



Amicitiae immortales,
mortales inimicitiae de-
bent esse—Livy 40.46

Amicitia

Don't Count Latin Out in the 21st Century!

The following is an abridged version of a talk by Tom Sienkewicz at the AMICI fall meeting in Iowa City.

The death knell for Latin has been ringing for centuries, perhaps as early as the fall of the Roman Empire in the west, sometime in the fifth century A.D. The history of Latin in the modern world has recently been revisited by the French scholar Francoise Waquet's *Latin or the Empire of a Sign*. Waquet, a social historian at the l'Ecole des Chartres, offers a cultural history of Latin in Europe from the Middle Ages to the present.

Waquet begins with the observation that for centuries Latin served as "the European sign," i.e., as a linguistic and cultural tie which united Europeans in their schools, in their churches, and in their scholarship. As Waquet notes, "Latin was the essential language for learned writings well into the 18th century," such as the scientific writings of Newton (1687) on physics, Linnaeus (1735) on botany, and Galvani (1791) on electromagnetism.

Yet as Latin gradually yielded its position of importance as a vehicle of communication, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Waquet argues that Latin became less a language and more a "sign denoting



This cow responds to the "Got Milk?" campaign with "Got Latin?" Picture courtesy of Ginny Lindzey at promotelatin.org

membership in the social elite" until by the end of the 20th century, Latin has become "an irremediably dead language."

Yet I question Waquet's vision of Latin in the 21st century. By examining the demographics of Latin students in the United States during the 20th century in the context of the broader changes which occurred in American education during the same period, I argue that Latin continues to serve as the

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Did You Know?

Cornell College Latin II students will be chatting in Latin and exploring virtual Rome in the VRoma MOO in February. If you would like your class to meet up with them, contact

John Gruber-Miller,
Cornell College, 319-
895-4326; jgruber-
miller@cornellcollege.edu

Celebrate 2005 as The Year of Languages

In the state of Iowa, more than 160,000 people speak more than thirty different languages, according to the MLA Language Map, which is based on U.S. Census data.

At the same time, nearly half of Americans say there is "too little" foreign language instruction in the nation's public schools, and 50 percent attribute this to a lack of funding, a Roper Poll has discovered.

In order to celebrate our linguistic and

cultural diversity and to emphasize the importance of language study, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has developed a year-long campaign to celebrate 2005: The Year of Languages. In its support, the U.S. Senate has passed a resolution declaring 2005 "The Year of Languages in the United States."

"Proficiency in languages other than

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Art in Roman Life Celebrates First Anniversary



A Lararium—a shrine to the household gods—graces the atrium of the reconstructed Roman house at “Art in Roman Life: Villa to Grave,” Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

The return of Roman Legionary soldiers as well as the world premiere of composer Andrew Simpson’s *Four Views of Pompeii* marked the first anniversary of “Art in Roman Life: Villa to Grave” at the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art this past September. In the first year alone, the exhibit has increased museum attendance, inspired numerous works of art, and merged into the local students’ curriculum.

“It [the exhibit] has put the museum on the map,” says Dave Caccioli, associate consulting curator. “We’re entertaining a whole new group of visitors.”

Other events this past fall have focused on the Latin language, Roman literature, and the Romans’ impact on our imagination. There have been talks about the Roman sword-and-sandal classic, *Ben-Hur*, and workshops on calligraphy and coin-making. Graduate students from the University of Iowa Classics Department helped museum-goers learn how to converse in Latin, decipher Roman inscriptions, and write their own graffiti. Classical

Studies students from Cornell College gave a taste of what the Romans talked about at Roman dinner parties, reading examples of poetry, gossip, and lampoon in English translation.

Upcoming Events include:

Robert Ketterer, Prof. of Classics, University of Iowa, “Rome on the Baroque Opera Stage, or Why is Julius Caesar Singing Soprano?” January 20, 7 p.m.

Joe Messner, “The Colossal Colossus: The Roman Colosseum,” February 12, 1 p.m.

