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The Farmington Observer

June 5, 2003

Farmington Hills officer Bledsoe moves on to Ferris State

Martin Bledsoe started in the police business at a good time nearly 31 years ago.

When he started with the Farmington Township Police Department in 1972, federal grants supplied tuition money for officers seeking higher- education while working part-time, Bledsoe said.

He put that incentive to good use.

Through the years, the assistant police chief managed to earn his associate's and bachelor's degrees, then obtained his master's degree in public administration in 1991.

"There was a push to change the way officers do their jobs," he said.

Learning more and passing along that knowledge to his co-workers has been a staple in his career with the Farmington Hills Police Department.

That's evident in his longtime participation in the Michigan Chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates, of which he currently serves as president.

The assistant police chief will be retiring in early July and moving into a different role as director of public safety at Ferris State University near Big Rapids, Mich.

"Looking back, there is no doubt in my mind I made the right decision," Bledsoe said. "I love what I do"

He admitted that putting his life on the line, dealing firsthand with some of the ugliest aspects of the human condition is part of the job. Holding on to the good he can do has kept him grounded.

"It's a huge blessing to have this effect on people's lives," he said.

"I've been fortunate in the promotions I've had, but I took those opportunities when they came forward."

Bledsoe for years has organized the department's annual 10K fun for muscular dystrophy, something with which he's proud to be associated.

As a kid, Bledsoe was often spotted talking with police officers in his neighborhood. Hearing about their jobs fascinated him, he said.

So there was little question to his career direction after high school.

He was just 19 when he started as a cadet with Farmington Township police, based on the encouragement of his girlfriend at the time, Marge, who, just two years later, became his wife.

The couple, who enjoy vacationing in their Upper Peninsula cabin, have two grown children, Danny, 23, a Blackhawk helicopter pilot, and Karyn, 20, a student at Central Michigan University.

Bledsoe was promoted to officer in 1973; sergeant in 1979; lieutenant in 1986; inspector in 1996 and finally to assistant chief in 1997. He now oversees the operations bureau.

He said he was lucky to work in a community where the residents support their police.

Leaving Farmington Hills will be bittersweet, he added, "I love the people here, but life comes with changes." Police Chief William Dwyer said Bledsoe has an outstanding reputation in and outside the department. "Ferris' gain is our loss," he said. "We appreciate all his efforts and dedication throughout the years. He's a true professional."

Bledsoe said he's encouraging folks to send their kids to Ferris.

"I'll look after them and love them like they're my own," he said with a laugh.

Bledsoe said as he leaves he likes to think he's made some difference in community.

"The highest compliment I've been given is when people say I'm a man of integrity."

The city will be hosting a retirement ceremony for Bledsoe at 2 p.m. June 27 at City Hall.

Birmingham Eccentric

Thursday, June 19, 2003

Commercial projects lauded

Most folks think residential when the topic is real estate. But don't forget that we also spend a great deal of time in work environments, entertainment venues and on infrastructure that gets us from here to there.

Good designs, quality construction and landscaping can make a big difference in quality of life.

Eight projects this year were selected as construction and design award winners by the Engineering Society of Detroit.

Judges evaluated effective teamwork among the owner, designer and contractor; quality of overall design and construction; unique engineering solutions; and innovative construction techniques.

Judges also examined sensitive land-use applications, and social and economic significance.

Here's a brief summary of the winners.

- Library for information, technology and education, Big Rapids

Owner: Ferris State University

Designer: Neumann/ Smith & Associates, Southfield; Contractor: Granger Construction, Lansing.

Efforts were made to identify the needs of all potential users – students, faculty, the university and the greater community. The 185,000 –square – foot building, budgeted at \$40 million, houses 440,000 volumes.

A state-of-the-art heating, ventilating and air condition system was installed to preserve the collections, maintain optimal computer functions and minimize energy usage. Windows abound.

This article also included a description about the other winners: Ford Field, Detroit; Michigan Hall of Justice, Lansing; Childcare and wellness center, Vance, Ala.; Vehicle performance integration center, Milford; Bridge Street bridge replacement (on the north side of Eight Mile west of Telegraph,) Southfield; Garfield tunnel interceptor, Clinton Township; and Historic category – Cadillac Place, Detroit.

The Grand Rapids Press

Thursday, July 3, 2003

Kendall design grad wins seat in a fantasy land of furniture

Thursday, July 03, 2003

By Rob Kirkbride
The Grand Rapids Press

Krista Tunstall has a strong background in furniture design, but nothing could prepare her for the 175 rooms of furniture she found at the Winterthur museum near Wilmington, Del.

The spring graduate of the furniture design program at Kendall College of Art and Design is like a kid in a candy store.

"It's a bit overwhelming right now," said Tunstall, 33, who is spending three weeks at Winterthur, one of the pre-eminent furniture museums in the country, as its summer resident. "It's just one room after another, all filled with furniture."

She is the first Kendall graduate to be tapped for the prestigious position in which she will study some of the 85,000 American antiques and 5,000 pieces of furniture.

"This is the experience of a lifetime," she said.

Paula Fogarty, president of Kindel Furniture Co. and a member of the Kendall Foundation Board, helped secure the residency.

Fogarty and Kindel have tight ties with Winterthur (pronounced "Wintertour").

Fogarty was a research intern for a former curator of furniture, Nancy E. Richards, and assisted in compiling information for the book "New England Furniture at Winterthur: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods," published in 1997.

Kindel also makes exacting and elaborate reproductions of Winterthur furniture.

Tunstall considers Fogarty a mentor.

"She was essential in getting me this residency," Tunstall said. "And she has had a strong influence on me. (Her ideas) have had a very profound effect on the way I want to design."

And she hopes the furniture at Winterthur have an impact on the way she designs as well. She has hands-on access to the extensive collection of furniture, assembled by Winterthur's founder, Henry Francis du Pont.

Tunstall said she leans toward modern furniture design but hopes to gain inspiration from the classics at Winterthur.

"As a designer, everything you're exposed to leaves its mark," she said. "I want to (focus) on construction and look at a more purist sense of traditional style."

Fogarty said there is no greater or more important repository of American furniture in the world.

"From my perspective, I want to make this an ongoing program for Kendall furniture design students to enable the integration of technical skills of Kendall students with the rich history of American furniture design," she said.

Tunstall's residency is an example of Kendall's mission to prepare students for careers as professional artists and designers, said Kendall President Oliver Evans.

"Paula Fogarty's efforts as a Kendall Foundation Board member and as a leader in the furniture industry assure enrichment for our students," he said.

"I think there is no better experience for a furniture design major than Winterthur."

Although she always has appreciated fine furniture, Tunstall's background is as diverse as her designs.

Her hobbies include snowboarding, wakeboarding, skateboarding and ice hockey.

Tunstall will bring what she learns back to Grand Rapids, where she plans to work as an independent furniture designer.

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The Pioneer

Monday, July 7, 2003

Community service is a joy to Bulldog hockey team

BIG RAPIDS - The coveted Central Collegiate Hockey Association regular-season championship trophy means a lot to the Ferris State program.

The Bulldogs, who went wire-to-wire in first-place in the CCHA, have savored since March the school's first-ever championship. Head coach Bob Daniels and his players have enjoyed the opportunity to share their successes of the past season with as many fans as possible. Ferris was impressive en route to a best-ever record of 3110-1 overall - including 22-5-1 in the CCHA standings.

After collecting the CCHA championship trophy, Daniels was all too receptive when a group of his players asked to take the trophy to a few area elementary schools for young kids to enjoy. Riverview and Brookside elementary schools were two of the institutions a contingent of Ferris State hockey players, including Chris Kunitz, Nick Field and Trevor Large toted the trophy.

Daniels thinks it's a positive reflection on the players, the program and Ferris State University when the school's athletes can give something back to the community. Of course, with the busy schedules that so many of the FSU athletes keep, it's not always easy, but it's usually a rewarding experience in the end. That certainly was the case for Kunitz, Field and Large when they joined Ferris women's basketball player Molly Potvin this past spring at Riverview.

"I think it's a good thing and we had a real positive response from the kids at Riverview and then later at Brookside," said Daniels. "The thing about it was that I had absolutely no part in setting the whole thing up ... it was something done totally by the players.

"The players came to me and asked if they could take the trophy with them to one of the elementary schools ... I think it's a great thing that the players are willing to do those things as they fit into their schedules."

One of the best things about the visits the athletes took to the local elementary schools was the message they delivered.

Even though so many of the kids sought autographs on posters and T-shirts, several photo opportunities and more from Kunitz, Field, Large and Potvin - the players delivered a consistent message when questioned by the kids and their teachers.

