Spring semester, it seemed, was the time to squeeze in everything everyone had hoped to accomplish during the school year — quick, before it was over!

Students, staff, faculty and Walla Walla community members chose from a plethora of quality events, from lectures and concerts to lu’au’s and blood drives. A tiny sampling of the spring calendar reveals the spectrum of opportunities: an Indian classical dance performance; an Asians in Rock Tour concert; lectures on the sovereignty of American Indian tribes, on the politics of archaeology in a global perspective, and on languages in the European Union; and 24 hours of theater sports. Students presented their research and displayed musical talents at the annual Whitman Undergraduate Conference and treated their “mentee” elementary students to a treasure hunt on campus.

And between classes, lectures, volunteer activities, concerts and studies, students found time for IM softball, Frisbee, volleyball and bowling, visits to their senior friends’ thesis art installations and theater performances, and an impromptu homemade slip and slide on Ankeny Field.

No wonder spring also found students taking power naps on the couches outside the President’s Office in Memorial Building.

(Above) The Holi Festival of Colors on Reid Campus Center lawn welcomed the coming of spring with a celebration similar to one the Hindus use to welcome the season. The festival and the Desi Students Association (DSA), an ASWC club that unites the South Asian population on campus and shares its culture, are in their second year at Whitman. (At right) Whitman’s Organic Garden is the focus of much energy and activity at Whitman during the spring. Page Taliaferro ’09 works on a bench that is an ongoing project at the garden each year.

(Left) The 80th Annual Choral Contest featured the musical talents of the Independents, Greeks (such as the Sigma Chis shown here), a cappella groups and a staff group.

Four students bring Fulbrights home to Whitman

Three 2006 graduates and one 2005 Whitman alumnus have been awarded prestigious national Fulbright scholar- ships and will scatter across the globe from Chile to West Africa this fall to conduct academic research and teach English as a foreign language.

Elisabeth Carr ’05, a magna cum laude graduate in foreign languages and literatures (Spanish), will serve as a teaching assistant in Chile. Amy Farris ’06, a cum laude graduate in German studies, will conduct research in Senegal, West Africa; Rebecca Hartwell ’06, a magna cum laude graduate in anthropology with honors, will conduct research in Malaysia; and Lindsay Satterlund ’06, a cum laude graduate in German studies, will be a teaching assistant in Germany.

Established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Student Program is considered the flagship of America’s educational exchange programs.

Carr, who has spent the last year in Menlo Park, Calif., interning as assistant to the editor-in-chief of Sunset Magazine, intends to write about her experiences as she teaches in Latin America, becomes immersed in the Chilean culture, travels throughout the country and studies the lives and works of Chilean writers. Carr plans to obtain a master’s degree in foreign language education and open a bilingual elementary/middle school for students of all ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

Farris, of Bellingham, Wash., will conduct research in Senegal on “Cultural Begging: Senegalese perspectives toward Koranic daaras.” While studying abroad in 2004, Farris began a preliminary study into the practice of begging to finance Senega-
Seniors teach at-risk kids about global warming and more

For one day a week last semester, Jill Schulte ’06, Rob Olsen ’06 and Jenna Bicknell ’06 made magical use of their environmental science skills, transforming themselves from Whitman students into inspiring instructors of struggling youth.

The intrepid trio of seniors answered the call in January when Rhonda Olson, who teaches the Pathways Back program at the Walla Walla Juvenile Justice Center, asked for volunteers to present a weekly one-hour lesson in environmental science.

Pathways Back, which targets youth struggling in their personal and/or school lives, seeks to “identify and remove barriers in the lives of (middle and high school) students so they can reconnect to their education,” Olson explains. By partnering with Whitman, the Pathways Back program improves the students’ opportunity for future success, she adds.

Olson was thrilled with her Whitman volunteers and their lesson plans, and by the interest they sparked in science. “Another plus of having student volunteers is the positive role modeling they offer,” she says. “They (were) teaching Pathways Back students about commitment, service and how to set and reach an educational goal.”

Schulte, Olsen and Bicknell, all majoring in environmental studies, focused on global warming and underlying scientific principles. Lessons included creative hands-on experiments that were as entertaining as they were instructive. Students made bio-diesel fuel in one session and examined water and carbon cycles, solar energy and wind power in others.

