

# **News from the National Committee For Latin and Greek**

JUDITH LYNN SEBESTA, Exec. Secretary, NCLG

The National Committee for Latin and Greek met on January 11, 2009, in Room 305 of the Downtown Marriott Hotel, at 7:30 a.m. during the 2009 annual meeting of the American Philological Association. The designees of the NCLG's national and regional member organizations met to discuss timely issues and projects for the promotion of classical languages.

**Latin Video Ad Project:** Stanley Iverson, Chair of the NCLG distributed a report from Virginia Barrett on the plenary session at ACL Institute at which plans were discussed for a promotional video for Latin. Tom Sienkiewicz has put together a working committee for the project. Sherwin Little reported on preliminary talks that he had with the DC video company. Because of newspaper articles on the growth of Latin, VT Media Company had contacted Geri Dutra expressing its interest in the project. Stanley Iverson planned his winter vacation so that he could visit the VT Media headquarters in Boca Raton, Florida on February 5<sup>th</sup>. He met with people there and toured their facilities. Stan said that he was impressed with everything that he saw and heard. VT Media creates promotional videos for non-profit organizations in a series of 1, 2, and 6-8 minute format and distributes them to public TV and to radio stations. Non-profit organizations can also distribute the videos. The ads can be posted on organizations' websites, and teachers would be able to show them to administrators and parents.

Stan distributed the production timeline and a questionnaire for classicists to fill out, which VT Media would use in scripting the video. The NCLG will advance half of the amount needed to produce the video. Sherwin stated that classics supporters and organizations would be asked to contribute money to replace funds expended. The NCLG will keep on hand money for annual committee expenses. Stan reported that the shooting would be in southern Florida where VT Media is located. Video clips will be provided to them by Tom Sienkiewicz and others. Stan then said he would contribute up to \$1000.00 as a challenge grant to CAMWS individuals. Sherwin stated that the video can be shown on such sites as YouTube and could be downloaded from such sites or be purchased from the ACL's TMRC. Stanley said that efforts will be made to have the video ad ready by ACL Institute.

Stanley announced that CAMWS has offered the NCLG a booth in the display room and two free registrations for himself and for Amy Sommer, who will attend the booth. Stan encouraged other organizations do the same at their meetings. The NCLG will have a display table of current promotional materials at ACL Institute in Los Angeles.

The ACTFL survey of languages in public schools shows that study of the widely-taught languages has declined, in part due to the growth of “critical languages” Latin enrollments have contracted less than German. After Spanish and French Latin may be the third most frequently taught language. Recently Latin programs have been added in public and charter schools. Elementary school Latin enrollments in public schools have doubled to 6%, especially in magnet schools. Contact: [www.ACTFL.org](http://www.ACTFL.org).

The Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) will meet in February and May in 2009. Sherwin Little will represent the NCLG at the May meeting and Stan Iverson at the February meeting. Sherwin pointed out how important it is that the NCLG has a seat on the JNCL-NCLIS board, which enables it to remind the board of classical languages. For current info on federal legislation for languages and on funding opportunities for language teachers visit [www.languagepolicy.org](http://www.languagepolicy.org).

Willie Major commented on his report on the Committee for the Promotion of Greek that the teacher of a new program in Dallas was supplied with Athenaze books at her request. She reported at CAMWS on the core vocabulary of Greek and is working to identify the core vocabulary in Athenaze. Her results will be downloadable by teachers. Athenaze is the text most commonly used in high schools.

Timothy Renner’s report for his Cultural Diversity Committee mentions that Europe is interested in classical Egypt as a diverse community; “Egypt: Crossroads of the World” will be presented at the International Festival of Latin and Greek on March 26-29, 2009, and information on it is available on the Festival’s website and in the Fall 2008 issue of *Amphora* (vol. 7.2)

*Please send me current contact information for the officers of the NCLG’s sponsoring organizations. To ensure that your classical organization is represented at deliberations of the NCLG at ACL Institute in Los Angeles send me the name and email address of your delegate to [jsebesta@usd.edu](mailto:jsebesta@usd.edu). Send news of current officers and official delegates to ACL Institute to Geri Dutra at [AmerianclassicalLeague@muohio.edu](mailto:AmerianclassicalLeague@muohio.edu).*

