Profile: Celebrating 2010 1960-2010: 50 Years at UMM

University Relations

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Mission statement

The University of Minnesota, Morris provides a rigorous undergraduate liberal arts education, preparing its students to be global citizens who value and pursue intellectual growth, civic engagement, intercultural competence, and environmental stewardship. As a public land-grant institution, UMM is a center for education, culture, and research for the region, nation, and world. UMM is committed to outstanding teaching, dynamic learning, innovative faculty and student scholarship and creative activity, and public outreach. Our residential academic setting fosters collaboration, diversity, and a deep sense of community.

Cover photos

Front: Morris Campus Student Association 1967
Row one: Thomas McRoberts ’68, James Holmes ’68, the late Duane Hjelmstad ’69
Row two: the late Robert Roers ’67, Michael Kennedy ’70, John Dayton ’68, the late Mary Jo Kwako ’69
Row three: Charlotte Schwarze Black ’68, Thomas Ellis ’69, James Lewis ’70, John Fox ’74, Gary McGrath ’68

Back: Morris Campus Student Association 2010
Row one: Mike McBride ’11, Forest Lake; Adam Olson ’10, White Bear Lake; Kellcee Baker ’10, Audubon
Row two: Kathy Julik-Heine ’11, Taylors Falls; Matt Privratsky ’11, Walker; Attina Earl ’12, Forsyth, Montana; Luciana Ranelli ’13, Duluth
Row three: Mark Privratsky ’11, Walker; Elizabeth Thoma ’11, Eden Prairie; Colin Stemper ’11, Richfield

—2010 MCSA photo by Natalie Johnson ’11, Wichita, Kansas
Share in the celebration. Come back to campus.

—Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson

Rodney Briggs served the Morris campus as West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station (WCSA) superintendent from 1959 until 1963 and the University of Minnesota, Morris’s first chief administrator from 1960 until 1969. He reminds us that people are at the heart of the academic enterprise. He captures an essential quality of the character of UMM—its people. And it is the people of this community that we celebrate in 2010, our 50th year. Come celebrate. Come back to campus.

Visit renovated Imholte Hall, named for UMM’s second chief administrator, and the new Welcome Center, part of the family of early 20th century buildings that comprise the national historic district. Visit Big Cat Stadium, a joint project with Morris Area High School that reflects our community partnerships. The Tigers and Cougars play on artificial turf, while fans enjoy a view of the prairie.

Come to see Morris students in action. Spring sports are underway. The Juried Student Art Show has opened. Spring theater and choir, jazz, and symphonic winds concerts are scheduled. Come for the Undergraduate Research Symposium and be amazed by the quality and variety of student scholarship.

We share our 50-year celebration with the 100-year anniversary of the founding of the WCSA. The West Central Research and Outreach Center continues the Experiment Station’s legacy. This summer, tour its horticultural gardens “on the hill” and rest in the shade of the new outlook structure, built with gifts from community members who treasure the gardens. Stop at the administrative building and step inside the new green addition—another great resource for the University and this community.

Then travel downtown to the Stevens County Historic Museum and view an exhibit that remembers the people who served and continue to serve this county through agriculture. You could drive, but better yet, borrow a bike from the Class of 2010’s project—a collection of loaner bikes painted gold, a gift from this year’s senior class to facilitate no-carbon travel.

Make time for a campus green tour. See how the people of this campus and community make a difference. Stand inside the wind turbine. See a second turbine under construction this summer. Learn about biomass gasification. Check out the solar panels slated for installation this summer. Locally manufactured, they will permit the sun to heat the Regional Fitness Center swimming pool.

Visit the gallery this fall to enjoy historic artifacts donated by or on loan from people who have supported the Morris campus for 100 years—students, faculty, staff, alumni, community members, and campus friends. The exhibit will tell the Morris campus story through personal memories and institutional vision.

Be here for Founders Weekend on September 24 and 25. View a documentary that connects campus history to broader social and political movements, linking Morris history to the legacy of the land and the peoples who belong to and are supported by it. Dance with us on the mall during an all-community musical extravaganza. Listen to a panel of former Morris administrators reflect, tell stories, and respond to questions. Join us for the Founders Day ceremony and Welcome Center dedication. Visit with friends in the restored courtyard and water garden.

Come often. Linger long. Commemorate the University of Minnesota, Morris’s 50 years of teaching, research, and service to the community, the region, and the state of Minnesota!
In partnership with the University of Minnesota Foundation, 100 percent of all gifts designated to Morris are received by and invested in the Morris campus. The Foundation serves as the legal, charitable entity for the University system.

The Morris campus welcomes all forms of financial gifts in any amount in support of its mission and in pursuit of strategic goals. There are many ways to give, and we are happy to assist you in determining the best way based on your individual situation. Read “Ways to Give” at morris.umn.edu/givetomorris, then contact a development team member for a personal consultation.

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Fall planned giving events in Morris  
UMM offers a broad range of gift planning services to alumni, donors, and friends of the University and their advisers. The development team at Morris also works closely with the University of Minnesota Foundation staff. Next fall, Frank Robertson, director of planned giving at the Foundation, will visit Morris to speak about planned giving. An afternoon event will be held September 14 on campus, and a morning event will be held September 15 at the West Central Research and Outreach Center. Mark your calendars.

Visit Fund Development online.  
morris.umn.edu/givetomorris

An invitation to a celebration from Maddy Maxeiner, associate vice chancellor for external relations

You are invited to help us proclaim our vision for the future as part of the campus’s 2010 Celebration. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the University of Minnesota, Morris. It also marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station (WCSA), which occupied the campus from 1910 until 1963. In its earliest days, the campus served as an American Indian boarding school, established by the Sisters of Mercy in the late 1800s and later operated by the United States government. Our vision for the future grows from these roots in the prairie communities of west central Minnesota. You are a part of this distinctive history, and we invite you to play a role in our future.

We call 2010 the year of “harmonic convergence,” which is only a slightly playful euphemism for all that comes together in 2010. In addition to celebrating our history and vision, the accreditation team from the Higher Learning Commission visited campus in March for Morris’s once per decade review. We have been preparing for this visit for two years, and though it’s been rigorous and time-consuming, we are proud of the report that Morris presented. Visit our Web site—morris.umn.edu—for more information.

The campus is still on track to achieve its goal of producing more energy than it consumes through additional wind turbines and the operation of the biomass facility in 2010. These facilities will fulfill our vision of becoming an energy self-sufficient campus and will provide unique learning and teaching facilities for the campus community, K-12 schools throughout the multi-state area, and the increasingly interested public.

Come and visit the newly opened Welcome Center—a friendly place for all campus visitors. The Welcome Center is the remodeled Community Services, also known as Engineering during WCSA days when it housed the blacksmith and carpenter shops. The Welcome Center houses the Office of Admissions plus all of External Relations including Alumni Relations, Fund Development, and University Relations. The Welcome Center is also home to the Center for Small Towns and other community outreach offices. We expect to receive top Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification in recognition of this historic building’s green virtues.

Dreams for the future embrace campus history and are built around Morris’s modern liberal arts mission. We envision UMM as a model community whose members align values with behaviors and live with intention. The liberal arts empowers citizens to view life’s most interesting and complex issues through the prism of multiple perspectives; to bring creative insights to the great questions; and to become leaders within their spheres of influence. We invite you to be part of something big in 2010.

See our calendar of special 2010 activities on page five. We are celebrating Founders Weekend September 23–26, 2010, with a premier of a video telling “the Morris story,” a street dance, and the Welcome Center dedication.

As the great sage Yogi Berra once observed, “The future ain’t what it used to be.” Come and see!
Scholarships and Scholarship Jubilee celebrate campus history

Each year, the University of Minnesota, Morris invites scholarship donors and scholarship recipients and their families to gather in Oyate Hall to recognize the generosity of Morris benefactors and the talents of Morris students. The Scholarship Jubilee illustrates a long history of philanthropic support for the Morris mission, and the named scholarships serve as a profound remembrance of people and happenings that shaped the campus.

Soon after the University of Minnesota, Morris opened in 1960, benefactors began stepping forward with financial gifts as statements of support for the new college, to encourage college education, and to make college accessible to more students. Early donors such as Edward and the late Dorothybelle Kaufman established scholarships that honored those who helped them earn their degrees—their parents.

The late Harold Weickert, longtime Wheaton dentist, created a scholarship in memory of wife Alice, a Morris elementary school principal. A note included with his gift many years ago reads:

If you plant for one year, plant rice;
If you plant for a century, plant trees;
If you plant for eternity, plant character
in the hearts and minds of our youth.

Throughout the years, Morris continued to receive scholarship gifts that reflect campus history and campus relationships. The Ethel M. Curry American Indian Scholarship reminds us of the campus’s first purpose as an American Indian boarding school.

Several Morris scholarships honor West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station faculty and alumni. Scholarships recognize supporters of the grassroots group that lobbied for the Morris campus, the West Central Educational Development Association.

Alumni, faculty, and staff from throughout Morris years are remembered, as well as their loved ones.

And patrons representing west central Minnesota and the city in which the campus makes its home—Morris—are also honored with named scholarships.

The story of the campus’s past as told through University of Minnesota, Morris scholarships speaks to deep support of the campus mission and its students—today’s and tomorrow’s, and new scholarships, still to be created, will continue the tradition that we celebrate in 2010.

The 2010 Scholarship Jubilee is scheduled for October 16.
Gifts support alumni visits to campus to share graduate school and career experiences

Gifts from alumni, faculty, and staff made possible two alumni visits to campus to share information about their careers and graduate school experiences, and to provide public addresses.

Haug ‘79: 2009–10 Latterell Visiting Alumnus

Ken Haug ’79, associate professor of chemistry at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, the 2009-10 Latterell Visiting Alumnus, visited campus in October 2009. He met with students and faculty, and gave an address, titled “A Pathway into Chemistry,” about Morris memories, graduate school, teaching, and research.

A political science, economics, and chemistry major, Haug was a junior when he enrolled in his first chemistry course and “fell into chemistry very deeply.” Today, grateful for his liberal arts education, Haug teaches chemistry and conducts computational physical chemistry research at a college much like Morris.

“All I mainly teach physical chemistry and general chemistry,” shares Haug, a native of Renville, “but on occasion I also teach a broader liberal arts class on ethics and philosophy in science and society, Unity of the Sciences and Ethical Consequences. My research interest involves computational physical chemistry and, in particular, has recently focused on chemical and physical processes occurring on solid surfaces.”

Haug earned a doctorate in chemical physics at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

The Joseph J. Latterell Memorial Visiting Alumnus Program provides annual grants to Division of Science and Mathematics disciplines to invite alumni to campus to serve as resource persons for students and faculty.

Siri Hakala ’98: 2009—10 Science and Math Visiting Alumnus

The 2009-10 Science and Math Visiting Alumnus Siri Hakala ’98, biologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Southwest Fisheries Science Center in La Jolla, California, talked to students and faculty about her graduate school experience and shared stories about her work in March 2009. Her public presentation was titled “Whales, Crossbows, and Cardboard Boxes: a Tale of (Continuing) Post-UMM Adventures.”

