

## 101 years of French at Calvin (Richard Harms, Heritage Hall)

A century ago the literary department of the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Church was in the process of becoming a college. In 1894 the board of trustees had approved admitting students who were not intending to become ordained ministers. Among the many adjustments needed to accomplish this metamorphosis was the expansion of the faculty and the curriculum. And one of the areas that was broadened was the teaching of foreign languages.

When the school began in 1876 instruction was in Dutch, while the students, all preparing for ministry, studied Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and English. The study of German was added soon after because of the extensive religion and theology scholarship that was being produced in German. At about the same time that German was added, the curatorium (now the board of trustees) was receiving student petitions complaining about the difficulty of learning English, particularly since some classes were even being taught in English.

With the addition of non-pre-seminary students to the school in 1900, the curriculum was expanded into a



*Albert E. Broene, professor of modern languages, 1903-1952.*

four-year preparatory sequence (comparable to today's high school), with an additional fifth year for those whose elementary education had not fully prepared them for the four-year sequence. In 1907 the two-year John Calvin Junior College was added to the curriculum, with these three tracks of study: Seminary Preparatory, Classical, and Modern Classical. The last two were modeled on the first two years of the University of Michigan curriculum so that students could complete their studies for a Bachelor's degree there.

Although just a handful of new classes were added to the curriculum at this point, two were courses in French for those in the Modern Classical track. During both years of the junior college, students had the option of taking either the two French courses or two courses in mathematics.

Teaching the new French classes was done by Albert E. Broene, professor of modern languages since 1903, but who, at various times, also taught Latin, mathematics, history, Bible, botany, and physics. The first class in French in 1907 had five students, Garrett Heyns, Herman Hoeksema, Peter Hoekstra, Harry Lieffers, and Martin Ten Hoor. Although Broene preferred teaching German, particularly since he had done graduate work in Heidelberg, he taught German and French at Calvin until 1952, even though he had officially retired in 1946 at the age of 70. Students had quickly nicknamed him "Drooge (Dry) Albert" which French students later changed to "Sec Broene." Yet the dedication of the 1930 Prism presents another student view of the professor of modern languages as ". . . an eminent scholar, a stimulating teacher, and a real and congenial friend."

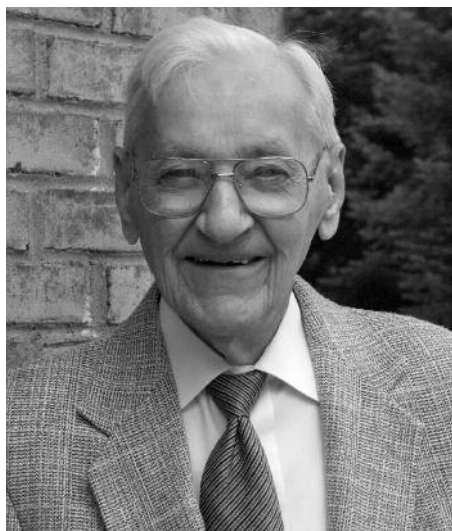
## Annual French Film Festival

In September 2008, the Department of French and the Calvin Film Forum will host a *Tournées* film festival with the theme "Histoires de familles." This is the fourth time that the department has successfully applied for a grant of \$1800 from *Tournées*, a program of the French American Cultural Exchange. The festival films are *La Môme* (2007), *Le Scaphandre et le Papillon* (2007), *Lili et le Baobab* (2006), *Elle s'appelle Sabine* (2008), and *La Question Humaine* (2007). In fall 2007 the French Dept. sponsored a film festival titled "French Without Borders" which included *Aaltra* (2006), *Mondovino* (2004), *Les Invasions Barbares* (2003), *Le Plafond de Verre* (2004) and *Indigènes* (2006). Each of the films was introduced by a Calvin professor or administrator, including President Gaylen Byker and Jacque Rhodes, Asst. Dean of Multicultural Student Development. The French Department was also grateful for the assistance of French majors Jackie Smith ('08) and Lara Matzat ('08). Please check the French Dept. website for the schedule of the 2008 festival ([www.calvin.edu/academic/french/](http://www.calvin.edu/academic/french/)).



*Scene from Le Scaphandre et le Papillon*

# An interview with President William Spoelhof *(J. Vos-Camy)*



**D**r. Spoelhof, now 98 years old, was president of Calvin College from 1951 to 1976. As a student at Calvin he took four semesters of French from 1929 to 1931 with Professor A. E. Broene.

## **JVC: What was French like?**

WS: Number 1, we had a thorough drill in grammar and we did that both orally and on the blackboard. (...) Then we had the conversation also in the class with each other. French always for me, maybe for all of the students, had an attraction for its elegance. So much better than Dutch, so much better than any of the other foreign languages you could take. But to know French, that was nice to know. And largely owing to the fact that in American literature there are so many references to French quotations and even word use and if you could sprinkle a bit of French in your reports, that was always very, very helpful. (...)

Broene was a staid, staid old Dutchman... He was a strict grammarian... Now one of the things that made class interesting on one occasion: we had the upstairs classroom... It was just the summerish weather and our window was wide open from the bottom and outside was a horse chestnut tree. Now one of the kids picked up a horse chestnut and he threw it right smack through the window as our professor was professing. And it bounced on the first desk, and onto the next desk, next desk, all the way to the blackboard. And he followed it with the constant “ne, ne, ne” and that was all. And then we were on with our lesson.

## **JVC: Did anyone laugh?**

WS: Oh yeah, we laughed. But we just went on. So we took French seriously. (...)

## **JVC: And did you ever get to use French later?**

WS: Well, yes, yes, I did. Always in the reading, in easy translations. And occasionally we tried our hands at writing a letter or something like that. But in any kind of English literature there is so much use of French phrases and, shall I say, right usage of certain words. And so it's always used illustrative in English language composition. And in that regard, why, you felt pretty smart by being able to read that right off, right like that.

*President Spoelhof served in the American army in France during World War II.*

WS: I remember I was in Paris and I wanted to get to the Netherlands and in Paris I went to see most of the famous

churches and cathedrals and things like that. For about a week before, I was sent up in a military vehicle. I joined with someone that came from another part of, I guess it must have been France, and he came with a liquor bottle in one hand and a girlfriend in the other hand. And they got into the vehicle with me and we went from Paris all the way up to Belgium that way. I don't know what happened to her. But I had a special friend, Oppenheim, who was a German who had come to the United States and settled in Maine. And he was my underling because he was a foreigner and therefore he couldn't be boss. But he knew Paris like the backhand of his glove. He had lived there, he had lived in all of Europe. So we got along famously.

