Sustaining Change

As this year’s graduates leave us for the larger world, we know they’ll seek to change it. That’s an instinct shared by every generation, but in this time of climate change, the need for the young to transform their—and our—relationship to the earth poses a particularly important challenge.

We’re angling in on some answers for all of us. The scientific consensus that the climate is indeed changing has at last begun to coalesce into an international consciousness. That, in turn, is beginning to fuel necessary change.

One useful way to think about the web of problems posed by climate change is contained in the nuanced term sustainability. The word simultaneously implies both change and constancy; maybe that’s why sustainability has become a shorthand way to identify the link between actions taken today and their future impacts.

Sustainability asks a key question: to paraphrase Nobelist Robert Solow, Will we be able to leave our heirs the means to enjoy living standards equivalent to ours? For today’s students and tomorrow’s, we must pay more heed than the last two centuries of humankind has to environmental causes and effects.

Here at the College, we have begun taking steps to do our part. In January, we established environmental sustainability in general and, more specifically, greenhouse gas emission reductions, as institutional priorities. A formal statement of principle by the Trustees was accompanied by a resolution to reduce radically our greenhouse gas emissions.

The goal is to reduce our emissions by 2020 to at least 10 percent below what they were in 1990-91. This amounts to an aggressive position, since the College’s energy use since that time has risen 50 percent and emissions by 44 percent as we expanded our physical plant and technology use.

The Climate Action Committee, which I formed last year of faculty, students and staff, did a superb job of determining what would be a good, stretch goal and identifying areas in which the College can do better. These include substituting cleaner fossil fuels (more natural gas, less no. 6 fuel) and conservation (for example, turning off chargers, computers and other appliances when not in use). But there are bigger thoughts on the table, too. The new Paresky Center boasts a range of green attributes, and we’ll work to factor environmental impacts even further into the planning of all future construction and renovation.

Fortunately we can draw on decades of solid work from our own Center for Environmental Studies, one of the oldest in the country.

The power to make the largest changes, however, lies in the hands of our students. They may start here with the likes of the “Do It In the Dark” energy saving contest and “Recyclemania,” an intercollegiate competition that at Williams alone has recycled tens of thousands of pounds of paper goods, cans and bottles. But we’ll strive at the administrative and faculty levels to put larger environmental thinking on the agenda of all the young men and women enrolled here. If they depart Williams with an abiding understanding that sustainability and sustainable development are essential, they will indeed change, and possibly even save, the world.

—Morty Schapiro
A Time in My Life

by Karen DeLong Parles ’81

We are nothing alike and yet we are the same. Elizabeth Edwards’ breast cancer has returned in her bones and is considered incurable. This development is sad and more than a little bit scary. She faces a very uncertain future with three children (two in grade school) while remaining committed to husband John Edwards’ presidential run. Despite her circumstances, she speaks hopefully of managing her disease while living life to its fullest.

I don’t know Elizabeth Edwards, but I am familiar with the feelings she is experiencing and the decisions she will be making. I live with advanced, metastatic lung cancer. At diagnosis in 1998, my oncologist explained that, left untreated, lung cancer would kill me in six months; with chemotherapy I could hope for a year or two. Like the Edwardses, my husband, Jamie, and I had young children—a 7-year-old son, Chris, and daughter Casey, 6—and we faced decisions that balanced the devastating news with the aching desire to preserve the normalcy of their lives.

Long ago I pushed aside any dreams of seeing grandchildren, but excellent medical care and extraordinarily good luck have allowed me to outline my prognosis and experience the pleasure of watching my children grow into interesting and vibrant teenagers. Given progressive disease and the ravages of treatment, however, my survival now is even more precarious. People are shocked to learn this news, but as Edwards says, “We’re all going to die. And I pretty much know what I’m going to die of now.” Despite having an incurable cancer, I challenge anyone to tell me exactly when my life will be stolen by this devastating disease. Statistics are no longer meaningful. My body whispers (OK, sometimes it yells) that I’m not as vibrant as I used to be (having only one remaining lung is a first clue). Yet, as my body fails me, my resolve to live fully and be a role model for my children becomes stronger. Not unlike Elizabeth Edwards.

I strive to spend a portion of each day tending to the Lung Cancer Online Foundation (lungcanceronline.org), a nonprofit I established to fund research and to provide patient information and support. Invariably, the bright spot in my day is getting lost in the jumble of our couch pillows with kids and dogs—laughing, reminiscing, watching old movies and reruns of Gilmore Girls. Our favorite family time is when Jamie prepares an exquisite meal meant to bring everyone together in joyful celebration of good food, great friends and life. These experiences of our home—the quotidian moments—are life affirming and give meaning to our days. But they could happen anywhere—even on a presidential campaign trail.

My life has been forever altered by the knowledge that I will die an untimely death from lung cancer. It is true that after a cancer diagnosis, experiences become richer and more essential. I can see a bluer sky, hear a sweeter sound of my daughter singing or my son’s flute. At times, the intensity of just being is overwhelming. Ongoing cancer treatment and its fallout have become part of the fabric of our lives. Each day is a victory. I am sustained by the people on this journey with me who have been generous, kind and have sacrificed much.

No one has been more profoundly affected than my children. John Edwards cannot yet know the wisdom of his words regarding how his children will cope with their mother’s cancer: “They’ve got to start learning to fly … on their own.” For our family, the all too early lesson in growing wings was excruciating; for me, it was my primary concern. But to have lived long enough to see Chris and Casey as young adults is to know that not only can my children fly—they can soar.

