

# Missouri *Western*

Winter 2008



***Western  
receives largest  
gift in history***  
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## **The Missouri Western Magazine**

is a publication of the University Advancement Office  
for alumni and friends of  
Missouri Western State University  
and the St. Joseph Junior College.

■  
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Missouri Western State University is an equal opportunity institution.



## **President's Perspective**

The University's Christopher S. "Kit" Bond Science and Technology Incubator is under construction. Western will provide support for up to 15 high-technology firms in the incubator, and our students will have more opportunities to apply what they learn in the classroom to "real life" business and industrial solutions (page 7).

As the number of students majoring in science and mathematics continues to increase at Western (enrollment has almost tripled since 1969), we will break ground for the renovation and expansion of Agenstein Hall. Funded by a \$30.1 million appropriation from the state of Missouri and a \$5 million private gift from Wes and Patsy Remington of St. Joseph, the project will add a second building; expand and improve laboratory and classroom space; and create an environment in which students will be challenged to be inclusive rather than exclusive, to work individually and in teams, and to meet today's scientific challenges (page 15).

As a result, our students will be well prepared for graduate study and for work in business, industry, and the professions far into the future. In truth, they will be the beneficiaries of the "magic circle of learning" that Western has provided for students since its founding in 1915.

Yours sincerely,

James J. Scanlon  
President

### **Dear Friends,**

In 1971, Professor Evan Agenstein wrote to the St. Joseph News-Press that we should *"keep the magic circle of learning at Missouri Western inclusive rather than exclusive, where respect for the individual is given priority, and all may learn the meaning of the words – integrity, honesty, reliability, and hope."* (page 18.)

More than three decades later, we at Western continue to provide our students with an education that is inclusive rather than exclusive. We respect students, individually and collectively, for their gifts, talents, and abilities. We expect honesty and integrity of ourselves and our students. We offer the hope of a better future through high quality education for our students.

In fact, our students are achieving national and international recognition for the quality of their work. They are participating in study away programs which focus on serving others, as our nursing students did this past summer in Honduras (page 4). They are also making an impact on the St. Joseph community. For example, what started out as a research project focusing on the effectiveness of antibiotics in society, turned into a student-led preservation project of Mount Mora Cemetery, a St. Joseph landmark (page 9).

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#### On the cover:

Wes and Patsy '79 Remington and Dr. James Scanlon look over plans for the renovation and expansion of Agenstein Hall. The Remingtons donated \$5 million to the project.

Photo: Eric Callow '97/Double E Images







## Master's programs underway

Last fall, the university launched its master of applied science (MAS) degree program, and for the first time in Western's history, graduate students are teaching chemistry labs.

Deb Wright '07, of Cameron, Mo.; Darcie Elder '07, Gallatin, Mo.; and LeeAnn Schuster '06, of Hiawatha, Kan.; are graduate assistants for the chemistry department. They earn a stipend for the semester and their tuition is waived.

"It's a really unique opportunity and I couldn't pass it up," said Deb.

Deb, who was 41 when she started her undergraduate studies at Western, believes that her master's degree will advance her career five years.

"That's a good thing at my age," she said with a laugh. "It's really going to pay off. It's a neat program and a good opportunity

for anyone who wants to further themselves."

She hopes to be a lab manager and research coordinator someday.

Fifty-one students are enrolled in the MAS program and the graduate certificate in the teaching of writing program.

Tabatha Proffitt '05, from Savannah, Mo., is a quality control chemist at Albaugh Inc. in St. Joseph, Mo. She enrolled in the program to help advance her career, and is one of five from Albaugh in the program.

"A master's degree gives you more of an edge in the job market," Tabatha said.

She said the business classes that are part of the degree are a huge benefit.

"I could have put it (getting her master's) off, but unless you take the challenge, you'll never get to the end," said Tabatha. "And the end has so many benefits." ■

## Two more graduate programs approved

The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education approved two new graduate programs to begin in fall 2008: a Master of Applied Science (MAS) in Assessment and a Master of Applied Arts (MAA). Each degree program will include two options.

The MAA program will prepare students for jobs in the rapidly growing Internet design and development industry, and the changing world of journalism. The options are integrated media and convergent media.

For the MAS in Assessment, the options will be learning improvement and writing.

"These options will give educators and literacy professionals better tools to assess student learning," said Dr. Jeanne Daffron, interim dean of graduate studies.

Other options may be added in the future to address assessment in other professional fields, such as nonprofits and health care, Jeanne said.

"The university has a plan to develop graduate education needed by our region and we are pursuing that plan thoughtfully and deliberately," she said. ■



*Graduate assistant Darcie Elder '07, works with a student in the Chemistry 101 lab she teaches.*





# Search for new university president

A screening committee spent the Fall 2007 semester searching for a new president for Western, as Dr. James Scanlon announced his retirement last April, effective June 30, 2008.

R.H. Perry & Associates (RHPA), an executive search firm for colleges and universities headquartered in Washington, D.C., was hired as a consultant to the committee. Dr. Allen E. Koenig, senior consultant with RHPA, spent three days on campus in September, meeting with groups of staff, faculty, administrators, the Board of Governors and other community members to gather information to create an executive search profile

for prospective candidates. The profile described the university, its accomplishments under current president Dr. Scanlon, the challenges facing the next president and the qualifications required.

"People attending the meetings expressed a variety of views about Western and its future," said Patt Lilly, vice chair of the Board of Governors and chair of the 20-member presidential screening committee. "Those perspectives were reflected in the search profile, helping us find the best match possible."

Advertising of the position began in September as well, and the committee planned to bring prospective candidates to campus by year's end.

The 20-member screening committee includes one student, four faculty members, two staff members, four administrators and nine community members, including members of the Board of Governors, Foundation Board, Alumni Association Board and Gold Coat Board.

"Community representation was important to the Board as we talked about how to structure the committee," said board chair Dirck Clark '85. "Western plays a key role in the educational, social and economic development of the region and we wanted to be sure the selection process reflected that." ■

## Policing Institute receives \$714,010 grant

The Missouri Regional Community Policing Institute (MO-RCPI) at Western now has a national mission, thanks to a \$714,010 grant from the federal Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Working with the 27-member RCPI national network, the money will be used to coordinate and deliver training nationally in support of efforts to prevent crime, drug abuse, and violence.

Since it was founded in 1997, the institute has facilitated training sessions and conferences for more than 700 Missouri law enforcement agencies, 20,000 law enforcement officers and 6,500 community members. ■



*Last summer, area elementary and middle school students enjoyed a week of art classes and activities at Artscape, an annual event sponsored by the Western Institute.*



# NURSING STUDENTS TAKE SKILLS WAY BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Eleven nursing students' learning experiences went way beyond the classroom last summer when they traveled on a medical mission 1,700 miles from home. The students and two instructors set up makeshift clinics and treated patients in several villages in Honduras.

"I fell in love with all the babies," said Jennifer Smith, senior from Kansas City, Mo. "I would love to go back; I feel like we made a difference."

The 12-day adventure was a study of contrasts: beautiful beaches and lush scenery along with a two-hour roadblock while military police broke up a protest; snuggling adorable newborns along with gathering funds to enable an elderly man to receive treatment for his cancerous growth; responding to the needs of approximately 2,000 patients along with packing and unpacking several totes at seven different makeshift village clinics; making sure to drink bottled water along with teaching Hondurans how to sanitize their drinking water.

