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Pioneer

January 3, 2005

Ferris wins Badger Showdown ----again

Madison, Wis.- The Ferris State University men's ice hockey team rang in the New Year in grand style as the Bulldogs defended their title at the 16th annual Badger Hockey Showdown with a 5-3 non-league triumph over nationally fourth-ranked Wisconsin in the championship game in front of 12,157 fans at UW's Kohl Center.

Ferris State, which captured last season's Badger Showdown title with a 3-1 win over the Badgers, improves to 8-10-2 overall as the Bulldogs extend their unbeaten streak to five straight (4-0-1). Three unanswered Ferris State goals in the opening period gave the visitors a 3-0 cushion. Senior center Jeff Legue tallied his team-high 13 goal of the season at 11:30 into the game on a four-on-four situation after taking a centering pass from senior right wing Derek Nesbitt and scoring five holes on Wisconsin goaltender Bernd Bruckler.

The Bulldogs' registered their second goal just over two minutes later during a power-play opportunity as Nesbitt's slap-shot from above the right circle found the back of the UW net for his eighth on the year. Senior defenseman Matt York and sophomore left wing Mark Bomersback each picked up an assist on the Nesbitt goal. FSU then notched its third lamplighter with 4:16 to go in the frame by converting a two-on-one which occurred as sophomore right wing Zac Pearson wristed the puck in the slot past Bruckler. Sophomore left wing Matt Verdone set up the Bulldog goal by stealing the puck in the neutral zone and then centering to Pearson for the score. But, FSU wasn't going to be denied as the Bulldogs went ahead 4:40 into the final stanza on Legue's second goal of the game which came from inside the left circle near the slot off a cross ice pass from Pearson.

Junior right wing Nick Scheible then garnered his fourth marker of the season when he shot the puck at the net and went over the shoulder of Bruckler, who finished with 37 saves.

Pioneer

January 4, 2005

Students take class into community

Big Rapids- This fall, social work students at Ferris State University took their talents and ideas out of the classroom and put them into action through Empowering Individuals Strengthening Communities.

The three-armed initiative, which provided mentoring within the Big Rapids community, was organized and formed by students in Wendy Samuel's Social Work 320 class, "Theories and Methods of Practice II."

Taking practice theories, students created their own organization, with three groups, to implement mentoring initiatives within the community.

This organization concentrated on providing academic and social mentoring grade-school students, at the area high school, intermediate school and Crossroads, Charter Academy. The students' goal was to simulate a non-profit agency that better helped meet the needs of Mecosta County citizens.

The student's mission statement was, "Collaborating with Ferris State University and area schools to promote success for the Big Rapids youth through mentoring," said Samuels, "I wanted the students to attempt to actually experience a learning organization. I intended the course to engage and empower the students to develop programs in the classroom that could be implemented in the community."

This class of future social workers presented their annual report concerning the construction of their simulated community out-reach organization from inception to implementation and program sustainability Dec. 16.

This presentation was held in the president's room on the FSU campus; in attendance were the program's stake holders, board members, Ferris President David Eisler and various other people of interest.

Overall, this classroom-based initiative not only served the Ferris students well but also positively impacted many of the community's grade-school students and will continue to do so throughout the remainder of the academic year.

The initiative began as a very unique class project, geared toward giving social work students first-hand experience with regard to the theories and methods of macro-level practice. Each Ferris student within this class has enjoyed the experience so much that all have volunteered to continue their mentoring initiatives throughout the grade-school academic year; further effort will be given toward yearly sustainability in the future.

The Grand Rapids Press

January 4, 2005

Gas leak evacuates Kendall Building

Grand Rapids fire fighters gather Monday by a leaking tank of propylene, a flammable gas used in the metal sculpting lab of Kendall College of Art and Design. People were evacuated from the building on Fountain Street NW. Employees getting ready to close the 17 Fountain St. building for the day noticed a foul scent and called firefighters, who shut off the leak and ventilated the building after the 5:43 p.m. call, fire officials said.

