Schuler Digs Up Mysteries of Jesus

By Kristina Shaw

"I wouldn't call this a hobby; it's more like an obsession," Mark Schuler, Professor of Theology at Concordia University, said about his archaeological pursuits. Though a professor of Greek and Theology at Concordia for the past 23 years, Schuler has always been a parish pastor; one of Schuler's passions is researching the past, and, in the last ten years, digging it up.

This past summer, Schuler traveled halfway across the world to excavate in Israel (Palestine in antiquity). The area in Israel is located 1.5 kilometers from the Sea of Galilee and 350 km above sea level. It is also known as Hippos, one of the Decapolis Cities (located South and East of the Sea of Galilee and a region during Jesus' time). "My research interest is during the Roman era in Palestine. I wondered what life was like in Palestine during the time of Jesus and after Jesus," said Schuler. In the past, Schuler traveled to Jewish villages by the Dead Sea and this Greco-Roman dig in Israel complements his previous digs.

The University of Haifa funds and leads the Israel excavation—there are three groups excavating different areas in the same city. Professor Arthur Segal, Head of Archaeology, leads the volunteer-based program. In the summer of 2001, Schuler volunteered to help dig with this program and Segal asked him to lead his own group the next summer.

"I was doing research of my own on this time in history when I heard about Segal's dig." Schuler Discovery Continued on page 2

President Dan Mueller Gets Long Winded page 4

All students, faculty, and staff are invited to Fitzgerald Events September 18 - 22. See website at heginbotham@csp.edu.

A Clean Sweep for New School Year

(Caption) In preparation for the students' arrival, three maintenance workers scrub down the classroom building hallways. Photo by Kristina Shaw

Volume 37 Number 1 August 2002

Schuler Organizes Fitzgerald Conference

By Mary Ann Gossman of The Pioneer Press, August 18, 2002

Compiled by Kristina Shaw

Around the corner from Concordia University, on Summit Ave., one of the biggest literary giants of the 20th century used to live and work. And one of Concordia's own, Dr. Elizabeth Heginbotham, is helping to celebrate his life. Heginbotham is co-chair, responsible for organizing and arranging the five-day F. Scott Fitzgerald Society sixth international conference and the first to be held in St. Paul. Fitzgerald, the author of the classic "The Great Gatsby," was born in St. Paul and he lived here sporadically until his early 20's.

Heginbotham has taken her position seriously and gone above and beyond the call of duty. Instead of simply booking accommodations for scholars who are flying to the conference from all parts of the globe, she, with the help of a local committee, has organized conference events that range from exhibits of Fitzgerald's artifacts to a narrated bus tour of his old haunts (including his old house on 599 Summit Ave.) to a formal banquet and a gala event and the bus tour will view the places Fitzgerald spent his days working, living and relaxing in St. Paul.

Also, a rare and incredible event that will take place is the production of an hourlong melodramatic play that Fitzgerald wrote when he was 15 entitled "The Captured Shadow." St. Paul Academy and Summit School students will present this play. The play has been seen since August 25, 1912, when the Elizabethan Dramatic Club presented it at Mrs. Backus's School for Girls on Holly Ave. Fitzgerald himself played "The Shadow."

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Besides being Fitzgerald's home for a little over 20 years, St. Paul was also instrumental in influencing his development as a writer. It was in St. Paul that teenage Fitzgerald first noticed the class stratifications that divided society and this affected his writing and perspective on civilization for the rest of his life.

Fitzgerald continued on page 2

Fitzgerald Events September 18 - 22. See website at heginbotham@csp.edu.

A Clean Sweep for New School Year

(Caption) In preparation for the students' arrival, three maintenance workers scrub down the classroom building hallways. Photo by Kristina Shaw

What's Inside

A Course You Don't Want to Miss page 2

22 Faces Lead the Way page 3

Big Cat Answers All Questions page 3

September CAP Activities page 4

President Dan Mueller Gets Long Winded page 4

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The SWORD • 1
Schuler Discovery
Continued from page 1
It correlated with my interests and I approached him as a volunteer," said Schuler. "I have always been interested in understanding the historical context behind the [religious] texts we study. I feel you can't understand the text until you understand the context, and times, it was written in. One way to do this is to study other texts, another way to study the material remains. This is a natural outgrowth of my teaching the text."

The part of the city Schuler's group was responsible for excavating contained a rare occurrence - four churches in one that served one community. This raised one question that Schuler tried to answer - why are all these churches there? The city was occupied between 200 BC - 748 AD, times before, during and after the birth and death. In 748 AD there was a major earthquake which destroyed the area and the inhabitants abandoned the site soon after.

This site has not been excavated since the 1950's, thus most of what we understand of the earth was a mystery. But Schuler admits that the mystery is one thing that makes archaeology so interesting. "It's a daily mystery. Every day we ask ourselves what are we going to find today?" said Schuler.