Karen DeLong Parles ’81, lives in Setauket, N.Y., with husband Jamie Parles ’81 and their two children and four dogs.
THE NEXT BIG DIG
Almost 10 years in the planning, the Stetson-Sawyer project got under way in March when blasting and earthmoving equipment began opening the foundation hole for the North Academic Building. This new classroom and office structure will stand behind the current Sawyer Library; excavation for the South Academic building on the Main Street side of Sawyer is to start immediately after reunion.

This work represents the first step in an elaborate four-year construction plan, which is to cost an estimated $128 million. After completion of the two faculty office and classroom buildings by fall 2008, the schedule calls for the demolition of the post-1923 additions to the rear of Stetson Hall and the construction of a new combined library and IT facility.

Beginning in spring 2008, most holdings in the Chaplin Library and College Archives will be sent to offsite storage. Frequently requested materials will be moved to temporary quarters, where special collections staffs will continue to provide access. Some items from the Chaplin Library, including the College’s collection of founding documents (among them a Declaration of Independence), will be on view in the Williams College Museum of Art during the construction period.

The original Stetson Hall and its new addition will become home to the new Sawyer Library, the Center for Media Initiatives, the special collections libraries, faculty offices and classrooms. The project will culminate with demolition of the current Sawyer in 2011 to order to create an open common bounded by the Paresky Center, the Freshman Quad, the new academic buildings and Chaplin Hall.

For more information on any of these stories, visit www.williams.edu and enter the topic into the search field.

PARESKY MAILROOM NAMED FOR JESSY H. PARK
Since 1980, Jessy Park has worked in the College’s mailroom; on May 10 her long service was honored with the dedication of the new facility at Paresky in her name.

The daughter of Clara Claiborne Park, an emerita lecturer in English, and David Park, professor of physics, emeritus, Jessy Park is the subject of two books by Claiborne Park that recount the challenges posed by Jessy’s autism. Jessy is also an artist, and her detailed,

continued on page 4

They Said:

“I’ll also be talking about the definition of success and what that means, because I think society’s definition and the true definition are not always compatible.”
—Katie Couric, 2007 commencement speaker, anticipating her words to Williams students. Record. 5.9.07

“If you can’t handle diversity, you can’t be as good as you should be.”
—John Amaechi, former NBA player, the league’s first openly gay athlete and keynote speaker at Gay Pride Days. Record. 5.2.07

“The primary cause of human desecration in Darfur is no longer violence, but what I would call genocide by attrition.”
—Eric Reeves ’72, professor of English at Smith College and Sudan researcher, speaking at Bronfman Auditorium. Record. 4.18.07

“For me the timetable and the benchmark rhetoric sound eerily familiar to the kind of things that people said about Dien.”
—Robert Brigham, professor of history at Vassar College, speaking at the Griffin Hall conference, “The New Vietnam War Revisionism.” Record. 3.7.07
SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMNI FUND AND PARENTS FUND

As of early May, 14,500 Williams alumni (62 percent) and 1,400 parents had given a record-breaking $12 million to this year’s Alumni Fund and Parents Fund, key components of The Williams Campaign. Since the campaign’s public launch in 2003, annual giving through the alumni and parents funds has increased by more than 50 percent, and nine of every 10 campaign contributors make their gifts through these two programs.

“Alumni Fund and Parents Fund donors have given us the financial flexibility to implement critical campaign initiatives,” says President Schapiro, “from enlarging the faculty to increasing the number of tutorials to undertaking major building projects. Once all campaign initiatives are completely in place, continued annual giving will sustain them for years to come.”

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THREE WATSONS FOR WILLIAMS SENIORS

Of the 50 Thomas J. Watson Fellowships awarded this year, three went to graduates of the College: Casey Drosehn of Newark, Del., Auyon Mukharji of Kansas City, Kan., and Wei Ren of Beijing, China.

The one-year grants, awarded for independent study and travel outside the United States, will enable Ren to pursue her study of Chinese artists in exile in Europe and Australia, while Mukharji will examine the intermingling of traditional music and culture in Dublin, Rio de Janeiro and Istanbul. Drosehn’s research into the life histories of the “Eastern European Babushki” will take her to Ukraine, Romania, Hungary and Montenegro to interview women born before World War II.

COLLEGE’S NEW CATHOLIC CHAPLAIN

On July 1, Father Gary Caster will become the College’s first full-time Catholic chaplain. His responsibilities will include presiding over the sacramental and liturgical lives of the Catholic students, as well as advising the Catholic student organization and offering individual counsel and spiritual direction.

Caster arrives from Illinois, where he was assistant to the Bishop of Peoria. He previously served students at Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Eureka College and Bradley University.

SUPPORTING CDE FELLOWS

Each year some 25 practicing economists from developing countries attend the one-year master’s program at Williams’ Center for Development Economics (CDE), then return home to serve their nations. CDE alumni include two prime ministers, five ambassadors, five central bank governors, numerous ministers,
deputy ministers and permanent secretaries. But a post-Cold War reduction in funding from sources such as USAID has threatened to put a CDE education out of reach for many outstanding candidates.

Thanks to a $1 million gift from Jim Mabie ’57 P’83 ’91, in honor of his 50th reunion, a new endowed fellowship will strengthen CDE’s internal resources, making the program and its students less dependent on external financial aid.

“If you look out over the next 25 years, I think a substantial part of the world’s economic growth will happen in Asia, Africa and Latin America,” says Mabie, a partner in the Chicago investment firm William Blair & Co. “Anything that can be done to enhance the quality of economic development in these regions will be good for us all, and CDE graduates clearly will be instrumental in leading that growth.”

NORMAN SCOTT ’09
NATIONAL BUTTERFLY CHAMPION

Even months later, Norman Scott’s senses tingle when he recalls the moment of his national championship swim in the 100-yard butterfly in March. His victory was as surprising as it was sensational. Barely a qualifier, Scott found his form when it mattered most after a subpar sophomore season that got off to a slow start following a bicycle accident in the fall.