To demonstrate the effect of carbon dioxide build-up on global warming, students dissolved Alka-Seltzer in bottles partially filled with water. They placed the bottles in the sun, next to bottles containing water only, and took periodic temperature readings, noting the Alka-Seltzer bottles warmed more quickly.

Schulte, a politics-environmental studies major from Redwood City, Calif., was perhaps the most experienced teacher among the volunteers. As a sophomore, she had served as coordinator of the Environmental Education for Kids program, which sends small groups of Whitman students into local grade schools to teach weekly one-hour lessons.

As a junior, Schulte took a semester off and traveled to Nepal, where she worked for a nonprofit environmental conservation organization, teaching lessons at a school and training students to run a recycling program.

Bicknell, of La Canada, Calif., also a politics-environmental studies major and volunteer tutor at a local school, says the “kids (at Pathways Back) are so bright, in spite of their disadvantages, and really deserve engaging and meaningful education.”

Olsen, a chemistry-environmental studies major from Helena, Mont., worked as a tutor at Whitman and taught chemistry to youngsters at the Walla Walla Children’s Museum.

Volunteering for Pathways Back was “a chance for me to teach students who might otherwise be excluded from learning about environmental science,” Olsen says. “It was a way for me to propagate the idea of having an environmental school.”

HUMANITY IN ACTION

Three tapped for Humanity in Action fellowships in U.S. and Germany

Humanity in Action (HIA) selected three Whitman College students for its 2006 diversity fellowship programs in New York City and Berlin. The students’ academic merit, leadership potential and interest in minority issues and human rights brought Whitman three of only 66 fellowships granted from a pool of 434.

Alina Shabashevich ’06, from Portland, Ore., was one of 10 U.S. fellows chosen to study in Berlin, as part of HIA’s European Core Program, from May 30 through July 5. She examined human rights and minority issues in Germany, development of human rights institutions and doctrines in the aftermath of World War II and the Holocaust, and examples of resistance to the Holocaust.

Shabashevich is an English and rhetoric major from Russia and Germany by teaching English and American Core Program.

Bethany Coleman ’06, a politics major from Lewiston, Idaho, and Stephen Reed ’07, a psychology major from Kennewick, Wash., are among 20 students chosen as fellows for HIA’s American Core Program.

They met in New York July 1 and will stay through Aug. 5 to study the legal, social, cultural, religious and political conditions that promote, sustain, regulate, protect and threaten diversity in the United States. Joining them are students from Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland.

Of the 20 U.S. students chosen for the American Core Program, Coleman is one of six also chosen for follow-up internships in Berlin. She will work with a nonprofit group concerned with human rights issues, including interaction between the Turkish and German populations, in Bremen and Berlin.

DEAN OF FACULTY LEAVES POST

Pat Keef stepped down this spring from his decade-long role of dean of the faculty.

Among college accomplishments during his tenure: Whitman’s increased national recognition, such as the rating of “Most Accessible Faculty” in the 2002 Princeton Review; reduced student-faculty ratio; 15 new tenure and six non-tenure positions created; and expansion of academic buildings on campus.

Keef said when he became dean he aspired to a “broad vision” and hoped to emphasize ways to make Whitman’s academic program resonate with “what’s happening in the world. Higher education frequently is referred to as the ‘ivory tower.’ The implication is that what is going on at our institutions is disconnected from the world at large. At Whitman, nothing could be further from the truth,” Keef says.

Keef, a member of the faculty since 1980, will be on sabbatical during the 2006-07 school year, then plans to return to the mathematics department.

A national search is under way to fill the position of dean. In the meantime, Timothy Kaufman-Osborn, Baker Ferguson Chair of Politics and Leadership, will serve as interim dean.

Fulbrights

Continued from Page 3

ese Koranic schools (daaras). “Through my project,” said Farris, “I hope to understand the Senegalese perspectives toward the new phenomenon of child begging.” As well as to collaborate with local efforts to develop alternatives to child begging.

Hartwell, of Carnation, Wash., said the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in Terengganu, Malaysia, offers her a cultural exchange that correlates with her aspirations as a student, teacher and citizen. Hartwell, who plans to obtain a teaching degree when she returns from Malaysia, will pursue an independent study project while in Malaysia that she hopes will further involve her in the Terengganu community. Her study will look at how rituals and formal ceremonies, as well as daily activities, allow people to identify themselves as part of a larger community.

