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Pioneer

October 23 & 24, 2004

“Journey, represents art discovery at Ferris”

BIG RAPIDS – “Journey” takes on a life of its own in the eyes of visitors to the Timme Center for Student Services on the campus of Ferris State University.

Just what Ferris Resident Artist and Professor Robert Barnum hopes for when people view the two-piece display, consisting of a 90-foot design featuring 130 birds made out of aluminum bent and welded together and a floor-mounted 500 pound display on a limestone base.

“I see Christmas cookie cut outs, don't you?” Natalie Wernette said of the suspended design. Maybe you see inspiration, a portal in time or maybe it reminds you of that movie where the birds attack people.

“You see something and you react,” the Remus junior and visual design and web media student said. “Art is ... takes shape and color and manipulates people's reactions.

The 10th collaboration made within the confines of FSU for Art Walk, “Journey” meant to be a subtle idea, a hint for people visiting the Timme Center, Barnum said.

The center is a place of business where students pay bills or check on class schedules, he said, adding the philosophy of the building takes on a pragmatic aspect of the world.

“This is not a place you come to discuss but to discover art,” Barnum said. “This is a hint about the subtle transition of movement.”

Ferris President David Eisler added his own interpretations of “Journey,” as seen from his office window, which overlooks a portion of the suspended display.

“I encourage you to look at this from a different direction ... from my office window; it blends with the birds flying outside and gives you a feeling of motion.” Eisler said. It ebbs and flows and if you look at it from downstairs, it's like a different sculpture.

“The gifts Robert has provided this university are extraordinary,” he said.

Art Walk consists of 19 pieces of art placed throughout the university's campus. Other works of art include “Of Thought and Reason,” by Barnum, found in FLITE, and most recently “Celebration,” by Ray Katz, of Pontiac, located in the plaza between the Business and Instructional Resource Center buildings.

The 20-year project is entering its ninth season, with a plan calling for 50 pieces of art to be placed throughout Ferris' campus and the Big Rapids community at a rate of about two pieces per year, Barnum said. There are currently no pieces of art off campus, but locations being considered include Hemlock Park.

The works of art include self-made art, which is campus work, and a competition in which Michigan artists send their work to be chosen as an addition to the concept, he added.

Pioneer

October 23 & 24, 2004

Ferris participates in 'Make a Difference Day'

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris State University Volunteer Center is participating in the national "Make A Difference Day" today. The "national day of doing good" is conducted in partnership with the Points of Light Foundation and USA Weekend.

The local emphasis will be a City-Wide Collection Depot held from noon to 3 p.m. in the Top Taggart Field parking lot area in conjunction with FSU Homecoming tailgating. Campus and community residents are asked to bring monetary donations or donations of furniture, clothes, and non-perishable food and eye glasses. The donations will benefit Goodwill Industries, the Project Starburst Food Pantry, the Ferris Optometry Clinic and the United Way of Mecosta/Osceola counties.

The Volunteer Center serves as a clearing house of information on volunteer opportunities for Ferris students, faculty and staff. Center representatives work with community agencies to develop opportunities that not only help students feel a greater sense of belonging in the community but also help them develop personal and career skills outside of the classroom.

The Grand Rapids Press

October 24, 2004

Mother's secret past haunts ghostly novel

On a dark and stormy October night what better way to spend the time than read this well written novel, a ghost story for adults. Shivering at the nineteenth century gothic details and struggling, along with the narrator, to decipher an intricate puzzle about family secrets?

In John Harwood's "The Ghost Writer," not only will the reader delight in the allusions to the genre's classic writers, among them Dickens, Henry James, and Wilkie Collins. But also this page-turner recreates Jamesian/Dickensian atmosphere -- old letters and photographs, a crumbling mansion with creaking floors and overgrown grounds, full of disturbing history.

The story opens with Gerard Freeman, a young boy, who in taking advantage of his mother's nap to search her desk, discovers a photo of her. "I felt I knew her. She did not smile, at least at first but as I went on staring, I began to think I could see the faintest trace of a smile" and though it was black and white, "I felt I could see the changing colors of her skin." Recognize Poe's kind of "I" narrator in "Fall of the House of Usher" already drawn in, before anything has happened?

This opening scene of the mysterious portrait found is a quiet scene until Gerard's mother appears, and screaming about privacy violated, starts beating him.

