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## **The Grand Rapids Press**

May 1, 2006

### **USTA honors couple for promoting wheelchair tennis**

GRAND RAPIDS -- An automobile accident in October 1989 cost Curt Bender more than the use of his legs.

"I was really struggling," Bender said. "A lot of things were stripped away from me. It didn't take long before my friends drifted away, and I lost the girlfriend I'd had for four years. I even had a roommate I had to have evicted.

"I was in a wheelchair and my emotional state could not have been worse. Basically, I had nothing in my life. I had even become estranged from my family, because I pushed them away."

Then, in April, 1992, everything changed.

"I hit the bottom," he said. "And then I gave my life over to Jesus Christ. It was the best thing I ever did, because my life hasn't been the same since."

Bender, now 44, reconciled with his family. He went back to school and is close to getting his electrical engineering degree from Ferris State.

Needing a competitive outlet, he took up wheelchair tennis, which not only gave him a fulfilling physical activity, but also led to meeting his wife, Connie, who is a recreational therapist. She also is head coach of the nationally ranked West Michigan Wheel Chair Sports Association tennis team.

In March, Curt and Lynn Bender were honored by the United States Tennis Association for their work in sponsoring, organizing and helping to spread wheelchair tennis across the nation.

Wheelchair tennis has been recognized for more than 25 years, but the Benders pioneered the WMWCSA "up-down" doubles program which allows able-bodied players to team up with wheelchair athletes in doubles matches.

The league, the first of its kind in the country, plays USTA sanctioned matches and keeps rankings to assist in seeding tournaments.

"It's the only wheelchair sport where the athlete can compete against able-bodied competitors," Lynn said. "We were named for the award, but it goes to so many people and organizations in West Michigan, who have helped take this game from the beginning and make it more successful here than anywhere else in the country."

The rules in wheelchair doubles are the same as for any other tennis match, except that the wheelchair player is allowed to hit the ball on the second bounce, if needed.

"We try to pair teams from an equal skill level," she said. "It takes some getting used to, not because the wheelchair player is less able, but because the able-bodied player usually wants to go easy on the player in the wheelchair.

"Usually they feel bad about the wheelchair player, until he hits a smash back at them to remind them that this is a real competition."

What keeps the able-bodied player from picking on the wheelchair player across the net? "Nothing," Curt said. "That's what makes it so much fun."

Wheelchair players can't move as quickly horizontally as an able-bodied player.

"I play with Curt so much that I know what he's going to do," Lynn said. "It's second nature. I can tell right away if it's a shot he's going to get, or if I have to go after it.

"I'm at the point that I don't even think about his wheelchair any more. If Curt gets the ball at the net, he's not going to dink it over. He's going to smash it past you, because that is his competitive nature."

### **Shopping for players**

The Benders find some of their players at the mall.

"If we're out shopping and see a person in a wheelchair, we stop by and give them a card and ask if they want to try tennis," Lynn said. "And we are very fortunate to have a facility like Mary Free Bed here, because most of our players are diagnosed as spinal cord injuries or are amputees.

"Sometimes we get them right out of rehabilitation."

"When you face that situation, you can go one of two ways," Curt said. "You can decide to go on with your life or not.

"Being involved in wheelchair sports is not only good for you physically, but mentally it gives you something else to focus on, and it teaches you that you can find success in many different things."

The West Michigan Wheel Chair Sports Association provides opportunities for wheelchair athletes of all ages, including kids leagues.

**Cadillac News, Sault Ste. Marie Evening News, Detroit Legal News, Escanaba Daily Press, Port Huron Time Herald, Houghton Daily Mining Gazette**

May 1, 2006

**Higher ed ready for budget debate**

LANSING - Ferris State University professor Bob Eastley crawled out of bed before sunrise one day last week to travel to the state Capitol.

Eastley and dozens of other representatives from colleges and universities across Michigan gathered to lobby state government for more money. They've heard a lot of talk out of Lansing about how important higher education is to Michigan's future, but say they haven't seen a lot of cash to back it up.

"Education is the foundation for everything we do in the next 10 years," said Eastley, who teaches engineering to construction management students at the Big Rapids university located about 120 miles northwest of Lansing.

"We are at a crucial time in our economy and the state needs to recognize the importance of higher education."

College and university funding could be a hot topic as debate heats up for the budget year that begins Oct. 1.

Just over 24 percent of Michigan residents 25 and older had at least a bachelor's degree in 2004, below the national average of nearly 28 percent; according to estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau.

That's something lawmakers and Gov. Jennifer Granholm say they want to change to make the state - which had the nation's third-highest unemployment rate in March - more attractive to potential employers.

But tax revenues, hurt in recent years by Michigan's sluggish economy have not provided much discretionary cash for state government to invest in higher education or anything else.

State funding for Michigan's 15 public universities this fiscal year is about 10 percent less than it was in the 2002 fiscal year, according to the nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency.

Public universities have increased tuition and fees in response to the declining state funding. The average cost for a full-time students' tuition and fees - more than \$6,800 this year - has jumped more than 35 percent in the past five years.

Higher education officials say they drew attention to their budget concerns by initially backing a potential ballot measure calling for mandatory annual education funding increases equal to at least the inflation rate.

But universities recently dropped out of the coalition, saying they could make a persuasive case for their funding without calling for guarantees which could harm the state's overall budget process.

Those topics formed the undercurrent of last' week's mini-rally and lobbying effort led by Rep. John Stewart, R-Plymouth.

Stewart, chairman of a House subcommittee for higher education appropriations, is backing a \$1.78 billion overall funding proposal that would give universities and colleges about 2.5 percent more money for operations and financial aid in the upcoming fiscal year.

