

C H A U T A U Q U A
PILLARS
OCTOBER 2007 CHAUTAUQUA, NY

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Pillars is published by the Chautauqua Foundation, Inc., Chautauqua, New York. Editor: Geof Follansbee; Design: Raymond Downey; Photos: Donna Campbell, Marie Corneulle, Bruce Fox and Roger J. Coda.

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A New Start for the Visual Arts

In the bright cacophony of music and motion that is summer at Chautauqua, it might only be the faint scent of linseed oil drifting from the Arts Quad that reminds us of another form of artistic expression that's happening more quietly on the grounds. "Not to put too blunt a point on it," says Chautauqua Foundation Board Chairman Lowell Strohl, "but historically, the visual arts have not received as much attention as the performing arts at Chautauqua, and that is reflected in facilities that have not been kept up to speed."



While facilities may have languished, the Chautauqua School of Art has continued to receive an abundance of impressive portfolios from far-flung applicants each year. Only 40 seats are available in the School's intensive nine-week program of painting, sculpture, ceramics, and drawing. Most recently these slots have gone to top undergraduate and graduate art students in the U. S. and from as far away as Sri Lanka, Vietnam, India, and Australia.

Says Art School Director Don Kimes, "The caliber of people that come here to study, lecture, exhibit, and serve as jurors for our shows in the last few years has been phenomenal. The School of Art actually has a much bigger reputation on the outside of the Institution than it has on the inside."

Recent and planned renovations to the visual arts facilities at Chautauqua will soon match the caliber of participants, and because of these dramatic enhancements, the relatively low profile of the visual arts on the grounds is likely to change profoundly. Faculty, staff, and students are excited.

"We have a focused vision for what the visual arts can mean at Chautauqua, and now we are stepping up to a new level," Kimes says. With the renovation of the west wing of the Arts Quad

completed, students this season were already charmed by the fresh, airy feel of the new space.

RESTORING THE ARTS QUAD

The Arts Quad, dating back to 1909, has literally begun to pull apart at the seams. The restoration of the west wing that began last winter required construction of a new foundation, which then allowed crews to shore up the structure itself. For a time the building was literally suspended above ground while a new foundation was excavated and laid. Workers then set doorframes at right angles once more so that doors would actually open and close, and they added a new roof and siding. The restoration of this one wing, however, only highlights the need for each of the other two flanks of the building to be restored.

"This entire building has been called one of the finest examples of Arts and Crafts architecture in the country," says Kimes. But parts of the floor in the painting and drawing wings of the building are

"The School of Art actually has a much bigger reputation on the outside of the Institution than it has on the inside."

— Don Kimes

not sitting on a foundation any longer. "The timbers underneath have rotted out and this building is literally sitting on the grass," Kimes says. He picks up a large wax crayon from a table and sets it on the floor. It rolls easily across the room to the wall without any help. "Nothing is level," he says. Before the restoration of the west wing, potters literally had to stop their wheels when someone crossed the room because the floors would bounce from the footsteps and ruin a spinning pot. Now the Joan R. Lincoln Ceramics Center has sturdy floors.



see **VISUAL ARTS** page 2

New faculty studios at the School of Art, a part of the Idea Campaign

“Maintaining vitality in each part of the mix here is important. That’s our uniqueness. Each art form enhances the others.”

— Lowell Strohl

VISUAL ARTS cont’d

What is striking is how delicate the architecture is in these lovely old structures and how straightforward the remaining restoration would be. Each wing is only a shell where art students regularly move interior walls, get messy, and seem to enjoy the simplicity of their space.

Beyond the tables of greenware drying under heat lamps, there’s another improvement behind the west wing that was just completed this winter. A construction crew moved two old voice studios, originally scheduled to be razed, from another part of the grounds. The builders cut the structures in half to create four new faculty studios now connected by handsome decking. The buildings are at once contemporary and completely in harmony with the Arts Quad. “It’s laid out as beautifully as any studio space I’ve seen,” says Kimes, “with translucent siding on the walls facing the Arts Quad and windows on the sides where everyone can see each other at work.” The faculty studios can accommodate all different media — from digital sculpture, to painting and printmaking.

Then came the pièce de résistance. Chautauquans Kirby Rodriguez and Blossom McBrier made possible the purchase of a new kiln. In March, this computer-driven innovation arrived on the grounds from Holland and was soon housed in its own, brand new steel-framed structure set safely at a distance from the hundred-year-old stick-built buildings.

“This state-of-the-art kiln room is the kind of facility that helps us all sleep better at night,” says Vice President and Program Director Marty Merkley. At temperatures in excess of 2,000 degrees, Chautauqua’s old kiln in the Arts Quad proper had been used each season for more firings in nine weeks than head ceramicist Jeffrey Greenham performs during the nine months he teaches at Fairview State University in West Virginia in the off season. Custom designed for the School of Art, the new kiln has a 30 foot capacity and offers the highest level of fuel efficiency and the lowest carbon footprint of any available in the current market.

IMPACT OF THE CCVA — ART SCHOOL MERGER

According to Don Kimes, the momentum behind all these capital improvements has come from both the generosity of donors and the long-awaited merger of the



A raft of pottery just removed from the computerized kiln and set out to cool behind the Arts Quad complex

Chautauqua Center for the Visual Arts (CCVA) and the School of Art that took place three years ago. Originally known as the Chautauqua Art Association, CCVA was run for nearly 50 years as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, independent of Chautauqua Institution. Coordination between CCVA and the School of Art was often a challenge. Turnover in gallery staff had been a recurring setback.

Now with all aspects of visual arts programming — the galleries, the school, and the lecture series — under the auspices of the Institution, there’s deeper collaboration and focus, more efficiency in staffing, and a unified vision and platform for fundraising.

An advisory committee, many of whom are former CCVA board members, still offers guidance to Kimes and his staff. “We have great people on the visual arts committee,” he says, noting that the group now operates more like the Opera Guild or Friends of the Theater at Chautauqua, which is a great asset, he says.

MORE IMPROVEMENTS TO COME

This fall, renovation efforts will turn to Wythe Avenue where a generous gift from Lowell and Becca Strohl will transform the headquarters of the Chautauqua Center for the Visual Arts. CCVA Gallery Director Judy Barie can barely contain her enthusiasm as a result of a very successful planning process. Every two or three weeks through the winter months last year, Charlie Heinz, Lois Jubeck, Kimes, and Barie worked with architects from the Design Alliance of Pittsburgh to conceive a renovation that, Barie says, “is at once Victorian on the outside and very contemporary with high ceilings and wonderful light on the inside.”

In addition to the renovation to the downstairs gallery, a new one thousand square foot gallery on the second floor of the new Strohl Center for the Visual Arts will feature museum-quality lighting and climate control, a dedicated security system, and inviting carpeting. The acoustical tile ceiling will be removed to expose the beautiful old trusses of

the original structure. High windows will be installed at the current ceiling level to create a diffuse light, filtered by a milky white fiber actually built into the window glass.

The second floor gallery will overlook the present gallery space, with both areas benefiting from the new windows and open ceiling. The side of the building will also be opened up to create a vestibule that will run half the length of the entire building and offer entrance from both the front and rear. The back side of the building will be extended a dozen feet, and a basement will be added below, to provide space for receiving and handling of archival exhibition materials and critical storage capacity. The rear of the Strohl Center, which faces the new white columns and terraced sculpture area, will remain as uncluttered, neutral space, permitting the display of large pieces of sculpture against the building as backdrop.

“We went pretty far out there in terms of design,” says Judy Barie, noting that at first the architects were trying to stay within their perceptions of the Chautauqua tradition, but finally revealed what they considered to be their most exciting ideas. The staff and the Strohls liked the plans.

