**Child of Mine, Get Thee to the CRC**  
*By Christine Ridout P'04*

Mike Sciola, director of Wesleyan’s Career Resource Center, tells students that “nobody is better at being a student than you are. However, moving to work is a major transition that calls for a whole new paradigm.”

A "whole new paradigm" sounds intimidating, but Sciola emphasizes that it need not be. Students simply need to "translate their experiences into the language of employers.” This requires breaking down both academic and non-academic experiences into skill sets such as leadership, communication, mathematics and computers, interacting with the public, customer service, problem solving, working with children, teaching, office experience, negotiating—and on and on.

For example, I told Sciola that my son, Tim ’04, was interested in working in a political campaign but didn’t know how to translate his experiences as a camp counselor and movie theater concierge (I know, you never heard of such a thing) into skills relevant to a campaign. Are you kidding,” said Sciola, “he’s worked with the public, manned the phones, dealt with complaints, analyzed situations and done troubleshooting, organized co-workers, and made schedules. As a camp counselor, he’s dealt with children, exercised leadership, solved a problem, and dealt with emotionally charged situations. Thus, a job search begins by identifying skills, not listing past positions. Skills, not job titles, are what employers are interested in.

Sciola also says employers look for communication skills, both written and oral. They seek leadership skills—whether someone can motivate others, work in groups, self-manage, generate new ideas—and they want learners: if you can learn, you can do anything.

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**Horgan House Offers Respite and Hospitality Befitting its Namesake**  
*By Sandy Zecca Pier P’06*

The quaint two-story brick edifice, once home to Pulitzer-prize-winning author Paul Horgan, is now a place where parents and alumni can relax on campus. Horgan House offers a brand of hospitality synonymous with the man whose warmth and generosity were a mainstay of the Wesleyan campus for more than three decades.

“Dedicated in 2002 in memory of Wesleyan’s author-in-residence, Horgan House is a place parents and alumni can call home,” Director of Alumni Education Linda Secord said. “It serves as a lovely meeting and greeting space, with facilities for small gatherings and receptions.”

The century-old former carriage house is a fitting memorial to Horgan, internationally renowned writer of fiction, history, and biography, and bellwether of Wesleyan’s prestigious Center for Advanced Studies from 1959 to 1969. And it has been renovated with an eye toward maintaining a sense of grace and gentility befitting its namesake.

“The beautifully renovated library, which houses Paul Horgan’s extensive book collection, has a large conference table ideal for meetings, receptions, and small seminars,” Ms. Secord explained. “And the adjacent ‘red room’—reminiscent of the color the walls were painted when Paul lived here—has a port for laptops so visitors can work or check e-mail.”

A blend of Queen Anne and Colonial Revival, Horgan House stands at 77 Pearl Street, behind the former High Street home of Middletown’s distinguished Russell family. Its original pur-
Students can offer information about their own interests and ask where they might fit in the workplace. Students should also ask if there are specific search strategies appropriate to that profession. Finally, a student should ask for two to three additional people with whom he/she can speak.

The mechanics of a job search is the third step: identifying employers with openings (Wesleyan has job listing databases) and researching specific organizations or corporations (the Web is helpful on this), creating a resume and sending it out (always request an interview and follow-up), attending campus recruiting sessions, letting people know you’re looking for a job, and interviewing. Wesleyan helps with these tasks by organizing resume writing workshops, cover letter workshops, unscheduled drop-in hours, and strategy sessions.

Sciola emphasizes that students should not scoff at entry level positions, short-term work, or work through a temporary agency. These jobs give students information about what type of work is right for them and many of them lead to full time jobs. Very often, a student’s first job is a continuation of the research process.

For students, many of these tasks sound insurmountable. Students are frequently overwhelmed with class work and other school activities and never “get around to going to the CRC.” But dealing with the psychological obstacles is also part of the CRCs mission and the staff is very supportive. Sciola tells students that “you have permission not to find a job that you’ll eventually retire from.” In today’s world, very few people start a job and “get a gold watch in 30 years.” Jump in and see what you find.