Satterlund, of Burlington, Wash., will facilitate cross-cultural exchange in Germany by teaching English and American studies to German students who will in turn teach her about their language and culture. She hopes as a future German instructor in a U.S. high school she can help others experience and appreciate Germany. Her teaching experiences include her work as an America Reads tutor while at Whitman.

From left, Farris, Hartwell and Satterlund during their Fulbrights in Malaysia and Germany.
Jenny Miles came to Whitman as the assistant registrar in 1993 and was promoted to associate registrar in 2000. Retirement in July will offer more time for her active roles in the Blue Mountain Chorus of Sweet Adelines and a local rock ‘n’ roll band. She wants to continue to lead a staff aerobics class and looks forward to long walks, gardening, reading, sewing, quilting, and catching up with the mundane work at home.

She will miss her colleagues in the Registrar’s Office who “enjoy each other and maintain a sense of humor through difficult times.” Friendships will remain important, like the one with her campus friends, “Lunch, anyone?” she asks.

Campus News

Staff members honored for service to college

Three Whitman staff members, nominated by staff, faculty and students, received 2006 Janice Abraham awards for their significant contributions and outstanding service to the college.

Margaret Hoglund, administrative assistant for alumni relations, joined the staff in 1990. Hoglund’s work as editor of the “Fifty-Plus News” publication and as the coordinator of the Alumni Association travel program was cited as notable in her interactions with the large alumni base.

David Sprunger ’07 majored in Asian studies and studio art and minor in Japanese at Whitman. After touring and conducting research overseas, he returned to Whitman and worked as multimedia technical assistant from 1998 to 2001. In 2002 he was hired as multimedia technician and now manages Whitman’s multimedia development lab.

He was recognized for building a full multimedia lab from the ground up after starting with “a few TVs and VCRs in the old library.”

The director of student activities since 2000, David Sprunger was cited for his work with students in which he provides “support and training while allowing students to take ownership of their activities.”

“He’s everywhere,” said students who nominated him.

Story submitted by Jodi Spoor.

Week in N.Y. financial world yields great connections

Nathan King ’07 took a direct trip into the world of New York banking in April with Whitman travel connections.

The connections went like this: Whitman’s former director of planned giving, Mark Kaita, suggested his employer, Whitman alumna Megan Clubb ’79, help sponsor a Whitman student’s trip to New York to meet investment professionals. Clubb, president and CEO of Baker Boyer Bank, agreed the bank would fund most of the trip if Whitman would pay for the remainder.

The college agreed, and King’s Whitman connections continued as he traveled to New York with Kaita to meet key people in the financial industry, including Whitman alumni.

“Nathan got the opportunity to meet with investment professionals of large organizations,” said Kaita, a vice president and senior portfolio manager for Baker Boyer, who says the trip was intended to transport the student outside the idealism of a college setting and into an “actual practiced calm of how to implement his ideas and be successful.”

Meeting the alumni was especially helpful, King said. “I could connect with them.”

While in New York, King sat in on business meetings with Kaita and people prominent in the industry, including Bob Dell, president and CEO of Merrill Lynch Investment Managers. King was impressed with how in tune those people are to what is happening in the world and how events affect the economy.

Service to the college complete, staffers ready to garden, fish and sing

Nathan King ’07 shared what he learned with members of the Whitman Investment Company. An ASWC club of which King is CEO. The club manages the student investment fund as a tool for learning about the finance industry.

His involvement in the investment club impressed Marshall Kaplan, managing director of Smith Barney Global Private Client Investment Management. Erin Burgess ’82 introduced Kaita to Kaplan, who offered to meet with King. Seeing investment professionals in action gave King’ “a sense of the real world beyond the Whitman bubble,” he said.

Kaita would like to see the trip become an annual event. Valdez says.

“This was a rare and exceptional opportunity, and it’s great to see the partnership of Baker Boyer Bank and Whitman work to the benefit of students,” Valdez said.

Riding high! Cyclists win nationals

Whitman cyclists rode to their second National College Cycling Association (NCCA) Division II Championship, and tennis players brought home their share of awards from the Northwest Conference Championship.

The men’s and women’s cycling teams captured first place in the Collegiate Road National Championships in Lawrence, Kan., in May. Mara Abbott ’08, of Boulder, Colo., won both women’s individual events — the 56-mile road race and 55-minute criterium. Whitman women brought home their third consecutive victory in the team time trial with this year’s riders: Abbott, Laura Valasov ’06 of Watenech, Wash., Rebecca Jensen ’07 of Mukilteo, Wash., and Kate Cero ’08 of Arden Hills, Minn.