## **JVC: What were some of your favorite places that you visited with him in Paris, do you recall?**

WS: Well, let's see. All of the cathedral areas. And also that was my specialty. And I had a home just below the *Arc de Triomphe*. And I remember the first time I was on the plaza, looking at the real *Arc de Triomphe* close in. And there was a fellow smoking a cigarette and I kind of bawled him out.

## **JVC: Because he was smoking?**

WS: Yeah, at that particular spot in a no smoking area. But it was a real revelation to me just exactly [how] everything fit together.

## **JVC: You probably knew the history of it well?**

WS: At that time I knew the history of it even better than I do now, surely. Paris is a marvelous, marvelous city.

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## Stories from the Fall 2007 Study in France program

Professor Fezter directed the fifth Study in France program in the fall of 2007 with 25 participants. The first week—orientation week—was spent in Grenoble, becoming acquainted with the city, opening bank accounts, buying transportation passes, but also having some fun: hiking in the Vercors (at Villard de Lans), riding the funicular at Saint Hilaire du Touvet, trying to find the home of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (and getting lost) in Chambéry. Once classes began at the CUEF, the days were filled with public transportation, baguette sandwich lunches, and language courses mornings and afternoons. The excursion to Paris in early October and to Provence and the Luberon in November proved to be highlights for the group. Memorable moments include the evening walk through Montmartre, a leisurely day spent at Versailles, the Eiffel Tower at night, the equilibrium-destabilizing mistral wind in Avignon, that town's famed bridge where everyone (mostly) did dance, group dinners at L'Hélicon, and more mistral at Marseille's Basilique Notre-Dame-de-la Garde.

Back in Grenoble, daily routines were interspersed with independent weekend travel that many (if not most) of the students undertook. Until... the strikes: train strikes and university strikes from November into December. The university strikes were inconveniencing but not disastrous—the CUEF found alternative places for the classes to meet. The train strikes, however, were not only inconveniencing but also frustrating, even to the point of maddening for those students who were expecting visits from friends and family. The last few weeks of the semester brought university exams, numerous visits to Grenoble's *Marché de Noël*, shopping for family back home, and last visits to favorite haunts.

### Liz Brush ('09): Memories

Je me souviens de la France. It is said that beauty is best known by experience and this proved true for me during my semester in France. The glories of the countryside and the charm of the cities marked my travels. One starry night in Montmartre found me in a cafe with fellow Calvin students, laughing in a golden glow of lights. Two men serenaded us on their guitars while a waiter in a beret brought us our drinks; the heart of Paris lit the evening with charm and grace. A month later would find me wandering along the coast of the Mediterranean at Cassis. The sun danced over the clear, azure

water and the town nestled among white rocky hills in an idyllic harmony. Grenoble enchanted me in a quieter way, on market days as we ate picnics at Place Victor Hugo or as I meandered the cobblestone streets, lined with shops and cafes, up to the Bastille.

*Joie de vivre* marked days with my host mother. Always ready to laugh, eyes sparkling, her life motto was 'Stress? That word doesn't exist in my vocabulary!' The conversations we had about everyday life in France gave me insight and left me much to think about. Perhaps one of the best gifts of France to me was the joy of sitting and talking for hours at meals. The easy flow of conversation about a wide array of topics and the intelligent and opinionated, but open, discussion enlivened my mind. A memory of much laughter and conversation was my family's *Faux Noël*. Before I left, my host mom made an extravagant banquet of all the French Christmas specialties and we invited friends. My friend Anita and I spent the evening laughing, talking, and enjoying frog legs and escargots, bright decorations and kind gifts, and most of all the warm welcome of a French family.

### Caroline Vanderloo ('07): A Quilt Made in France

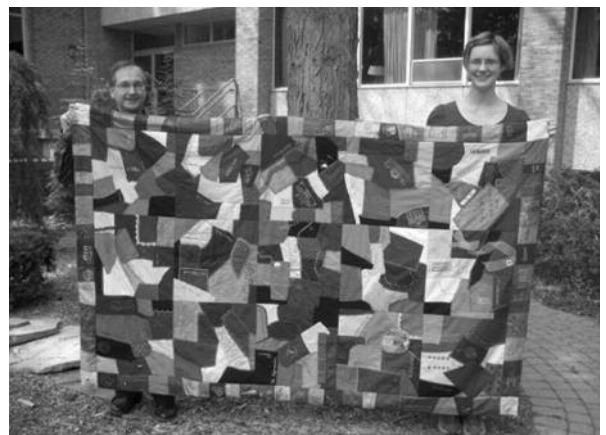
Last summer, over tea and two sewing machines, I lamented to my housemate that my banal photography skills would leave me with a very dull visual memory of Europe. She suggested that I make a crazy quilt where I tell my story by embroidering pictures, phrases, bits of ribbon and fabric onto a muslin backing. I loved the idea and by the time I got on the plane to Grenoble, I had 15 large squares basted together.

As the weeks went by, I embroidered the seams and added pictures and phrases. It seemed like I sat and worked on the quilt squares everywhere; on the TGV to Paris, on the grass in Place Victor Hugo in downtown Grenoble, in the kitchen of my host family as my host mother cooked dinner. I embroidered things like the Eiffel Tower, the celebration of Canadian Thanksgiving and the Calvin group members' names. I added a string of leather from Annecy, ribbon sent in letters from friends and a fabric flower petal that I found in a street in old Nice.

Late in the semester I decided to add a border to tell the story of my 5 week trip with Carina Kooiman, who helped design most of the pictures for me. Two months after I returned from Europe, after a total of 8 months of stitching, the quilt was complete.



Prof. Fezter and several members of the group at the château de Sassenage in Grenoble in September.



Prof. Fezter and Caroline Vanderloo back in GR

## Melody Joachim ('07), Assistante d'anglais in Louviers (Eure)

After graduating from Calvin in May 2007, I moved to Louviers, France to work as an English assistant at Lycée Jean-Baptiste Decretot for seven months. Teaching at a professional high school for students of hotel and restaurant management is kind of like working on the set of *Ratatouille*, where students scurry around in chef's uniforms, rehearse endless waiter-customer role plays, and generally obsess about food. But other than that, they were just typical French teenagers who love American TV shows, rugby, cafés and the latest French dance trend called *tehtonik*.

It was my first experience teaching, and I now have more respect for teachers than ever before. It's much harder than it looks. Yet I quickly realized it was a two-way learning process. While I taught the students about American music and



Melody Joachim and Josh Ankerberg ('07), also an assistant d'anglais in 2007-08, sightseeing in Rouen in February.

greeting the customer, they taught me about traditional Normandy cuisine and how to send text messages in French.