Seeded 18th, Scott began his move in the preliminaries, finishing fourth in 49.2 seconds, almost two seconds faster than his fifth-place time in the NESCAC final two weeks earlier. In the exhilarating final, Scott swam 49.05 to win the national title on a Division III season-best time that also set a new school and conference record.

“He just put together almost the perfect swim,” coach Steven Kuster said.

Scott remembers every moment vividly—his relaxed feeling in the waiting room before the meet, the excitement of the crowd, his father in the stands, his position and his thoughts and the way he recalled his coaches’ guidance through each 25-yard lap.

“When I looked up at the scoreboard I was just in shock,” he said. “I was just so happy at that point. I saw my coaches jumping, my teammates cheering, my dad smiling ear to ear. It’s just something I’m never going to forget.”

BASEBALL ended its season with a 27-9 record, the NESCAC title and advanced to the NCAA tournament. In MEN’S CREW, the varsity eight won the Grand Final at the Occoquan Sprint in Virginia and took home the bronze at the New England Championships. WOMEN’S CREW advanced to the Div. III Rowing Championships in Oak Ridge, Tenn., qualifying for the NCAAs for the fifth time in six years. MEN’S GOLF captured the 10th straight Little Three title. WOMEN’S GOLF, in only their third year of varsity play, qualified for the NCAA Tournament, finishing 10th in a field of 20. MEN’S LACROSSE earned an 8-6 record, including their first win over Middlebury in 14 years, and advanced to their first NESCAC semifinal game. WOMEN’S LACROSSE completed the year at 6-8 then shocked second-seeded Trinity 14-13 in the first round of the NESCAC tournament on the road. SOFTBALL went 20-16, winning the Little Three and the NESCAC West Division titles for the seventh year in a row before losing in the NESCAC semifinals. MEN’S TENNIS finished at 16-7, reaching the NCAA quarterfinals for the 11th consecutive year. WOMEN’S TENNIS, in Julie Greenwood’s ’96 final season as head coach, went 19-6, including a win over Pomona in the NCAA quarterfinals. MEN’S TRACK AND FIELD won its fifth straight New England title, while WOMEN’S TRACK AND FIELD won its seventh consecutive New England title and then became the first Div. III team to win the All-New England title at Dartmouth against Div. I, II and III teams. As for ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 171 Ephs earned NESCAC All-Academic honors last year.
BEFORE THEY FLOAT AWAY

With a new day can come forgetfulness, but on March 9, the Williams community awoke to 380 memories.

In an exploration of place and recollection, students in the ARTS 200/Post-Studio Practice class solicited the site-specific remembrances of fellow students, faculty and staff. Tyler Auer ’07, Katie Josephson ’07, Gurcag Payraz ’07, Kim Ulmer ’07 and Eve Strecker ’09 greeted early risers with balloons placed where the memories had been formed, each one attached to a note card. Here’s a sampling:

“We ate snowflakes in October.”  Bayerweather

“This is where I decided that art was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.”  Brooks-Rogers Auditorium

“This is where I wore a dress made of 100 feet of garden hose and was proud of it.”  Agard

“This is where we fought for the first time. . . . Little did I know there would be two years to go.”  Hopkins Hall

“Where I found my voice.”  WCFM

“This is where, on my birthday, a boy I didn’t know told me I was fat.”  Mission Park

“This is where I first decided I wanted to go to Williams.”  Stetson Hall

Reliant upon helium, “The Balloon Project” proved more fleeting than the anonymous memories. By morning the balloons were gone—but the shared recollections remained, enlivened by the fresh memory of the flighty elegance of hundreds of childhood-red balloons.

CAROLINE DOCTOR, TRACK CO-CAPTAIN

Few student-athletes at Williams College carried the level of responsibility in 2006-07 that Caroline Doctor ’07 shouldered during the outdoor track and field season this spring.

A co-captain on a team expected to contend for the first national championship in the sport in school history, Doctor handled it with a shrug and a smile—and with one great performance after another.

Competing in the long jump and triple jump, Doctor set new standards in at least one of her events week after week, beginning with the Williams Relays on April 14 and continuing through the all-New England championships on May 12. That included a school record and Division III national season-best 40 feet, 4.75 inches in the triple jump at the Little 3 Championships on April 21. “It seems the bigger the meet, the better she gets,” coach Ralph White said. “She definitely can rise to the occasion.”

She does it by ignoring the occasion. “Any meet, whether it’s nationals or a meet we have here, I’m always going in with big expectations,” she said. “I don’t think it ever changes. If I’m performing well at a small meet, then it will inspire somebody to go out and perform well.”

Those leadership qualities are one reason the Ephs have been among the nation’s best programs, finishing second in the 2005 indoor and 2006 outdoor seasons and capturing the national indoor title last winter.
A Time in My Life

by Karen DeLong Parles ’81

We are nothing alike and yet we are the same. Elizabeth Edwards’ breast cancer has returned in her bones and is considered incurable. This development is sad and more than a little bit scary. She faces a very uncertain future with three children (two in grade school) while remaining committed to husband John Edwards’ presidential run. Despite her circumstances, she speaks hopefully of managing her disease while living life to its fullest.

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THE Art of Life
When Sara Murphy wore her pearls to the beach, she couldn’t have known what she set in motion.

Along with her husband, Gerald, and their three children, the beautiful Mrs. Murphy moved to France after World War I to escape the suffocating swirl of New York society. A new friend and neighbor, Pablo, a man who himself had little taste for accepted social mores, took note of Sara’s choice of sunbathing accessories at the tiny beach they shared at Cap d’Antibes. Picasso promptly sketched a woman in pearls, a look he would employ in a range of drawings and neoclassical paintings.