In tennis, Steven Ly ’07 was named the NWC Men’s Player of the Year; Katie Collier ’07 was honored as NWC Sports woman of the Year; and Heidi Tate was voted NWC Women’s Coach of the Year. Ly also was the only NWC player invited to participate in the NCCA Division III National Singles Championship.

Nohemy Solórzano-Thompson

Nohemy Solórzano-Thompson spent spring break in Mexico with students studying, raising funds for women in Mexico.

She returned to Mexico with a student from the Whitman In Juarez: Fight Against Injustice student solidarity group. The students traveled to Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, to learn about domestic and sexual violence against women in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The students returned to campus and raised $1,900 to support four aid organizations in Ciudad Juarez.

In June, Solórzano-Thompson traveled with sophomore Spanish and psychology double major Nellie Newer to Guadalajara, Mexico, where he presented “Learning and Acculturation in Immigrant Children,” which reports his research on bilingual education in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The students worked with students in which he provides “support and training while allowing students to take ownership of their activities.”

“He’s everywhere,” said students who nominated him.

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Nohemy Solórzano-Thompson
Retiring faculty:
What did they teach? What did they learn?

**Charles Templeton**

A senior chemistry major popped her head into Professor Charles “Chuck” Templeton’s bright, orderly office in the Hall of Science before this interview began. Could she ask a quick question? Or two. Or five. The professor was patient and helpful, yet often answered each question with another question. “I guess I need to think about it some more,” she said more than once as he nodded his head in agreement.

“Did you notice how she wanted me to give her an answer?” he asked after she left. “I like to draw students out; to challenge them to think rather than spew information at them,” said the professor then five short weeks from retirement.

As he looks back on a career that began in a Whitman classroom in 1970, he is proud he “turned a lot of kids on to chemistry,” some of whom work in the field professionally and remain in contact. He also acknowledges some students left his classes frustrated by his expectations. Along with chemistry, he believes his students learned from him communication and how to share ideas; he knows he learned from them tolerance, patience and appreciation for their passions for subjects other than chemistry.

In addition to teaching, he is most proud of what he considers his legacy at Whitman. The addition to the Hall of Science completed in 2002. Templeton “passion for construction and making things,” he walked the site daily and took hundreds of pictures of the progress. “I know every square inch of this building,” he said. Templeton served on the building planning committee and spent a year as a full-time facility liaison on the project. “We had a great team,” he said.

As he leaves the Hall of Science, he looks forward to traveling with his wife, Lillian, who retired after 35 years as a speech pathologist. They will visit their two daughters, three grandchildren and his parents between volunteer work and attending cultural events; and the professor will use his fix it skills at church.

**Deborah Holmes**

Theater Professor Deborah Holmes’ heart is still in Whitman theater, but her energy is in short supply. And being a theater professor is all about energy.

Holmes, who joined the faculty in 1985, was forced by illness to leave a theater production she was directing in 2004. The casting calls alone wiped her out. My body said “that’s enough,” she said.

Before her energy failed her, she taught acting and movement and directed her first show on campus due to a little sleight of hand by then theater Director Jack Freimann. He was directing two shows and asked her to fill in as director for one of them for one week. The next week he was too busy, and the week after that, too, she said with a laugh. She took over that play, and with sweat on her brow, was ready for many that followed.

Summer months didn’t slow her energy for theater. With the encouragement of Freimann and administrators, and the hard work of students, she and former English Professor Pat Tyson ran a summer theater on campus from 1995 to 2000. After three weeks of rehearsal each summer, the cast traveled to Joseph, Ore. to perform in a street theater. “It was 14-16 hours a day for a month,” she said, without a hint of regret.

Holmes taught her students to “collaborate and be part of an ensemble — to play off each other.” She expected them to give 110 percent and come to rehearsal prepared. “Almost to a person, the kids gave their best,” she said. In turn, her students taught her humility. “There is a limitless amount to learn in the theater.”

**Hollibert “Holly” Phillips**

A framed drawing by a former student sits on Professor Hollie Phillips’ office bookshelf. It epitomizes a teaching philosophy often heard by that student artist and many other students in the professor’s classes: “anatomy and physiology before surgery.”