“Roman Scavenger Hunt” Kids can earn a genuine Roman coin when they find the correct answers to the questions about Art in Roman Life. February 19, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Barbara Burlison Mooney, Ass’t Professor of Art and Art History, University of Iowa, “Building Caesar’s Bridge: Classical Architecture in Virginia and Early America,” February 24, 7 p.m.

Make sure to visit the exhibition with your students this semester. It closes August 25.

Year of Languages (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

English is critical to the career preparation of today’s students. Learning a new language and studying about other cultures is a fun and exciting endeavor to be enjoyed by everyone. In today’s world, competence in more than one language is a core and defining characteristic of a good citizen,” said ACTFL President Keith Cothrun.

The goal of the Year of Languages celebration is to advance the idea that every American, young and old, should develop proficiency not only in English, but in other languages as well. To accomplish this goal, there are three things you can do:

Celebrate the increasing importance of language learning. Organize programs at your school or community to build public awareness that diverse languages and cultures enrich our way of life. Ideas may include a food and language bazaar or a dance and language festival or “read across the world” at your local library.

Educate students, parents, and the public about the benefits of studying other languages. After all, language is the most complex of human behaviors. Recently, the *New England*

Journal of Medicine reported that studying foreign languages increases the density of gray matter in the left hemisphere of the brain. Language study improves cognitive skills, helps us reach out to other cultures and nations, and prepares us for civic engagement.

Communicate the importance of language programs with local business people and community leaders. Ask them to sponsor events, subsidize brochures, or fund scholarships. Contact local radio and TV stations with public service announcements about the importance of foreign language learning or about covering an event at your school or community. Or sponsor a survey of parents, students, or business leaders about attitudes toward language education and the needs of employers for language-proficient employees.

The success of the Year of Languages relies on you to celebrate, educate, and communicate the power of language learning. For more information about the Year of Languages, including ideas for activities, go to www.yearoflanguages.org or contact John Gruber-Miller at jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu.



Oliver Stone's *Alexander*—A Review

I have a theory: at heart, all ancient historians are novelists and screenwriters, whether they realize it or not. So distant from ancient events, they must recreate the world in which they took place, interpolating character and motivations from woefully inadequate and incomplete source material. It is only natural that Alexander the Great would be especially attractive: by his death at age 32 in 323 BC, he had conquered the Persian Empire, the richest and most powerful state in the Mediterranean. He and his Macedonians now possessed tremendous resources and wealth, and the land they controlled stretched from mainland Greece to India. How did he do it? And why?

Any interpretation of Alexander inevitably reflects the concerns of its own age. Oliver Stone's new movie is no different. It attempts to solve the mystery of Alexander from the perspective of family dynamics: the son of a controlling mother and a demanding, distant father, Alexander grows up alone, unsure of himself, and possessed by his fears. Yet he is somehow certain of his own destiny for glory. Convincing? Not particularly. The world-beating achievements of one of history's greatest generals are reduced to half-baked psychodrama.

The major difficulty I had with Stone's presentation is how much of Alexander's life is passed over. Where is Philip's preparation of Alexander as a warrior and general? Where is the hero of Chaeronea? Stone chooses to telescope the first half of

Alexander's invasion of the Persian Empire into a 2-minute voiceover. His focus is on the far more troubled conclusion to the campaign, when Alexander, having achieved what he set out for, was left to figure out what to do with the rest of his life. And what the audience sees of Alexander is not compelling. He is distant, and frankly, not especially appealing.

So why are the Macedonians so devoted to Alexander? Because they must have been to march thousands of miles and fight countless battles for him. What Stone passes over is the opportunity to show Alexander as he must also have been: decisive, exceptionally brave, a master of the theatrical. This is the Alexander who untied the Gordian knot, who claimed Asia as his own with a spear-throw before his army. The battles of the Granicus and Issus, showcases for his strategic genius and extraordinary daring, are summed up in a sentence. But it was by such displays as these that Alexander won the loyalty and love of his men. This makes Stone's portrait unbalanced, and so makes Alexander even more of an enigma. It also strikes me as irresponsible. Stone doesn't even pretend to explain Alexander – several times the narrator, Alexander's general Ptolemy, just says Alexander was "a mystery." I also wish that Alexander were not played by Colin Farrell, who does not project much authority, or even personality.