Senior Megan Jensen, from Nebraska City, Neb., said working in the different stations they set up at each clinic - medical, dental, triage, vision, parasite treatment, and pharmacy - was what she liked the best about the experience. She added that it was fun to work with the dentist, since that was something she had never had the opportunity to do before.



*Nursing student Jennifer Smith.*

Courtney Luke, senior from Liberty, Mo., said it was quite an experience working with the dentist since patients just sat in a regular plastic chair, and the students shone flashlights in the patients' mouths.

Julie Baldwin, assistant professor of nursing who accompanied the students along with Linda Judah '82 and '94, noted that students had to rethink their first aid lessons at the clinics. For example, in the United States we treat a sprained ankle with ice, she said, but in the remote Honduran villages, they don't have ready access to ice.

Senior Lorie Stephens, of Maryville, Mo., had a great time, and she said the doctors were very good about giving the Western students hands-on experience. "They knew we were there to learn."

Students also collected toothbrushes, bars of soap and vitamins before their journey, and they received enough to distribute to everyone they treated at the clinics. Lorie said several organizations and churches from the St. Joseph community donated.

Linda, who traveled on a mission trip to Honduras two years ago, said she hopes the experience will encourage the students to continue to help the less fortunate.

"This is service in an educational realm," said Linda, executive director of the Social Welfare Board in St. Joseph. "The students get to practice the skills they learned in school, but apply them to someone else's culture."

*Nursing students took their skills a world away when they traveled to Honduras last summer.*







Julie said she hopes to repeat the trip in two years. Honduras is a good destination, she said, because travel costs were reasonable and there is great need for medical care there. Many of the villages they served are three hours from the nearest hospital.

"I absolutely loved it and would do it again in a heartbeat," said Julie. "It was amazing experiencing the people and the culture, and the students were awesome."

The students said they are ready to go again. They admitted their housing accommodations weren't as bad as they

had expected, and they did get a (lukewarm) shower every day.

"The patients are so grateful, even if you didn't help them that much," said

Megan. "It is so fulfilling."

"Honduras provided a very rich opportunity and experience," said Julie. ■



## Student wins big on Wheel of Fortune

The wheel was smaller than she expected. Vanna and Pat were very nice. The level of stress was incredible, but it was still an outstanding experience. Those were the impressions of Becki Burrell, a senior elementary education major from St. Joseph, Mo., who won \$10,000 on Wheel of Fortune last fall.

"It was overwhelming and overstimulating. I'm surprised people can ever concentrate on the puzzle - that's the last thing you're thinking of," she said. "I was shaking the whole time. It was very intense."

"But," she added with a laugh, "I made 10 grand in 20 minutes, so I can't complain."

Six shows were filmed at the Los Angeles studio the day she competed. The contestants had to stay in a windowless room the entire morning before they began filming, but Becki said she enjoyed visiting with the other contestants.

Once the show aired in September, Becki said she was



Becki Burrell

shocked by the attention she received. People she didn't know called to congratulate her, and she has often overheard people talking about her when she's shopping.

"I had my 15 minutes of fame and just 15 minutes is fine with me."

She bought some jewelry, her husband bought some wood-working tools, and the rest of the winnings went to the bank and "Uncle Sam."

"I loved it," Becki said. "If you have a chance to do something different, be brave and do it!" ■



## Donaldson speaks at 14th Annual Convocation

ABC News veteran Sam Donaldson was the featured speaker at the Convocation on Critical Issues in October, speaking to an audience of approximately 2,500. He also attended a private reception, spoke to about 500 people at a dinner and had an informal question-and-answer session with about 20 student-leaders over breakfast. Sam is pictured with Dan Boulware, former Board of Regents president.





*The 2007 Phonathon callers appreciate all who contributed to the phonathon, held in October and November. Contributions to the phonathon support the Annual Fund.*

## 2007 Outstanding Employees

**E**ach year, Western honors Outstanding Administrators, Outstanding Staff Employees and Distinguished Professors. The recipients were honored at a dinner with Dr. James Scanlon, Western's president, and the Board of Governors.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO ...

#### Distinguished Professor

- Dr. James MacGregor, assistant professor of history

#### Outstanding Administrators

- Beth Wheeler '77, director of external relations
- Jeanne Daffron '75, associate vice president of academic and student affairs
- Jerry Pickman '85, director of development

#### Outstanding Staff Employees

- Wonda Berry '84, director of recreation services
- Trevor Brown, corporal, public safety
- Brett Esely '01, assistant athletic director - external relations

- Dawn Hansen, accountant, business office
- Kathy Kelly, administrative coordinator, student development
- Roxanna Lawing '99, foundation accounting director
- Ken Lewis, locksmith
- Ruby Mayes '97, systems administrator/programmer, information technology
- R.E. Moore, director of developmental math
- James Mulder, library supervisor
- Steve Saffell '99, math coordinator, center for academic support
- Tim Talbot '85, adult basic education teacher - WRDCC ■

## Campus KUDOS

- Junior **Harvey Jackson** had his untitled photo published in the "Best of College Photography Annual 2007," one of five percent chosen from more than 38,000 entries.
- **Dr. Kelly Henry**, associate professor of psychology, was named a finalist for the 2007 Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service-Learning.
- **Julie Baldwin**, instructor of nursing, was promoted from captain to major in the United States Air Force Reserves.
- **Teresa Harris**, assistant professor of art, had a piece accepted into the 25th Annual National Small Works Exhibition, one of the 75 chosen from more than 450 entries.
- **Anna Smith**, junior, in conjunction with **Dr. Sandie Seeger**, assistant professor of biology, and Dr. George Patrick from Andrew Taylor Still University, had an article published in the journal *Impulse*.
- The four-year programs in **construction and electronics engineering technology** have been re-accredited by the Technology Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology for six years, the maximum allowed by the accrediting organization. ■





# Incubator rises along interstate

**T**he new Christopher S. “Kit” Bond Science and Technology Incubator is taking shape and is on track for completion this summer, and work has begun to attract tenants. The building is located on campus west of Interstate 29.

Dr. Christopher Shove, executive director and dean of the Western Institute and grant writer for the \$2.5 million project, is working to develop seed capital to invest in those who would use the incubator to develop technology or a new product.

“If we put in place the seed capital pool, I’m very confident we will attract small high technology firms from across the United States,” said Christopher.

One incubator tenant already committed last spring - the area’s Institute for Industrial and Applied Life Sciences (IIALS), a joint public/private cooperative effort to enhance

life sciences training in the region and beyond. They will move in as soon as the building is completed.

Dr. Gary Clapp, president and CEO of IIALS, said the institute’s approximately 3,000 square-feet of leased space will include a wet laboratory, classrooms and offices. He said the lab will be set up as an industrial lab, which is a regulated lab environment, and Western students will be trained on how to work in this type of lab setting.

Gary said although students are well trained to work in an academic lab setting, there are differences between the two types of labs.

“In a regulated lab environment, you are forced to work under guidelines from several federal agencies.” And, he added, the equipment and documentation procedures differ in each type of lab.

