

# N Alumni News

## Alumni Authors

Please let us know when you have (or plan to have) your work published. Please consider donating a copy or two to our school library. Contact Alison Frye at 802-387-6273 or [afrye@putneyschool.org](mailto:afrye@putneyschool.org).

We wish these and other present and future alumni authors well in their literary and scholarly endeavors.



### GOLD MEDAL KILLER

Diana Britt Franklin '51  
(with Nancy Pennell)

(Marquette Books, March, 2010)

“One of the most sordid murder trials ever staged in an American courtroom” unfolded in Columbus, Ohio, during the summer of 1929. The case against Ohio State University professor Dr. James Howard Snook scandalized a nation reveling still in the waning era of speakeasies, bathtub gin, flappers and machine gun-wielding mobsters. *Gold Medal Killer*, by Diana Britt Franklin with Nancy Pennell, tells for the first time the true story of this sensational and brutal crime. Snook, 49 at the time of the murder, was a full professor of veterinary medicine at the Ohio State University in Columbus. He had a wife, an infant child, and a pair of Olympic gold medals for pistol shooting. In the spring of 1926, he met Theora Hix, a

21-year-old medical school student at the university. For three years they had a wild, passionate relationship that knew no bounds. But when she became too demanding and threatened to kill his wife and child, he took her to a secluded shooting range and bludgeoned her to death with a ball-peen hammer. Just to make sure she was dead, he deftly slit her jugular vein with his pocketknife. Police arrested Snook within two days of the brutal murder, slapped him until they had a confession, and charged him with murder. The defense put Snook on the witness stand before the jury, a gallery of 200 spectators and more than 30 reporters from across the land. In his cross-examination of the defendant, the dashing, ambitious, “pretty-boy” district attorney explored every sordid detail of the lovers’ sexual proclivities. So shocking was the testimony that not even the New York tabloids would print it. For 28 minutes the jury deliberated Snook’s fate. Sixteen minutes were devoted to prayer; then it returned a guilty verdict that put Snook on the path to the electric chair. He was executed February 28, 1930, in Columbus, 260 days after Theora’s murder. Snook is the only Olympic champion to die in the electric chair.



### REQUIEM FOR STEAM

David Plowden '51

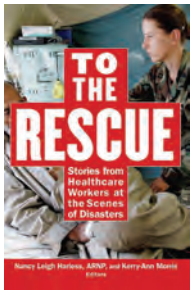
(W. W. Norton & Company)

As a child, David Plowden was given an inexpensive box camera and before long he began to photograph railroad trains. As he matured and started on what would become a lifetime in photography, trains—specifically steam locomotives—continued to be one of his passions. But by the beginning of the 1960s they were eclipsed by diesel engines; the steam era had ended.

It is our good fortune that Plowden was passionate about trains. For years he photographed not only the locomotives but all facets of the railroad world, from long steam-powered freight trains crisscrossing middle America to the yards, small stations, and industrial settings that are synonymous with trains. While his photographic love affair

with America, and in particular the mid-West where he lives, resulted in many books and exhibitions of his beautiful documentary photographs, he never lost sight of the railroads, where his work would result in the images presented in this book, a reverent tribute and requiem for the era of steam.

David Plowden is the author of more than twenty photography books, including *Vanishing Point: Fifty Years of Photography*, published by Norton. As a young man out of college he worked on the Great Northern Railroad in Minnesota, and when the opportunity presented itself, he photographed trains. Later, as he became increasingly well known in the world of photography, he continued to document the railroad world but it was not the same. The exhilaration of a steam locomotive thundering down the track was gone. It lives on in this book.



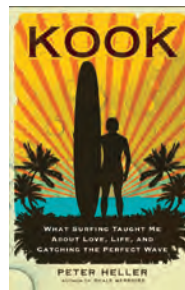
## TO THE RESCUE— STORIES OF HEALTHCARE WORKERS AT THE SCENES OF NATURAL DISASTERS

*Perry S. Prince '58, Contributor*

(Kaplan Publishing, September 2009)

Every year, around the globe, hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, and a host of other disasters devastate the lives of millions. But upon notice of a catastrophe like Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans or the tsunamis in Indonesia, physicians, nurses, and EMTs go into action to save lives.

In *To the Rescue*, those closest to the scene of disaster share intimate tales from the frontlines about the people they meet and the remarkable obstacles they must confront in order to care for patients under extraordinary circumstances. *To the Rescue* provides a fascinating journey into the hearts and minds of the people around the world who save and care for the millions who are affected every year by extreme situations. Heartwarming and inspiring, these are stories readers won't soon forget.



## KOOK—WHAT SURFING TAUGHT ME ABOUT LOVE, LIFE, AND CATCHING THE PERFECT WAVE

*Peter Heller '77*

(Simon & Schuster, July 2010)

With grit, poetry, and humor, Peter Heller, acclaimed author of *The Whale Warriors*, recounts his remarkable journey of discovery—of surfing, an entirely new challenge; of the ocean's beauty and power; of the strange surf subculture; of love; and, most of all, of how to seek adventure while crafting a meaningful life.

Having resolved to master a big-hollow wave—that is, to go from kook (surfer for beginner) to shredder—in a single year, Heller travels from Southern California down the coast of Mexico in the company of his girlfriend and the eccentric surfers they meet. Exuberant and fearless, Heller explores the technique and science of surfing, the secrets of its culture, and the environmental ravages to the stunning coastlines he visits.

As Heller plumbs the working of his own heart and finds joy in both love and surfing, he affords readers vivid insight into this fascinating world, with all of its perils and pleasures, its absurdity and wonder. Exhilarating, entertaining, and moving, *Kook* is a love story between a man and his surfboard, a man and his girlfriend, a not-so-old man and the sea.



## FREEZER BURN

*Richard Smith '80*

(Smashwords, Inc., June 2010)

*Freezer Burn* is a comic adventure about a pair of Maine hunters who find an old fridge in the woods that happens to be a portal to the past. Unfortunately, their get-rich scheme—leading safaris to the Ice Age—goes terribly wrong. Their clients get eaten. Dangerous animals escape into modern-day Maine. Hunky Paleo-Indians steal their women. And a ruthless repairman from the manufacturer arrives, determined to destroy the fridge and anyone who knows anything about it.

*Freezer Burn* is available as an ebook on the Apple iBookstore, and on the Amazon Kindle store. A hard copy version should be available in the winter of 2011.



*Correction:* We published the wrong cover image for Jennifer Steil '86's book, *The Woman Who Fell from the Sky*, her memoir of living and working for one of the most influential newspapers in Yemen. We thank Jennifer for correcting our error, and are happy to print the correct image in this issue.