In other words, Phillips explains, “You cannot criticize text if you do not know student artist and many other students in the professor’s classes: “anatomy and physiology before surgery.”

In other words, Phillips explains, “You cannot criticize text if you do not know the text. It represents what he hopes his students learned along with philosophy: to consistently think critically and read analytically so they “own the text.”

In turn, he learned from his students “that I know very little.” The engagement of students was, for him, the most exciting part of his job. “I will miss that. One does not become involved in a profession for 37 years and not develop a bond with people. I am proud of what I consider my legacy at Whitman that year and began what he referred to as the “most glorious years of my career.”

As he reflects on his time at Whitman, Phillips describes the tenure of former President Tom Cronin and former Dean of the Faculty Pat Keef as “for me, impressively good years.

“If the college continues on that trajectory, it will always be among the best in the country.”

When asked by colleagues and others if it is exciting to retire, Phillips replies it is not exciting, but it is appropriate. He looks forward to reading what he hasn’t been able to because of time constraints and to traveling with his wife, Carmella, a retired high school history teacher, to see their five children and their families. He also views retirement as a chance to “get reacquainted with myself. Some times I am so busy I hardly recognize myself.”

In other words, Phillips says “that’s enough,” to “get reacquainted with myself. Some times I am so busy I hardly recognize myself.”

### Whitman College Bookstore

**Whitman Gear T-shirts**

*Men’s S-XL* $12.95 100% cotton

*Women’s S-XL* $14.95 100% cotton

Available in apricot, light green, oxford gray, light blue, light yellow

**Whitman Beach Towel**

*100% cotton*

*Men’s* $29.95

*Women’s* $32.95

**Whitman Flip Flops**

*Men’s S-XL* $19.95

*Women’s S-XL* $20.95
Renowned composer puts her music in the hands of Whitman singers

“Leap into the song … spit the words out … that’s right; that was just right!” Head bobbing and eyes sparkling, renowned American composer Coyneeth Walker hovered attentively on the edge of the stage in Chism Recital Hall during an April 5 rehearsal of the Whitman Chorale. Perched on bleachers rehearsing for a Friday afternoon recording session and a Saturday night concert composed entirely of Walker’s works, the singers — as well as Director Robert Bode and accompanist Lee Thompson — all knew the pressure was on.

"The music is beautiful and delightful," said Bode in his office before the rehearsal. "It’s a great honor" to be asked to record for the Vermont-based composer, who happens to be a dear friend, he added, but "This composer ain’t dead! She looms large, and we want to get it just right." Walker, who says she doesn’t usually get involved in the recording end of a CD, was confident they would get it just right. In fact, she was on an airplane en route to her next engagement by the time the Chorale and Chamber Singers began recording April 7. The Whitman choruses are "wonderful," said Walker, who just dropped in for a few days to lend her support.

She is no stranger to Whitman. Her relationship with the music department began in 1995 with a commission for a violin concerto, and subsequent collaborations have included a 1996-99 commission by the Chorale to put music to the poetry of the late Virginia Adair. A year ago she asked Bode if the Chorale and Chamber Singers would be willing to create a CD of her music which could then be sold around the country. The choruses spent spring semester preparing for the recording, concert and collaboration with Walker, who listened as hard as she coached. Toward the end of this noon rehearsal, she responded to a polite hand held in the air by a serious chorus member.

"Excuse me, but on that last note, the piano is playing a flat and the tenors are singing a B-natural, what should it be?" After a thoughtful pause, Walker decided: "Let’s try A and the rehearsal forged ahead.

\[Image 30x147 to 247x461\]
\[Image 641x462 to 990x742\]

Robert Burgess

Legendary Whitman coach Robert "Bob" Burgess died at his Walla Walla home on March 7, 2006. He was 89.

Burgess spent more than three decades coaching Whitman students in tennis, basketball and swimming. He served 17 years as athletic director and played a key role in planning Sherwood Center. Burgess was named to the Whitman Athletics Hall of Fame in 2004.

He came to Whitman in 1949 and suffered just two losing tennis seasons in 32 years. Burgess was honored for his community work with Whitman’s 1981 Town-Gown Award.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Eleanor, and five children. Alumni remembrance, Page 38.

