

Ahead of the Game: **Octavio Herrera '98**

San Francisco Supervisor **Carmen Chu '00**

OCCIDENTAL

SUMMER 2009

A photograph of Jack Kemp, a man with grey hair, wearing a dark pinstriped suit, a white shirt, and a green patterned tie. He is looking upwards and to the right. In his left hand, he holds a white football helmet with a red bison logo on the side. The background is a blurred image of a classical building with statues.

A CLASS ACT

Schoolmates, friends, and family remember gridiron gladiator and economic innovator **Jack Kemp '57**

OCCIDENTAL

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE MAGAZINE

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 3 SUMMER 2009

DEPARTMENTS

2 CORRESPONDENCE

Jack Kemp '57 is remembered as an after-dinner athlete and devoted ATO brother. Also: From developing track stars to a stint as tennis czar, Payton Jordan cast a long shadow over the Oxy sports community.



4 FROM THE QUAD

With parting advice from filmmaker-turned-philanthropist Sherry Lansing, Oxy's Class of '09 fades to black. Also: Alan Freeman '66 M'67 leaves Keck Theater audiences on a high with his production of *Hair*, seniors seeking jobs ponder their options in a tight market, spring sports results, and more.

28 TIGERWIRE

Class notes for odd years, and class photos from Fifty Year Club weekend.



56 CONVERSATION

Eighteen months, two commencements, one president-elect, and countless socks, hats, and sweaters later, what's next for Bob and Nadine Skotheim?

On the cover: Jack Kemp '57 poses in front of the Lincoln Memorial, taken April 15, 1992. Photo by NFL Photos/Getty Images.
Pages 4 and 56: Photos by Marc Campos.
Page 24: Photo by Jim Block.
Oxy Wear photo by Marc Campos.



FEATURES

10 AMERICAN DREAMER

Jack Kemp '57 built a game plan for life around his passions: family, football, and the future of his country.

14 THE LAST PICTURE SHOW

John Wyatt '99 breathes new life into cinematic gems (including Terry Gilliam '62's *Brazil*) with his summertime series of cemetery screenings.

17 SWEET SCIENCE

Professor of psychology Nancy Dess measures emotionality and taste through her research with rats. How did one finicky rodent send her studies in a new direction?

20 GAME CHANGER

Octavio Herrera '98 struck Internet gold with a website that thwarted online pirates. Now he's underwriting the creation of applications for the iPhone—and giving back to Oxy in memory of a schoolmate.

24 POLITICS AS CHUSUAL

The transition from numbers-cruncher to San Francisco supervisor came overnight for Carmen Chu '00—but after nearly two years in office, she's found her voice in the high-stakes world of Bay City government.

SAVE THE DATE

for the Inauguration of
President Jonathan Veitch
Saturday, October 24, at 10 a.m.
Remsen Bird Hillside Theater



My Dinner With Jack Kemp

I was saddened to read of the passing of former Congressman Jack Kemp '57 (*page 10*). I was fortunate to organize several fundraisers for members of Congress with Jack as the special guest speaker. He drew huge crowds and was a political fundraising favorite.

As a self-taught economist and former professional football quarterback, Jack's speeches would often be a combination of economic lecture and pre-game football locker room psyche-up that would send the faithful into a frenzy.

His high-energy persona was contagious, and he would sometimes surprise me by bringing NFL Hall of Fame players with him unannounced to my fundraising events, and I would have to scramble to have them recognized and seated. One time he brought with him John Mackey, the famous tight end with the Baltimore Colts who made the game-winning ricochet catch from Johnny Unitas to win the first Super Bowl for the AFL in one of the greatest plays in professional football history. My mother is a graduate of Western Maryland College, which once served as the Baltimore Colts preseason practice field, so I was strongly "encouraged" as a child to become a Colts fan—even though I grew up in Omaha, Neb.

I remember one event I did with Jack as the special guest speaker for a congressman in Stockton. People often brought footballs to Kemp events for him to autograph. At this fundraiser, Jack decided he wanted to throw a live football from the dais to someone seated at one of myriad tables already set with china, glasses filled with water and ice, and the first-course salad. In what was perhaps the longest second of my fundraising career, I imagined a football crashing on to one of the tables and bouncing off to hit yet another table and guests. Kemp threw a perfect spiral. However, I was more worried about the hands at the other end. Fortunately, the football was caught, and an explosion of food and silverware was avoided. Then Jack decided he wanted to throw a second pass.

Jack was the author and major proponent of the famous Kemp-Roth bill, which

contained the well-known Reagan tax cuts. The economic recovery that followed spread Jack's economic philosophy around the world, and essentially put socialism and planned economies out of their misery.

I think it is safe to say that Jack Kemp had more influence on public policy than any other graduate in Oxy's history—pretty impressive for a physical education major.

MASON "BRAD" ZERBE '81

Tempe, Ariz.

Net Gains From Payton Jordan

I just received the Spring issue of *Occidental*. I especially enjoyed the "Coach of Champions" tribute to Payton Jordan and was so sorry to learn of his recent death.

Returning to college following World War II, I was an economics major at Oxy from 1946 to 1948 and got to know Coach Jordan very well—not as a track participant or football player, but as a member of the tennis team (a minor sport at the time). The team didn't have a coach, but I became the player coach in '48 and our budget was very

lean. I lamented about this problem to Coach Jordan, and he suggested I do something about it. Having been a ranked junior player, I contacted Perry T. Jones, secretary of the Southern California Tennis Association, who sent over Bob Falkenberg and Ted Schroeder, plus two prominent women players to put on an exhibition at Oxy.

The varsity and junior varsity teams were commandeered to carry wooden bleachers from the football field to one of the courts, and we set up viewing stands around to handle 1,000 people. We charged a buck a head, and more than 1,000 people showed up. When the talented players finished their contribution, Bob Miller '49 and I played doubles against Falkenberg and Schroeder. They won the first set, and we won the second. At that point 300 more came, including Laurence de Rycke from the econ department. We lost the third set, but managed to net \$1,240. Payton was there and congratulated me for producing the highest budget we had ever had. The next morning in class, Dr. de Rycke said I had "learned" economics!

From then on Payton extended his busy schedule to watch over our tennis program as well. What a tremendous asset he was.

ROBERT T. JONES '48

Palm Desert



Brother Tiger

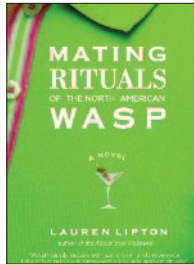
I found this picture of Jack Kemp '57 taken on Nov. 17, 2000, on the steps of Thorne Hall with the Alpha Tau Omega class of 2001. My class has very fond memories of our ATO brother, who spent some time with us following his talk in Thorne Hall. We are all saddened by the news of his passing and express our condolences to his family.

KEVIN A. DANNI '01

Pasadena

Bookshelf

MATING RITUALS OF THE NORTH AMERICAN WASP, by **Lauren Lipton '87** (*Grand Central Publishing*; \$13.99). When New Yorker Peggy Adams wakes up next to a strange man after a night in Las Vegas she can't remember, she's horrified when she discovers she has married him. Luke Sedgwick, the last scion of an old New England family, and Peggy agree to get an annulment ASAP—but those plans change when Luke's eccentric great-aunt Abigail offers the two the chance to make millions on the family estate if they stay married for a year. Peggy is soon pretending to be one-half of the perfect couple among Connecticut's WASPy set on the weekends, while keeping her marriage a secret in New York to her live-in boyfriend. But she isn't prepared for what might be her worst mistake of all—falling in love with her soon-to-be ex-husband. Lipton (*It's All About Your Husband*) divides her time between New York City and Litchfield County, Conn.

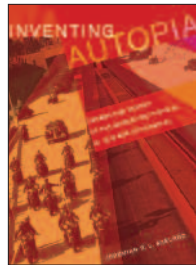


THE BIG COLLECTION OF PHONICS FLIP-BOOKS, written and designed by **Lynn Melby Gordon '80** (*Scholastic Teaching Resources*; \$24.99). Created for use in grades K-3, this comprehensive collection of phonics flip-books, dictation sheets, and phonics assessments is designed to meet the needs of beginning readers, struggling readers, and English learners, as well as students with learning disabilities, visual impairment, or dyslexia. Gordon targets essential phonics skills such as basic blending, onsets, rimes, prefixes, and suffixes. She is an associate professor of elementary education at Cal State Northridge.

THE POWER OF DESIGN: A FORCE FOR TRANSFORMING EVERYTHING, by **Richard Farson '47** (*Greenway Communications*; \$39). Properly mobilized, Farson argues, design could make a whopping impact on deep-rooted dilemmas such as the ravages of poverty, the miserable state of the American education system, and the failure of criminal justice. In short, it can transform the world. But the road to metadesign—a transcendent level of design that seeks to rectify fundamental problems by addressing the needs of all

people—is no cakewalk. Farson describes the many ways that designers hold themselves back from serving society meaningfully—from protectionism and commoditization to the insidious nature of awards. If we have the courage to embrace design's unrealized potential, he suggests, there's no limit to the role it can play in the future of civilization. *The Power of Design* is the sixth book by Farson, head of the Western Behavioral Science Institute in La Jolla since its founding in 1958.

INVENTING AUTOPIA: DREAMS AND VISIONS OF THE MODERN METROPOLIS IN JAZZ AGE LOS ANGELES, by **Jeremiah B.C. Axelrod** (*University of California Press*; \$24.95). In 1920, Los Angeles was a largely pastoral city of bungalows and palm trees. Thirty years later, choked with smog and traffic, the city had become synonymous with urban sprawl and unplanned growth. Yet Los Angeles was anything but unplanned, as Axelrod reveals in this visually oriented history of the metropolis during its formative years.



Inventing Autopia shows how the clash of irreconcilable utopian visions and dreams resulted in the invention of an unforeseen new form of urbanism—sprawling, illegible, fractured—that would reshape not only Southern California but much of the nation in the years to come. Axelrod is an adjunct assistant professor of history.

THIS COULD BE THE START OF SOMETHING BIG: HOW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FOR REGIONAL EQUITY ARE RESHAPING METROPOLITAN AMERICA, by **Manuel Pastor Jr., Chris Benner, and Martha Matsuoka** (*Cornell University Press*; \$19.95). While progressives bemoan the steady rise of the right in U.S. politics, progressive movements have emerged at a local level among urban coalitions of labor, faith groups, and community-based organizations. Authors Pastor, Benner, and Matsuoka show how momentum for “social movement regionalism” is building as new policies addressing regional infrastructure, housing, and workforce development bring together business and community groups who share a common desire to see their city and region succeed. Matsuoka is an assistant professor of urban and environmental policy.

OCCIDENTAL

Volume 31, Number 3, Summer 2009

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE

Robert Allen Skotheim
President

John T. “Tom” Tomlinson Jr.
Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Eric Frank
Vice President for Academic Affairs
and Dean of the College

William D. Tingley
Vice President of Admission and Financial Aid

Barbara Avery
Vice President for Student Affairs
and Dean of Students

Jim Tranquada
Director of Communications

James Jacobs
Director of Alumni Relations

EDITORIAL STAFF

Dick Anderson
Editor

Samantha B. Bonar '90
Rhea Borja
Contributing Writers

Marc Campos
Contributing Photographer

Marsha Inouye
Web Editor

Gail (Schulman) Ginell '79
Class Notes Editor

Claudia SanSoucie
Design

Diversified Litho Services
Printing

OCCIDENTAL MAGAZINE

Published quarterly by Occidental College
Los Angeles CA 90041-3314
www.oxy.edu

To contact *Occidental Magazine*

By phone: 323-259-2679

By fax: 323-341-4967

By e-mail: oxymag@oxy.edu

By mail: Occidental College

Office of Communications F-36

1600 Campus Road

Los Angeles CA 90041-3314

All letters should include the author's name, address, and daytime telephone number. Letters selected for publication may be edited for length, content, and style.