Before that, Gerard's mother recounts her idyllic childhood in a mansion called Staplefield in Sussex, England, but then abruptly stops talking about her past. All the son and his father know is that her parents died in an auto accident. No pictures of her family exist (except for the mysterious one), yet Gerard feels he would recognize every part of Staplefield. When lonely Gerard responds to a Penfriends International pen pal, Alice Jessel ("Turn of the Screw"), living in a place very like Staplefield, his mother turns from fretful to an "anxious, haunted look." This anxiety increases when Gerard, as an adult, plans a trip from their Australian home to London. His mother keeps repeating that all she wanted was to keep him safe.

Alice became a paraplegic in a car accident, which killed her parents (reminiscent of an accident that killed Gerard's grandparents). As she writes, it is "as if I died with them and went on to a sort of after-life, only still here on earth." Evolving from being Gerard's "invisible friend" to his "invisible lover," she resists his pressure to meet until she can walk again.

At this point the book breaks into a kaleidoscope of ghost stories written by his great grandmother Viola. Some readers might object that the four stories interrupt the main story of Gerard's finding out about his family, but in fact they are indispensable. Not the typical ghost stories and often appearing like fragments, they are completed by the main story. They put the reader into the same confusion as the "I" narrator. Events, places and people are subtly "familiar" to Gerard and with Viola's stories, also to the reader like seeing a figure or movement to the side, feeling more than seeing it.

The stories' details both repeat what the reader has been told and foretell what will happen. Through Viola's characters, transforming themselves into new stories, progressively the reader intuits why Gerard's mother was afraid. As she told him, "one came true" one of the ghost stories.

This first novel is satisfying on many levels. The author impresses with his complex plotting of distinctly powerful yet overlapping stories, the intricacy of repeated patterns. The effect is like taking apart a vibrantly colorful Russian nesting doll. The writer illustrates two truths about fiction how readers search therein for the writer's life and how fiction can be as true as life. It is Viola's stories that first reveal the crucial truth that Gerard's mother had a sister. From that relationship, everything follows betrayal, revenge. There is no better story to illustrate how dangerous family secrets can be.

This is a rousing good ghost story with a heart-thumping end. Harwood's "The Ghost Writer" is a perfect Halloween read.

Olive Mullet is a retired Ferris State University English professor.

The Grand Rapids Press

October 24, 2004

Assistant superintendent to handle communications

OTTAWA COUNTY -- Julia Gillespie was appointed the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District's new assistant superintendent of communications and human resources at the school board's monthly business meeting on Thursday.

Gillespie picks up communications duties previously handled by Karen McPhee, who the board selected to replace retiring Superintendent Randy Bergers in May.

Gillespie has been with the OAISD for 13 years. She initially was hired as a communications project assistant in 1991. She was promoted to personnel coordinator in 1995 and to human resources supervisor in 1999.

A native of Michigan, Gillespie holds an associate's degree in applied science from Ferris State University and a bachelor's degree in communications from Grand Valley State University.

Gillespie has several years of experience in public relations. She previously was a civilian employee of the U.S. Department of Defense, the West Virginia State Bar and the Governor's Office of Community and Industrial Development in West Virginia.

Gillespie resides in Grand Haven with her husband and two children.

The Grand Rapids Press

October 25, 2004

GVSU president enters boardroom

Mark Murray joins the ranks of other top university officials who earn extra cash on a corporate board.

Mark Murray is joining the ranks of Michigan university presidents who earn lucrative second paychecks by moonlighting in the corporate boardroom.

The Grand Valley State University leader will be paid \$20,000 to attend four board meetings a year for Universal Forest Products Inc. He recently accepted the post from board Chairman Peter Secchia, who molded the Grand Rapids lumber products company into a \$2 billion industry giant.

The corporate compensation is in addition to what GVSU pays Murray: \$187,900 in base pay plus perks worth several thousand more. Murray is beginning his fourth year as president.

Murray's predecessor at GVSU, Arend Lubbers ventured into one corporate boardroom during his 32-year presidency. He was a member of the Grand Bank board for a decade, earning \$500 per monthly meeting.

But Murray's boardroom take pales in comparison to the \$70,000-plus Michigan State University President Peter McPherson earned last year from Dow Jones. And University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman earned \$110,000 last year from Meredith Corp. and Johnson & Johnson.