While Stone takes care to show Alexander as a commander who cared for his men – he knows their names, binds

their wounds, and rewards their courage, it is still a puzzle why he inspired such loyalty. And Stone misses a prime opportunity to capture Alexander's charisma: while the brutal march through the Gedrosian desert is shown, it's simply a long, hard, walk. Readers of Arrian's *Anabasis* have a far better idea why Alexander's men loved him: Arrian writes that during this march, two of Alexander's soldiers bring him a helmetful of water from a spring. The spring could not supply enough water for the entire army. So Alexander made a point of pouring the water out on the ground: if there was not enough for everyone, he also would not drink. Such displays went very far with soldiers to balance the very poor strategic decision to march that direction.

Still, I must say that I enjoyed the movie. It is truly a visual treat. The settings are well chosen – I really felt how small and (relatively) hierarchy-free Alexander's and Philip's Macedon must have been. The Ishtar Gate, the ziggurat of Marduk (AKA the "Tower of Babel"), and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon are stunning and very effectively indicate how far from home Alexander and his army had come. The Macedonians are rough and unsophisticated – they speak with provincial English accents, and the soldiers have, shall we say, seen the wrong end of a sarissa more than a few times. Stone focuses on their xenophobia and desire for home very effectively. The showpiece battles of Gaugamela and Hydaspes are exciting and, for

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Colin Farrell as Alexander in Oliver Stone's *Alexander* (2004)



Alexander (Colin Farrell) with his parents, Olympias (Angelina Jolie) and Philip (Val Kilmer)

AMICI Translation Contest Winners

The annual AMICI Translation Contests were held last spring. Four schools participated: Bettendorf, Dowling, Rivermont, and Valley. The winners, who received a certificate of achievement, are as follows:

Bettendorf High School (Teacher: Pat Burr)
 Latin I 1st Place ThomasMcConville
 Latin II 1st Place Heather Freedman
 Advanced 1st Place Dolph Westlund

Dowling High School (Vicki Campbell)
 Latin I 1st Place Katelynn Bishop
 Latin II 1st Place AmandaSanders
 Advanced 1st Place Katie White

Rivermont School (Jeannette Rowings)
 Latin II 1st Place Marvina Roebuck
 Advanced Vidya Prabhu
Valley High School (Mary Ann Harness)
 Latin I 1st Place Nick Dawe
 Latin II 1st Place Scott Koslow
 Advanced 1st Place Erik Nysten

BEST IN IOWA: The winners of the state-wide awards at the three levels received checks for \$50.00:

Latin I: ThomasMcConville (Bettendorf)
 Latin II: Scott Koslow (Valley)
 Advanced: Erik Nysten (Valley)
 Congratulations to all participants.

—
 Cindy Smith, AMICI Consul, Loras College

Review of *Alexander* (cont.)



Meeting of horse and elephant at the Battle of Hydaspes, from Oliver Stone's *Alexander*

(Continued from page 3)
 the most part, accurate in detail. This includes graphic violence, so be forewarned. The army is shown to be very well drilled, and Stone portrays this, correctly, I think, as an important component of their cohesion and morale. Words attributed to Alexander make their way

into the script: before the battle of Gaugamela, when Parmenio, Alexander's trusted second-in-command, recommends, "if I were you, I would accept Darius' offer," Alexander replies, "If I were Parmenio, I would accept it. But I am Alexander." And the confusion over Alexander's dying words – his kingdom will go either "to Craterus" or "to the best" – also finds its way onto the screen.

While the settings are generally lavishly and carefully detailed, there are slips. A friend and colleague commented on the tacky art reproductions used; she is, I hate to say, right. It is also a little embarrassing that one map used in the movie labels the Mediterranean Sea as the *mare Mediterraneum*. Latin, as we all know, was not the language of choice among Greek-speaking cartographers of that period.