Hakala graduated from the University of Hawaii, Manoa in 2004 with a master of arts in psychology/marine mammal behavior and biology. Her thesis focused on behavioral choices of male humpback whales on the Hawaiian wintering grounds. Since then, she has served as a senior observer for the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary/Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, as a biological technician for the marine mammal genetics group at Southwest Fisheries Science Center at La Jolla, California, and as a research assistant at the Eye of the Whale in Homer, Alabama.

The Science and Math Visiting Alumnus Program is made possible by gifts to the Division of Science and Mathematics.
2010 Celebration

Throughout 2010, Morris campus history will be honored and history-in-the-making celebrated. The campus marks the 100-year anniversary of the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station’s (WCSA) founding and the 50-year anniversary of the University of Minnesota, Morris’s opening. Andy and Dian Lopez, professors emeriti of computer science, serve as co-chairs of the 2010 committee.

Documentaries chronicle Morris campus and WCROC history

Two special documentaries are currently in production. A 2010 Celebration film explores campus history from the American Indian boarding school era, through the WCSA period, to the University of Minnesota, Morris years. The 2010 Celebration film will debut during Founders Weekend, September 23–26, 2010. The West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) is also creating a documentary. The film documents the experiment station’s early influence on agriculture and its legacy that continues in the WCROC’s research, outreach, and support.

Founders Weekend

Founders Weekend will honor campus history and provide visitors an opportunity to tour campus facilities that illustrate the campus’s future. A panel of distinguished members of the campus community will reflect on campus history. Green tours will feature the wind turbine, the biomass gasification facility, and the new Welcome Center, which will be officially dedicated on Sunday before the Founders Day program.

2010 Homecoming Celebration

Billed as the “biggest and best ever,” Homecoming 2010 will feature opportunities for graduates from throughout UMM’s history to reconnect with friends, faculty, and the campus, especially during the “Groupies Reunions,” gatherings of student activities groups. See the inside back cover for a Homecoming schedule.

Photo above: Dennis Johnson ’56, WCSA, interviewed for the 2010 documentary

2010 Celebration Calendar

Stevens County Historical Society
“Reaping What We Sow” Agriculture in Stevens County
Opens April 9, 2010

West Central Research and Outreach Center
Field Day Celebration
July 16, 2010

West Central School of Agriculture
All-School Reunion
100th Anniversary Celebration
July 17–18, 2010

WCROC Gardens of Yesteryear
Horticulture Night and WCROC building dedication
July 29, 2010

2010 Celebration Exhibit
Humanities Fine Arts Gallery
Opens August 25, 2010

2010 Founders Weekend
September 23-26, 2010
• special screenings of UMM’s 2010 Celebration documentary
Saturday
• campus history panel at noon
• street dance with live music begins at 1:30 p.m., Monroe Crossing at 3 p.m.
Johnny Holm at 7 p.m.

Sunday
• green tours from 11 a.m. until noon
• Welcome Center dedication at 1 p.m.
• Founders Day program at 2 p.m.

2010 Homecoming Celebration
“Groupies Reunions”
October 8-10, 2010

Enjoy campus history stories and photos online. To share your memories, use the online form, call 320-589-6414, or e-mail weberm@morris.umn.edu.

2010.morris.umn.edu
Welcome Center opens to rave reviews

According to new occupants and campus visitors, including open house guests in February 2010, the Welcome Center renovation project is a grand success.

“The Welcome Center is a hub of daily activity,” shares Carla Riley, director of alumni relations and annual giving. “Prospective students, alumni, and friends are made welcome through this inviting portal. Today’s prospective students will remember having their first on-site experience here, while WCSA alumni remember it as Engineering, and Morris alumni remember it as Community Services. Alumni of both institutions will enjoy the tremendous transformation, and I hope they will visit soon and often.”

Maintaining historic features and building for the future

The project goal was to maintain the historic integrity of the 1914 West Central School of Agriculture engineering building while converting it to a 21st century environmentally and energy efficient office building capable of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

Architects Meyer Scherer & Rockcastle and campus representatives worked with the state historical architect and State Historical Preservation Office staff to ensure defining historic features were maintained.

Key elements of the Welcome Center reflect the building’s past and its future. They include: replicas of the original large windows; operable windows; salvaged and reused materials; wind energy; in-floor heat; the future use of biomass facility steam to provide “green” heat and energy to produce chilled water to cool the building utilizing an absorption chiller; “chilled beams” for cooling; and a design that reflects the original engineering purpose of the building that housed a blacksmith shop, machine shop, carpenter shop, and classrooms.

LEED certification underway

As a LEED building, the Welcome Center project adheres to renovation and operation standards: sustainable site development; water efficiency; energy and atmosphere performance; reuse of materials; use of recycled products; certified wood from sustainable forests; carpet made from recycled materials and recyclable; low emitting paints, glue, wood, and floor finishes; “green” cleaning products; and energy education. The certification process is underway, and the campus will receive word regarding recognition later in 2010.

Occupants and visitors appreciation

“The Welcome Center is a wonderful ‘front door’ to campus for prospective students and families, a great place for our first point of contact,” says Bryan Herrmann, director of admissions. Welcome Center visitors are very relaxed in the new space, visiting with other families’ in the seating areas. They are intrigued by a historical building with such a creative modern design.”

The Offices of Admissions, Alumni Relations and Annual Giving, Fund Development, University Relations, Continuing Education, and Community Engagement, and the Center for Small Towns make their homes in the new Welcome Center.

Jodi Huntley, executive operations specialist, greets guests as they enter the Welcome Center.
Chemistry alumni honored with 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award

The University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association Board of Directors (UMMAA) chose chemistry classmates Kenneth Bruss ’78 and Randy Koopman ’78 as the 2009 UMMAA Distinguished Alumni Award recipients. They received their awards at the Homecoming banquet.

Kenneth Bruss ’78
Bruss earned a bachelor of arts in chemistry with secondary education licensure and a master of science in business administration from Avila University, Kansas City. With nearly 30 years of various leadership positions in the food and pharmaceutical industry, Bruss currently is director of technical operations for sanofi-aventis, a pharmaceuticals manufacturing firm. His role encompasses health safety and environment, site security, and overall facilities and maintenance for the site, including capital investments.

During his acceptance remarks, Bruss said he was “deeply humbled and honored” to receive the award. He thanked God, wife Mary, and his parents for support, especially during challenges. He acknowledges his parents for “always being there for me” and teaching him that life needs to be “a mix of work and fun.”

Bruss attributes his ability to be flexible and to handle different types of jobs to his Morris experience. He said that “a renewable, sustainable education’ rings so true.” An active Boy Scouts of America volunteer, Bruss appreciates Morris’s emphasis on “giving back to community.”

Randy Koopman ’78
Koopman earned a bachelor of arts in chemistry, pre-veterinary medicine. His career path led him from field service engineer to technical sales representative to regional manager to director and, finally, to his current position as senior director for Waters Global Services. The company’s products are used by pharmaceutical, life science, biochemical, industrial, academic, and government organizations working in research and development, quality assurance, and other laboratory applications including regulatory compliance.

Receiving the award was “truly the honor of my life,” said Koopman. Like Bruss, he thanked his family for support, in particular, wife Debbie and his parents, “positive role models who never doubted that I was going to go to college.”

Koopman spoke about Morris activities “outside of studies,” sharing stories of friendships and campus fun. “Teachers, friends, coaches—it is all still happening at UMM—you can’t teach this,” he said, noting the lifelong “positive influence” of Morris relationships.

Professors’ Impact
Both Bruss and Koopman, who started their careers as bench chemists in the same lab at General Nutrition Corporation in Fargo, especially acknowledged the impact chemistry professors made on their lives: the late Joseph Latterell, professor emeritus; Jim Olson, professor emeritus, and Jim Togeas, professor.

The UMMAA Distinguished Alumni Award honors alumni who make noteworthy contributions in their professional lives, in public service, or in service to the University of Minnesota.

Photo from left: Jim Olson, professor emeritus of chemistry; Randy Koopman ’78; Kenneth Bruss ’78; Jim Togeas, professor of chemistry

Call for Nominations
Nominate an alumnus for the 2010 UMMAA Distinguished Alumni Award.

Deadline: April 30, 2010

For more information or a nomination form: 320-589-6066 alumni@morris.umn.edu morris.umn.edu/alumni/awards
Keeler awarded NSF research grant

The National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded Matthew “Len” Keeler, associate professor of physics, a research grant of $130,000, with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Keeler is developing a new way to measure and to interpret the behavior of highly excited atoms. The grant will be used to conduct an experimental investigation of the influence of background gas collisions on the classical orbits of Rydberg electrons. His emerging theory melds the classic “solar-system” atom model and quantum mechanics.

Keeler designed and constructed his research apparatus based on Blu-Ray lasers. With careful control over electrical current, temperature, and a specific color of light from the lasers, Keeler “excites” an atom of potassium that launches an electron into a large trajectory or orbit around the atom’s nucleus. Then, he pumps argon into the chamber, steeping the exited atom in the gas.

“The gas is the new thing,” explains Keeler. “I measure how often we find the electron in one trajectory path versus another. I hope to convince people that we can measure external influence on electrons in the Rydberg [highly excited] state with this sensitive tool.”

At left: Keeler explains his research apparatus.

Computer Science chosen for NSF funded Information Assurance project

The Computer Science Discipline was chosen as a partner in the Upper Midwest Information Assurance Faculty Development Project. Headquartered at Dakota State University in Madison, South Dakota, a national Center of Excellence in Information Assurance education as designated by the National Security Agency and Homeland Security, the project is funded by a $349,759 National Science Foundation grant. The project seeks to advance knowledge in the fields of information assurance and computer security, support current faculty, enlarge the pool of qualified faculty, and increase the number of graduates prepared to enter employment in this high demand area.

Computer science faculty—Nic McPhee, professor, Kristen Lamberty, assistant professor, and Elena Machkasova, associate professor—have incorporated IA concepts, defined as “measures that protect and defend information systems by ensuring their availability, integrity, authentication, confidentiality, and nonrepudiation,” into coursework and student research.

Machkasova works with Nathan Dahlberg ’09, Valley City, North Dakota, and Nolan Nordlund ’10, Clearbrook, on a directed study.

“Nolan and I are working with Professor Machkasova to review the security content of the Introduction to Web Development course,” shares Dahlberg. “Software security is a constantly changing field, and we are researching different tools to aid students in the class to maintain best practices in regards to this.

The goal is to ensure that relevant and thorough security is being taught and used by the Computer Science discipline. In particular, we are looking at installation, configuration, and proper use of Apache server software, php server-side scripting, and SSL encryption.”

Morris and its partners through the NSF grant will collaborate on research and share results with the goal of publication to further disseminate knowledge in the IA field.

At left: Keeler explains his research apparatus.