“We will create a student with high value

for employers because they would not have to spend as many valuable resources to train new employees,” said Gary. “We’ll have a regional impact on economic development.”

Gary said the IIALS lab could be used in Western’s master of applied science programs and for professional development for personnel in area industries. Even high school students may receive training in the lab, and other tenants in the incubator will have access to the lab as well.

Along with a \$2.5 million grant from the Federal Economic Development Administration and \$70,764 from the university’s unrestricted reserves, the IIALS is funding \$125,000 of the cost of the incubator. The 25,000-square-foot building could serve up to 15 high-technology firms.

IIALS partners include Western, the St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of St. Joseph, Buchanan County,

and several area businesses and individuals. Gary has been its director since its inception in February 2006. ■

*Western’s new science and technology incubator, west of I-29 on campus, is slated to open in the summer of 2008.*







## Gaining the Griffon *EDGE*

**A**n opportunity for new students to find out what it means to be a Griffon is the focus of Western's four-day orientation program, Griffon Edge.

Last fall, almost 700 incoming freshmen arrived on campus early to earn one credit hour and get a head start on their college experience.

Bobbie Delaney, Griffon Edge coordinator, said her favorite part of the program actually occurs beyond the four days - she likes running into Griffon Edge students throughout the semester, and seeing how comfortable, confident and involved they are in campus life. She believes the program plays a large role in those results.



Griffon Edge participants had a campus tour, learned how to use the library, attended workshops on topics such as campus email and textbooks, and participated in a Welcome Fair that introduced new students to campus clubs and organizations.

As part of Western's commitment to community service, all Griffon Edge students fanned out in the St. Joseph

*Griffon Edge participants help repair concrete steps at the MidCity Excellence Center. A day of service in the community was part of the orientation program for the almost 700 new students.*

community for a day, picking up 14 tons of trash in a 500-block area and performing a variety of tasks at the MidCity Excellence Center.

New students also watched a movie with a diversity theme, "Freedom Writers," and participated in discussion groups about it. Nationally renowned motivational speaker Joe Martin capped off the program as the featured speaker at the New Student Convocation.

"I think it's (Griffon Edge) a good place for questions and for meeting people," said freshman Christopher Southard of St. Joseph, Mo. "I liked seeing the organizations and how you can get involved."

Megan Gawatz, also from St. Joseph, said she liked the movie they watched.

"It connected to what we were talking about," she said.

"We had a great group of students," said Bobbie. "I'm excited to see what they can do while they are here." ■

## Overheard the first few days ...



Above: The Williams Below: The Stuvers



*"I'm very excited. I have all my stuff together. I made my bed. I'm ready to go."* Catherine Williams, freshman, Higginsville, Mo., on move-in day.

*"She's doing better than me."* Ora Mae Williams, Catherine's mom.

*"The people were a lot nicer here (when I visited) than other schools. The people won me over."* Joe Bailey, freshman, Indianola, Iowa, on why he chose to attend Western.

*"I like the sense of caring the faculty has for us."* Jasmine Gray, freshman, St. Louis.

*"This is our first one going away, but we're doing okay."* Cheryl Stuver, mother of freshman Ashlee Stuver, Brookfield, Mo., on move-in day.





# Western assists historic Mt. Mora Cemetery

*What began as a biology class project has blossomed into a multi-department effort by students, faculty and staff to help preserve historic Mount Mora Cemetery in St. Joseph, Mo.*

Assistant professor of biology Dr. Sandie Seeger's Biology of Aging class last year visited the cemetery to record birth and death dates and compare survivorship rates before and after 1950, when the use of antibiotics became

common. The study clearly showed the effectiveness of modern medicine, Sandie said, and she's looking for an appropriate journal for the results to be published.

But the students' time

at the cemetery had another result, according to Sandie - they became fascinated by the beauty and history of Mount Mora, a cemetery that dates to 1851, holds the graves of at least 400 Civil War veterans and was named to the National Register of Historic Places last year.

Senior Margaret Justice, the student director of the cemetery project, suggested creating a Web site to make people aware of the cemetery's beauty and help preserve it, and Western's Instructional Media Center took up the challenge. Rick Brown, Michelle Ritter and Cindy Wells created a site that allows visitors to search for specific graves. The burial records had already been computerized by volunteers and made available online through a genealogical Web site.

But Western's Mount Mora project didn't end with the development of the Web site. Dr. Cary Chevalier, associate professor of biology, had one of

his classes gather Geographic Information System (GIS) data for each gravesite last fall. That information will be available online to make it easier for people to find specific graves when they visit the cemetery.

Another biology professor will also help Mount Mora showcase its numerous trees. The

cemetery was redesigned by architect W. Angelo Powell in 1872 in the "rural garden cemetery" style then coming into vogue, characterized by a park-like setting with curvilinear roads and beautiful landscaping, said Suzanne Lehr, founder of the Mount Mora Preservation & Restoration Association. The plantings included a wide variety of tree species, and Dr. John Rushin will help the cemetery obtain state arboretum status by collecting GIS data for all the trees and labeling them.

"One of my goals was to connect Western more closely with the community," Margaret said. "I'd like to get even more people on campus involved in the project."

Suzanne said her association appreciates the help. "We started very small, but with great vision," she said. "With so many people now involved and with the support of Western we can reach our goals." ■



## \$100,000 donation funds scholarships

The Foundation was the recipient of a \$100,000 grant to support scholarships for non-traditional students. The grant is a gift of the Thanksgiving Fund, a fund of the American Endowment Foundation. The money was designated for two existing nontraditional student scholarships.

"We are grateful to the donors of the Thanksgiving Fund for their generosity and support of Western," said Jerry Pickman '85, director of development. "Their gift will benefit many nontraditional students."

Nontraditional students are those who are 25 years or older, going to college for the first time or coming back after an absence, or who do not conform to the definition of a traditional student. ■



# Trading spaces, **r a c**

**If you've ever considered buying a home, you've probably heard the old realtor adage about the three most important things to consider: "Location, location, location."**

Well, last summer, as part of the Summer Research Institute (see next page), a team of one Western student, Steve Hellstrom; and three high school students, Laura Kukuc, Stephanie Longe and Heather Slawson; set out to determine if raccoons feel the same way about the location of their homes, er, dens, as humans do.

The students, under the direction of Dr. Cary Chevalier, associate professor of biology, spent several weeks researching the dens of the little masked mammals to figure out if they really paid attention to certain amenities when they selected their dens, or if their choice was randomly made. Unlike humans, where females have lots of say in home selection, male raccoons choose the dens, so that's the gender they studied.

Thanks to Western's 744-acre campus with many wooded areas, the students didn't have to leave campus to find dens. They set up live traps in the woods and selected three male raccoons from the animals captured (they also trapped a mother opossum and her five babies, but they released them). They then placed radio collars on the home-seekers so they could track them to their dens. Oh, and of course they

named them - Rocky, Bandit and RJ.

A lot of research time was spent tracking the animals to their dens. Once they found the dens, they marked the coordinates of the den, thanks to a GPS (Global Positioning Systems) unit.

The students then spent many days returning to the dens (GPS made finding them again easy), and measuring 22 variables of the den site, such as distance from water, type of den (under a bush, in brush, etc.), height of den from the ground, distance to the nearest tree, number of potential sites in the area, and canopy cover.