IN MEMORIAM —

Stanley Plummer

Longtime Whitman professor and organist Stanley Plummer died April 13, 2006, at age 90. Plummer was, as President George Bridges describes him, "an institution of celebratory music" at Whitman, playing the organ for Commencement, Convocation and Baccalaureate. He performed for Bridges’ installation in 2005.

Plummer began his career teaching and directing the Whitman band in 1950. He taught music education, piano, organ, harp, screenwriting, theory and musicology. In later years, his accompaniment to a pre-Halloween silent horror film was a tradition.

His children have established the Stanley Plummer Cordiner Organ Maintenance Fund.

Lina Menard ’05, professor’s assistant in the Sociology of the Home class, looks at a student’s final project model of how space can be used in a three-generation household.

Home is not just where we put our stuff, students learn in unusual sociology class

How many students at a liberal arts college can say they designed a kitchen for class credit?

Probably not too many, is Associate Professor of Sociology Michelle Janning’s guess.

She taught a class spring semester she thinks could be one of a very few of its kind in the country. Inspired by her interest in gender issues, interior design, and home and garden TV shows, Janning’s Sociology of the Home class is described this way in her syllabus: "Domestic material objects, the placement of those objects, and the dwellings surrounding those objects all affect, and are affected by, everyday interactions between people. These interactions, in turn, represent larger cultural forces at work in contemporary society."

Janning taught the fall semester, two-credit class in a graduate-level seminar style with students required to lead class discussions on assigned readings and present a design project that incorporated the concepts covered in class. She had the help of a professor’s assistant, Lina Menard ’05, who did research with Michelle Janning through a Perry grant and published a paper on the subject of home and garden TV with her this spring.

Class discussions about public and private spaces in homes, social class status and gender roles within homes and how those elements have evolved over time reflected the diverse viewpoints of male and female students with a variety of majors and upbringings. Janning and Menard held a studio night to prepare students for their projects.

They provided home and garden decorating magazines, books, graph paper, pencils and other materials so students could "play with the ideas they started to develop in the course," Menard said. "They got excited about their projects and within a few weeks, we got to see what developed."

What developed were designs of varying sophistication for individual rooms within a home or for entire homes.

The spaces were created to fit the specific needs of a family or person, also of the students’ design. The projects ranged from kitchens functional for the handicapped or for families with small children, to a home that could accommodate the divergent needs of a three-generational family and one with high-tech features that make it a bachelor’s dream home.

Students explored flexible spaces, family interaction, the needs of children of a blended family, and the integration of office and home space, among other concepts.

Use of space in the home is an interdisciplinary topic incorporating psychology, anthropology, environmental science and sociology, Janning said. In this class, "sociology majors could see how things we talk about in sociology can be applied in their own worlds." Other majors got a taste of "sociology as a lens to look at their world.”

The class demonstrated one of Janning’s favorite messages: a "liberal arts education can really be very practical.”

RESEARCH NOTE

"Using an interdisciplinary lens to understand social phenomena," is key to Michelle Janning’s focus as a teacher and a researcher. The Sociology of the Home class and Janning’s research on home and garden TV stem from what she sees as the “importance of studying undervalued research sites.” The home, traditionally and still largely the realm of women, is one such undervalued research site, she said.


Read the research in the “Electronic Journal of Sociology” (2006) at www.sociology.org. Click on contents, then on the title of the paper.

July 2006
Baccalaureate special for retiring mentor of generations of students

A lengthy standing ovation and the presentation of a thick book of memories punctuated what may be Dr. George Ball's last Baccalaureate address at Whitman College on May 20. With the memory book, President George Bridges offered the 95-year-old retiring Sturtevant Religious Counselor and professor emeritus an open invitation to speak at future ceremonies. The majestic organ in Cordiner Hall stood silent for the ceremonies, and a bouquet of flowers sat near it, as a tribute to Dr. Plummer, professor of music, emeritus, who had played the instrument for Baccalaureate and other special college events for many years. Plummer died in April at age 90.

Dr. Ball's annual speech explored ways to approach the Bible, with some believing it cannot be the word of God because it contains too much that "an intelligent and moral person could not possibly affirm." The other approach makes it clear the Bible contains the "grandest insights and visions that have ever been offered the human race." Dr. Ball pointed to the magnitude, unity and majesty of the universe and to a fundamental message in the Bible that those who wrote notes to him in his memory book recalled again and again: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Professor of Theatre Nancy Simon '63 hadn't attended Baccalaureate since she graduated from Whitman. "I remember nothing of that occasion, and I expect those of you still around in another 30 years will remember little of this one. That is as it should be, for life, like theater, should be lived in moments, not memories or expectations," she said.

