

Fall 2008



# Pitt State

MAGAZINE



## Experience matters

At home and abroad, pre-med students learn from clinical experiences- pg. 8



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# Pitt State

MAGAZINE



8



22

## Features

- 8** Experience is a powerful teacher - PSU Free Clinic
- 12** In the eye of the storm - Future teachers help their hometown recover
- 16** A mother's mission - Son's autism reshapes a mother's life
- 20** Above the fray - Dale Dennis
- 22** Campus Romance - Love is always in the air on the PSU campus

## College Update

- 28** College of Arts & Sciences
- 30** College of Business
- 32** College of Education
- 34** College of Technology

## Departments

- 2** From the Oval
- 36** Athletics Update
- 40** Alumni News
- 43** Class Notes
- 46** In Plain Sight
- 48** The Last Page

## From the editor,

This was an interesting issue of the magazine to put together. From future doctors who are getting some valuable hands-on experience to an alumnus who has helped shape a state's schools, it is an issue that has inspired us and made us proud of the university's past and confident in its future. We've tried to include all the latest news and upcoming events for a busy fall semester, but you will also want to check out the university's Web site (www.pittstate.edu) to get all of the latest information about events on campus. As always, we're eager to hear both your kudos and criticisms, so keep those cards and letters (and e-mails) coming in.



This is one artist's conception of a fine and performing arts building, which will be located on the northwest corner of Homer and Ford streets, just east of the president's residence.

## University offers emergency text messaging

Students, faculty and staff at PSU have a new safety communications tool available to them. The university implemented an emergency text messaging option over the summer that is part of a package of communications tools that can be used in case of a campus emergency.

The text messaging service is optional and is available to parents as well as to students, faculty and staff. Anyone wishing to opt in to the service can do so from the university's Web site.

Howard Smith, assistant to the president and director of the university's crisis response team, said text messaging is just one way that information can be sent during an emergency, but it is not a panacea.

"We know from observing crisis situations on other campuses, that there is no single perfect way to communicate important information to every constituency on and off campus," Smith said.

That is why, according to Smith, the university continues to work on other communications systems that include group dialing, external loud speakers and Web-based communications.

"Campus safety is both a top priority and an ongoing process at Pittsburg State," Smith said.

For more information, click on the safety button on the PSU home page or go to [www.pittstate.edu/pres/EmergencyPreparedness.html](http://www.pittstate.edu/pres/EmergencyPreparedness.html).

## PSU receives \$10 million gift for fine and performing arts center

President Tom Bryant was smiling when he faced an expectant crowd on July 1 at the Wilkinson Alumni Center. Bryant was smiling because he had the honor of announcing the largest single gift in the university's history.

A gift of \$10 million from an anonymous donor has brought the long-awaited fine and performing arts center one step closer to becoming a reality.

"A fine and performing arts building is an important part of the university's master plan and a big piece of the current \$120 million capital campaign," Bryant told the excited crowd. "We are extremely grateful to this generous donor for this lead gift toward this project."

Dr. Brad Hodson, vice president for university advancement said the university needs and values gifts of all sizes, but some projects require one or more large donations in order to become a reality.

"The total cost of this project could exceed \$30 million," Hodson said. "That's a high hurdle to clear with small gifts alone. Large single gifts not only move a project along more quickly, they also inspire others to join in a very worthwhile project."

Bryant praised the donor's vision and generosity.

"Big dreams depend on people with vision," Bryant said. "This donor has chosen to invest not only in Pittsburg State University and many generations of students still to come, but also in the cultural life of the community."

Gene Bicknell, honorary national chairman of the university's \$120 million capital campaign, said the fine and performing arts center is the biggest remaining project in the 10-year campaign.

"We were successful in phase one in raising more than \$25 million for scholarships, faculty endowments and international programs," Bicknell said. "The Kansas Polymer Research Center was completed last year and the student recreation center/armory has just been completed. This fall, the university will break ground on a new student health center. Now our focus is on the fine and performing arts center and a new building for the College of Business. Bit by bit, this campaign is shaping the future of the university."