By the end of the research, students had discovered 30 dens that the three males had inhabited and measured variables at 15 of them. Bandit, it seems, liked to call several places "home," but Rocky and RJ were content with fewer abodes.

The students also selected random alternate den sites close to the raccoons' choices and measured the 22 variables of those sites as well. If the raccoons were merely picking sites at random, the team hypothesized, then the measurements of variables between

**"Raccoons can never be counted on to do the ordinary."**



# cool n-style



the raccoon dens and the alternate sites should show little difference.

But they found out the ring-tailed creatures can be selective about their dens, as there was some differentiation between the raccoons' dens and the randomly selected sites. The most important factors seemed to be den height, type of den and number of potential ground dens.

Cary said the research will continue this winter as Western students will measure the variables at the rest of the identified den sites.

"Den sites for raccoons have been looked into at other locations, but not in northwest Missouri. We know virtually nothing about what raccoons do on campus or in northwest Missouri."

He noted that raccoons don't build their own dens, but move into pre-existing ones instead.

Laura, now a Western freshman, said she was surprised at how much work was actually involved in the research, but she liked the hands-on experience with the raccoons.

"It was a good experience. I like animals and nature," said Laura. "I didn't expect to get to work with the raccoons so much."

Stephanie changed her perception of raccoons as "cute and cuddly" after trying to tag one of the captured mammals. "Raccoons are violent," she said.

"But they're remarkable little critters," said Steve, a senior biology major. "Raccoons can never be counted on to do the ordinary." He said tracking them to their dens was especially challenging.

"I wasn't much of a nature person," said Stephanie. "But I am now." ■

*From the top: Heather Slawson and Laura Kukuc place radio collars on a raccoon; Steve Hellstrom with a GPS unit; Heather and Steve take measurements; and Stephanie Longe handles Rocky.*

## Summer Research Institute spawns variety of projects

The summer of 2007 marked the sixth year for Western's Summer Research Institute, and projects ran the gamut from solar cell technology, to heavy metal contamination, to multimedia elements to Buddhist coping to raccoon tracking (see p. 10).

Dr. Ben Caldwell, associate professor of chemistry, began the Institute and has served as its director for the past six years. He said the Institute was originally formed to bring together Western faculty and students with area high school students for meaningful research, and that mission has remained unchanged. Teams usually consist of one faculty member, one Western student and two or three high school students.

After eight weeks of research, a public symposium is held so teams can display and discuss their projects.

"The Summer Research Institute provides opportunities for entering freshman and high school students not ordinarily available at larger research institutions," said Ben. ■



## GRADUATING CHAMPIONS

### Athletes earn accolades

**T**he early fall sports season produced honors for four Griffon student-athletes. Western volleyball produced three players that were named to All-Tournament Teams in the month of September: senior middle hitter Alyssa Berg, Bellevue, Neb., and freshman outside hitter Meghan Voelz, Elk Grove, Ill., were both named to the All-Tournament Team of the 2007 Ramada Inn Invitational hosted by Western. Sophomore setter Madison Benton, Kansas City, Mo., was named to the All-Tournament Team of the Cameron University/Best Western Invitational in Lawton, Okla.

Alyssa became the 14th Griffon volleyball player in school history to record over 1,000 kills for her career in October in a match on the road at Fort Hays State.

Senior golfer Aaron Lisenbee, Savannah, Mo., won the University of Minnesota-Crookston Fall Central Region Invitational and helped pace the Griffons to a tie for second as a team. ■

### New attendance record

**A** record 9,007 fans filled Spratt Stadium as the Griffons hosted Northwest Missouri State University Sept. 15. The previous attendance record of 8,730 was set back in 2005, also against Northwest. ■

## Western to host Elite 8 Championships

**A**thletics received some good news last fall when it learned it would once again be the host institution for the NCAA Division II Women's Elite Eight Basketball Championship in 2009 and 2010.

Although the NCAA Championships Committee considered multiple factors in reviewing all of the bids, committee chair Sandy Michael said Western's central location was key to the group's goal of developing a

strong fan base for Division II women's basketball.

"Missouri Western has a history of conducting the tournament and doing a very fine job," said Sandy.

"The university also has a commitment from the community to get involved. They've proven themselves, and the community has embraced Division II basketball. We're looking for that to happen again and to take it to another level." ■



*The athletic Hall of Fame class of 2007, from left, Ricky Lowe '78, Becky Reichard '99, and Bill Stevens '81, are pictured with Chuck Zimmerman of Wendy's, the Hall of Fame sponsor. Larry Ingram '86, and the 1975 baseball team were also inducted.*

## Father-son golf winners

**F**reshman Landon Hochenauer teamed with his father, Terry, to win the Jack Nicklaus Flight of the Father-Son Golf Championship at the Lake of the Ozarks this past summer. The duo had a two-day total of 135, nine under par, and won by one stroke.

Brad Nurski '01, and his father, Marty, finished in third place. ■





## MIAA post-season tournament March 6-9

**M**ake plans now to support Griffon basketball as the teams head to Kansas City's Municipal Auditorium for the 2008 MIAA Basketball Championships March 6-9.

The Griffon women will open action on Thursday while the Griffon men begin play on Friday. Game times will be determined by order of finish in the conference and will be available on March 2.

Watch your alumni e-mails or go to [www.griffonalumni.org](http://www.griffonalumni.org) for information on the annual alumni, family and friends social that will be held around the tournament.

New this year, alumni chapters from around the league will gather for an official tournament kick-off event called "MIAA Rally at the Live." The event will take place from 2-6 p.m. in the new Kansas City Power & Light District across the street from the Sprint Center. Food, beverage and live entertainment will all be part of the fun and excitement.

Tickets for this year's MIAA Tournament will be available in the Western Ticket Office on Feb. 1. To get your tickets, call 816-271-5904. ■

## Sweet victory in Pittsburg

**I**t had been 23 years since the Griffon football squad had gone into the "jungle" at Pittsburg, Kan., and defeated the Gorillas. That year, a defender named Jerry Partridge '86, recovered an onside kick to help seal the victory.

Now the all-time coaching leader in wins at Western, Jerry brought his Griffons to Carnie Smith Stadium in September and beat the Gorillas 39-32.

The game produced these milestones: the highest ranked opponent Western has defeated on the road (#7); the first time the Griffons have ever defeated Pittsburg State in back-to-back seasons; the first time in recent history Pittsburg State has allowed two running backs to rush for over 100 yards; and only the seventh time in the last 128 home games that Pittsburg State has been defeated. ■

## Athletics creates Gem Society

**O**pportunities for female athletes to network with successful women and be mentored by them, and for women in the community to get to know the female athletes, are the goals of the athletic department's recently created Gem Society.

The Society kicked off with a luncheon in October which featured Dr. Charisse Sparks, a local orthopedic surgeon, as the guest speaker. The group plans to host more lunches as well as other activities in the future.

