



Amicitiae immortales,  
mortales inimicitiae de-  
bent esse—Livy 40.46

# Amicitia

## Not Your Parents' Latin Class! New Journal Focuses on Latin and Greek Pedagogy

The teaching of Latin and Greek is changing. Gone are the days of being drilled word by word by a strict disciplinarian Latin teacher as John Cleese famously parodied in Monty Python's *Life of Brian*. Gone too are the days of sitting in rows, rote learning, and never ending recitation of paradigms such as *amo, amas, amat*. Now social networks encourage students to collaborate on Vergil's *Aeneid*, popular music is translated into ancient Greek, and teachers are equipped to teach the most frequent words when they are introducing Greek to their students.

That is the vision and reality of a new peer-reviewed journal launched by Cornell College Classics Professor John Gruber-Miller. The journal, *Teaching Classical Languages* ([www.tcl.camws.org](http://www.tcl.camws.org)), is committed to providing high quality research that Latin and Greek teachers can apply in their teaching and inform their choices as they strive to make learning productive, engaged, and fun.

The Editorial Board of the new journal has consciously chosen to be as accessible as possible by publishing its content online. Many teachers who have limited library resources or who are halfway across the globe can access the latest pedagogy through the click of a button on their computer. The online format offers readers a multimedia format that more fully illustrates the topics discussed, and

(Continued on page 4)



### Inside this issue:

- New Film based on Greek Mythology Opens Presidents' Day** 2
- Classical Studies: What You Should Know** 3
- Carin Green Receives CAMWS Outstanding Book Award** 4
- Robert Ketterer's New Book Garners Rave Reviews** 6
- Go Green: Amicitia Newsletter Now Electronic** 7
- Join AMICI** 7

### Did You Know . . .

The Latin Poetry Podcast is a finalist in this year's Edublog Awards Competition in the category "Best Educational Use of Audio." If you haven't heard this podcast, you're in for treat. You can vote at <http://edublogawards.com/2009/best-educational-use-of-audio-2009/>

## Remembering our Foremothers: Interview with Sister Mary Victoria Gereau, Iowa Latin Teacher for 30 Years

*This past summer as the editor was walking to campus, he met a colleague in Biology who was entertaining a botanist from the Missouri Botanical Garden and learned that his aunt, Sister Mary Victoria Gereau, had taught for 42 years (1938-87) in various Catholic schools in Iowa. He then put me in touch with his sister who asked her about her experiences as a Latin teacher for more than 30 years.*

*Tell us how you became interested in Latin. I took four years of Latin in high school and loved it. I had three different teachers who were very well prepared and loved it, too. In the first two years of high school Latin classes, grammar was emphasized. In my last two years, we were challenged to know what we read and to speak some by giving Latin answers to the questions in Latin about the litera-*

(Continued on page 5)

## New Film Based on Greek Mythology, *The Lightning Thief*, Opens Presidents' Day

It's the 21st century, but the gods of Mount Olympus and assorted monsters have walked out of the pages of high school student Percy Jackson's Greek mythology texts and into his life. And they're not happy: Zeus' lightning bolt has been stolen, and Percy is the prime suspect. Even more troubling is the sudden disappearance of Percy's mother. As Percy finds himself caught between angry and battling gods, he and his friends embark on a cross-country adventure to catch the true lightning thief, save Percy's mom, and unravel a mystery more powerful than the gods themselves.



L to R: Grover (a satyr), Percy Jackson (aka Perseus), and Annabeth (daughter of Athena) go in quest of the helm of darkness stolen to initiate an epic sized quarrel among the gods of Olympus in *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* (Twentieth Century Fox)

Based on the national best seller written by Rick Riordan, the film puts the spotlight on a young boy who discovers he's the descendant of Poseidon and sets out on an adventure to settle an on-going battle between the gods. In *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*, director Christopher Columbus brings the first novel in Rick Riordan's series to life. The movie, starring Uma Thurman as Medusa and Pierce Brosnan as Chiron, opens February 12.

But how did it all begin? For author Rick Riordan (pronounced Ryer'-dan), a bedtime story shared with his oldest son was just the beginning of his journey into the world of chil-

dren's books.

