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**Evening News (Sault Ste. Marie), Daily News (Ludington), Daily Press
(Escanaba), Alpena News**
September 1, 2006

Ferris State football facing sanctions

BIG RAPIDS (AP) -- Ten Ferris State football players will face sanctions ranging from one to three-game suspensions related to meals obtained by several team members with their student identification cards.

The NCAA notified school officials of the sanctions this week, the Pioneer reported. The players' student identification cards were activated for use during the summer of 2005 for preseason training camp. But due to an error, the cards were not deactivated quickly enough, the newspaper said.

"Its a major disappointment, but at the same time it is what it is and its something that were going to have to deal with now," said Ferris State coach Jeff Pierce, whose team will face Kentucky State on the road Saturday for its season opener. Players who face suspensions include quarterback Ryan Kaul, quarterback C.J. Van Wieren, linebacker Mike Klobucher, linebacker Kevin Noe, linebacker Nick Maeder, linebacker Rob Evenboer, defensive tackle Jereld Sawyer, safety Nick Beaudry, offensive lineman Allen Feigel and offensive lineman Rob Lukofsky.

The NCAA infractions ranged from dining services meals estimated at values of \$6 to \$1,144 during the summer of 2005.

All the players involved later paid for the meals in questions, Ferris State Athletics Director Tom Kirinovic said. The NCAA imposed penalties on the football players who owed more than \$300 for meals.

Petoskey News
September 6, 2006

Tebo reappointed to FSU board

BIG RAPIDS - Arthur L. Tebo of Walloon Lake was re-appointed chair of the Ferris State University board of trustees during an annual meeting of the board July 14.

Tebo was named to the board in the spring of 2001 to serve a term expiring Dec. 31, 2008. Tebo graduated from Ferris State University in 1972 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, and served as a counter intelligence agent in Washington D.C. during the Vietnam War.

He returned to Michigan to become general manager of Boyne Highlands Resort in Harbor Springs. From 1984 to 2004 he served as chief operating officer.

The Grand Rapids Press

September 15, 2006

Ferris football prospering despite adversity

Jumping out to a fast start is not common for the Ferris State football program, which has won its opening two games for the first time since a 3-0 start in 1996.

The early undefeated record is even more impressive when considering the juggling act coach Jeff Pierce has been forced to perform.

Two days before his 31-13 season-opening win at Kentucky State, Pierce was informed by the NCAA that 10 of his players would have to serve one- to three-game suspensions spread over the first five contests for illegally obtaining meals through the school's dining services during the 2005-06 school year.

The players, including the number of games they were originally suspended, are safety Nick Beaudry (three), middle linebacker Rob Evenboer (three), guard Allen Feigel (one), quarterback Ryan Kaul (two), All-American linebacker Mike Klobucher (one), center/guard Rob Lukofsky (three), linebacker Nick Maeder (one), linebacker Kevin Noe (one), defensive tackle Jereld Sawyer (two), and quarterback C.J. Van Wieren (three) of West Ottawa.

Lineup takes a beating

All 10 players are either starters or backups.

Nevertheless, Ferris State owns victories over Kentucky State and Great Lakes Conference foe Mercyhurst (by a 28-7 score) to stand perfect heading into Saturday's 7 p.m. home opener against Saginaw Valley State, the fifth-ranked team in NCAA Division III.

"(The suspensions) have made things a little more challenging, but it is what it is," said Pierce, a former Bulldog defensive back who is the program's winningest coach with a 12-year, 71-52 record.

"Regardless of the situation, it's just nice to get off to a good start. The guys have dug down deep to compensate for the players who aren't out there with them, and we're playing some pretty good football."

Pierce has said very little about the suspensions, and did not return numerous calls from The Press the day they were announced.

"We're simply moving forward and getting ready for a new challenge this weekend," he said.

"Hopefully, all this stuff makes us stronger."

Money was repaid

The NCAA suspensions were handed down despite the players paying back the money from their meal purchases.