"I would love to see more women in the campus and community involved with our women's athletic program," said Jen Bagley, women's softball coach who is spearheading the Society. "It's important for our women athletes to meet successful women." ■



*A new floor in the M.O. Looney arena was completed in time for the volleyball season. The floor was funded by the Max Experience, an athletic fee that was approved by the students.*



# Beyond

## Western receives \$5 million gift

**W**es Remington dropped out of college as a junior and worked a variety of jobs for a few years, including road construction, meat delivery and debt collection. In 1956, he was hired as a sales trainee for Anchor Serum in St. Joseph, Mo., a plant that manufactured serum to prevent cholera in hogs. And there he found his passion for the animal health industry.

That more than 50-years passion recently led to a \$5 million gift from Wes and his wife, Patsy '79, for the renovation and expansion of Agenstein Hall, home of Western's science and math departments. It is the largest individual contribution in Western's history.



Wes and Patsy Remington with Dr. Jim Scanlon, Western's president.

*"When you get a gift from a world class industry leader like Wes Remington, that is a great commitment to Western and to public higher education in Missouri."*

*Dr. Joseph Bragin, provost and vice president of academic & student affairs*

"We are delighted by the generosity of Wes and Patsy," said Dr. James Scanlon, Western's president. "Their gift will benefit students, faculty and the region for decades to come."

After becoming president of Anchor Serum (which eventually became Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc.) in 1968, Wes started up another company for them, and then went on to found or help found "eight or nine" more companies, all relating to animal health. St. Joseph community leaders estimate

that today, 1,200 to 1,500 employees in the area are employed by Wes' firms or their successors.

He currently owns and operates Pete and Mac's, an upscale pet daycare and boarding resort with locations in Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, Texas and Arizona.

"He enjoyed what he did," Patsy, his wife of almost 55 years, said of Wes' career. "For him it was about playing the game and winning."

Did Wes agree with his wife's assessment? "I loved it," he said fervently. "I feel so fortunate to be in this business." He added that, up until the owner of Anchor Serum died, Wes sent him a Christmas card every year "thanking him for hiring me."

Wes related that when he started in the business, customers that he called on would ask what type of college degree he had. "I'd tell them, 'I majored in football and I damn near flunked that,'" he said of his college career at Northeast Missouri State (now Truman State).

The \$5 million gift, Wes said, is to ensure that workforce development in the animal health and life sciences fields will continue in St. Joseph so the industry can grow even more.

"Patsy and I have always been huge advocates of wanting St. Joseph to grow," Wes said. "It's been a wonderful place to raise our children. St. Joseph has been good to us."

"I really, really like Missouri Western," Patsy said. "It fills a very great need in St. Joseph. We've watched it grow."

Wes noted that St. Joseph is part of a life sciences corridor in the region where approximately 38 percent of animal health suppliers in the United States



# Excellence

feature

## Agenstein Hall plans move forward

*A huge impact on the science and math programs. A showcase for Western.*

Those are phrases people have been using to describe the Evan R. Agenstein Hall expansion and renovation project that is currently underway. Plans have been approved and ground-breaking is scheduled for late spring or early summer.

"It's been an exciting process," said Dr. Jerry Zweerink, professor of chemistry who serves as faculty shepherd on the project committee. "It's very exciting to be able to spend more than \$30 million on a building. We'll have a facility that will take us well into the 21st century."

Construction plans include building an addition east of the current building that would approximately double its size, and then renovating the original building. The project, barring delays, is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2009.

Jerry said the current building, built in 1969, does not meet the needs of the growing chemistry, biology, and computer science/mathematics/physics departments.

"Things were designed for the '70s," he said, "and the ways we communicate and learn today are drastically different."

Laboratory space is not adequate in the current building, and new laboratories will be built in the addition to ensure state-of-the-art ventilation systems and equipment. When completed, both faculty and students will have more space to conduct research.

Additionally, students will gain pleasant gathering spaces throughout, and renovations will include updating classrooms and utilities; and expanding office space. In 1969, the departments had 23 faculty members. Today there are 39, along with three graduate assistants.

The Agenstein Hall project has been in the works since 2002, when U.S. Sen. Christopher "Kit" Bond secured \$250,000 in federal funds for Western to work with Project Kaleidoscope/National Science Foundation to draw up plans for the renovation and expansion. The project remained on the state's capital improvement list since then.

Finally last year, the state released \$30.1 million for the expansion and renovation, and the project received a boost in October when Wes and Patsy Remington donated \$5 million for the project (see page 14).

"It's been a very positive experience," Jerry said of the planning. "People are really excited about it." ■



*Plans are underway for the renovation and expansion of Agenstein Hall. The new addition will be named Remington Hall to honor Wes and Patsy Remington.*

### *Remingtons, continued from p. 14*

operate. "It's the largest corridor of animal health in the world."

The gift will be added to the \$30.1 million funding from the state for the Agenstein Hall project (above), and is the lead gift in a capital campaign that is being planned as part of a comprehensive initiative called "Beyond Excellence." The initiative also includes the \$2.5 million federal grant for the Christopher S. "Kit" Bond Science and Technology Incubator currently under construction on campus.

Other projects included in the capital campaign will be announced in the near future.

"When you get a gift from a world class industry leader like Wes Remington, that is a great commitment to Western and to public higher education in Missouri," said Dr. Joseph Bragin, provost and vice president of academic and student affairs. "This is a recognition of Western's role in economic and workforce development in the region."

"He has vision," Patsy said of her husband. "That sums it up." ■



# An array of achievement

*The expansion & renovation of Agnew Hall is just a part of*

## Research team receives \$170,000 grant

**F**irst it was a pancake problem. Then it was a traveling salesperson problem. Whatever the next problem may be, the biology and mathematics departments now have research funds to work on the solutions.

Last fall, Dr. Jeff Poet, associate professor of math, and Dr. Todd Eckdahl, professor of biology, received the largest National Science Foundation (NSF) research grant in Western's history - \$170,000 - to fund undergraduate synthetic biology research for three years.

The grant pays for summer research stipends for students and faculty, research supplies, travel money for all participants to three conferences per year and funding to bring a renowned leader in synthetic biology to campus.

"This grant is going to allow us to stay at the front of the pack in synthetic biology," said Jeff. "It's exciting that it is going to go on for at least three years."

And what does all this have to do with pancakes and a traveling salesperson? They are mathematical problems, said Jeff, and Western students are engaging in the groundbreaking field of synthetic biology to design, model and build bacterial computers using E Coli bacteria to solve those types of problems.

**One of the great things about the grant and the research is the collaboration between the math and biology departments.**

In November 2006, Jeff and Todd led a team of students researchers who presented their research results on the pancake problem at the International Genetically Engineered Machines (iGEM) Jamboree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. They brought home four awards, including first place for oral presentation.

This past November, a second group of eight students presented their traveling salesperson results at the jamboree. For their contribution of genetic parts and their Web site, poster, and oral presentations, the team was recognized with gold medal status, the highest level of participation, along with teams from Cal Tech, Cambridge, Harvard, Paris, St. Petersburg, and Tokyo.

In addition to the official recognition of gold medal status, several faculty from other institutions encouraged the team to publish their work, and they are currently making plans to prepare a manuscript for submission to a scientific journal.

A third team from Western has begun brainstorming and investigating ideas for its 2008 jamboree research project.

Jeff and Todd said one of the great things about the grant and the research is the collaboration between the math and biology departments.

They believe there is a critical need to train future research scientists to collaborate between the two disciplines. "This research will help cross train the students; all biology students will get more math, and vice versa," said Jeff.