Already an award-winning author of mysteries for adults, Riordan, a former middle school teacher of English and History, was asked by his son Haley to tell him some bedtime stories about the gods and heroes in Greek mythology. "I had taught Greek myths for many years at the middle school level, so I was glad to comply," says Riordan. "When I ran out of myths, (Haley) was disappointed and asked me if I could make up something new with the same characters."

At the time, Haley had just been diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia. Greek mythology was one of the only subjects that interested the then second-grader in school. Motivated by Haley's request, Riordan quickly came up with the character of Percy Jackson and told Haley all about "(Percy's) quest to recover Zeus's lightning bolt in modern-day America," says Riordan. "It took about three nights to tell the whole story, and when I was done, Haley told me I should write it out as a book."

Despite his busy schedule, Riordan managed to carve some time out of his daily routine to write the first Percy Jackson and the Olympians book, *The Lightning Thief*. And in deference to his son, Riordan chose to give the character of Percy certain attributes that hit close to home.

"Making Percy ADHD and dyslexic was my way of honoring the potential of all the kids I've known who have those conditions," says Riordan. "It's not a bad thing to be different. Sometimes, it's the mark of being very, very talented. That's what Percy discovers about himself in *The Lightning Thief*."

"Back when I taught middle school and wrote adult mysteries, my students often asked me why I wasn't writing for kids," says Riordan. "I never had a good answer for them. It took me a long time to realize they were right. Kids are the audience I know best."

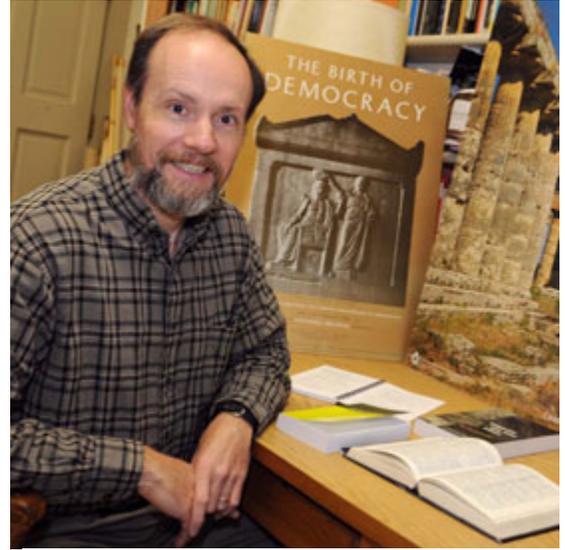
Young readers—in addition to reviewers, booksellers, librarians, and educators—agree. *Kirkus*, in a starred review, called *The Lightning Thief* "[a] riotously paced quest tale of heroism that questions the realities of our world, family, friendship and loyalty," while *Publishers Weekly* praised *The Sea of Monsters*, book two in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series, as "a sequel stronger than (the) compelling debut."

## Classical Studies: What You Should Know

This past summer, Dee Ann Rexroat, Director of Cornell College Communications, asked a number of professors on campus to describe their field in five minutes or less. What follows is John Gruber-Miller's take on what one should know about Classical Studies.

1. **Classical Studies embraces the languages and cultures of ancient Greece and Rome.** Temporally, that means that Classicists explore the Greek and Roman world beginning with the Bronze Age and the Trojan War (ca. 1200 BCE) through the last Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus, in 476 CE. Geographically, the Greek and Roman world extends from India in the east (conquered by Alexander the Great in 325 BCE) to Britain in the west (subdued by Caesar in 54 BCE), and from Germany to Africa north of the Saharan Desert.
2. **Latin and Greek are anything but dead.** There is a continuous evolution of the Greek language from the Linear B tablets found during the Bronze Age through the Koine Greek (language of the people) spoken during the time of Jesus down to the modern Greek spoken today. Latin, which flourished as a first language for more than 1200 years and then another 1200 years as a second language for many people, is living in Romance languages still spoken today: French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish. Latin and Greek, moreover, are very much alive in the English language, which has more than 60% of its vocabulary from Latin and another 10% from Greek.
3. **Some of the greatest stories ever told, some of the greatest characters that ever walked the earth, had their birth in the ancient Greek and Roman world:** Achilles chasing Hector around the walls of Troy, Clytemnestra murdering her husband upon his return from Troy, Antigone burying her brother against the orders of her uncle King Creon, Narcissus falling in love with his reflection, Pygmalion trying to fashion the perfect woman. And that is not to mention the stories from history: Miltiades stopping the Persians at Marathon, the tyrannicides assassinating Caesar, Antony's affair with Cleopatra, Nero playing the fiddle as Rome burns. You get the idea!