When constructed, the fine and performing arts building will fill a campus need that has existed since old Carney Hall was razed nearly 30 years ago. Carney Hall was named for Thomas Carney, the second governor of Kansas under whom the state's system of higher education was established. The building, constructed in 1919, included a 3,000-seat auditorium that was the cultural hub of the university. It was the site of numerous concerts and lectures until the building was razed in 1980 because of concerns about the building's structural integrity as a result of settling of the building's foundation.

To learn more, contact the Office of Development at 620-235-4768.





## Library receives mining documents

An important part of the history of the tri-state mining area has a new home at Pittsburg State University's Axe Library. The library has received a collection of letters, records and printed documents that help tell the colorful story of lead and zinc mining in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in southeast Kansas, northeast Oklahoma, and southwest Missouri.

The collection was originally housed by the Picher Mining Museum in Picher, Okla. The Picher Museum Board transferred ownership of the documents to the Baxter Springs Historical Society, which arranged a long-term loan of the materials to PSU. Axe Library will provide climate controlled-storage, create item records, and work on digitization to provide easy access to the records without damaging fragile materials.

Randy Roberts, curator of special collections, said the collection is a significant one.

"Over the years the Picher Mining Museum assembled one of the nation's outstanding collections of records and artifacts that document the history of mining and, specifically, the miners of the Tri-State Mining district. We are excited to be joining with the Baxter Springs Historical Museum to make this collection of original records available to future generations."

For more information about this and other historical collections at PSU, call University Archives at 620-235-4883 or visit their Web site at <http://library.pittstate.edu/spcoll/>

## Unusual discovery delays restoration work

Even burly workmen were no match for Mother Nature this summer.

For several days, work repairing and replacing the decorative stone high on the exterior of Russ Hall was halted to allow a mother American Kestrel to care for her fledglings until they took flight.



When workers uncovered the nest, they recognized quickly that its inhabitants were different from those they typically encounter. They contacted Rob Riggins, wildlife manager with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, who identified the birds as American Kestrels, also known as sparrow hawks. The Kestrel is a protected species under federal law, so Riggins advised the workers to keep at least 50 feet from the nest until the chicks took flight.

Riggins commended the construction company, Atkins Weatherproofing from Springfield, Mo., for calling him as soon as they spotted the nest.

"These guys were conscientious," Riggins said. "We were impressed with their concern for the birds and flexibility in working around the situation."

The American Kestrel is the smallest and most widespread North American falcon, according to "The Birds of North America Online." Riggins said the Kestrel is a beautiful bird that is "built for speed." It is a predator that many homeowners who feel besieged by flocks of non-native starlings should appreciate, he noted. "Many people put up speakers and play recordings of the Kestrel's call" to try to keep the starlings from nesting in their trees.

For more information on the American Kestrel visit [www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/American\\_Kestrel.html](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/American_Kestrel.html).



## FROM THE OVAL

### New Career Services system offers easier employer-student connection

Employers looking for the perfect employee will now have an easier way to access Pitt State graduates. Gorillas4Hire is a new Web-based system that allows companies to search for potential employees and access other services provided by PSU Career Services. The new system also allows students to add their resumé



to the database, search for employers, and track and manage applications.

Mindy Cloninger, director of Career Services, said, “Gorillas4Hire is much easier to navigate than the previous system and it offers more options. This improvement is part of our efforts to strengthen the link between PSU graduates and the organizations that hire them.”

Scheduling on-campus interviews is another option through this system. Employers can visit the campus and conduct a series of interviews with students. The office also has the capability to teleconference an interview so employers do not have to pay travel expenses for interviewees.

Additional features of Gorillas4Hire allow participants to personalize a calendar, save job searches, and be notified of upcoming career fairs, events and workshops. The system is free to students and employers. PSU alumni are allowed access for the fee of \$50 per one year of service.

For more information on Gorillas4Hire, go to [www.pittstate.edu/careers](http://www.pittstate.edu/careers) or call 620-235-4140.



### A new online look

When prospective students go to the Pitt State Web site, they not only see a new look, but they will be able to find their way around a little easier.

After research, interviews, and a great deal of discussion over the past year, the site underwent a complete overhaul. Kim Carlson, marketing director for the university, led the effort and the new Web site will officially launch in early September.

“When we began researching, we looked at other higher education sites for comparison. We started by changing the existing front page but quickly realized we needed more,” said Carlson.