Pioneer

January 5, 2005

'Character Assassination' at Rankin Gallery Tuesday

Exhibit: This month's exhibition at Ferris State University's Rankin Art Gallery is a graphic design and typography installation by Ben Van Dyke titled "Character Assassination." The exhibit will run from Tuesday to Feb. 4. There is a reception on Jan. 13 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Refreshments will be provided and noted musician/artist Brian Schorn will be performing.

Pioneer

January 5, 2005

Ferris invites community to learn programs

BIG RAPIDS - Local residents can learn about an education and career in healthcare by attending monthly information sessions hosted by the college of allied health sciences at Ferris State University.

Programs and career areas include: clinical laboratory sciences, dental hygiene, diagnostic medical sonography (ultrasound), healthcare systems administration, medical records, nuclear medicine, nursing, radiography and respiratory care. There are associate, bachelor and master's degrees available, as well as several certificate programs.

Healthcare careers are among the nation's most in demand and fastest growing occupations, and Ferris' college of allied health sciences can prepare students for a rewarding career in healthcare, university officials said.

Hands-on training in accredited programs prepares graduates for professional certification or licensure and immediate employment; allied health sciences graduates enjoy a placement rate of nearly 99 percent.

The information sessions are free of charge and no appointment is needed. Sessions are held in the evening on the second Tuesday and Wednesday of each month beginning Jan. 11 and 12 at the Spathelf Center for Allied Health Sciences (VFS Building) on FSU's Big Rapids campus.

Exact times and locations are available by calling 1-800 GO BULLDOGS or visiting <<http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/colleges/alliedhe/>> and clicking the "Program Information Session" link. Additional information may be obtained by calling Jason DaDay, allied health sciences recruiting officer, at (231) 591 - 2733.

Pioneer
January 5, 2004

Ferris Dining Services hosts “Business After Hours”

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University Dining Services will host the “January Business After Hours” Jan. 20 from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. inside the Centennial Dining Room at FSU Rankin Center.

FSU Dining Services is a self-operated, full service dining operation consisting of four residence hall dining facilities, faculty dining room, faculty/student snack bar, gourmet coffee shop, catering and banquet services, athletic concessions, and vending services as well as nutritional counseling and special diet accommodations. The FSU Catering Services, a division of Dining Services, provides professional catering services for numerous campus and community events and is staffed by experienced professionals. FSU Catering Services provides assistance with planning and serving at functions ranging from simple coffee breaks and receptions to gourmet sit-down dinners or buffets.

The Ambassador Club of the Mecosta County Area Chamber of Commerce encourages all Chamber members and their employees to attend Business After Hours on Thursday, Jan. 20.

There will be drawings for door prizes, drawing for “Member of the Month,” plus introduction to new Chamber members.

Reservations are encouraged by calling the Chamber staff at (231) 796-7649 or email: mcacc@mecostacounty.com.

Pioneer
January 5, 2004

The legacy of W.N. Ferris deserves recognition

Jan. 6, 2003. By proclamation of the mayor of Big Rapids, Michigan, “Woodbridge N. Ferris Day” celebrates the 150th anniversary of the birth of Woodbridge Nathan Ferris. Woodbridge Nathan Ferris was born near Spencer, New York in a small log cabin-but spent over 40 years promoting education in the state of Michigan.

Woodbridge Ferris had arrived in Big Rapids, Michigan in May 1884. He planned to start a private school that would educate lumberjacks, miners, farmers’ children and factory workers. He chose Big Rapids because of its distance from other educational institutions in the state.

Despite periodic financial setbacks, the school grew steadily. In 1894, they moved into their first permanent structure, and published their first catalog. In 1900 the name was changed to the Ferris Institute.

Ferris was an educator who believed strongly in the rights of all men to an education. While sometimes critical of the institutionalized school system, he believed schools had great potential. Ferris urged schools to be open longer hours-to have night and weekend classes, and courses during the normal vacation time. He believed that the government should help to fund the expanded system. Additionally, education to Ferris included experience and growth and was not limited to books. He once said “if you believe that your education is over, don’t delay any longer, take chloroform and make a permanent departure.”

