PAULA OGSTON (BA, Studio Art/Psychology, 2004) is currently a doctoral student at Virginia Commonwealth University who started an international sensation with her friends. While vacationing in Virginia Beach, Ogston and friends took pictures of themselves jumping. They posted them on Flickr, and soon afterward their activities were featured on the "Weekend America" radio show. The friends created the website jumpbecause.com, where others can post their jumping pictures. Thousands of people around the world have posted photos, and Ogston is excited that her “goofy fun” pictures are enjoyed worldwide.

MIKE SMOLA (BA, History, 2003) is the Volunteer and Tour Coordinator at Mission Houses Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii. His work involves recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers, scheduling group tours and educational programs, and conducting visitor studies and program evaluation. Previous positions have included serving as a curatorial assistant at the Michigan State University Museum, a collections intern at the Michigan Historical Center, and an activities leader and building supervisor at the Turner Dodge House and Heritage Center.

STEVE A. PRINCE (MFA, Studio Art, 1995) is an alumnus who dedicated one of his most stunning works of art to his late professor and MSU Alumnus (1965), John Scott, titling it “Song for John.” He attributes his attendance at Michigan State to the late artist, who “had a great influence on my life as an artist, educator, and father.” Prince has been an artist-in-residence in Santa Catarina, Brazil, at the Steward School, Richmond, Virginia, and in Winnipeg, Canada as part of the Invisible Dignity Project. Though he has exhibited around the world and won numerous awards, he is also a dedicated educator, having taught privately, middle school, and high school. Currently, he is an assistant professor at Montgomery College in Germantown, Maryland. Prince is the 2010-2011 Hampton City Schools Teacher of the Year, in Hampton Virginia. His website is www.1fishstudio.com

MICHELLE A. SCOTT (BA, Spanish, 1995) majored in Nursing at MSU in addition to her degree in Spanish, achieving High Honors as a member of the Honors College as well. In 2004, she earned a Masters in Sociology. Currently, she is a registered nurse and CEO of Voices for Health in Newport Beach, California. For her work to overcome language barriers in healthcare, in addition to her ongoing support of MSU, she was honored with the MSU Alumni Service Award in 2009.

STACIE LEWIS (BA, English, 1994) lives in London with her husband, Gareth, and her daughter, May, who was born in early 2009 with severe brain damage. Stacie writes a blog about raising her daughter at mamalewis.wordpress.com and wrote an excellent article for “The Guardian’s” Family section. She manages to tell her heartbreaking story with honest insight and wit that leaves the reader, and the author, with a great sense of hope. Stacie is also the author of the book “Taking the Plunge,” which was published in 2007 in the U.K. and U.S., an excerpt of which can be found at www.stacielewis.com.
NANCY CARABIO BELANGER


The book was the second-place award winner in the Children’s Books category of the Catholic Press Association 2009 Book Awards and received local and national media attention upon its release. Inspired by Saint Therese of Lisieux, the book has a blog operated by the author and is available at local Catholic stores or littleflowerbook.com.

KRISTY (SANDERSON) WATSON (BA, Studio Art, 1992) has been very busy in the years since her graduation from the College of Arts and Letters! She moved to Texas the same day as her graduation and immediately started working for Gousha Mapping Company as a map designer until 1996 (she has a second bachelor’s degree from MSU in Geography with a specialization in Cartography). She then began her own graphic design company, Polonyx, LLC, a company she still operates today. In 2000, she invented a urethane horseshoe called Ground Control which is very popular with trail riders and sold worldwide. She is also an artist who has chosen oils as her medium, with works hanging in local galleries. She is married to Todd Watson, an MSU Business alumnus whom she met on an MSU-sponsored ski trip in 1990. Her latest quest is to relearn the clarinet in hopes of joining the Boerne Village Band.

VALERIE MANN (MFA, Studio Art, 1991) is co-owner of WSG Gallery in downtown Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she regularly exhibits and sells her work, along with 15 other Michigan artists, of whom several are Spartan alumni. In the fall of 2010, she had a solo exhibit at Muskegon Community College entitled “Self, Awareness,” as a part of the Muskegon Area Arts and Humanities Festival. Her installation piece “Fortunes” is a focal piece of the exhibit and was the topic of her gallery talk at the public reception on October 20, 2010. Other work in the exhibit are her “Evening Bags for the Midwestern Woman” series and her most recent work, relief wall-hung pieces inspired by the flora and fauna of National Parks she has visited.

LEV RAPHAEL (Ph.D., English/American Studies, 1986) published his 19th book since earning his doctorate from MSU and the College of Arts and Letters, a memoir titled “My Germany” (The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009). Lev, who resides in Okemos, Michigan, offered readings at the Library of Congress and the Goethe-Institute in Washington, D.C. More information on his books can be found at levraphael.com, and his interview on WKAR’s “Morning Edition” can be heard online.

BRENDA BARRERA (BA, English, 1984) is the managing editor of “Washington Running Report,” which covers Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia, and is in the process of re-vamping the publication. At the same time, she serves as the creative services director for Tidewaters Arts Outreach in Norfolk, Virginia, where she now lives. She describes both jobs as interesting and rewarding in their own way, and they combine her interests of sports, the arts and building healthy communities.
1970s

JODY LAFRANCE DANIELS (BFA, Studio Art, 1979) headed into the workforce after graduation and spent 20 years in the entertainment industry as a production manager for Brass Ring Productions. She then returned to school, the College for Creative Studies, and earned a certificate to teach Art Education. Since then, she has worked at Brandon Middle School in Oakland County, Michigan, as their visual art instructor. Combining a love for the environment with her creative side, Jody has incorporated environmental concepts and ideas into her art room. As a result, she and a colleague were instrumental in having their school achieve the Evergreen status as a Michigan Green School. They are currently working to have their entire school district earn the Michigan Green School seal.