The House subcommittee proposal is about \$36 million more than proposed by Democrat Granholm. The House plan is about \$500,000 more expensive overall than a plan proposed by the Republican led Senate.

The House and Senate also want to provide more money for grants to students at private colleges than Granholm does.

The Granholm administration questions where the House will find the cash for its plan. Greg Bird, a spokesman for Granholm's budget office, said the governor won't support a budget balancing plan that could cripple "the social safety net" to pay for other programs.

"What we've seen so far from the House is the 'tax cut-and-spend' portion of their budget," Bird said.

## **The Grand Rapids Press**

May 1, 2006

### **Ferris professor works on show for Will Smith**

It's rare that a college teacher is summoned to California for the chance to work with a famous actor and first-time director such as Will Smith, but that was exactly what happened to David Pilgrim, sociology professor and curator of Ferris State University's Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia.

"I consider it a blessing and very unexpected," Pilgrim said.

"Will Smith is the easiest person in the world to work with. He is very humble.

"This is the first time he has ever directed anything, and he wanted me to be a part of it," Pilgrim said.

Smith's directing debut of the UPN sitcom "All of Us" aired on April 24. The episode, titled "The N Word," examined what happened when Bobby Jr. blurted out the infamous epithet at his birthday party, thus igniting debate among adults at the gathering. It makes all of us examine why this word is still allowed to work its way into conversations without a second thought.

Pilgrim thought the initial phone call asking him to be a consultant on the show was just "a weird phone call - not legitimate."

"Then I was asked to come spend a day with Will Smith. I stayed for eight days," he said. "I wanted to do it right and make a contribution: The reviews were extremely positive."

Pilgrim is well-known for collecting items that defame and belittle Africans and their American descendants. He is the founder, primary donor and curator of Ferris State's Jim Crow Museum, in Big Rapids. Pilgrim, who has amassed more than 5,000 items that portray blacks as Mammies, Sambos, Coons and other caricatures, calls himself a garbage collector of racist garbage. He also has produced and won several awards for a documentary of the museum's activities.

How did Will Smith get wind of Pilgrim? The professor is a published author of Will works Smith featuring race relations and community studies. One essay examined the epithet.

"I think they wanted someone who would handle the topic intelligently and not perpetuate stereotypes," Pilgrim said. "I worked with the script, actors and producer. I was brought out there to lend constructive criticism and find mistakes. It was cool, (but) I consider it a one-shot deal."

## **Pioneer**

May 2, 2006

### **Tot's Place and NEMCSA Head Start celebrate March is Reading Month**

BIG RAPIDS - Reading can open a lifetime of doors for children and through celebration of March is Reading Month, part of National Reading Month, students at Tot's Place and NEMSCA Head Start got a jump start opening those doors.

During the month of March, teaching staff from both organizations hosted guest readers to highlight this year's theme, "Clowning Around with Books." Some of the guest readers included President David L. Eisler and his wife, Patsy, former Big Rapids Director of Public Safety Kevin Courtney, Big Rapids Community Library staff, the Ferris volleyball team and Renee Mika, an assistant professor in the Michigan College of Optometry.

Each guest reader brought their personal enjoyment of reading to the stories they read, with children eagerly gathering each day to hear their guest reader's story, Tot's Place Manager Lori Johnson said.

"It was, a great learning experience for the children U have exposure to other people enjoying books, and stories," said Jamie Jewell. Tot's Place preschool teacher.

In addition to inviting guest readers to visit each organization, children were able to participate in Pizza Hut's "Book It Beginners" program. Each child received a "Book It" coupon for every book he/she read, along with earning a free personal pizza for their participation.

## Cadillac News

April 2, 2006

### A king among clowns

REED CITY - People may know Rudy Grahek from the various television commercials he has appeared in or from his time as president of the Northern District Fair Board.

It is likely, however, that more people know Rudy's other personality.

For 50 years, Rudy has been living a double life. Like the superheroes of comic books and movies or spies like James Bond, Rudy has been living behind a mask or, in his case, makeup. Instead of fighting crime or battling evil superpowers, he has been making children of multiple generations smile and laugh.

In essence he has been dynamite, Dynamite the Clown that is.

What is significant about 50 years of clowning one would ask? Well, at 73 years old Rudy is still going strong attending and walking in 58 parades a year as Dynamite. He also has other engagements he attends such as home shows and birthday parties and he would not have it any other way.

"Go golfing, go fishing, go hunting but I don't do them. This is my enjoyment of life. To be a clown you have to be born to be a clown," Grahek said. "Emmett Kelly and Red Skelton said this. To be a school-trained clown is not a clown. You have to be born into it. I love my work and love the clowning."

During these 50 years of clowning, Rudy has perfected his art whether it came to his appearance or his character of Dynamite.

Although he has his look and name copyrighted, it was by chance that Rudy came up with his explosive identity.

"When I first started out, I started as Rudy the Clown. I got my show name from a little town called Evart, Michigan. I did the fair and I was getting ready from the trunk of my car and kids came by and said 'you look like you were hit with dynamite,'" Rudy said.

"My agent at the time said 'doesn't Dynamite sound more impressive than Rudy' and I said 'yes it does.'"

The look that Rudy has patented was a combination of two clowns, the world famous sad-faced clown Emmett Kelly and Freddy the Freeloader played by Red Skelton.

"They were my two main influences in clowning. When I first started, I was close to Kelly," he said. "Kelly is a mime and I'm a talking clown like Freddy the Freeloader. I actually patterned after both and studied their faces so mine was not right on."



When he was asked why he would want to clown around for 50 years, Rudy looked up with a big smile and said the children.

