

Letter from the Chair, cont. from page 1...

you find yourself on campus, be sure to visit Wolfgang's incredible collection and take a seat on Wolfgang's bench.

Another shock to all of us was decision by the Dean of Arts and Sciences to terminate the German major. Fortunately, we convinced him that his decision was based on insufficient information and incorrect assumptions. Although we are a small program, our enrollments are very healthy, and our faculty and students contribute significantly to UVM's intellectual culture. Unfortunately, it took the better part of the spring semester to convince the Provost and the President that German should not be cut, but we finally prevailed. The German major is here to stay. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support of our program. Your letters and other examples of support meant a lot to us.

Now to the good news. Our Professor Swanson married Professor Glenn Levine of UC-Irvine and is now Professor Levine-West. She and Glenn welcomed their daughter Sylvia Ruth Levine-West on December 27, 2020. This semester, Professor Levine-West is in Berlin where she hopes to finalize her research for her book *Contemporary Classical Adaptations: The Pedagogical Promises and Sociopolitical Premises of German Literature on Film*. She will be back in the classroom this spring, teaching an exciting new course entitled "Screening Berlin." Adriana Borra is also in Europe enjoying a much-deserved sabbatical leave, which we expect to yield interesting materials and ideas to make her popular German courses even more popular.

While we all miss Adriana Borra and Bridget Levine-West, we very much enjoyed working with our visiting professor, Jacqueline Vansant. Recently retired from the University of Michigan at Dearborn, she accepted our invitation to teach two courses for us. She has been an energizing colleague and uplifting presence in the Department and will be sorely missed by all of us. We are already conspiring as to how we can bring her back in the future. You can read more about Professor Vansant later in the newsletter.

As always, the rest of the Department is busy with teaching and advising students. Gideon Bavly is keeping the Hebrew Program going strong and has also branched out into teaching a course on contemporary Israel for the Jewish Studies Program. Julia Katsnelson has proven herself unstoppable, returning to teaching full-time after undergoing major surgery. She will have a follow-up procedure over the break, and we all wish her good luck and a speedy recovery. Kat Scollins is invigorated by finally having her students back entirely in person, and judging by the way they line up in front of her office, they missed her as much as she missed them. Kate Kenny continues to infuse everything and everyone with her incredible energy and British sense of humor. Brian Minier keeps the Department running, the equipment working and strained nerves from erupting. I am incredibly grateful to be able to work with such wonderful colleagues.

Having students using our seminar room again, coming to classes and office hours in person (albeit masked) really is a treat! Our students deserve much credit for making these first steps back towards normalcy possible. They are all vaccinated and are scrupulously complying with the University's safety guidelines. We can only hope that the current wave of Covid infections in Vermont will subside and UVM can remain an in-person campus. While it would be nice to see everyone's faces again, it certainly beats remote instruction.

Another sign of normalcy is that we had our first in-person event this fall. Russian filmmaker Anna Evtushenko showed and discussed her film "Я - ЗАТ." The film, which incorporates rarely seen archival film material, was particularly well received by members of the Burlington Russian community. We did however also discover one of the great advantages of online events. Our 2021 Harry Kahn lecture "Seeking Refuge under Fascism: German-Jewish Emigration to Mussolini's Italy," presented by Professor Susanna Schrafstetter of the UVM History Department via Microsoft Teams, drew audiences from across the country.

Please turn the pages for more information about the Department and the accomplishments and successes of our students and alumni. As always, thank you for your continued support of and interest in the Department of German and Russian. We would love to hear from you, too.

Best wishes for the Holiday Season and the New Year.

Sincerely yours,



Meet Jacqueline Vansant

Professor Emerita Jacqueline Vansant received her Ph.D. in German languages and literatures from the University of Texas, Austin. She held teaching positions at Hamilton College, Miami University and the University of Michigan, Dearborn from which she retired in 2021. Her research focuses on contemporary Austrian literature, film studies and exile studies. She has published numerous articles and book chapters on postwar and contemporary Austrian literature and culture as well as on exile literature. Her publications include the monographs *Against the Horizon: Feminism and Postwar Austrian Women Writers* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1988), *Reclaiming 'Heimat': Trauma and Mourning in Memoirs by Jewish Austrian Réémigrés* (Detroit: Wayne State UP: 2001) and *Austria Made in Hollywood* (Rochester: Camden House: 2019). She is the co-author of the first-year German textbook *Deutsch: Na klar!* (New York: McGraw Hill-Random House, 1990, 1995, 1998, 2011). and the second-year reader *Blickwechsel* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990). Her research was supported by a number of Fulbright and NEH research grants, as well as grants from the Botstiber Foundation, the Lion Feuchtwanger Archive, a Dorot Fellowship, and the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at The University of Texas at Austin. Professor Vansant also was a Senior Fellow at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute (2017/18).