AL FISK (BA, School Music-Choral, 1978; MFA, Music Education, 1985) is currently a middle school vocal music teacher in Hazel Park, Michigan, and has been such for the past 30 years. He resides in Rochester with his wife, Bonnie, a physical therapist, and their cat, Bob. He is proud to be a barbershop quartet judge and has been a Barbershop Harmony Society member since his first graduation from MSU. His quartet has sung the National Anthem for the Detroit Tigers, the Detroit Pistons and several minor league teams. He has been elected to the Pioneer (Michigan) District Hall of Fame, which he considers the coolest experience he has ever had. Every year he comes back to Michigan State University to march in the Spartan Alumni Marching Band.

BILL TREVARTHEN (BA, Justin Morrill College, 1972; Honors College) is the executive director of Michigan Government Television, a public affairs initiative of Michigan's cable television industry providing audiences live and taped coverage of all branches of Michigan government. The organization's mission includes providing officials a direct means of reaching their audience without filter, providing audiences direct access to officials, and creating educational materials for students and educators. Bill is especially proud of two recent MGTV productions, both of which can be received by educators and viewed online along with many other archived videos. "Defining Moments" is the story of Frank Murphy, Fred Korematsu and the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, and "Oh, Could They But Speak..." deals with the history and importance of Michigan's Civil War battle flags.

In addition to his work with MGTV, Bill served for six years as a member of the College of Arts and Letters Alumni Association board of directors as well as other areas including the MSU Museum.

ANGELIKA (SILZER) LEE (BA, English, 1971) passed away in April 2010. She had been a founding member of Pregnancy Services of Ionia County as well as director and was a teacher at Portland Adult and Community Education. She was honored as the recipient of the Bishop Britt Social Justice Award in 2004. She is survived by a family of Michigan State alumni including her husband, Thomas Lee, her brother and his wife, Stefan Silzer and Barbara Chancey, and her children Mary Lee and Joseph Lee.

WILLIAM LOWE (BA, History, 1971) has become the new chancellor of the Indiana University Northwest campus. He previously served as provost and vice president for academic affairs at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, a position he held since 2003. From 1997 to 2003, he was vice president for academic affairs at The College of Saint Rose in Albany, New York. He has served as dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Detroit Mercy in Detroit and dean of Graduate Studies at Chicago State University in Chicago. He has also held administrative appointments at State University of New York at Cortland and Lake Erie College in Painesville, Ohio. Lowe is active in research and writing in the field of modern Irish history and has been a Fulbright Scholar. He is an authority on the Royal Irish Constabulary, Ireland’s national police force from 1814-1921, and has written articles on the subject.
GAIL GUTH (BA, Art Practice, 1970; Honors College) has been a freelance illustrator and graphic designer for 33 years, specializing in natural science illustration. A Battle Creek, Michigan, resident, she designs for several local firms and worked on illustrating birds for a field guide, among other projects. While her primary business is operating Guth Illustration and Design, Gail markets her prints and notecards, does bookbinding, and teaches workshops in drawing (landscapes and animals), watercolors, and beginning Photoshop. In addition, she is the current president of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators, an international group of artists who specialize in “art in the service of science.”

1950s

BOB REISING (B.A. with Special Honors, English, 1955) co-authored (with sportswriter Brett Friedlander) the book “Chasing Moonlight,” which was published in April 2009 and was nominated for the Casey Award as the best baseball book of 2009.

Bob, who also has degrees from the University of Connecticut and Duke University, is a professor of education at the University of the Cumberlands and lives with his wife in Williamsburg, Kentucky. He is the author of two other books as well, “Jim Thorpe: The Story of an American Indian,” and “Jim Thorpe: Tar Heel.” Bob was a three-year member of the MSU varsity baseball team and returned to campus as a Visiting Scholar in the fall semesters of 2003 and 2004. His career includes nine years in intercollegiate athletics as a baseball coach and football and basketball recruiter.

“Chasing Moonlight” has been hailed for its portrayal of Archibald “Moonlight” Graham, the doctor and baseball player immortalized in the iconic film “Field of Dreams.” Reising and his co-author, Friedlander, shed light on the fascinating character of Graham who, in real life, became a fan favorite in baseball while also managing medical residencies.

RALPH VANDERSLICE (BA, English, 1951) passed away in August 2008 after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease. He had been the director of administrative computing at Marymount College in Tarrytown, New York, before retiring in 1994, reports his wife, Carolyn, also an MSU graduate. She received her degree in Education and worked as a producer of educational videos before retiring and moving to Portland, Oregon, where she does a limited amount of jewelry making.

1960s

LARRY NEITZERT (MA, History, 1980; BA, Humanities, 1969), longtime teacher and currently an adjunct professor at Baker College, has published a book, “Maggie’s Farm” (Xlibris Corp., 2009), that provides an inside look at MSU during the 1960s. As a student at MSU in the mid-’60s, Neitzert was a typical small-town boy making his way at the big university. In the words of a City Pulse reviewer, “The author has done a yeoman’s job of capturing what it was like to be a young man growing up in a time when there were few boundaries and even fewer clear answers to issues like the war in Vietnam. Anyone who was even close to that era will recognize similarities in the book to their own classmates, friends and relatives.”

AUGUSTA D. ELLER (BA, Latin, 1969) enjoys a life of travels after retiring from the City of St. Clair Shores in 2000. She has since made three trips to England as well as visits to France, Belgium and Ireland, a place she “fell in love with” following a 1974 trip with a Michigan State University Alumni group.

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