But the collaboration aspect is much greater than just between two departments: Western researchers have been conducting joint research with students and faculty at Davidson College in Davidson, N.C., since they began research on the pancake problem. At the 2007 iGEM jamboree, the two institutions entered the competition as one team.

Additionally, Western and Davidson applied jointly for the grant, asking NSF to accept both or neither, and Davidson received \$173,000. The two schools have been holding weekly video-



# ents

the exciting news from the science & math departments

conference calls since last fall to discuss their next research project.

"It's been a great collaboration, and we're thrilled to continue working with them," said Jeff.

Freshman Lane Heard, from St. Joseph, Mo., worked with the 2006 team and attended the jamboree as a high school senior. He was the only one from that team on the 2007 iGEM team, and he has continued with the 2008 team.

"This project was the main reason I came here," Lane said. "It's interesting and a lot of fun. We're doing work that means something."

He said he liked collaborating with Davidson, too. "We get so much more accomplished. We can share mistakes, and if we can't fix it, we can ask Davidson for help."

"This gives students a chance to design a lab experiment, perform the experiment, trouble-shoot any problems and evaluate the results," said Jeff. "Such work is not typical of the undergraduate 'experience.'" ■



Freshman Ziao Zhu greets students from Davidson College in North Carolina via the web cam as part of the collaboration of synthetic biology research between Western and Davidson. During the introductions, Ziao realized that she had gone to high school in Chegdu, Sichuan, China with one of the Davidson students.

## Alumnus earns wildlife certification

**R**yan Evans '96 and '06, a field biologist intern working with the Bureau of Land Management in Newcastle, Wyo., holds the distinction of being the first Western graduate to apply for and receive the associate wildlife biologist certification from the Wildlife Society since the biology department began offering the wildlife, conservation and management degree two years ago.

"This is a profound and major benchmark for Missouri Western," said Dr. Cary Chevalier, associate professor of biology. "I think it's important that the institution celebrate this accomplishment."

Cary said the department specifically tailored the curriculum to meet the education requirements of the certification, so he was gratified when a reviewer from the Wildlife Society told him that Ryan's application was the best application he had ever received and the easiest for him to approve.

"The Wildlife Society takes certification seriously. It is not a rubber stamp," said Cary.

"The certification is a great resumé

builder," said Ryan, a native of St. Joseph, Mo. "It sets you apart."

Cary agreed. "If all things are equal between two candidates for the same job, the certification is a definite tie-breaker." Additionally, he believes that more and more natural resource management positions will require certification in the future.

Ryan played baseball his first time as a Western student and earned a natural science in biology degree.

"I was always interested in conservation and I enjoy the outdoors," Ryan said. "There's always something new around the corner." (Like the rattlesnake he met in his path one day, he added.)

In his current position he is monitoring habitats and conducting surveys on five different animal species and writing wildlife survey protocols. His ultimate career goal is to work with primates in the wild.

Ryan said his Western degrees definitely prepared him for his career, especially after talking to individuals who went to larger institutions. "They didn't get the one-on-one with professors that I did. I was able to get a lot of field work." ■

**"This is a profound and major benchmark for Missouri Western."**

*Dr. Cary Chevalier, associate professor of biology*



# Agenstein Hall answers

**Two questions have emerged as Western plans for the renovation and expansion of Agenstein Hall: Who was Evan R. Agenstein? and What about the animal heads?**

And the answers are ...

*Who was Evan R. Agenstein?*

In June 1971, when the Science and Math Building was two years old, the Board of Regents voted to name it after Evan R. Agenstein, longtime professor and chair of the mathematics and physics department.

"Evan Agenstein was an institution and a monument at Missouri Western long before the Science and Math Building bore his name," said Bob Shier '71. "Evan Agenstein was perhaps the warmest, kindest, gentlest, most understanding faculty member I met on campus. He was an excellent teacher, always ready to help those who didn't quite master the intricacies of his lectures."

Evan, a Stewartville, Mo. native, earned a bachelor's degree from Northwest Missouri State University and a master's degree from University of Missouri - Kansas City.

He was principal and coach at Stewartville High School, superintendent of the Stewartville school district for two years, and math chair at Lafayette High School for 17 years before joining the St. Joseph Junior College staff in 1958.

There he served as chair of the mathematics and physics department until he retired from Missouri Western College in 1971. He died in 1988 at the age of 78.

Shortly after the building was named for him, Evan wrote a letter to the St. Joseph News-Press. The following is an excerpt from that letter: "*Science and mathematics contribute to the development of talents, skills and know-how of students. For my name to be*

*included, I trust it shall mean we can keep the magic circle of learning at Missouri Western College inclusive rather than exclusive, differentiated rather than identical, where respect for the individual is given priority, and all may learn the meaning of the words - integrity, honesty, reliability, hope."*

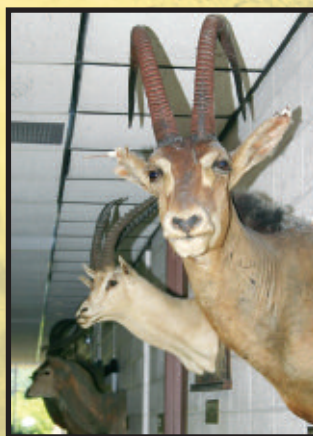


*Evan R. Agenstein*

*What about the animal heads?*

Gazelle, antelope and moose heads, oh my. The question refers, of course, to the first thing everyone notices when they enter the second floor of Agenstein - 32 mounted animal heads - kudu, buffalo, warthog, rhinoceros and more.

Dr. Jerry Zweerink, professor of chemistry who is serving on the Agenstein project committee, said the heads will continue to be a feature of Agenstein Hall even after the renovation. The committee hopes to secure funding to refurbish the heads and display them in the atrium between the original building and the addition. "It will be more like a scientific display of the animals in their natural habitat," he said. "It will be a display for educational purposes."



*From the halls of Agenstein*

The mounted animals were a gift in the mid-1970s from Harold and Alma Dugdale. Harold was the president of Dugdale Packing Co. of St. Joseph, Mo., and the Dugdales were well known for their hunting trips. In the 1950s, they went on two six-week African safaris, and they also hunted black bear in Alaska. The lion on display by the east entrance of the Nelle Blum Student Union is also from the Dugdales.

Harold died in 1970 and Alma died in 2004. ■



## From the Alumni Association President



*Jason M. Horn '95  
President, Alumni Association*

What are you doing Wednesday? Our alumni chapters in St. Joseph, St. Louis, Kansas City, and mid-Missouri began hosting Western Wednesdays in September. Held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, we gather for fun, friendship, networking and Happy Hour.

Western Wednesdays are an example of just one program being organized by our growing number of regional alumni chapters. Mary Vaughan '79, chair of the Alumni Board's special events committee, and all of our chapter volunteers are working to create programs such as Western Wednesdays in an effort to connect with as many alumni as possible.

With almost 14,000 of us living between St. Joseph and St. Louis,

I am excited by the opportunities we have as Western alumni to network with one another.