## **Celebrate Summer in Pittsburgh: Make It a Classic**

Save the Dates: July 22 - July 25<sup>th</sup> in the summer of 2009

The *Excellence through Classics Committee of the American Classical League* will celebrate its 20th anniversary for promoting the study of Classics at the elementary and middle school levels. The celebration begins with a **tea party** to welcome our friend of Classics from across the pond, Barbara Bell, Director of the Primary Latin Project in the UK and author of Minimus. Other highlights include a **teacher workshop** at St. Louise de Marillac Parish Center, a **book fair** at Barnes & Noble at South Hills Village Mall, and a **family event** at the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh. These events will be a collaboration of local, state, national, and international

Classics organizations. Please visit the ETC website at [etclassics.org](http://etclassics.org) for updates and details on Act 48 credits for teachers. For more information contact Zee Ann Poerio, Immediate Past Chair of the Excellence through Classics Committee at [pastchair@etclassics.org](mailto:pastchair@etclassics.org).

## **ARS GRATIA ARTIS: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Ancient Art & Architecture in the Elementary School Classroom**

This free workshop will be held in Williamsburg, Virginia from August 3-5, 2009 (9 am – 2 pm each day). A complimentary continental breakfast and light lunch is provided. The presenters are energetic and knowledgeable. Participants will leave each day with plenty of handouts, books, lesson plans, curriculum tips, and ideas! The workshop is ideal for professional development and recertification. Certificates of attendance are awarded.

This workshop focuses in-depth on teaching about two major aspects of the ancient world: art and architecture. No prior knowledge of Classical Studies is required.

The objectives of the workshop are:

- to educate teachers about art and architecture in the ancient world;
- to explore interdisciplinary, relevant approaches to teaching about ancient art and architecture in grades K-6;
- to provide curriculum materials and ideas helpful in teaching about ancient art and architecture in grades K-6; and
- to network with those interested in the teaching of students in grades K-6.

Participants can experience all of these sessions:

- Eat Your Way through Art: Edible and Hands-on Ways to Teach Classical Art and Architecture
- The Hands-on Approach to Roman Art and Architecture: A Mosaic of Disciplines
- No Longer Greek to Me: Sharing Greek Art and Architecture with Elementary Students
- Share the Wealth: Using Ancient Coins Across the Curriculum
- Ars Longa, Vita Brevis: Classical Art & Architecture Today
- Ad Astra! To the Stars! Resources for Further Exploration
- PLUS... a sharing session, and observation of an enrichment camp, LatinSummer.

For more detailed information and to register, please call (866) 933-9466 or visit <http://www.ascaniusyci.org> -- Matthew Webb

This workshop is a joint program of Ascanius: The Youth Classics Institute, Excellence through Classics for ES/MS Levels, Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools.

# Latin School for the City of Alexandria, VA

T. ROBINSON AHLSTROM, CEO of Alexandria Academy, Mt. Vernon

In the early mornings, when I take my coffee on the porch, I look out across Little Hunting Creek and onto the banks of George Washington's beloved home. Today is his 277<sup>th</sup> birthday and a good time to pause and reflect.

In July of 1785—four years before he became the President—Washington, the private citizen, wrote to Thomas Jefferson of his “inclination” to endow a school for poor and orphaned children, “especially the descendants of those fallen in defense of their country.” In December of that same year, General Washington endowed *Alexandria Academy* with £1,000 (approximately \$200,000) stipulating that his gift be used “for the purpose of educating orphan children” and requesting that up to one fifth of the endowed scholars be girls.

His gift caused a stir with his neighbors. Most members of the landed class feared that universal education would upset the social order. They believed that only a privileged few males needed a classical, college preparatory education. In 1794, a Trustee of the Academy, responding to an inquiry from President Washington, dutifully reported that “The academy is on the wane. Parents in good circumstance are unwilling that their children should associate with those of a lower class.”

Washington was unmoved. He continued to attach the stipulation to his annual gift and Alexandria Academy became the first “free” school in Northern Virginia. It continued to educate the poor and girls, but only because George Washington insisted on it—and funded the scholarships. Later it became one of the first schools in the Virginia to educate free blacks. According to one historian, the Academy was for Washington, “a great longing—almost an obsession.”