According to Kimes, the renovation to CCVA will ultimately mean that Chautauqua can borrow more valuable pieces from top museums around the world for summer shows — Degas’s works on paper, for example. Already, the director of the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, having previewed the CCVA plans, told Kimes he would be glad to lend works to Chautauqua for this new facility. In addition, artists who have been reluctant to submit their work to be shown in the present galleries will soon be able to submit work without concern for temperature, light, and humidity.

“The renovations to CCVA represent a sizeable step forward with artists in the Chautauqua community and others from the outside,” Lowell Strohl confirms, adding that he hopes these physical enhancements will bring greater overall recognition to the role of the visual arts at the Institution. “Maintaining vitality in each part of the mix here is important. That’s our uniqueness. Each art form enhances the others.”

Plans for the renovation of Kellogg Hall, across the street from the Strohl Center, are also on the books

see **VISUAL ARTS** next page



FROM THE CEO

GEOF FOLLANSBEE

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Pillars*, a newsletter for Chautauqua's philanthropy community, published by the Chautauqua Foundation. Recognizing the essential role of philanthropy in the Institution's sustainability over time, the Chautauqua Foundation Board felt the need to create a distinctive vehicle to communicate directly and regularly with our family of faithful donors and volunteer leaders. Our aim here is to go a bit deeper: to share the stories behind the scenes — what it takes to keep Chautauqua going and how we're progressing with both program planning, operational innovations, and the various construction projects made possible by the Idea Campaign. We also want to lift up the stories of those who have been behind the gifts that make all these initiatives possible.

As we come to the close of the Chautauqua Idea Campaign, evidence of the campaign's impact and the strategic plan that preceded

it are everywhere on the grounds. In this first issue of *Pillars*, we look in the lead story at the influence on our visual arts programs of recent and forthcoming building renovations as made possible by the Idea Campaign.

In a regular department we're calling "Blueprints," we examine the challenges involved in financing critical upgrades to the Athenaeum Hotel.

In another regular feature we're calling "Outside the Gates," we'll consider the reach of Chautauqua in the off season, this time reviewing the September roundtable in Manhattan on the viability of partnerships between nonprofit content providers and for-profit media outlets and the recent partnership established with FORA.tv.

In "Backstage" we take an insider's look at just what an extraordinary feat was involved this season in bringing the one-hundred-plus members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus

together with the CSO and a raft of talented soloists to realize Maestro Uri Segal's long-held dream of presenting Verdi's *Otello* in concert at the Amp on July 28th.

Pillars will also lift up new and "well-seasoned" Chautauquans who have enhanced the capacity of the Institution in multiple ways — as donors, volunteers, board members, and advisers. Among those profiled in this issue are "First Generation" Chautauquans John and Kathy Milos. We also invited veteran chaplains James Forbes, Craig Barnes, and Barbara Brown Taylor to have a three-way conversation with us about what it means to be a Chautauquan.

And finally, we asked author, professor, and commentator on geopolitical and environmental issues, Harm de Blij, to keep a journal during his stay on the grounds in July which is reproduced in these pages.

We hope these stories and those to come in subsequent issues of *Pillars*

will deepen your awareness of the underpinnings of Chautauqua, its reach, scope, operations, and impact. In addition to inspiring pride and understanding, we also hope that *Pillars* will evoke questions and story ideas, which I welcome from you. You can direct your questions or ideas to gfolansbee@ciweb.org.

Wherever possible we'll also incorporate Internet links to reports, drawings, white papers, and other data where our readers can learn more on a given topic or person profiled.

Ultimately we at the Foundation are very aware that the "fifth" pillar of Chautauqua is comprised of generous individuals who volunteer their time, talents, and treasure to perpetuate this enterprise that is unequalled on the planet. This publication is, then, for all of you with our deepest appreciation.

— Geof Follansbee, CEO,
Chautauqua Foundation



A CCVA exhibition of glass and metal works by artists Ron Desmett and Kathleen Mulcahy entitled "Truth and Beauty." The piece in the foreground by Desmett is entitled "Self Portrait of a Middle Aged Man."



"Spinner" by Kathleen Mulcahy on display at the CCVA Gallery

VISUAL ARTS cont'd

— improvements which will include a subtle architectural tie-in with the Strohl Center, possibly by means of re-grading the side yard of Kellogg, raising the road some 18 inches, and continuing with stone or brick across the street to the front of the Strohl Center, around the side, and into the new sculpture garden at the rear. The sorely-needed Kellogg renovation will create climate-controlled gallery space and other areas suitable for public programs, while adding bathrooms and an

elevator. An additional \$1,000,000 is needed to complete the Kellogg renovation — a goal of the Chautauqua Idea Campaign, which ends with this calendar year.

Judy Barie is already imagining the possibilities with the addition of air-conditioned space in both facilities. She envisions dinners, musical events, and other kinds of gatherings at the renovated visual arts complex. Barie, who is a noted studio artist herself, explained that the addition of the sculpture garden in this complex

will raise the level of everything that happens in the visual arts at Chautauqua. The sculpture garden, made possible by a \$500,000 gift from Karin Johnson in memory of her deceased husband Mel, will present rotating installations each year.

For Don Kimes, the new start for the visual arts that is now unfolding is ultimately about being able to take the gallery program several notches up by means of museum grade facilities. "Quality is the vision, not

what's hot or fashionable in the art world. We simply want to be a place where things that are serious are taken seriously. Merging the old and new is what art does," Kimes concludes, "and that's also what we do very well at Chautauqua. This whole place is about blending the old with the new."

For his part, Lowell Strohl put it this way: "I am a big fan of those old buildings. To see them restored to my mind is art."

A Victorian Fit for the Twenty-First Century

The \$1.5 million in scheduled improvements is only half of the critical maintenance that will be required over the next five to ten years as identified in a structural analysis conducted by a Buffalo engineering firm two years ago, Stanton explained.

If it's July, it's probably the scent of fresh lilies that will wallop you first — that and the magnificent scale of it — the high ceilings, the warm lighting, the long lobby leading to the registration desk. To the well-seasoned Chautauquan, the Athenaeum Hotel is a familiar icon easily taken for granted. But to the first-time visitor, it is the epitome of Chautauqua's grand idea — the place where the spirits of past dignitaries and ordinary seekers are hauntingly present. From the tall, wavy glass windows facing the lake, to the creaking floors of the dining room, the Athenaeum boldly announces our past and secures the Chautauqua legacy. It is also a major, ongoing institutional investment.

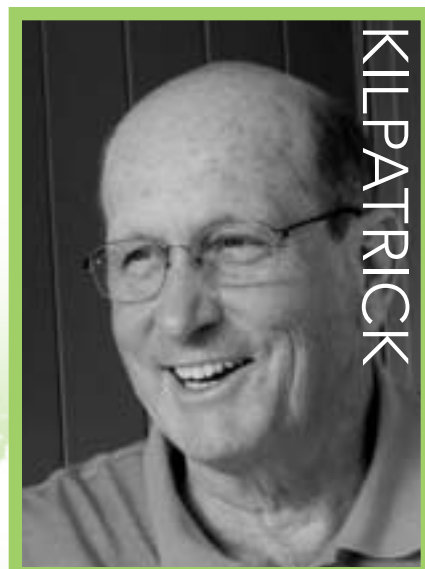
Initially used as a rooming house, the Athenaeum once hosted its own special club of regulars — Chautauquans who did not own or rent property on the grounds but who preferred the American Plan, taking all their meals at the hotel and staying for weeks at a time, some for the whole season. As such, the facility was sturdy and reliable, a community unto itself, and a happy destination for these stalwart residents who greeted each other by name in the hallways season after season, took to the porch in hopes of an afternoon breeze from the lake, and knew the menu from memory.

These faithful guests have dwindled. Though twenty years ago, there were some 40 to 50 long term guests who were still regulars at the hotel, that number today is down to eight or ten, according to Chautauqua's Vice President of Finance Sebby Baggiano. "Hotel guests these days can rarely make the commitment to stay for longer than a week at a time," he says.