LEFT: Camcorders, cameras, and even a koala dotted the crowd in Remsen Bird Hillside Theater. **BELOW:** Tyler Stuart, a biology major from Manitou Springs, Colo., flashes a degree and a smile.



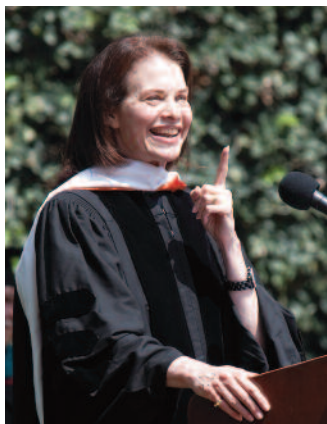
BOTTOM: Soon-to-be-grads Jessica Simes, Andrew Singer, Geneva Skeen, Samuel Slesinger, Alexander Smith, and Eric Smith march up Coons Road. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Sherry Lansing offers pointers.

Best Foot Forward



Photos by Marc Campos

With parting advice from filmmaker-turned-philanthropist Sherry Lansing, Oxy's Class of '09 fades to black




Unlike this year's 435 graduates, pioneering filmmaker and philanthropist Sherry Lansing had few career options. When she graduated in 1966, the only acceptable choices for women were teaching and nursing—"extraordinary professions," said Lansing. But she wanted to be in pictures.

People laughed, but Lansing followed her dream anyway, and became the first female head of 20th Century Fox, then Paramount Pictures, which under her watch produced Oscar-winning films such as *Forrest Gump*, *Braveheart*, and *Titanic*, the highest-grossing movie of all time. So in her keynote speech at Commencement on May 17, Lansing exhorted graduates: "Follow your dreams."

"If you have to look back on your life, regret the things that you did, and not what you did not do," added Lansing, addressing a

capacity crowd at Remsen Bird Hillside Theater on a balmy Southern California morning. "Because for me, one of the saddest things in the world is what might have been."

In tracing her own rise as a young college graduate from Chicago who dreamed of making it in the movies to becoming the first woman to head a major Hollywood studio, Lansing offered 11 tips and real-life lessons to the Class of 2009. The others were: Be persistent; enjoy the process; do the work; accept responsibility for your failures; be yourself; change is good; don't be afraid to fail; you can't do it all at the same time; have fun every day; and start giving back early.

"What distinguishes successful people ... is [that they] do the work and don't give up," Lansing continued. Her remarks earned her a standing ovation. Now pass the popcorn and let the show begin. 



Jordan Schultz '09 photo courtesy Gradtrak Graduation Images



ABOVE: Former Oxy President Ted Mitchell chats with honorary degree recipient Ramon Cortines, superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District. **BELOW:** Jordan Schultz, an American studies major from Seattle.

ABOVE: President Bob Skotheim, in blue, and members of the Occidental Board of Trustees join Oxy's honorary degree recipients prior to the May 17 ceremony—the 127th commencement ceremony in school history.



TOP: Kyshawn Hooks, a critical theory and social justice major from New Haven, Conn., with his godmother, Oxy professor Elizabeth Chin. **ABOVE:** Kiran Dhillon, a sociology major from Arcadia, hugs parents Rabinderpal and Balvir Dhillon, longtime College employees.



ABOVE: Honorary degree recipient John Paden '59, Clarence Robinson Professor of International Studies at George Mason University. **RIGHT:** Honorary degree recipient William Taylor '64, Muriel McKeitt Stone Professor of Latin American History Emeritus at UC Berkeley. "I've always seen myself mainly as an undergraduate teacher, and my models for good teaching and mentoring were the ones I knew here," Taylor said in his remarks.



ABOVE: In a new twist to the proceedings, confetti rained on the freshly minted graduates toward the end of the ceremony. **BELOW:** Starlie Chinen, a physics major from Honolulu, with sister Rosalei and father Guy.



LEFT: Raul Villa, professor of English and comparative literary studies, and La Mont Terry '98 M'99, adjunct assistant professor of education, prepare to marshal the Class of 2009. **RIGHT:** Brittany-Marie Swanson, an Asian studies major from Torrance, and brother Chris, mug for a family photo.



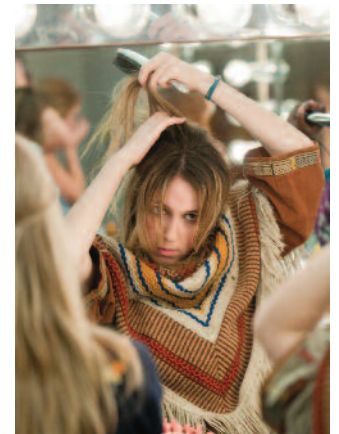
TOP: Sarah Garza, a theater major from Austin, Texas, and Simona Gavrilă, a diplomacy and world affairs major from Craiova, Romania, bask in the afterglow. **ABOVE:** Mathew Mikuni, an Asian studies and diplomacy and world affairs major from La Cañada, with Ashley Saito, an economics major from Honolulu.





TOP LEFT: Big wigs and flower power brought many a mane to life. **ABOVE:** Daniele Manzin '09 (Berger) laments the loss of true love "Donna" in Act 1. **LEFT:** The flexible auditorium of Keck Theater became a walkabout-style stage (designed by Susan Gratch) covered in psychedelic floor patterns. **BELOW:** Tribe member Sarah Garza '09 brushes her natural locks getting ready for the show. Tom Slotten created the period costumes.

Photos by Marc Campos



Sunshine Preening

After 40 years as a professor and director, Alan Freeman '66 M'67 leaves Oxy audiences on a high with his production of *Hair*

Alan Freeman '66 M'67 was a young actor and assistant stage manager at the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles when *Hair: The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical* opened on Broadway in 1968. For the final main-stage production of his Oxy career, the longtime theater professor and director decided the '60s counterculture classic had much to say to current audiences. "The social, political, and social-justice context that *Hair* came out of is arguably similar to that of today," says Freeman, who joined the faculty in 1969.

For seven electrifying performances in Keck Theater between April 17 and May 16, the Occidental production of *Hair* depicted the social and political strife of the 1960s through song and helped students—most of whom were born when long-haired men were seldom seen outside MTV's "Headbangers' Ball"—not only better understand the era's political and social upheaval, but also their parents' generation, Freeman says.

The Oxy production was challenging logistically. Two-thirds of the audience sat on the floor near the actors, in effect becoming part of the staging. And many costume

changes were done in full view of the audience, as video of historic news and film footage played on a screen behind the actors.

With recent productions staged in 16 states and on five continents—including the Tony Award-winning revival currently on Broadway—*Hair* is as groovy as ever. For Freeman, who is contemplating retirement next spring following a yearlong sabbatical, his Oxy swan song has been cathartic. "Anyone who went through that time wrestles with a lot of demons and gremlins," he says. "And to direct *Hair* at this time of my life was a wonderful opportunity."—RHEA BORJA



TOP: Tribe member Victoria Rutledge '11 greets theater patrons in the lobby before the performance. **ABOVE:** Manzin, Katharine Burstein '11 (Day S. McKeena) and Cassidy North-Reist '09 (Margaret Mead) sing "My Conviction" under the musical direction of Stephen Gothold '72. **BELOW:** Freeman receives a banner signed by *Hair*'s cast and crew prior to closing night. **BOTTOM:** Jordan Weed '11 straightens his wig.



Photos by Marc Campos



Andrew Blythe '09, left, scored a sweet spot with Nestle; Brendan Rakphongphairoj '09 opted for grad school.

Dear Recent Graduate...

In the worst job market in 25 years, flexibility, frugality are key

TWO YEARS AGO—what now seems like an eternity in these recessionary times—James Armijo '07 found a great job right after college, only to have it disappear soon thereafter. However, Armijo quickly parlayed his experience, networking skills, and diverse educational background into a management position at 8x8 Inc.

"The irony of having a degree from Oxy was that I was ideally suited to find a job in the current economic environment," says Armijo, who majored in diplomacy and world affairs. "I learned to shape my education in varying ways, based on the requirements of a particular position. In a job market with fewer opportunities, it is useful to have the ability to tailor your qualifications and skills" for all possibilities.

With the recession lumbering on across the United States, graduating seniors and alumni alike are struggling to find and keep jobs. Andrew Blythe '09 is one of the success stories, landing a job with Nestle thanks in part to Oxy's Career Development Center. "Oxy had been reaching out to Nestle for a long time and made it clear that their presence was a real opportunity," says Blythe, an economics major from Gold River. "The CDC did an excellent job of polishing my applications and making sure that Oxy students were competitive with other schools."

According to the CDC, 25 percent of seniors had reported finding a job by spring break in 2008. This year, that number had dropped to 19 percent. In response, the cen-

ter opened up more counseling hours and bolstered its skills series on subjects from resume preparation to personal finance. (Among the areas still hiring: insurance and healthcare.)

Not all new grads enter the job market, of course. Many are going straight to graduate school. Classmate Brendan Rakphongphairoj, an Asian studies major from Torrance, will enroll this fall in the prestigious Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program at Dartmouth College. "I wanted to get over all my schooling and spend the rest of my time in the professional world," says Rakphongphairoj, who served as president of The Occidental Entrepreneur Society (TOES).

Although Rakphongphairoj praises Oxy's vibrant community and personalized learning environment—an advantage when it comes to scoring letters of recommendation from professors for graduate school—he echoes others in wanting increased connectedness with alumni at bigger corporations. Developing these ties, he says, could prove to be a significant help to future Oxy job-seekers.

Though there are many young alumni and new graduates who have fared well despite the downturn, there is no shortage of those who are struggling. For those wanting to travel the world this summer and still seek meaningful employment, CDC director Valerie Savior '86 offers this piece of advice: Before starting a new job, she says, "You have no leverage in a down economy to ask for three months off."



Oxy's women's water polo squad, in a pregame ritual.

Spring Sports Wrap-Up Individual Performances Merit All-SCIAC Honors

In a spring sports schedule that saw student-athletes on half a dozen squads garner all-conference honors, the women's tennis and water polo teams fared best, with each placing third in the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Occidental flirted with the top of the women's water polo Division III national poll before ending the season ranked third. Four team members earned All-SCIAC honors: Laura Simanonok '09 and Karie Nickle '11 (First Team), Kelly Curtin '09 (Second Team), and Julie Monday '11 (Honorable Mention). Simanonok and Monday were also named to the First Team All-Tournament at the Division III national tournament, while Tessa Bailey-Findley '12 took Second Team All-Tournament honors.

Third-year women's tennis coach Linda Park capped her best season to date with a second-round upset of third-seeded Cal Lutheran at the SCIAC championships before falling to Pomona-Pitzer. Jennifer Wahba '09, Marissa Casman '10, and Krishnaveni Subbiah '12 garnered All-SCIAC recognition.

