

August 2, 2006-August 13, 2006

Media Packet

- **Personnel**
- **FSU names Talian new tennis coach**
- **Ferris professor writes articles about his home country
Nepal**
- **Ferris negotiations stalled?**
- **FSU faculty must resolve issues without a strike**
- **Scoping Out Adventure**
- **Higher ed's higher costs pinch many**

Business Update

June 2006 Edition

Personnel

Lansing- Kenneth G. Lawless, Vice president and Chief Operating Officer of Clark Construction, is the recipient of the 2006 Distinguished Alumni Award at Ferris State University.

Pioneer

August 5 & 6, 2006

FSU names Talian new tennis coach

BIG RAPIDS - Tom Kirinovic wanted a coach who not only would instill competitive values and high standards on the court, but also in the classroom.

Through the interviewing and subsequent hiring processes, the Ferris State Athletics Director soon realized former Bulldog All-American player Jan Talian was the right man for the job.

Kirinovic, this week, announced the hiring of Talian to step in as the new head coach of the men's tennis program beginning this fall.

Talian, who since September has worked in New Canaan, Conn. as a platform tennis instructor at the New Canaan Field Club, has been on a whirlwind tour through the hiring process.

"Its been very hectic and it won't get any better for a while," Talian, a native of the Czech Republic, said in an e-mailed response, Friday, after his hiring was officially announced. "Despite the crazy schedule, I am extremely excited with my acceptance."

Talian, along with serving as the head men's tennis coach, will have a host of other duties at the Racquet and Fitness Center. Among other responsibilities, he will work as a club professional. He also will work with students in the Professional Tennis Management (PTM) program and help organize and run summer tennis camps.

"We're excited to welcome Jan back to the Bulldog family," Kirinovic said. "Jan was an outstanding competitor and extremely successful as a member of our team when he was at Ferris as a student-athlete.

"I look for him to bring the same drive to this coaching position and lead our men's program to new heights both on a league and national basis."

Not far removed from his high-level playing days, as a Bulldog tennis player, Kirinovic believes that will work to Talian's advantage.

"I think he's going to gain a lot of respect from the players because of his personal ability to play," Kirinovic said of Talian, who is expected to assume his job at Ferris State at the end of the month. "He's still a high-level player and I think the fact he still has the ability to play at a high level will help him relate and work better with the players in our program."

Talian, a United States Professional Tennis Association (USPTA) Level I Professional, has held a number of different positions at the club in New Canaan.

Talian, who holds both a bachelor's degree in business marketing and a master's in career and technical education from Ferris State, enjoyed a prolific playing career for the Bulldogs. He

was a 2002-03 Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) Division II All-American in singles after previously being named an ITA All-American in singles and doubles in 1999-2000.

In addition to Talian's competitiveness, on the court, Kirinovic envisions Talian instilling a similar mentality and high set of expectations in the classroom.

"Education was important to Jan while he was a student here at Ferris State," Kirinovic said. "I believe he will have high standards, in the classroom, for our men's tennis players as he had for them on the tennis court.

"That's something that's very important to us and something we definitely need for that program and for all of our programs."

Pioneer

August 5 & 6, 2006

Ferris professor writes articles about his home country Nepal

BIG RAPIDS - Khagendra Thapa has evolved greatly throughout his life, much like his native country of Nepal. But while Thapa's development has been for the better, Nepal's has not.

Thapa, a surveying engineering professor at Ferris State University, has written several articles published on the Internet and in England, Nepal and other parts of the world examining the complicated political situation in Nepal.

"It's a bad situation," he said. "I see more trouble ahead."

Thapa's surroundings in the eastern mountains of Nepal prevented him from learning, as he didn't learn to read and write until he was 14 years old because there were no schools where he grew up. But his environment made him who he is today.

Once he learned to read and write, Thapa's brain was like a sponge; he wanted to gain more and more knowledge, eventually earning five degrees from four different countries.

He was the only student from Nepal to be selected for a scholarship to the University of East London for an undergraduate degree in surveying engineering. After that, he could have gone back to Nepal, but chose to attend the University of New Brunswick in Canada to complete a master's degree in surveying engineering.