When I wasn't teaching, I traveled around Normandy, Paris, and the rest of Europe. One of my French colleagues

took me on Saturday excursions to see Monet's gardens, the cliffs of Étretat, the WWII Memorial in Caen, and a tour of nearby castles. In Paris, I never got tired of strolling along the Seine with other English assistants and taking visitors from home to our favorite crêpe stand in the Latin Quarter. And thanks to low-cost European airlines, I was able to visit friends in Hungary, Holland, Italy and Spain, and family in Estonia and Germany.

For my first year out of college, the France assistantship was certainly a transformative experience. The everyday challenges of life in a foreign country sometimes felt like a crash course in adulthood, but the rewards were independence and personal growth. And yes, I did improve my French. I also developed a passion for gastronomy and made some lifelong friendships.

## Senior Breakfast report 2008

Twelve graduating seniors attended the annual French Senior Breakfast on May 16, 2008, at the Cherie Inn in Grand Rapids, along with their proud professors from the French Department. Everyone enjoyed the lively conversation and excellent breakfast. We asked graduating seniors (including some who were not able to attend the breakfast) what their plans were for the immediate future.

- Paige Alexander will work at a summer camp in West Virginia. She has been accepted to the Masters program at the University of South Carolina and she will be deferring that one year.
- Heather Balon will begin the graduate program in Audiology at Central Michigan University.
- Lindsey Geelhoed will be entering the Masters program in French at Bowling Green State University (Ohio). Her first year of the program will be spent in Tours, France.
- Brenda Katerberg has accepted a position with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) in Niger for at least one year.
- Paula Kielstra is looking for employment in France for the upcoming year and plans to attend graduate school after that.
- Michelle Jonker is looking for a teaching job in French at the secondary level.
- Lara Matzat will be working as an *assistante anglaise* in a lycée in the Académie de Lille in France.
- Nunana Nyomi will be getting married this summer and will work in the Calvin Admissions Dept. for at least a year while his spouse finishes her degree at Calvin.
- Jackie Smith will be getting married and moving to France for a year with her spouse. She will work as an *assistante anglaise* in a lycée in the Académie de Versailles.
- Kyla Vander Hart plans to work for a few years (hopefully volunteering abroad) and then go to graduate school in international relations or attend law school with a specialization in women's rights and human rights.
- David Van Geest has accepted a job in software engineering in Grand Rapids with Burke E. Porter Machinery Company.
- Justin Wassink will be entering the graduate program in Civil Engineer-



ing at the University of Toronto.

- Natalie Wiersma will begin a dual degree in Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan.
- Marc Ysselstein will be applying to medical schools.

At the breakfast the French Department granted the Outstanding Senior Award to two well-deserving students, Paula Kielstra and Jackie Smith. They were each given a large *Le Petit Robert* French-language dictionary. All the graduating seniors were given a French Bible and former department tutors were given Calvin travel mugs.

The French Department would like to thank Daren D'Ippolito (2000) for his generous donation to the French Department which funded the gifts to the graduating seniors of 2008.

# Professors at Work

## Professor Glenn Fetzer

The fall semester was definitely the highlight for Glenn Fetzer, since he was in Grenoble with the twenty-five lively participants in the Semester in France program.



The Fetzers are gearing up for another semester group this coming fall. This time, however, returning to Grenoble will be like going home.

The spring semester fled by too quickly. In addition to two sections of Introduction to French Literature, Glenn taught French 313—French Poetry—a perennial favorite course of his. He also had the opportunity to serve as an outside reader for a doctoral dissertation that was defended at Brown University in April.

The semesters in France and in Michigan were punctuated by short trips for professional purposes. In September he traveled from Grenoble to Dublin to present a paper titled “Guillevic et le rythme du familier” at a colloquium devoted to the work of the poet Eugène Guillevic. At the end of September, Glenn also spoke on the Guillevic’s work at the *Centre Européen de poésie*. In mid January he traveled to Rennes for the first colloquium for the International Association for Stylistics (the paper he presented, titled “Mots de passe et mots d’ordre dans l’œuvre de Lorand Gaspar” reflected a linguistic approach to the poetry of Gaspard). In March, he presented “Anonymat et référence dans la poésie de Frédéric Boyer,” at the 20th and 21st Century French and Francophone Studies Colloquium at Georgetown University.

He also saw the publication of two articles this year: “Claudel : l’art et le phénomène” in *Paul Claudel 2005 : Approches critiques* (Ottawa : Legas, 2008) ; and “Poésie et patrie chez Edmond Rostand” *Actes du Colloque International des 1er et 2 juin 2006 : Edmond Rostand: renaissance d’une œuvre* (Lyon : CEDIC Université Jean Prévost, 2007).

Finally, this past summer he spent a few days at the Centre Jacques-Petit, in

Besançon, consulting manuscripts in preparation for some work on Claudel.

## Professor Irene Konyndyk

This year Professor Konyndyk was privileged to teach another great group of students. Work progresses on her book explaining the various aspects of her Multisensory Structured French course sequence. The three chapters she focused on during 2007–08 (thanks to a Calvin Research Fellowship) were the structured aspects of her sequence, direct and explicit instruction, and the “best practices” that make her French sequence a successful learning experience for students.



In October 2007 she presented a paper titled “Reimagining Educational Excellence in a Beginning Foreign Language Classroom for Students with Learning Disabilities” at the Kuyers Institute conference held at Calvin. She also gave a paper at the North American Christian Foreign Language Association conference in March, 2008 titled “Teaching for Justice, Mercy, and Virtue in a Beginning Foreign Language Classroom for Students with Learning Disabilities”

Professor Konyndyk has a strong interest in “green” issues and for Calvin’s ‘Focus the Nation’ day in January, 2008, she did a presentation, “Building a Green Home,” in which she described the green certification she and her husband received for the construction of their new year-round cottage on Lake Cecelia near Baldwin, Michigan. (Any alums who are interested in learning more, can e-mail her at [ikony@calvin.edu](mailto:ikony@calvin.edu).)

Her children continue to lead active lives. Her daughter Liesje (’01), who is a French teacher in Kalamazoo, was married this summer to Shawn O’Farrell and enjoyed time in Québec for their honeymoon. Abby (’05) is spending the summer in Costa Rica (where she expects her knowledge of French to be very helpful in learning Spanish) doing an international internship in commu-

nity development. She will complete her M.S.W. at the U. of Michigan in December. After five years in Africa, Jeremy (’99) and his wife Hilary O’Connor have just moved back to the U.S. from Uganda, where they had both been doing international development work. They have settled in Washington, DC where she will be working for the International Red Cross, and he has taken a position as Senior Policy Advisor with MercyCorps. Both of them have found French to be invaluable in their work.