The men's golf team found its stroke as the season progressed, placing third at the SCIAC championships and fourth in conference play. The men's water polo team placed fourth in SCIAC, while seniors Andrew Valdes and Cameron Brahmst earned First Team All-SCIAC honors and were named to the

Association of Collegiate Water Polo Coaches All-American and All-Academic teams.

After a promising 8-2 start in nonconference play, Tigers baseball struggled to a 16-24 season (6-15 SCIAC). Middle-fielders Jason Jebbia '10 and Daniel Kelley '11 were named to the First and Second Team All-SCIAC, respectively. Jebbia also landed on the Third Team All-West Region.

Notching its most wins in nine years, Oxy softball completed the 2009 season at 14-23 overall (3-21 SCIAC). Junior catcher Alyssa Escalante earned Second Team All-SCIAC honors for the second time.

Oxy's men's and women's track and field teams placed fifth at the SCIAC championships and fifth for the season. A number of gutsy performances garnered 13 women and 11 men All-SCIAC recognition in 2009.

At the SCIAC championships, Karuna Batcha '10 easily won the 100-meter hurdles (15.45), and Kera Bartlett '09 won her third consecutive conference title by placing first in the pole vault. Freshman sensation Claire Larson won the 800-meter race in 2:16:34, nearly three seconds faster than her nearest competitor.

On the men's team, triple-jumper Sam Huie '10 placed second with a personal best (46'3.25"), earning All-SCIAC recognition, as did David Minguez '11 in the pole vault (14'6") and Sam Sleeper '12, who cleared the bar at 13'5.25". Clay Hoadley '09 ran a personal best in the 1,500-meter (3:57:56) to grab second place, and Victor Kali '10 also received All-SCIAC honors with a time of 4:07:34.



Kera Bartlett '09 and Justin Goltz '09 display their Roy M. Dennis Scholar-Athlete Awards, given to Oxy's outstanding female and male senior scholar-athletes. Bartlett is the Occidental and SCIAC record holder in women's pole vault and a three-time Academic All-American. Goltz played football, basketball, and baseball for the Tigers and was the 2009 SCIAC Offensive Player of the Year and Team MVP in football.

New Dean Search

Successor to Frank Eyed for 2010 Academic Start

In keeping with a plan laid out by the Board of Trustees 18 months ago, a search for a new dean of the College will be launched this fall. President Jonathan Veitch, Faculty Council president Raul Villa, and a search committee to be formed this summer plan to have a new dean in place by July 1, 2010, when Eric Frank will step down after five years as Occidental's chief academic officer.

"When Susan Prager resigned as president in December 2007, the board and I agreed that I would stay on as dean until June 2010," says Frank, professor of art history and visual arts at Oxy since 1986. "I made it clear that I had no intention of being among the candidates for the new search."

Frank began a one-year term as interim dean when then-dean Kenyon Chan stepped into the president's office after Ted Mitchell's departure in September 2005. Frank agreed to a second one-year interim term under Prager, and at the board's urging took the job on a permanent basis when she resigned.

"Next year I will be doing everything I can to help Jonathan, Raul, and the committee to find the best possible person to serve as our new dean," says Frank, who plans on taking a sabbatical for the 2010-11 academic

year. (Stan Hales, the consultant who helped bring Veitch to Occidental, also will be assisting with the dean's search.) "Given all of Oxy's strengths, I know we will see some outstanding candidates."

Class of 2013

Incoming Freshman Crop May Be Largest in History

Despite fears that the recession could have a significant impact on this year's admission results, Occidental not only received a record number of applications for the Class of 2013 but saw a 3 percent increase in its yield of admitted students. These results stand in contrast to many other top-ranked liberal arts colleges, where applications leveled off or declined, and yield rates showed little change from last year.

Addressing the possibility of an "Obama bump," given the fact that President Barack Obama '83's two years at Oxy have been widely publicized, dean of admission Vince Cuseo says: "While it's difficult to establish any cause-and-effect relationship, it's clear it has made more people aware of the superb education students receive at arguably the nation's most diverse liberal arts college, and one of the few located in a big city."

Applications to Occidental broke the 6,000 mark for the first time, up 4 percent

Photo by Marc Campos



Roommates John Hansbrough '12, left, and Tyler Eyrich '12 eye a Newcomb Hall floor plan with the help of classmate Yearin Cho during the third day of room draw April 9 at Rangeview Hall.

over 2008. Of those students offered admission this year, 59 percent of those reporting school rank were in the top 10 percent of their high school class. The median SAT score (1960) and median composite ACT score (29) both rose from last year's numbers.

Fifty-six percent of admitted students are from outside California, living in 39 states and Washington, D.C. Seven percent of admitted students are foreign or dual citizens, representing 24 countries. Men make up 42 percent of the total group.

Students of color from the United States make up 36 percent of admitted students, while underrepresented students make up 20 percent of the group. More than half (53 percent) come from public schools.

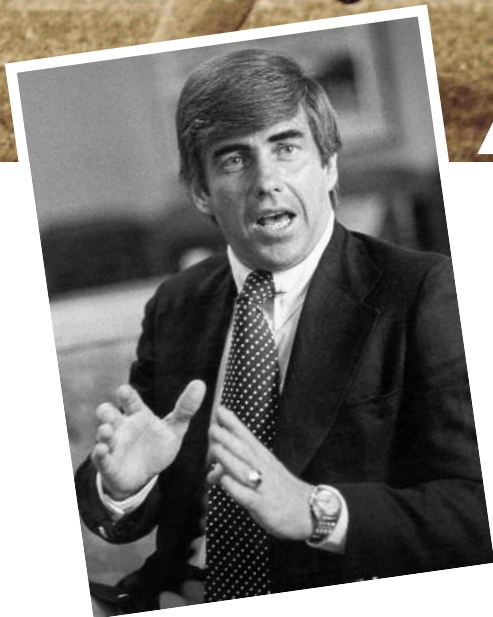
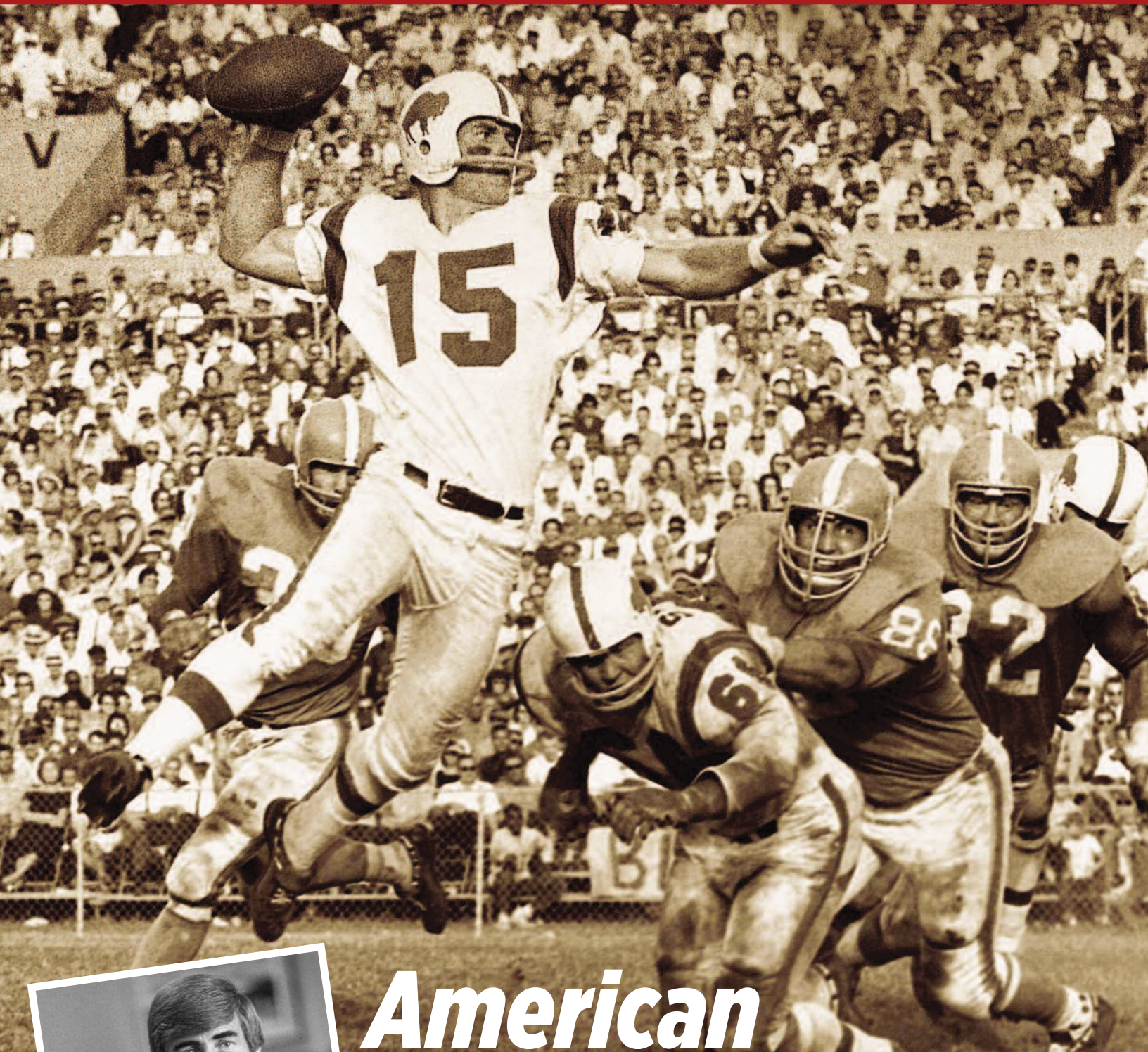
Photo by Marc Campos



Twenty-nine years after photographing a charismatic Oxy freshman and future president of the United States, Lisa Jack '81, center, is the toast of the L.A. gallery scene with her one-woman show of the long-lost images. "Barack Obama: The Freshman, Photographs by Lisa Jack" runs through July 18 at M+B Gallery (612 N. Almont Drive, West Hollywood). Jack (shown with Lisa Mandel '81, left, and Barb Novinger '81 at the May 28 opening) is a therapist in private practice and a psychology professor at Augsburg College in Minneapolis.

Scholarship in Brief

Six Occidental students and alumni have been named 2009 Fulbright Scholars. Seniors Alexander Altman (an urban and environmental policy major from Mill Valley), Allison Beresford (English and comparative literary studies; Ramona), Jessica Lobl (American studies; Rochester, Minn.), Amanda Lounsbury (physics; Westport, Conn.), and Caroline White (biology; Orinda) will be traveling to Ecuador, Hungary, Spain, Ghana, and Taiwan, respectively, with their research grants. Rebecca de Faria Slenes '07, a diplomacy and world affairs and French major from Campinas, Brazil, is headed for Morocco. □ Four Oxy graduates are among 950 recipients nationwide of National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships: Katharine Marshall '04, Christina Wong '06, Mirna Carrillo '08, and Elizabeth Brown '09. □ Mark Paulsen '10, a chemistry major from Rolling Hills Estates, won a Beckman Scholars Program award, which allots a stipend and supply funds of \$17,600 for 15 months of independent research with a faculty mentor—in this case, Carl F Braun Professor of Chemistry Don Deardorff. □ Margot Seigle '09, an urban and environmental policy major from Dundee, Ill., is the recipient of a \$10,000 Davis Project for Peace Grant, which she must use to design a grassroots project for peace anywhere in the world during the summer. □ Trevor Fay '09, an American studies major from Pasadena, will be a Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellow as part of the Capital Fellows Program administered by Sacramento State. □ Spanish professor Felisa Guillén has been awarded a \$21,000 Teaching Development Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a project titled *Links to the Past: A Digital Connection to Spain's Literary History*. □ Assistant professor of chemistry Andrew K. Udit was awarded a two-year, \$50,000 American Chemical Society Petroleum Research Fund Undergraduate New Investigator grant, designed to assist early-career faculty members in initiating research programs.