"Education is so important," said Field, a senior who played his final season this past winter for the Bulldogs and graduated. "Even though we're out there playing hockey we all know that we still have to concentrate on education ... we have to do it not only to stay eligible, but also so we can have a career when hockey is over."

Daniels would not mind seeing more of his players and other Ferris State athletes in the Big Rapids community-particularly working with the younger kids.

"I think it's a good thing as long as it's not something that becomes too taxing on the players and takes them away from their academic commitments or time that they may need to themselves or to be with their teammates for a team function.

"But, it's definitely a positive thing to have them out there."

Ferris opens the 2003-04 season officially on Oct. 10 in Kalamazoo against Western Michigan in a CCHA contest in what always proves a spirited rivalry. The Bulldogs are at home for the first time the next day, Oct. 11, to host the Broncos on the back end of a home-and-home series.

FSU will host its annual Crimson and Gold intrasquad scrimmage on Sept. 27 and Windsor, in an exhibition, on Oct 4.

Summer months not all about vacation for Ferris State athletes

BIG RAPIDS - As players leave, following the finish of winter semester, they do not depart completely empty-handed of football responsibilities.

Since fall football preseason conditioning and practice begin just about one month from now for Ferris State University, like so many other programs around the nation, coaches want to ensure players maintain an adequate level of fitness during the summer. And, while it's tempting for players to spend a lot of time on the beach, eating ice cream and further enjoying all of the other aspects youth college-aged students enjoyed, they are still expected to devote time to fitness.

Since the coaching staff has a limited amount of time to prepare the Bulldogs for their season opener on the road against Hillsdale College on Sept. 6, every day and every week of preseason is precious. While FSU head coach Jeff Pierce does concede that he has a couple dozen of his players on campus this summer, that means that more than 80 other players are back in their hometowns.

"When the players leave here for the summer they leave with a strength and conditioning program that they are supposed to follow throughout the summer," said Pierce, who has never been one to baby-sit his players. The veteran FSU coach says it's easy to find out which of his players worked hard at football during the off season and which others used the last three months as vacation time. "Due to NCAA regulations, we are not allowed to conduct practices during the summer.

"We have about 25 guys who have remained on campus and will spend a lot of time working out on their own and following their off season workout program.

"One of the reasons those guys are staying here in town is because they want push each other to get better for the upcoming season."

"Also, a lot of the kids who are staying up here are taking care of some academic requirements and are working in town as well."

Guys like Derek Fudge, Vito Ciaramellano, Jesse Porter, Tom Marsan, Luke Piepkow and Andy Thwaites are among those who can be seen around Big Rapids from time to time working, working out or taking classes. The fact that so many of those guys have remained on campus to work is not something that has gone unnoticed by Pierce and the coaching staff.

"It shows a lot of self motivation and determination on their parts," he said.

Pierce hopes those who are away from Big Rapids are showing the same attributes.

"We have 75 to 80 guys who are not here on the campus and are out elsewhere," he started to say of players who help comprise a team that finished 5-5 overall last season and 4-5 in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, but returns a lot of experience for 2003.

"They have to be working hard because it comes down to self motivation and determination on their parts as well."

Eisler takes helm at Ferris State

BIG RAPIDS - Incoming Ferris President David Eisler credits former president William Sederburg with the easy transition he's experiencing now

Eisler took over the university's top position on Monday, and so far, he says, it's been smooth sailing.

"Right now I'm just settling into the job," said Eisler. "There are all sorts of activities I'm involved with right now, everything from meeting and greeting people on campus to settling into our new house."

The transition into the position has so far been an easy one, Eisler added.

"Bill Sederburg did a beautiful job," said Eisler. "He left the university in excellent shape. And Scott Hill-Kennedy did a super job as interim president. Along with the trustees, who have been helping Scott, we're in great shape."

In addition to "pressing the flesh," Eisler spent Monday attending a new employee orientation.

"I went to the new employee orientation just like any new employee," he said. "I learned a lot about the university. Then I spent part of the day learning how to make the computer work."

Eisler's plans for the immediate future center on getting to know the community and unpacking.

"I'd like to cut down the number of boxes at the house by a couple hundred," he said.

As to the future of the university, Eisler says he envisions spreading the Ferris campus across the country, at least in a virtual sense.

"There are always going to be changes for the university," he said. "That's part of what we do. We do an excellent job at what we do. I don't know of another institution in the country that has the mix of programs that Ferris has. It's very special and unique.

"We need to deliver these programs to people anywhere, anytime all over the country. That's just one of the things we're discussing."

Eisler added that plans for a "virtual university" are still very much in the tentative, planning stages.

Eisler's wife, Patsy, is a Michigan native, hailing from South Haven, which is one of the reasons he's so excited to be moving here.

"My wife and I met in Michigan," said Eisler. "This is like coming home for her."

"There's a wonderful peace about a community this size, where relationships are close and supportive. You know the people, and when you're walking down the street people are friendly."

Eisler was chosen by the board from among three final candidates vying for the position.

He was previously provost, vice president for academic affairs and professor of music at Weber State University.

The Pioneer

Wednesday, July 9, 2003

FSU's soccer roster could shrink in coming seasons

BIG RAPIDS - Thank goodness for the wide-reaching communicative powers of e-mail and the Internet.

Having just started, officially July 1, new Ferris State women's soccer coach Melissa Eging has spent a good chunk of her time working to get to know the players she will work with this fall. Considering many players from the squad scatter all across Michigan and elsewhere in the Midwest, the task is a challenge for Eging.

"I talked to most all of them on the telephone or by e-mail ... e-mail is great," Eging said. "During my interview, here, there were about eight to 10 of them who were involved in the interview process. Tom (Kirinovic, the FSU Athletics Director) made sure that there were a number of them involved in the hiring process."

Eging, who takes over this fall for the departed Pete Watkins, has long since rolled up her sleeves and is ready to get to work. Her task is to take over the 4-yearold program Watkins helped build. During that time, Ferris is 23-36-7 overall and 10-23-4 in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Last fall, the Bulldogs finished 7-10-3 overall and 3-4-2 in the league. The seven wins in 2002 represents the third-highest single-season win total in the history of the program.

Emily Rogers, the team's three-time Most Valuable Player, led the way as she paced the Bulldogs with 11 goals, five assists and 27 points. Rogers, a native of Traverse City, was just a junior last fall for the Bulldogs. She is Ferris' career scoring leader with 81 points on 32 goals and 17 assists in 52 career matches. Another junior who enjoyed a solid season in 2002 was Saginaw native Kristin Bator, who played defender. Bator started 18 of 20 matches this fall. Belmont native Holly Alexander, another junior last season, earned the team Coaches Award for leadership. Alexander started 18 of 19 matches. Last fall, Ferris State had 90 players on the roster, but Eging does not anticipate she will have that many players in future seasons.

"One of the things I'm probably going to look at is the roster size for the team," Eging said.

"Pete kept a really large roster, but I don't think in the future I'll be keeping quite so many players on the team. I think the idea will be to keep a smaller roster that will emphasize a top group of committed players.

"A lot of times when you have larger rosters it's tough on the players who are not playing so much and that can, at times, lead to frustration."

The Bulldog soccer team tentatively is scheduled to begin its 2003 fall season on the road in Rensselaer, Ind., against St. Joseph's College on Aug. 29 at 5 p.m.

Ferris players hit books and weights during summer

BIG RAPIDS - Stephanie Benear, Bridget Horwitz, Sharon Smith, Lucy DeMartin and Ann Platz are members of the Ferris State women's basketball team on campus.

In addition to classes the athletes are taking, the summer months also are a time of hard work in the weight room and on the basketball court.

It's further evidence the summer is not a: ' vacation time for the players.

According to FSU head coach Tracey Fisk, it's a good thing to have so many players remaining in town and on campus for the summer. Fisk, and her players, would love nothing more than to improve on the team's solid 15-11 record last season.

"Right now, the players are spending four days a week working out on their own - either in the weight room or on the basketball court," said the coach who led Ferris to the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournament for the fourth time in five seasons. "They're doing a lot of running, jumping and ab workouts.

"Also, the players are doing plyometrics and chin-ups as well among other things," added Fisk, who coached the Bulldogs to a 10-8 record in the North Division of the GLIAC - a stacked division that includes Lake Superior; State, Northern Michigan Grand Valley State and Michigan Tech. "They're working pretty; hard in the weight room and hopefully that hard work in the summer will pay off in the winter."