## Professor Leslie Mathews

As I attended my final Calvin College graduation this past May, I shared in many of the feelings the graduates were experiencing: wistfulness



at leaving behind good friends and pleasant surroundings, thankfulness for the enriching and enlightening experiences of the past years, pride in the hard work that had brought me this far, exhilaration at the near-term freedom, and excitement and apprehension at what the uncharted future would hold.

A look back at my 24 years in the French Department reveals many changes, among them: the annual fall picnic with skits and choruses in French was replaced by the French film festival, filmstrip “technology” happily evolved into DVDs, students who early on studied in Paris, Avignon, and Chicoutimi (Québec) now participate in the department’s semester-long program in Grenoble.

Some things remain unchanged, however: the anticipation and trepidation that precede each class session, the “rush” experienced in the give and take of an engaging class, the frustration that not every student can be brought to share in the thrill of learning a second language, the pleasure of students allowing a glimpse into their lives and thoughts and, the satisfaction of shared learning and progress.

Good memories of my time at Calvin will include leading students on interims

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## Professors at Work continued from page 5

abroad in France, Spain, and Morocco, sharing my interest and experience in the world of translation in both the classroom and as an adviser, training tutors and teaching assistants and helping them discover their potential for teaching, involving my students in presenting French chapels so as to use their gifts in worship, hearing from former students as to where their careers have taken them, attending the stimulating lectures and performances which an academic community affords, and making fast friends among the talented and caring faculty.

While the decision to leave behind a 35-year career in teaching French was not easily made, the lure of spending time in our new winter home in Savannah, devoting more time to Translations Unlimited, and traveling to see our grown children and friends both here and abroad was too tempting to resist. *Merci à tous pour tout!*

### Leslie Mathews' Retirement

On April 21, 2008, the French Department celebrated Professor Leslie Mathews' twenty-four years of teaching at Calvin College with a reception held in the Meeter Center Lecture Hall. Students, colleagues, family, and friends joined to wish her God's blessings in her retirement.

The French Department is grateful

for all the energy she gave to teaching core-level courses, particularly the French 121-122-123 one-year track. French majors and minors have benefited greatly over the years from her business experience and connections through her French for the Professions course (French 221). Most recently, she organized with Prof. Cynthia Slagter (Spanish) a well-received Interim trip to France, Spain, and Morocco that looked at Muslim communities in the Mediterranean region.

Professor Mathews' "retirement" will be partial as she will continue to manage her translation company. She will also be leading another Interim abroad course in January 2009, this time with Professor Jennifer Holberg of the English Dept. Their "Tale of Two Cities" course will take a fortunate group of students to London, Paris, and places between.

### Professor Otto Selles

During 2007-2008 Professor Selles taught core and advanced language courses (French 201 and 216). During Interim, he had hoped to lead an Interim to



Martinique, which was unfortunately cancelled due to high costs. Instead, he taught on campus an introductory French film course open to all students. The class chose as favorites Kassovitz's *Hate* (1995) and Carion's *Joyeux Noël* (2005). In the spring, professor Selles taught Francophone Culture and Society in North America (French 280) and enjoyed the opportunity to approach the topic through historical documents, literature, film, and music.

As department chair, Professor Selles organized this year the search for a new full-time French professor and coordinated with Professor Vos-Camy the external review of the French Department. He continued to serve on the faculty steering committee of the Festival of Faith and Writing, held on campus April 17-19, 2008. During the Festival, he conducted a public interview with Yann Martel, author of the novel *Life of Pi*.

Next year, Professor Selles will be the Calvin Worldview Lecturer and will deliver a series of lectures on campuses across North America in conjunction with the work of CRC campus ministers. He will most likely give the talks at *L'Abri* Fellowship in Switzerland as well. This summer he began work on the lectures, all dealing with the topic of tolerance, and will continue his research

## New Faculty: Vicki DeVries '90 and Alison VanderWoude '04

When Professor Leslie Mathews indicated her intention to retire in 2008, the college granted the French Dept. permission to advertise for a full-time replacement. The national search garnered over thirty serious applications.

**Dr. Vicki DeVries** accepted the department's offer to begin teaching at Calvin as Assistant Professor of French on September 1, 2008. Dr. DeVries is an alumna of the French Dept. and completed her masters and doctorate at Michigan State University. She has extensive college-level teaching experience, having already worked as a French instructor at Calvin, Cornerstone University, Hope College, and MSU. The past five years she has been teaching French, Spanish, and ESL at South Christian High School in the Grand Rapids area.

Her doctoral dissertation focused on "Female Pymgalion Figures in French Literature (de la Sale, Marguerite de



Navarre, Balzac, Sand, Rachilde, and Colette)"—that is, she studied the power relations between women and men as depicted in literary texts across the centuries. She plans on revising her dissertation for publication.

The scope of her literary interests, her background in language teaching, and her interest in linguistics and study abroad programs promise to strengthen and deepen our course offerings. We are delighted to welcome Professor DeVries as our new colleague.

The department welcomes another alumna, **Alison VanderWoude**, who will be taking on a one-year, reduced-load faculty appointment to replace Professor Selles during his year as Calvin Worldview Lecturer. Professor VanderWoude is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She will be teaching a variety of core courses and continuing her doctoral research on the theatre of the eighteenth-century writer Denis Diderot.



and writing this fall, thanks to a Calvin Research Fellowship.

This year his introductory essays on Yann Martel and Leif Enger were published in Susan Felch and Gary Schmidt (ed.), *The Emmaus Readers: Listening for God in Contemporary Fiction* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2008), p. 106-132. A conference paper also appeared: "Voltaire, « apôtre de la tolérance » : les *Eloges de Palissot et La Harpe* (1778-1780)," *Les Vies de Voltaire: discours et représentations biographiques, XVIIIe-XXIe siècles*, ed. Simon Davies and Christophe Cave, SVEC 2008: 4, p. 255-267.

During the winter, Professor Selles continued to pursue skiing and snowboarding, qualifying for the NASTAR amateur ski racing championships in Steamboat Springs, Colorado in March. A fall on the race course taught him the valuable lesson that a fractured humerus is not a joking matter (nor are weekly physical therapy sessions). A family trip to the Rockies this summer did not involve any snow-related exploits.

#### **Professor Jolene Vos-Camy**

Professor Vos-Camy taught the Advanced Conversation course (French 215) and the Francophone Literature of Africa and the African Diaspora (French 219) in the fall. In the spring she taught

a section of French 102 as well as two sections of French 202 for the first time. It was a new experience teaching students who are on the verge of finishing their core foreign language requirement. It was her hope that the course left them with a positive impression of the French language and all the cultures where French is spoken. She was delighted to note that among the French 202 students not graduating, a number did decide to continue with French at the advanced level in the fall.