Some years later, working on the first draft of the novel that would become Tender Is the Night, F. Scott Fitzgerald named his main characters after his friends Sara and Gerald. Perhaps it is unsurprising that, in the finished book, the renamed protagonist, Nicole Diver, wears her pearls on the beach, too.

But the pearls are not the point; the Murphys are.

The couple did not set out to become or to inspire artists, yet they managed to do both. Walking past a Parisian gallery in 1921, Gerald was stunned by his first viewing of canvasses by Picasso, Georges Braque and Juan Gris. On returning to their apartment, he told Sara, “If that’s painting, it’s what I want to do.” And so he did, exhibiting his work in Paris to the admiration of critics and other artists. His new friend Fernand Léger commented, “Gerald Murphy [is] the only American painter in Paris.”

Lured to the Riviera by Gerald’s Yale friend Cole Porter, the Murphys purchased a modest villa in 1924. At the time, few rich Europeans summered at Cap d’Antibes. But the Murphys brought East Hampton beach culture to their adopted home, and their multi-national friends embraced a refreshing new life of screen doors, beach cabanas and fun in the sun.
The Murphys spent much of the 1920s at the Villa America, a time that proved to be the happiest of their lives. They made their home a welcoming place for a diverse list of American guests, including the Hemingways (Ernest, along with wives one and two), Dorothy Parker, poet Archibald MacLeish, novelist John Dos Passos and playwright Philip Barry. The rich cultural life they lived in France included interactions with Igor Stravinsky, Erik Satie, Russian dance impresario Sergei Diaghilev, Jean Cocteau and a who’s who of contemporary painters. The idyll at Villa America came abruptly to an end in 1929 when the Murphys’ youngest child, Patrick, was diagnosed with tuberculosis.

In the past, Gerald and Sara Murphy have been memorialized in print, notably by Calvin Tomkins’ essay in The New Yorker “Living Well is the Best Revenge” (1962) and in Amanda Vaill’s book Everybody Was So Young (1999). But a forthcoming exhibition at the Williams College Museum of Art takes a different angle of approach. The brainchild of Deborah Rothschild, senior curator of modern and contemporary art at the museum, “Making It New: The Art and Style of Sara and Gerald Murphy” will employ more than 50 paintings and a varied array of archival materials, including photographs, letters, music, books, manuscripts and other objects in an exploration of the context and the interplay between the couple, their influential friends and the emerging movement that came to be called Modernism. A catalog for the show, complete with nine essays by a range of scholars, will be published by the University of California Press, Berkeley.

Many familiar faces will be on hand, both on the gallery walls and in two documentary films made for the exhibition. The Villa America became a locus for a generation of expatriates, and dozens of photographic images and other ephemera will recall the Murphys’ intimate relations with their friends and the art they created. The artists represented will include Gris, Picasso, Man Ray and Léger, but central to the exhibition are paintings by Gerald Murphy. All of his seven surviving canvases will be on view. Murphy’s work, drawing upon machine and consumer imagery of the time, anticipated Pop Art.

Sara Murphy was unpretentious and direct. (“She is never coy,” observed her husband.) While she was forever comfortable in her own skin, Gerald was enamored of costume—he worked as a set designer for the Diaghilev ballet troupe—and, in his personal life, he calculated the casual and the formal alike. He saw life as a kind of theatrical adventure, and he always dressed for the occasion. But the Murphys, despite their repeated appearances in the art of their time, were more than merely stylish and decorative. Beneath the patina
and panache and a fairy-tale family life, Sara and Gerald Murphy seem to have been a warm and welcoming presence in a time of remarkable artistic, social and intellectual change. They were peripheral actors, to be sure, particularly when seen in the larger context of widely influential friends such as Picasso, Hemingway, Fitzgerald and Cole Porter. Yet the Murphys—as host and hostess and, more importantly, as catalysts—brought a style and manner to the so-called “Lost Generation” that is essential to the culture of the era.

Making it new: the art and style of Sara and Gerald Murphy will be on view from July 8 to Nov. 11, 2007 at the Williams College Museum of Art. The exhibition is the centerpiece of a range of events in a manner the energetic and eclectic Murphys themselves would have appreciated. A newly commissioned play, Villa America by Crispin Whittell, will be in performance at the ‘62 Center for Theatre and Dance, produced by the Williamstown Theatre Festival, July 11-22.

In keeping with the College’s emphasis on interdisciplinary learning, a series of gallery talks will explore the Murphys’ tastes in literature, dance, food and theater. Other activities will include a symposium (Sept. 15), a family festival (July 14) and workshops for local teachers, providing a curriculum that blends history, art and literature.

“Making It New” will travel to the Yale University Art Gallery (Feb. 26-May 4, 2008) and the Dallas Museum of Art (June 8-Sept. 14, 2008).

For more information, visit www.wcma.org.

At last, the April showers ended, leaving the Paresky Center posed beneath a crystal-line sky. The façade was no longer obscured by scaffolding; gone was the assemblage of pick-up trucks that had encircled the building site since groundbreaking in November 2004. On that picture-perfect, welcome-to-the-Berkshires spring day, these photographs were taken of the College’s new student center.

Just a few weeks after its opening, Paresky had become a daily destination for both students and faculty. Like its revered but outmoded predecessor, Baxter Hall, the Paresky Center contains a dining area, the campus mailroom and a snack bar, all on the ground level. But the 72,000-square-foot building is also home to student life offices, state-of-the-art kitchens and a bakery, two upstairs lounges, the chaplain’s office, a 150-seat auditorium in the basement, meeting rooms, the ‘82 Grill (a pizza pub), and other spaces. At the core of the building is Baxter Hall, named in honor of the building’s predecessor, a cavernous

Photography by Roger Straus III
central space with a somewhat rustic feel thanks to its exposed timberframe and massive Vermont slate chimney.