These days it is not uncommon for Rudy to see a parent and their small or grown child and get asked, "Do you remember me?" Of course it is not the child that is asking, but the parent.

"Just recently at the Wex a mother came up to me and she said she had a daughter in college. The mother wanted a picture," he said. "The husband was getting the camera adjusted and the mother looks at me and she says 'do you remember me?' You did my birthday party when I was 5. Every show, I don't care what part of the state it is, something like that happens."

After graduating from Cadillac High School in 1952 he started performing with the Clyde Beatty Circus. However, that did not last long as another personality said he needed Rudy's help - Uncle Sam.

Once he received the "letter in a brown envelope" from the U.S. Army, Rudy went to basic training in 1953. He first was at Camp Atterbury in Indiana and then it was off to Korea.

During his time in the military, Rudy saw action in famous battles such as Pork Chop Hill and even did some guard duty in the DMZ after the truce was signed. It was during the time after the conflict ended that another love was made evident to Rudy - flying.

"They put me in the cargo hold of C-47 and I lived in an airplane for something like six months," he said. "I almost could handle the plane myself. It was a wonderful experience and I still eat, drink and sleep that plane. I have models at home."

Once he was discharged in 1954, Rudy came back to the Cadillac area and that is when his love of clowning started to blossom. He spot performed in a couple of circuses but he realized there was not a big future in the circus so in 1956 he enrolled at Ferris State University which called Ferris Institute at the time.

During summer breaks, Rudy would spot perform and he also started doing parades in 1956.

Fifty years later, Rudy is going strong. This year will mark many milestones for him including his 50th consecutive year in the Manton Labor Day parade, 48th year Ionia Free Fair parade, 47th year for Ferris State's Homecoming parade and the 39th year for the Greenville Danish Festival.

One piece of advice Rudy has for any clown starting is essential for success.

"In my line of business you have to really like kids. You should not be in the clown business if you don't," he said. "I love working with kids. Kids come up with funny questions and tidbits for you. I look at the parents and I say that is where they got it."

## **The Plain Dealer (Cleveland)**

May 2, 2006

### **Browns pad roster with local free agents**

Two local players, Akron's Charlton Keith and Cleveland's Steve Sanders, are among a handful of undrafted free agents signed in the past two days by the Browns.

Keith, a defensive end from Buchtel, made first-team all-Big 12 at Kansas and set a school record in tackles for loss.

Sanders, from Cleveland's East High, was a receiver at Bowling Green.

Other free-agent rookies signed by the Browns were Tennessee offensive lineman Rob Smith, Ferris State receiver Carlton Brewster, Wake Forest running back Chris Barclay and Washington State punter Kyle Basler, who joins former teammate Jerome Harrison, the Browns' fifth-round pick.

"[Basler] can also play as a backup quarterback," said his agent, Cameron Foster. "At the [NFL scouting] combine, he performed 21 bench-press reps."

Sanders, a former East High track star, became one of quarterback Omar Jacobs' favorite flanker targets at Bowling Green.

"The Browns were looking at me," Sanders said. "I guess I've been on their board all the while. I had a lot of teams looking at me. But I've been a Browns fan all my life, and it's good to get a chance to play for the hometown team."

Sanders was on a pass-catching tear early in his senior season, but a shoulder injury limited his production. The 6-3, 205-pound receiver still finished with 55 catches for 855 yards, a 15.3 yards-per-catch average and 14 touchdown receptions as a senior.

He said his size and ability to make the tough catch caught Cleveland's eye.

"Personally, I want to gain a few more pounds, get in that 215- [pound], 220 range," he said.

Interestingly, one of Sanders' drawbacks is his speed, which is the one thing that landed him at BG.

"Yeah, I get overlooked in that department," he said. "A lot of teams say I am not very explosive. But one of my strengths is my endurance."

"In the fourth quarter when those other guys are losing those 4.3s and 4.4s because their legs are getting heavy, I'm still a 4.5 all game long."

This is the second-straight season the Browns looked hard at talent out of the Mid-American Conference as free agents. Last year, the Browns signed free agent Joshua Cribbs from Kent State.

"I had to fight my way into college," Sanders said. "And now I'll have to fight my way into the NFL."

The players will join the rest of the draft picks at the Browns mini-camp this weekend in Berea.

## USA Today

May 3, 2006

### **Professors want their classes 'unwired'**

NEW YORK - When Don Herzog, a law professor at the University of Michigan, asked his students questions last year, he was greeted with five seconds of silence and blank stares.

He knew something was wrong and suspected he knew why. So he went to observe his colleagues' classes - and was shocked at what he found.

"At any given moment in a law school class, literally 85 to 90% of the students were online," Professor Herzog says. "And what were they doing online? They were reading *The New York Times*; they were shopping for clothes at Eddie Bauer; they were looking for an apartment to rent in San Francisco when their new job started.... And I was just stunned."

Wireless Internet access at universities was once thought to be a clear-cut asset to education. But now a growing number of graduate schools - after investing a fortune in the technology - are blocking Web access to students in class because of complaints from professors.

Herzog first went on the offensive in his own law classes, banning laptops for a day as an experiment. The result, he says, was a "dream" discussion with students that led him to advocate more sweeping changes.

This school year, the University of Michigan Law School became the latest graduate school to block wireless Internet access to students in class, joining law schools at UCLA and the University of Virginia.

The problem professors face is "continuous partial attention," an expression coined by Linda Stone, a former Microsoft executive, to describe how people check e-mail and try to listen to someone at the same time.

"As a teacher, you can tell when someone is there, but it's just their body that is there," says Douglas Haneline, a professor of English literature at Ferris State University in Grand Rapids, Mich. "Their face is on 'screensaver,' so to speak, because what they are really doing is checking their e-mail."