Professor Vos-Camy's Interim was dedicated to writing the main body of the French Department's Strategic Plan 2008. This was part of a departmental review that included having two external reviewers, Dr. Brigitte Hamon-Porter of Hope College and Dr. Cynthia Running-Johnson of Western Michigan University, visit the French Department in May 2008.

On January 31, 2008, Calvin College participated in a national environmental initiative called "Focus the Nation." As part of this, Prof. Vos-Camy co-presented a teach-in session with



Prof. Herm De Vries (Germanic and Asian Languages Dept.). The title of their session was "Different Countries, Different Responses: What We Can Learn From Europe."

In March Professor Vos-Camy presented a paper titled "Chaotic Neighbors" at the North American Christian Foreign Language Association (NACFLA) which Calvin hosted this year. This paper addressed pedagogical issues raised in the French film *Chaos* by Coline Serreau. Prof. Vos-Camy also served as the budget officer for the local NACFLA program committee.

Professor Vos-Camy became the French Dept. Chair on August 1, 2008. She and her colleagues are grateful to Professor Selles for his preceding six years of service in that role.

#### **Congratulations to Vivan Steemers**

Professor Vivan Steemers taught the core sequence French 111-112-113 with Prof. Konyndyk in 2007-2008. In May 2008 she accepted a position as Assistant Professor of French at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. While we are sorry to see Prof. Steemers leave Calvin, we are delighted that she was offered a full-time tenure track position at WMU. Congratulations, Vivan!

## **Emerita News - Claude-Marie Baldwin-Vos**

I thought that I would share what my husband Ken and I are doing in our old age. Perhaps it will inspire others: retirement is not a biblical concept! We are privileged to be able to minister to many and to travel much. I am also sharing news of two French Dept. alumni, my daughter and my niece.

Ken and I are volunteers at a Pregnancy Center where we witness to the love and faithfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We help young women and their partners go through healthy pregnancy and take good care of their babies. We also do prayer counseling in two different churches, helping many men and women through tremendous pain due to abuse, divorce and other difficulties.

We travel quite a bit. We have recently been to Australia and New Zealand, visiting friends with whom I ministered in Israel. We also spent time enjoying the amazing beauty of New Zealand and the unique Opera House in Sydney. We have been to Switzerland several times lately, including for the marriage of my niece, Rachel Halbritter, in September 2007. Rachel, who

was the Calvin French Dept. Language Assistant from 1994-1995 and is now a pediatrician, married Henning Burmeister, a German physician. They live in Fribourg and she works in Bern.

I have been to Japan twice lately to visit my daughter Claire-Lise Baldwin-Godel (studied in the French Dept. 1983-1984). Her husband Martin Godel is the Chief of the Swiss Business Hub at the Swiss Embassy in Tokyo. They have three children, 7, 4 and 3 years old. Claire-Lise spent her junior year of high school in Japan and speaks Japanese fluently. She is delighted to be living there again.

My husband and I are about to take a one-month river cruise from the Black Sea to the North Sea, from Constancia to Amsterdam. We are eager to visit many Eastern European countries, Austria and Germany. After this, we will go to the Swiss Alps for a rest and to visit family and friends.

I have very fond memories of the almost three decades during which I taught French and was head of the Department of French (1968-1996). I remember many students with great fondness.

## Francofiles Update 2008

**N**ote from the Francophiles 2008 editors: in June we asked the French alumni to respond to two questions: What were you doing professionally in the year or two after graduating from Calvin? What can we include about your recent activities? A hearty thanks to all of you who wrote back!

### **Margaret Boelkins (1965)**

In 1967 I graduated with a Master's degree in French language and literature from the U. of Michigan. I taught French and English at Kalamazoo Christian High after that. Today I am retired. We like to travel and have recently returned from a trip to Martinique. When possible, I attend the book discussion group at Schuler's.

### **Mary Romence (1965)**

Following graduation I taught beginning French at East Grand Rapids High School part-time and at Calvin part-time. Having just been a student I never really dared to go to the Faculty Lounge very much, but one time I remember I did, and met and had a wonderful conversation with Dr. Louis Smedes... a hero in the faith to me. I own and work in the office of our retail greenhouse business with my husband, Bill Romence. Two of my three children are also corporate members and employed here. I'm very active in my church, La-Grave CRC, and in local politics, among my many interests. Also am busy as "favorite daughter" to my 95 year old mother, a Calvin grad from class of 1933. [mary@romencegardens.com](mailto:mary@romencegardens.com)

### **Arden Ruth DeVries Post (1965)**

I spent the year following graduation substituting in French and Spanish in East Lansing and Lansing, MI while my husband attended grad. school at MSU. Then we moved to Denver and I subbed at Denver Chr. High. I retired in 2007 from Calvin College where I was a professor in the Education Dept. since 1985.

### **Leanne Wierenga (1967)**

I went to grad school at the U. of Illinois right after graduating from Calvin. I completed my Ph.D. and then had a few teaching jobs in various parts of the country. I'm currently teaching at Wittenberg U. in Springfield, OH. I'm in Paris with a group of Wittenberg students right

now doing medieval history and literature, and we went to Chartres today for the day. Tour of the old city, visit to the wonderful stained glass museum, and, of course, a visit to the cathedral. Guess who was performing at Chartres today? The Calvin College Cappella choir. My group leader status didn't allow me to stick around and talk to anyone, but I did make my group stay for part of the concert. It was pretty amazing.

### **Dianne Zandstra (1974)**

The year after I graduated with my French major in secondary ed., I taught French and also the nutrition and cooking class at Hamilton District Christian High School in Hamilton, ON. After that, I returned to GR because I was to be married within a few months, and I worked as secretary to the English Dept. at Calvin College until my first child was born. My husband and I spent six years in Argentina, where I taught French part-time for a year, in the eighties. Soon after we returned, I began teaching Spanish here at Calvin, first part-time and then full-time. I defended my doctoral dissertation in 2001 and am now a tenured professor in the Spanish Department. My thesis was published as a book last spring.

### **Anne Tuuk (1975)**

Despite tough grading by Professors Ellen Monsma, Claude-Marie Baldwin, and Art Otten, I did manage to graduate in 1975. I went to Ohio U. for two years, and enjoyed the Master's program and interesting people there. As part of my Teaching Assistantship, I had the pleasure of teaching OU students at the U. of Touraine for a semester. In Athens, OH, we also put on two plays by Ionesco which was exciting. From '77 to '78, I lived in Paris and taught English and piano lessons. The girl who was studying piano lived a long bus ride away, in Neuilly, and was often a bit late for her lesson as she had to hurry back to her spacious flat from equestrian class. Her mother designed tent dresses (you have to be of a certain age to remember those things) and showed me her studio in elegant Place Vendôme. She served me champagne in Waterford glasses before the piano lessons, described in detail her vacations in Tahiti with TMI, and was ultra curious to hear

my youthful views about the most popular American novelists at the time. I often went to the movies that year and loved the experience. I also traveled by train quite a bit, and got to see most all the major regions in France and tasted their gastronomic specialties. Yum....