Schuler's research goal was to identify where the church is, its dimensions and general structure. He and his team of four volunteers anticipated finding these basics and the next year discovering more thorough details. But, surprisingly and pleasantly, his team accomplished his first goal within two weeks. "We found the walls, corners, doors and got a sense of what the church looked like," said Schuler.

The basic design of the church followed similar churches of that time. 125 meters by 15 meters were its dimensions with an exterior apse (a round hall that protrudes from one side) facing north. There were four pillars inside on each side and there were three entrance doors on the south side.

Schuler's next goal was to find out what kind of floor the church had. His team began to dig in the northwest corner of the structure because when a building is destroyed, most of the destruction occurs in the middle, thus most of the corners and outside edges have more intact pieces.

It is here that Schuler made his big discovery. While his team was digging, they hit a solid basalt stone. Looking closer, they noticed that underneath the dirt was a large, solid basalt stone. They quickly realized this was a covering of some sort because it was a single piece and not a combination of stones pieced together (like how a floor is usually constructed).

After a little more digging, they realized that the basalt stone was covering a limestone sarcophagus (a burial site). The entire area was surrounded by a small wall and on the stone was carved a cross and the Alpha and Omega signs. Also, on top of the stone was a small hole, which possesses its own mysteries. Was this hole used to let anointing oil seep into the tomb? Was it used to hold up a cross or other decoration? Or was the hole used so people could "dip" objects into it and touch the tomb, thus making the object sacred? This was a common practice during this time. If the last is true, this means that whoever is in the tomb is a very important holy person.

Schuler also believes that the entire church was built as a place of burial for this person because, originally, the tomb area was open to the church and altar. The area was most likely used some time after it was built and the tomb area was destroyed probably as a way to vandalize and desecrate it. Schuler then believes the inhabitants restored the tomb area, built a higher floor and created a wall around the tomb, closing it off to the church, and creating an exterior wall in order to further protect it. One can see this is true by the two floors that are stacked on top of each other and also it is apparent that the protective wall was built at a later date.

"This started out as excavating a fairly normal church, a ruin of an old church," said Schuler. "We never expected to find this. We certainly had beginning luck."

This church was also unique because though many churches have burial crypts in the church or surrounding area, there is one of the only instances, Schuler hypothesizes, where there is a sarcophagus that protrudes from the floor. Also, the building itself was too small to hold a community worship.

Schuler is excited about the many dimensions of this project. "We are uncovering the origins of Christianity in Palestine, in the land of Jesus, and I wonder - what does this mean?"

-Mark Schuler

Dr. Beilke Offering a F Scott Fitzgerald Course
Dr. Beilke is offering a 2 credit course entitled English 203: F Scott Fitzgerald's Short Stories. This class will meet Tues. Sept. 4 from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm and Sat. Sept. 28 from 9:00am - noon.

Students will also be expected to attend some sessions of Fitzgerald's scholarly conference.

The goals of this course are:
1. To read and discuss the short stories of F Scott Fitzgerald.
2. To broaden knowledge of Fitzgerald's life and work by participating in an international scholarly conference on this author and by writing a four page response paper.
3. To deepen skills of literary analysis by writing a 6 page paper on Fitzgerald's short stories.

Note that students will receive Continuing Education credits for this course, which are different from traditional college credits. Traditional students interested in signing up for this course must check to make sure credits will transfer for them. If you are interested, please sign up immediately or contact Debra Beilke at x8260 or email beilke@jcp.ed
RA Training Prepares and Bonds New Staff

By Kristina Shaw

All summer the Concordia community has anticipated and prepared for the new faces arriving on campus. One way Concordia prepared for the new academic year has been to train a new batch of Resident Assistants (R.A.'s). Every residence hall has these vital leaders; they are important to the functioning of campus and resident life.

The R.A.'s returned and moved into the dorms a full week before other residents. Also during that time, R.A.'s attended a weeklong training session in order to be trained, prepare for residents' arrival, and create a support system among each other. The first lessons that R.A.'s learned are what makes up their job. R.A.'s lead floor meetings; are the connections between residents and the administration; enforce housing rules (i.e. visitation hours, dry campus, noise levels); are available to report any maintenance or resident concerns; can facilitate answering a question or simply need hack up in a situation, needs help answering a question or simply needs to find someone to vent to; they facilitate social events. For example, there was an R.A. barbeque at Dr. Jones' house one night and another day they trekked to White Bear Lake to spend the day on the beach and bond.

There are many new faces among the R.A.'s staff this year; only 6 out of 22 are returning R.A.'s. Also, the Resident Directors Joel Stoltenow and Kendra Cornellisen are new to their jobs. "I'm excited about this year," said first year R.A. Sarah Johnson, "I'm looking forward to meeting all the freshman and being a helpful resource."

At the new residents filter onto campus and get settled into their dorm rooms, it is likely their R.A.'s will be the first person they turn to for answers or concerns because of the high communication and contact level between the residents and R.A.'s. This week of training is important to create knowledgeable and competent R.A.'s.