Nathan Dahlberg ’09, Valley City, North Dakota, and Nolan Nordlund ’10, Clearbrook, research information assurance best practices through a directed study with Professor Machkasova.
HGA Architects and Engineers (HGA) won an American Institute of Architects (AIA) Honor Award for Architecture for the Morris Biomass Research and Demonstration Facility design.

The biomass project, an addition to the original campus energy plant, symbolically highlights “the difference between traditional energy sources and new energy sources.”

Project designer Steven Dwyer, AIA, of HGA says, “Because this is both an energy plant and a demonstration facility in renewable energy resources, we created an architecture of transparency, in which much of the mechanical infrastructure is visible through metal screening and wood slats.”

Reaccreditation and self-study

The campus is in the process of review for its 10-year accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, an independent corporation of the North Central Association (NCA). The NCA is a membership organization of colleges and schools in 19 states, whose purpose is to provide educational leadership to the region and the country.

The Higher Learning Commission reviews the quality of an organization of higher learning using the five criteria for accreditation: engagement and service; mission and integrity; preparing for the future; student learning and effective teaching; and acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge.

Each institution engages in a self-study process and prepares a report of its findings in accordance with Commission expectations. Read Morris’s self-study report at morris.umn.edu/reaccreditation.

On March 29, 30, and 31, 2010, a team of five consultant-evaluators from the Higher Learning Commission visited the Morris campus to conduct a comprehensive peer evaluation of the University of Minnesota, Morris.

Biomass facility garners architects an AIA award for design

A February 2010 evening of jazz in the Morris Area Schools Concert Hall served as a 2010 Celebration gift from the campus to the community. The concert featured the Morris Area High School Jazz Band directed by Wanda Dagen, Jazz Ensembles 1 and 2 directed by Joe Carucci, assistant professor of music, and guest artist Laura Caviani, jazz pianist and composer. Jim Thoreen, songster, arts advocate, and Stevens County coordinator, was Master of Ceremony. Highlights of the evening included Lema Bean, composed by Carucci, featuring Caviani on piano and Carucci on sax; and Watching the Game, composed by Caviani, featuring Andrew Schulz on trombone, Eric Gorecki on baritone sax, and Caviani on piano. Caviani also conducted master artists sessions on campus and worked with students. In response to a very positive experience teaching and performing in Morris, she called the community an “oasis of jazz.”

The event was made possible with funding from the Jim “Doc” Carlson Jazz Fund.

2010 Jazz Concert showcases genre’s deep roots in community of Morris

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Bert Ahern: history lived and history studied

Wilbert Ahern, professor of history, remembers the pitch Rodney A. Briggs, first chief administrator, used to entice him to begin his career at the still–new college in 1967. “He said I’d be opening up liberal education to a wide cross section of society,” recalls Bert, who embraced that vision. As retirement approaches, he reflects on opportunities afforded at Morris—open minds, innovative teaching, research, collaboration, and sharing its mission with Janet Ahern, wife and colleague.

Bert and Janet, retired voice and opera workshop instructor, tally 75 years at Morris: Bert 43 and Janet 32. When they arrived, the college had a seven-year history and “a sense of development and possibility.” Bright, motivated students have been a constant, but Bert notes that “transformations” were dramatic in early years. “These days, most students have a broader exposure to higher education,” reflects the Horace T. Morse Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching recipient. “In earlier days, I frequently watched students, often from small towns, really ‘catch on fire’ here at Morris.”

Shaped by history colleagues Truman Driggs, Jack Imholte, and Ted Underwood, Bert also appreciated “junior” colleagues Mimi Frenier, Roland Guyotte, and Harold Hinds, and enjoyed welcoming a new generation of historians in the last decade. “The discipline knows each other well, but we also cooperate with different areas, sharing ideas across the disciplines.” He especially appreciated the collaborative spirit during service as Division of the Social Sciences chair from 1987 to 1995. “Supporting excellence among my colleagues and bringing outstanding new faculty to campus,” he reflects, “far overshadowed budgetary and personnel difficulties.”

Innovation and collaboration are career-long themes. Bert knew that Morris would be “a place where you can do more than the same thing year after year.” In 1969, he and Imholte, among others, worked on the “Training Teacher Trainers” program. Their efforts led to the creation of the now Multi-Ethnic Student Program (MSP). “UMM’s powerful, unusual form of liberal education was public,” Bert states. “We had to make it accessible, a place where everyone would prosper. The best way to strengthen education for African American and American Indian students was to have more teachers who grew up with the same experiences, which justified MSP.”

Bert recalls pedagogy and curriculum retreats in the 70s that provided innovative, flexible teaching ideas that planted seeds for Freshman Seminar. “As professors, we come to our appointments as scholars not as instructors,” Bert says. “We can learn to be better teachers, however, through collaborative study and practice.” He helped design and served as Faculty Center for Learning and Teaching director from 1993–94 and 2001–04.

When Bert arrived at Morris, he didn’t know the campus had been an American Indian boarding school. In 1968, an American Indian policy symposium was held on campus, and he made a profound connection: The forces behind the Morris American Indian boarding school were shaped by the same people he studied for his dissertation on the crusade for equal rights for ex-slaves.

Influenced by his mother’s birth on a reservation, his grandfather’s Federal Indian School Service teaching, his dissertation research, and campus history, Bert began investigating the American Indian boarding school period. In 1984, he received the Solon J. Buck Award for “Indian Education and Bureaucracy: The School at Morris, 1887–1893.” In 2002, the Minnesota Historical Society Press reprinted the article in The North Star State: A Minnesota History Reader. He is working on a book, An Indian Heart and A White Man’s Head?: Returned Indian Students in the Assimilationist Era, 1880–1928.

From 1998–2008, Bert served as the Bush Foundation’s Tribal College Programs director, an opportunity to reflect on the past, present, and future. “Boarding schools were very destructive, often with
Following World War II, research was conducted on the use of Willie’s Jeeps for agriculture purposes at the Experiment Station.

In 1946, I started as a third-year West Central School of Agriculture (WCSA) student, a transfer from Fergus Falls High School. A shy solitary wistful type. A farm girl...probably with the wrong clothes and hair style...but studious and law abiding to a fault.

I loosened up at Morris...was in a play, sang with Blossom Sorby...giggled with the girls, eyed the boys...but really thought I would look for a “city-boy.” All that gardening, canning, animal care, field work, and keeping the spotless house and yard Minnesota style was not my thing.

After WCSA graduation, I attended intense nursing training at Hamline University and Asbury Hospital in the Twin Cities from 1947-50. Mr. Edson, WCSA superintendent, came to my “Nurses Home” and hired me for $400 a month—room and board included. And I returned to the Morris Ag School. Never was there ever such a proud and happy school nurse...in my starched uniform and gray and red school cape, white stockings...while clinic shoes...suddenly a stand-in mother to 400 lively teenagers!

Two wonderful years later when I left my nursing position, they had all matured somewhat. I had a cheering squad of Aggies at the bowling alley. My shirt said “Morris Wreck” embroidered on the back...surely they meant “Morris Rec” as in recreation!

I found my city-boy. A truck load of Aggies showed up at my wedding and kidnapped me! Not sure what to do with their prize, they drove around town and to the A&W root beet stand, and then finally back to the church. We have five children, thirteen grandchildren, and now two great grandchildren. We sold the family farm in 1999. A visit there shows just fields, no buildings, no grove, no fences, just a square mile of prime farming. Efficient and no frills.

Now it is 2010, and I’m 80 years old. My years at WCSA are “Norman Rockwell” in my mind, vivid, inordinately carefree, and rewarding.

The Aherns are grateful they could both follow academic callings at Morris. “We’ll miss our colleagues, faculty and staff,” they share, “the wonderful students, and conversations with eager open minds.”

A campus gathering will be held in honor of Bert’s retirement on May 3, 2010.

In 1910, the University of Minnesota established the WCSA on the Morris campus, which educated area high school students in a boarding school environment until 1963. This time period garnered the campus its placement on the National Register of Historic Places as the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station Historic District. Handsome Prairie School structures, like Education—formerly the Infirmary, continue to serve the campus well.

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Now it is 2010, and I’m 80 years old. My years at WCSA are “Norman Rockwell” in my mind, vivid, inordinately carefree, and rewarding.

The West Central School of Agriculture Alumni Association has initiated a project to place bronze name plaques on the 13 former WCSA buildings in the campus historic district as designated by the National Registry of Historic Places. The plaques will be engraved with the name of the building or the use of the building during WCSA days.

The alumni also plan to install an information sign about the historic district and campus history near the Welcome Center.

If you’d like to be a part of this project, send your gift in the enclosed envelope marked “plaque project,” or make an online gift.

morris.umn.edu/givingtomorris

In the late 1950s, when the University announced that agricultural schools would be phased out, a grassroots citizens movement, the West Central Educational Development Association, convinced the Minnesota Legislature to establish a public liberal arts college at Morris.
Tributes to Professor Jim Gremmels

I don’t think Jim Gremmels (1927–2009) ever thought of UMM as the place where he had a job. The campus was so much more to him. He told me many times that one of the best things that ever happened to him was when Dean Rodney Briggs hired him to be UMM’s first basketball coach and a member of the English department. Jim said this with considerable humility and gratitude. I don’t think that it ever occurred to him that the day he was hired was also one of the most fortunate days in UMM’s history. Jim’s legacy and contributions to UMM continued for the next fifty years, and they will continue well into the future.

—Dennis Clausen ’65

It is hard to say enough about Jim Gremmels or to say it adequately. He was a model for how a life could be lived intellectually and yet close to nature and family and community. He drove tractors. He got his hands dirty. He sailed. He ran a letterpress. And he loved Moby Dick. He suggested, with his whole life, that the experience of reading and study was not cut off from the experience of living but was an enrichment to it.

Jim Gremmels was passionate about literature, but he was also passionate about so many other things that students could not help but seek out and value their own passions. Every English major knew about the letterpress Gremmels operated, and the joy he took in it: this clunky, inefficient thing produced—if one were careful, if one paid attention—forms of beauty. In many ways, that letterpress describes Jim Gremmels as a teacher and human being. His students were brought to a deeper understanding of the value of craftsmanship and art and tradition, and our connections to history, through the reverence and humor in Gremmels’ voice when he spoke of that letterpress. He managed to take it lightly and seriously both, and himself, and us, in the same way.

Gremmels kept up with my writing and publishing career, and invited me back to UMM several times to speak to classes about my own work. This in itself is remarkable—that with the hundreds of students he saw graduate, he nevertheless knew what one of them had accomplished. And because he did know, he cranked me back to influence UMM students in my own turn, allowing me to make an impression on another generation. He kept on operating the letterpress all the way to the end, fitting all those students into the sentences of their passions and interests, lightly tapping them into place, and cranking out lovely things.

—Kent Meyers ’77
A eulogy for Professor Ray Lammers, the artist, the teacher
—Tap Payne, professor of theatre

Ray Lammers (1926-2009) was a man who dedicated his professional life to educating generations of young people to become disciplined theatre artists…and enlightened countless theatre goers to the beauty and spectacle of live performance. He had an artistic vision…was rigid in his expectations…and unrelenting if a student was taking the easy way out.

