

## Alien Languages? And Piano

When I received my copy of the March-April issue of *Rochester Review*, I was surprised to see Paul Frommer '65 on the cover. My mind drifted back to our undergraduate days at the River Campus when Paul was one of three gifted pianists who performed with Steve Moshman and the University Baroque Ensemble. The first performer was the late George Schlein '64, who was a French major. He played the Mozart Piano Concerto No. 24 and later had a career in music. Then there was Paul, who played Mozart's 22nd Concerto with the group.

Finally there was Jim Dee, originally in the Class of 1965 but who graduated with the Class of 1966 after switching his major to linguistics. He went on to become a professor in that field. Jim played Mozart's 23rd Concerto in his own edition in the spring of 1966, just before we graduated.

Three Rochester undergraduates, all within a year of each other in age, all interested in languages, and all good pianists. It was a great pleasure to be associated with such an intelligent group of individuals.

H. E. (Kit) Crissey Jr. '66  
Elkins Park, Pa.

## Recommended Reading

I was pleased to see an announcement for the book *Becoming Me: The Memoir of an Erudite, Music-Loving, Left-handed Woodworker*, by David Rosenbloom '68 in the March-April issue.

I met David about five or six years ago on a golf course here in L.A., and we have become good friends, sharing not only our U of R connection but many other interests. I received my PhD in biophysics in 1975, and so David and I did not know each other in Rochester but since meeting David our paths have crossed several times.

I watched David in his struggle with dialysis and his kidney transplant as well as on the golf course. I also saw his evolution from corporate PR savant, to woodworker, and now to a patient advocate for transplant candidates at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, where I have been on the faculty for 30 years.

Having had the privilege of reading David's book, I can say that the man is very accurately revealed in the book, and it's a

remarkable journey described therein. I heartily recommend it to anyone who is either personally struggling with medical issues or who might be close to someone having these problems.

Thanks for keeping me up to date about the University.

Robert Farley '75M (PhD)  
Los Angeles

## Death Penalty: A Personal View

I realize that *Review* is not usually a forum for debate on controversial moral issues, but your full-page story about David Atwood '63 ("Defying Death," *Alumni Gazette*, March-April) and his crusade against the death penalty in Texas compelled me to respond with my very personal view.

Our son, New York state trooper Andrew (A. J.) Sperr was murdered on March 1, 2006. He was unaware that a bank robbery had occurred in Chemung County, New York, when he pulled up behind a pickup truck in what he thought was a routine traffic stop. The two robbers were changing vehicles to complete their escape. A. J. was shot twice through the window of the truck as he approached it. While on the ground, he returned fire and wounded both robbers before they shot him twice more, fatally.

During trial testimony, Anthony Horton, A. J.'s murderer, was quoted as saying to his accomplice that he was going to shoot the cop, knowing that there was no death penalty in New York.

Subsequent testimony convinces me that our son would have survived had the death penalty been in place.

In the United States in 2006, 145 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty; more than 175 in 2007. Many were killed by felons who had been incarcerated for violent crimes, including murder.

I believe in the U.S. jury system. The additional protection provided by DNA testing and modern technology would protect the innocent against unjust prosecution. The murder of a police officer during the commission of a crime deserves nothing less than the death penalty.

While Sister Helen Prejean and Mr. Atwood may make compelling arguments against the abuses of the past, I firmly believe there are a number of law enforcement officers' lives that would be spared in

the presence of the death penalty. My exposure to many stories since March 1, 2006, convinces me of this fact.

Andrew Sperr '52  
Greece, N.Y.

## Appeal of Poetry?

The most surprising thing about the article *Poetic Appeal* (March-April) was that the University actually teaches poetry writing. I am a well-read Rochester type of guy and do the *Times* crossword in ink, but I can only rarely decipher any meaning from the poetry in the *New Yorker*. And I don't think I am alone on this.

I realize it's fuddy-duddy to think Hensley and Holst were the last greats, but to read that the U of R devotes time and talent to teach folks to write modern verse is astounding.

David Sutliff '59  
Burley, Idaho

## Picturing Boar's Head

The nice photo taken at the Boar's Head Dinner (In Review, January-February) brought back fond memories of one of the nicest events in our campus life.

In former days, the dinner was strictly a stag event held in Todd Union. The Men's Glee Club members served as waiters while they entertained us by singing Christmas music. The Eastman String Ensemble also entertained. It's nice to see that the ladies are also included to enjoy the event.

As I recall the program included a brief history of the legend on which the event was based. To the best of my recollection, a professor was walking along a road through the woods and was attacked by a wild boar. A student happened along and killed the boar, saving the life of the professor.

They carried the carcass back to campus and roasted it for a feast. Perhaps you could print the history in a future issue?

Buzz Williamson '56, '64M (Res)  
Diriamba, Nicaragua

Review welcomes letters and will print them as space permits. Letters may be edited for brevity and clarity. Unsigned letters cannot be used. Send letters to Rochester Review, 22 Wallis Hall, P.O. Box 270044, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627-0044; rochrev@rochester.edu.