Designed by Polshek Partnership Architects of New York, the new center bears the name of David Paresky ’60 and his wife, Linda. The $44.5 million building incorporates elements of green design in its mix of steel, glass and local materials. It is a blend of vernacular elements—the tower reminds some of the silos once so commonplace in the valley—with an abstracted geometry of brackets and revealed structure. One hears mostly Oohs and Ahhs as people react to the building, and the energy of the place is unmistakable. As the photographs in the pages that follow suggest, the newest building on campus has become a focus for the college’s diverse population. Here students, faculty, staff and visitors meet to eat, study, engage in a range of activities, relax and, of course, exchange ideas.

Roger Straus’ photographs have appeared in numerous books, including the forthcoming Houses of the Founding Fathers.
Frank Lloyd Williamstown? The building may be clad in familiar brick and stone—materials so often used at Williams in the past—but there are Wrightian touches, too, with the long, low overhangs, a rigorous scheme of grids and the elliptical tower.

Coffee hour in the Lee Snack Bar, located on the main floor of Paresky’s tower.

Like a vector, the angular sidewalk points to Paresky from Chapin Hall Drive.
Baxter’s old bow is echoed in the curve of the tower at Paresky. Solar shades integrated into the design of windows on the building’s south side reduce the solar effect in summer but allow direct sun in the colder months.

A quiet moment downstairs in Luetkemeyer Lounge, often the site of boisterous games of foosball and Ping-Pong.

Paresky is proving to be a place where students come to eat, socialize and, sometimes, simply to relax and recharge.

The central axis of the building extends from the green out front through to Park Street. Baxter Hall is on the left, the mailroom, right.
In Baxter Hall, the movement is constant as students, faculty and a stream of visitors come and go.

In the main dining room at Paresky, the hardwood floors—here and elsewhere in the building—are of local cherry.

At nightfall, the building becomes a beacon at the core of the campus.
As seen from the south balcony, the light slashing through the skylights illuminates the great open space of Baxter Hall below. The view is across to the opposite balcony and the Office of Campus Life.

In a bow to Paresky’s predecessor (which was named after former president James Phinney Baxter III ’14) the new building’s central space has been dubbed Baxter Hall. Furnished with large upholstered chairs and area rugs, the room lends itself to constant rearrangement—for study, contemplation or even a fireside conversation before the towering masonry mass of Vermont slate. The banner celebrates an ongoing energy-saving contest at the College.

All five of the meeting rooms at Paresky have traditional blackboards as well as A/V equipment.

Patterns of use: Yes, Baxter Hall has become the College’s so-called living room, but, in a matter of hours, it can also be transformed into the site of a job fair with opportunities galore.
Most Americans agree that climate change is real.

Next question: How can we shift to a low-carbon economy?

“If I don’t kill myself,” former vice president Al Gore mutters as he steps onto a lift in the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. Pushing a button, he rises from the stage with a clunk and a whir, his path tracking a graph that shows human activities boosting atmospheric carbon dioxide levels above anything known in hundreds of thousands of years.

As millions of viewers sat in theaters watching the man who, like him or not, has become the face of global warming, nature was busy echoing the film’s message. According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2006 was the fifth-warmest year in a century, exceeded only by 2005, 1998, 2002 and 2003. Then 2007 opened with trees budding in January across the Northeast and Midwest.

In February the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), an expert body created to advise national governments, called global warming “unequivocal,” concluding with at least 90 percent certainty that human activities since 1750 had warmed the planet. With supporting evidence in the daily news—melting Arctic ice, heavy rainfalls and growing hurricane intensity—it seemed like a foregone conclusion when *An Inconvenient Truth* won an Academy Award a few weeks later.

The pace and ultimate impact of global warming remain uncertain, but the public has accepted that humans are changing the climate. Recent polls show that a majority of Americans view climate change as a top-tier environmental problem and, more surprisingly, are willing to pay for solutions such as more expensive electricity from low-carbon sources.

By Jennifer Weeks ’83
THE LEAP
But moving onto a lower-carbon energy path also means reducing our use of fossil fuels—the source of most U.S. greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions—and scaling up renewable energy sources. Enormous capital investments are at stake, and consumer preferences will be tested.

Who will drive these changes? Major cuts in U.S. GHG emissions, which have risen steadily since 1990, will require many forms of leadership, including analysis from scientists, policy direction from government leaders and investments and technical innovation from the private sector. Williams and other colleges and universities will also contribute by supporting climate research and educating future global citizens.

“There are immense challenges, and we have to get started now,” says Mayo Shattuck ’76, president and CEO of Constellation Energy, a Fortune 200 company that generates electricity from fossil, nuclear and renewable fuels.

“A huge migration toward clean fuels will have to take place. Demand management and energy efficiency should be priorities, because there’s no more cheap power—we can’t build our way out of this situation.”

SEEING AND BELIEVING

“Many students still seem to believe that there’s a big debate over climate change,” says Heather Stoll ’94, assistant professor of geosciences at Williams. “That’s surprising and frustrating because in the scientific community that debate isn’t really going on any more.”

For scientists, global warming does still pose two stiff tests. First, earth’s climate system is fiendishly complex, with ocean currents, atmospheric circulation patterns, topography, vegetation and variations in earth’s orbit interacting to create weather and climate. Oceanographers, meteorologists, atmospheric chemists, geologists and other specialists have been working since the 1950s to understand climate processes. Using air bubbles in polar ice cores and pollen buried in lake beds, scientists have estimated global temperatures and
atmospheric composition going back more than half a million years.