He then left Canada and returned to Nepal to teach at an engineering institute, but he did not stay for long.

"I really wanted to make a difference (in Nepal)." he said. "After two Years I realized the country is going downhill; I really didn't have a future here, they didn't want to listen to my ideas."

He pursued more educational opportunities at Ohio State University, where he earned his second master's degree in 1985 and later earned his doctoral degree.

"I guess it was circumstances that led me into doing what I did." he said.

But Thapa was tired of big city living, so he took a job offer at FSU in 1987 and was promoted to professor in 1991. He said Big Rapids was a better fit for his family --- his wife Rajani and their three kids, Sam, Beraht and Charisma.

"I was only planning to stay here a few years and move on, but I ended up staying here a longtime," he said.

During his time at Ferris, Thapa was a Distinguished Teacher Award finalist in 2000-01. He also created the Khagendra Thapa Surveying Scholarship and received the Ferris Award of

Excellence in 1997 as well as the Michigan Association of Governing Board (MAGB) Distinguished Faculty Award.

While Thapa has been in the United States, things have gotten worse in Nepal. The country was an absolute monarchy until 1990, when it changed to a parliamentary monarchy, with the king as the head of state and a prime minister as the head of government.

But no government has lasted more than two' years since 1991, either through internal collapse o parliamentary dissolution by the monarch. In 2001, the murder of almost the entire royal family rocked the country.

Prince Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev wanted to marry Devyani Rana, a member of a group whom the royal family did not like. The prince's mother did no allow him to marry her.

On June 1, 2001, the prince shot and killed nine family members, including his father, King Birdendra, and his mother, Queen Aishwarya, reportedly because of the tension amongst the family. He then shot him self, but remained in a coma for four days.

After the murders he was declared the new king but after he died his uncle, Prince Gyandendra, too his place. Thapa's initially supported Gyandendra in his articles, but once the new king brought in corrupt officials like his predecessors; Thapa's support wavered in his articles.

"My main emphasis was to expose how corrupt and irresponsible political parties have hurt the democratic system in Nepal; how they look at the poor people," he said. "They really did not look after the country and the people and instead they were busy getting themselves rich. The money for the roads is stolen; no roads are built or repaired."

The corruption, which has increased poverty, needs to come to an end for Nepal to become stable, Thapa said.

"How can you accept that in a country where this person only had a salary a \$120 a month and he's spending more than \$1,200 a month?" he said. "This is unreal. A lot of politicians (in Nepal) are believed to be very corrupt."

Thapa has proposed a political system called "Meritocracy" in his articles, in which a group competent and honest of people should run the country, much like a Chief Executive Officer and a board of trustees. But his ideas have not been implemented.

"I wish there was peace and people were allowed to make a living," Thapa said. "Both the army and the insurgents have no right to kill or harm the innocent people. (The citizens) must have the right to live peacefully."

Pioneer

August 11, 2006

Ferris negotiations stalled?

Salary, health care, discipline are among the faculty's concerns.

BIG RAPIDS - Mediated negotiation sessions Monday and Tuesday did little to resolve overall issues between Ferris State University and the Ferris Faculty Association.

A five-year contract has been proposed, with the FFA seeking across-the-board pay increases of 5 percent for each of the five years and fully-funded health insurance. The university is seeking to increase the number of part-time and temporary faculty from 15 percent of the total to 25 percent and proposing alternate insurance plans, in use by other groups of FSU employees.

Negotiations to replace the previous three-year agreement, which expired June 30, began in February. At the request of the university and with the agreement of the faculty both sides began meeting with a mediator July 21.

"Both negotiation teams worked them hard with the mediator by Monday night and Tuesday morning and will reconvene on Friday and Saturday."

Although no agreements have been reached on wages and benefits, a variety of ideas are being shared between the teams. We remain hopeful that with the assistance of the mediator that an agreement will be reached," said Shelly Armstrong, FSU associate vice president for marketing and communications.

Both economic and non-economic issues were discussed this week, but no final decisions or agreements were reached, said FFA President Michael Ryan.