Michael Quinter, director of administrative technology, talked to students about charity. He drew loud applause when he said, "We need to seek charity as a nation dealing with other cultures. Instead of being known as the people with the biggest appetites, or the biggest guns, if rather we were known as the people with the biggest hearts, our charity would never fail us."

Assistant Professor of Mathematics Barry Balof, noting the seniors had been at Whitman longer than he has, offered advice for how they can make the transition from college to the future. "The answer, as with mathematics, is to build your bridges strongly. The connections that you make between what you attempt in the future and what you have learned here will be as invaluable as they are in those connections between different branches of mathematics are (for mathematicians)."

As a historian of modern Europe, Lynn Sharp, associate professor of history, offered their "Thoughts on Changing the World" with a bow to the rules played by the "idea people," the economy, the "peasantry" and the importance of not getting shot while working for change. Her bottom line: "You cannot change the world without reaching all parts of a society. ... To effect change, you must speak as an individual, but reach the group and consider the good of all."

The Baccalaureate speeches are available on the Web site at www.whitman.edu/commencement.

President George Bridges presents Dr. George Ball with a memory book filled with more than 800 messages from admirers of all ages.
Campus News

Commencement 2006: Record number of seniors march, hug, celebrate

Members of the Whitman Class of 2006 get silly for their senior photo on Ankeny.

A lone bagpiper led 400 graduates — a record number — down Boyer Avenue to their place in the first Commencement ceremony presided over by the 11th president of Whitman College, George Bridges.

Commencement speaker Ronald Takaki, a pioneering scholar in the field of American ethnic studies and professor of ethnic studies at the University of California, Berkeley, confirmed that one can be a serious surfer (his nickname was Ten Toes Takaki) and a scholar. The grandson of immigrant Japanese plantation workers in Hawaii, Takaki attended Wooster College in Ohio, where people asked him how long he had been in this country and where he learned to speak English. Looking back he realizes, "It was not their fault that they could not and did not see me as an American. … My fellow students viewed me through a filter. I call this filter the Master Narrative of American History."

The Master Narrative is the familiar story that America was settled by European immigrants and that Americans are white or European in ancestry. But, we can just look at ourselves here today … and know that not all of us came from just one shore," yet we "are all Americans."

He urged students to pursue and practice epistemology, which he called a 50-cent word and described as a critical thinking skill strengthened and sharpened at Whitman. "In your struggle not only to comprehend the world, but also to change the world, ask yourselves: How do I know I know what I know about the America and the world I live in?" Takaki implored the graduates to ask the same questions of their policymakers before those officials "make choices that can have consequences like the war in Iraq and the proposed imprisonment and deportation of 12 million people."

Takaki was presented with the honorary degree of doctor of humane letters. An honorary doctor of public service degree was bestowed upon Robert W. Young ’55 in absentia. (See story, Page 41)

Whitman’s eighth president, Lou Perry, took over the diploma duties from President George Bridges to present a diploma to his grandson, Perry David Jones ’06.

Senior Drew Larona, a double-major in rhetoric and film studies and physics, and frequent host on the campus radio station, teased his classmates about their ambition and drive. "I have only one group to blame really, and it is the people seated behind me. The professors of this college have ingrained a desire for knowledge, growth, and wonder in all of you that I have had to fight for four long years to avoid becoming tainted with. … Is the gift these professors gave you really a gift at all? Ignorance is bliss, and I see not an ignorant face in this crowd. … " … You want to move on, you think we should see other people. If that is how you really feel, if you feel we have grown apart, then perhaps this separation is for the best. I will stay here, among the ducks and trees, the fountains and the fraternities, and I will save you all a spot. If the world runs you over like an out-of-control freight train, don’t hesitate to visit your old friend Drew at Whitman College. Just make sure you bring some money to donate to the school while you’re at it."

Commencement speeches are available on the Web site at www.whitman.edu/commencement.

(Left) Anthony St. John ’06 rises above the crowd to find a moment of peace to read the Commencement program during a crazy Commencement day schedule.