Like most professors, Mr. Haneline wants to be flexible about computer use in class. At the same time, when it comes to holding face-to-face discussions about a poem, he wants to see a student's face - not a laptop screen.

A growing number of professors now want computers - not just the Internet - out of class. Two professors at Harvard Law School have independently banned laptops in their classes, and many other law professors around the country have done the same.

For some, the issue comes down to learning styles. Professor June Entman of the University of Memphis Law School in Tennessee says some students with laptops end up typing every word said in class.

"When you focus primarily on transcribing everything said, you are not making good use of the class as a practice opportunity," she wrote in an e-mail to her law students, explaining her decision to ban laptops.

Law school students say laptops are good for taking neat notes and e-mailing them to friends who miss class. Laptop note-taking is still largely a graduate-school phenomenon, but the practice will probably spread to undergrads - unless teachers balk.

"It would have upset me if they had banned computers at Michigan," says University of Michigan Law School student Michael Jacobson. "I think my laptop has enhanced my study skills in that I'm able to capture a lot of what's said during class."

Educational assets aside, the main issue for graduate students with banning technology is their freedom - the freedom to use a tool that can be useful in class.

"If [the] Internet is distracting in law school," wrote second-year Harvard Law student Bryan Choi, "it will be just as distracting in the real world, and if Internet is helpful in the real world, it can be just as helpful in law school."

The UCLA Anderson School of Management realized the futility of blocking Internet access last year. In 2004, when it began offering wireless, it installed blocking devices in classrooms.

Last year, however, the school decided to remove the block.

"We all came to realize that if students wanted to communicate electronically, they could do so by hooking up their cell phones to their laptops or by just text messaging," wrote Susan Gutman, an official at the school. "In some ways, student behavior is the same as it ever was. In the old days, they chatted with each other, passed notes, read the newspaper, or did other work in class.... Now they surf, IM, and e-mail or play solitaire. The issue is behavioral."

Supporters of computers in the classroom emphasize useful ways that computers can be used in class, such as a program that lets professors ask questions of students and receive responses electronically to see how well they understand a lecture.

Professor Steven Smith, a psychology professor at Texas A&M University in College Station is "delighted" when students use laptops in class to access lecture outlines posted on course websites.

This may be the wave of the future. According to one recent study by the Campus Computing Project, more than one-quarter of university campuses have campus-wide wireless networks. That portion grew from one-fifth in 2004 and only 3.8% in 2000.

As wireless Internet access expands on campuses, the next frontline for laptop use may be undergraduate classrooms, where, for whatever reason, most students still don't use them in class.

"Every single person I have ever seen bring a computer to class has also surfed the Web or been on IM," says Amy Kornell, an undergraduate at the University of California at Davis. "I saw one girl watch a whole episode of Gray's Anatomy. But I would guess that solitaire is the most popular game."

## **The Detroit News**

May 3, 2006

### **School pins hope on state aid**

MARION TOWNSHIP -- As Howell Public Schools officials watched the final steel beam put into place at Parker High School, questions lingered as to whether there will be enough state funding to open the school in fall 2007.

Although district officials are unsure of the exact amount they will receive, the district said an increase in state aid is needed or the school may not open.

Rick Terres, associate superintendent of finance, said the district is exploring several options to ensure an increase to allow Parker High to open. Howell ranks near the bottom in the state -- 699 out of 735 -- among per-student funding, with an average \$6,875 per pupil. "We're hoping that it improves," Terres said. "Those with the lowest (per-pupil funding) may get some additional help. I'm more optimistic than I've been."

The \$72 million used to construct the school comes from a \$97.62 million bond issued in 1993. Those funds can't be allocated toward the school's operating costs.

During a "topping out" ceremony last week, in which school officials celebrated the completion of the building's structure, Superintendent Chuck Breiner pointed out the need for the school in the growing district.

Howell High School is beyond capacity, with 1,900 students in 10th through 12th grades. About 600 ninth-graders attend classes at a former middle school now referred to as the freshman campus.

The 305,000-square-foot Parker High would accommodate about 1,300 students. The school is on Wright Road just east of D-19 and about four miles from Howell High.

"With the splitting of a school, there is some sadness to that," Breiner said, adding that there will be twice the opportunity for student activities. Upperclassmen will be allowed to travel between the two campuses for classes.

"The smaller the environment, the richer the environment," he said.

When Parker opens, students will have the option of taking college courses through Ferris State University and Lansing Community College. Plans also include leasing space to a bank, health clinic and restaurant.



## **Pioneer**

May 4, 2006

### **Ferris to award more than 1,500 degrees Friday, Saturday**

BIG RAPIDS - Nearly 2,000 Ferris State University students are eligible for degrees during the university's Spring Commencement ceremonies Friday and Saturday.

About 11,500 of those students are expected to participate in five ceremonies over the two-day span. All ceremonies will take place in the Convocation Center of the Ewigleben Sports Complex - also known as Wink Arena.

The College of Allied Health Sciences will graduate on Friday at 3:30 p.m. on Friday at 7 p.m., the College of Arts & Sciences, College of Pharmacy and the FSU - Grand Rapids/ Industry Technology Management Program will graduate. All other Grand Rapids degree recipients will walk with the affiliated college.

Saturday, the College of Education and Human Services and Michigan College of Optometry will graduate at 9 a.m. the College of Technology at 12:30 p.m. and the College of Business at 4 p.m. Each ceremony is expected to be about one and a half hours long; doors open for guests an hour before the ceremony begins. Tickets for commencement are required and each graduate receives eight tickets.

