This December in the Year of Our Lord two thousand and twelve, we have these announcements to present.

Firstly, plans for the AMRS War games will be announced next semester.

Secondly, may the odds be ever in your favor during finals week.

Thirdly, have a wonderful Holiday Season, and if the world ends on the 21st, enjoy our last week before the apocalypse!!!

Most Sincerely,

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In June of this year, I was invited to join an international team of scholars for a trip to Algeria. This group of archaeologists, historians, and religion scholars spent 10 days visiting Roman and early Christian sites. For political reasons it is difficult to gain entry into Algeria, and our itinerary had to be vetted by the government.
As foreigners we were also required to travel with an armed escort at all times, primarily because Al Qaeda has a strong presence in certain parts of the country. These obstacles were minor, however, in comparison with the opportunity. The northern coast of Africa was an integral part of the Roman Empire. Its farms provided critical grain supply for Rome itself, but it also made significant cultural contributions to the Mediterranean world. The importance of the region was obvious in the impressive size and scope of many of the sites, such as Timгад, Tebessa, and Madauros. North Africa was also central in the early Christian period, being home to important figures such as Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, and the martyrs Perpetua and Felicity. The numerous large basilicas and ornate baptisteries attest to the importance of Christianity here prior to the Muslim Conquest. The climate has allowed much of the decoration at these sites to survive, including beautiful mosaics in many places. Over the course of our journey, we all kept waiting for the “letdown,” for the sites to stop wowing us. But this never happened. Each site has its own allure, its own mysteries, its own questions for us to debate on site and for hours afterward in the bus. If I had to pick a single highlight, it would probably be sitting in the bishop’s seat in the basilica of Augustine. We know from the sources that Augustine sat when he preached, so I knew that I was sitting in the very place where one of Christianity’s greatest bishops and theologians had once sat.

As someone whose research is by nature interdisciplinary, I found this trip exhilarating. There truly was never a dull moment, and insights from this trip will inform the course I will teach next semester on Early Christianity in Africa. It is gratifying to see the ways in which my research and teaching will intersect through this trip, and I am grateful to OWU for its support.
If there was one note of sadness in all this, it is that Algeria remains so little appreciated by scholars in the relevant fields. The logistical obstacles scare people away, and the treasures of Algeria remain largely undiscovered. Granted, Algeria lacks some of the infrastructure that would typically attract tourists, but it is well worth the effort. We found the Algerian people to be very welcoming. Many of them spoke French, so I was able to communicate easily with them. We were frequently greeted on the streets with “Soyez les bienvenus” (“Welcome”). On our last night there, we were swimming in the sea next to our hotel. A young couple was swimming near us, and finally the woman said in rough English, “Are you American?” We said yes, and she said, “Thank you for coming.” This brief exchange exemplified the warm welcome we received from the Algerian people.
THE OFFICIAL FALL 2012 OWU
AMRS TRIDENT PUZZLER
A PRIZE COMPETITION

Directions: The accumulated initial letters of the answers to the following 15 descriptions provide the names of two holidays and the desired time for their celebration. The answers are known or can be found by research-savvy AMRS students. By filling in the blanks, you produce their names. The answers to the 15 questions derive from Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance materials. Send your email to the following address: dgplatein@owu.edu

Fac feliiciter.

1. ______: October 1066 was a disastrous month for this English king.
2. ______, Egyptian anchorite in Julian’s day, credited with a Christian creed.
4. ______, Pisan despot died 1289 from penal starvation; cf. Inferno xxxiii.
5. ______ German astronomer, in 1619 published Harmonia Mundii.
6. ______ The English dramatist, author of The Spanish tragedy, d. 1594.
7. ______ cathedral town; here Great Karl was crowned in 800 (later buried).
8. ______, Eighth indeed, as Catharines, Annes, and a Jane could tell you.
9. ______ Athenian pal of Sokrates, wrote an account of his march to the Sea.
10. ____ b. 1431, Vicenza, painted in Mantova, “Triumph of Caesar”
11. ______ received 396 extant letters from Cicero; Nepos wrote his biography.
12. ____ names a well-known type of short Russian folktale.
13. ______, 5th C. Hebrew prophet, cup-bearer to Artaxerxes; cf. Jerus. Walls
14. ____ theater location where Aeschylus’ tragic choruses chanted, danced.
15. ____ 18th century Germ. art historian and Archaeolog; murdered in Trieste.

NOW write in the first letters from the word answers above for the three word answer:

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ & ___ ___ :: ___ ___ ___
1 5 8 12 15

The first OWU student yet to be awarded a B.A. degree who solves the AMRS Puzzler by returning the fifteen correct terms and the consequent filled-in answer BY EMAIL will win a prize and fame. S/he will be commemorated or interviewed in the next AMRS TRIDENT.