in the region. “If I hadn’t come up against this problem myself,” she adds, “I never would have found out about it.”

Although Chayes no longer works as a radio reporter, she hasn’t abandoned journalism entirely. Her first book, The Punishment of Virtue (2006), chronicles her experiences in Afghanistan and explores Near Eastern history, the subject she studied as an undergraduate and during two years in a doctoral program at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. In the process of writing the book, she found herself revisiting her Harvard professors, including Gurney professor of history Roy Mottahedeh, whose “moral and material support was precious.”

“I am glad these different threads of my life knitted themselves together,” she says. “Interestingly, what I studied at Harvard has become the absolute foundation of what I have done with my life.” (A self-described “Harvard baby,” she is the daughter of the late Frankfurter professor of law, Abram Chayes ’43, LL.B. ’49, a pioneer of international law, and Antonia Handler Chayes ’50, a legal scholar, mediator, and former federal administrator who is now a visiting professor of international politics and law at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.)

She sees herself as a bridge between Islamic culture and the United States. “I discovered in the process of doing Arghand that the beneficiaries of our actions are just as numerous in the U.S. as they are in Afghanistan,” she says. Building relationships with retailers and other audiences, such as those she meets during fundraising tours throughout the United States and Canada, improves the reputation of Afghanistan in America and vice versa.

Arghand offers Americans a way to get involved and a way to help, she says. “I hope that this will influence the direction that our societies are going to take: whether we are going to live in a bipolar world consisting of two irrevocably hostile civilizations, or whether we are going to live in a world made up of interconnected civilizations that are different but not mutually exclusive. I think that is one of the biggest issues that our generation is confronted with in this century.” That’s a lofty goal, she acknowledges. “I know that whatever I have to offer is a drop in the bucket,” she says. “But I may as well put my drop in a crucial place. And Kan-dahar is such a place.”

Nicole Branan is a freelance writer based in Colorado.

Eye on Harvard

Eye on Harvard is an Internet talk show “for and about Harvard people” that appears on InTimeTV.com. The subject matter is broad—topics so far have ranged from stem cells and evolutionary biology to adventure travel and North Korean politics. But the aim is specific: “bring together like-minded individuals who share a background, certain interests, and a history,” says Chicago-based host Ogan Gurel ’86. “It’s not just another TV show. It really represents a confluence of important social and technological trends.”

A medical doctor, Gurel also hosts Insights in Medicine, another InTimeTV show that targets physicians. On the Web, he says, “You have to build shows around specific niches, rather than for mass appeal.” Eye on Harvard’s guests have included Gurel’s classmate, Paul Kent ’86, assistant professor of pediatric hematology/oncology at Rush University Medical Center, who discussed the politics and ethics of research on stem cells and cord blood; evolutionary biologist Neil Shubin, Ph.D. ’87, now at the University of Chicago; and Nancy Collins, M.B.A. ’99, CEO of Global Adrenaline Inc., who talked about her transition from investment banking to travel entrepreneurship.

The show’s audience has grown steadily, from a few hundred to a few thousand viewers during the last several months. If the increasing popularity of Internet TV is any indication, the trend will continue. “Graduating from Harvard,” Gurel explains, “you always want to do the next best thing, and really make a mark.”

Comings and Goings

University clubs offer a variety of social and intellectual events, including Harvard-affiliated speakers (please see the partial list below). For further information, contact the club directly, call the Harvard Alumni Association at 617-495-3070, or visit www.haa.harvard.edu.


Old and New in Chicago

University president Drew Faust stopped in Chicago on November 9 for a black-tie dinner to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the city’s Harvard Club—the oldest continuously operating alumni club anywhere, according to the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA). (A Boston club was founded in 1855, but did not survive, and the current Boston club traces its roots only to 1908. The Cincinnati club, with an 1898 founding date, trails Chicago by just one year.) Although the club’s five founding fathers—two physicians, a lawyer, an insurance-agency owner, and the city surveyor
A Special Notice Regarding Commencement Exercises

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Morning Exercises,

To accommodate the increasing number of those wishing to attend Harvard’s Commencement Exercises, the following guidelines are proposed to facilitate admission into Tercentenary Theatre on Commencement Morning:

• Degree candidates will receive a limited number of tickets to Commencement. Parents and guests of degree candidates must have tickets, which they will be required to show at the gates in order to enter Tercentenary Theatre. Seating capacity is limited, however there is standing room on the Widener steps and at the rear and sides of the Theatre for viewing the exercises.

Note: A ticket allows admission into the Theatre, but does not guarantee a seat. The sale of Commencement tickets is prohibited.

• Alumni/ae attending their major reunions (50th, 55th, 50th) will receive tickets at their reunions. Alumni/ae in classes beyond the 50th may obtain tickets from the Classes and Reunions Office, 124 Mount Auburn Street, sixth floor, Cambridge.

• For alumni/ae from non-major reunion years and their spouses, there is televised viewing of the Morning Exercises in the Science Center, and at designated locations in most of the undergraduate Houses and professional schools. These locations provide ample seating, and tickets are not required.

• A very limited supply of tickets will be made available to all other alumni/ae on a first-come, first-served basis through the Harvard Alumni Association, 124 Mount Auburn Street, sixth floor, Cambridge 02138.

Afternoon Exercises

The Harvard Alumni Association’s Annual Meeting convenes in Tercentenary Theatre on Commencement afternoon. All alumni and alumnae, faculty, students, parents, and guests are invited to attend and hear Harvard’s President and the Commencement Speaker deliver their addresses. Tickets for the afternoon ceremony will be available through the Harvard Alumni Association, 124 Mount Auburn Street, sixth floor, Cambridge 02138.

~Jacqueline A. O’Neill, University Marshal

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U.S. Foreign Service. And Robert Todd Lincoln, A.B. 1864, the son of Abraham Lincoln, practiced law in Chicago and served two terms as club president. The club also had a female president before Harvard did—in fact, its second female (and current) president, Margaret I. McCurry, LF ’87, introduced Faust, the eighth Harvard president to visit the club.

Faust has devoted ample time to meeting with alumni in the early months of her presidency; the next planned stops on her tour included Washington, D.C., in December, to be followed by London in January and China in March. In Chicago, before a crowd of more than 500, she touched on the themes of her young administration: transcending the boundaries that divide Harvard’s various schools and departments; making it easier for students of modest means to attend; emphasizing practicing, as well as studying, the arts. She called for improving instruction and making Harvard a more international place.

Responding to a question from one alumnus—“Harvard is so rich already. Why do you keep asking us for more money?”—Faust answered: “Thirty-five billion dollars is not very much money if you want to change the world.” She paused, then added, “That is a serious answer, actually,” and went on to describe several major goals of her administration that are “not inexpensive”: building the new campus in Allston, expanding financial aid for undergraduates from middle-class families.

Another alumnus asked how Faust would have handled the scenario another university president recently faced: Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s appearance in September at Columbia University, where its president, Lee Bollinger, gave him a less-than-welcoming introduction. Faust, who had clearly given the matter some thought, said that if a request to invite Ahmadinejad had come through her office (as do all Harvard’s invitations to heads of state, as a matter of course), she would have honored the request but would not have introduced Ahmadinejad herself. “I would have tried to set up the situation so there was a group to respond or to question after he spoke,” she said. “I think I would not have had myself front and center....I would have wanted to ensure there was very active debate and that the matters of opposition or misrepresentations he made were challenged.”

~Elizabeth Gudrais

Margaret McCurry with a pen-and-ink sketch of Johnston Gate.

Drew Faust presents Margaret McCurry with a pen-and-ink sketch of Johnston Gate.