(Below) Xuacu Amieva, a bagpiper who performs for the King of Spain, leads the graduates down Boyer Avenue to the Commencement ceremony on the Memorial Building lawn.
Campus News

Excellence in teaching and counseling honored at Commencement

In recognition of excellence in teaching and counseling, six Whitman College faculty members were presented special awards at Commencement.

Alan McEwen, lecturer of theatre and technical director of Harper Joy Theatre, received the Suzanne L. Martin Award for Excellence in Mentoring, created to honor the memory of Martin, who served as a faculty member and administrator of the college from 1978 to 2000. McEwen began at Whitman as theatre technical director in 1998. In his nomination letter, a faculty member said, “He goes out of his way to stimulate students’ imaginations, provide them with a safe environment and build confidence in themselves.”

The mentoring award was established by Christine Baasce Moriz ’84, who as a student and later a faculty member, found inspiration in Martin’s interaction with students. Martin died in 2004.

Celia Weller, professor of Spanish, received the George Ball Award for Advising. Weller joined the faculty in 1969 as the sole faculty member in Spanish. At Commencement, she was cited for devoting her “superhuman energies to the welfare of her Spanish students,” and for her “excellence in advising colleagues.” Weller retired at the end of this academic year. See story, Page 8.

Kyra Nourse ’92, assistant professor of history, was awarded the Robert V. Flinn Award for Distinguished Teaching in the Social Sciences. Nourse joined the faculty in 2000. One of her faculty colleagues praised her “excellent teaching” in which she daily uses images to illustrate and enliven her topics, and “uses the mystery and intrigue of ancient and archelogists” to teach her subject.

Rogers Miles, assistant professor of religion and general studies, received the Thomas D. Howells Award for Distinguished Teaching in Humanities. Miles joined the faculty in 1990. He has been a stalwart of the First-Year Core program, for which he developed the innovative and nationally recognized program of Parents Core. He was lauded for stretching “far above and beyond the call of duty in his teaching” and for inspiring countless students.

Kendra Golden, associate professor of biology, received the A.E. Lange Award for Distinguished Science Teaching. A member of the faculty since 1990, Golden’s service on the steering committee for the Center for Teaching and Learning were cited at Commencement as proof of her commitment to the development of pedagogy at Whitman.

Paul Apostolidis, associate professor of politics, was awarded the G. Thomas Edwards Award for Excellence in the Integration of Teaching and Scholarship. Apostolidis joined the faculty in 1997. One of his students was quoted as saying: “His courses over the past several years have integrated teaching and scholarship in a manner that allows his students to enhance their learning through meaningful practice.” Apostolidis’ class titled “Latinos in Washington” was recognized for groundbreaking research that academics and lawmakers throughout the state found to be vital.

Paul Apostolidis

Kendra Golden

Celia Weller

Kyra Nourse ’92

Rogers Miles

Farewell, but not goodbye to Dr. Ball

He has gazed joyously through our lives on a fleet of craky bikes, shouting “Keep going!” as if our success was his alone. He has enriched us by enriching our lives. He has grieved as we grieved, celebrated with us as we celebrated.

“I am 91 years old,” he gently reminded us, when we protested. And although he is to us ageless, Dr. Ball has spent the last half century or so softly guiding the hearts and minds of students, faculty and staff with the keen insight of a Methodist minister and the Socratic reasoning of a savvy lawyer. A teacher, mentor and friend, George Ball’s presence on the tennis court, in the classroom, at the lectern for innumerable special occasions and as minister at countless Whitman weddings will remain legendary; and perhaps nowhere in the world is a nonagenarian’s advice on life and love received with such reverence. More than a few of us recall his quiet affirmation: “A successful relationship (marriage) is not about finding the right person. It’s about becoming the right person.”

Thankfully, the cozy book-lined office at 110A Memorial Building will not be vacated any time soon. By presidential decree, Dr. Ball’s office will remain an oasis of calm in the life of Whitman College, and he has been asked to ride over and visit as often as his retirement allows.

— Lenel Parish

Dear Dr. Ball,

“Thank you for helping me become somebody I might otherwise not have been. Somebody a little less selfish, more humble, more forgiving. Somebody involved, awake, committed. Somebody who gives thanks to you for the greatest gift of all—unbelieving faith in the essential goodness of the human spirit.”

— Tom Evans ’70, in the memory book presented to Dr. Ball at Baccalaureate