Professor Vansant has held a number of visiting professorships. She taught at the University of Leipzig in 1998 and was a Fulbright Visiting Professor at the University of Salzburg (Spring 2003) and at the University of Vienna (Spring 2016).

Her current project focuses on the correspondence of a group of Viennese high school students that lasted from 1938 to 1942 and spanned three continents. For this project, she received a Senior Fellowship at the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Museum, which she will start after completing her Visiting Professorship at the University of Vermont.

Student and Alumni News

Nathan Davis (German major, 2018) is completing a post-baccalaureate premed program at UVM.

Peter Farrell (German major, 2021), who is pursuing a graduate degree at The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, was awarded a Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship from the Center for European Studies at UT in Fall 2021.

Anya Gorodentsev (Russian major, 2019) has now passed the written stage of her U.S. Foreign Service Exam.

Eleanor Maloney (Russian major, 2018) is currently in her last year at the George Washington University School of Law.

Ellen Jones (German major, 2019) is in her second year of graduate studies in German at the University of Austin.

After pursuing her first year of graduate work in Translation Studies online, Emma Roach (German major, 2020) has located to the Monterey Campus of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies.

Ben Shefner (Russian major, 2018) was accepted into the Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service for the Master's Program in Eurasian, Russian, and Eastern European Studies.

Genavieve Twomey (Russian major, 2020) has taken a paralegal job with Bergeron, Paradis, and Fitzpatrick in Essex Junction, Vermont.

Faculty Publications

Wolfgang Mieder published six books: *Proverbial Rhetoric for Civil and Human Rights by Four African American Heroes: Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King, Jr., John Lewis, Barack Obama* (Burlington, VT: The University of Vermont, 2020), *The Worldview of Modern American Proverbs*. (New York: Peter Lang, 2020), *“Mit dem Kopf durch die Wand”. Sprichwörtliche Somatismen in der modernen Lyrik* (Burlington, VT: The University of Vermont, 2020), *“Was soll es bedeuten.” Das Lorelei-Motiv in Literatur, Sagen, Kunst, Medien und Karikaturen* (Wien: Praesens Verlag, 2021), *“There is No Free Lunch.” Six Essays on Modern Anglo-American Proverbs* (Burlington, VT: The University of Vermont, 2021), and *Dictionary of Authentic American Proverbs* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2021). He also edited the thirty-eighth volume of *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* (Burlington, VT: The University of Vermont 2021). After almost four decades this marks the end of the printed volumes of this annual publication with its 544 pages. Publishing it as a book and mailing it throughout the world is financially no longer sustainable, but it will continue to be published electronically at the University of Osijek in Croatia. There are also several articles on proverbs and fairy tales that appeared in publications in Germany, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, and the United States.

Helga Schreckenberger published the articles, *“Ich lebe jetzt zwei ganz getrennte Leben”: Negotiating*

Cultural Identity in Alya Rakhmanova’s Milchfrau in Ottakring” (*Journal of Austrian Studies* 54/1 p, 45-62) and *“Flucht durch Frankreich: Die Erinnerungen von Marta Feuchtwanger und Lisa Fittko”* (*Frauen und Exil. Bd.10: Fluchtorte-Erinnerungsorte Sanary-sur-Mer, Les Milles, Marseille*. München: text + kritik, 2017, 196-208). She contributed the chapter *“Zeitzeugenschaft und Selbstdarstellung in Hertha Paulis Der Riß der Zeit geht durch mein Herz (1970)”* to the volume *Zwischenwelt 15: Lebenspuren. Autobiografik von Exil, Widerstand, Verfolgung und Lagererfahrung* (Klagenfurt: Drava, 2020, 384-400). Her article on Austrian writer Lilian Faschinger was published in *Schriftstellerinnen 3* (München: Text+Kritik, 2020, pp. 32-46).