Shorter stays at the Athenaeum are the product of our culture of

multitasking and overextension. As Tom Becker recently put it, "When Chautauqua was founded in 1874, there was still some glimmer of discretionary time in American life. Of course, on one end of the spectrum back then there were honkytonks for entertainment, and on the other extreme was a rather rigid church view of appropriate leisurely pursuits. Chautauqua offered something else altogether — a distinctive blend of entertainment, reverence, and the urgency of applying oneself to education about history, language, literature, and science. Taking the time these days to engage in these reflective activities is a necessary but rare gift we give to ourselves."

Indeed, Chautauquans and would-be Chautauquans alike suffer the time poverty of two-career families and too many choices. In this environment the Athenaeum still serves a vital housing function; it's just a different one now. "The hotel is about the only place on the grounds where a new guest can test the waters by staying for less than a week," Baggiano explains. Institution Trustee Ron Kilpatrick is quick to point out that the hotel is also the place where first time



KILPATRICK

visitors and regular Chautauquans have "at least a chance at making reservations on short notice."

Walk in the Athenaeum mid-day on any given Saturday during the season and you'll see the weekly changing of the guard. Guests who've just finished their stays are coming down the stairs ruefully dragging their rolling luggage. The newcomers, fresh off the shuttle, are lining up at registration, ready to unpack, unwind, and prepare for the Sunday kickoff of the theme that drew them here. Children clamor among bellboys and mounds of suitcases to take their first ride on a real throw-back — the manually-operated elevator with its wrought-iron cage door. As families and couples begin to settle in, many gravitate toward a balcony or the sun room that serves as a bridge to the Annex. Here guests may still yield to the temptation of a laptop, but more likely they'll find themselves unfolding a Scrabble board or shuffling a deck of cards. Along the hallways, the warm orange lamplight cast through mica shades adds to the subdued atmosphere.

By dawn on Sunday, the Victorian rhythm has conquered the last of the reluctant. Rocking chairs inside and out fill with newspaper readers, coffee drinkers, and just-finished joggers — new faces and open minds, ready for the intellectual and aesthetic cornucopia about to be set before them.

Despite this continuity in the Athenaeum's historic role at Chautauqua, these twenty-first century guests also inevitably come to the hotel with expectations of amenities never considered by the original architects. Chautauquans are experienced travelers who want reliable Internet access, plush towels, signature toiletries, and power outlets adequate to the appetites of their hair dryers, computers, and a gaggle of other gadgets. Retrofitting the Athenaeum's 156 rooms to meet these demands while maintaining the hotel's charm is an ongoing challenge, says hotel manager Bruce Stanton.

The Chautauqua Hotel Corporation is a wholly-owned subsidiary of



STANTON

the Chautauqua Institution. In IRS terms, the hotel is a "C" corporation — a for-profit enterprise that is living under the umbrella of a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the Institution itself. As a corporation, the Athenaeum must pay corporate taxes on its profits, and it cannot seek philanthropic assistance in shoring up its finances or to make capital improvements. To address deferred maintenance in this enormous facet of Chautauqua's physical plant, the funds must come from a combination of hotel revenues, borrowing, and investment by the Chautauqua Institution.

"The hotel does not have the cash flow to support a huge debt service for the maintenance and renovations that are inevitable in such an old structure," says Charlie Heinz, Vice President of Administrative and Community Services. "The demands of this facility pose a serious challenge to Chautauqua that can only be mitigated by a strong revenue picture for the Institution overall. The role of philanthropy in helping to bolster our non-profit endeavors is critical to the Institution's ability to stay financially healthy in this complex scenario."

This May, the board of the hotel corporation voted to borrow nearly \$1.3 million for an initial capital improvement project of \$1.5 million. (The \$200,000 in additional capital will come from hotel revenues.) Beginning this fall and concluding by the opening of the 2008 season, critical renovations to the 126-year-old structure will be undertaken, including work on the roof and a full restoration of the hotel's signature tower, which is subjected each winter to brutal lake effect snows that have taken their

A T H E N A E U M H O T E L F A

126

Number of years the Athenaeum has been serving guests

7

Average number of children served in a day

43%

Percentage of guests visiting the hotel for the first time this season

182

Average number of adults served in a day

57%

Percentage of guests who have visited the Athenaeum before this season

11

Number of guests who will stay six weeks or longer

BLUEPRINTS



Old meets new in the Athenaeum lobby: laptop ports and electric carts amid the 19th century grandeur.

toll. “We’ve got to button down the outside of this building to protect the inside,” says Baggiano.

Still, the \$1.5 million in scheduled improvements is only half of the critical maintenance that will be required over the next five to ten years as identified in a structural analysis conducted by a Buffalo engineering firm two years ago. The firm also identified another three million dollars’ worth of room and amenity upgrades that must be done.

How to manage the \$4.5 million gap between this year’s project and the total required for renovations has yet to be decided by the board. “We know that this gap grows every year with rising construction costs,” Baggiano adds, “so there is some urgency here.” However, as trustee Ron Kilpatrick points out, the renovations have to be done in phases, between the summer seasons. “There’s only so much you can do before it’s time to start up operations again,” he says.

The last large capital project for the hotel was undertaken in the early 1980s and involved \$2 million in

improvements to the guest rooms, bathrooms, porches, hot water system, and furnishings. The Hotel Annex was likewise renovated in 1998.

Notably, this latest round of renovations will enhance fire safety features already in place from the last effort, which included a modern alarm and sprinkler system. New fire doors on the first and second floors will now provide smoke containment and permit the removal of the last of the fire escapes on the outside of the building, according to Bruce Stanton. Already 70 percent of the building is rewired with upgraded phone and Internet ports, he says.

Occupancy at the Athenaeum declined for several years in a row, but recently the decrease began to level off and then finally ticked upward last year and again this season — good news for Stanton and an affirmation of his efforts. “We are always considering what else we can do to be progressive in our menu of amenities while also maintaining the charm of our antiques,” Stanton says.

Increasing revenues and enhancing operations may help the hotel bear the brunt of expenses associated with essential and ongoing upgrades. In addition to the grand-scale dining service in the Athenaeum itself, the hotel also operates the Refectory in Bestor Plaza, Afterwords Café, and Bellinger Hall’s food service — all critical revenue sources. The hotel chef caters all of the president’s dinners and countless special functions in the private dining room adjacent to the lobby and elsewhere on the grounds.

Packaging hotel stays with gate tickets that feature big name entertainment is one way the Athenaeum has been encouraging new guests. The use of more aggressive Internet advertising is another. In the 2007 season, the addition of wine service in the dining room has been very well received, says Stanton. According to some Chautauquans, this addition also makes the hotel much more appealing as a site where they can host professional groups, business associates, and visiting friends who would not have

considered staying in the hotel for meetings or celebrations without this amenity. Dozens of weddings, banquets, conferences, an annual jazz festival, and senior programs such as Elderhostel take place in the shoulder seasons just before and after the nine weeks of regular programming at Chautauqua.

It is impossible to imagine Chautauqua without the Athenaeum, but the vigilance required to sustain such an intensely seasonal operation requires enormous foresight, strategic business thinking from board members, and the generosity of donors who contribute to other aspects of Institution programming. “We will continue to invest, to improve, and to accommodate change,” says Kilpatrick, sitting on the porch swing of his cottage on Miller Avenue. “What fascinates me and keeps me in this game is trying to anticipate what hotel guests will expect 50 years from now. Can you imagine what that will look like?”



C T S A N D F I G U R E S

60

Number of events catered by the hotel on the grounds during the season

65,000

Number of meals served to guests of hotel

8,000

Number of meals served for special functions and catering operations

360

Number of employees at hotel during the summer season

11

Number of year-round staff at Athenaeum

7,443

Number of room nights occupied during the nine-week season in 2007



“Everybody Needs Sabbath”

In mid-July 2007, three ministers who have long associations with Chautauqua agreed to have a conversation with Pillars by telephone. The Reverends Craig Barnes and Barbara Brown Taylor began the conversation. The Reverend James A. Forbes, Jr., joined the call a bit later from the grounds where he was serving as Chautauqua’s chaplain for Week Four. We asked them to talk about their experiences of Chautauqua and what this enterprise might have to offer the world outside the gates.