The athletes used identification cards that were activated for their use during last summer's preseason camp. Because of a processing error by someone within the university, their cards were not de-activated at the proper time, and the athletes continued to access dining services illegally.

"Given all the circumstances, I was kind of surprised, to be honest," Pierce said.

"I look at things that go on in college sports and in this world that get overlooked,... But you also have to take responsibility for the things you do."

Like the Bulldogs' first two games, Pierce will not reveal who is playing and who is suspended before Saturday's kickoff with Saginaw Valley.

The Bulldogs' most recent 3-0 start, in 1996, resulted in a 10-2 record, a conference title and 23-21 loss to Clarion (Pa.) in the Division 11 quarterfinals.

Pioneer
September 15, 2006
(Guest Editorial)

Yes, I can hear you now

So there I was, sitting in the middle of a very important Spanish exam when I became distracted by unintentionally becoming a third party in a conversation that was being held in the hallway.

I didn't participate in the conversation; I was an unwilling listener in it - even though the classroom door was closed. The person in the hallway had a cell phone with a "two-way" or "walkie-talkie" feature, which meant that I was able to hear both sides of the conversation.

So there I am, trying to figure out how to conjugate a present-tense Spanish verb when I was interrupted by someone's intimate conversation that I definitely didn't want to hear. What I did hear was the detailed story of the couple's sexual adventures of the previous night. Not only was where, when, and how long discussed, but also a very-detailed description of *how*.

Needless to say, I did poorly on the test.

I find that nowadays this sort of "conversation" is a problem that I run into more frequently, especially while walking around the FSU campus. I don't mind that people talk on their cell phones in public - heck I do it myself - but it's the "walkie-talkie" feature that bothers me.

First of all, the volume on the phone is generally turned up extremely high so the person can hear it without holding it up to their ear, which means that everyone within a 15-foot radius also can hear it. Plus, just like the toys of our childhood, the person on your end also has to talk louder. Since both parties are speaking loudly the problem arises that other people get stuck in the middle of someone else's conversation and sometimes there is no way you can remove yourself (like when you're in an elevator).

On an elevator ride to the Dean's Office in the Ferris' Star building I got to hear the "thrilling" tale of a friend of a girl in the elevator who had gotten drunk the night before and when she woke up she didn't know where she was, and it turned out to be in the house of someone she doesn't ever remember meeting.

According to some people who have this feature on their phones, you can choose not to use that feature and still get the calls for free. So why don't they opt for this option when in a crowded area? Do they really believe that everyone in the general vicinity wants to hear their conversation? Or do they just not care if they are bothering other people?

Now don't get me wrung, I don't think that this is a bad feature to have on a phone. It's probably extremely convenient while driving and it doesn't pose a problem when a person is in a wide open area, such as outdoors or even in Wal-Mart, but when you're trapped in a hallway or a small shop with them it can become very annoying and uncomfortable.

There is another class -c conversation that I seem to get stuck in the middle of almost every day while waiting in the hallway outside of my next class; the "who does he/she think she is."

If you've never been privy to a conversation such as this one, here's how it goes. One person is talking about how someone had the "nerve" to do something (kiss someone's boyfriend, wear something provocative to a party/class, etc.) and how they are a terrible person because of it.

Not only do they talk about the person's latest indiscretion, they also include everything that they have ever done as well as some things they think they've done.

Great, this is exactly what I want to hear, someone complaining. I'm a college student who works in a home improvement store, the last thing that I need to hear is more complaining. While I don't think that people shouldn't be able to use this feature, people should be considerate to those around them.

They should realize that when they are in a small area, including hallways, everyone in their line of sight can probably hear their conversation and this might not be a conversation that everyone else wants to hear. So in this situation they should use their phone as an actual phone and not a "walkie-talkie."

I've decided though, what I'm going to do if this situation ever arises again; I'm going to become an "active" participant in the conversation and tell them to be quiet.

Megan Stout
English Major
Ferris State University

Pioneer

September 16 & 17, 2006

FFA ratifies agreement

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris Faculty Association has ratified the tentative agreement with Ferris State University by a 4 to 1 margin, said FFA President Mike Ryan.