For students who don’t find a job after graduation, the CRC offers continuing support. Wesleyan has an alumni career counselor who helps students do the same kind of assessment, networking and research that it offers undergraduates. Students have lifetime access to the CRC.

As parents, we wonder what we can do to help. Sciola says parents can help with self-assessment by asking students what they’re passionate about and how that might translate to work. Parents can also encourage their son or daughter to go to the CRC, pointing out the services (many students are unaware) and reminding them how much you’ve paid for them! In the meantime, it’s important to remember that students have their own internal clock and that all of them will eventually settle into something.
Date Change for Reunion & Commencement Weekend

Due to a shift in the five-year academic calendar, the previously published date for this year’s Reunion and Commencement weekend has been changed. Reunion & Commencement 2004 will take place Thursday–Sunday, May 20–23, with Commencement 2004 scheduled for Sunday, May 23, 2004.

Parents of the class of ‘04 will receive an informational packet about Commencement 2004 in December. Parents should reserve accommodations as soon as possible, as area hotels fill quickly for this weekend. Information about local hotels can be accessed at www.wesleyan.edu/about/lodging/ctt. The Reunion & Commencement 2004 Web site will be available in March at www.wesleyan.edu/rc.

Graduation Requirements

The Class of 2004 will be the first class to graduate under the new degree requirements, which were developed and passed by the faculty to give greater rigor to the Wesleyan degree. Specifically, each student is responsible for meeting the following requirements: 32.00 credits with no over-subscription, including a minimum of 16.00 Wesleyan credits, a minimum 74.00 grade point average, fulfillment of major requirements, and six semesters in residence for entering first-year students (five semesters for sophomore transfers, and four semesters for mid-year sophomore and junior transfers).*

A student must fulfill all degree requirements in order to participate in the graduation ceremony and remain a member of the Class of 2004. Please be reminded that there are many resources on campus to assist students in that process. Your son or daughter is always welcome to meet personally with Louise Brown, Senior Class Dean to discuss his or her progress towards the degree. Dean Brown can be reached at lsbrown@wesleyan.edu or at 860/685-2758.

*Please note that students in the Class of 2004 who entered Wesleyan prior to fall 2000 remain under the old graduation requirements.
Parents Leadership in Transition

As the Parents Council moves into a new academic year of parent involvement at Wesleyan, we pause to say thanks and congratulations to graduated members of the executive committee: Joan Cohen (P’03) and Jamie Schwarzfeld (P’03) in Admission, and Susan and Lynn Rotando (P’03) in Career Resources. Each of these outbound members of the executive committee had sons who graduated this past May. Although they will no longer be active members of the executive committee, their service has been greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten.

Special congratulations and a huge thank-you go to Joan Cohen, a recipient of the Wesleyan University Service Award (WUSA). WUSA awards are presented annually by the Alumni Association to volunteers who have given sustained service to Wesleyan University over time or who have given significant service in a specific area such as admission, career resources, Wesleyan Annual Fund, Reunion planning, or class notes.

Joan is one of Wesleyan’s most outspoken fans and has been ever-alert to new ways in which parents can network with each other. She is also ever willing to help spread the word about the high quality of the Wesleyan experience. Joan has distinguished herself as one of Wesleyan’s top volunteers and deserves our most sincere accolades for her four years of dedication to Wesleyan University.

ParentsTalk Listserv Up and Running:
The ParentsTalk listserv is an electronic bulletin board that allows parent subscribers to post e-mail messages to the listserv address. As a subscriber, any parent of a current Wesleyan student can ask questions and raise issues that you would like to share with other parents, or simply establish relationships with other parents in your local area. To subscribe or to login, go to www.wesleyan.edu/parents, select the ParentsTalk button, then press Subscribe Here. More than 300 parents have already joined!

Homecoming & Family Weekend: October 31–November 2
Preparations are currently underway for this year’s Homecoming/Family Weekend scheduled for October 31–November 2. This exciting weekend is an opportunity for alumni and current students’ families to visit campus and attend WEseminars, concerts, and athletic events. For more information, see the Homecoming/Family Weekend Web site at www.wesleyan.edu/hcfw.