Pillars: As a way to begin, tell us a bit about your first encounter with Chautauqua. What struck you about the place?

Craig Barnes: I had never experienced anything like Chautauqua, so my first visit there was pretty overwhelming. I was accustomed to vacation centers, resort-type places, and conference facilities, but I had not been in a place where people were in some degree on vacation from their labors but not from their minds. I was struck by the fact that Chautauqua was a place that allowed people to grow spiritually, intellectually, and aesthetically. The people I met there were all interested in all of those dimensions while being in an environment in which they could let their guards down in order to grow as persons. I was fascinated by it.

Barbara Brown Taylor: Of course

Originally from Long Island, New York, Craig Barnes is the Robert Meneilly Professor of Pastoral Ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He also serves as pastor of the nearby Shadyside Presbyterian Church. Barnes’ books include *Yearning*, *When God Interrupts*, *Hustling God*, *Sacred Thirst*, *Extravagant Mercy*, and *Searching for Home*.



as a nervous preacher, my initial focus was on the Amphitheater. I had come to Chautauqua from Clarkesville, Georgia, from a church that seated 82 people. When I reached the lectern, I was looking at a small swatch of about 82 people down front, and finding it hard to raise my gaze to the rest of that gorgeous place. Earlier, I had been walking around the grounds and thinking I had already died and gone to heaven.

Pillars: So now that you have been on the grounds many times, what does it mean to you to be a Chautauquan?

Craig Barnes: Wow. A Chautauquan. Whenever I am there, I find myself entering a community of people who are not necessarily like me and who don’t share all of my assumptions or politics and even faith convictions, but who are interested in listening to each other. Chautauqua is one of the few places I am asked to speak where the people aren’t of my tribe, and they’re not asking me to buttress their beliefs. Instead, there is actually a conversation. I often get invited to polemical debates elsewhere, but I don’t find that at Chautauqua.

I specifically remember one of the times I was on the grounds — I think it was 2004, at the same time as the Democratic National Convention. There was a lot of interest in politics that week. The Republicans were fully engaged along with the Democrats who were quite excited. I was impressed by the civility of the conversations, by the fact that it was a conversation and not an argument. I don’t see much of that either in the church or other places.

Barbara Brown Taylor: I find it hard to say I’m a Chautauquan, because my idea is that Chautauquans have a house there and have been going there for ages, and they remember what it was like when they were little. Chautauquans have a generational love for the place that I lack, being such a newcomer. I would say, however, that to be a Chautauquan means that you are someone who is alive, not only in the mind, but also in the body and

“Chautauqua is one of the few places I am asked to speak where the people aren’t of my tribe, and they’re not asking me to buttress their beliefs. Instead, there is actually a conversation.”

—Craig Barnes



An Episcopal priest since 1984, Barbara Brown Taylor teaches religion at Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia, where she holds the Harry R. Butman Chair in Religion and Philosophy. She was named Georgia Author of the Year by the Georgia Writers Association in the category of creative nonfiction for her 2006 memoir, *Leaving Church*.

spirit, and you are committed to a place that feeds all three of those centers. To be a Chautauquan is, as Craig said, to let down one’s guard for a period of time. I think it is easy to trust in Chautauqua because there is so little threat. Kids ride their bikes up and down the street, and no one locks the doors. It’s an amazing relief.

Pillars: What is the larger lesson that we, in the U.S. culture, can learn from Chautauqua? Are there particular lessons from this environment of civility and safety that do translate to the world outside the gates?

Barbara Brown Taylor: Because it’s a gated community, there is a natural limit on commerce. I know people leave Chautauqua and go on day trips, but I don’t go anywhere, and I’m really glad that there’s no mall. There’s not a bank of theaters showing dozens of different movies. The choices are limited, and so the experience, to me, increases in depth. That goes for human interactions as well because there is a limited community there. Even though it’s

“I don’t know many people who intentionally set aside a week, two weeks of their summer to learn more pieces of music, learn more operas and hear more poetry and think about different topics. Where I live, many more people shop or seek out new restaurants than take time to learn anything new.”

—Barbara Brown Taylor

not a largely diverse community in some ways, everyone can go deeper because they’re not spread so thin.

Craig Barnes: On my way in on my first time there, I was a little cynical about the gate. As preachers, we tend to rail against barriers and walls and gates. We try to tear those things down. But I was quickly converted. The thing that converted me was bringing my kids. We have an eleven and an eight year old, and I was amazed at what it did to my wife and me, knowing that we could just let them go in the morning. They could ride their bikes to camp. We didn’t have to worry about them. And that absence of anxiety was what allowed us to turn our minds to other things, to be challenged by listening to some of the other speakers and even to enjoy some of the concerts without the ever-present fretting, which we tend to do, even at home. I got into a conversation with somebody, I don’t even remember who it was, who reminded me of Nehemiah’s conviction that it is necessary to rebuild some walls in order for there to be a place of worship or a place of Sabbath rest.

Barbara Brown Taylor: And identity.

Craig Barnes: Yes, I guess so. Chautauqua provided that for us, partly by virtue of the gate. By having a place like this, there is Sabbath. It’s okay to be relieved from anxiety long enough to think about some things that are really pretty important.

Barbara Brown Taylor: Right. So if I put that into a lesson for the larger culture, there is something about the possibility and importance — even in the biggest cities — of creating smaller communities, of

CHAUTAUQUANS

looking out for the people you know, of living close enough to one another to know each others' names. There is something about that containment that I can see happening in neighborhoods in New York.

Another lesson for the culture at large is the importance of continuing to learn. I don't know many people who intentionally set aside a week, two weeks of their summer to learn more pieces of music, learn more operas, hear more poetry and think about different topics. Where I live, many more people shop or seek out new restaurants than take time to learn anything new.

I'm very aware that it is a "white paradise." I very much appreciate the presence of both Jews and Christians of other denominations. I have welcomed the new effort at inclusion of Muslims as the third branch in the Abrahamic family. But I am always curious about what else could happen at Chautauqua that would more nearly mirror the world in which all of us live. I have no idea how that would happen, but I am at least aware that Chautauqua very much mirrors the dreams of the founders along with some significant growth in different directions in recent years. Still, when I talk about how wonderful Chautauqua is to African American friends and tell them what happens there, they don't think it sounds all that wonderful.

James Forbes: There was a conversation on the porch here the other day about whether it would be paternalistic to talk about subsidization for other ethnicities and religious traditions to find their way to Chautauqua. It was said that it felt almost like, if such persons did not have the normal resources to be a part, then the artificiality of inviting them would introduce unnecessary tension. I found myself wondering that if the value of increased diversity is as high as we say it is, why wouldn't we risk the downside of some kind of subsidization? It's an interesting topic. If you have affirmative action and all the negatives associated with it, should that cause us to back away from at least *experimenting* with the positives that might flow?

Program participants are more diverse now. There's a little greater sprinkling here and there of some folks that may be from a different crowd than would have been here years ago.

I know that under the present

"To continue to enjoy what these walls provide for us, we have to justify it by the relaxation we get, so that we are more ready upon our return to make this sanctuary possible for other people."

—James Forbes, Jr.

leadership there was a discussion about Chautauqua in Chicago some years ago about what [the Institution] could do. The present leadership is not simply mouthing these things. It is actually engaged in not only trying to increase the diversity but also to extend the Chautauqua spirit beyond the walls of this little beautiful community. Therefore, to be in Chagrin Falls just night before last, for what they called "a taste of Chautauqua," seems to be fulfilling that mission. I get the impression that we now feel some calling to see if we can extend what we are at Chautauqua — first as a model and then also as a living manifestation of a broadened family of God.