Dot Marketing from Miami, Fla., redesigned the look of the site and created the content management system (CMS). According to Carlson, changing the site to a CMS allows for more efficient updating, controlled access by publishers, and consistency of message.

“The branding of the university is so important. A consistent look will help with these efforts,” said Carlson.

The architecture of the new site is based on interviews conducted



**The electronic message board on Broadway received a dramatic upgrade this year. New LED panels are not only brighter, they are detailed enough to allow the university to include photos and even video in its public messages.**



The new PSU Web site will officially launch in early September.

with students, faculty, and staff that uncovered their needs and expectations.

“With the new system we’ll be able to better showcase our wonderful programs. It’s a marketing tool we needed to have,” added Carlson.

One of the biggest differences in the new site is that now the home page is designed specifically to target prospective students and their parents.

“Students continue to consider a college’s Web site to be one of the most important tools when deciding where to continue their education,” said Melinda Roelfs, director of admission. “This will allow us to more aggressively drive students to our Web site and expose them to easy-to-find information.

“In addition, the new focus towards parents will assist us in reaching prospective students. Parents are now considered to be one of the top influencers for students when deciding on a college or university,” said Roelfs.

Other features of the new Web site include testimonials from graduates, student profiles, and faculty biographies.

Check out the new Web site at [www.pittstate.edu](http://www.pittstate.edu).



*Women in Government Series*

**Teacher’s life is a political science lesson**

From teaching sixth grade to becoming a congressional candidate, Tierney Cahill will share her experience in the 2008 Profiles of Women in Government Lecture Series at noon on Nov. 10 in McCray Recital Hall.

Cahill, a mother of three from Reno, Nev., was challenged by her students after she told them that any American can run for political office. In order to inspire her students, she dedicated herself to running for the District 2 Congressional seat.

Cahill ran as a Democrat, and to her surprise, beat the other Democratic candidates to take on Republican incumbent Jim Gibbons. Although she lost in the general election, she succeeded in teaching her students the value of civic duty.

Her story is the subject of an upcoming film, “Class Act,” starring Halle Berry and written and directed by Doug Atchison. She has also been featured in the nationally published book, “Teachers: The Enlightened, the Exceptional, the Extraordinary.”

Cahill’s lecture will be followed by a question-and-answer segment and a signing of her new book, “Ms. Cahill for Congress.”

The Profiles of Women in Government Lecture Series is presented by PSU and the PSU Foundation through the support of the Helen S. Boylan Foundation.

The Profiles of Women in Government Lecture Series is free and open to the public. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, contact Mary Carol Pomatto at 620-235-4431.



Cahill



Dr. Mary Carol Pomatto, chairwoman of the Department of Nursing, right, accepts a gift of \$50,000 for nursing scholarships. The gift is from the Leon V. and Dorothy M. Skubitcz Foundation. Looking on are Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Steve Scott, Dean of Arts and Sciences Lynette Olson and Julie Plank a trust administrator with M&I Bank, which administers the charitable fund.



## Work begins this fall on new student health center

This fall, the university will break ground on a \$4 million student health center. The new building, which is to be completed in the fall of 2009, will be at the corner of Lindburg and Broadway.

For many years, the student health center has been housed in a metal building just south of the football stadium. As enrollment has grown and the demand for health services increased, planning began for a new facility.

The new student health center will be approximately 11,400 square feet in area. It will be large enough to not only provide additional space for health services, but also for both health services and counseling services to be housed in the same facility.

An unusual feature of this project is that it is funded by both student fees and private gifts. Traditionally, student health centers are funded only by student fees. The student body voted early in 2007 to assess students \$12 a semester to pay \$1.5 million of the cost.

President Tom Bryant has made keeping the cost of the project as low as possible for students a top priority, however.

“Our goal is to not need any student fee due to private gifts,” said Dr. Bryant, citing that the new student recreation center was built without instituting a student fee.

For more information on the proposed student health center, contact the Office of Development at 620-235-4768.

## Music & Theatre Events

Each year, Pittsburg State University offers hundreds of concerts, shows, lectures, readings and other public events. Many of them are free. Following is a list of major events already on the calendar. Others will be added as the semester gets underway. For the latest information, visit the PSU Web site, [pittstate.edu](http://pittstate.edu), or call the PSU Ticket Office at 620-235-4796.