In 1795 Washington wrote to Virginia's Governor Brook, asserting that “The time is come when a great plan for universal education be adopted in the United States.” *Alexandria Academy* was his model and his dream for the new nation. That schoolhouse which still stands on the southeast corner of Washington and Wolfe is a national shrine. It is the birthplace of universal education in the United States.

As we all know, America has still not achieved Washington's vision of providing a classical, college preparatory education for all its citizens. In America, we continue to have a two track system with one kind of school for the prosperous and another for the poor. Indeed, much has been written about re-segregation in America's schools since *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

On this, Washington's Birthday, I am writing to announce The Fund's intention to re-open **Alexandria Academy – The Washington Latin School in the City of**

**Alexandria.** Like Washington's little school, the new Latin School will be an independent, coeducational classical school that enrolls both paying and "free" scholars.

Over the past six years, we have established very successful Latin Schools based on Washington's model in New York City and Washington, D.C. Along the way, we have received both public and private funding—including gifts from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carnegie Trust and several smaller foundations and major donors.

This past week we began forming *The Alexandria Committee for Classical Education*. This week we will begin meeting with prospective parents. There is already considerable local interest in the school and we have not yet made our intentions public!

Once established, the new school will be self-sustaining. In order to lay the foundation we are seeking out at least twelve individuals, corporations or foundations to match George Washington's initial pledge. (\$200,000 paid out over five years.)

If you know me at all, you know that I am a school teacher. I know from a lifetime of experience that neither skin color nor family income have anything to do with a child's ability to learn. I also know that millions of America's most promising young scholars remain trapped in a gulag of government schools that show no signs of "reforming" themselves anytime soon.

It is time to return to Washington's model: Schools that are small, private, local, classical, coeducational and accessible to the rich and the poor. Don't just give a tax-deductible gift. Become involved. Contact [matt\\_davison@fa.org](mailto:matt_davison@fa.org).

## Useful Information from ACTFL

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) sponsors a contest for video podcasts by language students.

ACTFL has a full-color pamphlet available from the ACTFL online store: "Go to the Head of the Class: Choose a Career Teaching Languages." The brochure offers information for parents on academic, personal, and career benefits of language learning.

Other useful links are available on ACTFL's website [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org). One is for teacher recruitment for K-12 and higher education. Another is "Discover Language Teaching Research" on the benefits of language teaching for academic achievement, cognitive benefits for students and the fostering of attitudes and beliefs about language learning and other cultures.

Interested in finding out state certification requirements? Go to the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages website and check out the criteria at each state department of education. [http://www.ncssfl.org/links/index.php?links\\_index](http://www.ncssfl.org/links/index.php?links_index)

Or go to state report section and select a state and see the link to state certification requirements at [http://www.ncssfl.org/reports2/index.php?reports\\_index](http://www.ncssfl.org/reports2/index.php?reports_index)

## **JNCL/NCLIS BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING**

STANLEY A. IVERSON, Chair NCLG

The annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL/NCLIS) was held at the headquarters of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C. on February 27-28, 2009. The Chair of NCLG is a member of the Board of Directors, making sure that Latin and Greek are properly represented in the world language community. Four areas were of primary importance in the discussions: foreign language issues in congress, foreign language enrollments, preparation for legislative days, May 7-9, 2009 and the economic stimulus program.

JNCL/NCLIS is working strongly with legislators promoting national leadership for foreign languages. The National Foreign Language Coordination Act of 2007 (S. 451, sponsored by Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-HI / H.R.747, sponsored by Rep. Brian Baird, D-WA) is still lingering in committee; among its many provisions it would establish a National Foreign Language Coordination Council and create the position of National Language Director to be appointed by the President. Representative Rush Holt (D-NJ) introduced the International Education Leadership Act of 2008 (H.R.5179), which would establish an Assistant Secretary for International and Foreign Language Education and an Office of International and Foreign Language Education within the Department of Education; it has been referred to committee.