Barbara Brown Taylor: That's brilliant. What would it be like to take the experience outside the gates instead of only thinking how to get other people into the gates? I mean it's not either/or.

James Forbes: That is happening now.

Pillars: Reverend Forbes, what are the characteristics of Chautauqua, as you know it, that can best be carried outside the gate?

James Forbes: We have a bold experiment here. When you come through the gates here at Chautauqua, you have a reasonable expectation that you can relax. You don't need your armor as you might have needed it elsewhere.

Should that suggest we give a higher priority to creating safe environments as a part of our national outlook? And how can we do that in such a way that is not primarily increasing law enforcement but to do the multiple things which could sustain a less threatening context? If peacefulness, tranquility, and safety contribute to intellectual openness and curiosity and risk-taking — then what does that mean about the current atmosphere in our schools?

Craig Barnes: I think that part of Chautauqua's heritage is not just what happens on the grounds, but that it creates a conversation that people can carry on in their own souls after they go home. These captains of industry and political

leaders are forced to continue to think and converse about some of the diverse perspectives they encountered when they were there. The long-term benefit happens outside the gates of Chautauqua, in all of the communities that people return to and try to make a difference.

Barbara Brown Taylor: I am also thinking about all the young artists who come there — not just residents, but the people who come there to partake in what is offered. I see the young musicians, dancers, and artists around that place, people who would not be able to do this in a Carnegie Hall or some big city center, but who, at Chautauqua, have room for their gifts to blossom. That is a different constituency than the one we have been talking about.

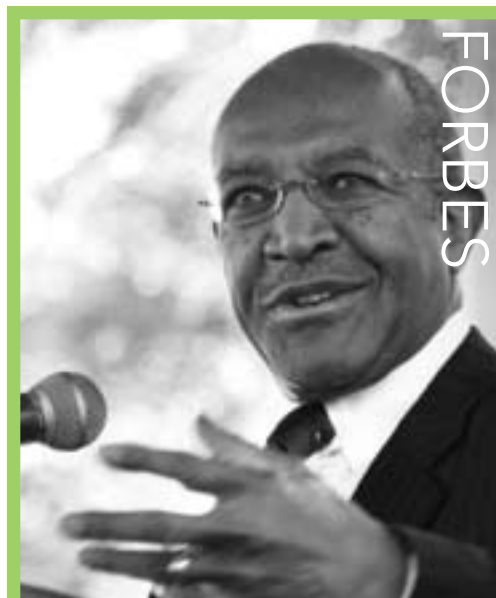
Pillars: Can we return to the passage in Nehemiah you were talking about, Craig, and ask Jim Forbes what he thinks of that parallel you drew?

Craig Barnes: It's in chapter two, I think, the middle of the chapter. Nehemiah talks about rebuilding a gate, a wall, to provide a place of sanctuary.

James Forbes: Are you comparing the boundaries of this space at Chautauqua to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem?

Craig Barnes: Yes. I made the comment that in my first visit I was cynical about the notion of a gated community of vacationers, but while I was there, I became convinced that there is a place for a gate if it is done in the context of creating a Sabbath, a sanctuary for people.

James Forbes: Well, my sense is that if the wall is viewed as Grace, then we can only sustain that image if it is a safety or grace that is provided for us that always lives in tension with what others outside do not have the opportunity to enjoy. I think an integrity tax has to be added to the already expensive requirement to stay here. That is to say, that to continue to enjoy what these walls provide for us, we have to justify it by the relaxation we get, so that we are more ready upon



James A. Forbes, Jr., has been recognized as one of the top preachers in the English-speaking world by many publications and distinguished panels, including *Newsweek* magazine, *Ebony* magazine, and Baylor University. On June 1, 2007, he retired from Riverside Church after 18 years to launch a new ministry through The Healing of the Nations Foundation.

our return to make this sanctuary possible for other people.

Everybody needs Sabbath. In New York City, the Fresh Air Fund that is usually sponsored by well-heeled people provides opportunities for ghetto kids to go up to the country to have some time. You can't enjoy the benefits of Chautauqua without being a champion of [creating] space where people of less wealth are also able to have the benefits of sanctuary and the oasis of spirit that this kind of place provides.

Craig Barnes: I also think that the value of the wall is similar to the medieval Benedictine understanding of the role the monastery played for the monk. The monk didn't go to the monastery in medieval times in order to escape the world but to bring the world with him to this place of prayer and contemplation, to seek redemption for the world. If Chautauqua were only for purposes of resort, then it would be just one more manifold vacation place. But to the extent that Chautauqua is a place to have civil, careful conversation about pressing issues of society from a diversity of perspectives, it really is bringing the world inside the gates.

That Daredevil Magic — *Otello*



“Tonight we bring you an international cast of singers as we celebrate the eighteen-year tenure of Maestro Uriel Segal. His musical leadership, humanity, and integrity have been an inspiration to us all.”

— Marty Merkley



As the last weekend in July is about to commence, the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra assembles in the Amphitheater. It's Friday, and the CSO is about to rehearse for the very first time with the soloists who will be performing the leads in a concert version of Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello* on Saturday evening. The soloists have been practicing their parts elsewhere on the grounds since Monday, but it will be tomorrow afternoon before the hundred-plus members of the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus arrive by bus, assemble in the choir loft, and add their parts to the mix. Indeed, the one and only rehearsal with all the musicians and singers together at the same time will take place within a few short hours of the actual performance. Such are the bold ambitions of Chautauqua.

In a pale red shirt and white slacks, Maestro Uri Segal takes the podium and calls for the orchestra to begin with Act Two. Some of the soloists, also dressed informally for the July heat, mingle around the stage, sipping water and marveling at the vast expanse of concrete before them. Remarkably, all of the benches on the ground floor of the Amp have just been moved in record time to the lawn behind the backstage area. Why? In only a few hours, the Dave Stevens Big Band will take the stage and summon the Amphitheater audience to its feet for a festive night of dancing. Such is the break-a-leg schedule of the performing arts at Chautauqua.

Maestro Segal has the Orchestra run through a few bars and then stops. He is not happy. The acoustics, he says, are terribly off without the benches to absorb some of the CSO's big sound. There is nothing to be done but persevere.

A while later, the Maestro invites Chautauqua veteran Allan Glassman, the tenor who is playing *Otello*, to ascend to the top of the choir loft. Segal wants to experiment with having his leading man sing, almost literally, from the rafters. Glassman's spine-chilling

voice lifts over the orchestra and delights the interlopers gathered to witness the rehearsal. Still, the Maestro is unhappy with the acoustics. Chautauqua's Vice President and Program Director Marty Merkley is moving about, listening from different angles. He is helpless to make the acoustics any better.

“Come down closer,” Uri Segal shouts to Glassman who is standing just in front of the Massey Organ pipes.

The tenor comes down a few levels in the choir loft and sings again.

“Come down a little more, to the very edge,” the Maestro beckons.

As Glassman descends the risers, stepping cautiously, one of the French horn players accompanies him with “Pomp and Circumstance.” Picking up on the lightness of the moment, Glassman, who has played the role of *Otello* a number of times before, throws one foot up on the lip of the balcony between the loft and the orchestra below. His straddle is precarious. He raises his arms to hold his balance and bellows, “More money!”

Marty Merkley, without missing a beat, shouts in response, “Go back!” There is laughter across the Amp.

The joke is not lost on all of these talented musicians and vocalists who know that staging *Otello* — based on Shakespeare's tragedy and the next to last of Verdi's operas, written when the composer was in his eighties — is probably the most expensive and ambitious undertaking of the 2007 season.

“It's a very complex opera,” Merkley explained in an earlier interview. “The run time, without any cuts, is a minimum of two-and-a-half hours.”

