

er was just Harvard's second nocturnal football game, and the first to be held on a Friday. The 20,462 attendees were treated to an improved Stadium sound system and a new video scoreboard that offers instant replays. The first night opener took place a year ago and drew 18,898 fans.

Bombs away: With Pizzotti's strong arm and a clutch of nimble receivers, Harvard may have the Ivies' best aerial attack. A fifth-year senior who sat out the 2005 season with a back injury, Pizzotti got the starting job a year ago and posted the second-best single-season passing numbers in Harvard annals. He threw for 370 yards against Holy Cross, for 320 at Brown, and for 231 at Lafayette. Iannuzzi, who also returned kicks, had 11 catches in the Holy Cross game, and Luft made 10 receptions at Brown.

The Game: The annual clash with Yale kicks off at the Stadium at noon on November 22. A halftime ceremony will mark the fortieth anniversary of the legendary 29-29 tie of 1968 (see "The Force Was With Them," page 79). ~"CLEAT"

For weekly Harvard football updates, visit www.harvardmagazine.com/football.

ALUMNI

At Home with Old Age

Reimagining nursing homes

AS THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER at an AARP workshop on elder care, William Thomas, M.D. '86, is telling the story of Eos, the Greek goddess who fell in love with the Trojan prince Tithonus. The couple lived happily until one day Eos saw something strange poking out of her husband's head. "What is *that*???" Thomas shrieks in mock shock and disgust as the audience laughs. "Well, it was a *gray hair*." Soon, Thomas continues, the prince's entire head was white and he grew older and older—but he could not die because he had been made immortal. His once booming voice became feeble, and his strong legs and shoulders shriveled up. In the end, Eos took pity on him and turned

him into a grasshopper. "The myth," Thomas tells his audience, "offers the proposition that old age is inside of us; it is welded to the human condition."

An internationally known geriatrician, Thomas is used to lecturing about the need for attitudinal adjustment when it comes to aging. Growing old entails "elements of decline, [but] the larger truth," he maintains, "is that aging is a complex, multifaceted, and poorly understood component of *normal human development*."

Thomas takes this holistic view to work every day. A bullish reformer, he has spent his career pushing for seismic cultural and economic changes in long-term care and public policy toward aging, which has meant challenging the

Men's Basketball Exonerated

An inquiry by the Ivy League into allegations of improper recruiting by the Harvard men's basketball program and of lowered standards of admissions for the team—raised initially in a March 2008 *New York Times* article—has determined that no violations of either National Collegiate Athletic Association or Ivy League rules occurred. In addition, the league's routine annual review of admissions standards found that all admitted Harvard recruits met the requirements mandated by the league, which issued a statement on September 3 that read, in part:

Harvard Head Coach Tommy Amaker and Assistant Coach Kenneth Blakeney were completely forthcoming in their participation in this inquiry, and interviews with others who were involved, as well as a thorough examination of relevant records, corroborated that the coaches' contacts with prospective student-athletes and their families were entirely consistent with NCAA and Ivy League rules.

"We're very pleased with the outcome," Harvard athletic director Robert L. Scalise said after the results became public. "It was what we had expected it to be," he added. "We have a pro-

gram that abides by the letter and the spirit of NCAA and Ivy rules and we want to continue that."

"This matter got a lot of attention because it was raised in the press," said Jeff Orleans, executive director of the Ivy League (see "Questions about Recruiting," May-June, page 76). "The admissions part was a non-story, in the sense that the reporter could have simply waited until the admissions decisions were known, instead of asking people to speculate."

As for the alleged recruiting violations, which centered on the fact that assistant coach Blakeney had played basketball—before Harvard hired him—with a prospect, Orleans said the committee conducting the investigation asked three questions: Was Blakeney a Harvard employee? Was he a Harvard representative? Was he trying to recruit athletes to Harvard at the time of these activities? "The answer was no in each case," Orleans noted. Such issues arise and are investigated routinely in Division One athletic programs; what made the Harvard instance unusual, he said, "was the level of attention that was focused on it."

Orleans did indicate that the allegations have prompted the league to begin "discussing with all the schools the importance of being very clear about the employment relationship and how it develops. That way," he added—given the public perception that the periods before and after someone is hired "shade together"—"they can avoid even the appearance of impropriety."

\$122-billion nursing-home industry.