And yet, he retired from UMM with, as some report, a glove compartment full of parking tickets. All were paid. He received the tickets because he stubbornly refused to stop parking in a spot in which he had parked for more than 20 years. This was Ray Lammers.

Ray came to Morris in 1962 to start the speech and theatre disciplines. He also established the Morris Children’s Theatre Program. I believe it remains Morris’s longest running outreach to the region and an effective recruitment tool for future students. For more than 40 years, elementary students have been exposed to live theatre. He saw the enormous value for the children…and the college students who produce the shows.

Ray was an artist with an artist’s vision for the stage. He moved people…physically moved them around the stage, when they wouldn’t do it the way he wanted them to. He had a standard of achievement for actors. He would rather have a student with a little talent and a willing attitude, than to have a very talented student who wouldn’t do the work to grow. He believed strongly in the process and not so much the product. He loved to build a world on the stage…build it from scratch…and, would become quite intense. He had, shall we say, a wonderfully expressive voice.

Colleen Hennen-Clements ’88, remembers that Ray often wore a baseball-style cap to rehearsal. When he grabbed the cap from his head and threw it on the floor beside him, you knew you were in trouble. Colleen also says that behind Ray’s piercing look was a hearty laugh waiting to burst forth. Once Colleen, and every other student realized this, they were never again afraid to talk to him about anything. But Ray had every reason to be intense. The process of bringing ideas to reality, which is what theatre does, is intense work.

To Ray, it was worth every quaking student…and every tattered baseball cap.

In this day and age…well, maybe in all days and ages…a man’s identity gets tied with his profession. Ray may have been the intellectual, the mover and shaker, a theatre founding faculty, a Morse-Alumni award for outstanding contributions to undergraduate education recipient, the original pilot of the Centennial Show Boat, and a director of creative ability and depth, but he wasn’t just his work. Ray would say his greatest achievement…his greatest source of contentment…came from his wife, Dolores, and his children and grandchildren.

George Fosgate, Ray’s theatre colleague for nearly half his life, states that in the many years of their relationship, George learned as much from Ray as did the students. Ray is teaching us now. This was Raymond J. Lammers.

Photo from left: George Fosgate, professor emeritus of theatre; the late Ray Lammers, professor of theatre; and Tap Payne, professor of theatre, circa 1980.
How I became a geology major

Secondary education in rural Minnesota is generally very good, but in the 60s and 70s, there was little Earth Science taught. I wanted to protect the environment, so based on my Glencoe schooling, I thought that meant becoming a biologist. I took baby bio from Robinson Abbott and Ellen Ordway, now professors emeritus of biology. In Kathy Killer Horton's lab, I grew to dislike microscopes. We were to draw the cell structure we saw through the microscope. I’m blind without glasses, so the tube kept poking my lenses into my face. When I took off my glasses and cranked up the power, I couldn’t see the drawing paper. The major required related sciences courses, so I took geology. My future became clear. If you couldn’t see the rock hand specimen, you brought it closer to your face. Describing a road cut of layered rock was fun. For a close inspection, you press your nose against the rock. For the big picture, you walk across the road. If somebody had taught me Earth Science, I could have saved a year of bruised eye sockets.

Doc Rock

The 70s geology majors were flannel-shirted nonconformists. We took our cue from the professors, James Van Alstine, now retired, and the late Clemens Brauer, or Doc Rock to us. He was a tough Oklahoman of slight stature, a shock of black hair combed back high. Doc was a WWII glider pilot in Europe and a Texaco oil wildcatter in the 50s—hot days on dusty roads and nights in tacky motels. He mentored and trained Texaco new hires, which led him to teaching us. He was a character. When a student asked a question, Doc wouldn’t answer. He’d laugh like a sputtering motor, then rearrange your words to make you think your way to the answer.

Assignments

I’m still trying to follow Doc’s example. I’ve got Doc’s old job now with one of his competitors, now on assignment in Melbourne, Australia. I met my wife, Mei-Ying, on assignment to Malaysia during the 90s. Mei didn’t have the opportunity to go to college—six siblings and little money. Malaysia was newly independent with little emphasis on higher education. At the time, daughters of Chinese mostly didn’t go to college. She reminds me how fortunate I am. She worked hard for low pay with limited opportunity. However, based on crossword puzzle skills, fluency in five languages, reading habits, and coping skills, she’d have made an ideal Morris freshman. Despite having never set foot on campus, she is an enthusiastic donor to Morris alumni funds. I know what an education means. Mei knows what a lack of an education means.
2009 Driggs Lecturer Jill Doerfler ’01 reflects on significance of Morris experience

Jill Doerfler ’01, assistant professor of American Indian studies at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, gave the 25th annual O. Truman Driggs Distinguished Lecture in October 2009. The first Morris graduate to serve as the Driggs Lecturer, Doerfler’s address, titled “You can go dig him out of his grave’: Anishinaabe Resistance to Racialization in the 1910s” derived from her research into the question of tribal identity revealed in her investigation of fraudulent land sales on the White Earth Reservation in the early 20th century.

Doerfler completed a doctorate in American studies at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in 2007 and earned a Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellowship in American Indian Studies at the University of Illinois. She has presented her research at national conferences for the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, Native American Literature Symposium, American Studies Association, Organization of American Historians, American Society for Ethnohistory, Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium, and Mid-America American Studies Association. Doerfler is a member of the constitution drafting committee for the White Earth Reservation.

“You can go dig him out of his grave’: Anishinaabe Resistance to Racialization in the 1910s”

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“The tuition waiver for American Indian students played an important role in my decision to attend Morris,” says Doerfler. “The waiver is an articulation of a commitment to social justice. My great-grandfather was sent to boarding school in Genoa, Nebraska, when he was only four-years old. He later attended Pipestone; he never talked much about his experiences. No one in my family had earned a bachelor of arts degree before I did, and, in some ways, I felt that by attending Morris I was starting a new chapter for our family. I was thrilled to learn that a major in American Indian studies has been established since my graduation in 2001. The major demonstrates a commitment to the inclusion of American Indian perspectives and ways of knowing, which is nothing less than essential considering the history of Morris. American Indian studies is a critical component of a liberal education.”

She continues, “I now look back on my undergraduate education and fully appreciate the mentorship, scholarly training, and intellectual development I received at UMM. The liberal arts education provided me with a broad background and opened my eyes to a diverse range of new perspectives. The dedication of the faculty and staff is extraordinary. I had the privilege of working with Dr. Bert Ahern on a Morris Academic Partnership and an Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program project. His mentorship provided me with confidence and skills I needed to be successful. I found myself well prepared when I joined my doctoral cohort in American studies at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.”

Olson ‘10: living the Morris legacy of student involvement

Adam Olson ’10, White Bear Lake, a political science major and statistics minor, has served on the Morris Campus Student Association (MCSA) all of his four years at Morris. During Morris’s 2010 Celebration year, he’s serving as MCSA president. Student government’s long tradition at Morris began in 1960 with students organizing to support the new college and to ensure a voice in its future.

How has your Morris experience prepared you to lead?
At some colleges, you are taught classes on leadership. But, you can’t read about that in a book. There’s theory, then there’s the way it actually happens. I’ve been trying to be the kind of leader that uses channels already in place. Different groups want different things. Morris taught me that it should be a collaboration and how to deal with people effectively, to understand what people need.

What do you think of the new “renewable and sustainable education” tagline? The whole time I’ve been here, there’s been a focus on environmentalism; we’re just giving a name to what we already have. It’s true to Morris students and the interest of the faculty. We are a liberal arts school confident in that we are a liberal art school. We learn the basics of a liberal arts education: literature, writing, diversity, the ability to understand things and analyze, articulate, etc. At Morris, I’ve been equipped with skills that I can use to learn anything.

Twenty-five years from now, when Morris celebrates its 75th birthday, how would you like to be remembered?
As an advocate for students. That’s what MCSA is all about.
—Natalie Johnson ’11, Wichita, Kansas

Gooch to explore the rhythm

Rhythms illustrate the career of Van Gooch, professor of biology, a Horace T. Morse-University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education recipient. The tempo of the academic year cycles new students into his classroom and allows new teaching methods and ideas to be incorporated into coursework. Research on circadian rhythms, the internal clock of living things, provides challenge and discovery. With retirement this spring, daily patterns will change and new regularities will emerge, but a love for learning and a fascination with life will remain constant.

As a child, Gooch grew up in California, in Bay Area suburbs, collecting “critters.” It was no surprise that he majored in biology at California State University East Bay. There, he remembers, the cadence of crickets at his favorite lunch site inspiring his career-long research on biological timing mechanisms.

Gooch completed a doctorate in biophysics at the University of California, Berkeley and a postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard University. With city life closing in and a desire to teach, Gooch applied for a temporary position at Morris in 1976. Robbie Abbott, now professor emeritus of biology, hired him—in the Philadelphia airport. Gooch and wife Sue packed a U-haul with belongings, including a snake, and drove to a rural town and state where they had never been before.

In 1978, Gooch taught one year in the hills of Ohio at Hiram College, but he returned to Morris when hired for a tenured position. He came back for the prairie, for excellent staff like Audrey Ross and the late Lois Hogander, for teaching mentors like Tom Straw, former professor of biology, and for the students.

“I’ve spent time at Harvard, Berkeley, and Dartmouth, and I would put my Morris students up against those students anytime,” reflects Gooch. “I’ve always had good students, very enthusiastic.” Nearly every biology major, pre-med, and pre-health student at Morris learned cellular basics from Gooch, the primary instructor for the foundational Cell Biology course for the last 34 years.

In 2003, the Pride of the Prairie local foods initiative begins on campus.

In 2004, the campus receives $180,000 from the Getty Grant Program to develop a historic preservation plan for the campus.

In 2000, the Pride of the Prairie local foods initiative begins on campus.

In 2003, the National Register of Historic Places names the campus to registry as West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station Historic District.

Ed and Patty LaFave gift their home to the Morris campus in 2003.

Upper Minnesota River Valley
BUY FRESH
BUY LOCAL
www.prideoftheprairie.org

University of Minnesota, Morris: a renewable, sustainable education
And over the years, more than 100 students conducted research with Gooch. They studied the daily cycles of organisms, known as circadian rhythms, primarily using a mold called Neurospora. Recently, a collaboration with colleagues at Dartmouth resulted in a new procedure—inserting into Neurospora an “optimized” firefly luciferase gene, “built from scratch.” The artificial luciferase gene allows Gooch and his students to directly “see” the kinetics of different circadian genes. The procedure has been patented by the University of Minnesota and Dartmouth College.

In addition to teaching great college students, Gooch also fondly remembers 19 years of teaching Human Reproduction and Biotechnology in the Summer Scholars program with Tom Turner, associate professor of Spanish, and Bill Campbell, Academic Assistance department director. “It was energizing to work with talented high school students tackling real life problems, to not be confined to one discipline, and to experiment with a variety of teaching styles,” says Gooch. UMM was one of the first campuses to have a freshman critical thinking common course, Inquiry. “The close interaction with incoming first year UMM students in the Inquiry course was amazing,” shares Gooch, “as well as the interaction with faculty across the campus. I learned many different teaching styles and techniques.”