American Dreamer

Jack Kemp '57 built a game plan for life around his passions: family, football, and the future of his country

BY SAMANTHA B. BONAR '90



Photos courtesy Occidental College Special Collections

ABOVE LEFT: Kemp (No. 49, *second from left*) with Oxy teammates Walt Williamson '58 (No. 41), Doug Cornford '57 (No. 51), and Curt Plott '58 (27) in 1955. **ABOVE RIGHT:** An undated photo from the 1960s.

AS FOOTBALL TEAMMATES, Alpha Tau Omega brothers, and best friends from the Class of '57, Ron Botchan, Jack Kemp, Jim Mora, and Russell Ray called themselves the “Fearsome Foursome.” They remained close for more than half a century, gathering for what would be the last time in Washington, D.C., in April. Kemp was in the advanced stages of metastatic melanoma and bald from chemotherapy. When they sat down to lunch at the Congressional Country Club, Botchan, who officiated a record five Super Bowls as an NFL umpire, pulled out a gag visor with a funny wig attached and handed it to Kemp. “Jim didn’t want me to bring it,” recalls Botchan. “But [retired Sen.] John Glenn came over to our table, took the visor off of Jack’s head, and put it on his own head. It was a very funny scene.”

The three friends stayed with Kemp and his wife, Joanne (Main) '58, at their Bethesda, Md., home for two days. “Me, Ron, and Russ, we’d sit in the house with Jack and Joanne and tell old stories about Oxy,” recalls Mora, the 15-year NFL head coach (now an analyst on the NFL Network) who caught many of Kemp’s passes during their college gridiron career. “Jack called me up in January and said, ‘Hey Jim, I got bad news. I got cancer, and it’s terminal,’” he recalls. “It shocked me. It put me totally in a state of depression. He’s not the only friend that I’ve lost or that has battled cancer. But when it’s one of your longtime close friends, it hits you in the gut.”

“They really lifted Dad’s spirits,” says Kemp’s elder daughter, Jennifer. “It was great

for him to have these guys in town—not feeling sorry for Dad, but reveling in their life together and how much fun they had at Oxy.”

A football Tiger turned political lion, Kemp died at home three weeks later on May 2, surrounded by his family. “His family was No. 1 to him—over politics, over football. He was very proud of his family,” says Ray, longtime airline executive and former chairman, president, and CEO of World Airways.

But those who did not know him personally will remember Kemp as a tenacious quarterback and pugnacious politician. After a standout 13-year career in professional football, Kemp went on to serve nine terms as a congressman from upstate New York, ran for the Republican presidential nomination in 1988, served as secretary of Housing and Urban Development for President George H.W. Bush, and was Bob Dole’s vice presidential running mate in 1996 campaign.

As *The New York Times* pointed out in a front-page obituary, Kemp’s greatest legacy is likely his determined advocacy of tax cuts to stimulate the economy while a congressman from Buffalo—an issue that became central to Ronald Reagan’s 1980 presidential campaign and remains a tenet of GOP philosophy today.

“I’ll miss his broad mind and big heart,” *Los Angeles Times* reporter Peter Hong '87 posted on Facebook following Kemp’s death. “The last time I saw him, at some forgettable political event, he called out to me as I walked away. ‘Hey Peter,’ he said softly. I turned and he grinned. Barely above a whisper he called out the old Oxy cheer, ‘To Triumphe.’”

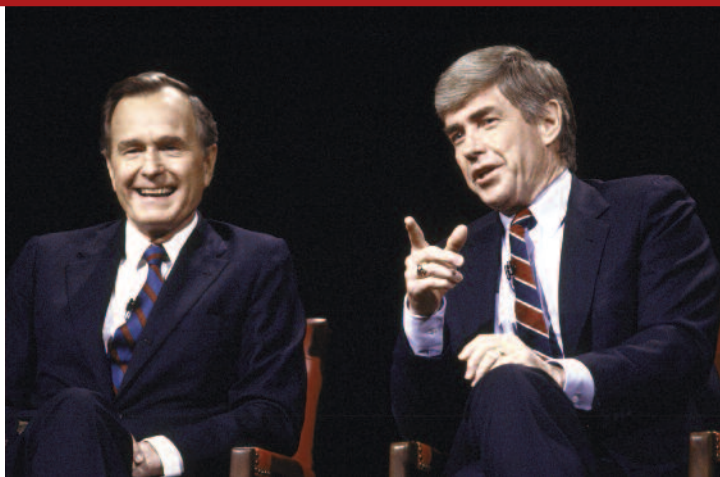
Photo by Lou Witt/NFL/Getty Images

ABOVE: Buffalo quarterback Jack Kemp '57 throws a jump pass in the Bills' 28-14 road loss to the Houston Oilers on Oct. 20, 1963.

LEFT: Visiting with Occidental students on April 21, 1976. “I’m very competitive,” Kemp said of his career transition. “Now competition of ideas has replaced the competition in football.”

RIGHT: In 1988, Jack Kemp shared the stage with Vice President George H.W. Bush during the Republican presidential debates. After a lackluster showing on Super Tuesday, Kemp withdrew from the race.

BELOW: Kemp brushed aside philosophical differences with Sen. Bob Dole in 1996 to run for vice president against incumbents Bill Clinton and Al Gore—his last bid for elected office.



Bush photo by Shelly Katz/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images; Dole photo by J. David Ake/AFP/Getty Images

JACK FRENCH KEMP WAS BORN IN LOS Angeles on July 13, 1935, the third of four boys. His father ran a trucking business. “His mother and father were special,” recalls Ray, who met Kemp in junior high school. “The few times I was in his home as a teenager, I was struck by the old-fashioned way the family would have dinner together and remain at the table until the topic of the day had been fully discussed. Those issues of political and economic interest were the seeds that bloomed later in his life.”

Kemp decided at age 6 that he wanted to be a professional quarterback. He attended Fairfax High School and entered Occidental in 1953, where he quickly became pals with Ray, Mora, and Botchan. “I wouldn’t say that Jack was a party boy at all,” Ray recalls. “ATOs partied, of course, but Dean Ben Culley and the coaches kept watchful eyes.”

At 5’10” and 150 pounds when he started at Oxy, Kemp’s dreams of the pros seemed unlikely. But he worked extra hard, lifting weights he made out of filling buckets with cement. Belying the Tigers’ 3-6 record his senior year, Kemp was the nation’s No. 3 small college passer, an All-Conference pick in the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, and a Little All-American honorable mention. In track, he was a record-holding javelin thrower.

“Oxy was a small and rich launching pad—rich in the people he met there like my mom and Coach Payton Jordan,” says Kemp’s elder son, Jeff.

“My parents so many times spoke fondly of Occidental’s curriculum,” adds younger daughter Judith. “It really produced in them a love of learning for a broad range of subjects.”

“Most people just thought of him as a

jock,” says Joanne, who wed Kemp in 1958. “But I knew that he was interested in the arts, philosophy, all sorts of things.” Her husband loved going to the ballet, musicals, opera, and classical music performances, she says.

After graduating from Oxy, Kemp was a 17th-round draft pick of the NFL’s Detroit Lions but was cut prior to the start of the season. It wasn’t until he signed with the Los Angeles Chargers of the fledgling American Football League in 1960 that his professional career took off. By the time he retired in 1969, he had led the Buffalo Bills to four division titles and two AFL championships in seven years and held league records in pass attempts (3,055), completions (1,428), and passing yardage (21,130).

So great was Kemp’s devotion to the game that, daughter Jennifer recalls, after a serious finger injury in 1961, he required surgery that would render his middle finger on his throwing hand permanently immobile. So he had a football brought into the operating room so that the surgeon could position his finger into his grip before the surgery.

In 1964, Kemp co-founded the AFL Players Association, serving as president for five terms. He often traced his concern for minorities to his experiences in pro football. In January 1965, he supported a black players’ boycott of an all-star game in New Orleans after they were barred from the city’s nightclubs and taxis. The game was moved to Houston, where the black players participated.

Shaped by his experience in pro football, Kemp also was a longtime advocate for greater representation of African-Americans and other minorities in the Republican Party. “The GOP must emphasize by reaching out in a dramatic new way to people of color that it’s truly a party of Lincoln—with inclusion, not exclusion, as its predicate,” he told *Occidental Magazine* after the 2008 election that sent Barack Obama ’83 to the White House.

“Jack Kemp’s commitment to public service and his passion for politics influenced not only the direction of his party, but his country,” President Obama said following Kemp’s death. He praised Kemp as “a man who could fiercely advocate his own beliefs and principles while also remembering the lessons he learned years earlier on the football field: that bitter divisiveness between race and class and station only stood in the way of the common aim of a team to win.”

KEMP'S SECOND CAREER BEGAN ON the long flights between football games, where he continued his college practice of reading works by major economic thinkers and political philosophers. Even so, his initial run for Congress took his Oxy buddies by surprise. "I never had any clue that he would go into politics," Mora says. "We were straight-arrow guys, we were P.E. majors. We were good students, but none of us set the world on fire academically. Jack's hard work, commitment, and confidence all led to his great success. That I saw on the football field."

Exhorting his party "to move from defense to offense" in a memorable speech at the 1976 Republican National Convention, Kemp found new fans in the electorate as well as in the media. In 1978, *Time* designated him one of the top young leaders in America, while *Newsweek* labeled Kemp "the new darling of the right" in 1980. His calls for tax cuts were adopted by Reagan, and in 1981 he won passage of the Kemp-Roth bill, a three-year, 23 percent tax cut.

"Fairness means that taxes should be proportional to the ability to pay," Kemp wrote in 1985. "We need a tax code that rewards enterprise, initiative, and thrift."

He disdained "country-club" Republicans who were against such policies.

"He was a quarterback, not a lawyer," son Jimmy says. "He didn't get bogged down in petty fights—he'd been booed in front of 50,000 people in stadiums, so you weren't going to hurt his feelings. He was forceful in advocating the ideas in which he believed."

Kemp's final appearance on a ballot was as Dole's vice-presidential running mate in 1996, the year President Bill Clinton was reelected. Three years earlier, working with William Bennett and Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, Kemp helped found Empower America, a Washington, D.C.-based public policy and advocacy organization. He served co-director until 2004. More recently, he served as chairman of Kemp Partners, a strategic consulting firm now being run by Jimmy.

Throughout his political career, Kemp always made sure he was home for dinner with his family—even if that meant the meal was served at 8:30. "My dad was great at bringing our family together," Jeff recalls. "Being at our games, my sisters' recitals, tennis, and ballet. Obviously football games got a higher billing. When you just got him alone to talk with, that was the cherished thing."