Uri Segal had asked Merkley for years to consider a concert version of the opera that he saw many times as a child and always wanted to conduct. Merkley put Segal off repeatedly. Even without full sets, staging, and costumes, the piece's expense comes from so many soloists and the need to bring in a full chorus, in this case to sing in Italian. The Chautauqua Choir, already fully booked for the season, could hardly be asked to master one more daunting piece of music, Merkley explained.

“And so for his last season, I finally told Maestro Segal that we would somehow find the money to celebrate his 18 extraordinary years as conductor of the CSO with the *Otello*,” Merkley said, smiling. The

planning actually began even before the 2006 season.

Segal and Merkley conferred with Marlina Malas, chair of the voice faculty in the Chautauqua School of Music. They studied the rosters of opera companies in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, New York, and Toronto, among others. They listened to tapes, hoping to assemble a complementary mix of solo voices. In particular, they reviewed seven different lyric sopranos, deciding in favor of Joni Henson, a rising star with the Canadian Opera Company. Though Henson, still in her twenties, has already won many awards, including the Opera Grand Prize at the XVth Concours International de Chant de Verviers in Belgium and the First Place Opera Award at the Concours International de Chant de Marmande in France, her Chautauqua performance would be her first in the role of Desdemona.

In May of this year, Chautauqua purchased the music and the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus agreed to begin their rehearsals under the guidance of Gerald Gray. About the same time, the well-known baritone who had been selected to play the villainous Iago regretfully informed the Institution that he was going to have to retire from singing. Segal and Merkley scrambled. It was serendipity that Stephen Kechulius, having recently completed debut performances in London as Scarpa and in Frankfurt as Falstaff, was available for the role. *Opera News* once declared of Kechulius as Iago: “This wasn't just a baritone sounding sinister; every fiber of his body and vocal inflection suggested evil.” Kechulius was also familiar with Chautauqua. He apprenticed in opera here some two decades ago and fondly remembers riding the Chautauqua Belle up and down the lake with his parents.

Elizabeth Bishop, who has been to Chautauqua many times, was selected for the role of Emilia. She spent the week not only rehearsing her solos but helping to block the movements and entrances of her comrades. “She really knows those roles and the opera so well,” says Maestro Segal. Rather than perform the opera as oratoria, the Maestro set the singers loose to “do what can be done” on stage to add to the drama. There are chalices for the drinking scene, rough and tumble fight scenes, and careful staging for the romantic moments between *Otello* and Desdemona. Marty Merkley also arranged for English supertitles to flash above the stage, a libretto that reads like poetry.

“I think the experience really answered all of my expectations.”

—Uri Segal



BACKSTAGE

It is now the Saturday afternoon of dress rehearsal. Marty Merkley is bringing bottled water to all of the soloists assembled on the stage, a measure of his dedication to every detail up to the last minute. A trumpet player from the orchestra has set up her music stand on the street level above the Amp to add to the drama and acoustical surprise. The Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus is in the choir loft along with the Chautauqua Children’s Chorus who are here to witness the make-or-break rehearsal.

Maestro Segal — now wired with a lavalier microphone because there are so many assembled who need to hear him — tells the performers that when the concert is introduced, he plans to make an unceremonious entrance from a bench on the front row so that the audience does not have a chance to applaud him. “You will know we are starting when I reach the podium and the electronic wind comes over the loudspeakers,” he says. He goes to his seat to practice the opening.

The Orchestra falls silent and holds their instruments at the ready. The moment of anticipation is palpable. Segal ascends the stage with a spry hop, the storm blasts over the P.A., and the orchestra launches in with an enormous crash from the percussion section. The thunder, the trumpet from above, and the choral voices are magnificent.

The dress rehearsal moves along auspiciously. The Amp benches are back in their places, and the acoustics are much better. The usual handful of Chautauquans who can’t wait are assembled around the periphery, looking up at times from their knitting and newspapers.

Now, it is not quite three hours after the end of dress rehearsal and the Amp is filling up with eager audience members who fan themselves with their programs. Two years in the making and a lifetime of anticipation have come to this moment for Uri Segal — his first opportunity to conduct *Otello*. Marty Merkley, in formal attire, ascends the steps to the stage.

“Tonight we bring you an international cast of singers as we celebrate the eighteen-year tenure of Maestro Uriel Segal. His musical leadership, humanity, and integrity have been an inspiration to us all,” says Merkley, who then thanks the Margaret Miller Newman Fund for the financial support that, in part,

made this evening possible. Maestro Segal hops to the stage again in his dress white jacket. The supertitles arrive with the storm of music: *God flays the skies with his bolts of fire.*

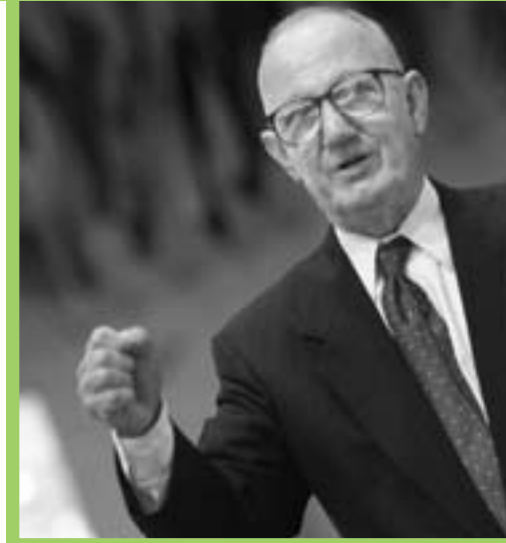
A couple of weeks after the performance, Uri Segal is enjoying the morning at his Chautauqua home with his wife and all of his children and grandchildren in residence. “I think the experience really answered all of my expectations,” he says. “By now I know very well what the Orchestra is capable of. The chorus, too, was really so well prepared. The chemistry among the singers was wonderful. Some of them had known each other before, and some had not.”

Segal is a happy man. He confesses that at one point, near the end of the performance, things nearly fell apart, but the musicians recovered. “The Orchestra was amazing. They did miracles,” he says with passion. The Maestro also admits that he must now face his retirement in earnest and with very mixed feelings. Still, he believes that 18 is a very lucky number and is looking forward to experiencing a season on the grounds as a member of the audience. Of the *Otello*, he says simply: “We took a big gamble. But then, we always do.” Such is the daredevil magic of Chautauqua.



Welcome to Chautauqua

by HARM deBLIJ



Let me begin with a confession: when I was asked, early in 2000, to present a lecture at the Chautauqua Institution, my first response was: "Where and what is Chautauqua?" The program director had obviously heard this before. "You'll have to come and experience it. No way I could describe this place in a few words."

How right she was. From the moment you pass through the gate you are in a world so different that no summary suffices. To walk onto the stage of the Amphitheater and see an audience of five thousand of the most well-informed citizens in the country ready to listen and debate is an experience no speaker ever forgets. I have had the honor five times in eight years and every occasion has been a professional highlight.

But there is a downside for the visitor: one or even two overnights is not nearly enough to sample the hundreds of events, from ballet to theater, from chamber music to opera, from bridge lessons to poetry readings. No one I know among colleagues who have had the Chautauqua experience has ever wanted to leave on schedule.

So it was a singular pleasure to be invited back to Chautauqua as Scholar-in-Residence for 2007, meeting daily with a select group of significant donors every morning on the topic of the week (the meteoric rise of China and India) and being able to sample the program as never before. Arriving at dusk on Saturday after a ten-hour drive from Cape Cod and having rented a small apartment in the heart of the village, my wife Bonnie and I were too late to unload but just in time to join the huge audience for the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra's stellar performance in the Amphitheater, highlighted by Colin Carr's introspective interpretation of the Shostakovich *Second Cello Concerto*. Sunday was a day to

tour the Institution's numerous beautiful gardens and to walk the lake shore, to get reacquainted with the sights and sounds of the village, visit the bookstore (is there a better one anywhere?), lunch at one charming restaurant and dine at another. Along the way we hear the sounds of a steel band emanating from the Amphitheater, a soprano rehearsing near Lenna Hall, a book reading on the porch of a private home. There's nothing like Chautauqua.