4. **The ancient Greek and Roman world offers a useful lens through which to examine challenging social and moral issues.** When challenged with seemingly intractable problems today, thinking about it in the ancient world helps provide some perspective. Gender, homosexuality, ethnic and racial issues, slavery, the individual and the state, science and religion, war and peace, and the relation of human and divine are all issues that pose a dilemma for us today. Approaching these issues in a culture separated from us by time and place helps us see important similarities and differences between our attitudes and theirs. For example, looking at Greek patterns of sexuality helps us realize that other cultures conceived of the concept of same-sex love and marriage in very different ways from our own. Exploring Greek and Roman comedies offers us a lens for understanding everything from Charlie Chaplin to *Family Guy*.
5. **Everybody wants a piece of the Greek and Roman world.** That's why the Vandals and Visigoths came to Rome in the fifth century. That's why travelers on the European Grand Tour (not to mention 30 Cornell students last March) made sure to visit Italy and bring back mementos of their visit. That's why people still flock to shows like *Gladiator*, *Troy*, *300*, and HBO's *Rome*. That's why the founders of our country created a democratic republic based on the models of Athens and Rome. That's why Cornell students fill two sections of Latin or one section of Greek every year. So the next time you see a house decorated with columns or the dome on the Capitol or even a statue of Cupid in a garden, remember that it's because we all want a piece of what's classic.



John Gruber-Miller, professor of classical studies, Cornell College



John Gruber-Miller, Cornell College

## University of Iowa's Carin Green Receives CAMWS Outstanding Book Award



Carin Green is the author of *Roman Religion and the Cult of Diana at Aricia* and chair of the Classics Department at the University of Iowa

When asked what qualities I and others on the committee look for in deciding on this book award, my short answer is a solid work of detailed research that also sheds interesting light on larger issues. The very title of this year's winner, *Roman Religion and the Cult of Diana at Aricia* (Cambridge 2006), suggests these qualities. First, though little is known about this cult of Diana, the author has painstakingly gathered all the evidence we have for it -- archaeological, literary, iconographic, and historical -- and has carefully and clearly presented it for the reader's consideration. She then draws on her wide-ranging strengths in philology, history, religion, comparative anthropology, and mythology to fill out the picture of this specific cult and to relate it to larger trends in Roman religion.

With all this, the author provides readers with a vivid picture of the sanctuary itself, which rested in a spectacular physical space dominated by a crater that seems to have been densely populated by wildlife. Elements of the cult point to both a lunar goddess and a huntress, reflecting the stark contrasts of this physical environment. Other interesting aspects of the cult include its role in the rivalry between Rome and Aricia, the position of the priest -- the *rex nemorensis* -- selected in a peculiar

hunting ritual in which a fugitive slave is required to hunt down and slay his predecessor, and the fact that slaves played a crucial part in the cult.

More broadly, the author's insistence on Aricia as a Latin, not Roman, cult provides insight into the interaction between Latin religion and imported Greek myth and iconography against the backdrop of Roman and Latin cultural relationships. In the conclusion the author cites Varro's comments about the decline of Roman religion in the late Republic and then contrasts the situation he seems to describe in Rome with the vibrancy of the Arician cult. This effectively confirms the author's contention that one must appreciate the distinction between Roman and Latin religion.

In sum, in *Roman Religion and the Cult of Diana at Aricia*, Carin Green has written a book that has much to offer both specialists and the average reader. I am pleased to present her with the 2009 CAMWS Book Award.

--Michael Gagarin, Chair, CAMWS Subcommittee on the Outstanding Publication Award

## New Journal, *Teaching Classical Languages* (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)  
provides hypermedia links to related information and websites.

In addition, the journal intends to establish a greater dialogue with modern language educators, applied linguists, and decision makers. Each article draws on relevant research in language education, applied linguistics and second language acquisition.