Chapter activities are not just for alumni in Missouri. Groups are also forming in Chicago and Washington, DC. If you would like to know more or would like to participate in planning chapter events, the chapter chairs are listed on page 22. Or email them at [mwalumni@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:mwalumni@missouriwestern.edu), or go to [www.griffonalumni.org](http://www.griffonalumni.org).

With Griffon Pride,

*Jason M. Horn*  
Jason M. Horn '95  
President, Alumni Association

## 10 awarded Alumni Family Scholarships

**C**ongratulations to our 10 recipients of the Alumni Family Scholarship this year! Listed with their alumni parents, they include:

- James Aldridge, St. Joseph, Mo.; Janice (Wyrick) Aldridge '74.
- Bethany Barton, Agency, Mo.; Donna (Blodgett) Barton '85.
- Joshua Bennett, St. Joseph; Debra (Bennett) Burns '98.
- Sophie Chleborad, St. Joseph; Adrienne (Ziegler) Chleborad '06.
- Hollie Cook, Hamilton, Mo.; Terry '05 and Leslie '91, Cook.
- Rhylan Daily, Bethany, Mo.; William '73, and Priscilla (Sawyer) '72, Daily.
- Linzy Fairman, Cameron, Mo.; Shelley (Kallenbach) Fairman '82.
- Dansare Lawrence, St. Joseph; Mary Lynn Lawrence.
- Spencer Williams, Roland, Iowa; Barbara Williams '86.
- Ryan Winger, St. Joseph; Virginia (Walgreen) Winger '77. ■



*Members of the Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority face paint guests at the second annual drive-in event for alumni and friends, held at Horseshoe Lake Drive In, St. Joseph, Mo.*



# Alumni Association Distinguished Service Awards 2007

*We celebrated 25 years of distinguished service this year, as the first Alumni Association awards were given in 1983. This year, we honored four alumni, one professor, and a longtime volunteer and former employee.*

**Congratulations to:**

*Mary Jane Feldt Schoen*  
Class of 1947

Mary Jane is an alumna of the St. Joseph Junior College as well as a former employee of Western. After earning an associate degree in 1947, she earned a bachelor's degree from Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, and a master's degree from the University of Missouri - Kansas City.

Mary Jane, of St. Joseph, owned and operated a preschool, opened the first kindergarten for the Savannah, Mo., school district and opened the first all-day kindergarten in the area.

Mary Jane developed the early childhood emphasis area for elementary education majors at Western and taught here for 20 years. She retired in 1993 but taught part time until 2005. She also owns Pigtails 'n Inkwells, a teaching supply store in St. Joseph.

"I appreciated the concern shown by instructors while I was a student," said Mary Jane. "As a teacher, I tried to remember to share that same concern, care and empathy for my students."

*Edward H. Haffey*  
Class of 1962

Ed, of Castle Rock, Colo., earned an associate degree from the St. Joseph Junior College, a bachelor's degree from George Washington University in Washington, DC, and a juris doctor degree from the University of Colorado School of Law. He served as a lieutenant in the United States Navy for three years, making two extended deployments to Vietnam.

During more than 35 years of law practice, Ed specialized in representation of most major property and casualty insurers regarding suspected fraudulent claims activity. He retired in 2005.

"My two years at the Junior College formed the basis for my ability to succeed for the rest of my undergraduate studies and later in law school," Ed said.

*Tom Norworthy*  
Class of 1975

Tom is the president and CEO of KRM Restaurant Corp., which owns and operates the 54th Street Grill & Bars. He graduated with a bachelor of science in business administration with an emphasis in accounting.

Tom, of Kansas City, Mo., served as president and CEO of a direct marketing company with 500 employees and \$100 million in annual revenue. He now owns twelve 54th St. restaurants.

"I had a great education there," Tom said of Western. "I still contend they have one of the best accounting and finance programs in the area."

*Dr. R. Gregory Downing*  
Class of 1976

Greg, of Niskayuna, NY, graduated with a bachelor of science in chemistry, and earned his Ph.D. in nuclear chemistry from the University of Missouri-Rolla. He is a research chemist for the National Institute of Standards and Technology. He also serves as a consultant for national and international businesses and governments on scientific programs.

Greg has nine inventions and procedures to his credit, six of which have been patented. In fact, he has invented the highest resolution imaging device that exists in the world today. Greg has collaborated with scientists across the globe on a number of projects.

"I enjoyed it," Greg said of his student experience. "The chemistry teachers were fantastic. It was truly a student supportive group."

*Dr. Dennis Rogers*  
Director of Percussion Studies

Dennis joined Western as an adjunct instructor of percussion in 1978 and became a full-time faculty member in 1979. He was named director of percussion studies in 1981, and has developed a highly successful percussion program at Western.

Dennis earned a bachelor of music - percussion performance, and a master of music - percussion performance from the University of Missouri - Kansas City Conservatory of Music.





#### 2007 Distinguished Service Award

Recipients: Dr. R. Gregory Downing '76, Mary Jane Fields Schoen '47, Dr. Dennis Rogers, Dr. George Richmond. Back row: Dr. James Scanlon, Western's president; Jason Horn, Alumni Association president; and Ed Haffey '62. Not pictured: Tom Norsworthy '75.

He also earned a master of arts - adult and continuing education, an educational specialist degree, and a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Missouri - Kansas City School of Education.

Dennis has been the recipient of nine merit awards from Western and four awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. He has published five books and performs throughout the world.

"I have enjoyed my professional life because of my students and my peers," said Dennis. "My life and purpose has been to mentor my students."

**The Herb and Peggy Iffert Award for Outstanding Service to the University** was created by the Alumni Association Board of Directors in 2007 to recognize

the tireless devotion and commitment of Herb '35, and Peggy Iffert to Western. The award is given to an alumnus/alumna, retiree or other friend of the university who shows continuous commitment to Western and its mission, vision and legacy.

*Dr. George Richmond*

George began teaching in the education department at Western in 1969 and became chair in 1970. As chair, he was involved with Western's innovative teacher

experience program that was being developed at the time. George also served as director of the continuing education department and vice president for development and planning. He retired in 1984.

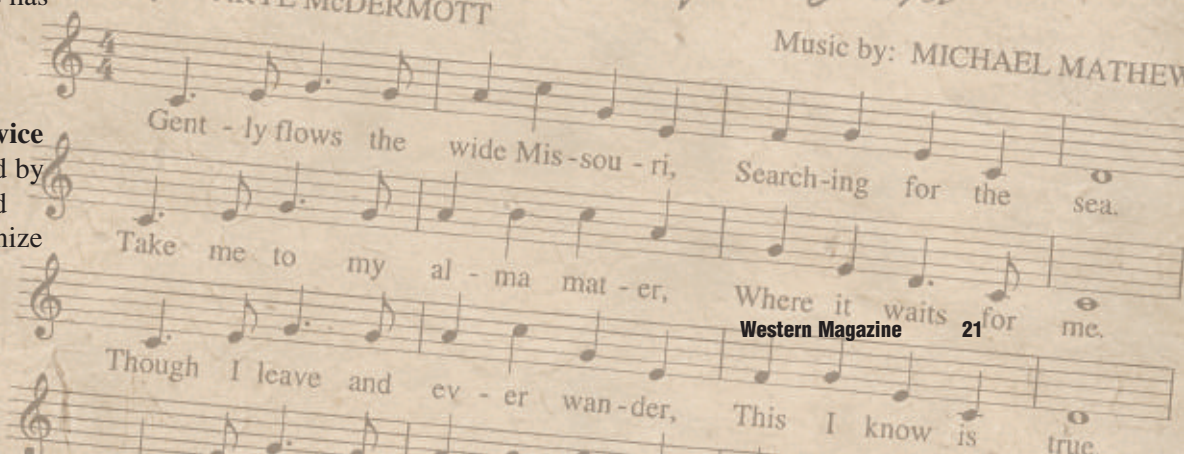
He earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Eastern Illinois University, a master's degree in education from Millikin University, and a doctorate in school administration from Illinois State University.