Besides education, Woodbridge Ferris became active in the state Democratic Party. In his first run for office in 1892, Ferris was resoundingly defeated in his bid for a Congressional seat. Undeterred and urged on by party members, Ferris ran for Governor in 1904 only to lose again. Ferris would win his term as governor in 1912.

During his term, Ferris dealt effectively with the copper strike in the Upper Peninsula, formed the Michigan Historical Commission and suggested numerous other governmental reforms. Ferris was later elected to the U.S. Senate in 1922. He held the seat until his death in 1928. As a politician he was an ardent supporter of Prohibition.

The celebrations of Woodbridge N. Ferris’s life and accomplishments by Ferris State University began on Jan. 6, 2003 but are ongoing. The official university celebrations took place on Jan. 18 and Jan. 23, while classes were in session. At the Jan. 18 home hockey game vs. Northern Michigan University, President William Sederburg cut the Ferris birthday. Cake was then served in the Wink Arena for all attendees.

A full day of commemorative activities took place on Jan. 23, 2003. At 10 a.m. a wreath laying ceremony occurred, with the bells playing 150 times. A guard unit stood watch, while President William Sederburg gave remarks. At 11 a.m. there was a campus program sponsored by Student Affairs, featuring speaker Will Keim. Later in the day, the wreath was moved, and a second ceremony held at Ferris’ grave in Highland View Cemetery in Big Rapids. The day concluded with a celebratory banquet at the Holiday

Inn where entertainment included another speech by Keim, a short reader's theatre production entitled "Ferris Vignettes" (a biographical sketch written by William Keller) and a performance by the musical group "The Ferris Wheels."

As part of the celebration, the book, Sayings of Woodbridge N. Ferris, was reprinted with new introductory remarks by Will Keim. Plans were made to convert the Presidents Room in Rankin Center to the Founders room, celebrating Woodbridge and Helen Ferris. The new room should be rededicated in winter 2005. Birthday celebrations for Helen Ferris were celebrated in September 2003- the 150th anniversary of her birthday. In fall 2004, a component about Woodbridge Ferris has been added to the university's mandatory freshman course as Ferris State University continues to educate students about their unique origins.

Pioneer
January 7, 2004

Ferris hosts meeting for tsunami relief

BIG RAPIDS - Members of the campus and local communities interested in generating funds for the Tsunami relief effort can share ideas next week at Ferris State University.

A meeting is scheduled Jan. 13 at 5:30 p.m. in the Rankin Center Dome Room to discuss aiding victims of the Dec. 26 earthquake and Indian Ocean tsunami.

Ferris faculty, staff, students and local residents are invited to attend if they wish to contribute in any way. Questions should be directed to Student Leadership and Activities at (231) 591-2606 or the vice president for student affairs office at (231) 591-3578.

Pioneer

January 8 & 9, 2005

Cullen named Ferris' Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs

BIG RAPIDS - Roxanne Cullen was appointed as assistant vice president for academic affairs at Ferris State University, according to Michael Harris, vice president for academic affairs.

Dr. Cullen's appointment, which was effective with the start of winter semester this week, is subject to approval by the Ferris Board of Trustees at its Feb. 26 meeting.

Cullen, who joined the Ferris faculty in 1983, has headed the department of languages and literature since 1995. Most recently, she also served as the interim associate dean of the college of arts and sciences. Cullen received the university's Distinguished Teacher Award in 1991 and has a variety of experiences in teaching, curriculum development, establishing unique support programs for students, assessment, retention, and North Central Accreditation self study.

"Dr. Cullen's faculty and leadership experiences, knowledge of the issues, communication skills and integrity have well prepared her for this challenge," said Dr. Harris. "I am looking forward to continuing to work with her toward a bright and positive future for Ferris."