In spring, 2021, **Kathleen Scollins** published an article on Dostoevsky’s literary engagement with Orthodox iconography in *The Journal of Icon Studies* (*“A Haymarket Khozhdenie na osliati: Raskolnikov’s Donkey Walk and the Failures of Iconic Performativity”*), demonstrating how the author inscribed “narrative icons” as part of a broader critique of modern Russia’s schism from the Orthodox Church. This summer, she wrote on offering students in the world literature classroom more agency over activity, topic, and learning style, inspired by her experiences with hybrid teaching (*“Open New Paths to Learning in the Literature Classroom with Choice Boards”*), which has been published in the online *FLTMag (Free Language Technology Magazine)*.

Scholarships and Awards

Maggie Hirschberg was this year’s **Outstanding Senior in German**.

John Wirls was this year’s **Outstanding Senior in Russian**.

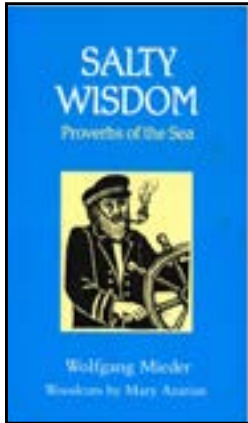
Julia King received the sixth annual **Kevin McKenna Scholarship** (made possible by alumnus **Matt Ryan**). She also received a scholarship in the name of alumnus **Doug Smith**.

Josh Huffman and **James Thomas** each received a **Webster Scholarship**.

Kaitlin Kiley received **The Carpenter Prize** for the greatest progress and improvement in the study of German during the first two years.

Bryce Gross, Matthew King, Sierra Miller, and Maya Robbins were the recipients of this year’s **Lampport Prize**, for outstanding students in the first two years of Hebrew.

Departmental News



Gideon Bavly once again spent the summer sailing on the lake. He finally got the opportunity to take many of his university friends with him: one trip with Wolfgang, Barbara, Kevin and Marcy; a second trip with Helga, Gordon, Jackie and Ron; and a third trip with Kat, Brian, Andrew and Andrea. Wolfgang agreed to steer the boat during his outing, and

he applied his salty wisdom to perform a virtuosic docking job that would have made even Captain Georg Ludwig Ritter von Trapp envious.

Helga's and Jackie's cruise marked the end of an incredibly long season that started a few days late because Gideon was not able to return from Israel as scheduled, since the Tel Aviv airport was shut down during the fighting between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. Sailing season started the day he came back on May 28th. Being severely sleep deprived on the first day, he remembers falling asleep (yes, standing up with his eyes open while steering the boat). What alerted him to this was a split-second dream, worrying about the passengers sitting at the bow of the boat. In fact, no one was there at all, and Gideon decided this would be a good time to return to shore.

While sailing the boat Gideon gets to meet people from all walks of life. Many ask about his "winter job" and his country of origin. One passenger, an evangelist from Texas, said that as far as she was concerned, God gave the Israeli land to the Jews and there is no other way about it. She was not interested in his thoughts about the subject. As provocative as he found this statement, he was able to hold his tongue and kept his thoughts about relying on the bible to establish real estate ownership to himself.

Though the season was long, as soon as the boat was pulled out of the water Gideon was already looking forward to next season. However, like every year, Gideon finds joy and fulfillment in his "winter job" and appreciates the peace associated with not having to worry about the weather forecast.



Adriana Borra is currently on sabbatical, based in Liguria. She is very grateful for the time to reconnect with both her mother tongues and home countries, enjoying the short travel distances in Europe and jumping on every opportunity for professional development. After the nearly travel-free time due to the pandemic every short trip, for instance to Ravenna, Aosta, Turin, Milan or Bologna feels like a delightful novelty again. It is also a real treat to have so much time for reading and writing, but she is looking forward to being back in the classroom in Fall 2022.



So many plans for retirement, so few opportunities to fulfill these dreams during a pandemic. No walking tour in Patagonia. No escaping from another endlessly long winter in Vermont. No more singing in the choir. No spontaneous decisions to do whatever tickles one's fancy. As the world around us shrunk to its core **Theresia Hoeck** began an inward journey by joining a writing group that challenges her with honest reflection, reevaluation, and discipline. In response to our pandemic crisis she decided to become a volunteer, distributing meals for food-insecure Vermonters.