All of his children remember the "JFK grams": "From the time they were little, he would write little notes and put them on their pillows—if he was going away on a trip, or if they had a recital coming up that he wouldn't be able to make," Joanne recalls. "He wasn't a tough guy with his children."

What ultimately mattered most to Kemp was his family and his faith. "I think what was going on at the end of my dad's life was a process of meditation about all that had gone on," Jeff says. "All of us have egos. Someone on the national stage, and as good as he was at advancing ideas on the political stage, can be a little monomaniacal and self-driven and intense. Dad was processing all of that. In the end, he said, 'I don't want to be lionized for football and politics. My legacy is my children, my family, and the Lord's love.'"

"We were really blessed because we had this giant of a father who encouraged us to be leaders and to follow our passion," says daughter Jennifer, who was holding her father's hand with the permanently bent finger when he died. "He loved us well, and he never pressured us or pushed us. He just wanted us to be the best we could be, and that was a wonderful gift." □

"Jack had strong beliefs about how things should be done and how people should be treated," says Jim Mora '57. "He would stand up for things he believed in."

"In the understandable nostalgia for Ronald Reagan ... it's been too easy to forget that for much of the 1970s and into the 1980s, it was the young Jack Kemp who fired up the grass roots and who gave a thoroughly beaten minority party the ammunition for its comeback," David Broder wrote in *The Washington Post* after Kemp's death. "As much as any public figure I have ever known, Kemp burned with a passion to make the American dream real for everyone—without regard to race, religion, or national origin."

After Kemp's unsuccessful presidential run in 1988, President George H.W. Bush chose him to head the Department of Housing and Urban Development. During his four years as secretary, Kemp authored legislation to establish inner-city enterprise zones and advocated expanding home ownership among the poor through resident management and ownership of public and subsidized housing.

The entire Kemp clan gathered in Vail, Colo., in July 2008 for Jack and Joanne's 50th wedding anniversary. "Seeing him with all of his children and grandchildren is my fondest memory," Joanne says.



Photo courtesy the Kemp Family



THE LAST PICTURE SHOW

John Wyatt '99
breathes new life
into cinematic gems
with his summertime
series of cemetery
screenings

By DICK ANDERSON
Photos by MAX S. GERBER

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AN authority on classic cinema and climate change, John Wyatt '99 is your guy. "I used to start screenings in April, then the beginning of May, then mid-May," says the founder of Cinespia, the popular Los Angeles outdoor film series set in the unlikeliest of surroundings. "The weather's gotten colder and colder. In eight years I've never seen June weather like this—and I watch closely."

After canceling a June 6 showing of *The Cat People* (1942) due to inclement weather, and with the specter of showers in the forecast for June 13, Wyatt held firm. Following a morning misting in some parts of the city, the rain never came—and a couple of thousand or so hipsterish patrons turned out for a 9 p.m. screening of the 1957 Audrey Hepburn-Fred Astaire musical *Funny Face*. "I think a lot of people were waiting to see if the weather was going to clear off," he says at 8:30, with traffic still backed up on Santa Monica Boulevard to get into the Hollywood Forever Cemetery.

For the uninitiated, the notion of watching a movie on the side of a mausoleum sounds, well, a little creepy. But when Sasha Villacis, a research manager with the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles, mustered a group of friends together for a May 30 showing of Woody Allen's 1973 farce *Sleeper*, "We had a lot of fun," she says. "Everyone's super friendly. It's almost like a neighborhood party."

And that's just what Wyatt intended. "I love how these people who are usually in their little cars and hangouts are thrown in and mixed together," he says. "Their blankets are bunched together, and there's something about the disorder and the mixed-upness that has this incredible effect on Angelenos. And these movies were meant to be seen on the giant screen. The impact is totally different than if you were sitting at home watching them."

Growing up with a professor of English and comparative literary studies for a mother—that would be Jean M. Wyatt, who has taught at Occidental since 1970—the younger Wyatt wasn't allowed to watch TV at home. "Going to the movies was a treat," he says. A turning point in his aesthetic development was a ninth-grade class under legendary film and literature teacher Jim Hosney '65, who retired in 2007 from Santa

Monica's Crossroads School for Arts & Sciences. Whether it was screening films by Michaelangelo Antonioni and Francois Truffaut or discussing the philosophies of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan, "He would teach us like adults," says Wyatt, who remains in touch with Hosney. "He really got me to thinking about film."

After high school, Wyatt studied for two years as a film major at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. "I did a lot of film stuff on my own, watching a lot of movies and working on projects," he says, but left Bard after his sophomore year and took a job as a bicycle messenger. When he decided the time had come to resume his education, he chose Occidental.

"I grew up around Oxy—my mom has been a professor there longer than I've been alive—and it just occurred to me that it might be perfect for me," Wyatt explains. With the occasional nudge from his mother as to which professors' classes to take, he majored in art history and graduated with a "broad, interesting, deep education. I have nothing but good feelings about Oxy."

After graduation, his art history education helped him snag his first job, working for a "very fancy interior designer. In the interview we started talking about art, and we shared a love for an obscure Italian painter." From there, he took a position with an art department that worked on videos and feature films, and as an assistant production designer for fashion shoots he has worked for many of the top photographers in the business, including Tom Ford, Steven Meisel, and Lisa Wiesner.

Wyatt has also worked as an art director on a number of independent films, most notably writer/director Miranda July's *Me*

Photo by Dick Anderson



and *You and Everyone We Know*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2005 and became a modest arthouse success. "The script was unbelievable," Wyatt says. "It was interesting to see her make it as good as we could within the limitations of the budget and the actors."

The roots of Cinespia date back to 2001, when Wyatt and a friend organized an Italian film club around various repertory screenings in Los Angeles. "We'd arrange everything, get tickets for everyone, and afterward we would all go out for drinks," he recalls. The club quickly grew in popularity, drawing 80 people one night. And that's when Wyatt decided he wanted to find his own screening room.

As cinematic fate would have it, a friend of Wyatt's was working at Hollywood Forever. He suggested seating audiences on the Fairbanks lawn (next to the reflecting pool and crypt that houses both Douglas Fairbanks Sr., who died in 1939, and his son, who died in 2000) and projecting films onto the wall of the Cathedral Mausoleum—the final resting place of Rudolph Valentino and Peter Lorre. "And that clicked," Wyatt recalls. "I could show a movie, play some music."

Founded as Hollywood Memorial Park in 1899, the place was bankrupt and crumbling when then-28-year-old businessman

Funny Face photo © Paramount Pictures



Movie night at the mausoleum: More than an hour before showtime, audiences were planting their blankets on the Fairbanks lawn of Hollywood Forever Cemetery, left, and breaking out everything from Taco Bell to Trader Joe's in anticipation of the June 13 screening of *Funny Face*, starring Audrey Hepburn.



LEFT: In Cinespia's 8-year history, Wyatt says, "Probably the strangest audience was for *Blue Velvet*," David Lynch's macabre 1986 masterpiece. **RIGHT:** Robert Shaw, Roy Scheider, and Richard Dreyfuss await the great white shark in *Jaws* (showing July 4). **BELOW:** Rocker Johnny Ramone is buried near the Fairbanks lawn.



Jaws photo © Universal Pictures



Photo by Dick Anderson

What plays best to a cemetery crowd? Hitchcock movies "run like clockwork," Wyatt says. "I know when everybody's going to scream or laugh or clap."

Tyler Cassity (the subject of a 2000 HBO documentary *The Young and the Dead*) and his brother bought it in 1998. The cemetery was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1999, and the Cassitys undertook a massive restoration and renovation of the 62-acre property, which they rechristened Hollywood Forever.

"I'm really attached to that place," Wyatt says. "It was this forgotten beautiful gem of L.A., and it's seen an amazing transformation." After the first screening—Alfred Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train*—drew around 400 people, Wyatt did a few more. As the crowds steadily grew thanks to the support of local cinephiles and some well-placed news stories, he realized he was on to something.

Relying on little more than media listings and word of mouth, Cinespia screenings frequently draw more than 3,000 on a mid-summer Saturday night. (The Fairbanks lawn's capacity for the living is around 3,500.) The film series has been written up in *The New*

York Times and *USA Today*, and Wyatt has even had screenings with the filmmakers in attendance, including director Amy Heckerling (*Fast Times at Ridgemont High*), comedian Paul Reubens (*Pee-wee's Big Adventure*), and actress Karen Black (*Easy Rider*).

When it comes to picking Cinespia's eclectic lineup, "I'm careful about what I play on Saturday nights," Wyatt says. "I look for stuff that will resonate with a younger crowd. I look for the great stories and the great storytellers. That means lots of Howard Hawks and Billy Wilder and Alfred Hitchcock." Upcoming Saturday night screenings include the 1975 blockbuster that scared a nation beachless, *Jaws* (July 4), and Wilder's ribald 1959 comedy *Some Like It Hot* (July 25). (Tickets are \$10; for a schedule of coming attractions, visit www.cemeteryscreenings.com.)

Sunday-night screenings have a different vibe altogether. Wyatt programs those for a more esoteric crowd, with the notion of resurrecting films "that I think are com-

PELLING or important or fun," he says. Cinespia's offerings in July include Terry Gilliam '62's visionary 1985 classic *Brazil* (July 5), the 1973 British thriller *The Wicker Man*, and films by Kenneth Anger and Russ Meyer.

While it's a kick to show horror classics such as *The Shining* and *Rosemary's Baby* in a cemetery, "We walk a fine line," Wyatt says. "I'm not allowed to show stalker movies or zombie movies." (One exception to this rule: For a screening of the zombies-in-a-cemetery 1979 cult favorite *Phantasm*, Cinespia welcomed director Don Coscarelli and actor Angus Scrimm, who had worked on the adjacent Paramount Studios lot in the 1940s and came stalking through the cemetery crying after he had lost his job. "He told these great stories," Wyatt recalls.)

Like any good party host, Wyatt is constantly on the move during the movie—fiddling with the sound system, or checking on the 20 porta-potties lined up like coffins. "I want to make sure everyone has a good time and is comfortable," he says. "Maybe once or twice in eight years have I laid down on the lawn and actually watched the film."

While running Cinespia is a full-time job during the summer, Wyatt has time to pursue other interests during the off-season. Most recently, he has been working with a musicologist who traveled to some of the most remote regions of the world to record the traditional music and rituals of these vanishing cultures—in effect, rescuing this music from an audio graveyard.

In the meantime, you'll find Wyatt in a different kind of graveyard on these increasingly chilly summer nights. While outdoor film festivals have taken root in many communities, "The main difference with Cinespia is I have a lot more leeway in terms of programming. If it's an open screening in the park, it's going to be G-rated and family-friendly. We have a liquor license." □

|2|
DAYS



|12|
DAYS



|14|
DAYS



|37|
DAYS



|50|
DAYS



Sweet Science

Professor of psychology **Nancy Dess** measures emotionality and taste through her research with rats. How did one finicky rodent send her studies in a new direction?

By Dick Anderson
Photos by Marc Campos

The birth and maturation cycle of a rat is a speedy one: 21 days' gestation, and 21 days to weaning. At three weeks, Oxy's low- and high-saccharin rats are divided by sex and placed in living quarters with their siblings until they are assigned to an experiment.