"Now, it's up to the (FSU) Board (of Trustees) to complete it and we'll have a contract," Ryan said.

The faculty voted 82.4 percent in favor of the agreement and 17.6 percent opposed, he said.

The board will soon set the date for the meeting to ratify the contract, said university spokesperson Leah Nixon, assistant director of news services. Usually, that meeting is scheduled within a week of faculty ratification.

The agreement, hammered out in the 11th hour on Aug. 27 before a strike was scheduled to begin the next day calls for a 2-percent salary increase for the first year and 3 percent each of the following three years. Additionally, supplemental market adjustments will be available to all the faculty, which was not previously true. Many faculty members will pay only 10 percent of their insurance costs in the first year, and in the following three years they will pay between 15 and 20 percent. There will be a variety of health care insurance options offered to professors.

The numbers of part-time faculty will increase during the life of this contract by 1 percent each year. Currently, part-time faculty members are capped at 15 percent of the total number; by the end of the four-year contract, that cap will be 19 percent.

Pioneer

September 16 & 17, 2006

First female to climb to Mount Everest summit speaks at Ferris

BIG RAPIDS - Stacy Allison, the first American woman to attain the summit of Mount Everest, will speak at Ferris State University Monday at 6 p.m. in Williams Auditorium. The event is free, sponsored by the Mechanical Service Contractors of America Student Chapter, but anyone interested in attending should pick up tickets at the Williams Auditorium Ticket Office.

The Williams Auditorium Ticket Office is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and the night of the presentation from 7 a.m. until one half hour after the program begins.

Seats will be general admission (no reserved seating). Attendees needing special assistance should call 591-3676 in advance if possible, or contact an usher the night of the event for assistance.

Allison brings a vast range of experience and knowledge to her energetic and dynamic presentations. As president of Stacy Allison General Contracting, a residential building company, her mission is to motivate people to move beyond limitations and reach for their dreams. She challenges her audiences to lay the foundation for risk taking by accepting full responsibility for their lives. She also emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing everyone's contribution as a team member in life's pursuits.

"Mountains, though seemingly a planet apart from the world of business, are a rich source of practical insights for executives, managers and individuals alike," Allison said. "They are high-altitude laboratories for leadership, team dynamics, risk-taking, and vision and change management."

At the age of 21, Allison began major alpine climbing in earnest and achieved rapid success. Within a year, she reached the top of Alaska's Mt. McKinley, the highest point in North America, and was part of the first successful women's ascent of Ama Dablam, the 22,495 foot peak known as Nepal's Matterhorn.

She returned to Mt. Everest with the Northwest American Everest expedition, On Sept. 29, 1988 after 29 days on the mountain, Allison became the first American woman to reach the summit of 'Mt. Everest, the world's highest mountain at 29,028 feet. She then went on to lead a successful K2 expedition, the world's second highest mountain one of the most difficult peaks on Earth to climb.

Allison also serves on the Board of Trustees of National University and is a successful author and committed mother of two.

Pioneer

September 16 & 17, 2006

A Convenient Opportunity

Former vice president Al Gore's long-standing warnings about the threat from global warming have reached a mass audience thanks to "an Inconvenient Truth," a slick, stark movie that has become one of the most successful documentaries in U.S. history.

Mecosta County residents who want to see one of the most talk about movies of the summer can check it out at 7 p.m. Thursday in G. Mennen Williams Auditorium on the campus of Ferris State University. Admission is \$3.

If the scientists featured in the movie are correct, mankind has just 10 years to avert a major catastrophe that could send our entire planet into a tail-spin of epic destruction involving extreme weather, floods, droughts, epidemics and killer heat waves beyond anything we have ever experienced.

Gore's renewed popularity and his 'high-profile book and movie tours -across the United States, have spurred speculation of a White House run in 2008. Gore arrived in Australia last week for the Sydney premiere of the documentary and declared that he is still considering having a second run for the White House, according to a story published in the New York Sun.