While board appointments are common for top university presidents and allowed under most university contracts, the practice is not without controversy.

Some universities, including U-M and Central Michigan University, require university board members to approve each corporate board appointment to guard against possible conflicts of interest.

Policies are far more lax at GVSU and MSU, where university boards let their presidents use their own discretion. According to their contracts, Murray and McPherson simply are required to notify their boards about a corporate appointment.

GVSU board President Jessie Dalman said she supports the appointment and the university policies. She said Murray complied with his contract by informing her.

“We pretty much trust Mark Murray on those types of decisions,” she said. “It's not a pressing issue because it has not been a problem. You only put tight policies in place when you have problems.”

Corporate appointments do benefit a president financially, but they also benefit the university, said GVSU board member Jose Infante, president and CEO of Community Shores Bank in Muskegon.

Business connections allow a president to interact with perspective donors, and effectively increase his income without costing taxpayers, Infante said.

“This is a high profile company. It gives the university more visibility,” he said. “It gives (Murray) both monetary and personal satisfaction.”

“Everybody wins when it's done properly,” agreed Tom Ingram, president of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. “I think (a corporate appointment) speaks well of the individual, as it does for the university.”

But CMU's attorney said corporate board appointments can pose a challenge for presidents. That's why her board takes an active role in reviewing possible appointments and their potential for conflicts.

“We've had trustees that have been very sensitive to conflict of interest issues, and in a small community people are more likely to question and challenge,” said attorney Eileen Jennings.

Neither CMU's president, Mike Rao, nor Ferris State University, President David Eisler served on a corporate board.

Murray said he accepted the Universal appointment in August and will attend his first meeting in January.

Potential conflicts of interest should not be an issue, Murray and Secchia said.

Secchia said his company does not sell products directly to the university. Universal's lumber products recently were used in a GVSU residence hall, but they were purchased by a contractor, Rockford Construction, not the university, he said.

“I'm not sure that Mark Murray or anybody on campus knew it was our wood,” Secchia said.

“If you're selling 12,000 truckloads a week, what are one or two truckloads to Grand Valley over the course of several years?”

Murray also does not expect conflicts to arise. But if they did, “I would stay out of the decision,” he said.

Murray does have to sign off on all campus construction projects. “But I have no involvement in their decision about particular contractors and their product lines,” he added.

“People who lead big universities public or private I think we're in a position to contribute to big corporate boards,” Murray said.

In 1984, then-state Attorney General Frank Kelley issued an opinion addressing how presidents should prevent conflicts of interest with their corporate duties. Kelley said a university contract may be awarded to the business in question when the contract is awarded to the lowest qualified bidder through a sealed bid process. Secchia, a local Republican Party activist, said he picked Murray because he admires his objectivity and “his ability to see through the bureaucracy.”

“I have the utmost respect for Mark,” he said.

Also serving on Universal Forest Product's eight-man board is Murray's former boss, John Engler. Murray served as state treasurer for former Gov. Engler, a Republican.

Murray also lends his time to seven non-profit boards, including Spectrum Health, Grand Rapids Symphony, Governor's Council of Economic Advisers, and The Nature Conservancy Michigan chapter, among others.

Murray and other university presidents with financial expertise have a lot to contribute to corporate and non-profit boards, said MSU's McPherson, a former banker.

But it is important not to stretch yourself too thin, he added. McPherson said time commitments prompted him to limit his corporate involvement to the Dow Jones board for the past five years.

Not every president is as disciplined.

In 2001, Judith Rodin, then president of the University of Pennsylvania, came under fire for earning more than \$196,600 for her work on numerous corporate boards.

U-M's Coleman spends about 20 days a year serving on two corporate boards. McPherson said he attends nine meetings a year in Manhattan.

Murray is expected to attend four annual meetings one of which is held via conference call and two or three audit committee meetings.

Pioneer

October 26, 2004

Ferris Board approves request for \$2.5 million operating budget increase

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University's Board of Trustees approved a request for a \$2.5 million increase in state operating support for the university's fiscal year 2006 operating budget at its Oct. 22 meeting.

The board also voted to resubmit a capital outlay funding request for a new building for the University's Michigan College of Optometry.