Of those not on campus, playing, lifting and running are still important. This year's: incoming freshman class: Kristin Reinhart, a point guard from East Lansing; Hailey Potter, a forward from Temperance; Audrey Thwing, a front court player from Davison; and Lucie Cenkova, a junior college transfer from Illinois Central Community College, comprise the team's class of newcomers Cenkova is a native of the Czech Republic, who provides the team with rare international flavor.

The players also engage in pick-up games; from time to time as another way of getting to know each other.

In addition to participating in pick-up games, classes and workouts, the veteran players also will be on campus to work Ferris' camps - team and individual sessions.

The Ferris State women's basketball team hosts a day camp (July 28-31), a team camp (July 26-27) and a team shootout (July 18, for freshman and junior varsity teams; July 19, for all teams: and July 20, for varsity squads).

Accident saddens Ferris State athletics

BIG RAPIDS - Jason Feasel, a former Ferris State football player, was reported in "fair" condition Thursday morning at Spectrum Downtown Grand Rapids.

The 6-foot-4, 268-pound defensive tackle, who suffered numerous broken bones in his arms and legs during a Monday evening accident, faces the high probability of lower-body paralysis and a long road for rehabilitation. Feasel, 23 of Ceresco, was injured when his motorcycle was hit by a sports-utility vehicle driven by Barbara Jean Kirvari, 53 of Big Rapids. The accident occurred at the intersection of State and Pere Marquette in Big Rapids. Feasel's motor cycle was headed southbound on State when the northbound vehicle attempted to turn. Because turn the opposite way the driver of the SUV told Big Rapids Department of Public Safety she did not see the bike until just before the collision occurred.

It's the latest in what has been a difficult last 12 months at Ferris State University, according to Athletics Director Tom Kirinovic. It's also the second major tragedy to strike the football program in the last year. On Sept. 11, freshman football player Matt Sklom died following a collision as part of a routine tackling drill on the FSU campus.

"It's really sad to think of a kid this young having to go through something like this," said Kirinovic. "Our hearts go out to Jason and to the members of his family."

"Even in the midst of this tragedy, we've already talked about some things that we, as a university, can do to assist the family during this time."

Feasel, a starter at defensive tackle the last two seasons for the Bulldogs, played as a senior this past fall. A former high school star at Battle Creek Harper Creek High School, compiled 73 tackles and tied for the team lead with 10 sacks.

Kirinovic said that FSU football head coach Jeff Pierce, who was on vacation this week, along with defensive coordinator Duane Wilson, have spent time with Feasel and his family at the Grand Rapids hospital.

"Duane was there with (Feasel) the night it happened," Kirinovic said.

The plan is eventually to transfer Feasel to another hospital that specializes in rehabilitation for paralysis following his treatment at Spectrum Downtown.

Kirinovic and head Ferris State trainer Dave Lucey have heard reasons to feel optimistic. The FSU athletics director said that Feasel's breathing has improved and that he has some muscle tone in his lower abdomen. But, in spite of some of these positive signs, Kirinovic believes the road to recovery will be a long one for Feasel, who majored in small business management at Ferris State.

"He probably will never walk again," Kirinovic said. "But, the more use he has of his arms and his hands the better off he will be. All of his arms and legs are broken, but those can heal with time. Once that has happened we're hopeful he should regain some pretty good movement."

"We're hopeful that he can take some of the values he has learned through athletics - values of hard work, determination and a never-say-die attitude - and apply that to this situation and keep fighting."

Kirinovic says that the FSU Athletics Department is planning to get in touch with Tim Pendell, a former sports information director at Ferris (1976-83), who is Senior Director of Community Affairs with the Detroit Lions. Kirinovic would like to get Feasel and his family in touch with former Lion Mike Utley.

Utley was injured on Nov. 7, 1991 during a football game and fractured the sixth and seventh cervical vertebrae. Since his injury, the former Lion lineman has been an inspiration fighting through rehabilitation with the hope of someday walking again.

Utley lives in Washington State and has improved to the point that he is capable of living on his own without assistance.

"Mike Utley's story could prove an inspiration in this time of tragedy," Kirinovic said.

The former Lion established the Mike Utley Foundation. The mission of the foundation is: "Finding a cure for paralysis."

The Pioneer

Friday, July 11, 2003

New president of Ferris State is on the job

David Eisler is now on the job as the 17th president of Ferris State University.

Sporting an assemblage of music performance, theory and history degrees from Yale and the University of Michigan, Eisler is busy orienting himself to Ferris after serving as provost and vice president for academic affairs at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah.

While Eisler's road to the presidency is not lined with a parcel of administrative and educational degrees, people should remember that his predecessor, Bill Sederburg, traveled the non-traditional road to the top, as well. He was a politician who used his unique skills to revise Ferris from declining enrollment and programming.

Sederburg proved that you don't have to have a stack of the traditional degrees to be a good college president. Eisler obviously impressed a large screening committee and the university's board of trustees as another man capable of traveling the non-traditional road to success as a college president. He impressed us, as well.

We welcome him to our community and hope he can follow in the footsteps of his predecessor.

Welcome to Big Rapids, Dave. Here's hoping you're around for a long, long time.

The Grand Rapids Press

Friday, July 11, 2003

Tuition likely to climb 9.9%

Friday, July 11, 2003

By Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood
The Grand Rapids Press

The Ferris State University Board of Trustees is expected to approve a 9.9 percent tuition hike, and a 6 percent room and board increase for the fall semester.

The increase would require a first-year student to pay \$6,044 for tuition and \$6,326 for room and board. The \$12,370 total is \$902 more than students paid last year.

The board also is expected to vote on a separate proposal to raise tuition 5.7 percent for studio courses and 11.7 percent for general education classes at FSU's Kendall College of Art and Design. Since Kendall students take a mix of studio and general-education courses, the average tuition increase would be 7.3 percent.

If approved, Kendall students will pay \$9,816, or \$666 more to attend classes this fall.

Ferris administrators say the proposed increases are necessary to help make up for an anticipated 10 percent cut in state funding.

Last year, money from tuition and fees made up 52.4 percent of FSU's general fund operating revenues. Next year, administrators project students will shoulder an estimated 57.9 percent piece of this funding pie.

"I don't want to gouge young people," Ferris board Chairman Bruce Parsons said. "We're doing our absolute best to keep those rates down. I think 9.9 is very fair."

Parsons said the challenge has been to hold down costs without letting the academic quality slip.

The university budget proposal was prepared before Ferris President David Eisler arrived on campus Monday for his first day on the job, but he said he thinks the budget planners "made a very good decision" on the tuition issue. He said the increases are necessary to keep up academically.

But Eisler said he does have concerns about rapidly increasing tuition costs.

"It does worry me a lot," he said. "I don't know anyone who wants to raise tuition. Once we raise tuition, it's not going down. I've got to get out and find new funding sources to take some of this burden off the students. We're going to work on scholarships."

In the meantime, Yangchen Sherpa, a 20-year-old Ferris student from Nepal, is worried about the impact the tuition increase will have on her family's budget.

"It's already very expensive -- especially for international students," Sherpa said.

International students pay double the amount it costs a Michigan resident to go to Ferris. For her first semester the social work major said her parents paid \$5,642 just for tuition.

Parsons said administrators considered dropping the international tuition rates from 200 percent the in-state rate, down to 175 percent.

"Unfortunately, because of the budget discussions this year, that got put on the back burner," Parsons said.

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The Grand Rapids Press

Friday, July 11, 2003

Ferris considers student housing downtown

Friday, July 11, 2003

By Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood
The Grand Rapids Press

The Ferris State University Board of Trustees could decide today create student housing and increase the physical presence of Kendall College of Art and Design in downtown Grand Rapids.

Board members are to consider a plan to partner with Rockford Development Group to provide Ferris and Kendall students with housing options on the 8th and 9th floors of the Commerce Building at 5 Lyon St. NW.

Under the proposal, Rockford Development Group would convert the upper floors to student apartments for at least 48 students beginning in August 2004.

The space would be rented to students for about \$500 a month by Rockford Development. The college would be expected to publicize the housing options to students.

The plan would cost the university nothing as long as the development company is able to earn at least \$250,000 in annual rentals. If rentals plummet, Ferris would reimburse the company.

Ferris also would have the option to buy the property, which is co-owned by Rockford Development and the family of Jim Peterson. The assessed value of the property is about \$1.7 million, according to city records. The agreement would allow Ferris to buy the building for a price between 80 and 85 percent of the appraised market value.

Rockford Development representatives declined to comment on the plan Thursday.