Nancy Dess's rats do not have names—they are laboratory animals, not pets—but that makes it a little difficult to write a story about the one rodent in particular who changed the course of her research into taste and emotions at Occidental. So, with apologies to Dess—a professor and chair of the psychology department and the 2008 winner of the Graham L. Sterling Memorial Award for teaching, service, and distinguished professional achievement—let's call this exceptional rat "Milo."

But before we get to Milo's story, a little background is in order. Like humans, rats have a fear of novelty—a condition known as neophobia. Stress generally increases neophobia, and saccharin (the potent sweetener in Sweet'n Low) is considered more novel to the palate than other sweeteners. "It has a funky, metallic, or bitter aftertaste," says Dess, who began to research taste emotionality and the organization of behavior late in her graduate studies and early in her postdoctoral work before joining the Oxy faculty in 1986.

As part of an experiment, Dess arranged to have a group of rats be predisposed to a saccharin solution before receiving a stressor in the form of a mild electric shock—something that would scare but not harm them—thus making the novelty of the taste even more off-putting.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the stressor. "We gave a bunch of rats the saccharin to drink," Dess recalls, "and sure enough, we came in the next day, and they'd all drunk a nice healthy amount—except for this one rat who had drunk none of it." That would be the rodent hereafter known as Milo.

After checking on Milo's health ("He was fine—I looked in, and he looked back at me") and tapping the spout of the stainless steel metal water bottle for air bubbles, she returned the following day to find the same results. She switched the bottles with the plain water and saccharin-sweetened water; Milo switched sides as well. "This was a rat," she says, "who did not like saccharin."

Most rats, if they are given any sweetened solution, will drink it more avidly than if you just give them water. And the mystery of Milo "brought us to the fork in the road," Dess continues. "The most common and experimental response to this would be to throw him out; he's a weirdo." But because Milo seemed really interesting—and because she says Oxy has a history of encouraging faculty "to be active scholars and to do interesting work"—the decision was made to follow him.

They started selective breeding, taking Milo and a second rat "who was not nearly as remarkable"—and thus will remain nameless—"but drank less than an average

Dess has always been interested in non-human animals, which is a bit of a mystery in that she was the only one in her family who enjoyed having pets.

amount of saccharin," and mating the two of them with females that measured a bit low on the saccharin-consuming side of things. Conversely, they took their highest saccharin-consuming rats and bred them together.

That was 33 generations ago. "What we now have are Occidental high- and low-saccharin-consuming rats," Dess says of the white albino rodents with beady pink eyes. "You really can't tell these rats apart by looking at them. You have to look at their behavior to see the evidence of selective breeding.

"One of the things I love so much about science is the mix of the orderly, systematic, planful part of it with the getting-thrown-for-a-loop, serendipitous, something that you never imagined happening," she adds.

IN THE WORLDVIEW OF NANCY DESS, "Sugar is not an arbitrary commodity. The human shape of the world, the economic systems, the political systems, the trade routes related to those, the cultural glue and tensions that are related to commodity transfer—that might all look very different if we didn't like sugar so much," she said at the conclusion of her Sterling Award Lecture at Oxy in April.

"My guess is a lot of people in charge at critical points in history have been more like high-saccharin rats," she added. "It's not just that they like sugar. They're more impulsive; they're less vulnerable to stress; they're less anxious. Those are really good traits for putting brakes on unpleasant social things."

Dess first developed an interest in psychology after taking an introductory course as an undergraduate at UCLA. From the beginning, what interested her most were the day-to-day questions of how things work—what she calls "the mystery in the ordinary."

Despite the fact that her older brother had majored in psychology at UCLA (he's now a clinical psychologist in San Diego), "I was never that interested in a clinical or counseling career," notes Dess, who got her feet wet doing lab research as junior.

"A graduate student came to my physiological psychology class of 350 and said that he was looking for a couple of volunteers to help him with his dissertation research," she recalls. "So I volunteered, and it was a rat lab that was looking at basic biological mecha-

nisms related to Parkinson's. I loved working with the rats, but I was not that interested in the more mechanistic neuroscience side of things. I was more interested in their behavior and what they were doing."

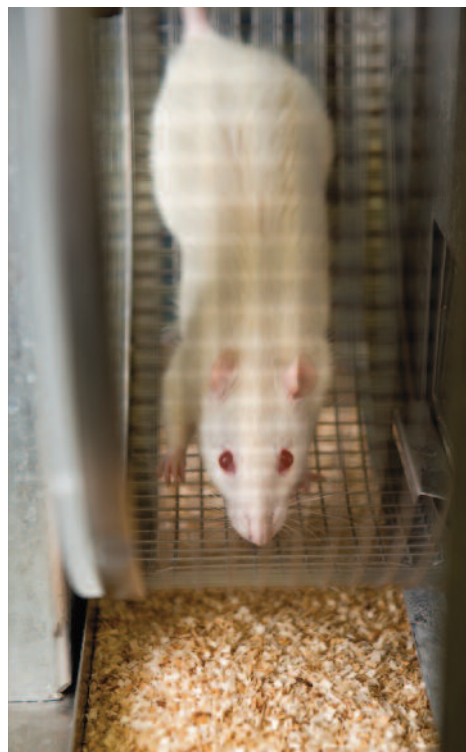
When it came time to choose a graduate program, Dess opted for one that emphasized behavioral analysis. That led her to the University of Minnesota, where she studied under "an amazing mentor," Bruce Overmier, who is not only active in U.S. psychology circles but also has been president of the International Union for Psychological Sciences. "I can see now that his influence showed me how can you focus on your research and think about it in a bigger context," she says.

With Overmier's encouragement, Dess became active in the American Psychological Association. She is currently the president of APA's Division 6, the behavioral science and comparative psychology division, and has been a senior scientist at the association as well as chairing the APA's Committee on Animal Research and Ethics. "That reflects Bruce's influence, which says the world is not just your playground—you have some disciplinary stewardship looking after the health and vitality and the integrity of the enterprise that you are a part of," Dess says.

OVER THE YEARS, STUDIES HAVE SHOWN that high-saccharin rats consume more of anything good that you give them. On the flip side, low-saccharin rats are more sensitive to the adulteration of something sweet with something bitter.

And what Dess and her colleagues have been doing over the last 15 years is pursuing three lines of inquiry: Are these individual differences in saccharin level related in any way to the animal's emotionality, including stress? (In a word, yes.) Second, do these high- and low-saccharin rats go about life provisioning themselves differently, and responding differently to metabolic threats? ("We, of course, would expect that they would.") And lastly, does their willingness to consume saccharin in large amounts without restraint suggest a penchant for drug abuse?

Among their findings: When you sharply limit its food supply to one hour a day, a rat experiences depression-induced hyperactivity—which, in the case of the low-saccharin rat, averages about 11,000 running-wheel revolutions (or about seven miles) over a



24-hour period. "That's a long way for a little animal to go," Dess says.

Another outcome is that "High-saccharin animals learn to self-administer cocaine much more rapidly than low-saccharin animals," she adds. "It could be they're just smarter, or it could be they're more sensitive to any drug with the potential for abuse."

Having published five papers just on taste, six on subjects other than taste, and six more on the psychopharmacology involved, Dess averages roughly a paper a year on her rat research alone. (She has authored more than three dozen peer-review articles, nine of which have Oxy students as co-authors.)

"One of the bum raps that science sometimes gets is that it's really all confirmatory," she says. While noting that the "hit rate" of Oxy's research is pretty good, "We've had some big wrong predictions that we were pretty certain of that turned into really interesting things. ... I also have benefited greatly in terms of balancing the risk with the certainty from being part of collaborations with people at other institutions."

She points to the work that Marilyn Carroll, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Minnesota, was doing with regards to impulsivity and the behavioral characteristics related to drug use. "She was all set up to do drug administration," Dess says, "so all we had to do is send her some rats."

Morning exercise: "The life expectancy of rats in the lab is much longer than if they're out running around," Dess says, "and they're much better fed."

Marking the rodents' tails—blue for high-saccharin, and red for low-saccharin—Dess shipped live rats to Minnesota about seven years ago. Carroll subsequently bred them, and now the university has the only other colony of low- and high-saccharin rats in existence. "Her graduate students and postdocs have been publishing really interesting studies," says Dess.

Typically, there are around 200 rats living in laboratory housing at Oxy, in a former storage facility and recreational room converted some years ago by professor of psychology emeritus Dennis VanderWeele. After a study is completed, the rats who participated are given saccharin-intake tests, and the highest drinkers of the highs and lowest drinkers of the lows are selected for procreation. "Breeding is a treadmill," Dess says. "We've always got more in the pipeline."

Thirty-three generations removed from Milo, is there an end to the high- and low-saccharin rat studies in sight? "I try to never say never, but I try to never say always," Dess says. "There are still things we want to know. Right now we have one tantalizing and frustrating puzzle that we're working on"—an experiment studying sugar addiction in rats that springs out of a series of studies conducted by Veronica Yakenveno '09, a psychology major from Odessa, Ukraine—"and we have another dreamlike series of experiments that we're following up where every experiment comes out cleanly and straightforwardly"—a study on flavor-preference conditioning that may explain what makes people with a taste for alcohol drink more.

What is it about rats that makes them ideal for laboratory research? "I think there are multiple reasons, and practicality is a big one," Dess says. "They are small, they are rapidly reproducing, they are hearty, and they have large litters. But there are other animals with some of those attributes that never quite caught on, like gerbils and hamsters." One key distinction, she adds, is that rats are a domesticated species—hamsters and gerbils aren't.

"It's a pretty small percentage of people who are working with nonhuman animals at all," Dess says. "The preferred species in psychology is human." □

Octavio Herrera '98 struck Internet gold with a website that thwarted online pirates. Now he's underwriting the creation of applications for the iPhone — and giving back to Oxy in memory of a schoolmate.

OCTAVIO HERRERA '98'S SON is a little young for tattoos. Yet 4-year-old Jake is the spitting image of Lil Wayne, with the rap star's signature dreds, face tattoos, and bling. Only Jake doesn't actually have any of these accoutrements for real. Herrera has Lil Wayneized his firstborn. And himself, for that matter.

"It's just an entertaining app that you might use once a month at a party," says Herrera, showing off the Be Like Lil Wayne app on his iPhone—one of the many novel applications for the ubiquitous Apple device sold by Jirbo Inc., for which he has raised millions of dollars in capital since early last year. With simple concepts and clever graphics—Memory Match, Turkey Hunt, and the über-popular Paper Football—Jirbo has grabbed a stakehold in the highly competitive and potentially lucrative world of what Herrera calls "mobile entertainment."

"We weren't interested in reinventing the wheel," Herrera says over lunch near Jirbo's offices on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles. "It's a phone. You have this with you, and you want to use this to kill five, 10 minutes of time. So we make games that are easy to get in and out of." Of the 300 or so games available in the App Store upon its opening last July, 14 belonged to Jirbo, and iPhone users downloaded more than 3 million Jirbo apps in the first month alone.

"Our strategy was, we will get out there with some free games, some low-price-point games,

but we will land grab," says Herrera, who with his business partner, Randy Saaf, created and eventually sold MediaDefender Inc, a pioneering anti-piracy provider and scourge of peer-to-peer content networks worldwide. "The first adopters are the most important people to get on their phones—and we'll figure out how to make money once we build an audience."