Ferris administrators are seeking reinstatement of the two percentage points (\$1 million) remaining of the five-percent executive order reduction for fiscal year 2004. Reinstatement of three percentage points of that reduction was reflected in the fiscal year 2005 higher education budget approved by the governor on Sept. 30.

“Economic conditions in Michigan have created a significant challenge for higher education,” said President David L. Eisler. Ferris has had to cut costs by \$9.3 million. We have reduced budgets intelligently - to preserve our focus on careers, to emphasize high quality instruction, and to position our campus to help the state and its citizens.

“I am proud of how our people have responded to these challenges and accommodated increased numbers of students with reduced resources,” said Eisler. “While such actions reflect economic realities, the depth of recent cuts causes concern for access to higher education and the erosion of quality for our students and the state. I appreciate the support of Governor Granholm and the legislature to address these issues.”

In addition, Ferris is requesting a three percentage point (\$1.5 million) inflationary increase in state appropriations for fiscal year 2006 and \$3 million to begin to fund a portion of the past Michigan Public School Employee Retirement System cost increases and identify of relief to protect the MPSERS universities from future cost increases. One of seven MPSERS universities, Ferris faces an increase of almost \$770,000 in employee retirement contribution costs for fiscal year 2005.

Ferris' Michigan College of Optometry (MCO) has been housed in Pennock Hall, a remodeled residence hall, since shortly after its first class was admitted in 1975.

Administrators are requesting \$40 million in capital project funding for a new optometry facility to include academic, laboratory and clinical spaces in support of the teaching, research and patient care missions of MCO. The request also encompasses the renovation of Pennock Hall for College of Education and Human Services classrooms and faculty offices.

Trustees also approved the fiscal year 2005 general fund operating budget of \$133,285,000 with the projected state appropriation level remaining at \$48,968,800. The Board had

approved a preliminary general fund operating budget in July based on enrollment and state funding assumptions.

Pioneer

October 26, 2004

Ferris trustees OK contracts with public safety

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris State University Board of Trustees approved three-year collective bargaining agreements with the university's supervisory and patrol public safety officers at its Oct. 22 meeting.

Both groups, affiliates of the Police Officers Labor Council, had previously ratified the agreements.

The contracts are retroactive to Oct. 1 and extend through Sept. 30, 2007. Highlights of the agreements include a three-percent wage increase each year of the agreement, along with a significant increase in the university's contribution toward health insurance, which is equal to the contribution level that the university provides to administrative employees.

Trustees also approved acceptance of a grant, if awarded, for Ferris to become a Police Corps Regional Training Academy. The university has applied for the designation in response to a Congressional cost-saving measure to replace individual state police corps academies with regional academies.

The proposed budget for the grant award, which is expected to be made in January 2005, is \$984,358. Ferris presently conducts the Michigan Police Corps program through the Criminal Justice Institute in the College of Education and Human Services.

In other action, the board:

- accepted the recommended appointments of board members for Connor Creek Academy East in Roseville and Marshall Academy in Marshall, charter schools authorized by the university;
- approved acceptance of a \$188,700 three-year research grant for the Department of Biological Sciences from the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences, a \$199,364 three year research and development grant for the College of Technology from the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, and a \$179,000 Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement grant for the College of Education and Human Services from the Michigan Department of Education;
- approved policy revisions for the acquisition and lease of real estate by the university to permit various types of preliminary agreements to be entered into without the need for board approval, but still providing for the required full board approval upon the actual purchase of the real estate; and
- accepted the conveyance of title to the Timme Center for Student Services from the State Building Authority pursuant to the fulfillment of the standard lease agreement; The next meeting of the board of trustees will be on Feb. 26, 2005.

The Detroit News

October 26, 2004

State graduation rates increase

Scholarship athletes at most Michigan universities continue to graduate at rates higher than national averages, and better than that of their school's general student body, NCAA statistics released Monday show.

At the nation's 328 Division I schools - those with the largest athletic programs the average graduation rate for the past four years was 60 percent for athletes the same as the year before and 58 percent for the entire student body.

In Michigan, five of the seven Division I schools bettered or equaled that two-point spread. Central Michigan and Eastern Michigan athletes graduated at a rate 15 percent higher than that of the student body. Western Michigan was plus-13 percent, Detroit Mercy plus-12 and Oakland plus-10.