Researchers use this information to program global circulation models that look backward and forward, replicating past climate patterns and predicting future changes. The process is slow, iterative and data-intensive. “Getting information from climate models takes a huge amount of computational time to depict things like the levels of sunlight striking every segment of the earth. It involves lots of simplifications, and you can never get them perfectly right,” says Stoll.

Thus the second big challenge for scientists is to explain less-than-conclusive findings to audiences that want certitude. “Most scientists are cautious and put error bars on their figures, but people feel more confident listening to authorities who are very definite about what they say,” says Stoll. “The IPCC has had to walk a thin line between getting the big-picture message across and making the models’ limitations clear.”

In fact the IPCC has steadily sharpened its conclusions since reporting in 1990 that the world was warming. The panel’s new report estimates that global temperatures are likely to rise between 1 degree and 6.4 degrees Celsius by 2100 if GHG emissions keep rising at or above current rates, with impacts including heat waves, heavy precipitation, shrinking snow cover and more intense hurricanes.

“Scientific communication is getting better, but obviously we haven’t done enough,” concludes Stoll.

**CHANGING THE POLITICAL CLIMATE**

Government officials are still divided over climate policy, although momentum is building for national regulations. It’s been a long time coming, as Gore ruefully admits in *Inconvenient Truth*, looking back at hearings that he convened in the 1980s. “I actually thought and believed that the story would be compelling enough to cause a real sea change in the way that Congress reacted to that issue,” Gore muses. “I thought they would be startled. And they weren’t.”

Why the disconnect? Climate science was evolving, with legitimate debates among scientists about what the data showed. Even when findings predicted serious effects, politicians knew that the economic impacts of regulation would be felt much sooner than physical damage from storms or heat waves—and they saw political costs in imposing higher gasoline or electricity prices. Meanwhile, industries opposed to GHG reductions created lobbying coalitions that amplified doubts about what the science meant.

The Clinton administration supported international action on climate change—most notably by signing the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which required industrialized nations to make binding GHG emission cuts—while President Bush contends that the United States can reduce its carbon emissions intensity (the ratio of greenhouse gases emitted to economic output) through voluntary initiatives. Still, total U.S. emissions continue to rise. Many of the Democrats who now control the House and Senate, as well as some prominent Republicans like Arizona Senator John McCain, support mandatory curbs. And in April the Supreme Court ruled that the Environmental Protection Agency had authority under the Clean Air Act (contradicting EPA’s interpretation) to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from vehicles.

Mark Udall ’72, who has represented Colorado’s 2nd District in Congress for five terms, says that the hardest thing about shaping climate policy
"We rely on the federal government, but we are also relying on ourselves. We’re acting as a new country.”
—Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger

is finding bipartisan consensus about the federal government’s role. “There isn’t agreement yet that federal action is necessary, let alone what form it should take. But with the new IPCC findings, it’s getting easier to make a case in spite of uncertainties about economic impacts,” says Udall, who serves on the House Science and Natural Resources committee.

State and local officials deal directly with issues like rising sea levels and regional air pollution (which will worsen in many places as temperatures rise), so many of them are out ahead of Congress. California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has signed legislation capping state GHG emissions and calls climate change an opportunity for California to design and market clean technologies. “We rely on the federal government, but we are also relying on ourselves. We’re acting as a new country,” Schwarzenegger told Newsweek in April. Ten northeast states have created an emissions trading system to reduce GHGs from electric power plants, and 11 states are in the process of adopting a California law regulating global warming emissions from cars.

“States are leading because they believe the problem is urgent, and they are filling the federal policy vacuum,” says Eileen Claussen, president of the Pew Center on Global Climate Change and former assistant secretary of state. “With changing politics and growing awareness, it’s plausible that the United States will have a mandatory climate policy by 2008 and likely that we’ll have one by 2010.”

CORPORATE COOPERATION

With the science growing clearer and state and regional controls mushrooming, many corporate leaders see national legislation as inevitable. Some are asking Congress to act now so that they can make informed decisions about future investments. In January the U.S. Climate Action Partnership, a coalition including Alcoa, DuPont, General Electric and Caterpillar Inc., called for prompt mandatory limits to slow and reverse the growth of GHG emissions on a rapid scale. Addressing climate change, the group said, “will create more economic opportunities than risks for the U.S. economy.”

Many early pollution controls required certain kinds of equipment on factories, cars and other emission sources. Today, corporations strongly prefer market-based solutions that set targets and let regulated industries find the most efficient ways to meet them. National climate-change controls will probably be a cap-and-trade system that limits total GHG emissions, distributes emission allowances among sources and lets companies sell any extra allowances to sources that need them to stay within their limits. This approach has successfully reduced air pollutants that cause acid rain.

“Once Congress sets the caps, the market will work to reduce emissions by rewarding companies that invest in innovative technologies and shut down inefficient plants,” says Continental Energy’s Mayo Shattuck. “The system is designed to meet a limit while allowing companies to transition from one kind of big, hard asset to another.” Managing this shift is a major concern for companies that invest billions of dollars in plants designed to run for 30 to 50 years. “Our capital is limited, and our customers expect that their lights will always go on, so we don’t want to make many mistakes in deploying our resources,” says Shattuck.

Consumer preferences will influence the shift to cleaner technologies, since no manufacturer wants to market low-carbon products that won’t sell. U.S. automakers long argued that Americans
weren’t interested in small cars, and indeed low gasoline prices spurred heavy sales of low-mileage SUVs and light trucks in the 1990s. But as world oil prices started to rise in 2001, American car makers have been losing market share to brands like Toyota that emphasize fuel efficiency.

For some companies climate change is an opportunity to introduce new products and act on their environmental values. “We can see interest rising within our own customer base, and it’s exciting. Here’s a global issue, and customers are demanding that we move on it,” says Shattuck. “We’re trying to be responsive in terms of the fuels we use and by educating customers about energy efficiency and demand reduction. Everybody has a role in this—consumers, government and the private sector.”