Gooch was pleased to serve on the pre-med committee and as Biology Club and Tri Beta Honor Society adviser, and as the "snake man" when countless elementary children had their first chance to touch and hold a snake.

“Becoming a professor was ideal for me,” reflects Gooch, “because I could continue the learning process. Teaching is a great way to learn. Life continues to fascinate me. I am in awe of the diversity of life, from the organisms existing in the rocks of Antarctica to the ornate birds of the tropics. I am also continually amazed by the unity of life; the weirdest organism is still going to have DNA with the same code as me, and it will still be run by ATP.”

The pulse of the prairie has “gotten in my blood,” says Gooch. So, he and Sue will retire nearby in an eco-house now under construction, the first of its kind in west central Minnesota.

A celebration for Gooch will be held at Pomme de Terre Park in Morris on Saturday, May 22, 2010, from 3 p.m. until dark. While not necessary, you may wish to add your name to the attendees list at morris.umn.edu/alumni/gooch. Send memories and photos of Gooch via the RSVP form, to alumni@morris.umn.edu, or to Alumni Relations and Annual Giving, Welcome Center, 600 East Fourth Street, Morris, Minnesota, 56267. To make a gift to the Van and Susan Gooch Biology Undergraduate Research Fund, please use the envelope marked with the name, or make a gift at morris.umn.edu/givetomorris.
I thought it might be fun to share a brief recap of the earliest days of the University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association (UMMAA). The organization was incorporated in 1964, at which time the first decision made by the nine-member board was to recognize all former students as alumni, whether they graduated or not. The second order of business was of a financial nature. An account was opened with a deposit of $2 from Josten’s for a credit on class rings previously ordered. Adding to those early coffers were membership dues of $1. The first project undertaken by these UMMAA pioneers was the publication of a quarterly newsletter.

Originally, alumni records and data were carefully gathered and stored on 3” x 5” index cards. Today, this information is housed in a highly sophisticated and “uber” secure Data Management System that, with the proper clearance, can instantly retrieve information with a few well-placed keystrokes.

From humble beginnings, the UMMAA has grown to more than 17,000 strong. Dues are no longer required, but donations to the Alumni Annual Fund are highly encouraged. Monies from this fund are used to support students, faculty and staff, and alumni programming including Homecoming. We continue to publish an alumni “newsletter,” now known as Profile, which is entirely funded by contributions to the Alumni Annual Fund.

The mission of the UMMAA today remains the same as it was in 1964. We endeavor to nurture the significant relationships that have been built between fellow alumni, and between alumni and the University of Minnesota, Morris. Programs and publications may have changed in name or format over the years, but at the heart of it all, the alumni association holds fast to its original purpose.

There is much for alumni to celebrate in our 50th year as we look back but also ahead to what the future holds. Our October 8–10, 2010 Homecoming celebration promises to be bigger and better than ever. Chances are that as a student you belonged to one or more campus organization. If so, you will be pleased to know that there will be a “Groupies” reunion for the groups and organization(s) you belonged to, and you will want to be part of it. Check the alumni relations Web site and watch your mail this summer for a letter detailing these and other Homecoming events and activities.

While visiting our Web site is the perhaps the quickest and most energy efficient way to stay abreast of what is being planned, please don’t hesitate to contact me directly with questions, concerns, or just to say hello! I always enjoy hearing from alumni and can be reached at 320-589-6394 or rileycj@morris.umn.edu.

Class of 1984 members gather during 2009 Homecoming festivities

During Homecoming 2009 weekend, members of the Class of 1984 gathered for informal conversation and reminiscing on Friday evening and for dinner at Bello Cucina, downtown Morris, on Saturday evening.

Photo from left: Lowell Amundson, Julie Nere Amundson, Carol Walker Denny, Tina Brown Shelton, Scott Nelson, Sharyn Wallin Danielson, Susan Larson Sommerfield, Jenny Born Kelly, Shari Kittelson Opdahl, Don Opdahl
As a member of the University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association (UMMAA) Board of Directors, I learn of future projects, activities, and initiatives that will happen at UMM in the coming months as well as in the distant future. It is exciting to look forward to new things happening at UMM. While necessary to look ahead, it is also important look back at where we have been and reflect on our past. The year 2010 will mark UMM's 50th anniversary as a liberal arts institution and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the West Central School of Agriculture (WCSA)—a perfect opportunity to reflect on UMM’s past and reconnect with UMM.

I was born and raised in Morris, and I feel a real connection and appreciation for UMM and the WCSA. My parents attended WCSA. I grew up following UMM football and basketball in the 1970s. My wife, Beth ’88, and I both attended UMM in the early 1980s. Our son, Patrick ’08, played football and graduated from UMM, and finally, our daughter Megan, is finishing her senior year at UMM this spring!

UMM is an important part of all alumni lives and makes up a part of who we are. Whether you hung out at the original Louie’s Lower Level, at Agoraphobia, or Turtle Mountain Cafe, or if you watched football games at Miller Field, Cougar Field, or Big Cat Stadium, the campus still has the same unique feel to it. The names and faces of faculty, staff, and administration change from time to time, but the same strong commitment to a high quality education at an affordable price remains the same.

So, I invite everyone to make an extra effort to come back to Morris this year, reconnect with UMM, with friends, and with the campus itself. The UMMAA assists in these opportunities at Homecoming in the fall and Jazz Fest in the spring. But you can reconnect anytime online at UMM’s Web site, morris.umn.edu, or through Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn found on the UMMAA’s page at morris.umn.edu/alumni.

The UMMAA’s mission includes fostering communication and relationships among alumni, students, faculty, and staff, so if there is anything that we can do to assist you in this please, contact us. We are always looking for ways to contribute and improve. It is also part our mission to nurture the unique educational experience of UMM by directing alumni gifts to the various needs of students, faculty, and UMM. Of course, in order to carry out our work, it takes the time, talents, and financial gifts of UMM’s alumni. We do not charge membership dues, so your generous donations are greatly appreciated to continue our mission.

I look forward to seeing you this year on campus. Thank you for all of your support. GO COUGS!

2010: a look in UMM’s rear-view mirror, a chance to reconnect
—Jim Mahoney ’85, president of the University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association

Alumni Calendar of Events

May 4, 2010
Morris at the Minnesota Twins game

June 3, 2010
Washington, D.C. alumni gathering

July 28, 2010
Morris at the St. Paul Saints game

September 25–26, 2010
Founders Day Weekend events

October 8–10
Homecoming at the University of Minnesota, Morris

alumni@morris.umn.edu
320-589-6066
morris.umn.edu/alumni

Reunite with YOUR student groups, during Homecoming, October 9, 2010, in the Student Center!
Alumni online book club launched—join anytime!

With much excitement, the University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association has launched a new venture—an online alumni book club, and you are invited to join anytime.

You will need an e-mail account through google (gmail), yahoo, twitter, AIM, Netlog, or OpenID to sign-in and post on the book club blog. If you do not have one of these accounts, there is no charge, and it is easy to set-up. The UMMAA book club blog has been created at ummbookclub.blogspot.com. Additional information can be found on the blog site regarding book selection and discussion.

Based on popular vote, plans include to read Three Cups of Tea in April, a memoir in July, the work of an alumnus writer in September, and award winners in January. Participants will vote on the title to be read each month. Stay tuned for future communications including a possible face-to-face book club meeting this fall. Happy Reading!

Contact Erin Christensen ’05, program associate, at schellin@morris.umn.edu or 320-589-6066 or check out the Web site for more information at morris.umn.edu/alumni/bookclub.

Midwinter Gathering at Como Park Conservatory

The annual Midwinter Gathering, held at the Como Park Conservatory in St. Paul in February 2010 was appreciated by alumni representing a multitude of reunion years.

“I enjoyed the event because it gave me a chance to catch up with old friends I hadn’t seen in a while and to meet new alumni, who I otherwise wouldn’t have had a chance to meet,” says Sara Herman ’07. “I also learned from the chancellor that Morris is moving towards a completely green campus, which was good to hear and something I find worth supporting.”

Photo: Sara Herman ’07 and Victoria Pyan ’07

Morris Legacy Walk Project returns for 2010 Celebration

The University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association invites you to celebrate UMM’s 50th birthday by participating in the Morris Legacy Walk project. Originally the Class of 2007’s Legacy project, the paver project allows you to inscribe a paver with your name and reunion year, or the name of a person you would like to honor or memorialize. In recognition of your gift to the Morris Legacy Walk fund, we will personalize a paver with your inscription. Your tax deductible gift of $125 will support the Morris Legacy Walk with remaining funds used to support scholarships.

Imagine the completed project—pavers lining the Welcome Center sidewalk that capture the history of the campus through the names of those who touched this place by living, learning, teaching, or working at the University of Minnesota, Morris.

Installation will be complete by Founders Weekend scheduled for September 24–26, 2010. You are welcomed to participate at any time, but to ensure paver placement by Founders Weekend, your order must be received by July 31, 2010.

For more information, please e-mail alumni@morris.umn.edu or call 320-589-6066, or check the Web site at morris.umn.edu/alumni/pavers.

“Dinner with the Chancellor” in Arizona

Alumni and friends enjoyed a “Dinner with the Chancellor” in February 2010 at Annabelle’s Restaurant in Mesa, Arizona. The event was sponsored by the University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association and hosted by Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson, Associate Vice Chancellor for External Relations Maddy Maxeiner, and Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving Carla Riley.

Photo: Ron Meiss ’69, Johnson, Gary McGrath ’68, Maxeiner ’76, and Kitty McGrath
Young alumni visit Science Museum

Young alumni and friends experience the history of the Titanic at the Science Museum in October 2009. The special event allowed Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition visitors to assume the roles of a passengers as the tour followed the journey of the famous ocean liner.

"Beth and I had a great time at the Young Alumni Titanic event," says Andy Korth '07. "We both reunited with an old friend that we hadn’t seen since graduation. The event itself was a blast. Seeing relics retrieved from the actual ruins of the Titanic was very interesting from a historical perspective and was an emotional experience."

Photo: Elizabeth Kahl ’04 and Andy Korth ’07

Senior Banquet kicks off BikeShare project

In December 2009, the Class of 2010 kicked off their Legacy project—a BikeShare program—at the Senior Banquet, sponsored by the University of Minnesota, Morris Alumni Association.

Jenna Sandoe, Rochester, and Ashley Gaschk, Bismarck, North Dakota, lead the project, a program that serves as the class legacy, inspires philanthropy, and promotes environmental friendliness.

“We envision the bicycles being of great use to students who wouldn’t bike enough to bring their own bicycle from home, but would still like an option get around town other than driving or on foot,” says Gaschk. “…I know people would use them.”

Photo: Ashley Gaschk ’10, Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson, and Jenna Sandoe ’10 at the Senior Banquet.

Morris area young alumni gathering

Morris area young alumni and friends gathered for a cold winter evening of energetic bowling and warm conversation at the Crystal Lanes Bowling Alley in Morris in January 2010.