(above) The 22 Resident Assistants and 2 Resident Directors smile for the camera in front of the classroom building. Arriving to campus a week early, the R.A.'s are trained to help assist residents and be leaders on campus.

Photo by Kristina Shaw

"I appreciate our support system," said second year R.A. Debbie Brown, "Because I can get ideas and feedback from my other R.A.'s and it is nice to know you are not alone, whether you're enforcing a rule or planning a program."

Ways Kruger Schewe creates the R.A. support system is through social events. For example, there was an R.A. barbeque at Dr. Jones' house one night and another day they trekked to White Bear Lake to spend the day on the beach and bond.

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Dear Big Cat...

Dear Big Cat,

I have just moved onto campus and am having a blast away from my parents. However, now I have to do things for myself such as laundry and picking out my own clothing. How do I get help with something like that?

Sincerely, Getting Dirtier by the Day

Dear Dirtier,

I have been in your shoes. Well, maybe not your shoes, but ones similar. What size are your Hooms? Anyway, when I was a first year student my plan of action was to do as little laundry as possible. I learned very quickly that a good pair of jeans or sweats can be worn at least three times before they started to smell too bad. Soon I realized that there were little things that I didn't know how to get done on campus. Such as where to cash a check, or where the best place to get a haircut is located, or even where a good church was to attend. I was then introduced to a fantastic resource that has been planted onto every floor of every dorm. This resource is called your RA. Most likely he/she has been put into this position because they have experience with campus life. They should be able to let you know how to survive without your parents pampering you, sissy boy. Well, have fun, and remember, everyone is out to get you. HAA HAA!!!

Sincerely, Big Cat

Dear Big Cat,

I want a new image. I have been in your shoes. I have a green dress, but you'd have to go talk to professors. There are so many opportunities to get involved. Another good thing is that you get to talk to professors.

Sincerely, Re-imaged

Dear Re-imaged,

If you can get you a new image. I have a green dress, but you'd have to go talk to professors. There are so many opportunities to get involved. Another good thing is that you get to talk to professors.

Sincerely, Re-imaged

The SWORD • 3

ra@concordia.edu

(above) Cranes and other equipment help workers clear out the area and construct our new library.

Photo by Kristina Shaw
New Senate President Counts Blessings

By Dan Mueller

On behalf of your Concordia University Student Senate, I would like to welcome you to Concordia, whether you are returning or coming for the first time. Concordia is an exciting place to be and I hope my belief that everyone can understand what a gift it is. My belief is that our University is underappreciated because too many people have found it easier to sit around and coast than to get up and do something.

Here at Concordia we have the opportunity to get involved in whatever we want. Whatever your interest — sports, drama, music, academics, politics, journalism — you can easily get involved in anything. Who can do all that at a large university?

Often it seems that people find it easier to talk about what they see as negatives and do nothing about them than to focus on the positives and try to fix what needs fixing. Complaining only hurts the community.

This year I would urge everyone to approach campus with a new perspective. We have also appointed the new Editor-in-Chief, Phillip McClelland is our new Technical Editor and Jennifer Mills is our Technical Editor. We have also appointed Jonika Stowes as our Business Manager and Joel Barker as our Advertising Manager.

It is easy automatically to assume change is always bad. Though I agree that some of these changes took place overnight, totally transforming the world CSP lived in last spring. But, as Kettering says, change is progress and inevitable.

Our campus is feeling the aftershocks of the budget crisis and the actions taken to balance the budget. However, I have faith in our school and that it will remain strong and connected.

The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress,” says Charles F. Kettering. These words drew my attention these past few weeks. This quotation holds true for Concordia this year. Returning to school this fall, many students will notice changes: in staff and faculty, in construction, in administrative office locations and structures, and in perspective. It will seem as if these changes took place overnight, totally transforming the world CSP lived in last spring.

I am excited about this year. I have a lot of plans for the upcoming year. I, Kristi Shaw, am the new Editor-in-Chief. Concordia has experienced its share of aftershocks of the budget crisis, but I believe in this concept.

On an upside, your campus newspaper, The Sword, has experienced its share of changes this year as well. We have a new Executive Board this year. I, Kristi Shaw, am the new Editor-in-Chief, Phillip McClelland is our new Managing Editor and Jennifer Mills is our Technical Editor. We have also appointed Jonika Stowes as our Business Manager and Joel Barker as our Advertising Manager.

The Sword is the work of students and faculty at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota. We welcome and encourage the feedback from all readers both inside and outside the Concordia community.

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Dr. Debra Belke

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Kristina Shaw

Managing Editor:
Phillip McClelland

Technical Editor:
Jennifer Mills

Business Manager:
Jonika Stowes

Advertising Manager:
Joel Barker

Writers:
Kristina Shaw
Jeremy Davis (Big Cat)
Jennifer Mills
Dan Mueller

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