LEARNING TO FACE FACTS

Any effective U.S. climate policy will take decades to work, as the nation’s fleets of factories, power plants and vehicles shift to low-carbon sources like wind energy and biofuels. Will future leaders be ready to operate in a carbon-limited world? The growth of green campus programs at U.S. colleges and universities is one hopeful sign.

Green campus initiatives help catalyze measures such as energy conservation, recycling and mass transit. The strongest programs infuse environmental considerations into campus operating policies, from building design to dining room food sources. Beyond practical benefits like reduced utility costs, these programs also serve an important educational function. By involving students in energy audits and similar initiatives, they highlight the environmental impacts of actions that can seem minor—for example, choosing one brand of appliance over another.

With good reason, climate change is becoming a focal point for many campus environmental programs (see President Schapiro’s discussion of the College’s sustainability initiative, page 2). “It’s a global problem with immediate and long-term impacts, and it helps prioritize actions,” says Sarah Hammond Creighton, manager of Tufts University’s Climate Initiative and author of *Greening the Ivory Tower* (MIT Press, 1998). Reducing GHG emissions produces benefits that are easy to measure and monetize—for example, by calculating avoided fuel costs. It also gives schools a way to show concern about how their actions will affect future generations. Most GHGs remain in the atmosphere for decades, especially carbon dioxide, the main driver of climate change, so there is a direct connection between fossil fuel consumption today and future global warming.

Climate change raises broad moral issues about culture, equity and responsibility that have yet to be addressed in any conclusive way. Which countries should bear more costs for reducing GHG emissions: the developed countries that have caused most of today’s warming or newly emerging economies like India and China that will soon be the biggest sources? Why do many consumers equate the American way of life with owning big homes and driving big cars? Academia is arguably better positioned than any other sector to grapple with these overarching issues. As former Harvard University president Derek Bok argues in *Universities and the Future of America* (Duke University Press, 1990), “Universities may not have any special capacity to prescribe solutions for the nation’s ills. But they are better equipped than any other institution to produce the knowledge needed to arrive at effective solutions and to prepare the highly educated people required to carry them out.”

Jennifer Weeks ’83 (jw@jenniferweeks.com) is a freelance writer living in Watertown, Mass. “Here’s a global issue, and customers are demanding that we move on it. … Everybody has a role in this—consumers, government and the private sector.”
—Mayo Shattuck
WHO WROTE THIS BOOK, ANYWAY?

by Zelda Stern

“Autobiographies are always subjective,” observes Soledad Fox, assistant professor of Spanish and comparative literature at Williams. “You can never trust them, especially when they’re political.” Yet upon setting out to research the life and memoir of Constanza de la Mora, one of the most intriguing figures of the Spanish Civil War, Fox had little notion of what surprises lay in store.

A wealthy Spanish aristocrat, de la Mora renounced her life of privilege to become spokesperson for the democratically elected Republican government that General Francisco Franco had ousted. When Spain’s civil war forced her to flee to Mexico, she continued to seek international support for the Spanish Republican cause. De la Mora’s chief weapon in that campaign—and the starting point for Fox’s research—was her life story.

Written in English and published in the U.S. in 1939, de la Mora’s memoir, In Place of Splendor, is an account of her conversion from socialist to fighter for democracy. A best-seller, the book won the backing of prominent figures such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Ernest Hemingway. Despite this, the U.S. government refused to lift its embargo of arms to Spain. De la Mora died in 1950 without realizing her dream of overthrowing Franco.

In 2004, a Fulbright grant enabled Fox to research de la Mora’s past. As a scholar of autobiography and exile, Fox consulted American and Spanish archives and interviewed nearly 100 people in Spain, Mexico, the U.S., France and Russia. Unexpectedly, her work led her to both FBI and Comintern files and to the finding that, like many supporters of the Spanish Republic, de la Mora...
was an active communist, a fact unmentioned in her memoir for fear of alienating American readers.

Then Fox made an even more startling discovery: the writer of *In Place of Splendor* was not Constanza de la Mora but Ruth McKenney, author of *My Sister Eileen* and herself a Communist sympathizer, who ghosted the "autobiography" to help sway American opinion. The colloquial language of the memoir had led Fox to speculate that de la Mora had help, "but the fact that she didn't write it at all and carried on for the rest of her life as if she had come as a complete surprise to me."

After the intriguing revelation of McKenney's role—"I'm a literary scholar working on a memoir and I find the 'author' didn't write it!"—Fox soon came to terms with her findings, publishing them in her own book, *Constancia de la Mora in War and Exile* (Sussex Academic Press, February 2007).

"Ultimately, it doesn't matter," says Fox. "She bet everything on defending the Spanish Republic. She gave up everything she had. She spent the rest of her life in exile. Her book was one more attempt to build support to resist Franco."

"De la Mora was not the writer," concludes Fox, "yet she was not a fraud."

A sampling of appearances by Williams professors outside the College's local news area, compiled by the Office of Public Affairs. For a complete list, visit www.williams.edu/admin/news/inthenews.php.

In her "Lessons" column on the New York Times Education page on March 21, Susan Engel, psychology lecturer and director of education programs, described the balance of inclusion and exclusion among a group of second graders. "Even without a reason," she reported, "children of this age are naturally drawn to creating groups that exclude."

In his March 1 essay about Confucianism in an era when marriage is in decline, Sam Crane, professor of political science, wrote in the China Daily, "What matters for Confucian morality is sincere enactment of one's personal duties to close social relations. If those most intimate bonds are not ratified by a formal recognition of marriage, so be it. It is more important to actually perform duty every day than to worry about official acknowledgement of a certain relationship."