The most notable inaccuracy, but one done for dramatic purposes, was placing the mutiny of Hyphasis *before* the battle of Hydaspes, not *after* it. Alexander only put down the mutiny by agreeing to return home, according to the literary sources.

Alexander's sexuality as portrayed by Stone has received much press. The notion of being homosexual or heterosexual is modern. Same-sex contacts were not stigmatized in ancient Greek society. Alexander appears to have been a man whose primary sexual and social interests were other men. The problem that Alexander's sexual habits caused lay in his reluctance to father a purely Macedonian heir. Stone portrays this correctly. Although Alexander's homosexual relationships are portrayed no more explicitly than with manly hugs, the dialogue makes it clear that they were far more intimate sexually.

So, the big question: is this a must-see for classicists and ancient historians? I think so. It is imaginatively filmed, on a scale that reflects Alexander's importance for later history. If you don't buy Stone's interpretation, just sit back and enjoy the scenery. It's worth it.

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Don't Count Latin Out (cont.)

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cultural sign of a significant minority of well-educated Americans, as it always has. In fact, despite the drop in Latin enrollments which occurred in the mid-twentieth century, the language has maintained a remarkably stable population of individuals who have studied the language in American high schools and universities. The only difference is that the demographics of this minority have changed. As I'll show below, the profile of the typical Latin student has changed over the course of the twentieth century and this change is all to the good.

To a certain extent the history of Latin in American schools in the 20th century supports Waquet's impression that the language has lost its influence. In 1905, 56 % of all students enrolled in public high schools in the United States studied Latin (compared to the 32.7% who studied a modern language). By 1928, the percentage of Latin students had already declined significantly to 22%. By 1934, the percentage was 16%. In 1948, the percentage was 7.9%. By 1976, after the turbulence of the 1960s, the percentage dropped to an all-time low of 1.1%.

Yet the decline in the number of students studying Latin has stopped and these percentages have even begun to rise again, albeit modestly. In 1994 the percentage of high school students studying Latin had increased to 1.6%. This figure represented an increase in Latin enrollments of 15.2% between 1990 and 1994.

These oft-repeated figures, moreover, must be seen in the context of the dramatic increase in the number of Americans graduating from high school during the 20th century. In 1900 only 6.4% of the U.S. population aged 17 were high school graduates. But during the first half of the twentieth century a high school diploma came to be seen as an essential tool for social and economic mobility. By 1948 52.6% of the U.S. population aged 17 graduated from high school. In 1970 this percentage rose further, to 76.9%.

In addition, such demographic changes inevitably brought curricular change. In 1900 the subjects studied by most high school students were typically what would be considered academic or even college

preparatory subject matter today—not only Latin but advanced literature, math and science. But by the middle of the 20th century, the typical high school curriculum became more and more vocational, and life preparatory courses like typing, shop, home economics, etc. became part of the standard high school curriculum.

I would suggest that these changes in the demographics and in the curriculum of American high schools should be factored into the figures recording the decline in the percentage of high school students studying Latin in the twentieth century. If one compares the number of U.S. high school students studying Latin to the approximate number of high school age children, instead of the number of students actually enrolled in high school, the decline is seen to be much less steep and significant. While 262,752 U.S. high school students studied Latin in 1900, they actually represented only about 4.5% of the U.S. population aged 14-17. In 1994 the 189,833 high school students studying Latin represented about 1.6% of the same age group.

To a certain extent, the history of Latin in U.S. colleges and universities parallels that of Latin in the high schools. Yet similar to the overall stability in the number of high school students studying Latin, the number of students studying Latin in colleges and universities has also remained virtually stable in the second half of the twentieth century: 25,700 in 1960; 25,897 in 1995. Encouragingly, from 1998-2002 Latin has seen an increase of 14% at the college-level.

Within the context of Latin's important role in American education, several demographic changes demonstrate Latin's continued vitality. The number of students studying Latin in middle and elementary schools has experienced remarkable growth in the late twentieth century. In 1982, the first year such statistics are available, the number of middle school Latin students was 8,389. By 1994 this number had grown to 25,349, more than a 300% increase! A similar trend is beginning in the elementary schools. In 1990 there were 2001 known grade school students studying Latin. In just four years that number doubled to 4,265.