Kendall President Oliver Evans said the availability of housing will help the college attract students.

"We always thought that growth would be tied to housing," he said.

Last fall, 856 students were enrolled at Kendall. Evans said he expects about 900 students to enroll for fall. He said he would like to see the college grow to about 1,000 students.

Evans said demand will ultimately determine whether or not the college decides to buy the building.

The board also is expected to vote on a memorandum of understanding among Ferris, Grand Rapids city government and the Grand Rapids Art Museum. The deal lays groundwork for Ferris to eventually acquire the historic building that once served as the U.S. Post Office and Federal Building at 155 N. Division Ave.

College administrators have been eyeing the building since the museum announced plans to leave it for a \$50 million structure they hope to build on downtown's Wurzburg block.

The building would give Kendall additional space for classrooms, offices, studios and gallery exhibits.

Parsons said initial estimates show Ferris would have to spend between \$8 and \$10 million to renovate the building, but stressed plans were still developing.

"While we have this agreement between us, there are a number of ifs," he said.

In May, Grand Rapids city commissioners approved an agreement to give the art museum building to Ferris and Kendall.

The agreement will seek the federal government's permission to convey the building to Ferris after the art museum moves to a \$50 million facility planned in downtown's Wurzburg Block.

The federal government gave the building to the city in the late 1970s, but retained the right to determine who will own it next.

Susan Shannon, Grand Rapids' economic development director, praised Kendall for bringing housing and increased student services downtown.

Housing increases evening activities and the student services contribute to the "high-tech environment" city planners want to see.

"It's very supportive of our overall economic strategies for downtown," she said.

"To bring in more housing is one of our key strategies for creating a more vibrant downtown. One of the other things that we've been trying to do is support the renovation of vacant buildings to new uses."

Press reporter Cami Reister contributed to this article.

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The Pioneer

Weekend, July 12 & 13, 2003

Ferris tuition on rise

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris State University Board of Trustees Friday approved a 9.9 percent increase in tuition for full-time undergraduate students and a 6 percent increase in room and board costs for this fall.

The increases bring the cost for full-time, instate undergraduate students attending Ferris to \$6,044 per year and \$6,326 for room and board. The \$12,370 total is \$902 more than students paid last year.

Tuition for in-state graduate students will increase approximately 7.6 percent or \$22 per-credit-hour from \$287 to \$309, while the cost of tuition for in-state students enrolled in Ferris' first professional programs (optometry and pharmacy) will increase 7.5 percent or \$400, from \$10,600 annually to \$11,400. The annual cost for full-time, in-state undergraduate students attending Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids will increase 7.3 percent or \$666, from \$9,150 annually to \$9,816. The tuition for graduate students remains the same.

The increase in tuition is necessary to help make up for a considerable reduction in state funding for Ferris, according to the board, while the hike in room and board covers rising operating costs and deferred maintenance.

"The decision to raise tuition was very difficult especially since we are deeply committed to holding down costs for our students. However, in these difficult economic times when Ferris faces a \$5.5 million reduction in state funding, we had to find a way to balance 'the budget and still provide a high quality, affordable education to our students,'" said university President David Eisler.

"We are very mindful that with an increase in tuition comes a responsibility for us to provide our students with appropriate advising and counseling support so they can graduate on time and within their budgets," Eisler said, adding that he is pleased the amount of need- and merit-based scholarship assistance available to students has been increased in response to the rising cost of tuition.

While the increase in tuition will help Ferris address its budget shortfall, the university also has had to look internally to respond to its fiscal challenges.

Voluntary severance plans and voluntary time reduction opportunities, consolidation of operating units, and evaluation of the overall operating efficiency of the university have been instituted in the past several months.

The board also approved a Bachelor of Applied Science in Digital Animation and Game Design degree. The program, which is the only one of its kind in Michigan, will be offered through Ferris' College of Professional and Technological Studies beginning this fall.

The four-year, 129-credit multidisciplinary degree includes course work in programming, design, theatre, project management and business. The program was developed in coopera-

tion with Grand Rapids Community College so that associate technology degree-seeking students can easily ladder to Ferris' four-year digital animation and game design degree program.

To address the current nursing shortage, the board approved a Master of Science in Nursing degree with concentrations in nursing education, nursing administration and nursing informatics. This is the first master's degree program to be offered through Ferris' College of Allied Health Sciences, and students will begin enrolling in Fall 2004.

In other business, the board approved the following:

- A total general fund operating budget recommendation for fiscal year 2003-04, which began July 1, of \$126.2 million for the main campus, Kendall College of Art and Design and the College of Professional and Technological Studies;
- A three-year contract with Consolidated Vendors Corporation of Cadillac that provides guaranteed revenue to the university;
- The renewal of Ferris' student and faculty exchange agreement with Aachen University of Applied Sciences in Germany
- A memorandum of understanding between the university the City of Grand Rapids and the Grand Rapids Art Museum that allows Ferris to eventually acquire the historic federal building at 155 N. Division. The building would give Kendall College of Art and Design and the university's other Grand Rapids programs additional space for classrooms, offices and gallery exhibits and create a greater presence for Ferris in downtown Grand Rapids;
- A preliminary agreement with developers converting the Commerce Building at 5 Lyon St. NW in Grand Rapids to a mixed use facility, including commercial and office space and student residences. Under the proposal, the upper floors of the building would be converted to student apartment units with priority given to Ferris and Kendall students;
- The reappointment of the following board officers for one year terms: Bruce Parsons of Rockford, chair; Greg Patera of Lake Odessa, vice chair; and Olga Dazzo of Lansing, secretary.

As the Jim Crow flies

“Abridged from ‘As the Jim Crow flies’, court art attracts heat but no media light, by Tim Fleck”

Two weeks ago, a couple of lawyers, a client and state District Judge Caroline Baker retired to her empty jury room to try to work out a mediated settlement to a civil lawsuit. One of the attorneys, African-American Ronald Ray, happened to focus on several framed prints hanging on the wall. When he noticed that they all portrayed groups of black people in idyllic antebellum settings, Ray was shocked -- he realized he was looking at what is known in art history circles as Jim Crow art.

(...)

The Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan, is dedicated to educating people about the corrosive effects of such art. Museum policy bans children from viewing the objects in the collection, and even adults are assigned facilitators to explain the contexts of the works.

The Insider e-mailed photos of the paintings in question to David Pilgrim, the museum curator and a Ferris State sociologist. He notes that the question of whether some black people own or like the art has no bearing on its content. In fact, Pilgrim says, black collectors have some of the largest displays of Jim Crow art and often claim it gives them a sense of how far racial relations have advanced.

"I hear that a lot," says Pilgrim. "For our purposes, it wouldn't matter who created, distributed or sold the art. We would be more concerned about what the image is and how it is impacting people."

The fact that the art was immediately removed from Baker's court once it came to the public's attention indicates to Pilgrim that even the judge saw the problem.

"Is it possible that all the people involved can be so innocently naive to the meanings behind these things? In many cases like this, when someone raises the issue, people look at it and decide that [displaying the art] wasn't such a good idea."

While Pilgrim allows that the Baker court pictures are on the mild end of the spectrum of the art in his museum, he does not believe they are appropriate for display in a government building.

"If it's something that belongs in my museum or that I would gladly have in my museum, it's something I would consider racially offensive...I think those things definitely belong not in a jury deliberation room but in a place like mine."

If Bailiff Wright needs a new place to hang his art, The Insider suggests he contact Pilgrim through www.ferris.edu/news/jimcrow.

For the complete article, go to <http://houstonpress.com/issues/2003-07-10/insider.html/1/index.html>

The Grand Rapids Press

Saturday, July 12, 2003

Ferris hikes Kendall's tuition, OKs new housing

Saturday, July 12, 2003

By Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood
The Grand Rapids Press

Students at Ferris State University's Kendall College of Art and Design soon may notice an expanded urban campus to go along with their growing tuition bills.

As part of its \$126.2 million budget, the Ferris State Board of Trustees, which governs Kendall, on Friday approved tuition increases of 5.7 percent for studio courses and 11.7 percent for general education classes. Since Kendall students take a mix of studio and general-education courses, the increases average out to 7.3 percent.

That means Kendall students will pay \$9,816, or \$666 more to attend classes this fall.

Board members also approved a plan to partner with Rockford Development Group to provide Ferris and Kendall students with housing options on the eighth and ninth floors of the Commerce Building at 5 Lyon St. NW.

"This gives us wonderful exposure," said Ferris board Chairman Bruce Parsons.

He said the university looked at several downtown buildings possibilities, but said none had the housing potential found in the Commerce Building.