Monday it is time to get serious. The morning lecture in the Amphitheater is a vigorous exhortation by the Chinese-American businessman Ronnie Chan, whose enthusiasm brings the audience to its feet. Interviewed in *The Chautauquan Daily*, Chan worries about Americans' ignorance of China, and wonders how many people here have visited China. "I will ask that, so I can see how many have actually been." When he does, a forest of hands rises in the audience, and he is visibly surprised. I smile and say to myself, "Welcome to Chautauqua, Mr. Chan."

There is much to debate in Mr. Chan's ardent devotion to China (and doubts regarding India), and I am pleased to have the opportunity to meet my audience, but I do not want to miss the early-afternoon lecture by Arun Gandhi, Mohandas' grandson, in the open-air Hall of Philosophy, rushing from there to Lenna Hall to hear the incomparable Janaki String Trio play Penderecki, Beethoven and von Dohnanyi. The hall overflows with chamber-music lovers, the trio is superb. I am late for cocktails and we leave dinner early to hear the Music School Festival Orchestra play in the Amphitheater, a concert that ends with a rousing, energetic performance of *Scheherazade*. The exuberance of youth and the excellence of conducting give this warhorse a whole new spirit.

The Chautauqua Institution may continue to be America's best-kept secret, but as an engine of education and as a forge for public opinion there is nothing like it. It creates the most uplifting, inspiring, energizing environment imaginable.

It is Tuesday, and we meet in the Norton Opera House at 8:45 a.m., an experience I have not had since I was an assistant professor powerless to demand reasonable scheduling. I momentarily forget that this is Chautauqua and expect a few dawdlers, but President Tom Becker knows there will be none and starts his generous introduction right on time. We leave early enough to hear former U.S. Ambassador to India Richard Celeste describe to his Amphitheater audience the changes he has seen in India, and I make a quick appearance on Jim Roselli's radio program. Now with my series in full swing, I need some time to prepare, but I cannot miss the Tuesday afternoon piano recital by Music School faculty member Rebecca Penneys before another overflow crowd in Lenna Hall. From Bartok to De Falla and from Schubert to Liszt, she plays a two-hour program of over 30 movements and songs-without-words, completely from memory, an extraordinary feat. Again we must hurry to make the Chautauqua Ballet Company's innovative, riveting program at 8:15 pm.

Elizabeth Economy's Wednesday morning Amphitheater lecture brilliantly puts the brakes on the runaway train launched by Ronnie Chan. Her vivid descriptions of cities so smog-ridden that the sun never shines, waters so polluted as to be undrinkable, forests felled, deserts expanding, power stations disgorging soot give us pause. We remain in the Amphitheater following her lecture to hear what is billed as a "mini-concert" on the

Massey Organ by Jared Jacobsen. There is nothing "mini" about it. The organ fills the vast hall with its power. Jacobsen speaks to the audience about the instrument and the music. His technique and range of programming make for a memorable hour.

To move fast forward (by Chautauqua standards), more food for thought re China's ascent is a brilliant Amphitheater presentation on Thursday morning by former UN Under-Secretary General Sashi Tharoor, whose discourse on India is rewarded by a standing ovation and a series of perceptive questions. The week is giving us much to ponder for years to come, and it is not over yet. On Friday, Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Jeffrey Bader delivers a cool, analytical, incisive, and in some ways troubling analysis of China's economic and socio-political prospects, the perfect close to an inspiring week.

But Chautauqua is not all work and no play. On Thursday we have dinner with Bob and Ann Fletcher, major supporters who recently contributed \$ 1 million to the Music School. On Friday we are invited to join President Tom Becker and his wife Jane on their beautiful lakefront porch for music and supper, and Tom makes the mistake of asking me to say a few words "for a couple of minutes."

I cannot extol the virtues of this matchless place in short order. Now Bonnie and I must pack for an early-morning departure. To say that we are reluctant is an understatement.

see **WELCOME** next page

Chautauqua Content Goes Global

In 2005 Chautauqua launched an effort to raise the Institution's profile among thought leaders around the United States and beyond. Through roundtables and conferences, media events, and collaborations with other organizations such as the Brookings Institution and Syracuse University, this initiative — developed in the last round of strategic planning — has helped to raise awareness of the distinctive model of lifelong learning that is embodied at Chautauqua. The events have stimulated dialogue and created relationships between Chautauqua, prominent academics and leading publications including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *TIME*, and *Newsweek* magazine to name a few. These fora have also provided valuable contacts in the continued quest for platform speakers and new funding partners.

This September, a group of thought leaders from the business side of a number of media corporations gathered for breakfast at the Princeton Club in Manhattan to talk about best practices in content management. Content management in this case refers to the deployment of new media formats — video and audio streaming over the Internet via computer or cell phone, podcasting, content partnering, event creation, and other means to extend the reach of a brand's traditional broadcast and print products. New media is a subject of great interest to Chautauqua's leadership as the Institution seeks to multiply the reach of our programming. Rich-

New media is a subject of great interest to Chautauqua's leadership as the Institution seeks to multiply the reach of our programming.

media communications such as live and on-demand streaming of video and audio can both broaden and effectively segment target audiences.

At the September roundtable, representatives from *The Wall Street Journal*, The Weinstein Company, TIME, Inc, and others considered how they are now using their brand content to augment their traditional offerings and how nonprofits such as Chautauqua might disseminate its distinctive lifelong learning content more broadly. How have these media leaders successfully leveraged their content into new channels of distribution? What has worked and, perhaps, more interestingly, what hasn't? How can Chautauqua learn from their experiences? Could a for-profit media outlet partner with a non-profit content provider for a win-win collaboration? What are some examples in the field of the most successful integration of new media applications? What kinds of business scenarios can benefit all partners?

According to event organizer Clay Stobaugh, participants at this and other Chautauqua-sponsored roundtables have been enormously pleased with the opportunity to brainstorm, trade stories, share insights and compare their latest initiatives in a spirit of candor

and collaboration. To encourage a forum of engaged dialogue, the conversations are off the record and therefore very lively.

For Chautauqua's part, these events have led to new partnerships and ideas. With the development of the Cohen Recording Studio in the basement of the Library and the launch of podcasting on line, the Institution itself has begun its foray into the field of new media.

This season in Week Seven, Chautauqua officially joined forces with FORA.tv, an on-line global media outlet that has brought together a wide-ranging consortium of institutions including the Aspen Institute, The Brookings Institution, C-Span, the Cato Institute, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Heritage Foundation, the Hoover Institute, The New School, and many others. These entities, along with a number of freelance producers working around the world, are providing video content to the website, FORA.tv, where viewers can choose from any number of video and audio lectures and presentations by leading experts in their fields. The site permits individuals who register to use the site free of charge, to participate in the intellectual exchange by posting comments about the individual

presentations or by recommending links to other blogs, sites, and articles on a given topic. Users may also access archived material.

"I love their mission and their sense of purpose," says Tom Becker. [FORA.tv founder, president, and CEO] "Brian Gruber comes to this enterprise with vast experience. He has worked over the years with some of the best known names in intellectual content." Becker suggests that Internet users who are attracted to the FORA.tv site are people who are hungry for a deeper examination of current issues and their historical underpinnings. "FORA.tv is an interesting analog to who we are at Chautauqua," Becker goes on to say. "We are the quintessential town meeting in a physical place that has been scaled to foster such conversations. FORA.tv is trying to make the same kind of meaningful exchange of ideas and opinions across the political spectrum in a virtual environment."

FORA.tv crews were at Chautauqua for the entirety of Week Seven and launched the content they recorded a week later on line. The crew left their gear for recording engineer Matt Wilson to capture the last two weeks of the season as well.