### **Jean Groenberg (1975)**

In the first years after graduation I taught in Christian elementary schools in Nova Scotia and Ontario, with French classes in the upper grades. I now live in Granby, Québec. Having studied French formally gave me a huge advantage and good confidence in writing the French language, helping my children with their homework and presenting myself professionally. I now teach English as a second language to adults at the local junior college and have a lot of fun with it. I serve customers in French and occasionally in English in my husband's hardware store. The family's church, school and social activities are in French. Every other Thursday evening I meet with former students and anybody who wants to become fluent at the nearby "cantine" (read "neighbourhood greasy spoon") for an hour of English Conversation Club.

### **Rosanne Lopers-Sweetman (1977)**

I have worked at the U. of Toronto in the central and divisional administration for about 20 years. For the past several years I was Director of Strategic Initiatives and Priorities in the Office of the Vice-President and Provost, and recently became Assistant Dean, Administration in the Faculty of Physical Health and Education.

### **Dianne Marty (1978)**

I graduated in 1978, and immediately got a high school job, teaching French and English. After about eight years, my focus changed to almost exclusively French, which is what I still teach. In 1984-85, I spent a year in Switzerland and France, becoming fluent in French. From 1987-1989, I taught French to missionary children in Papua New Guinea, with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Since 1990, I have been teaching French at the largest Mennonite high school in British Columbia. I was married to Gary Marty, a tall, handsome, highly-educated American fish pathologist in July, 2006. We visited Lebanon in the sum-

mer of 2007, where I had the opportunity to use my French! [dmarty@telus.net](mailto:dmarty@telus.net)

### **Geraldine Selles Ysselstein (1979)**

I graduated in 1979 and in the first two years after leaving Calvin I taught French and Art in a Christian school in grades 7-12. After that my husband and I worked for CRWRC in Bangladesh for 3 years. For several years after that I taught part-time in both my majors at all levels. For the last five years I have been a working artist out of my studio in Guelph, ON. I still love the French language but do not get the occasion to practice it! Peter and I have three girls who have all graduated now from Canadian universities.

### **Renaee Kool Feyer (1979)**

Following graduation I moved to Indianapolis, IN where my husband and I both worked for my father's car dealership, Kool Oldsmobile, Inc. In 1977 I married Dick Feyer ('79). We have three wonderful children, Chad ('80), Desiree ('82) and Eric ('84). We currently live in North Carolina and own two car dealerships in Plymouth and in Williamston, NC. Both our boys are married, and we have one granddaughter, Olivia, born to Chad and Amy in 2006. We work hard, go to Nascar races and play at the beach with all of our friends and family.

### **Amy Plantinga Pauw (1981)**

After graduation I immediately went to Calvin Seminary and then Fuller Seminary and then to graduate school in Religious Studies (Yale University). As a theology professor at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary I continue to use my French in my research. For example, I recently read Calvin's sermons on Isaiah for my essay "'Becoming a Part of Israel': John Calvin's Exegesis of Isaiah," in *Those Who are Taught: The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL*, eds. C. Mathews McGinnis and P. K. Tull (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Lit, 2006). I will also give a paper on Calvin's ecclesiology in Geneva next May as part of the celebrations around his 500th birthday. [amypauw@lpts.edu](mailto:amypauw@lpts.edu)

### **Deborah L. Postema-George (1984)**

I graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 1986 with a Masters in Historical Administration, Museum Studies. While in grad school I worked for the Coles County Historical Society Museum in Charleston, IL. After grad school I worked at Mackinac State Historic Parks,

Mackinac Island, MI as Assistant Curator. My responsibilities included assisting with exhibits construction and installation, guide training and translating 17th and 18th century French and Québécois documents. I am still working in the museum world, currently at the Holland (MI) Museum as the Curator of Archives and Research. I still translate documents, although they are more likely to be in Dutch than French these days. My daughter will be attending 3rd grade this fall which means our fourth Tulip Time kids' parade to march in. We also ride in the big Saturday parade in our old 1931 Chevy, husband, Rick, driving and Jessie and me in the rumble seat.

### **Christian Schutte (1988)**

I moved to Chicago after graduation and eventually found employment in the regional Chicago sales office of a Steam Shipping company based in Montreal, Canada. I dealt with shipments out of Le Havre, Antwerp, and Rotterdam. I went from there to work for a French freight forwarding company, and then to a French Travelers' insurance company, handling French speaking client needs as they encountered medical issues abroad. I am now a Nurse at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. I work on the spinal injury rehab unit, which is one of our most challenging units, both emotionally and physically. Many of my patients are with me for up three months, at least, and must adjust to a life that is changed forever. For those who remember me, yes, I still ride a bicycle as my primary transportation, both winter and summer.

### **Audrey (Ammeraal) Bokuniewicz (1989)**

The summer after graduation, I taught summer school French I & II at Marist High School. That fall I went to the U. of Michigan to pursue a Master's Degree in French Literature. Upon completion in 1991, I started working as a Teaching Assistant at Michigan State U. where I taught first and second year French classes while beginning a doctoral degree in French lit. I have since moved into the field of library science, completing my Master's in 2000, and am working as a librarian at the Naperville Public Library.

### **Ann (Plantinga) Kapteyn (1990)**

We (my husband Ray and I and three children) will be returning to Cameroon

in July of 2008. I'll be working with 12 Cameroonian Bible translators from 6 different language groups, going over the exegesis of each chapter with them before they translate that chapter into their own mother tongues. I communicate with these translators in French, which is a second language for all of us, and the only language that all of us have in common.

### **Karen (Boersma) Wood (1990)**

The year after Calvin, I went to Paris to work for a bilingual newspaper but the job did not pan out. I stayed and became a nanny for a family with six kids. I now have a son Jacob, age 10, and a set of twins (boys, Ethan and Aidan, age 6).

### **Julie (Post) Wagenmaker (1990)**

I got married to Todd Wagenmaker ('89) in Aug. of '89 and we had our first child in 1990. We moved to California where he went to seminary and then later law school in Illinois. I stayed home with our growing number of children (we have 6 now) and used my education to homeschool them until two years ago. I now teach first grade at a classical school in St. Louis, MO, called Providence Christian Academy where I teach them some French! Todd is an associate pastor of Christ Presbyterian in Hazelwood, MO, headmaster of Providence Christian Academy, and a very part-time immigration lawyer.