Prior to becoming an administrative department head, Cullen taught all levels of composition and directed the university writing center. Her areas of specialization include basic writing, gender and communication, and composition pedagogy. She received her baccalaureate degree from the State University of New York at Geneseo and her doctorate from Bowling Green State University.

Pioneer
January 8 & 9, 2005

Former FSU standout Lewandowski guides Titans

TRENTON, N.J. - Phil Lewandowski had fun playing college hockey.

But now that he's in the pro ranks, the former Ferris State University forward is having a blast.

"I actually like it better," said the second-year pro, who signed with the ECHL's Trenton Titans prior to this season. "I loved college. It's a great game and it's really fast. It was a great experience. But here, it's more positional."

Through the first few weeks of the season, Lewandowski and his teammates are in just the position they want to be: first place.

Trenton - the AA minor league affiliate of the National Hockey League's Philadelphia Flyers - leads the National Conference North Division with a 16-4-4 mark, and Lewandowski has been a big part of the Titans' success.

Through the first 28 games, the 5-10, 190-pound native of Naperville, Ill. is one of five Titans with eight goals or more, registering eight goals and five assists for 13 points.

"Personally, it's going real well," Lewandowski said "I'm on a good team. I've been scoring some (goals) lately -- everything is clicking right now.

"Our team is winning and I'm chipping in, so that always helps."

Following his four-year stint with the Bulldogs that ended in 2003, Lewandowski first moved into the professional ranks with the Gwinnett Gladiators. He tallied 23 points (12 goals, 11 assists) in 44 games with the Gladiators before finishing his rookie campaign in Cincinnati, where he logged seven goals and seven assists in 13 games.

So far this season, Lewandowski and the Titans are poised to contend for a spot in the postseason.

"If everyone works hard for 60 minutes, I honestly don't think there's a team in the league that will beat us," he said. "If we stay within our system and if we have all three lines clicking - nobody is going to beat us."

This would be plenty of fun for Lewandowski and the Titans.

ICE CHIPS:

- SWITCHING SWEATERS: Troy Milam has worn a lot of different uniforms the past couple years. Four, to be exact. But none have been more important than the one he's wearing now.

Milam, a 6-foot, 188-pound former FSU defenseman, is patrolling the blue-line for Manchester of the American Hockey League, where he's helped the Monarchs (24-4-2-

1) skate out to a commanding Atlantic Division lead. The Lake Orion native has seven assists and a pair of goals in 25 games this season.

After leaving Ferris in 2003, Milam played 60 games with Gwinnett in the ECHL (six goals, 27 assists) before jumping to the AHL, where he played 13 games with San Antonio and seven games with the Monarchs. He signed a one-year deal Sept. 8 with Manchester - the AHL affiliate of the Los Angeles Kings.

Pioneer
January 13, 2005

Friends of Ferris gears up for fund-raiser

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State and Big Rapids are moving "Through the Years" to raise funds through the 16th annual Friends of Ferris benefit dinner Feb. 26.

The evening begins with a social hour at 5:30 p.m., with dinner following at 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center on Perry Street Tickets are \$50 and available by contacting one of five event chairs: Marji Johnson, (231) 796-6506; Scott Hill-Kennedy, (231) 796-1649; Brad Schmitz, (231) 796-4400; Tom Weaver, (231) 796-4959; or Scott Whitney, (231) 796-8659.

Live and silent auctions are two of several activities to look forward to at the event, with package deals including a Ferris quilt and floor mats, dinner party with Ferris President David Eisler and artwork, organizers said. Brainstorming will continue over the next month the next month to drum up new ideas and seek community donations, which are always welcome.

"Anyone can donate ... if you haven't been involved before, call one of the organizers," Whitney said.

Organizers are looking to prepare 70 to 75 items for auction. Approximately 15 will be auctioned live, they said.

The auctions are not the only item filling organizers' schedules, making sure the fund-raiser is prepared to face an uncertain economy plagued with recent disasters like the Indian Ocean Tsunami also must be given careful thought, along with the threat of higher education cuts by Gov. Jennifer Granholm.