GROWING UP IN A WORKING-CLASS FAMILY, Herrera entered Occidental from South Gate High School, a big urban school in a predominantly Mexican-American community. "I loved that Oxy was small and you got to know everybody," says Herrera, who lived in Pauley Hall for three years. "With my background I wanted to be immersed in the College, but I still wanted to be around people of color."

Herrera chose physics with the idea that he was going to be an engineer—"I didn't know why, other than I was good in math," he says. With fellow physics major Eduardo Gomez '98, he "would go down to the library and hold court there. There was actually a little area downstairs in the library that we made into our own. We put pictures on the wall and funny signs, and people knew that it was Ed and Octavio's area."

Living in Pauley, Herrera also met his wife, Amy Roegler '98, whom he married in 1999. (She completed her teaching degree at Oxy, taught at Longfellow Elementary in Pasadena, and has

By Dick Anderson
Photos by Kevin Burke

GAME CHANGER



since taken time off to stay home with their two children.) The couple moved into an apartment off-campus their senior year, around which time Herrera developed career anxiety.

“At one point I wanted to be a cop and sell insurance,” says Herrera, who had abandoned any notion of continuing his studies at Caltech. After graduation, in fact, he dabbled in insurance sales for a short time. “Those two months of sales training have done me wonders ever since,” he says, “because you’re always selling something to somebody.”



The late Anson J. Credille '97 “could have been a doctor, could have been a lawyer, could have been a Laker,” Herrera says. A scholarship in his memory was first awarded last fall.

While the market for engineers wasn't great, the need for computer scientists had gone through the roof, thanks to the dotcom boom. Herrera landed a position at Raytheon, the defense contractor, which was hiring people with a mathematics or science degree and training them on the job.

Because all of Raytheon's work required government clearance to perform—a process that began only after an employee was hired—Herrera found himself sitting on his hands, reading a book and surfing the Web for months on end. “It sounds like heaven to a lot of people, but it was hell to me,” he recalls. “I was about to crawl out of my skin, I was so bored.”

But soon after his training began, Herrera realized that Raytheon was a bad fit. “I was not a talented programmer, and I was not going to move the needle for that company,” he says. “I was a tiny cog, and I got depressed. I was overeating, I was unhappy, and every day I would come home to Amy and complain about my job.”

Herrera found company in the misery of Harvey Mudd graduate Randy Saaf, who was equally frustrated and had the entrepreneurial bug to boot. The two would talk about starting their own dotcom company, and even after Saaf left Raytheon to enroll in law school, they continued to meet and brainstorm ideas over beers.

One bad idea led to another, and in his own frustration, Herrera started actively looking for a way out of Raytheon: applying to law school, business school, even the FBI (the latter of which entailed losing about 80 pounds from his depression-induced peak of 235 pounds). “People were a little worried,” he says, “but I was like, ‘I have a plan here.’”

Herrera had been accepted to law school and business school and was into the final round of the FBI interview process when he got a call from Saaf, who had a simple notion, but a great idea: What if they developed a way to thwart Napster—to bombard its legion of users with files that would frustrate their search for illegally downloaded music?

“That was an ‘Aha!’ moment,” says Herrera. “We started pitching the idea to some potential investors, and we got a few people to bite.” That gave them the resources to hire “two really smart guys” they knew from Raytheon as programmers. “We told them, ‘Look, it’s not all the money in the world, but we can pay your salary, and we’ll give you equity.’” With wife Amy's blessing, he quit Raytheon, and MediaDefender was born.

Despite a series of industry meetings and an encouraging meeting with Recording Industry Association of America president Cary Sherman, nothing happened for nearly a year. “All we had was a demo, six computers and three programmers, and an idea,” Herrera says, “but we got some good press.” A piece in *The Wall Street Journal* prompted a call from *Spin* magazine, which declared in melodramatic fashion, “MediaDefender is the godsend to the music industry,” Herrera says with a laugh. “Bear in mind we have no clients; nobody's actually using this stuff.”

But that article prompted a call from an executive at Sony Pictures, which was planning to release *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*, a costly computer-animated feature based on the popular role-playing game. Eager to protect the movie from pirates using file-sharing sites such as Morpheus and Kazaa, he offered Herrera and Saaf a one-month trial without pay—“but if it works,” he told them, “you can use me as a reference.”

It worked. “When anyone would type in *Final Fantasy* on Nutella, they would get fake files—and we came up with some other little techniques to frustrate people,” Herrera says. “Then Randy and I went on a big sales spree.”

This, he explains, is where his insurance salesmanship came in handy. “We just cold-called Sony Music, BMG, Universal—everyone—and we started getting meetings,” Herrera says. Interscope hired MediaDefender to handle a No Doubt release, which led to Eminem, and so on. “We built a business providing this service one album, one movie at a time,” Herrera says.

As they began piling up projects, MediaDefender became a subscription-based utility for movie, TV, and music providers as well as software and video game makers: “We started negotiating huge deals and growing revenue wildly,” Herrera says. “We had raised about \$2 million, and were profitable by the time we had spent about half.” At its peak, MediaDefender's sales were close to \$16 million.

By then, Herrera and Saaf were getting buyout offers from other anti-piracy firms and private equity concerns. So they hired an investment bank and, in 2005, sold the company to Artistdirect for \$42.5 million. “Not too shabby,” Herrera recalls, smiling broadly. “Our investors got a great return, our employees were happy, and we were happy.”

AFTER SELLING THE COMPANY, SAAF and Herrera stayed on to run MediaDefender, but the duo started “getting a little fidgety,” Herrera admits. “We had cash and started thinking, ‘How should we invest this?’” But they never found anything all that interesting until late 2007.

That was when a good friend of Saaf's, UCLA graduate Jonathan Zweig, first developed a series of Web-based games such as iTetris that users could play on their iPhone, which had been launched by Apple at the end of June 2007. In those primitive days

before the App Store, the only games iPhone users could play were on the Safari browser, and Zweig was getting about 300,000 unique visitors per month to his website—“pretty sick penetration,” as Herrera puts it, for a nascent universe of around 3 million iPhones.

“And again, an ‘Aha!’ moment,” he recalls. “Randy and I agreed: ‘Let’s back him, give him some money, and formalize this company.’ Jon Zweig had this lightning in a bottle. The three of us are going to make this happen, but Jon’s going to run this—we’re just going to be investors.” (Besides, as he is quick to note, “Randy and I don’t code.”)

On March 6, 2008, Apple announced the creation of the App Store, and Jirbo was chosen as one of the first companies to sell its wares, alongside biggies such as Sega and Electronic Arts. Soon after that announcement, Herrera and Saaf raised \$1 million of angel funding, and Jirbo hired a corps of skilled programmers with one goal in mind—to get as many casual games as they could into the store for its July 10 launch.

With Jirbo’s success, partners soon came calling. When ESPN approached Apple with the idea of developing “a really neat little iPhone game,” Apple introduced ESPN to Jirbo (which responded by launching a separate brand called Epic Tilt, including artist-centric games featuring the aforementioned Lil Wayne, diva du jour Lady Gaga, and Asher Roth of “I Love College” fame).

Jirbo’s founding stake in the App Store gave the company a leg up on the competition—which was crucial for its ongoing prosperity in today’s App-heavy universe. “We were out there early, we have a captive audience, so when we launch new offerings we don’t have to hope that people run into them,” Herrera says. “We just market them to our audience. Put a banner ad on one of our games saying, ‘New Jirbo Game—Download Here,’ and if you click on it, it literally connects you to the App Store on your device, and you’ve downloaded it. It’s completely seamless.”

Having recently raised a second round of funding, Herrera and Saaf sit on the board of Jirbo, while Zweig is focused on growing the business. “We spend a decent amount of time on it, but Jon’s the CEO,” Herrera says. “It’s a blast, because it’s video games. One thing I will say about anti-piracy”—MediaDefender’s *raison d’être*—“is it’s a negative space. You’re always dealing with lawsuits.”



Playing games the old-fashioned way with wife Amy Roegler '98 and kids Jacob, 4, and Alissa, 2.

FOR ALL HIS SUCCESS PUSHING MEDIA-Defender and Jirbo, Herrera “is not a big self-promoter” by his own admission. So why did he agree to share his story with *Occidental*? Because he wants people to know about the Anson J. Credille '97 Memorial Scholarship.

“After I graduated, I didn’t look back,” he says. “When you’re in your 20s, you’re very focused on yourself.” But even after the sale of MediaDefender, Oxy was not high on his list of charitable causes: “I was a selfish entrepreneur.” With his wife’s prodding, he says, they would write small checks to support ALOED and women’s soccer each year.

As his 10-year reunion drew near, Herrera grew reflective. “I was thinking, ‘Man, Oxy was great, and I really should give something to Oxy because it’s been a big part of my success.’ But I didn’t give it much more thought.” Soon after, he was having lunch with Andre Coleman '97, who proposed endowing a scholarship in memory of Credille. “It was another ‘Aha!’ moment,” Herrera says. “I was just thinking about this, and Dre comes up with this, and I said, ‘Yeah, let’s do it.’”

A kinesiology major from Gardena, Credille graduated a year ahead of Herrera. “He was a homie, a bud, and we played video

games together, drank together,” Herrera says. “Anson could have been a doctor, could have been a lawyer, could have been a Laker. He was quiet but had a great sense of humor.”

Credille went to Costa Rica in a Spanish immersion program after graduating from Oxy. On Aug. 16, 1997, he was swimming in the ocean and drowned—“just a terrible freak accident,” Herrera recalls. “The scholarship is a good way to remind everybody of one of Oxy’s great guys.”

While Herrera and Coleman provided the bulk of the \$50,000 minimum to activate the scholarship, they wanted to engage as many classmates as possible. “None of us have been giving money to Oxy!” Herrera says with a laugh. “So we called our friends and we said, ‘Hey, we’re doing this scholarship for Anson,’ and they’d say, ‘Great.’ And we’d be like, ‘Naw, you’re sending a check.’”

The scholarship has 39 donors and was first awarded last fall. “I had the means to get this going, and as other people have means, they’ll give back to Oxy. If they give to Anson’s scholarship, it will grow,” Herrera says. “Look, Dre and I are ambitious guys. We want to make this a million-dollar scholarship fund one day.” In other words, game on. □





POLITICS AS CHUSUAL

The transition from numbers-cruncher to San Francisco supervisor came overnight for **Carmen Chu '00**—but after nearly two years in office, she's found her voice in the high-stakes world of Bay City government

By Traci Vogel | Photos by Jim Block

IN POLITICS, as in show business, success is often about being at the right place at the right time. Carmen Chu '00's big break arrived on Sept. 24, 2007, as she sat in her cubicle at San Francisco's ornate City Hall, where she served as deputy budget director. It was a weird month for politics in the city known as Baghdad by the Bay: Newspapers and water coolers alike buzzed about freshman District 4 Supervisor Edmund Jew, who had not only lied about living in his district but was accused of trying to extort money from a tapioca drink shop. The district attorney was drawing up charges (Jew would later plead guilty to perjury and extortion), Mayor Gavin Newsom was wielding the suspension stick, and the gossip mill went into overdrive.

But Chu had work to do. It was 4 p.m., and she sat dutifully crunching numbers. As she worked, the mayor walked over and tapped her on the shoulder. "Have you ever considered serving in public office?" he asked, offering Chu the District 4 position. "I think you should."