He says issues remaining on the table include salary, health care, market adjustments for equitable pay, discipline and due process procedures and post-tenure recommendations.

"They feel comfortable with the language the way it is," Ryan said of the university. "The general belief is they have, certain managerial rights and our requests are infringing on them."

Ryan used an example of anonymous complaints coming up in discipline hearings, which the union believes is unfair.

"You would have more rights if you were charged with a crime than under their discipline procedures," he said.

Pioneer

August 11, 2006

OUR VIEW: FSU faculty must resolve issues without a strike

Negotiations continue toward settlement of a new contract for the Ferris Faculty Association with Ferris State University.

Talks began back in February to hammer out a new pact for the faculty to replace a three-year contract that expired June 30. A mediator was called in July 21 to meet with both sides.

Yet, with less than three weeks remaining before the beginning of fall classes, a final resolution has not been reached despite warnings from the union that faculty will not return to class without a new contract.

FFA president Mike Ryan began posturing in this newspaper earlier this month by blaming the slow progress on the lack of leadership from FSU President David Eisler who he says seems content to leave bargaining in the hands of the university's negotiating team. After all, its members ultimately must answer to his boss, the university's board of trustees.

Frankly, we think it may be time to lock all bargainers in a room and not let them out until they resolve all the issues at hand. No one wants to see a repeat of the strike a decade ago.

An eight-year agreement was hammered out in 10 days after the two sides had been bickering over a new pact for over three years.

And, the only thing that strike proved was that a contract can be agreed upon in a hurry under trying conditions.

Unfortunately that short strike resulted in a lot of bitter feelings among students, faculty, administrators and members of the community who railed on the effects of the strike on recruiting personnel and students to a university that was in the midst of recovering from the early 1990s downsizing that saw enrollment drop from more than 12,000 students to just over 8,000.

This university community has worked a lot of long hard hours, and spent a lot of money, improving an image seriously damaged by the downsizing and is just now returning to the enrollment levels of those earlier years.

The faculty, administration, students and community has all been involved in this recovery.

Now's not the time for another strike.

Resolve the issues at the bargaining table to avoid another step backwards.

Pioneer

August 12 & 13, 2006

Scoping Out Adventure

Roger Card closes in on his World Hunting Award in the months after losing his wife, Debra.

When Roger Card packs for a hunt, no matter where in the world, he brings the essentials.

Rifle – check.

Ammunition – check.

Passport – check.

Peanut butter – Skippy, to be exact – check.

From a polar bear hunt in the frozen Arctic to the wilds of Mongolia – where the local food is so greasy Skippy won't stick to it – Card seeks out adventure and the species of game required to earn his Safari Club International World Hunting Award.

Three species remain on his list of more than 200 required for the award: two kinds of ibex, a mountain goat-like animal, and a red stag, all found in Spain. The real estate developer from Mecosta ventures to the Iberian Peninsula this fall to collect them.

It's like the Super Bowl of hunting," Card said. "It's a real special goal to be able to collect these different species from all over the world. There's only something like 45 people who have done it and I'm excited to join their ranks."

Roger is the most driven person in the world," said long-time friend and frequent traveling companion Rodney Merchant. "When Roger locks onto something ... he never ever ever gives up."

In Cameroon, Card spent nearly a month in 120 degree heat, unbearable humidity, awful bugs and even had a case of heat stroke. Still, he returned later because he hadn't bagged a bongo - an animal Card describes as "probably the most beautiful antelope in the world."

"When you hunt with Roger Card, it's only fair chase by the rules," Merchant said. "He puts hundreds of hours of logistics into getting us to remote places. ... He finds the far corners of the Earth. For him, life is about the journey."

Card calls it "adventure."

"(I do it for) the excitement of it. I'd have to say after 40 years of hunting, actually squeezing the trigger and killing the animal is anticlimactic," Card said. "Now, my trips have turned into adventures. ... Every year, we go someplace different, tour the area, get to know the local people, see the local sights - we've combined with the hunt the adventure of meeting the local people."