Sons & Daughters Program: preparing for the college admission process, November 23–24, 2003
A joint venture between the Office of University Relations and the Office of Admission, this program helps prepare high school students and their parents for the college admission process. For more information, please see www.wesleyan.edu/sonsanddaughters or contact Camille Dolansky at (860/685-3756) or cdolansky@wesleyan.edu.

Residential Life
The Office of Residential Life employs eight full-time staff members and approximately 100 students to serve the Wesleyan community. All first-year areas and most upper-class residences have resident advisors or house managers living in the units. Their responsibilities include community development, programming and serving as referral sources.

Residents who wish to request a change in room assignment may do so by obtaining a room-change form from the Office of Residential Life and following the procedures outlined on the form. All changes are subject to space availability.

Have questions about student housing? Go to the Residential Life Web site at www.wesleyan.edu/reslife or contact us at 860/685-3550 or reslife@wesleyan.edu.

Wanted: Your E-mail Address!
In our increasingly electronic age, communication between parents and Wesleyan is greatly facilitated through the use of e-mail. If you haven’t heard from the University via e-mail, it could be that your current address is not on file. Please add or update your address today by sending a note to parents@wesleyan.edu, indicating your preferred e-mail address. You’ll automatically begin receiving WesOnline Monthly, a new electronic publication providing alumni, parents, and friends of Wesleyan with a brief summary of news pertinent to the university.

Wesleyan Campaign on the Web
The Wesleyan Campaign is right on track to meeting its $250-million goal! For an updated report of the Campaign’s progress, go to the Campaign Web site at http://www.wesleyan.edu/campaign/
W e’d like to welcome Dr. Samuel Mehr and Marilyn Mehr as new members of the Parents Council Executive Committee (PVEC). The Mehrs live in Omaha, Neb., and are the proud parents of James ’03, and Christine, accepted ED1 to Wesleyan’s class of 2007. Long active in the Wesleyan Omaha community, we are delighted that the Mehrs are taking on active leadership responsibilities within the Parents Council as co-chairs of the PVEC in preparation for assuming full leadership in 2004–2005.

In their first years as Wesleyan parents, the Mehrs were very active in both Parent-to-Parent and the Fall Call program. Through these efforts, they established a number of relationships with other Wesleyan parents and gained insight into questions and issues relevant to both Wesleyan students and parents. They also attended Reunion & Commencement 2002 and Volunteer Weekend in September 2002. This level of involvement and commitment is very impressive, especially considering that the Mehrs live in Omaha, more than 1,300 miles from Middletown! They are great examples of how Wesleyan has established with its graduates in the Midwest an impressive, especially considering that the Mehrs live in Omaha, more than 1,300 miles from Middletown. They are great examples of how Wesleyan can bring Wesleyan closer to you and your community. Call Camille Dolansky at 860/685-3756 if you’re interested in hearing more about hosting opportunities.

A WELCOMING EVENT . . . A GREAT WAY TO VOLUNTEER!
By Kathy & Jim Walsh, P’03, P’06, P’07

I n August 2002, Pat St. Germain asked us if we would host a send-off party for members of the Class of 2006 who live in Maine and New Hampshire. We were delighted because our son, Michael, was a member of this talented group of new Wesleyan students. We were pleased to have about 45 people from Maine and New Hampshire accept the invitation. One family from Keene, N.H., actually drove two hours so they could connect with other Wesleyan families. In addition, the fact that some alumni attended, including a member of the class of 1949, underscored the legacy that Wesleyan has established with its graduates. The weather was perfect the day of our send-off cookout and there was a wonderful atmosphere as students and parents met each other for the first time.

Many of the parents we met were people we had called with the traditional welcome call in the spring and this gathering solidified their Wesleyan connection. In the fall, Kathy got a chance to “debrief” some of the same families through the Fall Call program. The send-off parties have been so successful that Wesleyan will be looking for families of current students who would be willing to open their homes next summer to the incoming students who live in their area. Once you have offered to host a send-off, the staff at Wesleyan will work with you on details. You decide the format—cocktail party, cook-out, or coffee and dessert event. They will organize the invitation list and send out the invitations. Then you get to plan the party!