Another success story is the National Latin Exam, which was administered for the

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“Latin continues to serve as a cultural sign of well-educated Americans, as it always has. In fact, the language has maintained a remarkably stable population of individuals who have studied the language in American high schools and universities.”

Don't Count Latin Out (cont.)

“Latin teachers were involved in the development of National Standards for Foreign Language Learning by ACTFL, affirming the commonalities between Latin and modern languages.”

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first time in 1978 to 8000 students. In 1997 98,435 students took the exam. In 2004 more than 145,000 students representing all fifty states and eight foreign countries participated.

Equally impressive is the increasing gender equality among Latin students. While annual statistics illustrating the proportion of male and female Latin students, to my knowledge, are not available, the increasing number of female students can be documented indirectly, for example in the number of females taking the Advanced Placement exams. The College Board notes that between 1986 and 2002 “the percentage of women taking AP Exams has increased for nearly all subject areas,” with the greatest increases in the areas of sciences and foreign languages. This is certainly true for the Latin AP exams. In 1986 40% of the students taking the Vergil exam were female. In 1996 the percentage had risen to 48% and in 2001 to 50%. In 1986 45% of the students taking the Latin Literature AP exam were female. By 1996 that percentage had risen to 52% and to 53% in 2001.

Similar statistics are notable for the number of women studying Classics at the college level. While no data is available for years prior to 1996, it is clear that at least since that date women have been earning more bachelor's degrees in Classics than men have.

There are several reasons why the study of Latin is holding its own and even increasing in the multicultural world of the twenty-first century. Especially significant have been new teaching methods that have been introduced for an old language and the effort to bring Latin teaching into the mainstream of foreign language teaching. First of all, Latin teachers were involved in the development of the National Standards for the teaching of foreign languages by ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages). The core of these standards is the five C's: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities.

By participating in the writing of these standards, Latin teachers have affirmed their place along with the modern languages. They have consistently and successfully argued that Latin has more in common with Spanish, French, and German than it has differences. Even though the primary emphasis of the Latin classroom is reading while that of the modern

foreign language classroom tends to be speaking, both classrooms share many similar goals. Both classrooms focus, in varying degrees, on the development of four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The result has been standards that apply equally to Latin and the other languages.

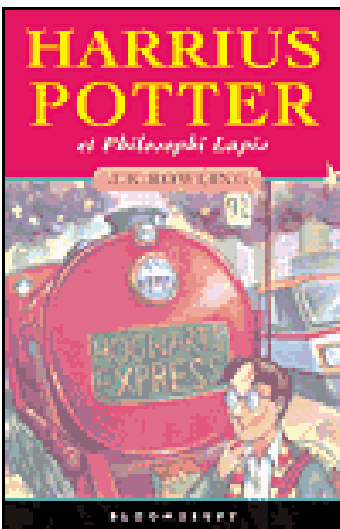
A second change in Latin pedagogy, connected with the standards, is “the increase in the use of oral Latin in the classroom.” Modeled after methods of teaching modern foreign languages, the purpose of oral Latin is “the reinforcement of reading and writing skills, which remain the primary emphasis in most Latin classrooms. Latin teachers now speak Latin more and more in the classroom. They don't necessarily hold conversations, but they do say words and phrases out-loud in order to reinforce the recognition and meaning of the written word.

A third significant change in Latin teaching is the development of textbooks that focus more on Latin in a cultural context. These texts, like the *Oxford Latin Course* and the *Ecce Romani* series, help students understand both Latin and ancient Roman life by following the adventures of a young Horace or a Roman family in the context of first century Rome. Other new textbooks, such as *Minimus*, which is set at a Roman fort in England, are geared to younger students.

Another significant trend in the 20th century has been the translation of modern English language books into Latin. One of the earliest was a 1921 Latin translation of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. In 1953 the Italian Enrico Maffacini produced *Pinoculus*, a translation of C. Collodi's *Pinocchio*. In 1960 Alexander Lenard's *Winnie Ille Pu*, a Latin translation of A.A. Milne's *Winnie The Pooh*, became a best-seller. More recently there have been Latin translations of Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *The Cat in the Hat*, and *Green Eggs and Ham*, as well as Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree*. Most recently Harry Potter has appeared in Latin (as well as ancient Greek).