Serving as commencement speakers will be the two recipients of honorary doctoral degrees, Mike Daley and Jim Klett. Both men will speak Saturday, Daley at the 9 a.m. commencement and Klett at the 12:30 p.m. ceremony.

Daley, a distinguished graduate of Ferris, will receive his honorary doctorate in business and industry. He earned both his Bachelor of Science and Associate of Applied Science at Ferris in the 1970s. His relationship with the university continued as he provided instruction in optical technology for Ferris.

Daley began his career with Essilor of America in 1976, serving as a Varilux Corp. sales consultant. He soon received several promotions within Varilux Corp., including positions as assistant technical manager, product manager, director of technical services, vice president of laboratory operations and vice president of sales. In 1989, Daley became president of Varilux Corp. In 1996, Daley was appointed president and COO of Essilor of America's United States Lens Division, known as Essilor Lenses, following the merger of Varilux Corp. with Essilor of America.

Daley's relationship with Ferris has facilitated the establishment of an Ophthalmic Fabrication Laboratory in the Michigan College of Optometry. His professional career includes distinguished service, both past and present, on numerous boards in the opticianry and optometric fields. His service on the Boards of Governors and Directors for blindness prevention agencies is truly reflective of his passion and commitment to his industry.

Klett also will be recognized in the area of business and industry with his honorary degree. A longtime leader in the asphalt paving industry, Klett is an active member and past president of both the Michigan Road Builders Association and Michigan Asphalt Paving Association.

He has been an effective advocate on behalf of his industry in both Lansing and Washington and' has served as president of Klett Construction for many years.

Throughout his career, Klett has been deeply involved with Ferris' construction programs. He is the current chairman of the College, of Technology's Construction Technology and Management Advisory Committee. In September 2004, Klett was the construction industry representative for the American Council for Construction Education's site visit for re-accreditation of the university's. Bachelor of Science in Construction Management.

In 2003, he donated significant funds on behalf of his family for the procurement of state-of-the-art equipment in the materials laboratory located within the Granger Center for Construction and HVACR.

Further, his personal efforts generated additional funds for the lab from industry partners. In recognition of his efforts, on April 14, 2004, the university officially dedicated the Klett Family Materials Laboratory.

Klett has been chairman of the National Asphalt Paving Association Research and Education Foundation Scholarship Program Committee since 2002 and currently serves on the Workforce Development Committee of Western Michigan.

## **Pioneer**

May 4, 2006

### **Congratulations to Ferris State graduates**

Friday and Saturday about 1,500 Ferris State University students will take part in five separate graduation ceremonies.

They are among nearly 2,000 Ferris students eligible for degrees during the university's Spring Commencement exercises.

All five ceremonies will take place at Wink Arena with two Friday and three more Saturday.

Moms and dads, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters, other relatives and friends will pack the arena for each ceremony to witness special moments in the lives of the students.

Following the ceremonies, a majority of the graduates will take their degrees and begin a new phase in their lives as members of this country's workforce. Others will continue their studies here at FSU or at other universities to obtain higher level degrees. All of them will learn - that education never ends, whether on the job or back in school. Learning is a lifelong adventure.

Yet, it is important to recognize achievements in all aspects of life. That's exactly what the university, relatives and friends will be doing over the next couple days - recognizing important milestones in the lives of students who have worked so hard to earn associates, bachelors and masters degrees at FSU.

We, too, offer our congratulations to the graduates who have been part of our community for the past few years.

We know that some will find jobs in our area and continue their residency in our community, just as many other graduates have done over the years.

Most, however, will move on to other communities here in Michigan, around the nation and even in other parts of the world.

We hope they all have enjoyed their experiences here in our rural west-central Michigan community and will return for frequent visits as alumni and friends of FSU and Big Rapids.

## Pioneer

May 5, 2006

### **University contributes 30,000 student volunteer hours to community**

BIG RAPIDS - As the winter semester winds down and Ferris State University students prepare to exit Big Rapids, they leave behind an invisible gift - more than 30,000 hours of volunteer service to the community.

During the 2005-06 school year, Ferris students volunteered 18,064 hours through registered student organizations such as fraternities or service groups and 12,201 hours as individuals interested in giving back. Add in 12 hours of volunteer work by faculty and staff and the grand total - 30,277 volunteer hours - appears on the bottom line of tally sheets in the Student Volunteer Center.

And that's not all. Donations of money and goods for the academic year total \$26,272.28.

"I'm so proud," said Cindy Horn, director of student leadership and activities.

"(Volunteer hours) have increased every year I have been involved, with this office, and I started as a student' in 1999. I think our total last year at this time was pretty close - about 27,000 (hours)."

While the numbers may look impressive, Horn is sure they are lower than actual totals.

"Think about the people doing this service and not reporting it," she said. "I know that's happening.... We had someone complete 150 hours in one semester and not report any of it. I know it happened because I worked with the person."

Dan Campbell, student manager of the volunteer center, acknowledged some hours were likely from various program requirements but most were not.

"I think a lot of people registered (through the volunteer center) do it out of their own good will.... The honors program requires 15 hours per semester (per student), and that's some, but that's definitely not all of (the hours)."

Students find volunteer opportunities through three main avenues, Campbell said. Either they start a project based on a need they know about through their friends and family, take part in a philanthropic service event through their registered student organization or go to the volunteer center's online listing of agencies requesting volunteers to choose a service site.

The majority of volunteer hours are spent in the Big Rapids community off-campus, Campbell continued.

"I know a lot of people who invest a lot in the community," he said.

Horn attributes the high number of volunteer hours to some changes in the reporting system and to leadership changes at the university.

The system for volunteers to report their hours is now online, easing the paper hassle and responsibility to verify hours for students.

