

## Friday @ 4 huge success!

by taylor leake '07

Do you wish there was an event where you could just talk about current events? Ever wonder why no one discusses politics on our campus? Do you long for more meaningful intellectual discourse among your fellow students and professors? The Honor's Forum is coming to your rescue!

On September 23rd the Honor's Forum held the very first "Fridays at Four," a monthly informal discussion in the Faculty Staff Club. The series bring faculty and students together to discuss current events and national issues, aimed at making our beloved forum, more of a forum.

The first topic was the energy crisis and rising oil prices, but discussion ranged from the current state of the environmental movement to American Identity and rugged individualism as well as our place in the global neighborhood.

Skidmore's "Lights Out to Stay In" initiative got students thinking about what they can do, and representatives

from the Environmental Action Committee shared some of their ongoing projects.

The discussion drew a surprisingly large crowd of students and professors from the Business, Sociology, Environmental Studies, and English departments.

Due to its popularity the Honors Forum is opening this event to the whole community, and expects the event to grow.

October's discussion topic is the change of our Supreme Court. Beau Breslin, the chair of the government department, and Chris Kopeck, professor of Business Law will be in attendance, as well as your fellow HFers (what better way to get to know each other?).

The series will continue this month, and the executive committee would love to hear your suggestions for topics (e-mail [a\\_feigen@skidmore.edu](mailto:a_feigen@skidmore.edu)) or comments on the event.

## Spotlight on: Reema Zaman '06

by molly appel

Reema has been sure of two truths since she was a little girl: she will be an actor; she will be a mother of three adopted children.



For her Honors Capstone project, Reema has created a moving, original work that unifies her personal truths with her political passion.

A Theatre major and Women's Studies minor, she has written a play called *Spinach and Babies*, which examines the tensions surrounding foreign adoption of babies with HIV/AIDS. The title stems from the Health Minister of South Africa's declaration, "the best combat to AIDS is to have a healthy diet based on spinach."

Reema aims to create a catalyst for change, and has embedded a number of perspective-shifting mechanisms into the project towards that end. The play's setting, an alternate universe, uses different language to address terms we hear so often they have lost their meaning: "AIDS" becomes "the burn of the untouchables."

Additionally, she has three actors (herself included) play five characters. The audience watches the actors alternate characters onstage as they, for example, walk behind a screen and emerge on the other side as someone else.

The script has taken form in Prof. Stephanie Felischmann's playwriting course, but Reema and the cohort of friends she enlisted to be involved in the project produce, direct, design, choreograph, and discipline each other for line memorization entirely themselves.

**The show dates of *Spinach and Babies* are November 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> at 8PM in Studio A (upstairs in JKB).**

## Students "petrified" with excitement

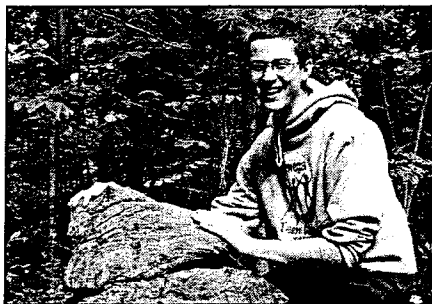
by erin cassidy '09

A sizable group of intrepid Honors Forum members led by Adam Epstein '08 recently ventured to Saratoga's Petrified Sea Gardens.

The adventure commenced with a display of exemplary driving skills when the fearless bus driver backed into the Gardens' narrow entrance, missing the stone gate by mere inches. The trip only got better from there.

On the sunny eighteenth of September, 2005 a modest gem in Saratoga Springs was uncovered by this motley crew of brazen adventurers. Making their way over the fossilized stromatolite remains, the explorers learned that the Petrified Sea Gardens, on which they were standing, are about 500 million years old. These mushroom-like plumes of cyanobacteria grew on an ocean coastline during the Paleozoic Era, before dinosaurs roamed the earth.