### Concerts & Performances

For additional information: 620-235-4466.

- Oct. 6 ..... Jazz Ensemble Concert, 7:30 p.m.,  
Overman Student Center
- Oct. 17..... Opera Scenes, 7:30 p.m., McCray Hall
- Oct. 19..... Opera Scenes, 3 p.m., McCray Hall
- Oct. 30 ..... Chamber Orchestra, 7:30 p.m.,  
McCray Hall
- Nov. 7 ..... PSU Choirs, 7:30 p.m., McCray Hall
- Nov. 13 ..... Wind Ensemble 7:30 p.m.,  
Pittsburg Memorial Auditorium
- Nov. 20-22 .... Southeast Kansas Symphony with the  
Ballet of the Nutcracker, 7:30 p.m.,  
Memorial Auditorium (tickets required)
- Nov. 23 ..... Southeast Kansas Symphony with the  
Ballet of the Nutcracker, 2:30 p.m.,  
Memorial Auditorium (tickets required)

### Theatre

For ticket reservations and information, call the PSU Ticket Office, 620-235-4796.

- Oct. 30-Nov 1 .... “The Uninvited,” 8 p.m.,  
Pittsburg Memorial Auditorium
- Dec. 5-6 ..... “One-Act Plays,” 7 p.m.,  
PSU Studio Theatre
- March 5-8 ..... “tempOdyssey,” 8 p.m.,  
Sunday matinee 2 p.m.,  
PSU Studio Theatre
- April 30-May 3 ... “Look Back in Anger,” 8 p.m.,  
Sunday matinee 2 p.m.,  
PSU Studio Theatre

### Solo & Chamber Music Series

Tickets are required for all Solo & Chamber performances. Performance times are at 7:30 p.m. in McCray Recital Hall. Call for additional information 620-235-4460. For ticket reservations and information, call the PSU Ticket Office, 620-235-4796.

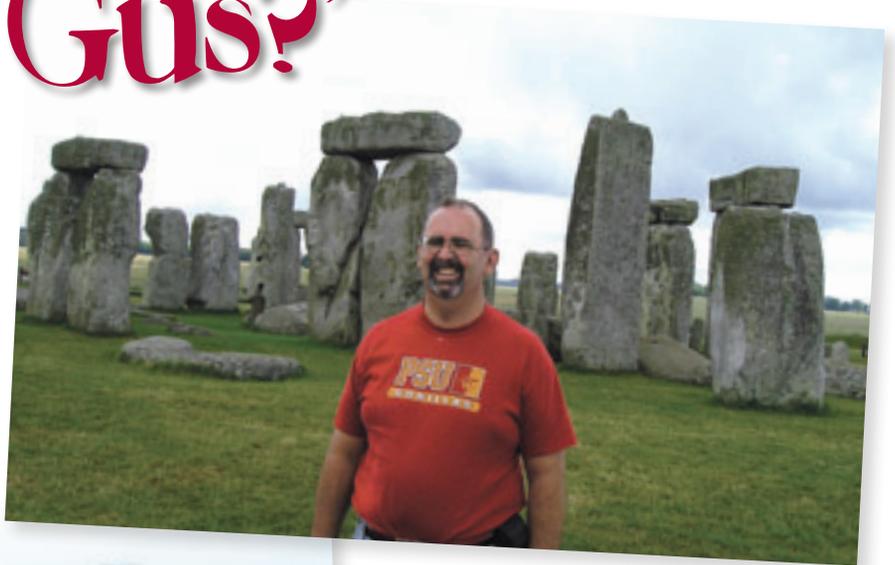
- Sept. 23 ..... Niklas Eklund, trumpet
- Oct. 7 ..... Daniel Pollack, piano
- Nov. 11 ..... Ensemble Galilei
- Feb. 17..... James Maddalena, baritone
- March 27..... Capitol Quartet
- April 24..... David Requiro, cello



# “Where in the World is Gus?”

## Gus visits Stonehenge

Ken Collins wore his PSU shirt on the day he visited Stonehenge because he wanted a photo in front of a landmark just about everyone would recognize.