As Wesleyan parents (03, 06, 07), we believe in making frequent and positive contacts with our sons and the university. Volunteering to host a send-off event can bring Wesleyan closer to you and to your community. Call Camille Dolansky at 860/685-3756 if you’re interested in hearing more about hosting opportunities.

THE PARENTS FUND—ANOTHER BANNER YEAR
By Dick Crockford P’04

P rior to the matriculation of my son, Seth, at Wesleyan in the fall of 2000, four of his siblings had already graduated from four other colleges, so being the parent of a college student was hardly a new experience for me. I was not prepared, however, for the welcome, the recognition, and the involvement offered to parents at Wesleyan. The four other colleges, all good private institutions which shall remain nameless, seemed to regard parents as a necessary evil, a constituency seemingly valued only by the Bursar’s office when bills were due. From day one at Wesleyan, however, it was apparent that the university regarded parents as an integral part of their children’s education and, as such, members of the Wesleyan family. Calls from alumni and other parents offering advice and answers to questions were a prelude to the warm reception on opening day. Throughout the year, parents were encouraged to attend a series of events and seminars and to serve as volunteers—in short, to immerse themselves in the campus life and educational processes of the institution. These were no empty gestures, we learned—the staff and faculty actually listened to and responded to our suggestions.

Given our acceptance by staff, faculty, and alumni as part of the university, it is not surprising that parents have responded not only with input as volunteers but also with significant financial support. Cognizant of the fact that tuition and fees fall short of meeting the cost of a student’s education and wishing to maintain a high quality faculty, excellent educational resources, and a high level of financial aid to students, parents have generously contributed to the Parents Fund since its inception in 1993. Even the parents of students who have graduated continue to offer their support; currently they constitute more than 50 percent of our donor base.

The Parents Fund has dramatically increased its contributions to the university since its inception only ten years ago. Fiscal year 2001–2002 was a record year, and this year was another record-breaker. Seven hundred and eighty-seven non-alumni parent households contributed $451,807, surpassing our goal of $450,000, eloquent testimony to the involvement of parents in the life of the university. On behalf of the parent volunteers, the faculty and staff, and, above all, the students, our heartfelt thanks to all of you who helped put us over the top in this worthy endeavor.
THE PARENTS COUNCIL
The Parents Council was instituted in 1994 to help parents communicate with the University and among themselves, and to assist Wesleyan in providing the best education and experiences for its students. All Wesleyan parents are automatically members of the Parents Council. The council receives administrative support from the Director of Parent Programs, Office of University Relations.

PARENTLINE COCHAIRS
Carol and Jim Blann (Parents '04)
Hartsdale, NY; 914/723-7671
jmb@acxp.com
Marilyn and Sam Mehr
(Parents '03, '07)
Omaha, NE; 402/697-9110
msmehr@calllink.com
sammehr@sprintmail.com

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jmb@acxp.com
Marilyn and Sam Mehr
(Parents '03, '07)
Omaha, NE; 402/697-9110
msmehr@callink.com
sammehr@sprintmail.com

CAREER RESOURCES
Kathleen and Jim Walsh
(Parents '03, '06, '07)
Cape Elizabeth, ME; 207/799-6730
kfw@mainc.rr.com
jwalsh2@maine.rr.com

PARENT-TO-PARENT PROGRAMS
Catherine Charney (Parent '06)
Lebanon, NJ; 908/439-3893
jcharney@eclipse.net

PARENTLINE EDITOR
Christine Ridout (Parent '04)
Wayland, MA; 508/358-2012
cridout@comcast.net

PARENTS FUND
Richard Crockford (Parent '04)
Holliston, MA; 508/429-8701
richardcrockford2@verizon.net

WESSEMINAR COMMITTEE
Ellen and Arthur Sinkman (Parents '05)
New Rochelle, NY; 914/632-0683

PARENTLINE
Christine Ridout '04, Editor
Meg Zocco, Director, Parent Programs
Camille Dolansky, Assistant Director of Parent Programs

Questions, comments, or suggestions should be sent to:
PARENTLINE, Wesleyan University, 318 High Street,
Middletown, CT 06459 • 860/685-3756 • parents@wesleyan.edu
For more information, visit www.wesleyan.edu/parents
Join the new listserv: www.wesleyan.edu/parents/parentstalk

IMPORTANT DATES

FALL 2003

September
2  Tues.  Classes begin
4  Thurs.  Drop/Add Period begins
10  Wed.  On-campus Enrollment Period for undergraduates ends, 5 p.m.
11  Thurs.  Drop/Add Period ends, 5 p.m.