"I haven't completely ruled out running for president again in the future, but I don't expect to," the 58-year-old Democrat told reporters.

Addressing the impact of global warming would be best accomplished through the power of the presidency, Gore said, but that making a documentary was the second best way to get the information to the public.

The documentary, which Gore narrates, is critical of America and other industrial countries that refused to adopt the Kyoto Protocol for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

"Each one of us is a cause of global warming, but each one of us can make choices to change that, with the things we buy, the electricity we use, the cars we drive. We can make choices to bring our individual carbon emissions to zero. The solutions are in our hands. We just have to have the determination to make them happen. Are we going to be left behind as the rest of the world moves forward? All of these nations have ratified Kyoto. There are only two advanced nations in the world that have not ratified Kyoto, and we are one of them; the other is Australia," Gore says in the movie. The documentary, of course, has been challenged by critics.

"A general characteristic of Mr. Gore's approach is to assiduously ignore the fact that the earth and its climate are dynamic; they are always changing even without any external forcing. To treat all change as something to fear is bad enough; to do so in order to exploit that fear is much worse," wrote Richard S. Lindzen, the Alfred P. Sloan Professor of Atmospheric Science at MIT, in an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal.

To make up your own mind, see "An Inconvenient Truth" for yourself this week.

Pioneer

September 16 & 17, 2006

Ferris State rebuilds for a football renaissance

Jeff Pierce's football coaching peers, in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, picked Ferris State University sixth in the annual preseason coaches' poll.

That means Pierce and his program, once again, must battle the odds and fight to overcome the latest in a line of adversity.

The head coach, who is now in his 12th year in that capacity with the Bulldogs, has been fighting the odds since he first moved from Sault Ste. Marie to Big Rapids 32 years ago.

"The one thing about it was that there was nothing given to me," said Pierce, who leads his 2-0 Bulldogs into tonight's 7 p.m. contest against Saginaw Valley State University, the fifth-ranked NCAA Division II team in the nation. "I had to come in and work and I had to earn everything that I got to become a member of the football team and to get an education at Ferris State."

Now in his 12th season as head football coach at Ferris State, Pierce has experienced no shortage of triumphs and tragedies during the last three-plus decades.

The man who began his career as a defensive hack for the Bulldogs, and wore Ferris State's crimson and gold colors from 1974-77, graduated from his alma mater in 1979 with a degree in trade-technical teacher education. He started his Ferris State coaching career in 1983 when he coached the junior varsity team under then head coach Nick Coso. He later served as an assistant coach, in different capacities, under Dan Underwood and Keith Otterbein, before he finally caught his big break in May Of 1995.

Following Otterbein's resignation, the former 12-year assistant coach and former player got the job he had long-since coveted: He was named head football coach at Ferris State.

"I never thought that much about becoming the head football coach at Ferris State when I first got here as a player and as a student and even when I first started to coach," said Pierce, whose 2-0 Bulldogs open the home portion of their schedule when they host nationally-ranked Saginaw Valley State at Top Taggart Field. "To be honest, I had not been thinking that far ahead of time. I was, and still am, focused on doing the task that is right in front of me at that time. Whatever I am doing, at a given time, I focus on it and give too percent."

That focused mindset has served Pierce well, both athletically and academically, throughout his life.

"My major goal is to motivate our players and get the most out of every person in the football program. I've been here for a number of years and have experienced the bad times and the good times," Pierce said in a statement he has stuck by over the years during his time at Ferris. "The one thing you must instill in your program is to keep the players focused on what it takes to win a championship."

Winning is exactly what the program did, in particular, during his first five seasons as head coach. It all started in 1995 when the rookie coach made quite the debut as he guided the program to a 12-1 record, a conference championship and to within two wins of a national championship before the run was stopped by North Alabama. It remains the highest football finish in school history. The run continued in 1996 as the team again won a league title and moved on to the quarterfinals of the NCAA Tournament before it was defeated and finished 10-2.