According to the plan, Rockford Development Group will convert the upper floors to student apartments for at least 48 students beginning in August 2004.

The space would be rented to students by Rockford Development. The university will pay the developer only to manage the property.

The plan would cost the university nothing more as long as the development company is able rent out all the apartments.

If rentals plummet, Ferris would reimburse the company up to \$250,000 per year for five years.

Ferris also would have the option to buy the property, which is currently owned by the family of Jim Peterson, a principal in Commerce Realty and Management Co. In the meantime, Rockford Development is working on a deal to co-own the building with the Peterson family.

And if Ferris does buy the building, "then we can put up a great big Ferris State/Kendall sign (to rival) other big blue signs not far away," Parsons said. He was referring to Grand Valley State University's large neon-blue signs that have received considerable attention in downtown Grand Rapids.

The board also rubber-stamped a memorandum of understanding with Grand Rapids city government and the Grand Rapids Art Museum. The deal lays the groundwork for Ferris to acquire the building that once served as the U.S. Post Office and federal building at 155 N. Division Ave.

College administrators have been eyeing the building since the museum announced plans to leave it for a \$50 million structure they hope to build overlooking Rosa Parks Circle.

The building would give Kendall more space for classrooms, offices, studios and exhibits.

"If this all comes together, we'll have a great downtown campus," Parsons said.

Initial estimates show Ferris would spend between \$8 and \$10 million to renovate the building.

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The Grand Rapids Press

Saturday, July 12, 2003

Ferris State leaders say tuition increase could have been worse

Saturday, July 12, 2003

**By Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood
The Grand Rapids Press**

BIG RAPIDS -- The Ferris State Board of Trustees Friday approved a 9.9 percent tuition hike and a 6 percent increase in room and board costs for the coming fall.

The increase means first-year Ferris students who attend classes on the Big Rapids campus can expect to pay \$6,044 for tuition and \$6,326 for room and board. The \$12,370 total is \$902 more than students paid last year.

This tuition increase includes a \$20 per credit "general" fee.

Students who attend classes at FSU's satellite campus in Grand Rapids are not required to pay the per-credit fee, so they will experience less than a 1 percent tuition increase this fall, said Scott Hill-Kennedy, who drafted the tuition proposal while serving as FSU's interim president for the past two months.

The Big Rapids increase pushed Ferris above the \$6,000-a-year tuition mark, while most other state schools are reporting increases that will keep tuition bills within the \$5,000 range.

Hill-Kennedy said it's unfair to compare Ferris to liberal arts schools around the state because Ferris has a unique academic niche.

He attributed the higher cost to attend Ferris to the fact that the university has to spend more to provide high-quality technical and professional programs.

"We are not comparable," said Hill-Kennedy, who has returned to duties as vice president of governmental relations and general counsel.

He said administrators always worry about how their tuition rates will stack up against other state schools.

"It makes it tempting to have add-on fees," he said, explaining that this would make the tuition increase appear smaller. "But", he said, "we just couldn't do it."

The 9.9 percent increase is the absolute total increase -- "it's no smoke and mirrors," Hill-Kennedy told the board during Friday's meeting.

Ferris board Chairman Bruce Parsons said the finance committee spent a lot of time on the tuition issue.

"While it is never fun to increase tuition 9.9 percent ... it could have been much worse," he said.

Board member Louis Meeuwenberg agreed. "We wanted to keep the costs as low as possible," he said.

Ferris is facing a 10 percent cut in state funding from the previous year. Administrators already have cut more than \$3 million in spending as part of an effort to cut \$5.4 million within the next two years.

The university's reduction plan includes savings of more than \$1.2 million through the elimination of vacant positions, roughly \$580,000 through voluntary separation agreements and about \$35,000 from a layoff.

While tuition increases are frustrating for students and their parents, Ferris Student Government President Jason Granger said he understands that the board had few alternatives.

"That's pretty much the only option," Granger said.

Granger said he doesn't know at what point students will refuse to, or be unable to, afford annual tuition increases.

"I'll pay, but some other people may not be able to... It's a concern," said Granger, a Ferris senior from Lansing.

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Murder suspects to appear in court

BIG RAPIDS - Preliminary hearings are scheduled to begin today (Tuesday) in Mecosta County's 77th District Court at 9 a.m. in the Jeremiah Monroe homicide case.

Monroe died of a gunshot wound on March 12 in a Hutchinson Street apartment.

Three men have been charged with homicide in connection to the shooting and will appear before Judge Susan H. Grant today.

DeLauren Omar Gordon, 21 of Lansing, was arrested April 9 and has been charged with felony murder, armed robbery, conspiracy to commit armed robbery, felony firearm and possession of a firearm by a felon.

Shannon Ladell Keys, a 31-year-old Ferris State University student, was arrested April 14 outside his residence in Ferris married housing. He has been charged with felony murder, armed robbery, conspiracy to commit armed robbery, possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony and being a habitual offender.

Marvin Vern Redmond II, a 23-year-old former Ferris State University student from Detroit, turned himself in to Big Rapids Department of Public Safety officials on April 15. He was arraigned on charges of felony murder, armed robbery, conspiracy to commit armed robbery and possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Two bound over in homicide case

Gordon, Keys to face charges in connection with March murder

Big Rapids - Two men were bound over to face felony murder charges Tuesday in Mecosta County's 77th District Court in connection to the March 12 shooting death of Jeremiah Monore. Omar Gordon 21 of Lansing, was bound over on five charges including felony murder, assault with intent to commit robbery while armed, conspiracy to commit armed robbery, possession of a weapon during the commission of a felony and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

"I bind him over to stand trial on all five counts to the (49th) Circuit Court," Judge Susan H. Grant said of Gordon as she outlined her decisions in Tuesday's preliminary examinations.

Shannon Ladell Keys, 31 of Big Rapids, was bound over on four charges including felony murder, assault with intent to commit robbery while armed, conspiracy to commit armed robbery and a felony firearm charge.

A third suspect in the case, Marvin Vern Redmond, 23 of Big Rapids, has pleaded guilty to assault with intent to commit robbery while armed. He is awaiting sentencing, a spokesperson for the Mecosta County Prosecutor's Office said Tuesday.

Prosecutors allege Gordon fired the fatal shots in a March 12 robbery gone bad and have charged Keys under an aiding and abetting theory. Mecosta County Prosecuting Attorney Peter Jaklevic said Tuesday he believes Keys had knowledge a gun would likely be used in the alleged attempted robbery.

An autopsy concluded Monroe died of bullet wounds to the neck and back probably fired from less than 2 feet away. Gordon, Keys and Redmond have been accused of conspiring to rob Monroe during three days leading up to the incident at Monroe's Hutchinson Street apartment.

Police found an amount of drugs and cash in the apartment during their investigation.

Judge Susan H. Grant reminded a full courtroom before reading her ruling that a preliminary examination forces her to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe the defendant is responsible for the offenses that have been alleged.

Ferris 'streamlining' to fight state budget cuts

BIG RAPIDS - Cuts in state funding this year have forced universities across Michigan to tighten their belts and come up with creative ways to raise money. Ferris is no exception to this rule, according to new President David Eisler.

Eisler said that - though he's still relatively new to the job - the school's budget is foremost in his mind.

"(Former FSU President) Bill Sederburg saw the budget cuts coming and planned for it." said Eisler.

But recent tuition increases don't come close to covering the \$5.5 million loss in the university's funding, Eisler added.

"We're looking at a lot of different things," he said. "We all have to make due with less."

Eisler said the tuition increases were not decided upon lightly.

"Whenever there's an increase in tuition it worries me," he said. "It's tough for parents and hard on students. I know Scott Hill-Kennedy and the trustees worked really hard to keep the numbers down as low as they could."

Eisler said 70-percent of university expenses are tied up in personnel. One of the ways Ferris is seeking to save costs is attrition; simply not hiring new employees to replace those who are leaving.

Said Eisler, "It's a delicate balancing act. We can't allow budget cuts to impact the quality of education. We must continue to deliver a great education."

The holy trinity of university financing, according to Eisler, is tuition, budget reductions and fund-raising.

"It's very difficult to replace base dollars," he said. "I spend about 10-to-30 percent of my time on fund-raising."

However, funding cuts can have - if not a silver lining - then at least a pewter, according to Eisler. "Reductions force us to take a good hard look at what we're doing and force us to become more efficient," he said. "We look at what we can put off doing and what we can do to be more effective."

When times are hard, students tend to rely more on alternate funding, such as loans and grants.