## Gus in Thailand

Terry Osborne (BSN '89) wore her Gorilla shirt on a medical mission trip to Thailand. Terry wrote that she and Gus “had a great time traveling.”

## Gus in Peru

Gus turned out to be a terrific goodwill ambassador for these youngsters in the high country of Peru where students in PSU's pre-professional programs conducted a service trip. (see page 8)



# EXPERIENCE IS A POWERFUL TEACHER

Pre-med students learn from free clinic, international travel

Pre-med student Emily Walters admits that at times, when the demands of school and motherhood have piled up, her dreams of becoming a doctor have seemed perhaps too ambitious. But this spring, as she helped treat a sick child on a snowy mountaintop in Peru, her goal of becoming a doctor seemed within reach.





Pre-med and other pre-professional PSU students have discovered that people in poverty, whether in Pittsburg, Kansas, or in the high country of Peru share a common problem -- unmet medical needs. The students' trip to Peru (facing page and above) gave them an international experience that fits nicely with their weekly service back home at a free clinic that they operate.

Walters, the co-director of the PSU Free Clinic in Pittsburg, was one of 20 students who participated in the first PSU Pre-Med Club medical trip. For two weeks, the students traveled across the countryside of Peru, assisting local doctors as they treated the ailments of more than 800 patients.

The Peru trip augmented an already rich clinical experience that these students have through the operation of the free clinic in Pittsburg, according to their adviser, Dr. Dan Zurek. Zurek believes the free clinic is the only operation of its kind in the U.S. in which undergraduates (under the supervision of local volunteer doctors) gain experiences they normally wouldn't have until their third year of medical school.

"I think there is quiet word among the Four-State area of our program, because we draw far better students than a school this size should be able to," said Zurek, who also served as faculty adviser during the Peru trip. "They're getting into medical school at a far higher percentage and getting residencies at prestigious places. They're a fabulous bunch. It's a privilege to work with these people."

The students' motivation is evident to anyone who has visited the clinic, where once a week juniors and seniors open its doors to uninsured persons without resources and in need of medical care. The one-room clinic is located at Wesley House, an outreach ministry of the Pittsburg United Methodist Church that also provides food and living assistance to the area needy.

The setup is modest: cabinets full of donated supplies and medication line one side of the room, and a partition divides the rest of the space into two examination areas with a small corner left for a computer and desk. Walters, who this year shares the clinic's leadership responsibilities with John-Michael Watson, another senior pre-med student, said one of the greatest benefits of the experience isn't just learning how to treat illnesses, but how to work and communicate with a population to which many students normally have little exposure.

"It's a big step forward to be able to touch and talk to a real patient," Walters said of the clinic, which

just celebrated its 11th year and has a patient base of about 3,500. Patients are typically treated for common problems – influenza, diabetes, high blood pressure, and minor injuries.

"We're working with a population well below poverty level, and I think

**"I think there is quiet word among the Four State area of our program, because we draw far better students than a school this size should be able to."**

part of it is learning to deal with patients who don't live in a way some of our students are used to," Walters said.

That reaction is something she is learning to not take too personally. The clinic wasn't unfamiliar to her before – her mother was a patient there when she fell on hard times and lost her insurance.

When students sometimes get frustrated or judgmental, Zurek said, it is often followed by one of the greatest lessons: to develop humanity for others, no matter their hardships or lifestyle.

"You learn what it really means to care for someone," said Watson. "You're looking at people for who they are."

During this school year, Watson and

*(see Clinic, pg. 10)*

Seniors Garrett Barton, left, and John-Michael Watson look over the inevitable paperwork.



### Clinic (from pg. 9)

Walters hope to bring big change to the clinic. While underclassmen typically have to wait a few years to get involved, Watson and Walters see a role for them in keeping the clinic organized and in shadowing the student volunteers. They'd also like to give social work students a chance to interact with the patients, and to promote the clinic with more advertising. The biggest challenge, however, has been the elephant in the room for years – finding funding to keep the clinic going. Previous funding by the Prichett Trust isn't permanent, leaving students to not only learn about patient care, but about fundraising, as well.