The years 1997 and 1998 were lean ones for the program, but Pierce and his staff bounced back in 1999 to share the conference championship.

Late in the 1990s, however, the scales started to tip. While funding issues exacted a toll, on Ferris State's football program, competitor's like Grand Valley State and Saginaw Valley State have upped the ante with bigger budgets for funding. Those improvements helped the Lakers and Cardinals shift the balance of power in the GLIAC at the start of the new millennium.

BULLDOG FOOTBALL COMES FACE TO FACE WITH ADVERSITY

From there, times became tougher for Pierce and the program and the tough times did not always have to do with football, either.

On Sept. 11, 2001, one of Pierce's former players, Eric Bennett, was one of the victims of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. Bennett, who was a two-year starter at center for the Bulldogs was Executive Vice President of the Alliance Consulting Group, an organization located on the 102nd floor of the first World Trade Center Tower hit by the terrorists.

Bennett, a resident of the New York area, was last heard from as he attempted to evacuate the building.

"This is a tremendous tragedy and puts reality back into the importance of football and life," said Pierce, who reflected on him and his wife, Suzie, raising their own sons: Jason, who is a senior quarterback for Big Rapids High School, and his youngest son, Justin. "Eric was a great person who had really moved up in the business world because of his hard-working approach." "Eric was a part of our Bulldog family," he added. "When something like this happens, it really hits close to home for a lot of people." One year later, tragedy again struck Ferris' program.

Eighteen-year-old Matt Sklom, who joined the Bulldog program after a solid high-school career in Illinois and joined the Ferris program as a walk-on, died after a hit during a routine tackling drill in practice in Big Rapids. Ferris Department of Public Safety and Mecosta County EMS personnel made it to the scene after the report of a football player who had collapsed was taken. Attempts to save Sklom's life proved unsuccessful.

"Matt hadn't been here long - just a few weeks - so I didn't know him well," Pierce said. "What I saw in Matt was a good kid who worked hard and gave his all to playing football here at Ferris."

Teammates were shaken by the incident as many of them watched it unfold.

Bulldog co-captain and senior defensive end Bo Moore echoed the coach's sentiments.

"Matt never took a day off, even as a red-shirted freshman," said Bo Moore, who was a co-captain and teammate of Sklom's. "He was so happy to be a part of this team, and I was really looking forward to seeing how he would turn out as a player."

Less than two years later, tragedy struck again.

Football player Ben Willard died May 27, 2004 as a result of injuries he sustained during an automobile accident near his hometown of Jackson.

The coaches and players attended Willard's funeral as a team.

Other vehicle accidents, during the last few years, have caused serious injuries to former Bulldog players Jason Feasel (during the summer of 2003) and Jim Bourdlais (Jan. 15).

Feasel was paralyzed in a motorcycle accident while Bourdlais also was paralyzed as the result of an automobile accident. Both have undergone therapy and continue to undergo therapy with hopes of someday walking again.

This preseason, Pierce had to deal with rape allegations in the case of junior-college recruit Eddie Scott, who was playing junior-college football in California. The issue brought national headlines to Ferris in spite of the fact Scott had never once stepped foot on campus or even qualified for admission to the university.

"We've had our share of adversity over the years, with so many of the things " that have happened, but the one thing that has kept us together, I believe, is the character of the people who are in this football program and at this university," said Pierce, who has leaned heavily, over the years, on his wife. Suzie, as a rock of support. "We've had our share of tough times, but we've all pulled together and staved strong, as a group, and that character has really been the strength of the people we have here."

Character is what people see in Pierce even as the program's record has hovered just above 500 at 32-33 since it was 7-3 during the 1999 co-championship season.

FERRIS STATE MAINTAINS CONFIDENCE IN PIERCE

Pierce has continued to work hard and remain positive.

"First of all, that shows the resiliency of Jeff and the tremendous character he has," said Tom Kirinovic, Ferris State's athletics director.