Money raised through the event benefits Friends of Ferris, a political action committee (PAC), that rallies support in Lansing for Ferris and its programs and initiatives. Organizers hope to continue to drum up support for the event, even in uncertain financial times, so the organization can promote Ferris, Hill-Kennedy said, adding the university already has reaped the benefits of the organization's work, seen through Ferris being chosen for the Freedom to Learn project.

"At the end of the day, Ferris is in schools across the state (through the Freedom to Learn project)," he said.

Ferris campus radio expands

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University's student-produced radio station, Bulldog Radio, began broadcasting on Charter Communications cable television and the Internet with the help of new equipment allocated by student government.

Zack East, president/general manager of the five-star rated registered student organization (RSO), spearheaded the expansion project as a way of connecting the community with Ferris.

In addition, the project ensures that students in the organization receive an education using industry-standard, professional broadcast equipment.

Bulldog Radio, in its 47th year of providing radio services started by forerunner AM stations WHFR, WFRS and WRKX, operates nontraditionally on cable TV on campus and has done so as WFSU since around 1989.

The name became Bulldog Radio in 2003 as the group began a descent toward FM broadcasting. However, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) decided not to accept low power FM licenses. After discussing other broadcasting facets, expanding the station's operations via cable television off campus, as well as Web-casting online, was deemed a worthwhile venture.

Before broadcasting to areas other than campus, much equipment needed to be replaced in the studio in Masselink Hall's Telecommunications Department.

East, a junior in the communication program, last month proposed to student government more than \$6,400 in new equipment for the station and received all but \$200 worth. Three new Dell server computers, an audio console and varied sound boosting and processing equipment was installed over the holidays and the station has operated at top efficiency since Dec. 21.

"Since the FCC would not accept licensing for low-power FM stations, we had no choice but to move on and seek other options," said East. "Expanding our operations to Charter Cable and the Internet is very low-cost and practically maintenance free.

"While we may not be like every other college radio station broadcasting on the FM band, we are still a college radio station. And, in some cases, our coverage area is stronger than most college stations could ever have thanks to cable TV and the Internet."

Pioneer

January 14, 2005

Ferris to observe Martin Luther King Day on Monday

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University faculty, staff and students are observing Martin Luther King, Jr. Day through a series of events starting with an annual march Sunday and culminating in a tribute and celebration Monday.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. March begins at 2 p.m. at Merrill Travis Hall and ends at the Rankin Center. Later on Sunday, the Societies of Minorities in Hospitality is sponsoring an MLK Dinner at 6 p.m. in Cafe Ferris.

“War and Rumors of Peace,” an in-service presentation for faculty and staff, highlights activities Monday. Stories, poems and other presentations will be moderated by David Pilgrim, professor of sociology, from 10 a.m. to noon in the Rankin Founder’s Room.

Monday programming includes “The Game of Life” from noon to 1 p.m. in the Rankin Whitney Young Room, with participants interacting and role playing; “Multimedia Tunnel of Oppression” from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Rankin Constitution Room, participants are led through a room of vivid and shocking pictures, videos and quotes dealing with oppression; “The Albatross” from 2 to 3 p.m. in Rankin 155, with an interactive experience of stereotypes, cultural perception, ritualism and sexism; and “Unveiling the Truth” from 3 to 4 p.m. in the Whitney Young Room, where an interactive experience will be coordinated by staff from Carlisle, Helen Ferris and Masselink Halls.

There also is a 5-on-5 basketball tournament in the Student Recreation Center at noon.

The observance closes with the Student Tribute/Celebration from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Rankin Dome Room, featuring readings of poems and writings, acts and a performance by the FSU Gospel Choir, followed by “The Meeting,” a depiction of Martin Luther King, Jr. meeting Malcolm X at 7 p.m. in the Dome Room.