“Absolutely, this was fun,” says Matt Zaske ’03. “Even though we all live and work within a short distance of each other, the young alumni bowling event was an excellent opportunity to reconnect, socialize, and show off our wickedly impressive bowling skills. None of us will be joining the pro tour any time in the near future, but that’s half the fun of a bowling night.”

Photo: Angie Lozano Senger ’07, Lori Borowski Kurpiers ’03, Erin Schellin Christensen ’05, Carla Riley ’85, Matt Zaske ’03, Josh Kurpiers ’01, and Matt Senger ’03
Class of ’65

Lynden Nelson was inducted into the Dave Bartelma Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame in April 2009. He coached and taught at Kerkhoven–Murdock–Sunburg High School for more than 25 years. He is retired from teaching, but he serves as a township supervisor and as Hubbard County District Five soil and water supervisor. He loves to golf.

Class of ’68

Lonnie Broden, Orono, loaded up a booth for the first time at the Uptown Art Fair in August 2009 hoping to sell her paintings and prints. Her work was the “face” of the 2009 show. The festival is considered the biggest art fair in the state and rated among the best in the country. She largely taught herself art until she headed to UMM, and in classes she grew to love impressionism and embraced it as her painting style. She used her artistic skills in a 25-year career in exhibit design at the Science Museum of Minnesota. She retired in 2008 to focus on her art career, but she continues to teach exhibit design at the University of Minnesota.

Class of ’69

Lorlee Bartos, Dallas, is progressing on a postcard project, which was featured in the Echo Press in Alexandria. The postcards may be viewed at anniebartos.blogspot.com. She made a quick trip to Minnesota in mid-September and enjoyed the perfect days.

Class of ’71

Greg Lemmons is retired.


Class of ’72

Bonnie Stahler, Morris passed away in September 2009. She is survived by daughters Patricia Buckle ’67, Merrilee J. Stahler ’74, Susan E. Dupay ’75, and Coleen Behm. She was an active local volunteer, and donated land to UMM to be used as a teaching prairie.

Debra Carlson presented a talk in Belfast on “Learning through Nature: Supporting All Areas of Learning through Interactions with the Natural World.” She was one of four presenting on this topic. The other presenters were from Australia, India, and Brazil.

Class of ’73

Suzanne Sarlette, Davenport, Iowa, passed away in October 2009. She is survived by her husband, Gerald Pearson, brothers Del ’76, Marty ’81, sister Carol Dutcher and three nephews, including Peter ’09. She was an avid birdwatcher, reader, crafter, and music lover.

Class of ’74

Joan Rumph McDonald, Sauk Centre, passed away in July 2009. She was committed to social justice, especially for children, and had a lifelong love of books.

Class of ’75

Patti Lee Bung Bock is happily living and working in New Ulm with a great husband and two grown children.

Class of ’76

Norman Dailey joined the Traveler’s Century Club in 2009 when he stepped on the Antarctic Peninsula. He continues to toil at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C., while planning his next trip. He has only 214 countries left to visit! His country list is at toursbynorm.com.

Class of ’78

Kathleen Pederson Shiop, Tampa, Florida, was hired by Northwest Airlines, now merged with Delta Airlines, 30 years ago. She continues her career in the airline industry with no plans to retire until she has traveled the world. Anyone who remembers her is invited to get in touch at toonfull@yahoo.com.

Monica Wilmes Wepking and husband Jeff celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary in June 2009. Daughter Jenn plays volleyball at Dakota State University, and son Jon is the assistant men’s basketball coach at Moorhead State University. Monica was awarded “Best News Story of the Year” by the South Dakota Newspaper Association. She is the publisher/editor of the Wagner Post and Lake Andes Wave.

Class of ’79

Wanda Schackmann–Flechig passed away in June 2009 from ovarian cancer. She is survived by her husband Marc, her mother, and four sisters, including Lorrie Schackmann ’81. She was founder and owner of Circa Gallery in Minneapolis.
Class of ‘80
Rod Abbott was recalled to active duty in the U.S. Navy. Captain Abbott is the military associate dean of research at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Nancy Elias’s daughter’s Sweet Adelines chorus competed at the International Convention in Nashville in October 2009.

Class of ‘81
Scott Behrends passed away in November 2009.

Class of ‘82
Shirley Zierke, representing Polaris Industries, visited campus in October 2009.

Shirley Zierke

Class of ‘83
Tera Guetter is involved in the Detroit Lakes Morning Rotary Club when she is not working on Pelican River Watershed District projects. She has been a member of the club since 2000 and president in 2007-08 when it was named top club for the district.

Class of ‘84
Joel Scalzo is the president/CEO of Business Management Association.

Class of ‘85
Debora Korkowski, along with Tony Streng ‘05, Julia Schmitt Smith ‘08, Evan Remmel ‘08, Whitney Pankonin-Fink ‘09, Robert Michalscheck ‘09, Devin Sumption ‘07, Dani Larson ‘09, Nolan Hauta ‘08, Andrew Peterson ‘08, Erika Spofford ‘09, and Sarah Tolbert ‘09, participated in the alumni Concert Choir during Homecoming 2009.

Mark Lagergren was part of a teacher summit with nine other American educators and ten Polish educators in Poland in October 2009. The trip was sponsored by the Embassy of Poland in cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Class of ‘86
Darcy and Troy Hoyt live in Springfield, Minnesota, where Darcy is the head volleyball coach, assistant speech coach, and directed the spring play this past year. It was a busy year. Troy was the 2008 Springfield Teacher of the Year. Their oldest daughter is a junior at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and their second daughter is a freshman at Morris. They have one daughter in seventh grade.

Connie Jorgensen and Blair Nelson ’89 live in St. Cloud, where they have been for the past 18 years. They have six children, the oldest a young adult out on her own and the rest ages 5 to 12. Connie is a social worker, and Blair works for the information systems department, both for Stearns County. They keep busy with their children and in their spare time they enjoy hiking and spending summer weekends on Leech Lake.

Connie Jorgensen
Blair Nelson ’89

Class of ‘87
Leigh Marthe earned a doctorate in education with a focus on leadership in higher education from Capella University, an online university based in Minneapolis, in August 2009. Her dissertation studied the lives and career paths of women college presidents in New England.

Class of ‘88
Cindy Goyette and husband Dennis Kailey left Colorado after living there for more than 19 years. Her employer, Gilead Sciences, Inc., relocated them to the San Francisco Bay area in September 2009. She is a human resources business partner to the senior vice president of the Cardiovascular Therapeutic business of Gilead in Palo Alto, California. She’s been with the company nearly three years and is focused on integrations of mergers and acquisitions. Her e-mail is cindy.goyette@gmail.com.

Class of ‘90
Sherry McKenzie is a K-12 principal in Amber, Alaska. She is excited about the new job and the move. She writes, “My godfather, Bob, gave me snow pants and really warm down booties. My friend, Stan, gave me blaze orange mittens to go with my blaze orange deer hunting coat, so that I will be able to be found in the snowstorms or by grizzly bears! For those of you who knew about my surgery before flying to Anchorage and then the northwest Arctic…Thank you for the prayers and kind thoughts. I appreciate them all very much.”

Class of ‘91
Kristin Erickson Dahlen has been a stay-at-home mom for sons Luke and Sam for the last four years.

Jill Hanson-Follingstad and Mike Follingstad, Prior Lake, welcomed second son Drew to their family in February 2009. She writes, “Big brother Jay is seven. We live in Prior Lake. I’m on leave of absence from teaching at Prior Lake High School, while I stay home with Drew. Mike is a director of engineering at ADC in Shakopee. Hi to all UMM friends!”

Jill Hanson-Follingstad
Mike Follingstad

Spring 2010 Profile
Alana Christensen Petersen is Senator Al Franken’s Minnesota state director. Aside from four years in Washington as deputy chief of staff to Congressman David Minge, she has been a lifelong resident of Minnesota. She spent the previous five years working on Congressman Jim Oberstar’s Minnesota staff, serving as his political director and director of field operations, focusing on constituent outreach and regional organizing. She and her family live on a farm near Pine City.

Class of ’92
Rob Carson writes, “On September 23, 2009, wife Rinna, son Robert Luzon (3), and I welcomed our daughter, Lucia Paola. We reside in Soldotna, Alaska. I teach physical science, marine biology, and anatomy and physiology at Skyview High School.”

Talitha Sannes-Venhuizen is a family physician in the hospital in which she was born, St. Mary’s in Detroit Lakes. She practiced medicine in several places before settling in the area, including St. Cloud, Park Rapids, Melrose, Long Prairie, and Bemidji.

Jon Reinders received a doctorate in epigenetics at the University of Geneva in Geneva, Switzerland. His research was published in Nature (v 461, 427–430). Jon and Lina Tucker Reinders ’95 continue to reside in Geneva with daughters Annemieke (4) and Jamison (1).

Class of ’97
Erik Anderson, Blaine, and wife Cindy welcomed their second child, Brennan Riley, in May 2009. Erik has been a home mortgage consultant at Wells Fargo for the last five years.

Class of ’94
Lois Regnier Conroy accepted an international policing award in Denver, Colorado, in October 2009. She is a senior attorney with the Minneapolis City Attorney’s Office and began her prosecution career in 1998. Her specialty is chronic offenders.

Class of ’95
Nathaniel Metcalf is a writer, director, and technical director with the National Theatre for Children. His play, Masterpiece, was published by Samuel French/Baker’s Plays. His latest, Mint Condition, is slated for performance in April 2010 to coincide with the opening of the new Twins stadium. He lives in Roseville with wife Jolene and his Labrador, Spaghetti.

Pat and Christine Larson ’94

Class of ’93
Lois Regnier Conroy

Class of ’94
Lois Regnier Conroy

Class of ’93
Kaarina Pearson passed away in June 2009.

Class of ’97
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Class of ’97
Erik Anderson, Blaine, and wife Cindy welcomed their second child, Brennan Riley, in May 2009. Erik has been a home mortgage consultant at Wells Fargo for the last five years.
Dana Bender Brink and husband Mickey welcomed daughter Amelia Mae in June 2009. Dana works at Hanley Wood Marketing in Minneapolis supporting the FedEx business. She’d love to hear from classmates at mdana75@hotmail.com.

Jason Schommer performed No Holds Barred: An Evening of Stand-Up Comedy with Jason Schommer at the Great River Arts Center in Little Falls. He is a standup comedian, director, actor, writer, and producer. He began doing stand-up as an intern on “The Rosie O’Donnell Show.”

Mark Wills started a new job with the American Institute of Architects, “and may be coming to a state capital near you soon as an advocate for the architectural profession. Let me know if you’re coming to DC.” He can be reached at mwills57423@gmail.com.

Class of ’98
Amy Roorda Albrecht and family welcomed son Mark in March 2009. Mark joins sisters Clarissa and Doryan, and brother Daemon. Amy graduated from the University of North Dakota with a doctorate in biochemistry in August 2009. She is an assistant professor of biochemistry at Charleston Southern University in Charleston, South Carolina.