"He has been able to handle all of the tragedies, but still be able to lead our players and still set a great example for them. He has been able to survive all of that and keep the program together."

People feel they know where they stand with Pierce.

"I like the fact that Jeff is an honest person, he is a trustworthy person and you always know where you stand with him," said Matt McCarthy, Ferris State's offensive coordinator, who was a starter quarterback, as a player, under Pierce in the late 1990s. "He treats you with respect and he tells you exactly how he feels and exactly what's on his mind."

Current players feel the same way.

"Coach Pierce tells you what you need to hear and he tells it to you honestly," starting quarterback Ryan Kaul said. "He tells you things honestly because he believes in you and because he wants you to be the best that you can be."

Other players agreed.

"Coach Pierce is cool," wide receiver Robert Miller said. "He has an open-door policy and you always feel comfortable that you can come to him and say what you need to say and know that he is going to listen and talk back to you honestly."

Pierce knows that the boosters, fans and alumni want to see winning football at Ferris State, but the veteran coach says no one wants to win more than the people who are in the program right now.

"There's pressure but there's always pressure," Pierce said. "We know our fans and our alumni want to win and, believe me, as much as they want to win we want to win a lot more than that. ... We're working hard and we've taken some strides with the fund-raising we've done and we feel like we're moving in the right direction."

"We'll certainly learn a lot when we step out on the field against Saginaw Valley."

The Grand Rapids Press

September 19, 2006

Brewster trying out today with Broncos

GRAND RAPIDS -- Carlton Brewster will be given a tryout today with the Denver Broncos, and the former NCAA Division II All-American wide receiver/return specialist isn't planning on a trip back to Grand Rapids anytime soon.

Brewster is the former standout at Creston High School and Ferris State University. He signed a free-agent contract April 30 with the Cleveland Browns, and enjoyed a promising preseason camp with them before being traded Aug. 22 to the Green Bay Packers in exchange for much-needed secondary help.

He was cut by the Packers 11 days after his arrival in Green Bay, and has waited for a call from another NFL team.

"The Broncos called my agent last Thursday and told him they had film of my two preseason games (one with both the Browns and Packers) and liked what they saw in me as a receiver and return man," Brewster said before boarding a Monday flight at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport.

"I'm just happy for the chance to get back on a field and compete again. I know I can play in the NFL and, at the very least, make someone's practice squad. "I have no plans on coming back until after the season is over."

But Brewster will face a challenge. The Broncos on Monday signed former Pittsburgh receive returner Quincy Morgan to a one-year deal and cut wide receiver Charlie Adams.

In Green Bay's final preseason game, against Tennessee, Brewster had two receptions for 52 yards, including a 46-yard catch. He also had a 32-yard kickoff return and two punt returns worth 3 yards.

Denver's current kick returner is backup wide receiver David Kircus. The former Detroit Lion also is a Division 11 All-American, from Grand Valley State.

The Grand Rapids Press

September 19, 2006

College testing wouldn't be smart

Congress should ignore portion of federal report pushing standardized exams for universities.

A federal commission's call for standardized testing at state universities is not a smart idea.

Higher education doesn't require a government accountability system like K-12. Congress should reject this portion of the group's recent report, and pursue more sensible recommendations regarding access, cost and competition. Last September, Education Secretary Margaret Spellings charged the Commission on the Future of Higher Education with looking into key aspects of higher education.

The report does a good job of highlighting problems facing colleges and universities such as costs outpacing family incomes and problems navigating financial aid bureaucracy. But the push for accountability through tests is an unnecessary intrusion.

A complex grading system of exams, term papers and entrance tests for graduate school is already in place. International students are drawn to our institutions of higher education because their quality is arguably the best in the world. State legislatures and boards already oversee public universities. That's where the responsibility needs to be. Besides that, colleges and universities have to meet standards to get accredited to be eligible for state funds.

Improving kindergarten through 12th grade education should be the government's focus. A strong case hasn't been made for an expanded federal role in higher education. However, the government should give serious consideration to some good recommendations.