The petite Chu, whose intent gaze gives her a gravity that belies her stature, laughs a little as she remembers how shocked she was that afternoon. "We had never talked about it before. I hadn't given much thought to public office," she confesses. "I'd always been more of a technical, nuts-and-bolts, behind-the-scenes person."

Chu asked Newsom for one night to sleep on the decision, and then she called friends and family, along with "other people in public life." The next morning, she marched

From left, Chu greets constituents in the Civic Center; speaks at a Golden Gate Park fundraising run for the Asian Liver Center to find cures for hepatitis C and liver cancer; prays at a birthday celebration for Buddha; and fulfills her duties as official race starter for the run.



into the mayor's office, agreed to become District 4 supervisor, and was immediately sworn in. At 11:30 a.m., Newsom introduced Chu at a news conference, and by 2 p.m. she was voting on issues at her first Board of Supervisors meeting. "S.F. mayor's finance office aide named interim replacement for Ed Jew," a *San Francisco Chronicle* headline gasped. Chu was 29—the same age, the newspaper noted, that the mayor had been when he was appointed a city supervisor a decade before.

ALTHOUGH SHE DIDN'T KNOW what form it would take, Chu has been inextricably drawn to public service her entire life. She was born in Los Angeles, the middle of three daughters of first-generation Chinese immigrants who fled their home country after the Cultural Revolution (in China, Chu's father had been blacklisted from getting an education). When they landed at Los Angeles International Airport, neither of Chu's parents could speak English. "Someone had written down 'Chinatown' in Eng-

lish on a piece of paper for them," says Chu. "And they showed that to the taxi driver."

Chu's mother found work as a seamstress, and the couple eventually saved up enough money to open a Chinese restaurant in Inglewood, southwest of Los Angeles. "My parents worked every single day until the last seven or eight years," Chu says. She smiles wryly. "Then, they decided they could take a half a day off."

Chu grew up working weekends in the restaurant, handing out menus and busing tables. The experience gave her a profound appreciation of what it takes to run a small business, but her parents wanted more for her and worked hard to make it happen. Then, one night in April 1992, her parents failed to come home from the restaurant. Chu, 14, and her siblings turned on the television and saw Inglewood engulfed in violence. The not-guilty verdict in the first Rodney King beating trial had hit the airwaves, and the L.A. riots were spreading. Chu's parents, it turned out, had been carjacked at gunpoint, were stuck in the neigh-

borhood, and decided to stay at the restaurant to make sure it was safe. "We were terrified about what would happen," says Chu.

The riots tore the thin veil off longstanding racial tensions between African Americans and Asians in inner-city L.A. Afterward, although her parents were safe and the restaurant continued to run, Chu says things felt different. "We'd go pass out menus, door to door, and now people would open the door only a half an inch," she says. "The riots really impacted my life. I realized that there was a huge lack of structure and opportunity in our community." She began to think about "the values of society," she says, why certain neighborhoods seemed to fall through the cracks, and how public money was distributed.

CHU'S GROWING INTEREST found an outlet when she studied public policy at Occidental on an Irvine Fellowship. Oxy was "a transformative experience" for Chu, who found herself in culturally diverse classes of 10 to 12 students, all of them debating pas-

LEFT: Chu speaks at a celebration observing the birthday of Buddha in front of City Hall. The event was sponsored by the Tzu-Chi Foundation USA, a philanthropic organization based in Chu's Sunset District. **RIGHT:** Chu at her desk in City Hall. "I think the best you can do is go out and meet people and really try to understand the issues they are concerned with," she observed in 2007.



Unlike some politicians suddenly thrust into the forefront, “Carmen actually listens down to the root level and then tries to think of a thoughtful response,” says a constituent.

sionately the definition of terms like justice, equity, and fairness. “For me, just being put in that environment was amazing,” she says. “The most eye-opening thing was being challenged as to not only what your core values were, but about how to see results, how you would put those things into action.”

At Oxy, Chu blossomed as a policy wonk who wasn't afraid to get her hands dirty. She wrote her senior thesis on how to increase voter registration in communities of color, worked for Women at Work, a group that provides job training for women, and did census outreach in Los Angeles with the Asian Legal Center. “She was both smart and wise—an unusual combination,” says Clapp Distinguished Professor of Politics Peter Dreier, who taught Chu in his Introduction to Urban Politics class and again in his community-organizing and leadership class. “She's idealistic, but she doesn't have her head in the clouds. She's always been interested in change. You could see the seeds of all that when she was 18 or 19.”

Chu graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, then earned a master's degree from UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy. While getting her graduate degree, she served as an intern in the Board of Supervisors' Office of the Legislative Ana-

lyst. In 2004, she joined Gavin Newsom's administration as a budget analyst, helping establish the city's first universal health-care program and a 24-hour service call center, as well as crafting the city's annual budget. There, the nuts-and-bolts crackerjack served happily behind the scenes until that fateful tap on the shoulder.

DISTRICT 4, WHICH SPRAWLS across San Francisco's Sunset District neighborhood, is flat and residential, a neat grid of pastel-colored houses in the southwestern part of the city that stretches down to the Pacific Ocean. The neighborhood is dotted with small businesses, and 53 percent of its residents are Asian American. In November 2008, Chu kept her supervisor spot in her first public election with nearly 52.4 percent of the vote, and she seems likely to stay put, at least for a while. She has made a name for herself by championing progressive causes and small businesses, but what's really won over her constituents are some particularly thoughtful actions such as establishing Chinese-language public police meetings.

“She listens,” neighborhood activist and constituent Arthur Tom explains. “Some politicians pulled from the back room to the forefront might be canned; they might have

rehearsed lines. Carmen actually listens down to the root level of the constituent and then tries to think of a thoughtful response. And if she doesn't know the answer, she will say so.”

WHILE CHU HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL with large projects, such as creating the largest municipal solar panel project in the United States and helping to amend the city's Rent Ordinance to protect victims of domestic violence from eviction, she's also managed a busy day-to-day schedule of small-but-critical tasks: visiting a local intersection that's become a magnet for public dumping, meeting with local activists, and sitting in long committee meetings. It looks like the policy wonk may have found her public footing, after all. “She's carrying out a tradition of Oxy that extends from Jack Kemp to Barack Obama,” Dreier says. “Although I think her politics are closer to Barack Obama.”

Might the comparison hint at greater public service ambitions for Chu? Sitting in a sunny corner of a coffee shop on Taraval Street in the heart of her district, Chu winces a little at the question, saying the farthest she can see down the road is her 2010 run for reelection. This is home: the Sunset District, where she lives with Scott Hua, her firefighter boyfriend, and Birdie, the dog she rescued from a shelter 2 1/2 years ago—and where she gets to see her constituents every day. “I'd love to be able to have completed the projects I've started here, to stay in this role,” she says. “If the residents will have me.” □

Traci Vogel is a San Francisco-based freelance writer.



Chu high-fives her favorite canine constituent, her beloved rescue dog, Birdie, in a Sunset District park.

After 18 months of getting up with Bob at 6 every morning, Nadine looks forward to sleeping in again.

Photo by Marc Campos



Up, Up, and Away

Their work's done at Oxy. What's next for **Bob and Nadine Skotheim**?

Twenty years ago, on the heels of his retirement from Whitman College, Bob Skotheim gave the first Commencement address of the John Brooks Slaughter era at Occidental. On May 16, at Class Day, he delivered a pared-down version of the same speech to this year's seniors. "My advice was simply to prepare them to be surprised for what they don't know how to expect," he says.

It's been a busy 18 months for Bob and his wife, Nadine, who quickly drove down the Pacific Coast in December 2007 to take the helm of Occidental after then-President Susan Prager's unexpected resignation. After stabilizing the campus community, helping select a new president (and, in Nadine's case, giving knitting lessons to staff and faculty), the pair, who have been together for more than 60 years, are ready to resume retirement life. They sat down with **Samantha Bonar '90** for one final chat before their road trip.

Bob, after 20 years away from academia, what was the most surprising thing about running a college the second time around?

Bob: Probably that it was so much like the first time. The continuities are much more striking to me than the changes. The basic activity of a small liberal arts college is unchanged, and the people on campus are the same, essentially. Organizational behavior does not change rapidly.

What has given you the most satisfaction in the time that you've been here?

Bob: Doing what we set out to do: to calm the campus, which was upset by recent changes which had occurred; to explain to alumni what was going on and to tell them that the College was in very good shape, despite some appearances to the contrary; and to make the campus attractive to presidential candidates, which we did, as evidenced by how successfully the search went.

What advice would you give to President-elect Jonathan Veitch?

Bob: That to succeed, he needs everyone's support. He needs to communicate with alumni much more assiduously than has been done. And the academic program itself always needs monitoring. He needs to pay close attention to where Occidental is in the larger world, including fundraising. And he will do all of these things, I think.

What do you think is the biggest challenge for Occidental right now?

Bob: If it weren't for the recession, I would say Occidental is on a roll such as it has not been on for decades. That said, I think the good signs are far greater than the threatening signs. This year's applicant pool turning into such a large entering class was big news. From student satisfaction to faculty productivity, all the signs are very good.

Do you think you're leaving Oxy a better place than when you came here?

Bob: Oh, not a better place. Oxy was just fine when we came here.

What have you enjoyed most about the experience here, Nadine?

Nadine: The house, the surroundings, the lovely campus—being near the students and being back on a campus has been a lot of fun. I've met some marvelous people on the staff. It's been a challenge to do this 20 years later, but it was very rewarding.

What have been some of the challenges?

Nadine: It's a bit far from family, although we had 17 people in this house at Christmas for a week, which was terrific. We couldn't have had such a grand family reunion without that. I don't like getting up at 6 a.m. I'll be glad to lengthen the night.

Why do you have to get up at 6?

Nadine: Because he has to get up at 6. And that was a bit of a shock to the system.

What are you looking forward to the most about going back to Washington?

Nadine: I'm ready for more free time, and I'm really anxious to get back to a place with lots of water. Our home on the Strait of Juan de Fuca is really beautiful. We miss it.

How many things have you knitted since you've been here?

Nadine: [Laughs.] Well, let's see. Several sweaters and several pairs of socks. I did a lot of knitting for Christmas. So there were hats and sweaters and socks under the tree for everybody. And it's a big group.

What will you miss the most about Oxy?

Nadine: I'll certainly miss all the good friends we've made and the sunshine, I'm sure. And the lovely flowers. And the house, which is formal without being formidable. We've had a lot of friends visit from the northwest, and it's been wonderful to have these facilities, these beautiful grounds, and this pretty house to show off.

Bob, how do you anticipate your new role as trustee?

Bob: I'll come down for meetings, so that will mean quarterly visits.

Nadine: And a lot more knitting lessons.

What else are you going to do now?

Bob: Go back into retirement. I had no plans before and I have no plans now.

Nadine: You'll resume the cooking.

Bob: Yeah, we've had other people doing the cooking. I'm the cook in the household since retirement. So I'll go back to cooking.

What do you like to cook?

Bob: Whatever she likes to eat.

Nadine: Once he found a cookbook, it got better. It was odd for a scholar to think that you just had to intuit it all. Once he learned that he had books to help him out, then he got really good.

Bob: I wouldn't say "really" good. □