"Before, we took them at their word," Horn said. "Now, we actually make contact with the agencies (to verify service)."

Employees of Horn's office validate all submissions of volunteer hours. To be counted, the student must have actually volunteered when, where and how long they claimed to and have done an acceptable job while they were there.

"It's taken a lot of work out of the students' hand on proof of volunteering," Horn said of the new system.

"My staff does the legwork. It's a really, really good system. It's benefited us in so many ways."

The verification system also allows the volunteer center to better understand the needs of the county and determine if they are successful in meeting those needs, Horn added.

Adding to the easier reporting system is a change in campus culture stemming from the highest levels of administration, Horn added.

One of FSU President David Eisler's three foundations for Ferris is the creation of an engaged campus.

"He's pushing not just academics but also service," Horn said. "When (students) graduate, people out there are looking for that civic engagement."

The Student Volunteer Center is always looking for additional opportunities for students to volunteer.

Any agency wishing to be listed as a possibility or anyone wishing more information about the center can contact the office by phone at (231) 591-2140, by email at student [volunteercenter@ferris.edu](mailto:volunteercenter@ferris.edu), or by mail at Student Volunteer Center, 805 Campus Dr., Rankin 164, Big Rapids, MI 49307.

## **Pioneer**

May 5, 2006

### **Ecuador: Trouble in Paradise presentation Saturday**

BIG RAPIDS - Ecuador: Trouble in Paradise presentation at Artworks beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday. The presentation, by Ron Haladyna, is free and open to the public.

Haladyna, a professor of Spanish at Ferris State University, spent his 2004-05 sabbatical in South America collecting materials for several anthologies of Spanish American poets.

During his four month stay in Quito, Ecuador, he was able to straddle the Equator, take tango lessons, view the public demonstrations leading to the overthrow of President Lucho Gutierrez, visit the colonial city of Cuenca and fly out to the Galapagos Islands.

During his presentation, which includes accompanying music, he will share all of these experiences.

Other upcoming events include:

- Tall ships presentation by Thad Koza May 16;
- Jerry Dennis visits Big Rapids High School June 9 at 7 p.m.; and
- Tall ship presentation July 23.

For more information, call (231) 796-9365 or (231) 796-2420.

## **The Pioneer**

May 6 & 7, 2006

### **Local officers invite public to police memorial service Tuesday**

Remembering the fallen is one part of the Central West Michigan Police Memorial Ceremony that begins at 9 a.m. Tuesday in front of FLITE library on the campus of Ferris State University.

The other component of the service is to strengthen and reaffirm ties between law enforcement officers and the community.

"I think that's an important element - officers stand a little taller when they see the community supports them," said Marty Bledsoe, chief of the Ferris State University Department of Public Safety. "It gives the public the opportunity to walk up to us, to meet us or to say thank-you."

Bledsoe doesn't downplay the importance of the event as a memorial, however.

"There's an honoring element for those who have lost their lives.... It lets us stand with our fellow officers ... we're really in this fight together," he said.

Bledsoe introduced the annual police memorial service to the community in 2004 after he assumed leadership of FSU DPS in 2003.

"This was prompted by a conversation between Sheriff (John) Sonntag and me," Bledsoe said. "This was looked at as a wonderful way for our officers and their families to see and feel directly the outpouring of community support and respect paid for the difficult job they do.

Also, after 30 years in law enforcement I have seen how well received this is by the community as it impresses upon them that they are in good hands where critical incidents are concerned. It is always comforting to know we are in good hands during emergencies."

Sonntag will serve as presenter for this year's ceremony, which is part of a larger recognition begun by President John F. Kennedy in 1962 with the creation of National Police Week, May 14 through 20, and National Police Officers' Memorial Day, May 15. The local service comes on the heels of the 13th annual Michigan Law Enforcement Officers Candlelight Memorial Service on the Capitol steps in Lansing Monday evening at 7 p.m.

Big Rapids Mayor Edward Burch has signed a proclamation for the city to observe those national events on a local scale. The city has had an observance for some time, but it was a smaller scale, said Frank West, Big Rapids Department of Public Safety deputy director.

"For the last three years, they've really stepped it up.... Some schools brought their students last year. We've invited some to come this year. It's really nice (to have) interaction with them."

Representatives from the Ferris police, city police, Mecosta County Sheriff Department, Michigan State Police and other agencies will participate in the event Tuesday.

Following a welcome address by FSU President David Eisler, former FSU DPS interim director Mike Cilibraise will speak. An honor guard, led by a police dog and bagpipe-playing officers will bring in a rider-less horse to symbolize police officers who have lost their lives in the performance of their duties.

One such officer is Jessica Ann Nagle-Wilson, who was killed July 28, 2002, in the line of duty. The Hazel Park police officer was responding to an animal complaint when a man shot her.

Nagle-Wilson, along with Officer Dean Whitehead, Lansing Police Department, and Trooper Byron Egelski, Michigan State Police, is one of three Ferris criminal justice students to die in the line of duty.

"She was one of those people you want in the profession," West said. "She was a great representative of what you want as a police officer."

West met Nagle-Wilson through the criminal justice program when he taught a firearms class.

"Her brother, Rob Nagle worked for me as a service officer," West recalled. "I remember as he was graduating, he was joking about his little sister was going to be a 'copper' too."

In the event of rain, the ceremony will take place under the canopy in front of FLITE.



## **Pioneer**

May 6 & 7, 2006

### **Ferris Foundation launches charitable gift annuity program**

BIG RAPIDS - The Ferris Foundation has announced a new gift option available to individuals age 55 or older - the charitable gift annuity program.