In some ways the timing for such reforms could not be better. Many nursing homes built in the 1960s and 1970s in response to Medicare and Medicaid legislation now need major renovations just as aging baby boomers begin to create rising demand for geriatric care. (Seventy million Americans are expected to be older than 65 by 2030.) “The boomers are already changing the face of aging,” says Thomas, who is 48. “They aren’t going to take the declinist label: ‘I am broken down and unimportant.’”

Thomas is out to improve nursing-home conditions—or, better yet, supplant them with smaller group homes where customized, flexible care is the norm. “I am talking about a vision for alleviating the main causes of human suffering in older people—loneliness, hopelessness, and boredom,” he says. “The changes I am talking about are really just applying common sense. Would you rather live in an institution, or in a garden?”

THOMAS CALLS himself a “nursing home abolitionist.” The vision of an “Eden Alternative” for elders began in 1991 when he took a part-time job as a doctor at the nonprofit Chase Memorial Nursing Home in upstate New York. He was seeking respite from harrowing 24-hour shifts at a local emergency room, but quickly realized two things: that there was “something very wrong” with the way people were living there, and that he had “just fallen in love with the people, their families, and the nurses.” He also recognized opportunities to effect deep change. “Morale is often so low at a nursing home that just about *anything* you could do there would have a huge impact,” he says. “I met people who had literally given up on living. And *you* can bring joy to them—that’s what turned me on.”

Within two years Thomas had also brought the residents 80 parakeets, 10 finches, two lovebirds, six cockatiels, two canaries, and dogs, cats, rabbits, and chickens. Fresh-cut flowers and home-grown food—from gardens dug into Chase’s once-manicured lawns—graced the hallways and dining room. He introduced new approaches to dementia, frailty, and the human need for compan-



ionship that also improved working conditions for the staff. (Staff turnover is a major problem in geriatric care.)

The Eden Alternative’s most enduring contribution, he emphasizes, is not “the fur and feathers” but the Eden Golden Rule: As management does unto the staff, so shall the staff do unto the Elders. “We teach the people who own and operate these facilities how to provide staff with the same vital experiences that they want the staff to offer to the elders: dignity, respect, affection,” he says. The New York State Health Department studied the impact of this unprecedented approach and found a 50 percent reduction in infections, a 71 percent drop in daily prescription-drug costs, and a 26 percent lower turnover rate among nurses’ aides.

Based on that success, Thomas “Edenized” several other upstate nursing homes and then founded the nonprofit Eden Alternative to spread the word. To date, the organization has 300 registered nursing homes around the world and has trained more than 18,000 people in what he considers the 10 basic principles of creating a “human habitat” for elders.

THOMAS KNOWS personally about living with debilitating frailty. He and his wife, Judy, have five children; their two daughters, Haleigh and Hannah, have been diagnosed with Ohtahara syndrome, a progressive neurological disorder, and have always required around-the-clock, home-based nursing care. Although Thomas

criticizes the pharmaceutical industry for many things—like pushing too many drugs on older people and marketing pills to “cure” such normal aspects of life as shyness, grief, and occasional insomnia—he is always quick to thank modern medicine for keeping his girls alive.

Balancing family life with his workload and travel schedule—he is gone from their Ithaca, New York, home 30 to 45 days a year—is not easy. He is still on the Eden board, but since 2002 has left daily operations to an executive director. He is a regular consultant for AARP, the author of five books, including *What Are Old People For? How Elders Will Save the World*, and a professor at the Erickson School of Aging, Management, and Policy at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, where he writes the blog “Changing Aging.”

In 2003 Thomas pushed beyond Eden to pilot a newer concept in elderly housing—the Green House Project in Tupelo, Mississippi. The challenge was to create better alternatives that meet demands for high-quality care and meaningful lives while complying with government regulations and building codes—and remaining affordable. Each house provides 10 to 12 seniors with 24-hour nursing care, well-trained and -supported staff, and private rooms and bathrooms in a layout designed with an open kitchen and dining room and plenty of light and access to the outdoors. The pilot project was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; an additional \$13-million

grant from the foundation has enabled NCB Capital Impact, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit, to complete 41 Green Houses in 10 states, with another 18 projects in development. The goal is to open a Green House in every state.

Thomas views the nursing-home industry—which draws about 78 percent of its revenues from Medicare and Medicaid—as a powerful and daunting competitor. Unpopular as nursing homes may be, as of 2004 they housed 1.5 million of the frailest Americans, almost half of whom were over age 85, according to a 2007 AARP report; Thomas notes that 50 percent of people aged 65 or older will spend at least some time in a nursing home before the end of their lives. The expenses—largely absorbed by the government—are hard to bring down. (This year, the average private-pay cost for a private room is \$209 per day, or \$76,285 a year; a semi-private room averages \$187.)