The report calls for increases in Pell grants to help relieve financial barriers to college. The commission also proposes restructuring the current financial aid system to make it less confusing and more efficient. The 19-member commission suggests increased funding for research in areas such as science and technology to ensure competitiveness.

The commission also rightly urges K-12 school systems, state lawmakers and colleges to work closer together to "create a seamless pathway between high school and college."

The report raises some key issues that can be a launching point for a national dialogue that engages students and families, lawmakers, businesses and the academic community.

But standardized testing shouldn't be the future of higher education. Universities and colleges are accountable to their states. That's where improvements need to occur.

Pioneer

September 21, 2006

CBS Sports producer to speak at Ferris

BIG RAPIDS - Lance Barrow, coordinating producer for CBS Sports, will be speaking at 7 p.m. Wednesday in G. Mennen Williams Auditorium to conclude the University's annual Career Tactics Workshop - Gain the Professional Edge. The presentation is open to the public.

Barrow, a nine-time Emmy Award winner for his work on the Masters, the NCA. Men's Basketball Championship, the Daytona 500 and the NFL will share, with humor and candor, what it took to go from golf spotter to CBS producer. He will also interject stories and secrets about the sports industry.

"The campus community is invited to hear Lance speak on his career accomplishments." said Brendalee McCarthy, College of Business internship coordinator. "His presentation will provide an entertaining evening."

Barrow joined CBS in 1975 being named lead game and coordinating producer for the NFL on CBS in 2004. Barrow attended Abilene Christian University in Texas, where he played football and baseball. He earned a communications degree in 1978. He lives in Colleyville, Texas.

This event is sponsored by the College of Business Internship Office, Student Employment and Career Services, and Alumni Relations.

Pioneer

September 22, 2006

The party is over at FSU

Recent crime statistics backup what police are saying: "Kids know not to party in Big Rapids."

BIG RAPIDS - Whether the students are calmer or the police are tougher, Ferris State University just isn't as wild as it used to be - at least according to crime reports.

In the past 10 years criminal Investigations on the campus have been cut in half according to Marty Bledsoe, director of Ferris' Department of Public Safety.

"It's hard to say what all went into that, but we can say that when we have a more responsive community in general, including student affairs and housing, it can have to do with crime control in the surrounding city," Bledsoe said.

Since 1995, criminal investigations - which range from petty crimes to felonies - have decreased 1,175 to 621 last year.

"It's really important to under- on campus stand that we don't just have to be and in the reactive to crime but we can be pro- area around active and in the community doing Ferris State other things," Bledsoe said. "It's a University snowball effect."

With Ferris at a record number of students -- 12,578 up by 263 from last year - things could have gone the other way, Bledsoe said.

"There has been a lot that has gone into this, from good communication between the city and the campus to how we're dealing with academic standards for entry and the good works of people identifying what we want a good community to be," Bledsoe said.

But there aren't fewer calls for service just on the college campus, the surrounding area also has seen a decrease, said Frank West, director of Big Rapids' Department of Public Safety.

"Kids know not to party in Big Rapids," West said.

In the past decade the city of Big Rapids has passed various ordinances that West said have played a role in decreasing crime. West said that a nuisance ordinance package passed in 1995, which defined a nuisance party and its attendants, made a big difference in fewer calls for police assistance.

"They've really gone a long way in helping get rid of some of the problems we used to have," West said. "We used to have parties with 200 kids and it's just not like that any more."

While more crime statistics have gone down - like the number of calls for service dropping from 6,000 in 2000 to 4,670 in 2005 - some, such as, alcohol enforcement, have gone up.

According to West, liquor law enforcement have increased 127 cases in 2000 to 271 cases in 2005.

"Because of grants we have been able do more with things like this (alcohol enforcement)," West said. "And it's really gone a long way."

While both the campus and city public safety departments have done a lot of work in cracking down on crime, both Bledsoe and West said it's a team effort.

"This isn't just something we have done or Ferris has done or the county, it's everything coming together and it has been highly successful," West said.