The first issue offers innovative articles about social networking in the Latin classroom, using music in beginning Greek, and core vocabulary in beginning Greek textbooks. All three articles take advantage of online publication, offering screen shots, audio of the songs, handouts for the classroom, or appendices that list the common core vocabulary in two popular Greek textbooks:

- Andrew Reinhard, "Social Networking in Latin Class: A How-To Guide"
- Georgia L. Irby-Massie, "That Ain't Workin'; That's the Way You Do It: Teaching Greek through Popular Music"
- Rachael Clark, "Greek Vocabulary in Popular Textbooks"

Gruber-Miller notes that *Teaching Classical Languages* welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek. Please take a moment to take a tour through the new journal and spread the word. You can find TCL at <http://www.tcl.camws.org>.

**"Teaching Classical Languages intends to establish a greater dialogue with modern language educators, applied linguists, and decision makers."**

## Interview with Sister Mary Victoria Gereau (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

ture we read.

In college, especially in graduate studies, the professors lectured in Latin and we were expected to respond in Latin. I was never bored at learning the grammar part because I knew it was a necessary background and because it simply strengthened my English. As I got into Virgil's *Aeneid*, Cicero's legal speeches, Tacitus' history and Latin translations of the New Testament, I could see how the Romans and Greeks and early Christian writers illustrated the excellent remark by Pliny the Elder (paraphrased) that the knowledge of a language helps us to understand the people who speak that language.

*Where did you receive your education in Latin and the ancient world?* I earned a BA in Latin in 1953 from Loras College (then Columbia), Dubuque, Iowa. I received an MA in Latin in 1963 from Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska. I was teaching while I was earning my MA from Creighton University. Some of my degree was done by mailings, some in summer schools. My last semester was on campus during the school year, so I did not teach that semester.

I continued to do post graduate studies in Latin at Loras College (Dubuque) in ensuing summers; most of those instructors were from the Catholic University of America, Washington D.C. In the 1970s I attended Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, to earn my endorsement for teaching French in grades 7-12.

*How did you teach Latin and what did you emphasize?* I always looked forward to my classes when I was teaching. Perhaps not all of my students felt the same way, but I tried to touch upon the very many good ideas, works of art, architecture and literature from those countries throughout my 42 years of teaching Latin.

I did encourage high school students to ask questions in Latin or to answer my questions in Latin that were grammatical in nature or questions regarding the text we were studying. This was a problem at first, but in time, the students became better, especially in talking about the meaning of the text. I found that they even helped one another formulate a question or an answer. This they did in oral response. For underclassmen I used English at first when explaining a new point of grammar, but I changed to Latin when they were ready.

When the days of TV quiz shows started, occasionally we'd have a Friday activity using the chalk board to do a completion of grammatical usages or a quote from a passage in the current readings of the *Aeneid*, Cicero or whatever we studied at the time. I used this activity for juniors or seniors. In general, though, some students thought Cicero's legal speeches were pretty dull; but later, a few who went to law school changed their minds and are lawyers in Dubuque or elsewhere now.

I recall that a student once took a passage from *Medea* and gave it to the class in her own simple style of Latin. This encouraged other juniors and seniors to give similar renditions. They felt good about it.

*What are some other special memories you have of teaching Latin?* Other interesting and fun things I did during those years included

two European trips for my Latin and French students. When both groups traveled together, we visited Rome and Paris and the accompanying sites. Other teachers substituted for my classes while I was away.

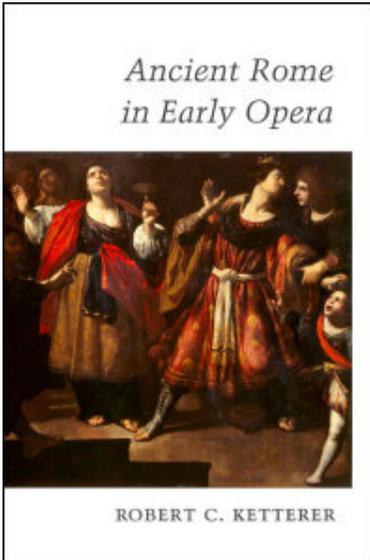
Another year we worked out a plan to have Latin classes participate in chariot races. After some reading about the possibility, groups of students built their chariots at home using old bicycle wheels. I went to their homes to check their progress and to encourage them. We had trial runs in our own athletic fields. Charioteers and horsemen were all volunteers from my classes. Other students made posters to display during the race. We made our own markings for the racing lanes. Students painted Latin names on their chariots. About 250 spectators – upper class students, parents and neighbors – supplied their own seating. The chariot races were the most fun for the students in the Latin classes and everyone who participated. We did this only one time at Newman in Mason City, but twice at St. Edmond's in Fort Dodge.