The adventurers then set off to ex-



plore the other wonders of the Gardens including the medicine wheel, a Native American spiritual site, the small scale labyrinth, the time garden, which contains four devices that use the sun to tell time, and the "Iroquois" Pine, a huge tree that is at least 300 years old.

The exhilarating escapade ended on a swing set where the intrepid time explorers re-lived their childhoods before returning to the Skidmore Campus to ponder the meaning of the place of human beings in the vast stream of time.

**Spring HF Classes**  
Pre-register by emailing lsantaga!

- CH 106 Chemistry Principles
- EN 105 Writing Seminar II
- EN 105 Nonfiction Writing
- GO 201 Principles in International Politics
- GO 304 Modern Political Thought
- HF202 Great Books Practicum
- HF 203 Student Citizenship
- HF 301 Senior Honors Symposium
- LS2 101 Victorian Illustrated Book
- MA 126 Problem Solving
- PS 376 Senior Research Project
- PS 378 Senior Seminar
- SO 251 Special Topics in Sociology

# Honors Forum goes to the opera

by Leah Elliott '06

What do you get when you mix living history with arias and throw in enough food to feed an Italian family reunion? The Honors Forum's New York City Trip! On Saturday October 22, the Honors Forum took a trip to New York City to see *The Barber of Seville*.

Despite a cold and gloomy day, the trip shone, starting with a walking tour of New York's traditional immigrant neighborhoods: China Town, the Jewish East Side, 5 Corners, etc. Starting as far back as the early 17th century with the Dutch settlement of Manhattan, the tour brought us through the waves of Irish, Italian, German, Eastern European Jew, and Chinese immigration to the present day.

Prior to Saturday, my only exposure to Opera was through Warner Brothers' cartoons ("kill the wabbit, kill the wabbit..."). What the New York City Opera's performance lacked in animated rabbits it made up for in operatic magic.

The three hours flew by as I was transported to Rossini's 18th century Seville, cheering on Rosina in her fight to rid herself of Don Basilio and join Count Almaviva, and laughing at Figaro's sly schemes to bring the young lovers together.

The day finished with a fabulous Italian dinner. The warm food and good company did much to alleviate the cold, rainy day, as did a chance to eat outside of the Dining Hall.

# Our Honors Forum and our civic duty

by Phil Boshof

Skidmore's Honors Forum derives its namesake from the Latin word *Forum*. Historians tell us that Rome's most famous forum, the Roman Forum, was the administrative and corporate heart of Rome and the site of the city's most important public buildings including the Rostra or public speaking platforms. Forums were not exclusive to Rome, and "forum" came to refer to the open space in any Roman town where business, judicial, civic, or religious activities were conducted.



The opening sentences of our Mission Statement mark out our duty as citizens in Skidmore's Honors Forum: "The central goal of the Honors Forum is to strengthen the intellectual community for all highly motivated Skidmore students . . . The 'Forum,' as the name suggests, is intended not as an exclusive society but rather as a structure for organizing and promoting our common interests as an academic community."

This statement gives rise to two central questions about community and duty: What is the "intellectual" and "academic community" we are charged to strengthen? How broadly do we construe "our common interests"? Some argue our primary

charge is to the Skidmore College campus community; others maintain that our mission obliges us to serve the Saratoga Springs and extended communities. Answering these questions lies at the heart of our conception of civic duty.

In the true spirit of providing a forum for public discourse, we invite you to join us for an important discussion of our citizenship as Honors Forum members on November 9 at 5:30-6:30 pm in Davis Auditorium. We promise a lively conversation, a rostrum, and even some Roman refreshments. Come; let your voice be heard.

## Forum Fun!

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## Upcoming Events

**November 9** All-Forum Meeting (Roman Style). Come make important decisions about our community service requirement.

*Davis Auditorium 5:30-7:00*

**November 18** Friday @ 4. Topic TBA. Email a\_feigen with suggestions.

*Faculty/Staff Club*

*especially for you...*

The Honors Forum Newsletter is published monthly and distributed to members of the Skidmore College Honors Forum.

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