### **Jeff Pyun (1993)**

I just became a chaplain (captain) in the US Army. My first assignment will be at Fort Hood, TX, where I will report for active duty early September this year. I will be serving the 720th Military Police unit as their battalion chaplain. I attended Calvin Theological Seminary upon graduation. Then I pursued a M.A. in French Literature at MSU from 1997-2000. I taught one French language course as a lecturer at Calvin and at Aquinas College as an adjunct prof. for two years in 2000-2002. I was a Korean and French linguist in the US Army in 2004. I was accessioned as a chaplain candidate (second lieutenant) in the US Army Chaplain Corps while studying at the Grand Rapids Theological Seminary where I received the M.Div. degree in May 2008. I am married to Kathy and God blessed us with three children: Daniel (12), Rachel (6) and Rebecca (2).

## Francofiles Update 2008 ~ continued from page 9

### **Christine (Lise) Patete (1994)**

After graduation I taught Elementary and Middle School Art at Westminster Christian Academy in Miami, FL. Currently, I live in Asheville, NC, with my husband Rob Patete ('94) and our 3 children. I teach elementary Art part-time at Asheville Christian Academy. [patetes@charter.net](mailto:patetes@charter.net)

### **Scott Vandenberg (1994)**

In 1995 I taught at Fraser Valley Christian High School as a Learning Assistance Teacher. I then started working as a Grade 7 teacher at Centennial Christian School in Terrace, B.C. and taught French 7-10. I took a French immersion course during the summer at the University of British Columbia. In 1997, I taught French in the Primary grades and coordinated French activities at the school. In 2002, I became Principal at Beacon Christian School and have taught French in Grades 3-6 for 6 years. Sadly, I may have to rest my French beret on the coat hook as I am planning to move to Lynden, WA, where it is unlikely that they will require a French teacher. I'll have to teach my four children French so that they can have some of the basics should they need it down the road.

### **Helen (Golub) Hekman (1994)**

The year after graduation I lived and worked in the Dominican Republic as a teacher at a small English school. I had taken a bit of Spanish and learned a great deal more by living in the country! I didn't know much grammar, but found I could translate exactly from the French and it worked pretty well. The next year I went home to Chicago and was a secretary at a manufacturing company for a few years. I am currently living in Calgary, CA, and don't get the opportunity to use French (or Spanish) very often, although we did attend the Francophone community's *Festival de Sucre* (Maple Festival) this spring. We are also homeschooling our two children and they are learning French.

### **Robert Kostrzeski (1994)**

I am currently the Director of College Counseling and French Instructor at the Drew School - an independent co-ed school in San Francisco. I had the opportunity to launch a summer program to Senegal in 2005, now in its third

summer. I recently created a two -week home stay exchange program between our school and a public school in Québec. I am leaving Drew School after six years and becoming the Associate Head of the Upper School/Director of College Counseling at the Wildwood School in Los Angeles, CA in July 2008. I also started a doctoral degree at the U. of California-Davis in Educational Leadership this year along with receiving a fellowship for Aspiring Heads of School from NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools). My year-long project turned into a 33-minute professional documentary presenting the experiences of students of color attending a predominantly white school.

### **Stephanie Lycans-Powell (1994)**

I got married in 1995. I'm currently working for Savaria Concord Elevator in Brampton, Ontario, where I've worked for 6 years. We were recently bought by a company from Montreal, Québec, so I'm brushing up on my French. I am contemplating returning to school to get my Master's degree at the Univ. of Toronto.

### **Stephanie Posthumus (1995)**

The year following graduation I was doing a Master's at Queen's U. in Kingston, ON [Stephanie earned her Ph.D. from Western Ontario U.]. I am presently an Assistant Professor at the Dept. of French, McMaster U., Hamilton, ON. [posthum@mcmaster.ca](mailto:posthum@mcmaster.ca)

### **Shannon (Hytinen) Rop (1995)**

Following graduation I taught French and History at Mansfield Christian School, in Mansfield, OH, for 2 years. Since then, I have been a stay-at-home mom. We have 5 children. We are moving back to Grand Rapids this summer, after 5 years in Louisville, KY. My husband is opening up his own law practice in GR and I plan on homeschooling the kids.

### **Lynn Ehrlich (1995)**

I actually graduated from the U. of Minnesota - but Calvin is a very fond memory for me. In the year or two after graduation, I got a Master's Degree in African Studies. For the last 7 years or so, I've been teaching ESL (to many Africans - surprisingly) in Minnesota at a variety of levels but primarily pre-K-8.

### **Sarah (Vanderhill) Hesshaus (1996)**

Just after graduation I was working in a cafe, and teaching French to preschoolers in a private program and to 3rd graders in a public after-school program. Then I went to work full-time as a staff assistant and translator for a healthcare consulting firm in Boston that was doing a lot of work in Algeria. Then I went to Middlebury College and got my MA in French. A few jobs and several years later, and I am Manager of Marketing and Communications at the EcoTarium, A Museum of Science and Nature in Worcester, Mass.—and I am not using my French at all! The most exciting recent thing has been my marriage in Boston in 2007 to Michael Hesshaus. [savanderhill@yahoo.com](mailto:savanderhill@yahoo.com)

### **Anji Straayer (2001)**

After graduation I moved to France for a year and worked as an *assistante d'anglais* in a lycée in the small town of Provins, east of Paris. Then I got a job teaching French and English at North-Pointe Christian High School (formerly Grand Rapids Baptist HS) where I am completing my 6th year. I teach French and 9th grade English, and I also direct the middle and high school theatre productions. I am also pursuing a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership at Calvin.

### **Alicia DeGroot (2001)**

Since graduation I've earned an MA in International Relations from the U. of Kentucky and worked for the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security for two years. I also did a year-long stint at the Kentucky Dept. of Agriculture working as an international trade specialist. I moved to Albuquerque, NM, in October, 2007 and work for the FBI. When I'm not working, I'm mountain biking and exploring the Southwest.

### **Liesje J. Konyndyk (2001)**

I have been teaching at Loy Norrix High School in Kalamazoo since graduation. I started out teaching math full-time, but have recently transitioned to teaching French full-time. I took a year off from teaching (2004-2005) to go to Paris to complete my MA in French from Middlebury College.