Jennifer Vogt Erickson and husband Jeshua are enjoying life in Albert Lea, where she teaches high school history and criminology. In March 2009, they welcomed their first child, Axel Christian.

Michael Hench was recognized as Distinguished Band Director of the Year through the Minnesota chapter of the American School Band Directors Association. At the time of recognition, he was completing his eighth year as Pipestone Area High School band director. This year, he is head band director at Centennial High School in Circle Pines.

Jon Lipp is a Java developer, at Garmin Ltd./Digital Cyclone, Inc.

Class of ’99
Mollie Mohr Dusha, husband Ryan, and son Teague (2) welcomed baby girl Lola Sigri in September 2009.

Jennifer Hunter writes, “I’ve taken a new position teaching early childhood education courses and practicums, as well as coordinating an international partnership with South Korea at Northwest Missouri State University.”

Chris Lienemann, wife Stacy, and daughter Zoe welcomed baby Owen in July 2009. They reside in New Ulm, where Chris telecommutes for a company in Eden Prairie. Stacy is a librarian in St. James.

Sal Monteagudo received the fourth-annual Morris Human Rights Award. Sponsored by the Morris Human Rights Commission, the award is presented to residents who further human rights in Morris. A liberal arts for the human services major, Sal works for the Stevens County DAC and Prairie Community Services. He is a job coach for people with developmental disabilities. He volunteers for the Morris Literacy Project, English as a Second Language and GED classes, and Special Touch Ministries.

Kate VanSickle, Hopkins, and husband Chuck Pumarlo welcomed son Levi in January 2009. Big sister April is in Spanish Immersion School and loving life.

Class of ’00
Elizabeth Holden and Jesse Yagotin ’98 live in a cabin on a mountaintop in Patagonia. Elizabeth manages a large bat guano collecting site for an international fertilizer conglomerate. Jesse is a stay at home dad to their iguana, Horace, and coati, Puzzles. Elizabeth spends her days zorbing to work and crocheting hanging planters. Jesse enjoys collecting exotic species of venus flytraps and geocaching. They would love to hear from friends and can be reached at eholden20@gmail.com, or stop by if in the area.

Jennifer Mathews and Chad Emery, St. Cloud, happily announce their marriage in June 2009.

Ryan and Jennifer Redin Fair ’00, Minneapolis, welcomed their second child, daughter Raja, in March 2009. They also have a son, Nathan. Ryan and Jennifer work for the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Paul and Stephanie Grimes Sandvik are doing great and living in Spring Lake Park with kids Ellie and David. Stephanie stays at home with the children, and Paul works for Hennepin County. Stephanie writes, “We always seem to keep busy and think fondly back to our days at Morris.”
Class Notes

Andrew Christianson ’04 and Ryan Turgeon ’05 visited campus in November 2009 to meet with the Morris Chemistry Club. They discussed life after UMM, career and graduate opportunities.

Class of ’02
Shannon Lambert has been named L’Oreal: Women of Worth for 2009 by public vote. She founded Pandora’s Project, an online resource that connects survivors of sexual violence with others facing similar issues across the globe. Pandora’s Project started out as a small message board in anticipation of her appearance on “20/20” to share her own story of healing. It is now the largest international online sexual abuse survivor community and serves more than 20,000 survivors worldwide.

Tony Schuster is a financial adviser at Lund, Joern, & Associates of Ameriprise.

Jeffrey Stewart is in software development.

Class of ’03
Jaclyn Reinarz teaches kindergarten. She writes, “I have recently published my first (of many I hope) children’s books.” It is titled The Brightest Star.


Joel Vanderheyden’s debut album, Complete Life, was named August 2009 CD of the Month on KCCK 88.3 in Cedar Rapids, and has been receiving airplay on stations in Kansas City, Virginia, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Nebraska. The album features the band Kopliant No, that embarked on a “mini-tour” of the Midwest. Visit joelvanderheyden.com.

Class of ’04
Scott Hiland married Erika Schornstein in June 2009.

Class of ’05
Tim Connors bought a little bungalow in south Minneapolis with fiancée Laura Garcia. He writes, “We are getting an education in minor home repair and gardening, and loving every minute of it!”

Angela Eischens completed a masters in marriage and family therapy from Argosy University in the Twin Cities in 2007. She is a licensed associate marriage and family therapist, and she plans to receive full licensure in 2010. She lives in Minneapolis and works at the Washburn Center for Children as a home-based therapist in their Family Focused program. She recently started a project with the Washburn Center at Broadway High School with their Teenage Pregnant and Parenting Program doing early intervention assessment and treatment for birth to three.

Jeff Iverson started the Granite Falls Community Theatre. Their first production was Guys and Dolls in July 2009. Current student Molly Kvam was an accompanist. He teaches vocal music at Yellow Medicine East High School and directs the school’s fall musicals.

Mike Stone was in an episode of “Sweat Equity” in October 2007. He was ready to invest his money in a home, so he jumped at the chance to own and renovate his grandmother’s fully furnished 1990-built town home.

Class of ’06
Nathan HilFiker works as a Macy’s specialist.

Tia Pierce Thysell has fulfilled the dream she had as a student teacher by working in Independent School District 544. She is a full time teacher with the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center, and the inclusion of the outdoor classroom fits well with her. Her passion is to connect students with nature.

Amanda Howard Stults and husband welcomed their first child, Piper, in November 2009.

Class of ’07
Jenna Benson made a trip back to Morris to visit and give a chemistry seminar in September 2009. She is a third-year graduate student at the University of Montana in the Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Studies.

Jenna Benson
Alyssa Herzog and Jacob Melby married in December 2009. Ben Melby ’02 was best man. Jacob is pursuing a doctorate in materials science and engineering at Carnegie-Mellon University, while Alyssa graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a masters in theatre arts. Alyssa is serving a year in the Literacy AmeriCorps and is the education director for Prime Stage Theatre. They’d love for an alumni gathering to make its way out east again.

Becky Houdek is a technician at Minnetonka Creek Watershed.

Class of ’08
Katherine Glasrud interned at St. Mary’s Innovis in Detroit Lakes summer 2009, and is a second-year medical student at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. She plans to graduate from medical school in 2012.

Jackie Venable, along with Jessica Henry ’09, Sarah Tolbert ’09, Brian Kotila ’09, and Daniel Connolly ’09 participated in the Symphonic Winds concert during 2009 Homecoming.

Class of ’09

Rachel Olm will serve the Mahtomedi School District as a GreenCorps member until August 2010. With oversight by a Pollution Control Agency mentor, she will concentrate her efforts in two areas: reducing waste, such as increasing recycling and composting, and reducing toxicity, such as using nontoxic household cleaners.

Kau Chee Vang appeared in the cover photo of the November 2009 issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Faculty and staff
James Gremmels, professor emeritus of English and retired basketball coach, passed away in November 2009. A Celebration of Life will be held on the Morris campus on April 29, 2010, beginning at 11 a.m. in the P.E. Center.

Ray Lammers, professor emeritus of theatre arts, passed away in October 2009.


Sam Schuman, retired Morris chancellor, has written Religious Colleges in Twenty-First-Century America. Published by Johns Hopkins University Press, the book explores the religious colleges and universities in contemporary American higher education.

Maria Brun ’08 receives dissertation award

Maria Brun ’08, a native of Robbinsdale, has traveled where others dream and allowed knowledge and experience from journeys to influence life views and to open new doors.

The Morris environment motivated Brun to work hard and focus. The trip that turned her life upside down was field research with Professor of Economics Pareena Lawrence to India. She experienced a different way of life and made a positive impact on marginalized people. She also credits creative and smart fellow students who challenged her views with challenging her to stay up with the curve. With hard work, Brun was accepted into graduate school at the prestigious London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

Brun’s program was challenging. Her degree focused on problems facing lesser developed countries—problems that have no simple answer.

“Each country has a different economy and has a very different history that makes them interact with the global economy and grow in a different way,” says Brun. “There are millions of variables to consider, some which we know, some which we haven’t thought of yet, some which we can measure, and many of which are subjective and impossible to quantify and in some cases, even make a qualitative statement about. To even take a stab at this problem, the program is designed to cover theory across economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, geography, international relations, gender theory, and more, all of which rarely agree or consider each other when coming up with theory and thus the literature we covered was often disparate. It’s a lot to learn and a lot to connect together in a meaningful way. Even more challenging than absorbing it all is then to transform it into workable questions to research.”

Brun received LSE’s Excellent Dissertation Prize for the Development Studies Institute, earned a masters of science in development studies, and graduated at the top of her class in December 2009. She currently works as an analyst at Target headquarters, Minneapolis, and is applying to political science and development doctorate programs—her first choice: LSE.

—Cassie Hall ’13, Brookings, South Dakota
Mark Fohl, athletic director, updates and Cougar announcements

**NCAA automatic qualifier**
One of the most exciting parts of moving back to North Central Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III competition is the potential for automatic qualifiers (AQs) for postseason play.

Starting in 2010, all Cougar teams will now be eligible to participate in the NCAA postseason by virtue of winning conference play in the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC). Not only will this give Morris additional exposure on a national stage, but will also provide our dedicated student-athletes with the deserved thrill of national competition.

**Baseball and softball hit the road**
The arrival of spring break means holiday for most of our students, but for the baseball and softball teams, given our Minnesota winters, it means long-distance trips to southern regions to pack in a week of games.

The baseball team traveled to Fort Myers, Florida, to play Finlandia University, University of Scranton, State University of New York (SUNY)-Fredonia, Lakeland College, and SUNY-Plattsburgh.

The softball team, meanwhile, traveled to Tucson, Arizona. Coach Heather Pennie and team will face Southwestern University, Dickinson College, Schreiner University, and several others as they warm up the arms and bats for the 2010 season.

**A new online look for Cougar athletics**
In efforts to bring you the highlights of Cougar sports, we are very excited to tell you about the arrival of new athletics Web site. The URL address will be the same, but the look, the feel, the information will all be multimedia and more dynamic—all the better for you to stay up-to-date on your favorite Cougar sports and student-athletes.

We’ve partnered with Sidearm, an information management company that specializes in athletics Web sites and media. With the new site, we’ll be able to bring you more videos, photos, and stories from Big Cat Stadium, the P.E. Center, and the Cougar soccer field.

Check out the new Cougar athletics Web site now at ummcougars.org.

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**Keller competes at national cross-country meet**
First-year runner Linda Keller, Paynesville, advanced to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) national cross-country meet in November 2009 by virtue of an eighth-place finish in the regional meet. Keller is the first Morris runner to qualify for the Division III national cross-country meet. She and coach Jeremy Karger traveled to Highland Hills, Ohio, to the national meet, hosted by Baldwin-Wallace College, where she placed 85th of 279 runners with a time of 23:29.0.

**Tucker and Howell compete in All American Bowl**
With outstanding Division II and III football players from across the country, senior running back Ernest Tucker, Cleveland, Ohio, and senior defensive lineman Matt Howell, Tampa Bay, Florida, were invited to play in the All American Bowl in Minneapolis in December 2009. The two Cougar players participated in a skills and strength combine for National Football League scouts prior to playing the bowl game.