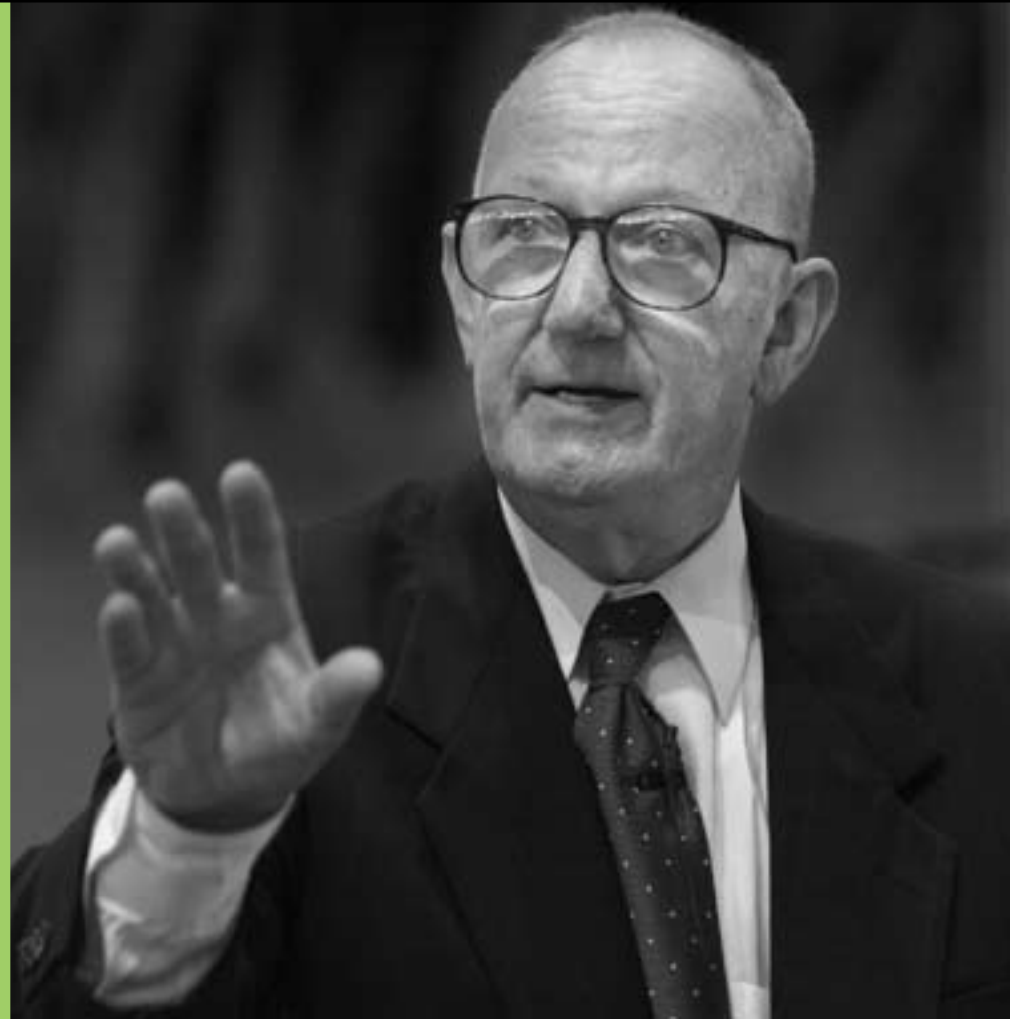
Unlike some other content providers, Chautauqua has the unusual distinction of being able to offer presentations around a common theme across many lectures and speakers. To visit FORA.tv, simply log in at www.FORA.tv and register to become a user of the site.

WELCOME cont'd

The Chautauqua Institution may continue to be America's best-kept secret, but as an engine of education and as a forge for public opinion there is nothing like it. It creates the most uplifting, inspiring, energizing environment imaginable. It constitutes a convergence of the most positive, creative, productive participants conceivable, all making the experience mutually reinforcing. Many third-generation Chautauquans have memories of first lessons in ballet, music, language or art in this enchanting setting. Some of these early exposures led to satisfying careers. Chautauquans form a nation, an international network for understanding and progress.

Editor's Note:

Geographer Harm deBlij served for seven years as Geography Editor on ABC's "Good Morning America." In 1996 he joined NBC News as Geography Analyst, appearing mostly on MSNBC. He also served as writer and commentator for the original PBS Series "The Power of Place." Professor deBlij has published more than 30 books and has held named chairs at Georgetown University, Marshall University, and the Colorado School of Mines. He currently is Distinguished Professor of Geography at Michigan State University.



Fans of the Arts in Many Forms: John and Kathy Milos



For many, Chautauqua is an inheritance, a ritual, an experience that has been passed along as a natural element of family life. But every season there are also those who venture inside the gate for the first time. Often that initial visit creates an unshakable yearning for more, a happy infatuation that, with time, can turn into a sturdy relationship with the Institution and the community it fosters. One thing Chautauquans will quickly tell you: few people are lukewarm about this place after they've been here. They say the Chautauqua experience is a fit or it's not.

In the case of John and Kathy Milos of Cleveland, Ohio, it only took that first encounter to embrace the Chautauqua Idea and the Institution that sustains it. The relationship with Chautauqua began one Sunday in the early 1980s. They took a drive down from Buffalo where they lived at the time to visit a friend at Chautauqua.

The Miloses were soon back for a weekend, then a week, and now it's been at least a week every year for the last 24 years. They bought a condo on the grounds five years ago and are now in the process of turning over the reigns of the on-line catalog company they launched more than a decade ago. Though they sold the Cleveland-based company a while back, John has continued to handle marketing and catalog development, while Kathy has managed the information technology side of the business.

Surrounded by stunning contemporary art glass pieces and ultra-modern furnishings in their fourth floor condo on the site of the old William Baker Hotel, John and Kathy say that they've been on the grounds every weekend this season. They enjoyed the Smothers Brothers' performance in particular. "We also love taking classes," says Kathy, "yoga, tai chi, nutrition — and we go for long walks."

For many, Chautauqua is an inheritance, a ritual, an experience that has been passed along as a natural element of family life. But every season there are also those who venture inside the gate for the first time.

The Miloses — who often make the pilgrimage up from Cleveland to enjoy the quiet of the grounds in winter — have become Chautauquans in the deepest sense, assuming roles of leadership and stewardship of the Institution. They serve on the committee that has been examining ways that the Institution can best recognize its benefactors. They have also made a significant gift to the art and music programs through the Idea Campaign.

"We go to just about everything the CSO does," John explains, admitting however, that he is a diehard Jethro Tull fan. (In the loft above the living room there's an impressive electric guitar sitting on a stand near the railing.) John also claims a particular fondness for the annual explosion of paper bags on July 4th during the CSO's ritual performance of the *1812 Overture*.

"Even though we are not big opera fans, we have even attended those performances," John says, recalling how strongly his daughter reacted to the opera sampler she witnessed here as a child. "She thought it was the greatest thing in the world she'd ever seen," he says.

Both of the Milos children are now pursuing careers in the arts. Daughter Christina is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design in industrial arts and has been

working on the design of an unusual theme park in China this summer. Son Eric is presently a student at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Both were classically trained on piano as youngsters, but their parents have come to believe that the annual immersion in Chautauqua — everything from their son's fascination with the street musicians on Bestor Plaza to their daughter's satisfying experience in sculpture classes — were contributing factors to their educational paths.

This season, John Milos decided to introduce a group of business associates to Chautauqua as well. He invited members of the World Presidents Organization of which John is education chair this year. WPO is a global service organization of present and former CEOs of corporations. The group of 30 stayed at the Athenaeum and shared time with Tom Becker. "This is the kickoff event for the group this year, and I wanted to show them Chautauqua and all this community has to offer," Milos said.

Now with their kids grown and educated, the Miloses plan to begin spending entire summers at Chautauqua. They are looking forward to a deeper association with all that Chautauqua offers.



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