This, said Eisler, forces the university to shoulder an increased responsibility- to ensure student achievement.

"When students have those loans to pay off it's important the university helps the students succeed," he said.

As for the future, Eisler like the rest of the country is hoping the economy improves.

"We're hoping for better times," he said. "The economy is going to turn around eventually."

Meanwhile, Eisler added the university will continue to consider ways to decrease costs in an effort to absorb the loss of state dollars while maintaining current academic standards.

Ferris pleased with compromise

'Things could have been worse,' said Scott Hill Kennedy

BIG RAPIDS - A compromise budget agreement recently hammered out between Democratic Gov. Jennifer Granholm and state Republican legislative leaders will have at least some positive impact on Ferris State University.

Though state cuts this year are responsible for a \$5.5 million shortfall at the university, some aspects of the new budget work in FSU's favor. This according to Scott Hill-Kennedy, FSU vice president of government relations and general counsel.

According to Hill-Kennedy the budget agreement does away with the previous "tier system," whereby Ferris was lumped together - for funding purposes - with several liberal arts colleges.

"The problem was, the way the schools were grouped wasn't based on the best data or best assessment," said Hill-Kennedy. "We were being put in a tier with schools much different from us.

"(Ferris) has more career and technical programs, which cost more to run than the liberal arts schools. The comparison was faulty"

The new state budget negates the tier system, a goal of Ferris' administration for some time. Under the new mandate, said Hill-Kennedy, the school will be judged on its own merits when funding time rolls around

" We had advocated this change for some t time said Hill-Kennedy. "In the long term this is a big issue and very helpful for Ferris."

The elimination of the tier system in and of itself does not eradicate Ferris' current fiscal woes. The school is making cuts in many areas to try to compensate for the loss of state funds, though Hill-Kennedy stresses the quality of education offered at the university will not suffer.

"We took care not to eliminate any core programs," he said. "We just made the cuts in programs where students didn't show much interest or where they wouldn't affect our core curriculum."

The school also has cut back on hiring, and is allowing many recently vacated positions to go unfilled. Ferris also has instituted a tuition hike for this academic year.

Another state university, Grand Valley, rolled back at least a portion of its planned tuition hike following word of Granholm's budget compromise. According to Grand Valley President Mark Murray, the improved state aid plan made the rollback possible.

"I commend the legislature and governor for agreeing on a policy that says Michigan's university students will receive a minimum level of state aid no matter which campus they attend," he said.

The Grand Rapids Press

Thursday, July 17, 2003

'Dave' creates a buzz on Ferris State campus

Thursday, July 17, 2003

By Jennifer Ackerman-Haywood
The Grand Rapids Press

He was an undergraduate music major at the University of Michigan who never expected to lead a university.

"I never aspired to be a president," said David Eisler, 51. "I aspired to be a clarinetist."

Now, he is both.

The new Ferris State University president has been on campus a little more than a week, yet his enthusiasm is creating a buzz. He's energetic and urges everyone to call him "Dave."

"I'm an ordinary person and I think that people find that I'm approachable," Eisler said. "It's how I work."

At Ferris, where there long has been mistrust between the faculty and administration, staff are optimistic and a bit curious about his upbeat approach.

"About the most negative thing that I've heard is that he seems too nice," quipped Bill Papo, academic senate president and professor of printing management. "I can tell you that the general feeling from campus is very positive. I think everybody is looking forward to his leadership."

"We're real hopeful," said Rick Griffin, Ferris Faculty Association president.

Eisler and his family have an unprecedented invitation to the annual all-union Labor Day picnic. The event was started in the late 1990s, to show solidarity during a tumultuous labor dispute.

"This is the first time an administrator has been invited to come," Griffin said, adding, "No, we're not going to dunk him or anything."

This is Eisler's first time running a college. A professor of music, he began his administrative career in 1990, holding positions at Eastern New Mexico and Troy State universities.

Most recently, he spent seven years as provost and vice president for academic affairs at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah. He headed a capital campaign that raised \$87 million for student scholarships, faculty fellowships and Weber State's first donor-funded academic building, among other things.

Eisler also helped create the university's aggressive online program, which last year offered 266 courses.

At Ferris, Eisler said he will work to increase enrollment, which was 11,074 students last fall for the Big Rapids and Grand Rapids campuses combined.

He also wants to improve online course offerings and continue expanding Ferris' presence in downtown Grand Rapids. Eisler replaces President William Sederburg, who left in May to lead Utah Valley State College.

To any campus skeptics leery of Eisler's Mr.-Nice-Guy approach, those who worked with him in Utah say it's no act.

"That won't change," said Gary Dohrer, former faculty senate chairman at Weber State. "He's very supportive of faculty."

At Ferris, Eisler made a point to greet students and parents at a freshman orientation. The father of two daughters, he chatted with parents about what it's like to send their children to college.

And he gave students some practical advice about leaving home: part company with parents on the best terms, because the next phone call may be a plea for money.

Eisler's daughter, Heather, 26, is studying molecular genetics at the University of Notre Dame, and Lindsay, 23, starts medical school at George Washington University this fall.

Eisler says he favors a team approach to tackling projects.

"What I try to do is build on the strengths of the people around me and then try to make the right call," he said. "My job is to empower the people around me."

Eisler was the first member of his family to go to college. He found the experience so fulfilling he never left the university setting.

"Universities are about learning. I have a lot to learn. I like to learn," said Eisler, who earned a master's in music from Yale University and returned to U-M to earn his doctorate.

Eisler's enthusiasm impressed Bruce Parsons, chairman of the Ferris board, which chose Eisler in May over two other finalists.

"If we could just bottle the energy here," Parsons said, pointing at Eisler during last week's board meeting, "we would have all our budget problems solved."

Eisler doesn't hold back his excitement at being a university president for the first time.

"This is where I really wanted to come," Eisler said. "And the good news was that they really wanted me. You're talking to the luckiest person alive."

"You have to understand that I've never worked a day in my life," he said. "What I'm doing ... I love it. I get up early, start early in the morning. I work late. I have a passion for it."

The Grand Rapids Press

Sunday, July 20, 2003

Federal proficiency requirement will hit rural schools hardest

Sunday, July 20, 2003

**By Melissa Slager
The Grand Rapids Press**

Judy Huynh has traveled the globe to bring experiences to her sixth-graders in tiny Palo, where the Ionia County cornfields stretch for miles and Joe's Market is the only sign of business.

She even was named a teacher of the year this spring by her state social-studies peers. A regional consultant says Huynh is one of the best teachers she's seen.

But under new federal regulations, the 55-year-old is considered unqualified to teach social studies -- or writing, math and other sixth-grade subjects she teaches in the 165-student school.

That's because her college major was in dairy science, before she became certified for teaching.

"To say I'm not qualified is silly," Huynh said, whose travels include seven years in Vietnam. "Teachers like me -- if you're in something, you continue to develop in that area. For 15 years that's been my passion."

Rural educators in Palo and throughout the state and nation are troubled by tougher teacher certification rules coming as part of the national No Child Left Behind legislation. Recruiting any teacher to small, remote schools is difficult -- much less one who has majors in several subjects.

The mandate mainly affects teachers at middle and high school, where specialization will be expected by June 2006 in core subjects such as English, reading, art, math, science, government and history, among others.

Teachers everywhere soon could be returning to college, taking tests or essentially re-interviewing for their jobs at districts, rural or not. But rural schools face a tougher road because many of the teachers handle multiple subjects. And they have challenges of diminutive budgets, lower salaries and isolated communities.

"It's mind boggling the problems it's going to create," said George Stamas, head of Montcalm Area Intermediate School District.

The uncertainty already is taking a toll on teachers, Ionia County ISD consultant Kathy Peasley said.

"They're frustrated, they're hurt, they're angry. I have younger teachers who are scared. I've heard a lot of teachers just say they're going to retire, period."

The issue is no small matter in Michigan, where a third of all students -- about 548,500 children -- learn in rural schools. The state has the nation's sixth-largest rural student population.

No one has calculated exactly how many area teachers will be affected. "At the larger middle schools, it could be dozens of teachers," Peasley said.

But the smallest and more isolated schools feel the biggest impact.

The remote 175-student Alba Public School in Antrim County's Jordan Valley, for example, has four of its 14 teachers -- close to one-third of its staff -- teaching subjects outside their major.

Tiny Glenn Public School in Allegan County has only two full-time teachers, and one just retired. The job of recruiting a new teacher who can handle subjects for 34 students in grades three through six falls to Wally Gunderson, who serves as "superintendent, principal, everything" for the 150-year-old school.