**Women’s soccer Cougars earn academic awards**
The Cougar women’s soccer team earned the National Soccer Coaches Association of America College Team Academic Award. This is the 11th time the Cougar women’s soccer team has earned the award.

Soccer midfielder Maddy Gerber ’10, Mahtomedi, with a GPA of 4.0, and junior midfielder Amber O’Connor ’11, Ham Lake, with a GPA of 3.5, were named to the national Scholar-Athlete Teams as selected by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.
The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has awarded University of Minnesota, Morris student-athlete Maddy Gerber, Mahtomedi, a NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship. Annually awarded to only 87 men and 87 women of the NCAA’s 400,000 athletes, the scholarship honors students who excel athletically and academically, and demonstrate outstanding citizenship and service to others.

During Gerber’s four-year Morris career, the biology and psychology major, and chemistry minor, maintained a 4.0 grade point average while playing four years of soccer. The three-time Upper Midwest Athletic Conference all-conference and four-time academic all-conference athlete scored a career total of 81 points.

Gerber says that participating in college athletics taught her the value of hard work, team play, and determination. “These principles can get you very far in both athletics and academics,” she says. “Working on a lab report with three other students is not unlike working with ten teammates on the soccer field. In both cases, you must communicate well and work cooperatively toward a common goal.”

The perfect combination

Tracey Anderson, faculty athletic representative and associate professor of biology, has known Gerber since her first-year student days. Serving as her adviser, Anderson noticed early in Gerber’s academic career that she possessed the characteristics necessary to be a strong candidate for the NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship—discipline, organization, and knowledge. “In particular, I became aware of Maddy’s accomplishments and how well she was doing when she was a junior. We’ve been just waiting for her senior year, because we believed she had what it takes to earn a really competitive scholarship award.”

Anderson’s colleague, Timna Wyckoff, associate professor of biology, served as Gerber’s research mentor. She’s impressed with Gerber’s ability to balance athletics and academics. As student/faculty partners, they conducted research on agricultural contributions to bacterial antibiotic resistance. The transition of one half of the nearby West Central Research and Outreach Center’s dairy herd from conventional production to organic production allowed the researchers the opportunity to compare populations of bacteria in two different dairy environments.

“She is the perfect combination as a student,” Wyckoff says. “She is very intelligent, and she works so hard.”

Gerber is also involved in Biology Club and Science Sensations, a program for area elementary children.

Choosing a microbiology doctorate program

Gerber will use her NCAA scholarship to study virology or gene therapy after Morris graduation. She has been admitted into microbiology doctorate programs at the Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Iowa, and Ohio State University and will soon make a decision as to where she will attend.

—Chris Butler, sports information director

An outstanding example

Dan Magner, head women’s soccer coach at Morris, notes that the NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship is extremely competitive, and Gerber is very deserving of the honor. He says Gerber is a great example of an outstanding Morris student-athlete. “That covers everything,” he says, “her fitness, her studies, her focus in training, how she conducts herself in games. In 20-plus years of coaching, I’ve never coached anyone so well rounded.”

Friends of Cougar Football spring and summer events

Friends of Cougar Football Fishing
Thursday–Saturday, April 8–10, 2010
Sportsman’s Lodge, Baudette

Friends of Cougar Football Golf outing
Friday, June 25, 2010
Pomme de Terre Golf Club, Morris

Contact Coach Todd Hickman for details.
hickmant@morris.umn.edu or 320-589-6431
Benson ’08: Now a Saint—always a Cougar

For four years on the Cougar basketball court, Alaina Benson ’08 stood out for ceaseless energy, scoring ability, and sunny demeanor in victory and defeat. But now, the former team captain, all-conference honoree, and 1,000-point career Cougar, paces a rival turf as head women’s coach at Presentation College in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

At only 24, Benson is already in a top job. Her mentor and former head coach, Tim Grove, is hardly surprised. “Alaina’s always been a leader,” he says.

The Clinton native had to be convinced to apply for the Presentation Saints job. After graduation, she began graduate school at Northern State. “The assistant baseball coach at Presentation was in one of my classes,” remembers Benson. “He told me to apply, but I didn’t think I’d have a chance.”

At Presentation, recent memories of Benson as a player made her a strong candidate. “You don’t remember all the players you play against,” says Rick Kline, Presentation athletic director. “But the ones you do must be something special. I remembered Alaina. I liked the way she conducted herself on the court. She represented the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference well, and we knew she’d be a positive role model for our women.”

Once hired, some of the work load surprised Benson. “As a player you don’t realize all the work that happens behind the scenes,” she says.

“I was confident Alaina would make the transition fine,” says Grove. “When you have players in college, you wait for them to make that turn to understanding the game more conceptually. When I joined the team, Alaina had already made that turn. She knew what we wanted to do on the floor and why.”

That mental agility, Benson says, was nurtured at Morris. Demanding coursework and high academic standards drove her beyond what she thought possible.

“When I started classes, I worried that I wasn’t going to make it. But I pushed my way through, and I think that fight to keep up my grades has made my present job easier. I’m used to having to work hard for what I want, and UMM prepared me for that,” says the sports management major.

In particular, it is one greatly missed Cougar, a basketball legend, who Benson credits with her academic success.

“Gremmels,” she says with a wistful smile. “Jim Gremmels taught me how to write. I thank him a million times whenever I have to write a graduate school paper.”

Benson keeps close ties with Morris, soliciting her former coach’s advice about the managerial aspects of basketball. With enduring relationships like these, Morris holds a soft spot for Benson. But when alma mater comes to Presentation to play, she becomes a Saint, ready to compete and expecting to win.

—Chris Butler, sports information director

Student and mentor, friendly coaching rivals: Alaina Benson ’08, Saints women’s basketball head coach, and Tim Grove, Cougar women’s basketball head coach

The original cougar mascot poses with cheerleader Corlyce Phelps Grant in 1966
Collectively, the O’Connor siblings, Amber ’11, Justin ’10, Kyle ’13, and Pat ’10, may be the most productive siblings to play Division III soccer—all at the same college.

They’ve earned eight Upper Midwest Athletic Conference (UMAC) all-conference placements, one UMAC player of the year, one UMAC post-season tournament player of the year, four National Soccer Coaches Association of America All-Academic awards. Pat is a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) post-graduate scholarship candidate.

In 207 games, the O’Connors amassed 53 goals and 50 assists for 156 points. And the figures belie the fact that Justin played defense; Amber has only played two years; and Kyle has three more years to play!

In high school, many college recruiters courted the O’Connors. Twins Pat and Justin made the radical decision to play on the inaugural men’s soccer team at Morris led by Coach Christian DeVries. Their first season of seven wins exceeded expectations. The next two seasons, the Cougars tallied 33 wins and won two UMAC post-season tournaments.

After playing one year at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Amber joined the Cougars and was promptly named to the all-UMAC team. Then Kyle enrolled in 2009 and helped the Cougars earn a UMAC conference title last season.

“They’ve provided a consistency and desire that exemplifies what UMM soccer and the University is all about,” says DeVries, “They all have great personalities, and they’re great students.”

Soccer helps the O’Connors focus on academics and vice versa. A management major, Justin looks forward to a real estate career. Pat will enroll in a statistics graduate program. Pre-med Amber aspires to be a doctor. Kyle is exploring academic paths.

—Chris Butler, sports information director
Gillies ‘83: Love of soccer inspires career and gift to Morris

Friendships with high school and college students from other countries fueled Jeff Gillies’s initial interest in soccer. Throughout his life, he has enthusiastically watched soccer advance in the United States. Today, as director of youth soccer at the YMCA of Middle Tennessee, Brentwood Center in Brentwood, Tennessee, Gillies encourages thousands each year to learn and love the sport. A gift to the University of Minnesota, Morris reflects his passion.

A Brazilian student visiting his high school in Alexandria, Minnesota, introduced Gillies to soccer. “I took to it right from the beginning,” he remembers. “We did not have a varsity program then, but we put together a league with the help of several adults who also had passion for the game.”

When he arrived at Morris in 1978, it didn’t take him long to notice young men playing soccer on campus green spaces, and he was quick to join them. “We had students studying at UMM from foreign countries, including Greece and several Middle Eastern countries. As I recall, they got things started, and Soccer Club grew from there.”

That group of about 30 players coordinated Soccer Club practices, games, and travel to other colleges. They practiced two or three times per week on Miller Field or in the P.E. Annex during the winter.

While he holds fond Soccer Club memories, Gillies was thrilled when soccer became an intercollegiate sport at Morris, the women in 1998 and the men in 2006. “It’s pretty neat to see a program finally,” he says, “and for it to be doing so well.”

A 1983 physical education major, Gillies notes that his Morris education “most definitely” serves him well in his YMCA position. As director of soccer programs, he witnesses the sport’s growth as he coordinates leagues, coaches, and sponsors for between 1,500 to 1,700 youth each spring and fall season.

“Soccer is a great game,” reflects Gillies, “a beautiful and simple game, played the world over. When it comes to professional, top-level soccer, the United States is still in the early stages compared to the rest of the world. But when it comes to youth soccer, we have more kids playing here than anywhere in the world. I’m inspired by seeing youth play the game and by seeing it continue to grow in numbers.”

In thanks for his Morris experience and as a reflection of his passion for the sport of soccer, Gillies has established a fund in support of the Cougar men’s and women’s soccer programs through a bequest. He shares, “Morris was great. Campus life—there’s nothing like it—the best five years of my life. The University of Minnesota, Morris was a perfect choice for me, and I thought this would be a great way to help others involved in the game I love.”

Gillies retired from playing soccer at age 40 because of a bad knee, but he continues to referee high school and college soccer.
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TENTATIVE HOMECOMING SCHEDULE

Friday, October 8
- Men’s and women’s soccer matches
- Disc golf tournament, 5:30 p.m., Pomme de Terre Park
- Entertainment in Edson Auditorium, Student Center
- Black Student Union dance, 10 p.m., Student Center

Saturday, October 9
- Cougar 5-K registration, Regional Fitness Center (RFC), 8 a.m., 9 a.m. start time
- UMMMAA annual meeting, 9:30 a.m., Student Center
- Alumni band rehearsal with Symphonic Winds, 10 a.m., HFA Recital Hall
- Welcome Center and campus tours, 10:30 a.m.
- Bookstore open, 11 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Science lower level
- Tailgate party, 11:45 a.m., west of Big Cat Stadium
- Football game, 1 p.m., Big Cat Stadium
- UMM Alumni Association reception, 4 p.m., LaFave House
- UMMMAA Groupies reception, 5:30 p.m., Student Center
- Distinguished Alumni Awards, Cougar Hall of Fame, and Groupies Reunion Dinner, 7 p.m., Student Center

Sunday, October 10
- Alumni choir rehearsal with Concert Choir, 10:30 a.m., HFA Recital Hall
- Homecoming Concert, 2 p.m., HFA Recital Hall, reception follows

morris.umn.edu/homecoming
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