At Michigan State, a 41 percent graduation rate for football players dragged down the team average to 66 percent still well ahead of the national average and a 4 percent improvement over the year before, but 2 percent behind the student body's graduation rate.

At Michigan, 74 percent of athletes graduated over the last four years, one of the highest rates in the nation for a program its size. But the program still showed a negative percentage because all students there graduate at a rate of 84 percent.

Of the seven Division II universities in the state, five surpassed the national 258-school average of 50 percent, and at six, athletes graduated at a rate equaling or bettering that of the student body.

NCAA standards, which some critics call too strict, count as graduates only those athletes who were on scholarship for all four years of their eligibility, did not transfer, and graduated within six years of admission.

How Michigan schools compare

The following chart shows the most recent graduation rates of scholarship athletes at Michigan universities, released Monday by the NCAA. It compares average graduation rates of athletes in 2003 to athletes in 2004, as well as to the student body as a whole in 2004 and the disparity between graduation rates of athletes and the student body as a whole.

Division I universities

Athletes Athletes Students Disparity

2003 2004 2004

Central Mich. 62% 65% 50% 15%

Eastern Mich. 47% 51% 36% 15%

Western Mich. 67% 67% 54% 13%

Det. Mercy 59% 63% 51% 12%

Oakland 61% 51% 41% 10%

National avgs. 60% 60% 58% 2%

Michigan State 62% 66% 68% -2%

Michigan 73% 74% 84% -10%

Division II universities

Athletes Athletes Students Disparity

2003 2004 2004

Ferris St. 51% 59% 32% 27%

Lake Superior St. 53% 58% 39% 19%

Michigan Tech 60% 64% 63% 1%

Grand Valley St. 53% 55% 48% 7%

National avgs. 50% 51% 44% 7%

Saginaw Valley St. 45% 45% 29% 16%

Northern Mich. 51% 50% 43% 7%

Wayne St. 43% 41% NA NA

NCAA statistics

Pioneer

October 27, 2004

Wyeth presentation highlights Ferris Accessibility Awareness Day

BIG RAPIDS - A presentation by Duncan Wyeth, executive director of the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC), will highlight Ferris State University's second annual Accessibility Awareness Day (AAD) Thursday.

Wyeth will speak on "Addressing University Diversity from the Disability Perspective" at 11 a.m. in Auditorium 004 of the Instructional Resource Center.

The AAD event, sponsored by Ferris' Liaison Committee for students with Disabilities, was organized to allow participants an opportunity to experience accessibility features of the FSU campus from the perspective of a student/staff with a disability, and therefore to increase awareness of campus accessibility issues.

Wyeth, who has directed the MCDC since August 2003, is a graduate of Michigan State University and currently instructs an MSU course titled, "Disability in a Diverse Society."

He is responsible for all MCDC programs and services and serves as lead staff to the 21-member, governor-appointed commissioners.

His previous work experiences include teacher and administrator in the Lansing Catholic School system; coordinator of services and resources for the Center Handicapped Affairs; director of the Center of Handicapped Affairs; director of the consumer activities department within the national office of United Cerebral Palsy Associations (UCPA), Inc.; director of the client assistance program within Michigan Rehabilitation Services; and consumer customer relations specialist for rehabilitation services.

Wyeth has been honored with the Michigan Rehabilitation Association Outstanding Achievement Award (1996), the UCPA National Volunteer Award (1998), and the UCP National Achievement Award (2001). He has been a guest on "Good Morning America," "CBS Morning News," the "Larry King Show" and CNN's "Crossfire," and has served on numerous committees, commissions and boards at the local, state, national and international levels.

Further information regarding AAD events is available by calling Karen GreenBay, committee chair, at (231) 591-5034, or Eunice Merwin, disabilities service office, at (231) 591-3772.

Pioneer

October 27, 2004

FSU Rankin Art Gallery features landscape exhibit

BIG RAPIDS - "Exit 55 and Other Places." the landscape paintings of Holland artist Clay Stauffer, are on exhibit through Nov. 4 in Ferris State University's Rankin Center Art Gallery. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

All of the landscape paintings in this exhibit have to do with particular places and the construction of places. A large majority of the pieces are focused on Exit 55 off of I-96, as well as other locations along highways.