After more than two years, Theresia Hoeck was finally able to return to Austria. She was lucky to find a short time window before this country was on lockdown again. With so many restrictions on public

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Celebration of Graduating Seniors, cont. from page 10...

Peter Farrell Major in German and Political Science



Hometown: Stow, MA

"I am grateful for the opportunity that the German and Russian Department gave me to grow my love for languages. My exchange semester in Augsburg was the highlight of my time as a student and it wouldn't have been possible without the wonderful faculty and staff. The German and Russian Department has been a second home for me and I am proud to be an alumnus."

A true intellectual, curious and goal-oriented, whose perfectionism is tempered by a devilish sense of humor.



Isabel Figueiral, Major in Russian



Hometown: Medway, MA

"I will miss the Russian Department very much, it has been a wonderful 4 years and I've learned so much! Thank you to Professor Katsnelson and Professor Scollins for guiding me along the way. I am excited for the future!"

- Искра

A sharp student of Russian language and culture who is unafraid to stand up for what she believes in, whether speaking up against human rights abuses in Russia, or taking on climate change deniers at home!



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Celebration of Graduating Seniors, cont. from page 11...

Connor Goulet, Major in Russian and Political Science



Hometown: North Providence, RI

"I never would have imagined that a single language class that I only took as a degree requirement could have changed me so much. I took Elementary Russian my first semester here, purely because I had a language requirement and I wanted something unique and challenging for myself. Something clicked, and I immediately fell in love with the language, the culture, and the country's history. Four years later, I am now graduating with Russian as my second major. I've made so many friends along the way, and have learned so much and I am so grateful for everything this department has given me. Спасибо вам всем за все, я никогда этого не забуду."

The funniest member of every Russian class he was ever in, "Dmitry the Drunk" turned out to be a serious student of Russian history and politics, as inquisitive as he is fun.



Maggie Hirschberg, Major in German and Environmental Studies



Hometown: Arlington, VA

"Joining the German program at UVM is the best decision I could have made as a first-year. I am so thrilled and honored to have been part of such an outstanding, caring, and scholarly community these past four years."

A multi-talented student, whose keen intellect is matched by her kindness and generosity.



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Celebration of Graduating Seniors, cont. from page 12...

Julia King, Major in Russian and English



Hometown: Chicago, IL

"I am so happy and grateful to be a part of the Russian Department. I have found a source of unending inspiration and intellectual debate here and I will always treasure the opportunity to be a part of this community. I am very grateful to both Katya and Julia for guiding me, being patient with me as I struggle through a new language, and for helping me to ignite a curiosity for Russian culture that I know I will have with me all my life."

A born literary scholar, her penetrating observations always illuminate texts in unusual ways and push discussion in unexpected directions. In any literature class, she imparts as much as she learns.



Katie Rearden, Major in German



Hometown: Springfield, IL

"Without my time in the German and Russian Department, my time at UVM would be so lackluster. I will so greatly miss studying and getting to know my classmates every day in the seminar room after class. This department is small, but strong; as a freshmen, I never thought I would be a German major, but the close-knit classes and incredibly engaged professors kept me coming back. I'm so grateful to have found a second home in the German department and it will always hold a special place in my heart."

Intellectually curious, with a creative spirit, Katie enlivens any German class with her original ideas and insights.



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Celebration of Graduating Seniors, cont. from page 13...

John Wirls, Major in Russian



Hometown: Burlington, VT

"My time with the Russian department has been invaluable. It can seem as if we leapt four years all within a single, hardly perceptible moment. But for perspective, I sometimes think of the thin "START" books we used the first year with Катя, copying out letters, or those times we went to the top floor of Williams Hall to discuss Gogol and have competitions for the best усы (which I, ironically at the time, did not participate in). I think of these memories in relation to how things have become-- classes with Юлия discussing Bulgakov, Pushkin and Lermontov, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, the history of Russia from the bells of Kiev to the Soviets, Russian folktales and Russian art-- all по-русски! With all of these experiences has come incalculable personal development. My interaction with Russian both in and out of class has been my life. That is, not simply school, but rather a deep source of life. I'm sure I will go away with a bit of an ache in my heart. With warmth as well as a subtle «ура!»"

--Ваня

Like a Dostoevsky hero come to life, our Vanya is a thoughtful, intellectual, and occasionally otherworldly scholar of Slavic studies, whose analyses elevate every class.



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\$ 4,481 **Total Spent in FY21**

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