"I don't know what we're going to do there," said Gunderson, an associate superintendent at Allegan ISD.

"How can you find a highly qualified math, highly qualified science, highly qualified English..?," Gunderson said. "I don't know how a small district would find such a person -- especially in our situation."

High-needs specialties like math are among the most difficult posts for rural districts to fill.

"They're going to be attracted by higher salaries and the areas where those salaries are," said Stamas, in Montcalm.

A sampling of 19 area rural districts shows average teacher salaries ranging from \$33,796 in Alba to \$53,754 in Kent City -- compared to \$51,950 in Grand Rapids or \$54,595 in Forest Hills. Overall, Michigan's rural teachers' earnings are 14 percent lower than non-rural peers, according to a report from the Rural School and Community Trust.

By contrast, larger rural districts like Cedar Springs, which encompasses seven townships over 110 miles, will have an easier time meeting the new standards, Assistant Superintendent Ron McDermed said, adding that the district already is in compliance.

"I think because we have 3,500 kids, that makes a difference," he said.

There are a variety of ways for teachers to comply with the law.

At the cheapest and most straight-forward end, it could be \$75 per state single-subject test, which teachers could take to prove they are qualified, said Peasley, the Ionia consultant. At most, it could be more graduate work -- costing nearly \$2,000 for three courses at Central Michigan University, for example.

Who pays is a different question. Teacher-contract negotiations are picking up the teacher-mandate topic for the first time in many area rural districts, while others say they simply don't know.

If schools fail to meet the new standards, sanctions will allow children to attend other districts at the school's expense. In rural areas, the next school can be dozens of miles away.

Educators and lawmakers from some rural regions have made a pitch for the federal government to relax the rules. In the state of Alaska, where bush planes are the only way to get students from some districts to others, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige appears willing to ease transportation requirements. But beyond that, there are no free passes.

"The information that comes down from the U.S. Department of Education is they're sticking with the letter of the law and we need to learn to live with them," said Bill LeTarte, executive director of Michigan Small and Rural Schools Association.

Good teachers shouldn't have difficulty meeting the new standards, said Ron Tomalis, chief of staff for U.S. Department of Education Under Secretary Eugene Hickok.

"We're going to try to spread the good word of teacher quality to schools. No doubt about it, though, it is daunting -- well, it is a challenge," Tomalis said. "But it's a challenge our nation's schools will be able to meet."

To ease the burdens on schools, state and federal educators are looking for ways to help teachers meet the standards.

Secretary Paige formed a Rural Education Task Force to recommend ways rural schools can address challenges, and a separate task force announced last week will focus on helping teachers meet the highly qualified mandate.

Ferris State University's School of Education just went live with a "Rural Achievement Network" on its Web site, Dean Michelle Johnston said.

"I feel a commitment because many of our students here at Ferris will go home and teach in rural schools."

District leaders in Allegan County are pinning hopes on a federal option that would have teachers prove they are qualified through a performance review by school staff -- no state tests, just classroom observation, videotaped lessons and/or a portfolio, among other options. But schools still are seeking details from the state, which would have to offer final approval.

Teachers like Kathy Papes in Lake County's Baldwin school think the reforms are well intentioned but out of step with classroom challenges in a rural district such as hers, where 90 percent of the students are poor.

"They don't sit here in the front lines, in the trenches, and see the kinds of things we have to deal with," the 27-year elementary teacher said.

Students there have parents who are jailed or on drugs. One girl has been through kindergarten twice and still cannot spell her last name. Another failed to do her homework because her mother said the family had no pencils.

The "most qualified" teachers are those who give the kids consistency and the knowledge "that somebody cares about them," Papes said.

Other teachers say the law's good intentions will pay off.

If a teacher can't pass a test, "maybe they shouldn't be teaching anyway," said Cynthia O'Brien, head of the 1,355-student Pine River Area Schools. "I know it's a big scare out there. But we'd do what we need to do to fix it."

There's no choice, said Linda Myers, superintendent of Morley-Stanwood Community Schools in Mecosta County. "They're going to have a state standard and we all have to meet it if we want state money."

Huynh, the Palo teacher, said she'll do what it takes to stay teaching in her school.

"It's my passion," Huynh (pronounced winn) said of her social studies focus. "Sixth-graders suit me," she added.

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The Grand Rapids Press

Monday, July 21, 2003

UNIFORM CHANGE: Once Ferris' top cop, now he wants to be a priest

Monday, July 21, 2003

By Emma Palova
The Grand Rapids Press

BIG RAPIDS -- Michael Cilibrise no longer wears the blue badge with the torch logo of Ferris State University.

He no longer has a patrol car, a police radio or a cozy office with a long desk overlooking campus.

At the age of 46, Cilibrise gave it all up, and a different flame is now burning in his heart.

The former director of FSU's Public Safety Department will enter a Catholic seminary this fall to become a priest. He hopes to be assigned to a church within the Grand Rapids Diocese by 2008.

"I was very tempted to stay, but I didn't have personal peace," Cilibrise said of his Ferris job. "I don't belong here. There was a lot of grief."

The Rev. Paul Milanowski, director of vocations for the Diocese of Grand Rapids, said it has become increasingly common for older candidates to enter the priesthood.

"They come from second and third professional careers and offer a great wealth of wisdom and experience to the community they serve," Milanowski said.

For Cilibrise, the switch has not been without a struggle.

In 21 years, he has worked through the ranks of public safety, from a patrol officer to director. He loved every minute of the journey. Always torn between the love for criminal justice and social work, Cilibrise earned both a police officer certification and a bachelor's degree in social work from Ferris.

He was preparing to move to Kalamazoo to pursue a master's degree at Western Michigan University in 1982 when Ferris called to offer him a job.

"I wasn't sure where I was headed," Cilibrise said. "I was in between not knowing what I wanted. I was leaning more toward law enforcement."

But he packed his bags and moved with wife, Amy, and son Ryan back to Big Rapids.

"I liked the university environment, and I liked my job," he said. "I've always been a people person."

In August 2002, Cilibrise was appointed director of the Public Safety department, replacing former director Stan Dinius. The appointment was something Cilibrise had always wanted.

"I was successful, I had money and I had good relationships," he said.

However, something wasn't right. Cilibrise always felt that there was something missing in his life.

"I was in a perpetual state of anxiety all the time," he said. "I kept thinking that I needed to make more money and have perfect relationships. My focus became on these things."

He and his wife were divorced in 1987, though Cilibrise maintained a good relationship with his sons, Ryan and Christopher.

It was in 2000 that Cilibrise said he first heard a call from God -- at a time he wasn't even a practicing Catholic.

Although he was raised a Catholic in Sheridan as a child, he didn't go to church as an adult. But all that changed as he "started to pay attention to what was going on with me and with others," Cilibrise said.

"I gained self-knowledge through reading. I sensed the presence of God."

He began to share those feelings with friends and co-workers. They weren't surprised.

"It's his nature to be caring," said Diana Hepler, interim assistant director of FSU Public Safety and a friend of Cilibrise's for 18 years. "I am not happy to see him go. I am losing my best friend."

Cilibrise sought counsel from the Rev. Wayne Wheeler at St. Paul's Campus Parish in Big Rapids, as well as from the Diocese of Grand Rapids. He applied for seminary sponsorship and was accepted by the Grand Rapids diocese in 2002.

"It had been a roller coaster," Cilibrise said. "I realized I would have to leave a place where I had done well and thoroughly enjoyed the people."

In March, after an extensive interview process, Cilibrise found out he had been accepted to the largest Catholic seminary in the United States, Mundelein University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Ill. The university accepts about 200 seminarians a year.

In the meantime, Cilibrise helped recruit his replacement -- Martin Bledsoe, who served as assistant police chief in Farmington Hills for 30 years.

However, Cilibrise will remain connected to Ferris.

Bledsoe appointed Cilibrise as the first-ever police chaplain at FSU. In case of a crisis, Cilibrise would come to the department to offer spiritual counsel, or he may be contacted at the seminary.

"My biggest regret is the people that I am leaving," Cilibrise said. "But I am at peace and thrilled about where God has led me to."

"And I get another badge out of it. It makes it easier."

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Nelson to receive special honor from Ferris State

BIG RAPIDS - From 1962 - 1990, Joan Nelson served as a health and physical education teacher at Ferris State University.

To this day, Nelson still serves as an avid supporter of athletics at Ferris State - in particular. Of Women's sports - in the years since her retirement. Nelson, who will be honored by the Ferris State University Bulldog Athletics Hall of Fame with the "Athletics Special Service - Award," also is a member of the University's Founder's Club and Ferris Emeriti Association. The Ferris Hall of Fame induction ceremony for the class of 2003 will take place on the evening of Sept. 19 at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center in Big Rapids.