The Green Houses cost more to build than conventional facilities, Thomas says, but the elderly residents get more as well: more privacy, to begin with, and a much higher quality of life. In his model, money and resources are shifted away from middle management and used more for direct care. Operationally, the Green Houses cost the same to run on a daily basis as a nursing home, he says, adding, “This should not be that much of a surprise since the nursing home was never a paragon of efficiency.”

THOMAS'S PERSUASIVE POWERS spring in part from his earthy public persona—

he typically wears roomy blue jeans and Birkenstocks to speaking engagements. His speeches, while laced with philosophical references, are akin to kitchen conversations; he hands out advice like a caring, grown son and reassures people with phrases like “no worries” or “cool beans.” His knowledge of the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries is formidable—he can reel off the detailed history of commercialized use of heroin and the relationship between “horse piss and hormonal supplements”—but he also tends to recall the simpler past when his grandmother tended his cuts with a milk and bread poultice, and old people worked outside and didn't take 20 pills a day.

Growing up in rural Nichols, New York (near Binghamton), Thomas was the first member of his family to attend college. He thrives on winning over a tough audience. As an undergraduate at the State University of New York at Cortland, he was a charismatic student leader—campaigning for new student-run evaluations of professors—and even ran for mayor. “You know how you are at 20,” he says now. “I thought I could run the city better than my opponent, who had a college-bashing platform. I lost the election, but my consolation prize was that I got into Harvard Medical School—the first person from Cortland ever to do that.”

Thomas found Harvard stimulating and ultimately advantageous. Just as “Nixon was the only politician who could go to China, because he was immunized against the claims of selling out to communism,” he points out, “what better person than a

Harvard-trained medical doctor to lead the way against the medical model in nursing homes? If people get up in my face about the medical issues—the main excuse given *not* to enact reforms—then I have the facts to back them down.” The medical model makes illness and treatment the paramount issue, he says, and “what happens then, especially in nursing homes, is that people's pancreases get more attention than anything about their lives or what they need *as people*.”

He says he would have been happy in politics, and the work he does now is far from apolitical. Ultimately, his constituents are old people. They like him for his ungodlike doctoring and for his essential championing of autonomy.

“I'm a firm believer in the rights of elders to do whatever the hell they want,” he told the seniors at the AARP workshop. “If you only have the right to make the ‘good, wise’ decisions that your grown daughter agrees with, then you're not running your own life anymore.” Old people, he says, can make decisions even if they are bed-ridden and confused. “I've taken care of lots of people who didn't even know their own children,” he notes. “Sure, they probably shouldn't be making decisions about their 401(k) plans, but they can decide what to wear and what to eat and whether to go outside on a daily basis. People think that if old people cannot make the big decisions, they cannot make any decisions—and that is just wrong. They have the right to folly.”

Thomas's vision seeks to shift our underlying cultural philosophy. “Old age is

Comings and Goings

Harvard clubs around the country offer a variety of social and intellectual events. For information on upcoming programs, contact your local club directly, call the HAA at 617-495-3070, or visit www.haa.harvard.edu. Among the winter happenings:

On November 12, the **Triad Harvard Radcliffe Club** of North Carolina offers “Blown to Bits: Your Life, Liberty, and Happiness after the Digital Explosion,” a lecture by McKay professor of computer science Harry R. Lewis, who also addresses the **Harvard Club of Eastern New York** on November 19. On the same day, the **Harvard Alumni Association of Utah** will hear from Ann Braude, director of the Women's Studies in Religion Program at the Divinity School.

On December 6, the **Harvard Club of Boston** and the **HAA** host “**A Saturday of Symposia**” with a keynote address, “Who's Afraid of the Fundamentalists?” by Hollis professor of divinity Harvey Cox. Speakers include Aramont professor of the history of science Janet Browne (“Celebrating Darwin in 2009: Charles Darwin's Life, Times, and *Origin of Species*”); Stare professor of epidemiology and nutrition Walter Willett (“Diet and Health: A Progress Report”); Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies senior scholar Marshall Goldman (“Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the Rise of the New Russia”); and Robinson professor of music Robert Levin (“Who Cares If Classical Music Dies?”).

For further details and registration, please call the Boston club at 617-450-8489, or visit www.harvardclub.com.