The College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007 was authorized and became Public Law 110-315 on August 14, 2008; it contains a provision for a new Deputy Assistant Secretary for International and Foreign Language Education, but JNCL/NCLIS is still working on a higher level position for foreign languages. It should also be noted that the term "less commonly taught languages" seems to be reappearing along with a more broad definition of "critical foreign languages," as suggested by JNCL/NCLIS. For further information regarding legislation and to see if your congressperson sponsors bills, see <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

Nancy Rhodes and Ingrid Pufahl of the Center for Applied Linguistics presented the third decennial report on the National K-12 Foreign Language Survey. Among the elementary schools the number of schools offering foreign languages had increased by 9% from 1987 to 1997, but decreased by 6% from 1997 to 2008. As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, Latin in the elementary schools increased from 3% in 1997 to 6% in 2008! Chinese and Arabic also increased. Latin enrollment is now third after Spanish and French, even though French enrollment declined from 27% of the schools to 11% in the last decade; German declined from 5% to 2%. It is surmised that No Child Left Behind with its emphasis on reading and mathematics has squeezed out some foreign languages at the elementary school level. NCLB may just have helped enhance the Latin enrollment because of Latin's emphasis on vocabulary. As was often mentioned during

this report, there's a dissertation in there somewhere. Foreign language enrollment in the secondary schools will be available in a later issue. For more information consult [www.cal.org.flsurvey](http://www.cal.org.flsurvey).

Significant discussion was given to the preparation for Legislative Days May 7-9. With a new administration, newly-elected congresspersons and some new delegates to the spring meeting, JNCL/NCLIS is developing principles and guidelines for discussions with our elected officials. Much will depend on what happens in Congress in the intervening months, so we want to be as informed as possible regarding current legislation as well giving input into directions in which we want legislation to go.

While JNCL/NCLIS is active in behalf of foreign languages throughout the year, Legislative Day is when delegates present themselves as citizen lobbyists in a professional manner. It is interesting to note that greater drive for foreign language study comes from the Department of State, from the Department of Defense and from National Security than from the Department of Education; this is exactly why it is so important for us to be vigilant in keeping Latin and Greek as part of the national budget and keeping the other foreign languages informed through JNCL/NCLIS. Again, in order to be an informed citizen yourself, please visit <http://thomas.loc.gov>. We may be contacting you for active participation in writing your official regarding specific legislation. Minnesota, my home state, may also have two senators by Legislative Day, May 7-9, 2009!

According to an article in [Education Week](http://www.edweek.org), the \$787 billion Economic Stimulus Package, signed into law by President Obama on February 17, contains \$115 billion dollars (\$115,000,000,000) for education. This time we are talking about billions of dollars, not "just" millions. At our meeting we decided the areas in which foreign languages are most likely to see some benefits are State aid for schools/critical needs – in which programs may be in jeopardy due to deficits (\$53.6 billion), Pell Grants (\$15.6 billion) and Teacher quality (\$400 million). There is a \$5 billion incentive fund to be administered by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, but the majority of the money will be distributed to the states to be used as each state sees fit. It is, therefore, very important that everyone keeps informed about the situation in his/her own state. To see a summary, with a pie chart, and to see if you are getting your share of the pie, visit <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles>.

On an entirely separate issue, an informative website, *tela totius terrae*: [Vicipaedia](http://vicipaedia.org). Google and have fun!

## **Classics Methods Course – Iowa**

MARCIA LINDGREN, University of Iowa

Iowa City, Iowa—The Department of Classics at the University of Iowa has launched a new course for upper-level undergraduates and MA students called Teaching in the Classics. It was developed primarily to supplement the teacher preparation programs in the College of Education that focus on modern foreign language instruction and is expected to become part of the required curriculum for students seeking teaching certification in Latin. The course, which encompasses both high school and college-level teaching, also is intended to introduce students who are interested in careers in the classics to the profession.

Some of the topics include the history of Latin and Greek language instruction, theories of language acquisition, primary teaching methodologies and the controversies surrounding them, national standards for classical language learning and teaching, evaluation of beginning Latin and Greek textbooks, adapting teaching methods to individual differences, resources for teachers, and opportunities for professional development. In addition, each student is planning a public presentation to inform an audience about some aspect of classical studies that will demonstrate the validity and continuing importance of the classics in our daily lives. The course, to be offered every other year, is taught by Marcia Lindgren ([marcia-lindgren@uiowa.edu](mailto:marcia-lindgren@uiowa.edu)).

*Send timely news of promotional projects or professional issues by individuals or organizations to Virginia Barrett, Editor, NCLG News. Contact: [Barrettcyp@aol.com](mailto:Barrettcyp@aol.com) by August 1<sup>st</sup> for the fall issue of the ACL Newsletter.*