"It's another great class of individuals that we have going into our Hall of Fame for 2003," said Ferris State Athletics Director Tom Kirinovic. "We're still working to catch up with our inductions to honor so many people from years ago who helped shape athletics here at Ferris State.

"This is a class I'm really excited about because we have such a great group of folks ... each year we wonder how we're going to match the inductees we had the year before, but the fact that we've been able to match shows how many great athletes we have had here at Ferris State."

Nelson will be the second individual to earn the Athletics Special Service Award. In 2001, Bill Buckingham was recognized by the induction committee. The selection committee for the Bulldog Athletics Hall of Fame consists of 16 members who are members of faculty, staff, alumni and the community. An alum of Michigan State University, Nelson, a summer resident of Charlevoix, has fought to advance women's athletics at Ferris through various forms of support - including financial support. Nelson has been a pleasant fixture at women's athletic events, including: volleyball, basketball and softball.

The Hall of Fame class consists of: Paul Cochran, who starred in football and track and field (1987-90); Dick Dolack, who played baseball and officiated (1951-55); Charles Evans, a stellar football athlete (1974-77); Carmen Fanzone, who was a baseball participant for the Bulldogs (1960-61); Walt Franczek, who was a golfer (1960-64); Grover Hinsdale, who ran track (1973-78); Paul Jungck, who wrestled; the late Sam Ketcham, who coached and served as athletics director (1953-68); Paul Lowden, a hockey player (1983-87); and Dave Surofchek, who wrestled (1988-93).

This year's class will be the fourth to earn induction into the Hall of Fame. In 2000, the inaugural class included: Scott Appledorn, Steve Banonis, Patty (Theis) Feldpausch, Dave Gagnon, Frank Karas, Babe Hielitnan, Bob Leach, Dan Ley, Sharon (Stickney) McCumber, Lloyd Tonkin and Jim Wink.

FSU hockey alumni take on local police and fire fighters for charity fund

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris State University hockey alumni will square off against area police and fire fighters in a benefit softball game for the Little Kevin Hockey Hope Fund on Aug. 1 at Hemlock Park.

The Little Kevin Hockey Hope Fund was established with donations made in memory of Kevin Martin Courtney who died at the age of 5 in March of last year. Kevin loved to play hockey and was a huge fan of the Bulldogs. He was well known to players on the Ferris team due to his parents' (Kevin and Julie Courtney) involvement in the Ferris Hockey Boosters Club.

"The guys from the past teams are really looking forward to playing in the game and helping out the Little Kevin Fund," said Ferris State hockey head coach Bob Daniels.

There is no charge for attending the game, but there will be raffles held during the game to raise money for the Little Kevin Fund. Fans will have an opportunity to see some of their favorite players from past teams and get their picture taken with the Central Collegiate Hockey Association championship trophy won by the Ferris State hockey team during the past winter season. The Little Kevin Fund is a recognized fund within the Mecosta County Community Foundation and provides funding for underprivileged children in the community so that they can participate in the learn to skate and youth hockey programs at the Ewigleben Ice Arena at FSU.

The fund also provided six area youngsters the opportunity to participate in to learn to skate program during the 2002-03 season.

For more information contact Kevin Courtney at (231) 527-0023.

Ferris hosts automotive engineering academy

BIG RAPIDS - The Automotive Engineering and Design Academy was held July 16 and 17 at Ferris State University.

The academy is a partnership between Wyoming Public Schools, FSU-Grand Rapids, Automotive Department of the College of Technology, Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University and the City of Wyoming Economic Development Office.

Twenty middle school students were selected from Wyoming in an effort to address workforce development issues within the city. The 12 girls and eight boys spent one week disassembling cars and exploring all component systems. Students studied computer-aided and 3D imaging design systems and learned the automotive component systems from engines to drive trains to the chassis and safety equipment.

During the final days of the camp, students studied manufacturing techniques and worked onsite at several Wyoming-area automotive supply manufacturers including Delphi Automotive, Benteler, Leon Plastics, Model Die and Mold, Die Tron, Future Tool and Die and General Motors.

Kirinovic: Soccer program in good hands

Ferris State A.D. wants program to continue to recruit strong student-athletes

BIG RAPIDS --- Tom Kirinovic, Ferris State's Athletics Director, believes his soccer program moved from one set of good hands to another.

When Pete Watkins stepped down from his post as head women's soccer coach at FSU, to accept the men's head coaching position at Division III Aurora University (III.), the Bulldog Athletics Department eventually settled on former Hamilton University women's soccer head coach Melissa Eging to take the reigns. Eging had more recently served as women's assistant coach at Central Michigan University during the 2002 fall campaign in Mount Pleasant. Kirinovic has been impressed with Eging and believes she is a great fit for Ferris State's program.

"Melissa is a real bright and articulate individual," Kirinovic said. "That's something that will be a real positive because of the kinds of that Pete had recruited to Ferris State in the past. He recruited a lot of intelligent kids into the program."

"Last year we had nine of our student-athletes on the women's soccer team in our honors program," Kirinovic continued. "Knowing the kind of individual that Melissa is, I'm sure she will continue to recruit quality student-athletes here to Ferris."

Eging also is excited.

"I'm excited to take over a program like this one at Ferris State, which has such a strong foundation in place that Pete established," said Eging, who was involved in administrative, on-field coaching and recruiting activities during her season at Central Michigan, in an earlier interview. "Looking at what Pete had been able to establish here, before he left, I feel this is a good situation for me to come into."

"I think we have a committed core group of players returning and I'm really looking forward to getting started."

Eging, 26, inherits a Ferris program that finished 7-10-3 last season and placed sixth in the conference with a 3-4-2 mark. In two seasons at Hamilton, as a head coach, Eging amassed a record of 19-13-1 and made back-to-back New York State Women's Collegiate Athletic Association Tournament appearances.

"Melissa has been a head coach in the past and has had success," Kirinovic said. "She has been in Michigan (having coached as an assistant at CMU), so she knows the state and where she can establish her recruiting bases."

Eging knows what she is up against coaching Ferris in a league with well-funded perennial powerful programs at Ashland, Mercyhurst and Grand Valley State.

"Tom has been very up front with me about what we have to work within terms of the funding and the facilities that we will have to work with," Eging said. "(Kirinovic) has been great for me to work with.

"I know that if I need him to listen to me about something that I have to talk about that he will be there for me," she continued.

Wall of Fame honors Ferris tennis greats

Garvey and Jilkova the first women's tennis All-Americans in Ferris State University history

Big Rapids – Back in 2002, Jennifer Garvey and Barbora Jilkova made history for the Ferris State women's tennis program.

Garvey, who was a senior, and Jilkova, a sophomore at the time, were named as Intercollegiate Tennis Association Division II All-Americans. The Bulldog duo was two of 30 individuals to earn such distinction that season. Also that season, Garvey, a native of Maryland who was the 2001-02 ITA Great Lakes Region Senior Player of the Year, was one of nine athletes to earn the All-American honor in both singles and doubles competition. Garvey also was a four-time (1998-2001) first-team All-Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference pick during her standout career at FSU.

Jilkova will be a senior this season for head coach Dave Ramos' women's tennis squad and eager to once again return to All-American status. However, if the native of the Czech Republic is unable to regain her All-American accolades, she will go into the history books for the Ferris State women's tennis program in a prominent way - as one of the first women's tennis All-Americans ever. "We were very happy as a program to be able to put up on that wall the first two All-American the history of the women's tennis program, said Ferris State coach Dave Ramos, a former player on the men's tennis team, who led the Bulldogs to a share (with Northern Michigan University) of the GLIAC championship last fall. "We've a our first two women's All-Americans and we feel like Barbora has a good chance to become an All-American again."

"Barbora is a very competitive player who knows what she has done in the past and wants to end her career on a high note as an individual and as a part of a team."

At the Racquet and Fitness Center in Big Rapids, the home court of the Ferris State men's and women's tennis teams and the home of the widely-respected Professional Tennis Management program, has been established a sort of Wall of Fame.

Above the bulletin boards near the indoor tennis courts are a wall with the photos of all the FSU men's and women's tennis All-Americans ever.

Jilkova and Garvey have their names on the wall along with the likes of Jan Talian, Paul Marcum, Martin Krbec, Kurt Hammerschmidt and others who have helped lead both programs to numerous GLIAC and NCAA regional championships during the last 20 years.