A charitable gift annuity is a contract between the foundation and a donor whereby the foundation promises to pay the donor a fixed amount annually for life in exchange for a donor's irrevocable gift of assets.

Emeriti Association Vice President and emeriti faculty member Jack Fleming, along with his wife, Rita, assisted the foundation in starting this program and also are its first annuitants.

We had been getting charitable gift annuity requests from other colleges in Michigan," said Jack Fleming. "But because Ferris is so close to my heart, I wanted to establish something similar at Ferris that would allow myself and others to put the power in our own hands and help the university and its students as we see fit. It's a win-win situation for everyone in my book," added Fleming.

Details of the program include: fixed income guaranteed by the foundation; annuity rates based upon the age(s) of the income beneficiaries gift is irrevocable; no more than two income beneficiaries may be named; minimum age to establish a charitable gift annuity is 55; the minimum gift to establish a charitable gift annuity is \$5,000; and charitable income tax deduction applies for a portion of the gift and a portion of the annuity income is considered a tax-free return of principal.

"With this charitable gift annuity, my money is protected no one can touch it. And, it's working for me and paying me while I'm still alive it was just too good to pass up,' Fleming said.

For more information on the charitable gift annuity program contact the Ferris Foundation at (231) 591-2365 or [fsufdn@ferris.edu](mailto:fsufdn@ferris.edu).

## **Pioneer**

May 6 & 7, 2006

### **Ferris professor plans project to build network to sustain wild rice**

BIG RAPIDS - Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin have significant populations of wild rice, or manoomin, as the Ojibwe Indians call it. Wild rice populations, however, have declined throughout much of the plant's native range due in large part to human impacts. In an effort to share information and ultimately restore rice populations, Dr. Scott Herron, an assistant biology professor at Ferris State University, has been planning a series of community meetings and a conference in coalition with the Native American communities and others throughout Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. This coalition includes universities, community colleges, non-profits, tribal and local governments, and federal and state agencies.

Community meetings are being scheduled in communities that contain wild rice populations around Michigan. They will begin as early as this spring in Houghton Lake, Manistee, Mount Pleasant, Muskegon, Sault Sainte Marie and Watersmeet. The series of meetings will identify local issues related to wild rice ecosystems and population, and gather information for use in coordinating management, use and restoration of wild rice. While the community meetings are currently focused in Michigan, it is hoped that they can provide a template for similar meetings in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

The Wild Rice Restoration and Preservation Conference will take place Aug. 8 through 10. The planning efforts for this regional conference are being co-chaired by Herron and Patrick Robinson, Environmental Restoration outreach coordinator for the University of Wisconsin Extension and the Great Lakes Regional Water Program, a partnership between Land Grant universities and the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. The conference is being hosted by the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Watersmeet and will be held at the Lac Vieux, Desert Resort and Casino.

The conference steering committee hopes that representation from all three states attend the conference and help in reflecting the conference theme of "Sharing Perspectives and Building Community." This joining together brings hopes that each person will share knowledge and take away new knowledge about wild rice.

At the conference, training will be given in the areas of wild rice identification, harvesting, management of abundant and threatened species of wild rice, restoration, processing, recipes, culture and the role wild rice plays in Ojibwe spirituality. There also will be opportunities to learn about the latest issues related to commercial production of wild rice.

"All people that have interacted with wild rice or its ecosystems have an important story that we are interested in hearing," said Herron. "You will be able to hear other

people's stories about rice ecosystems, good and bad, and share your stories, in an effort to help our wild rice coalition compile local issues related to rice for future management and restoration plans."

Robinson added, "We truly hope that this conference further stimulates ongoing collaborative efforts and generates future cooperation. It will take a community effort built upon shared understanding to ensure that wild rice is not only part of our present, but also a thriving part of our future."

For more information on the wild rice conference call Herron at (231) 591-2087, [herronsn@ferris.edu](mailto:herronsn@ferris.edu), or Robinson at (920) 465-2175, [Patrick.robinson@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:Patrick.robinson@ces.uwex.edu).

## **Pioneer**

May 6 & 7, 2006

### **Barnum profiled in national watercolor publication**

Featured artist in a photo, Ferris State University Resident Artist and art professor Robert Barnum found a national audience when he was profiled in a national art magazine, "Watercolor Magic." Barnum is featured on page 34 of the April issue in an article entitled "Social Distortion," about his paintings of Middle American life. In a courtesy photo, Barnum stands near one of his recent paintings.

## **Pioneer**

May 8, 2006

### **More than 1,500 graduate from FSU**

BIG RAPIDS - Ferris State University officials awarded more than 1,500 diplomas to graduates and presented honorary doctoral degrees to two recipients during the university's annual spring commencement exercises in Wink Arena Friday and Saturday.

More than 1,500 students of the nearly 2,000 eligible graduates participated in five ceremonies recognizing those who completed graduation requirements during the 2005-06 academic year.

The Ferris Board of Trustees conferred honorary doctoral degrees upon Mike Daley (business and industry) and Jim Klett (business and industry). A distinguished graduate of Ferris, Daley earned both his Bachelor of Science and Associate of Applied Science at Ferris in the 1970s. His relationship with the University continued as he provided instruction in Optical Technology for "Ferris.

In 2003, Klett donated significant funds on behalf of his family for the procurement of state-of-the-art equipment in the materials laboratory located within the Granger Center for Construction and HVACR. Further, his personal efforts generated additional funds for the lab from industry partners. In recognition of his efforts, on April 14, 2004, the University officially dedicated the Klett Family Materials Laboratory.

## **Port Huron Times Herald**

May 8, 2006

### **Peyerck lands Ferris State track honor**

Corey Peyerck had a busy weekend in Big Rapids.