The Grand Rapids Press

January 16, 2005

Personnel changes

Nick Langenfeld joined Gerontology Network as its chief financial officer. He previously worked for Metropolitan Hospital. Chantal Storm joined as program assistant at Friendship Place Adult Day Health Care Center.

Roxanne Cullen was appointed assistant vice president for academic affairs at Ferris State University in Big Rapids.

John T. Sperla, Claude L. Vander Ploeg and Daniel J. Parmeter Jr. were named to the 2005 management committee at Mika, Meyers, Beckett & Jones PLC.

Groups and organizations

The West Michigan Lakeshore Association elected: Sharon Johnson, of Prudential Clyde-Hendrick Realty in Muskegon, president; Tom Speet, of Summit Properties, president-elect; Bev Scholten, of Re/Max Vogue, treasurer; and Ken Bordtta, of Greenridge Realty in Spring Lake, immediate past-president. Installed to the board of directors were Mark Gleason, of Greenridge in Spring Lake; Alan Helvig, of Woodland Realty in Fennville; and Char Remwolt, of Greenridge in Muskegon. Returning directors are: Joyce Clegg, of Woodland in Grand Haven; Drew Deters, of Piers Realty in Holland; Dan Hendrick, of Prudential-Clyde Hendrick in Grand Haven; Becky Hosley, of Westdale in Holland; Rick Page, of Woodland in Holland; and Chris Peel, of Greenridge in Spring Lake.

Green Applies Himself Well

GRAND RAPIDS - Ferris State University - Grand Rapids academic dean Don Green makes it his business to know what employers want.

Actually, when he came to Grand Rapids in 1987 to work in then-Davenport College's human resources department that was his business.

But when he began serving as an adjunct faculty member, he quickly lost interest in much of his field. He didn't feel a passion for labor relations, safety or benefits work. But there was still one aspect of his job that excited him. Both as faculty and within the college's human resources department, Green found that "what really got him geeked" was training and education.

So when the college offered him an opportunity to help design and serve as the first director of its ACE program, a degree completion program for working adults, Green took the step into higher education and never looked back.

"I've loved working in higher education ever since," he said. "It's an industry where you can make enormous change and make a really positive impact in people's lives."

From that start, Green has worked hard to create programs that fill needs within the business community. At Davenport, he was involved in the creation of the area's earliest NT and Novell certification programs. Later in his career, he helped develop education programs customized for local companies through Grand Rapids Community College's corporate training and development division, which recently adopted the new "training solutions" moniker.

Since crossing over to the other side of GRCC's Applied Technology Center, Green has been able to effect changes that are making FSU-Grand Rapids a popular destination for students seeking applied business education and a welcome pipeline for employers.

"What we wish to be is entrepreneurial," Green said. "The expectations concerning higher education and especially our state universities have changed. Years ago, we were expected to be the developers of labor for the market; now we're expected to be the developers of the market."

FSU President David Eisler prefers to give Green and the Grand Rapids campus as much latitude as it needs to develop programs that fit needs in the West Michigan community.

Green has responded with new programs like digital animation and game design. Now in its second year, Green believes the program will likely become an economic engine for the West Michigan region.

Students learn how to create video games and digital cinema as they would at Purdue College, DePaul University or The Illinois Institute of Art in Chicago, but they also learn how to apply those skills to the business and industrial market.

“When we talk about digital animation and game design, so many people think Nintendo or Pixar,” Green said. “That’s great; nothing wrong with that but what they have to understand is that industrial simulations are getting to be a bigger and bigger part of how we sell products and how we sell services.

“We’re seeing so many different industries come to it expressing interest.” With demand for digital animation spreading from entertainment to both the marketing and design arm of a great number of industries, including the manufacturing, real estate, health and legal communities, many FSU students - now freshmen and sophomores - are already finding full- and part-time work with their new skills.

One student was even paid several thousand dollars for a single freelance assignment creating a project animation for a local company.

This program comes on the heels of the successful launch of the bachelor’s of applied science in industrial technology and management.