An animated and gifted storyteller, Card willingly shares tales of his exploits, including quests ending with record animals. His voice changes, however, becoming a union of pride and mourning when he speaks of his late wife Debra.

"That lady was tough as nails," Card said, the words catching in his throat. "She could live out there with the guys and instead of just sitting around waiting for the guy to cook supper, she'd be in there cooking, building the fire. It's pouring down rain, and Deb was right there, helping set up the tent.

"She was just a great, great woman. I miss her just terribly."

Debra was such a sport, she agreed to marry Card at the 1991 Safari Club International convention in Reno. It was a short honeymoon - Card had an African safari planned less than two weeks later.

Debra's mother was skeptical Roger would leave his new bride, but Debra knew better, he said, smiling at the memory.

"Nine days after we got married, I was in Africa," he said. "She enjoyed the hunting part of it and got into it as much as I was."

Debra died of cancer Jan. 6, two weeks after her diagnosis.

His far-away-eyes fill with tears. "I haven't got over it yet. She has just a light. She was my hunting buddy, my business partner, my wife," he said.

They built their home, Card's Draw, together, he explained looking around the inviting house which doubles as a trophy whitetail deer ranch outside Mecosta that he and Debra managed together.

More than 440 acres, the ranch has been in operation for nine years. Hunts cost \$2,500 and up and not more than two are scheduled at the same time. Debra was camp cook, providing hunters with home-cooked meals.

"Debra and I used to travel together. She has taken the world's biggest moose - there's not a moose killed in the world bigger than that one," he said.

When they first discussed a family hunt, Card asked Debra what she would like to stalk, sure she'd opt for the impressive racks of an elk or moose.

"She was looking around my office and said, 'I really like those rams.' Rams live on the top of the mountains - they're the toughest animal to hunt and I already had my grand slam, which is (collecting) all four different species of ram," Card said. "I'd collected all mine ... I had no intentions of ever going up that mountain again. She said that, and I thought, 'Oh, my God.' So, over the next 10 or 12 years, I came out with her and she got a grand slam also."

Debra's other trophies included a rare drop-point buck taken off Card's Draw. A drop-point buck has an antler tine pointing downward instead of upward, as they usually do.

She'd told Card if ever there was a drop-point buck on the ranch, she wanted it. Two years ago, he spotted one. "I called her and said, 'Deb, I've got good news and bad news - what do you want?' She said, 'The good news.' I said, 'The good news is, we've got a drop-point buck out here.' She said, 'What's the bad news?' I said, 'It's got two drop points.... She was so excited."

She bagged her buck with one shot.

"Man, I was so happy," he said. "I was more happy for her to get game than I was for myself I just loved her being successful.... I've got all her hunts on video. It's really cool, like going on a second hunt with her."

Debra's world-record moose is on display at the Card Wildlife Center at Ferris State University, although Roger hasn't decided yet if he will permanently give it to the museum.

The 5,000-square-foot Card Wildlife Education Center is free of charge and located in the Arts and Sciences Commons at FSU. The facility displays are divided by regions of the world. The museum is open on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and weekdays by appointment. The Cards have given the specimens on display to the university. Debra was passionate about education and exposing children to wildlife.

"She's probably more responsible for the Card Wildlife Center than I was," he said. "She loved educating kids. ... She backed me 100 percent to make the center, build it, get the animals mounted and get them in there. We've sponsored four scholarships to make sure we have helpers to show people around."

Educating children on the wonders of nature was a natural bulls-eye for Card to aim for, according to FSU President David Eisler.

"When I really see Roger's eyes sparkle is when he talks about the schoolchildren seeing the unique wild animals," Eisler said. "(The museum) is a wonderful learning opportunity for (both Ferris and grade school) students."

It's the museum that makes the quest for his World Hunting Award that much more special to Card. The Card Wildlife Center continues to give him an opportunity to share the wonders he sees around the globe with others.

"The special part is those animals will be on display at the Card Wildlife Center," he said. "That's a bonus for me ... I can put them in the museum."

"The awesomeness of the outdoors is just incredible. You get the feeling you're standing on a spot nobody's ever been before."