The 2002 Marysville graduate ran three events in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference track and field meet Thursday and Friday. He marched Saturday in the Ferris State University graduation.

Sunday afternoon, Corey and his older brother, Scott, were loading a truck with his belongs for a trip back to Marysville.

"I've enjoyed my years of running up here," said Peyerck, electrical engineering major. "I'm not going to miss the classes, but I will miss training.

"I'll still be back to help out in some way."

Peyerck, who turns 23 on Friday, received the Bulldog Pride Award April 30 during a team banquet. The honor is voted on by the coaches and team members.

The award goes to the individual who is a team leader and is most dedicated, Peyerck said. "I was shocked and awfully glad I won it," he said. "I was a little surprised, but I thought I had a chance to win the award because I was the only senior male on the team.

"I think it's the best award given out for the track team."

Peyerck competed in the 200- and 400-meter dashes. He also ran a leg of the 1,600 relay team, which placed seventh.

"Both Thursday and Friday were tough days for competing because it was so windy," Peyerck said. "The times were not great at all.

"I didn't have a very good race in the 200, but thought I did well in the 400. It also was nice to place in the 1,600 relay considering we had two different guys on the team."

# The Flint Journal

May 8, 2006

## **Local golfers lead Ferris into nationals**

Missy Ward never had to worry about whether or not she was good enough to make Linden's golf team.

Her standing as the Metro League's premier golfer was also never jeopardy. Ward was a three-time AllMetro first-team pick and she easily took medalist honors at the first five Metro tournaments.

Even outside the Metro, Ward had few peers. As a senior, she captured the Division 2 state championship by a 12-stroke margin.

Her status as the top golfer in her league and division came to a quit halt when she arrived at Ferris State University in the fall of 2004.

All of a sudden, the other girls on her team were as good as she was. She finished her first season on the Bulldogs' squad with the fifth-best stroke average.

"It's a different situation," Ward said. "The scores are so much better at tournaments. It helped me realize there are a lot better golfers than me."

While there was some shock at first, Ward has since made the adjustment.

She has dropped almost three strokes from her average and she shot a 79-80-80-239 to finish a team-best fifth place at the NCAA Division II regional tournament May 1-2 in Findlay, Ohio.

Another local player for Ferris State, sophomore Becky Hoffman of Swartz Creek, was the team's second golfer at the regional with a 240 score.

Ward and Hoffman will lead FSU to its second straight appearance at the NCAA Division II championship Wednesday through Saturday at The Meadows Golf Club in Allendale.

"Mentally, (Ward) knows she can go out and shoot a good score no matter what," FSU golf coach Brad Bedortha said. "She's really matured into the player I thought she would be."

One of the other hurdles she had to clear at FSU was not to worry about the external factors surrounding her game. She had to learn to just play golf.

The 20-year-old doesn't like to let her teammates down and she puts a lot of pressure on herself to perform well for them.

What has eased the burden for her this spring is the Bulldogs have a pretty deep team. FSU captured three of the top eight scores at the regional tournament.

"I've come a long way mentally," Ward said. "I've worked hard on my swing forever. It all comes down to my head in these tournaments."

In the 11 tournaments she's played, Ward has finished in the top 10 spots six times, including five top fives. She won her first collegiate tournament when she shot an 81-76-157 to win the Ashland Invitational April 14-15 in Ashland, Ohio.

Ward earned her second straight spot on the All-GLIAC first team when she carded a 75-78-77-230 to take fourth place at the GLIAC championships April 22-23 in Midland. The 5-foot-7 sophomore ranks second on the Bulldogs' team with a 78.56 average.

"I'm striking the ball a lot better," Ward said. "I'm hitting the ball better than I ever have."

Ward's next goal is to try to improve on her score from last year's national tournament where she tied for 34th place with a 72-hole total of 325.



# **Furniture World Magazine**

May 8, 2006

## **2006 ASFD Design Contest Award Winners Announced**

The American Society of Furniture Designers presented their annual 2006 David Kline Memorial Scholarship contest winners last week during the High Point Spring Market dinner held at the High Point Country Club on Thursday evening. Hafele America Co., supplier of functional and decorative cabinet, furniture and architectural builders hardware co-sponsored the contest and made the formal award presentations to the three top winners who are all students at Kendall College of Art & Design (KCAD) located in Grand Rapids, Mi.

Contest application kits were sent to colleges across the Country whereas eligible design students were asked to design a piece of furniture utilizing Hafele's UV Glass Bonding Hardware.

The First Place Award of \$3,500 went to Thor Taber for his "Dionysus" Bar (photo attached). The judges noted that Thor used the required Hafele hardware multiple times in his "creative, functional, uniquely styled cabinet design."

Lisa Koskela received the \$1,000 Second Place Award for her "Grace Console" entry. Judges stated that the entry included a "great explanation of product purpose; and the design was very appealing, elegant but simple."

Diane McCabe received the \$500 Honorable Mention Award for the second year in a row with her entry entitled "UV Bonded Cart Display." The judges said that her understanding of the Hafele product was superb!

The design has great potential for numerous pieces. Good for retail, or home. "The Judges for the Contest included Philip Martin, director of marketing, Hafele; Philip Behrens, ASFD vice president and president of Natura Design; Larry Chilton, Director of Marketing, Pennsylvania House; Gray Pennell, Merchandising Director, Furnitureland South; and Dr. Richard Bennington, Director, Home Furnishings Programs, High Point University.

The ASFD annual scholarship contest was named in honor of the late David Kline, who was a West Coast designer and former ASFD president during the late nineties. Hafele America Co. is a Corporate Member of ASFD and this is the third consecutive year of their scholarship co-sponsorship.