“We developed a degree that was part management and part engineering,” Green said. “And we designed it so that the coursework was easily accessible to students.”

There is no burden of prerequisites, with flexibility within the program for transfer credits as well as customized concentrations.

This major has become popular with community colleges. Since its launch in Grand Rapids in partnership with GRCC, the major has found homes at a half dozen other community colleges, with the transfer flexibility allowing for as much as two-thirds of the degree to be achieved through taking the lower-cost community college courses.

Green hopes to extend FSU-GR’s longstanding partnership with GRCC even further in the coming year, as he develops a bachelor of applied science in sustainability and environmental impact.

Like FSU-GR’s other programs, the new major will be tailored to fit the need expressed by the local business community. Aquinas College recently rolled out a major in sustainable business, and Green hopes to work closely with Aquinas on the FSU program.

Green does not intend to duplicate the Aquinas program, instead focusing on the applied manufacturing and design potential of the concepts.

He also hopes that Aquinas, along with GRCC, Kendall College and local businesses, will become partners in a sustainability and environmental impact design center and research facility, preferably housed at the ATC.

Green also hopes to roll out a second program centered on building design and management if the first sustainability major is successful. This would be accomplished with help from the Big Rapids-based construction management, facility management and architectural design programs.

“The way we do business at Ferris State University in Grand Rapids is that I look at the trends taking place across the United States and the world - population trends, social trends - and based on those we develop unique degree programs,” Green said.

Green cited health care as another growth area for the college, which has developed a laddered program that can usher students through certifications, associate’s degrees and then bachelor’s degrees per their interests and job requirements.

“(Applied education) is a tradition at Ferris,” Green said. “We are unique in that we want people to be able to go out into the industry and do - to accomplish. The education that we offer is applied and hands-on; it gives students the opportunity to try something rather than just learn the theory behind it.”

Petoskey News
December 27, 2004

Making science 'cool' to learn

Biotechnology classes are being offered in area high schools thanks to the coordinated efforts of the Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District and Ferris State University. The biotech lab visited Petoskey, Charlevoix and East Jordan high schools to give students a peek into some of the equipment and subject matter of careers involving advanced science.

James Hoerter, head of the biology department at Ferris, is the instructor for the traveling lab which treats students in upper level science classes to in-depth, hands-on learning opportunities like no high school science class could ever provide.

Biotechnology equipment is out of reach financially for most high schools, but with programs like this students get a taste of what to expect on a collegiate level. Many of the students who took part in the biotech lab are considering careers in the field of medicine. Char-Em and Ferris are working together to meet the need of providing extended learning opportunities for high school students interested in science and related careers. The biotech labs are made possible in part by a grant from the Michigan Department of Education.

The lab made it possible for area students to take part in the analysis of blood proteins in a variety of livestock, cutting viral DNA to identify the control region within it and a genetic engineering experiment involving firefly DNA and harmless E-coli bacteria.

According to Hoerter, there are tremendous job possibilities involving these ongoing efforts to map and analyze the human genome.

Programs like the visiting biotech lab are a wonderful opportunity for students who have a strong interest in science to expand their knowledge and their imagination. Lessons learned could help guide them into careers they may never have dreamed possible.

Grand Rapids Business Journal

December 27, 2004

Their Mission Is To Unite Division

GRAND RAPIDS - With a host of the city's most recognizable institutions straddling its half-dozen blocks, North Division Avenue has been and will continue to be an integral part of downtown Grand Rapids.

Historically Division has been the eastern boundary between downtown proper and the "downtown area." Now, recent developments at Grand Rapids Community College, the Grand Rapids Public Library and "Pill Hill" are quickly bringing downtown's outlying eastern portion closer to the center.

And as Second Story Properties' development of the old YMCA building and projects of Ferris State University and Civic Theatre all are planned for the near future, the face of Division is likely to change dramatically in the coming years.

With that in mind, nearly a dozen stakeholders in the small piece of Division stretching between Fulton and Michigan streets have begun a regular series of informal meetings to help steer the street's development in a manner beneficial to all involved.