October
17  Fri.  Fall break begins at the end of class day
22  Wed.  Last day to withdraw from 1st-quarter classes
24  Fri.  Fall break ends, 8 a.m.
29  Wed.  2nd-quarter classes begin
31  Fri.  Homecoming/Family Weekend begins

November
1-2  Sat.–Sun.  Homecoming/Family Weekend
11  Tues.  Last day to withdraw from full semester and 2nd-quarter classes
25  Tues.  Thanksgiving recess begins at the end of class day

December
1  Mon.  Thanksgiving recess ends, 8 a.m.
8  Mon.  Classes end, undergraduate and graduate
9-14  Tues.–Sun.  Reading Period
15-19  Mon.–Fri.  Undergraduate final examinations
20  Sat.  University housing closes, noon

SPRING 2004

January
16  Fri.  University housing opens for all undergraduates, 9 a.m.

On-campus Enrollment Period for undergraduates begins, 9 a.m.
Once Upon a Graduation:
Life After Wesleyan

By Andrea Wilson ’03
and Carolyn Wilson P’03

The Graduate:

After the memory of turning in my thesis in April, everything sort of becomes a blur. Reading week and finals flew by and all of a sudden, my classmates and I were surrounded by our families, paraded around in caps and gowns, packed and gone. There was so much happening at every step of the way that I was hard pressed to find time to indulge in the emotions so many of my classmates were feeling: relief, pride, panic, despair?

For me, it was hard to put too much stock into May 25th, 2003. After all, I was to board a plane only a few days later and make my way to Montana where a job awaited me. That’s right, in spite of the dark cloud of recession that seemed to overshadow the job searches of my fellow classmates, I had managed to get my hands on the coveted 12-month contract. Not only that, but I was taking a position in my dream field, the field in which I had written my thesis: Children’s Theater.

A careful, albeit overeager, planner, I had applied for the position in October and therefore spent my senior year stressing about more imminent concerns, such as what to wear to our impending graduation with utter fear. I sympathized as they agonized over what their financial, living, and job situations would be. For me, however, it was not until I was standing literally under the great wide open that it hit me.

This was not just a summer break or semester abroad. I wasn’t just traveling to see the sites or to gain life experience. I was actually experiencing life... and not the kind that comes with meal plans and residential life. I was experiencing the kind where you find yourself alone in a brand new place trying to make it in the all too real real world.

Suddenly, the question loomed in my brain: What the heck am I doing in Montana anyway? It had seemed like the perfect position. Working for Missoula Children’s Theatre, I would be doing something I loved while traveling around the country bringing theater opportunities to kids who might not otherwise have access to the performing arts. It was the very stuff my thesis had been written on. At the same time, it entailed living out of a suitcase for a year and never being in the same place with the same people for more than a week at a time.

Unfortunately, the reality of what I had signed on for caught up with me at exactly the same moment that I realized I had truly said goodbye to my Wesleyan life. All of a sudden, I comprehended the big cliff that my classmates had fearfully described as looming on the horizon throughout most of our senior year. I began to think back wildly to the decision process that had gone into my job selection.

At the time, safely in my senior wood-frame house, I had decided that traveling with Missoula Children’s Theatre would be much more exciting and worthwhile for me than remaining in Middletown and working for Oddfellow’s Playhouse, a smaller children’s theater where I had volunteered, conducted my thesis research and where I had been offered a position.

Now, standing on unfamiliar ground with the prospect of nothing but change ahead of me, I wasn’t so sure I had made the right choice. Confused and all alone except for my cell phone, I naturally called my mother. The agonizing and worrying I forced her to listen to during the few days I spent deciding whether or not to leave Montana were perhaps above and beyond the call of duty for the mother of a 22-year-old. Nevertheless, she stuck by me through it all and helped me come to the conclusion that, planner and perfectionist though I may be, my first year out of college didn’t have to be a blueprint for the rest of my life.

