

## VISITING COMMITTEE

The fall Visiting Committee meeting was held on October 21, 2009, at the Quadrangle Club, with Yorke Rowan giving a presentation on his current Galilee Prehistory Project in Israel. Cocktails and dinner followed the meeting.

The spring meeting was held on May 3, 2010, at the Fortnightly Club in downtown Chicago, thanks to our host Carlotta Maher. Two faculty guest speakers attended the meeting: Nadine Moeller presented on her excavations at Tell Edfu, Egypt, and Chris Woods provided a preview of the upcoming special exhibit on the origins of writing, which he is guest curating.

We had a number of changes to the makeup of the Visiting Committee at the end of the year. Jim Sopranos will step down as Visiting Committee Chair but remain on the Executive Committee. Throughout his tenure, Jim has provided us with the firm leadership, guidance, and support needed to successfully run the Visiting Committee and Oriental Institute programs. We look forward to continuing to rely on Jim's advice and support in the coming years.

Harvey Plotnick was appointed as a new Visiting Committee member and will serve as our new Chair. Harvey Plotnick was President and CEO of Paradigm Holdings, Inc., until his retirement in 2007. He was formerly President and CEO of Molecular Electronics Co., and previously he founded and was President and CEO of Contemporary Books, Inc., which was one of the largest publishers of adult basic-education instructional materials in the United States. A 1963 graduate in English literature from the University of Chicago, Plotnick has chaired a number of its major fund-raising campaigns, including the \$650 million Campaign for the Next Century, which ended in 1996. He chaired the College and Student Activities Visiting Committee and was a member of the Alumni Association's Board of Governors and Chair of the College Visiting Committee. Plotnick has been a member of Argonne's Board of Governors since 2001. He is also a member, since 1994, of the University of Chicago's Board of Trustees. He and his wife endowed the Elizabeth and Harvey Plotnick Scholarship fund for undergraduate students, as well as a fund for graduate students in the Physical Sciences at the University. Please join us in welcoming Harvey to the Visiting Committee.

Patrick Regnery and Mary Shea will be leaving the Visiting Committee this year, and I hope you will join us in thanking them for their many contributions to the Oriental Institute.

Lastly, Janet Helman received special recognition this year as a Life Member of the Visiting Committee. This is in honor of her many years of support for the Oriental Institute both financially and in her role as Docent and volunteer. Congratulations to Janet on this wonderful honor.

## The Oriental Institute Visiting Committee 2009–2010

O. J. Sopranos\*, Chair

Marilynn Alsdorf	David Kipper
Kathleen G. Beavis	Daniel and Lucia Woods Lindley
Guity Nashat Becker	Jill Carlotta Maher*
Gretel Braidwood*	Janina Marks
Alan R. Brodie	John W. McCarter, Jr.
Andrea Dudek	Kathleen Picken
Emily Huggins Fine	Crennan M. Ray
Dr. Marjorie M. Fisher	Patrick Regnery
Margaret E. Foorman	John W. Rowe*
Joan Fortune	Robert G. Schloerb
Isak V. and Nancy Gerson	Lois M. Schwartz*
Margaret H. Grant	Mary Shea
Lewis and Misty Gruber	Toni Smith
Howard G. Haas	Norman Solkhkha
Deborah Halpern	Mari Terman
Thomas C. Heagy*	Walter Vandaele
Janet W. Helman*	Marjorie K. Webster*
Arthur L. Herbst*, MD	Anna M. White
Doris B. Holleb*	Nicole Williams
Neil J. King	

\*denotes Life Member

## VISITING COMMITTEE

**Executive Committee**

(through June 2010)

O. J. Sopranos, Chair

Deborah Halpern, Events

Jill Carlotta Maher

Thomas C. Heagy, Nominating and Governance

Toni Smith, Development

**Nominating and Governance Subcommittee**

Thomas C. Heagy, Chair

Jill Carlotta Maher

Patrick Regnery

Robert G. Schloerb

**Development Subcommittee**

Toni Smith, Chair

Andrea Dudek

Jill Carlotta Maher

Neil J. King

O. J. Sopranos

Arthur L. Herbst

**Events Subcommittee**

Deborah Halpern, Chair

Andrea Dudek

Mary G. Shea

Margaret E. Foorman

Mari Terman

Kitty Picken

**Remembering Rita Picken**

This year also marked the passing of Rita Picken, a true friend and generous supporter of the Oriental Institute.

Rita showed her love for the Oriental Institute not only through her involvement with the Docent program for over thirty years but also through her sponsorship of the Robert F. Picken Family Nubia Gallery and the recent special exhibit *The Life of Meresamun: A Temple Singer in Ancient Egypt*. At our 90th Anniversary gala in 2009, the Institute honored Rita with the James Henry Breasted Medallion — the highest honor that we give our Members and supporters to recognize their service and commitment.

Rita and her daughter, Kitty Picken, have been part of the fabric of the Institute for decades; Rita saw the people in the Oriental Institute community as a second family. She will be greatly missed.

In memory of her mother Rita, Kitty Picken and the Oriental Institute announced the endowment of the Rita T. Picken Professorship in Ancient Near Eastern Art, which will be supported by a \$3.5 million gift from Kitty. The professorship will enhance the work of the Oriental Institute by adding a faculty member whose expertise in ancient art will complement the Institute's strengths in languages and archaeology. The endowment of this professorship is a fitting tribute to Rita's love of art history and will be historic, given that it is only the second endowed chair in the Oriental Institute's ninety-year history.

In closing, we at the Oriental Institute thank you all for your continued support as Donors and Members. Your contributions help keep the Oriental Institute at the forefront of research and scholarship of the ancient Middle East.