"It's not a Right Place-sanctioned committee or some blue-ribbon committee the mayor called upon," said Rick Chapla, vice president of urban redevelopment for The Right Place Inc. "It's a forum representing property ownership and natural land uses along and adjacent to the North Division corridor. It's allowing us to have the frank discussions that were needed."

Earlier in the year, Chapla had engaged in discussions with most of the institutions represented in hopes of involving them in the area's redevelopment planning process.

"It became apparent that people were not necessarily talking to each other about what each of their institutions and workplaces were doing," he said.

So he began working to put the diverse group of stakeholders - ranging from MDOT and St. Mark's Episcopal Church to Ellis Parking Co. and Second Story Properties - together in the same room.

"There are a lot of great things happening on that property around and adjacent to Division," said Jay Fowler, executive director of the Downtown Development Authority. "The idea is to bring all of them together and see what common interests they have in terms of facilitating a better environment."

Fowler explained that the city has been working systematically to improve the downtown streetscape, putting in planters and trees where appropriate, improving signage and street lighting, and completing both aesthetic and infrastructure construction on roads and sidewalks.

Within the coming year, according to Assistant City Engineer Rick DeVries, those efforts will be directed toward the streets surrounding North Division Avenue, and the street itself soon after.

“It’s a tough nut to crack,” Fowler said. “It’s an important traffic artery. Yet the situation out there today is pretty unfriendly for folks walking up and down the street or trying to cross the street.”

At recent meetings, held on the first Thursday of the month at the Grand Rapids Public Museum, discussions have included upcoming road construction with city engineers while the most recent meeting concerned the announcement by Ferris State University of Grand Rapids of plans to annex the Grand Rapids Art Museum building and eventually the Commerce Building.

“We’re fairly aggressive about our growth and one of the thoughts when we developed our master plan was to help build up central Grand Rapids,” FSU-GR dean Don Green said. “Division series to him an avenue that struggles with its identity, and because of where we are located we can play a significant role in the development of Division.”

With the intention of creating a recognizable urban campus and possibly converting a stretch of Pearl Street into green space, FSU-GR was in immediate need of the audience with city planners and engineers available through the forum.

“We believe it’s important to have more accessibility to the street and more accessibility to the neighborhood,” he said. “We want to help bring more merchants there, more culture there.”

FSU-GR’s hopes for Pearl Street mirror those accomplished recently by its neighbor, Grand Rapids Community College. The school was able to convert a segment of Bostwick Avenue into a common green space, dramatically changing the campus.

“That was a tremendous improvement for pedestrians in the area and our students,” said Bob Partridge, GRCC executive vice president of business and finance. “Now, can that be done in other areas?”

While GRCC would like to see a more attractive and greener Division, Partridge said the school’s greatest concern is making Division less of a divider.

“One of the issues, whether longstanding or not, is, Are pedestrians safe to cross?” he said. Part of the perception we have in mind, with all the studies of different districts, is how do we make that more cohesive? That’s what we’re looking for.”

Partridge explained that despite its presence only two blocks away, GRCC is not often perceived as part of downtown Citing Pill Hill and the proposed residential development of the YMCA building, he believes that efforts must be made to make Division more inviting.

“There has always been sort of a conceived barrier between traditional downtown and east of Division,” Fowler said. “And I think there has been so much development on the east side that it really makes sense to knit the downtowns together, treat it as one district and invite people to either walk along or hack and forth across Division.”

This is one of many issues that Fowler believes must eventually end in compromise.

“It’s a balancing act. You might reach a consensus that everyone would like to see wider sidewalks, but you can’t achieve wider sidewalks without eliminating traffic lanes,” Fowler said. “We’ve got to work through the trade-offs.”

But at least all of the stakeholders will have a say in how that balance is achieved.

“I just know in my gut that as we reconstruct areas within that area, that if we have a consensus and a buy-in from several stakeholders that the end result is going to be a much better public space effort,” Chapla said.