My mother helped me to realize that my decision to join a traveling children’s theater may have had more to do with the exciting life I felt like I should want right after college than with what was actually best for me.

A few days after embarking upon my new life in Montana, I disembarked from my mother’s car onto my Connecticut lawn. I felt like my first foray into the world as an official adult had left me both a quitter and a failure. In the end, instead of traveling the country, I spent the summer after my Wesleyan graduation doing what many of my fellow classmates have been doing: a lot of reevaluating and a lot of temp-work.
Though now an official adult, I am still allowed to mess up, to make mistakes, to fumble, and even to ask for help from those around me. I have big dreams for myself, and there’s no doubt that one day I may be in the position to achieve those dreams. For the moment, however, I am content to learn the ropes of being a **real world adult** in Middletown at Oddfellows Playhouse, with members of both my real family and my Wesleyan family close by to give me advice whenever I am feeling adult enough to ask for it.

**The Parent:**

Once a parent, always a parent. My graduating daughter has always been one to make sure all her bases are covered well ahead of time, so when she told me she had two jobs lined up well ahead of graduation, I was not surprised. I hoped this would mean an easy end to school and transition to adult life. As is often the case, life keeps us on our toes with many twists and turns. Graduation came and went with the usual fanfare and I was still rolling along assuming all was under control. With only two days to go until she was to leave for Montana for a year, and still lots to do, we suddenly had three other recent graduates come to spend their last days together at our house. Although we had fun, I wondered when my daughter was going to come off the high of constant parties. Graduation came and went with the usual fanfare and I was still rolling along assuming all was under control. With only two days to go until she was to leave for Montana for a year, and still lots to do, we suddenly had three other recent graduates come to spend their last days together at our house. Although we had fun, I wondered when my daughter was going to come off the high of constant parties. As I drove her to the airport at 5:30 a.m. the next morning to catch her plane, she was suddenly quite quiet. I was not concerned, assuming her time had finally come. I assumed the plane ride would be a chance to gather herself up and get ready for what she expected would be a wonderful year. She was to travel the great West, which she has visited several times and loved, giving children an introduction to theater. This is something she has been doing since she was ten years old, and she loves doing.

My husband had left on a business trip to Europe and finally having the place to myself I was now able to concentrate on my own projects. Around 9 p.m., the phone rang and there was a small voice asking me, “Why am I here?” I explained that she had been going so fast the last couple of months, she should not worry, get a good meal and go to bed and get some sleep (basic Mom 101). The rest of the night was spent with several more phone calls, ending up with what I thought was a solution—she would stay the summer and see how she liked it. The next morning I found that she had called to see if the other job was still open (still making sure all was under control) and had booked a flight home. In the space of two days, my 22-year-old daughter had realized, I hope, that she does not have to prove anything to anybody (especially her older sister) by taking the whole world on at once, and that sometimes it is okay to come home with your tail between your legs and still get a hug and a kiss at the end.

As we talked through that first night in Montana, many things came out that I had never realized. She questioned herself and her ability to stand eye-to-eye with the world. She had always been successful in every way; did “they” expect her to continue on this path, and if so, how? Certainly staying close to home as her sister had done was not the way. She was going to go out and prove herself. But this wasn’t school; there were no courses to sign up for, no structure to follow. She had made a choice between a job in the same town as the college she attended (horrors) and one with the glamour of the open road, the big sky. She chose the one that would, in her mind, make her a stronger person, one who had gone out and conquered the world. Did she fail? Certainly not. In a funny way she did exactly what she set out to do. By understanding that the gypsy life expected in this job, coupled with the base commercialism, was not for her, and fixing it immediately, she is a stronger person. It cost her the price of a ticket to Montana, which for someone without a job is a big price, but it has set her feet a little more firmly on the ground. And yes, she is living at home this summer but already has lined up a place to live next fall. Has she gotten over the need to prove things to her sister? I am not sure that will be as easy a lesson for her to learn.