*How do you spend your time now that you are retired?* In retirement I still read a lot and

(Continued on page 6)



## Robert Ketterer's New Book, *Ancient Rome in Early Opera*, Garners Rave Reviews



*Ancient Rome in Early Opera* (Univ. of Illinois Press 2008) is the synthesis of more than a decade of research by Robert Ketterer, Professor of Classics at the University of Iowa

"This enjoyable, compelling, and beautifully organized book is a truly significant contribution to the field. It is a must read for music historians and directors of staged performances of baroque opera, but also essential for political and social historians and those interested in comparative literature." Ellen T. Harris, author of *Handel as Orpheus: Voice and Desire in the Chamber Cantatas*

"This is a marvelous book and by no means a simple survey of obscure material. In this book, Ketterer examines Italian opera during the two centuries from its origins in Florence about 1600 until the end of the 18th century. Though those Tuscan intellectuals claimed to be recreating the declamation and music of Greek tragedy, Ketterer argues that it was ancient Rome that more truly inspired the great majority of librettists and composers. Not only were most of the subjects Roman, but the central themes of the clement prince and the quest for liberty are more dependent on Roman his-

torians and Stoic philosophy than on Athenian drama." Ronald Mellor, *CJ Online Review*

From the Dust Jacket: The major historians of ancient Rome wrote their works in the firm belief that the exalted history of the Roman Empire provided plentiful lessons about individual behavior, inspiration for great souls, and warnings against evil ambitions, not to mention opportunities for rich comedy. The examples of Rome have often been resurrected for the opera stage to display the exceptional grandeur, glory, and tragedy of Roman figures.

In this volume, Robert C. Ketterer tracks the changes as operas' Roman subjects crossed generations and national boundaries. Following opera from its origins in seventeenth-century Venice to Napoleon's invasion of Italy, Ketterer shows how Roman history provided composers with all the necessary courage and intrigue, love and honor, and triumph and defeat so vital for the stirring music that makes great opera.

## Interview with Sister Mary Victoria Gereau (cont.)

(Continued from page 5)

spend a large amount of free time in the art room doing silk-screening projects. I design my own cards, cut the stencils, choose the colors I want and then begin the silk screening. Most of these cards go in our gift shop at the convent where other arts and crafts and Free Trade items are sold.

*Postscript: A comment from Sister Victoria's niece, Sister Beth:* When I was a sophomore at Wahlert High School in Dubuque, Iowa, (1961-62), I had the privilege of having Sr. Mary Victoria for Latin. All biases aside, she was an

excellent teacher, firm and gentle at the same time. She taught well the needed grammar, vocabulary, syntax and literature that we could manage. She held high expectations and she helped us get there. For example, she had great passion for the national Latin test. Our generation brought in wins and trophies. We made her proud and felt very good about ourselves. I, too, can say that, having taken four years of Latin in high school, I was better prepared for my liberal education in undergraduate and graduate studies and eventually for teaching high school composition, literature and journalism.



### Sister Mary Victoria's Teaching Career

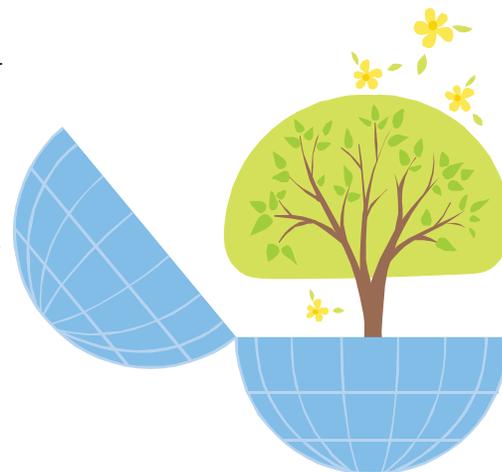
1938 to 1950	Elementary teacher	St. Joseph Grade School	Mason City, Iowa
1950 to 1951	Elementary teacher	St. Mary Grade School	Storm Lake, Iowa
1950 to 1952	Latin and English	St. Mary's High School	Storm Lake, Iowa
1952 to 1959	Latin	St. Columbkille High School	Dubuque, Iowa
1959 to 1967	Latin	Wahlert High School	Dubuque, Iowa
1967 to 1968	Latin and English	Immaculate Conception HS	Charles City, Iowa
1968 to 1975	Latin and French	Newman High School	Mason City, Iowa
1975 to 1987	Latin and French	St. Edmond High School	Fort Dodge, Iowa
1987 to 1988	French	St. Joseph the Worker, (Jr. High)	Dubuque, Iowa
1988 and ff.	French	Tutored several students	Dubuque, Iowa