In sum, then, the prognosis for Latin at the beginning of the 21st century is guardedly optimistic. Despite the fact that Latin is no longer the required subject it was at the beginning of the twentieth century, Latin has managed to maintain into the 21st century an

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The Augustana Latin Web Challenge

The Idea: Create a Web page based on the following passage that includes the following:

- Your best translation of the Latin, a translation that is accurate and captures the spirit of the original
- Links to sites on the Web and/or pages you have created that illustrate and illuminate the passage
- A paragraph explaining what you've tried to accomplish with your Web page.

So: Use a Web page format

to present, illuminate, and illustrate the passage below. Viewers of your page – even those with no Latin – should be able to read and understand your translation of the passage in more depth (of content and context) than print alone can convey.

Who can enter? Latin students (as individuals or groups) at the middle and high school levels whose teachers belong to the Illinois Classical Conference or to the Iowa association of Classicists, AMICI.

Prizes: First, \$100; Second,

\$75; Third, \$50 (These awards are made possible by the H.S.B. Johnson Endowment for the Classics at Augustana College.)

The text for this year's contest is chapter 37 of Tacitus' *Germania*. In the course of describing the various tribes of Germany, Tacitus comes to the Cimbri, a people whose massive migration at the end of the second century BC threatened the very existence of Rome. The memory of that awesome threat prompts Tacitus to reflect on Rome's relations with the Germans from

that time to his own day (AD 98).

How to enter: Have your sponsoring teacher send the URL of your Web page(s) by email to

CLKramer@Augustana.edu

Deadline: Entries must be received by April 21, 2005 (Rome's 2758th birthday – roughly!)

For more information, go to <http://www.augustana.edu/academ/classics/Web%20Contest%2004-05.html>

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important and relatively stable place in school and college curricula throughout the United States. There are certainly challenges ahead, like reaching out to community college students,

non-traditional students, and minorities, but, provided that we produce the certified teachers needed to instruct the next generation of Latin students, I am confident that Latin will still be taught in our schools and colleges well into

the next century. To Françoise Waquet I say "Perservanda, perservanda est lingua Latina!"

Tom Sienkewicz
Monmouth College



Special Offer

If you enjoyed this newsletter and are interested in the ancient world, fill out the form to the right. For just \$5.00 you can keep receiving *Amicitia* and know that you are supporting Classics in Iowa. Additional gifts are tax-deductible and support the AMICI Translation Contest and other activities across the state. Please return the form to the right with a check (payable to AMICI) to John Gruber-Miller, AMICI Secretary-Treasurer, at the address at the bottom of the form.

AMICI Membership Form, 2004-05

Yes, I want to join AMICI. Enclosed are:

Annual dues (\$5)

Additional gift

Position:

Administrator

Teacher

Graduate Student

Friend of Classics

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

E-mail _____

If you know of anyone else not on our mailing list who would benefit from receiving a copy of our newsletter (e.g., a friend, parent, principal, guidance counselor, dean, or colleague), please send the person's name and address.

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AMICI, Classical
Association of Iowa

AMICI was founded in 1988 as a non-profit organization to promote the study of Latin and the ancient world in Iowa schools, colleges, and communities. The name of the organization is the Latin word *amici*, which means “friends,” and comes from the Latin root for “love.” AMICI sponsors a bi-annual newsletter *Amicitia*, an annual Translation Contest, and a speakers’ bureau. If you are looking for a Latin teacher, are looking for a speaker, or want to know more about Latin or the ancient world, contact one of our officers:

- Cindy Smith, college consul (563-588-7953; csmith@loras.edu)
- Mary Ann Harness, high school consul (515-226-2600; Harnessm@home.wdm.k12.ia.us)
- John Gruber-Miller, secretary-treasurer (319-895-4326; jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu)