Dr. Park and his inspiring Chapel Talks, often noted in my diaries. It also reminds me of my priorities then, when I decided that the New England Student Christian Movement’s annual June conference was more important than our week of pre-graduation parties. As I was on the Interrace Commission at the time, it seemed an inevitable decision that offered the prospect of joining in the life and work of a community in inner-city Newark that summer. It feels now that important parts of my life have come full circle with the arrival of Dr. Crutcher.

I sense also a concern that students gain ever wider experience of other cultures, and recall my pleasure in a student’s brief account in a recent *Quarterly* of his summer studies in Torino, and his delight in discovering the significance of the piazza, that centuries-old gathering place still so much a part of civil and social life in Italy. As Wheaton encourages these experiences and helps to make the rest of the world more accessible, the better our lives will be.

—Margaret “Meg” Heath Wadsworth ’41

Riding through the years

The article in the winter 2004 *Wheaton Quarterly* covering the equestrian team’s recent success really hit home with me. I was completely unaware of the riding team being excluded from the viable sports program as early as 1925. When I entered Wheaton in September 1930, there was an established team, which had been competing in an annual military-type riding drill with the House in the Pines girls. I came onboard the team that fall as a freshman. ...We all worked hard, getting up at the crack of dawn to practice our drill before classes. We had a lot of fun putting the horses through their paces in the House in the Pines outdoor ring those early mornings.

As a point of interest, the team picture included with the story is one taken in either 1931 or 1932; I am riding the fourth horse from the right. Earlier this month, my daughter, Linda Young Chisholm, and her sister, Nancy Young Covill ’68, went through some boxes of old pictures while visiting. They found several photos of the Wheaton riding team and the schedule for the riding meet at House in the Pines on Nov. 18, 1933. Just how long the team kept up with competition after 1993, I am unsure. I’d love to hear from anyone who was on the team during my years or later. Congratulations to

the current team members for their outstanding accomplishments in the horse world.

—Ruth “Tommy” Sawyer Young ’34

Corrections

A production error in the summer *Quarterly* caused a line to be dropped from Pat King’s “Roundtable.” The text should have read:

That was the response from one alumna after receiving an e-mail from me about the announcement of Ronald A. Crutcher as Wheaton’s seventh president. Her sentiment summed up the comments I heard from a great many Wheaton people following his appointment.

Also in the summer issue, trustee Deborah Haigh Dluhy ’62 was misidentified as belonging to the Class of 1970 in the profile of Dr. Ronald A. Crutcher. Finally, the Admission Office updated its statistics on the Class of 2008, whose members hail from 39 states and 26 countries.

Letters to the editor: The *Quarterly* welcomes letters to the editor on topics you’ve read in these pages or on other topics concerning the Wheaton community. Please address your letters to:

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