### **Laura (Black) O'Day (2001)**

During the 2001-2002 school year, I worked with a traveling dinner theatre

run by Wycliffe Bible Translators' Northwest regional office. During 2002-03, I taught middle school French in Elgin, IL. I taught four years of middle school French and English in Western Springs, IL. Last summer ('07), I got married and moved, so I've been substitute teaching this year. My second long-term sub job was a maternity leave position for an upper-level high school French teacher. It had certainly been a while since I'd used the subjunctive and other such advanced grammar in regular conversation! But thanks to some excellent preparation by my Calvin French teachers, plus some serious review just before beginning the job, things went quite smoothly. :)

#### **Laura (VanderMale) Grosso (2002)**

The two years after graduation I spent most of my time working as a substitute teacher in the Detroit suburbs. I taught one year full-time as a 5/6 teacher at a private school in Dearborn, MI. Currently I am teaching 5th grade in a public school in Portland, OR. But, I will be moving to Los Angeles, CA (due to my husband's job transfer) where I will teach 1st grade at a Private Islamic school. I have used my French on our honeymoon in French Polynesia and I have subbed in several French classes...

#### **Jana Bosscher (2003)**

Following graduation I spent two years at Western Washington U. obtaining my teaching certificate in French (K-12) and TESOL (K-12). I have worked in both areas, and I currently am substitute teaching and considering going back to school.  
[datzai@hotmail.com](mailto:datzai@hotmail.com)

#### **Catherine Boersma (2004)**

I was in the graduating class of 2004 at Calvin, but I transferred to UBC in 2003 to complete my BSc and then got my BEd in Secondary Math Ed. After graduating, I taught high school Math, French, and Physics at Centennial Christian School in Terrace, BC for two years. This past year, my French 10 and 11 students and I participated in a French exchange, where we hosted 21 Québec students in Terrace for a week and later spent a week living with our twins in Québec City. Next year, I'll be teaching Math in Dalian, China.

#### **Cari Kooger Vixamar (2004)**

Through Christian Reformed World Missions I was able to go to Quisqueya Christian School in Port-au-Prince, Haiti in August of 2005. While here I have been teaching history, primarily, in grades 7-11. QCS is an English school, which means that all of our classes are taught solely in English (except French classes). In Haiti I am not just a school teacher, however. I am here as a partner missionary with CRWM. I consider it a privilege to have lived in Haiti for these three years, impacting my student's lives for the glory of God. At the close of this school year my husband and I will be moving to Canada. I would also like to put in a little plug for the school and for CRWM in Haiti. QCS is always eager to hire qualified teachers, and French abilities are always an asset living in Haiti. The CRWM family in Haiti is also very supportive and welcomes new partner missionaries with open arms. If any students graduating from the French dept. at Calvin are interested in stepping out and using their education in an adventurous way, they should consider Haiti!

#### **Shannon Marcus (2005)**

Since graduation I have been working at Durham Christian High School in Bowmanville, ON teaching Core French to grades 9 - 12, and Grade 10 Civics. In July 2007 I started my Masters of Ed. at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education at the U. of Toronto.

#### **Sarah DeVries (2006)**

Following graduation I taught English at Lycée Saint-Exupéry in Marseille, France as an *assistante d'anglais*. After that, I moved to St. Louis, MO to teach French at Westminster Christian Academy, a Christian middle and high school, where I have just completed my first year as the only high school French teacher. This summer I will travel to France for a week to interpret and babysit for a family on vacation, and in the summer of 2009 I plan to bring a group of my own students to France for a two-week tour.

#### **Valerie Saarloos (2006)**

I taught French and English at Hamilton Christian High School in Hamilton, ON for one year. This past year I taught French and Science at Patmos College, the new Christian high school in Sarnia, ON. Looks like I will be teaching the

same, plus some English for next year. This summer I will be going to Grenoble for a month to the CUEF, (the university where the Calvin semester in France students go) to take some classes on teaching French as a second language in a high school setting. I have wanted to go back to France since my semester spent there, so this is a wonderful opportunity. I will also be staying with the same woman I stayed with during my semester.

#### **Marybeth Myhren (2007)**

I am finishing my first year of teaching at Valley Christian High School in Cerritos, CA. I'm currently teaching levels I-IV in French. Next year I plan to teach the same classes as well as extending the French program into the Middle School. I am also preparing to lead a group of high school students to France for two weeks during the summer of 2009!

#### **Lauren Van Enk (2007)**

After graduation I went straight into a graduate program at George Washington U. in Washington, DC where I am pursuing a Masters in Global Public Health. I will be graduating in May 09 but working in Dhaka, Bangladesh for several months beginning this fall. I'll be working for BRAC, a not-for-profit development organization.

#### **Jaclyn Janis (2007)**

After two years at Calvin I graduated from Ohio State U. in June 2007 with a B.S. in Environmental Science and a minor in French. I went on to volunteer with an environmental organization in Togo called *Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement*. While there, I met my husband, got malaria three times, and had an appendectomy (this is the extremely short version). I came back to the US in November to recover and store up some more funds. I returned to West Africa in January 2008 to continue volunteer work in environment/health fields. I have been living in Porto Novo, Benin since late February. I already spent just over two months there in a rural maternity clinic (I plan on pursuing medicine in the future) and will soon start with an environmental NGO on adaptations to climate change, mostly in the agricultural sector. I am currently learning Fon, an African language, to increase my abilities to communicate with people here, especially in rural areas.

# The Comenius Scholars program

The Comenius Scholars program allows liberal arts students to obtain a paid internship in non-profit organizations and receive credit for attending accompanying courses related to non-profit leadership. During 2007-2008 three French majors were Comenius Scholars: Amma Aboagye ('09), Brenda Katerberg ('08) and Kyla VanderHart ('08).

**Amma** did her internship with CALL Immigration Services, an organization that assists people with the immigration process, charging only nominal fees. During her internship she attended to clients needing help with green cards, employment authorization, and other citizenship issues. As most of her clients were refugees from around the world, she



was able to apply her French occasionally by translating official documents and interpreting. She learned a lot about the immigration process and how different each person's situation was.

**Brenda** did her internship with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) where she focused on setting up a program of short-term trips, "Discovery Tours," for pastors, potential donors, HIV/AIDS specialists, and others who learn from work happening abroad. She learned how faith values give shape to tours in different ways, and about teamwork and the importance of intercultural competence in development work. It was a rich experience that will serve as a strong foundation for the next step in her life: working for CRWRC in Niger following graduation from Calvin.



**Kyla** did her internship with the Program Assisting Refugee Acculturation (PARA), an organization that assists refugees in their acculturation to the U.S. She helped find employment for refugees and she developed a mini-ESL class where clients focused on job-related vocabulary specific to their type of work, thereby helping them advance to higher levels in their jobs. She found that her experience living and studying in France helped her relate to non-native speakers of English.



All three women greatly appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Comenius Scholars program. Not only did they learn about life in Grand Rapids, but they also gained a much better understanding of global issues.