"The era in which we live is characterized by an increasing prevalence of 'non-spaces,' whose purposes are transitory, such as highways, airports, airliners and automobiles," said Stauffer. Yet we tend to look beyond these places, as if they were not worthy of our attention. In this respect they are transparent. My paintings aim at making these spaces optically opaque and psychologically reflective.

"These landscapes manifest ways of looking that reveal, in our patterns of habitation and movement, the unchanging and eternal in the contingent and ever changing," he added. "In this way, the landscape as a text in which we continually write and read, becomes a condition of our inner, as well as our outer, lived realities."

The Grand Rapids Press

October 28, 2004

Cornerstone anchors MBA program in religion

What would Jesus do in the corporate boardroom?

Apply positive values? Practice good business ethics? Resist immoral temptations to steal from employee pension funds?

Likewise, administrators at Cornerstone University hope to use a curriculum rooted in religion to influence how future business leaders move up the corporate ladder.

The university is moving ahead with plans to launch an MBA program as early as next spring.

“We don't require students to be a Christian to come into the program,” said Robert Simpson, dean of Cornerstone's Professional and Graduate Studies, adding the religious base “is part of the attraction.”

Despite reports of slumping enrollments at business schools nationwide, Cornerstone administrators are optimistic students will be attracted by the flexibility of the 36-credit hour, 18-month program that will be taught in a mix of classroom and Internet formats. A master's degree in business administration will cost about \$13,000, Simpson said.

Pending approval from a national accreditation firm, the program will be offered at Cornerstone's Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Troy locations.

And with five colleges offering MBAs locally, there will be plenty of competition for students.

“I would say it's a challenging time,” said Tom Scannell, director of the Western Michigan University's Grand Rapids MBA program. “The competition is certainly strong.”

Enrollment is down about 10 percent this year in the MBA programs at WMU and Grand Valley State University.

Instead of fretting about how many applications will pour in, Cornerstone President Rex Rogers is focusing on what will set the university's program apart from the competition a Christian perspective.

That distinction may play a key role in helping Cornerstone build its program.

“I think it's a nice approach,” said Bill Boras, chairman of Ferris State University's College of Business Graduate Programs. “I think for some students, they maximize their value in a program such as Cornerstone's....It's a matter of choice.”

About a year ago, Boras helped Ferris launch an Internet-based MBA program that differs from traditional programs offered by peer schools.

Ferris administrators hoped to launch their MBA program last year with 60 students and ended up with about 100. Cornerstone hopes to recruit 60 students the first year and build enrollment to 140 within three years.

Administrators at the University of Phoenix report steady growth since they began offering the degree locally in 1999.

“There are plenty of adult students to go around in this market,” said Craig Jacob, campus director for the University of Phoenix.

Jacob counts himself among the 400 students seeking an MBA through Phoenix. He said convenience is a big part of the reason many local professionals like the program that, with a \$22,000 price tag, is the most expensive of the local options.

Cornerstone administrators recently sent out a request for letters of support from members of the local business community. So far, the response has been positive, Simpson said.

“It's really looking at the need for an MBA program that has a Christian world view that talks about ethics, morals and values,” Simpson said.

“There's Just really strong support for that.”

Cornerstone plans to spend about \$500,000 during the next four years to hire one full-time and 25 adjunct faculty members, and buy library and technology resources.

Simpson projects the program will generate \$780,000 in tuition revenue during the first year.

Montmorency County Tribune

September 22 & 29, 2004

News Summary -

The various results of chemical tests related to air quality in and around Hillman Elementary School were reviewed by Dr. Gary Rodabaugh, professor at Ferris State University in Big Rapids. He determined that elevated levels of arsenic in the school's filter system are a concern and should be tested further. As for soil tests taken in the area, levels are within the state criteria, and he does not recommend a reduction of usage at this time.

News Summary-

Dr. Gary Rodabaugh, Ph. D of Ferris State University, Big Rapids, attended the Hillman School Board meeting last week, and was quite candid about the air quality at Hillman Elementary School. He recommended more tests, with better control on the sampling process, and the school board asked for a formal proposal to do the work by this week.

Members of the Montmorency County Board of Commissioners were waiting to hear what the Michigan Legislature would do about revenue sharing last week, as they discussed items that would impact their financial situation. That same day, the legislature passed a proposal that sets up a summer tax collection, part of which goes into a reserve fund, as an alternative to paying any more revenue sharing to counties.