The people in the various places Card has traveled to collect the required animals have become a second family of sorts for him.

"They're my hunting family - people all over the world, I've got all these friends. You're with these people for a week or 10 days ... they take you back to their house, offer you tea and coffee and you just get to be like family," Card said. "I'm 63, but I feel 43 - hunting keeps me young."

He may feel young, but when it comes time to jump into an African river to tie a rope around a freshly-killed hippopotamus, Card is glad to have the locals on hand.

African rivers with hippos have crocodiles, too. A professional hunter, a person who accompanies big-game hunters in Africa to serve as guide, information source and a back-up shot if necessary, stands with Card on the riverbank to protect the natives who swim to the carcass. If they see crocodiles edging too close to the swimmers, they shoot it, Card said.

A hunter shoots a hippo between the eyes, the only visible part of the creature above water, Card explained. The hippo immediately sinks to the bottom only to fill with gas and pop up 45 minutes later. Then, the natives swim out with a rope to tow the animal to shore.

"The local African natives eat everything, even the insides, the guts of the hippo," Card said.

"Every part of the animal is used in Africa and it makes you feel good. The hunting climate has changed; part of the license fees go to the local village and all the meat goes to the local village."

Meat from game taken in North America and Mexico also goes to local villages and churches, he added.

Detroit Free Press

August 13, 2006

Higher ed's higher costs pinch many

More relying on loans, scholarships after tuition hikes

Christopher Buckley's mother refinanced her home to help pay his college tuition.

Amie Michael is moving back to her parents' house because she can no longer afford a campus apartment.

Tiara Fletcher is using seven scholarships to pay her way through school.

And before Debbie Newman lucked out with a raffle ticket, she and her husband, Mike, had taken out a home equity loan to pay their daughters' college bills.

Across Michigan, the cost of higher education is leaving a growing number of students in debt and straining families trying to pay college bills.

Each of Michigan's public universities is requiring students to pay more this year, with increases ranging from 4.8% at Northern Michigan University to 17.8% at Central Michigan University, which capped its tuition rate for up to five years.

"I was kind of naive," said Buckley, 21, of Oak Park, whose student loan debt has grown to nearly \$20,000 as he enters his fourth year at Central. "I always assumed the Pell Grant would be enough for college. I never expected tuition would be so much."

The tuition increases are happening at a time when state funding to public universities has declined from \$6,840 per student in 2000-01 to \$5,688 per student in 2005-06, according to the President's Council, State Universities of Michigan. Though universities have received a 3% increase in aid for 2006-07, officials say it isn't enough to make up for previous cuts and rising expenses.

That means more are turning turn to loans.

"I have a lot of friends that graduated and only a small handful ran into jobs paying them \$40,000 to \$50,000," said Buckley, an economics major. "You need a pretty good job to tackle those loans."

At least Buckley has the fortune of not paying increasing rates at Central, where a tuition guarantee keeps his tuition locked in at the same rate as it 14 was when he entered in 2003. Federal loans used to finance college education have grown from \$33 million in 1994-95 to nearly \$63 million in 2004-05, the latest school year for which numbers are available.

That means students are carrying bigger amounts of debt when they graduate.

The College Board, in its annual Trends in Student Aid report published last October, reported students receiving a bachelor's degree in 2004 graduated with an average of \$10,600 in debt.

And the number of graduating seniors with a debt of more than \$40,000 has skyrocketed from 7,353 in 1993 to 77,552 in 2004, according to the Project on Student Debt, a research and policy group based in Berkeley, Calif.

Buckley has had to take steps to get his college finances under control. Last year, he took a semester off to take less expensive courses at Oakland Community College. He also has had to look to extended family for money.

His mother, Bennie Buckley, a retired General Motors line worker, refinanced her home. But even with all that, Christopher Buckley still has sizeable loans.

"We're finding that more and more undergraduate students have to explore the possibility of taking out loans. And that's a challenge upon graduation to be 22 with a bachelor's degree and have the potential of owing \$40,000," said Nancy Schmitz, vice president for student affairs at Oakland University, where tuition is increasing 7.9% for 2006-07.