A moment to remember? As USA Today reported, a rare arithmetical sequence has come and gone. The time was 02:03:04 a.m. and the date: 05.06.07—which amounted to a one-two-three-four-five-six moment. "There are numerical patterns in nature all around us," said Edward Burger, professor of mathematics. "Some are more significant and some are more beautiful than others. And this one is a silly one."

In a Wall Street Journal article concerning fears that Americans are not saving enough for retirement, David Love, economics professor, observed, "More Americans than I would have expected are doing OK." The Feb. 20 article points out Love's view that the savings embedded in home ownership are to be seen as key retirement assets.

Marc Lynch, professor of political science, told U.S. News & World Report for an April 16 article, "We don't listen to the terms in which Muslims are carrying on their debates. Or we listen through American filters."
"The third or fourth time I read The Lord of the Rings, I made myself read it aloud to slow myself down. I was reading too fast. I didn’t want it to end."
—Christina Scull

TAKEN BY TOLKIEN
by Zelda Stern

A book read in childhood or adolescence can cast a spell that lasts a lifetime. On separate continents and at different times, Wayne Hammond and Christina Scull read the words of Oxford philologist and fantasist John Ronald Reuel Tolkien and each was changed forever.

Hammond, assistant librarian of Williams’ Chapin Library of Rare Books since 1976, first read The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings as a teenager growing up in Cleveland, Ohio. His fascination with the saga of Middle-earth led him to collect books by and about Tolkien, then to write about him. Fellowship—and a ring—followed: As a member of the Tolkien Society he met Christina Scull, an Englishwoman whose own Tolkien collection and scholarship (stimulated by a transformative encounter with The Lord of the Rings when she was 13) rivaled his own. They married in 1994. A year later, Scull took early retirement from her job as librarian of Sir John Soane’s Museum in London and moved to Williamstown. Aided by their combined personal library of 15,000 volumes, the husband-wife team has been producing Tolkien publications ever since.

With Hammond writing evenings and weekends and Scull working on their books full time, they have edited a 50th-anniversary edition of The Lord of the Rings as well as Rowanandom and Farmer Giles of Ham (two of Tolkien’s children’s tales); created new, expanded indices for The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien and The Lord of the Rings; and authored J.R.R. Tolkien: Artist & Illustrator, The Lord of the Rings: A Reader’s Companion and the recently published, 2,300-page The J.R.R. Tolkien Companion and Guide, a two-volume work consisting of a lovingly detailed chronology of the author’s life and an encyclopedia of entries on the people, places and events that influenced his work as well as descriptions and discussions of his writings.

What is it about Tolkien’s writing that speaks so strongly to Hammond and Scull? She cites his “beautifully clear English” and “a world that is completely imagined.” She still hears “the archetypal resonances of his stories” and values their complexity. (They are not, she points out, “happily-ever-after; there is grief and loss.”) Of The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien’s masterpiece, Hammond says simply, “It’s a compelling story well told, by one of the masters of the English language.”

None of which explains why, of the millions of Tolkien admirers who share these sentiments, Scull and Hammond are among the select few who have spent years chronicling and annotating his genius. Perhaps the answer lies with their talents, temperaments and training. “You can’t be a good librarian unless you’re happy bringing things together and putting them in coherent order so that others can make use of them,” says Hammond. “You have to enjoy that kind of work, enjoy being in libraries and digging in archives. You can’t worry about being in or out of the sunshine.”

And so, exercising their own considerable powers, Scull and Hammond pursue their quest to shed ever more light on the wizard and wizardry that continue to hold them spellbound.
MORE FROM THE BOOKSHELF

He Almost Changed the World: The Life and Times of Thomas Riley Marshall. By David J. Bennett ’79. AuthorHouse, 2007. The biography of Woodrow Wilson’s vice president, who, when Wilson became disabled while in office, found himself at the center of one of the great constitutional crises in American history.

To Paris! 1914 Then and Now. By Granville M. Brumbaugh ’50, et al. Snake Nation Press, 2006. Maps and photographs of Europe during the first week of World War I and today build the basis for the authors’ contention that one military action could have shortened the war and prevented future 20th century atrocities.


Protecting the Poor: A microinsurance compendium. Edited by Craig Churchill ’86. ILO Publications, 2006. An overview of the many aspects of microinsurance, including product design, marketing, premium collection and governance.


Gender and Justice in Multicultural Liberal States. By Monique Devaux, assistant professor of political science. Oxford University Press, 2006. Explores the difficulties multicultural liberal nations face when confronted with competing political commitments to cultural rights and sexual equality.


Gotta Do Homework! By Richard Goldhammer ’82. Scholastic Inc., 2006. A study guide offering tips to help middle school students identify their individual strengths and weaknesses as learners.


LIFE OF THE MIND


Protecting Information: From Classical Error Correction to Quantum Cryptography. By Susan Loepp, associate professor of mathematics, and William K. Wootters, Barclay Jermain Professor of Natural Philosophy. Cambridge University Press, 2006. An introduction to error correction and cryptography that provides a context in which ideas from mathematics and physics meet.

Why Race Matters in South Africa. By Michael MacDonald, professor of political science. Harvard University Press, 2006. An account of how the transition to democracy in South Africa enfranchised blacks politically but without raising most of them from poverty.


The Backwash Squeeze & Other Improbable Feats: A Newcomer's Journey into the World of Bridge. By Edward McPherson '99. Harper Collins, 2007. The story behind the time-honored card game, told through the author's travels around the country to learn to play and introduce a new generation to the game of bridge.


The Tourmaline. By Paul Park, lecturer in English. Tor Books, 2006. The second installment in the "Princess of Romania" young adult series continues the fantasy story of Miranda Popescu, whose life is interrupted by the discovery that she is a princess in another time and place.


ON CD