George has volunteered and served on many community organizations. As a Western employee, he was a great representative of the institution in the community, and was a leader in exemplifying Western's commitment to community service and volunteerism. He is currently serving his second term on the MWSU Foundation Board of Directors.

"Being involved with a new college was very exciting for me," said George. "I wanted to do everything I could to help it grow." ■

*Missouri Western Alma Mater*  
Words by: DARYL McDERMOTT

Music by: MICHAEL MATHEW





# Western Wednesdays



Angie Durbin '01,  
Sarah Quinlan '03,  
Kim (Buretta)  
Meyer '02, and  
Kim Bax '05 in  
St. Louis.

## What are you doin' Wednesday?

**The Alumni Association has a cure for the mid-week blues - Western Wednesdays!**

Last fall, the association kicked off the mid-week socials on the last Wednesday of each month for alumni and friends at four locations across

the state - St. Louis, Mid-Missouri, Kansas City and St. Joseph.

Western Wednesdays will continue monthly through June and alumni will meet at a different location each month.

**Check out [www.griffonalumni.org](http://www.griffonalumni.org) or call 816-271-5646 for details.**

## Let's go to IRELAND!

**T**ake a 10-day trip to Ireland with the Alumni Association! From Dublin to Shannon, we'll see the land and tour some of Ireland's most historic sites. Dr. Robert Shell, retired associate professor of Spanish, will lead the tour.

For more information on travel costs and itinerary, contact Colleen Kowich, director of alumni services, at 816-271-5650. Hurry! The deadline for a \$200 deposit is March 1, with the remainder due June 1. ■

## Chapter Corner

**T**he Alumni Association recently established regional chapters, and you are invited to attend alumni events in your area! In each issue, we'll let you know of upcoming happenings, or, you can stay informed by checking out the online community - [www.griffonalumni.org](http://www.griffonalumni.org).

The following are the chairs of each chapter:

Mid-Missouri - John Fabsits '04

Kansas City - Gini Fite '01

St. Joseph - Zach Ramsay '02

St. Louis - Mary Vaughan '79 ■

## Grillin' with the Griffs



More than 200 alumni and friends gathered at Uncle D's Sports Bar & Grill for a barbecue before the Western football game against Northwest Missouri State last fall.



## Teacher is first master's graduate

**W**hen Deb Schwebach '74, walked across the stage at the spring commencement ceremony in May, she became the university's first graduate school graduate, earning a certificate in the teaching of writing.



Deb Schwebach '74 and '07.

"It was really nice. I felt very honored to be the first," she said.

The degree prepares teachers to use writing as a means of improving student learning, and is offered through Western's Prairie Lands Writing Project (PLWP), a professional development program for writing teachers of all levels. Sixteen students are currently in the graduate program.

Deb, a communication arts teacher, department chair, curriculum coordinator and professional development chair at Lathrop R-II High School, has been involved with the PLWP for five or six years, she said. She was immediately interested in earning the graduate certificate when it became available, as she had already earned hours toward the certificate through PLWP.

"Prairie Lands saved me from teacher burnout," Deb said. "I went to the Summer Institute and it rejuvenated me. The impact has been amazing." It also turned the wife and mother of four children and four stepchildren, and grandmother of 14 into a huge advocate of professional development. Her future goals include focusing more on professional development for teachers.

In addition to her two degrees from Western, she earned a master's in education administration from Northwest Missouri State University. ■



**As the very foundation** of the university's fundraising effort, the Western Annual Fund secures opportunities in areas critical to the learning experience. Students are benefiting from special lectures, using state-of-the-art equipment, and traveling to conferences in their field. These opportunities are due in large part to the support of alumni and friends through gifts to the Annual Fund.

**Help us make the annual fund a success!**

Call 816-271-5647 or give online at [www.missouriwestern.edu/development](http://www.missouriwestern.edu/development).

## Tell us what's new!



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden \_\_\_\_\_

Class of \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ Class of \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

What's New \_\_\_\_\_

*Return to: Alumni Services Office, 4525 Downs Drive, St. Joseph, MO 64507*



Kendell Misemer '81 and Mary Wagner. Kendell coordinated the agricultural program's first reunion last September.



## Alumni gather for ag reunion

Homecoming just hasn't been the same since the agriculture program closed in the mid-90s; just ask any ag alumnus.

"We always won all the (Homecoming) competitions," said Margo (Wilson) McPhee '75. "We made life miserable for the Greeks."

Margo, with her husband, Jess '77, gathered last September with about 40 others for the first-ever reunion for Western graduates and friends of the agriculture program. And sure enough, there at the reunion were giant trophies from the Homecoming parade float contests.

Kendell Misemer '82, who organized the reunion, said that when he was a student, the Ag Club was one of the more active clubs on campus, sponsoring the



This photo, from the 1978 yearbook, shows the Ag Club's winning float in the Homecoming parade. The club won the float contest for the record fourth year.

Ag Olympics each year for Homecoming, and of course, entering a float in the parade.

But the ag department was more than an active club, said Kendell. The program was only one of two undergraduate programs in the nation that conducted research, and many results were published. Each year, the department hosted Farmers Field Days to display the research results, and farmers from the four-state area attended.

Sheep and cattle barns once dotted the campus along James McCarthy Drive, and there were more than 200 acres of research crops.

In 1992, those who had declared an ag major were allowed to finish the requirements for the degree, but no more majors were accepted after that year.

"It was terribly disappointing (when it closed)," said Kendell.

"I never heard anyone say it was a good deal. Everybody was really upset and hurt."

Kendell said he hopes to hold more reunions, and a committee of ag alumni is working on ideas for an agricultural program display on campus so the department won't be forgotten. ■

Margo (Wilson) '75 and Jess '77 McPhee visit with former ag professor John Duncan.





# MWSU BEST HOMECOMING EVER

## Homecoming 2007

For the third year in a row,

rain crashed the Homecoming party on Saturday. Lightning forced the cancellation of the parade and caused a two-hour game delay. When the game finally started, the Griffons beat Southwest Baptist 49-14.

New this year was an All-Greek Reunion on Friday evening, which was a huge hit! Greeks, be sure to mark your calendar and join us next year.

Thanks to all the alumni volunteers who helped out during the weekend!



From the top: Although the parade was canceled, students' floats were judged on campus; Sigma Sigma Sigma and Phi Delta Theta Greeks pose by their floats; alumni enjoy the biology reunion; queen Chemia Woods, senior speech communication major; two fans in the Stadium Club wait for the delayed football game to start; and friends and family of R. Gregory Downing, alumni award recipient, enjoy the awards banquet reception.