## Go Green: *Amicitia* Newsletter Now Electronic

As world leaders meet in Copenhagen attempting to find ways to reduce humans' impact on the environment and slow climate change, *Amicitia* is doing its part to make the earth a greener place. Beginning with this issue, *Amicitia* is being sent electronically to everyone on its mailing list who has also sent their email address to Secretary-Treasurer John Gruber-Miller.

*Amicitia* has had an online presence since 2001, and past issues have always been available on the AMICI website ([www.cornellcollege.edu/classical\\_studies/amici](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/classical_studies/amici)). Now it will be easier for readers to read the newsletter online and to forward a copy to their friends, students, and colleagues. In addition, many articles have color photos accompanying them, and now readers will be able to read *Amicitia* in full color and not just black and white.

If you have not yet sent your email address to Secretary-Treasurer John Gruber-Miller, please do so and he will be happy to add you to the growing list of *Amicitia* readers who are going green. You can add your email address on the membership form below or email John at [jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu). And of course you can rest assured that your email address will never be shared with any other organization or group.



### Special Offer

If you enjoyed this newsletter and are interested in the ancient world, fill out the form to the right. For just \$5.00 you can keep receiving *Amicitia* and know that you are supporting Classics in Iowa. Additional gifts are tax-deductible and support the AMICI Translation Contest and other activities across the state. Please return the form to the right with a check (payable to AMICI) to John Gruber-Miller, AMICI Secretary-Treasurer, at the address at the bottom of the form.

### AMICI Membership Form, 2009-10

Yes, I want to join AMICI. Enclosed are:

Annual dues (\$5)

Additional gift

Position:

Administrator

Teacher

Graduate Student

Friend of Classics

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

If you know of anyone else not on our mailing list who would benefit from receiving a copy of our newsletter (e.g., a friend, parent, principal, guidance counselor, dean, or colleague), please send the person's name and address.

### AMICI, CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF IOWA

Classical and Modern  
Languages  
Cornell College  
600 First St W  
Mt. Vernon, IA 52314

Phone: 319-895-4326  
Fax: 319-895-4473  
Email: [jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu)  
Website: [http://cornellcollege.edu/classical\\_studies/amici/](http://cornellcollege.edu/classical_studies/amici/)

Amicitia is Now Electronic! See Page 7 to Sign Up!

WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
WWW.CORNELLCOLLEGE.EDU  
/CLASSICAL\_STUDIES/AMICI/

Exploring our past in order to  
understand the present

Email: [jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu)  
Website: <http://cornellcollege.edu/>

Phone: 319-895-4326  
Fax: 319-895-4473

Classical and Modern Languages  
Cornell College  
600 First St W  
Mt. Vernon, IA 52314

AMICI, CLASSICAL  
ASSOCIATION OF IOWA



AMICI, Classical  
Association of Iowa

AMICI was founded in 1988 as a non-profit organization to promote the study of Latin and the ancient world in Iowa schools, colleges, and communities. The name of the organization is the Latin word *amici*, which means “friends,” and comes from the Latin root for “love.” AMICI sponsors a bi-annual newsletter *Amicitia*, an annual Translation Contest, and a speakers’ bureau. If you are looking for a Latin teacher, are looking for a speaker, or want to know more about Latin or the ancient world, contact one of our officers:

- Cindy Smith, college consul (563-588-7953; [csmith@loras.edu](mailto:csmith@loras.edu))
- Amanda Woodruff, high school consul (515-226-2600; [woodruffa@wdmcs.org](mailto:woodruffa@wdmcs.org))
- John Gruber-Miller, secretary-treasurer (319-895-4326; [jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:jgruber-miller@cornellcollege.edu))