Cape Town Conference

Alumni are invited to join President Drew Faust and other Harvard scholars in Cape Town, South Africa, for the Harvard Alumni Association's 2009 Global Series conference. The event, March 27-29, offers the chance to meet fellow alumni while exploring a region of cultural, intellectual, and economic importance.

Registration is required. Please visit <http://post.harvard.edu/globalseries> for further details.

and will always remain difficult. It demands much from us...and seems to offer very little in return," he writes in *What Are Old People For?* "It is the fearfulness of this vision that has led us to ignore the old, to deny aging, and to hope that someday a cure for this malady might be discovered....Such a hope, while understandable, ignores the possibility that there is something vital and true to be grasped and then savored with the distinctly human experience of growing old."

"Young and old alike," he says, "aspire to long lives full of warmth and meaning. The myth is that aging is mainly the concern of old people. The reality is that aging touches, changes, and influences everyone and everything."

~NELL PORTER BROWN

Job Notices

SEVERAL COLLEGE programs match students with paid and unpaid jobs and internships. To find out more about how alumni can provide these learning and working opportunities, contact:

The Office of Career Services, which connects students with employers for full-time, part-time, and summer jobs or internships throughout the year. For information, including details about developing and/or posting job opportunities, call Nancy Saunders at 617-495-2595 or e-mail nsaund@fas.harvard.edu.

The Radcliffe Mentor Program, which matches undergraduates with alumnae for career development, is oper-

ated by the Harvard College Women's Center. For details, please call 617-959-4864 or e-mail director Susan Marine at marine@fas.harvard.edu.

To offer a paid position, call the Student Employment Office at 617-495-2585 or visit www.seo.harvard.edu.

Well Done

THE HARVARD ALUMNI Association Awards were established in 1990 to recognize outstanding service to Harvard University through alumni activities. This year's recipients were to be honored on October 16 during the HAA board of directors' annual fall meeting in Cambridge. Highlights of their many contributions are given below.



Peter Bynoe

Peter Bynoe '72, J.D.-M.B.A. '76, of Chicago, has served the University for more than two decades. He was a member of the Harvard Business School Alumni Council and an HAA elected director, and then became a University Overseer (1993-2002). In addition, he has been a member of three Harvard alumni clubs in Chicago (College, Law School, and Business School), and worked on his twenty-fifth-reunion's gift committee.

Deborah Goldfine '85, of Newton, Massachusetts, is a longtime member of the visiting committee to athletics, cochair of the Friends of Harvard Tennis, and executive chair of the Harvard Radcliffe Foundation for Women's Athletics, where she has strengthened programming and funding. Goldfine also cochaired her tenth, fifteenth, and twentieth reunion committees, and now cochairs the Newton schools and scholarships committee.



Nathaniel Guild

Nathaniel ("Nat") Guild '73, of Concord, Massachusetts, is class secretary and cochaired his fifteenth and twenty-fifth class reunions. He has also served as an



Deborah Goldfine

HAA appointed director and chair of the HAA classes and reunions committee. Currently, Guild leads the HAA chief marshal selection committee and is vice chair of the "Happy Committee" (which assists with Commencement). A member of the executive committee of the Association of Harvard College Class Secretaries and Treasurers, he is also a member of the Kennedy School Institute of Politics advisory committee and former treasurer of the Friends of Harvard Track.



Susan Heath

Susan Heath '67, of Pound Ridge, New York, has recruited and interviewed students for more than three decades. She recently completed her term as chair of the HAA National Schools and Scholarships Committee, and has been chair of the Harvard Club of Westchester schools and scholarships committee since 1975. A former member of her class-reunion gift committee, Heath just began a three-year term as HAA Regional Director for Metro New York and New Jersey.

Ella Smith, A.B.E. '66, of Abington, Massachusetts, is a founding member and former president of the Harvard Extension School Alumni Association (HEAA), and has served on its steering committee since 1968. For many years she has also been the Extension School's HAA appointed director and a member of both the HAA's graduate schools and communications committees.



Ella Smith

Charles Wiggan '68, M.B.A.-J.D. '73, of Oklahoma City, is a longtime director of the city's Harvard club and served for three years as HAA Regional Director for the South Central States. He is a former member of both the HAA clubs and graduate schools committees and the committee to nominate Overseers and elected directors, of which he was also chair. In addition, he has chaired the HAA awards committee and his tenth-reunion gift committee.



Charles Wiggan