Angela Polowski, 20, a junior at Oakland University, is about \$8,000 in debt and still has two more years to go.

"I just figured whatever I couldn't afford would be in loans," Polowski said. "Once I get a job and get on my feet, I won't have too much to worry about."

But her mother, Sherrie Polowski, is gravely concerned. "Is she going to be able to get a job with the economy being so bad?" she asked. "And you only have six months after you graduate before you start paying back the loans."

More fees but more help

That's why some schools are trying to increase the amount of financial aid they offer. While tuition at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor is rising 5.5% this year, the university's financial aid budget will rise 7.7%, said Deborah Greene, a U-M spokeswoman. That aid is primarily available to the neediest students, though the university has some programs that also provide aid to middle-class students. Greene said.

Alicia Keaton, associate director of the financial aid office at Wayne State University, said competition for scholarships and grants is fierce, and more students are exploring options such as enrolling in a community college first.

"Some students look down on a community college like it's less of an education and it really is not," Keaton said. "Community colleges offer a great education and many times it's a student's way of getting their feet wet."

For Amie Michael, community college isn't in her future, but moving back home is.

Michael, 21, a junior at Wayne State, will move back to her parents' home in Royal Oak at the end of August because grants and loans won't be enough to cover living expenses. She has been paying \$485 a month in rent in Detroit and works two jobs.

"I just like to be on my own, and I like to be close to campus. ... I just like the independence," Michael said.

Just as bad are the constant tuition increases. For the 2005-06 school year. Wayne State tuition rose 18.5%-- the largest increase in the state. It will go up 5.8% this year.

"That made me even more mad," she said. "We already had the biggest increase last year."

Luck and scholarships

Tiara Fletcher, 19, a sophomore at Oakland University, is paying for college through scholarships - about seven of them.

Fletcher, of Auburn Hills, had parents who were willing to fund her education at Oakland Christian School. But she was on her own for college.

Still, Fletcher waited until March of her senior year of high school to get serious about finding financial help.

So she applied for a scholarship. And another. And another. The persistence paid off.

Fletcher, who got help from her high school guidance counselor, was savvy about applying for academic scholarships that would renew year after year.

"I know a lot of students who end up being thousands of dollars in debt. That's something I won't have to worry about when I start working."

Some people, meanwhile, have just lucked out.

Debbie Newman and her husband would be looking at a mountain of debt for their daughters' college educations were it not for a lucky raffle ticket.

Catherine, 22, is to graduate this month from Michigan State University, while Natalie, 19, will be a sophomore at MSU.

Newman, a teacher at Walled Lake schools, plopped down \$100 for a raffle in January in the first Tuition Expedition raffle sponsored by the district's education foundation. The district wanted its annual raffle to focus on education rather than cool prizes, district spokeswoman Judy Evola said.

Newman of Commerce Township said-she was shocked when she won a prize amounting to about \$40,000.

"I bought the ticket to support the district. I never really thought about winning. But to have that load lifted off your mind as far as college education... this opens the door for other things."

Cindy Tanner, director of the Foundation for Excellence, said hasn't heard of any other such tuition giveaway in a Michigan school district, and she could find only a few other examples of schools nationwide that have done it.

The district sold 800 of the 1,000 tickets available and officials expect greater demand for the raffle next year. First crack at tickets will go to those who bought this year, and a waiting list has been created for those who want to buy what's left, Evola said.

There was no lucky ticket for Buckley, the Oak Park man whose college expenses are being covered mostly by loans. And his mom has had to make sacrifices, too.

She once gave him the money she planned to use to pay her home's tax bill.

"I'm determined for my child to finish school. He will be the first generation for us to graduate from college," Bennie Buckley said.

Her son shares those dreams. But he has another reason to strive for a college education getting a job that will allow him to help out his younger brother, Darius, a sixth-grader at Crescent Academy, a charter school in Southfield.

"When he goes to college, he won't have to go through the struggles I went through," Christopher Buckley said.

"The only thing he'll have to worry about is school."