"It concerns me," Zurek admitted. "We have to find ways to keep this going. Students were talking about selling plasma to keep it funded when I first started, so it's been an issue for a while. It's really an exceptional opportunity to offer this



Cole Sims, senior, listens at a group meeting before the clinic opens.

clinic and most of them know that."

If the outpouring that sent them to Peru is any indicator, the students are hopeful that finding support for the clinic won't be difficult. More than half of the \$70,000 cost for the Peru mission was donated by local physicians (students picked up the remainder themselves). They also spent their free time receiving training from the Department of Nursing on drawing blood, setting catheters, and starting IVs in order to be prepared to help in any way.

Getting the opportunity to compare health care in Peru, said Walters, "makes the Free Clinic look like Mayo." Students hiked up mountains with medicine and equipment in tow, sleeping and working in areas where a toilet is sometimes a hole in the ground. Setting up at old schoolhouses and under tents, they often worked into the early morning hours trying to get to every patient. As one of the few women, Walters was pulled in to assist with gynecological exams. Others performed triage, treated wounds, performed dental care and tooth extractions, and helped

educate patients about warding off disease – widespread in villages with unsanitary conditions.

Zurek, who cites the trip as one of the most educational experiences of his career, was shocked when the blood test of one child revealed severe anemia caused by malnutrition and parasites.

"I was surprised he was even standing," he said.

The experience won't soon be forgotten. A small film crew from the University of Kansas accompanied the group and plans to submit a documentary of the experience to the History Channel. As for their work at the clinic back home, the group relies on the occasional local news story or fundraiser to let the community know they are there and in need of support.

"We leave the clinic each week encouraged in one sense," Watson said. "We're getting the people the help they need and developing relationships with them, the same way we will as doctors. But to be able to do more would be good. It doesn't ever seem like you can do enough." •



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**KANSAS**  
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Tyson Barnes, left, and his twin brother, Todd, stand amid rubble that remained after a tornado struck their hometown of Picher, Okla.



# In the eye of the storm

## Future teachers help their hometown recover

Amongst the ravaged landscape of uprooted trees, mountains of broken boards and twisted pieces of metal where homes once stood, Tyson Barnes walks down the middle of a quiet road in Picher, Okla., approaching a tangled, dark object in the muddy ditch nearby. It was once someone's car.

If you could read the mind of this PSU education major, it might make you reconsider what's important in life. What the 6'5" firefighter saw the night of May 10 when an F-4 tornado wiped out parts of his hometown made his skin crawl. You hear about tornadoes in the movies and see the glamorized excitement, he ponders aloud, but it isn't like experiencing the real thing.

“If I can work a tornado like this,” said the 25-year-old, motioning toward the rubble, “I’m sure I can handle the chaos that comes with a classroom of kids.”

These days, Picher is a quiet place to be. Contaminated by the lead left over from its mining history, the town has been in limbo for years while the government worked to buy out property owners. Residents tried to salvage their belongings after the tornado, but rain and despair quickly led most to give up their search. Now at the top of the government’s to-do list, buyouts have become mandatory and plans are being made for a total evacuation. By this winter, many expect Picher to become a ghost town.

For Tyson and his twin brother, Todd, who fit junior-level curriculum and instruction courses at PSU into their busy work schedules, it will be the end of the town their grandfather helped establish (he created the Picher Fire Department, where Tyson now works) and their mother grew up.

“I never thought this would happen in Picher,” said Todd, who works as a manager for the nearby Wal-Mart store. “I hate to come home now because I have to drive by and see the destruction.”

His brother has had to be much more hands-on with the damage. His fire truck parked nearby, Tyson walks through the rubble on this rainy morning and emerges minutes later with a stuffed toy gorilla – the Picher School District’s mascot, as well as his own at PSU.

Maybe it’s his goal of working with children that leads Tyson to salvage the sentimental things. Sometimes, you have to make lemonade.

## Caught in the storm

Tyson was working the night the storm approached, and he and the other firefighters immediately fanned the area to watch for tornadoes. Stationed at the edge of town, Tyson radioed his co-workers as soon as he saw the funnel dip from the sky. As he raced back toward Picher, the tornado caught up with him, spinning the fire truck around and pulling him out the passenger window. Within seconds, it had moved on. Tyson watched as the tornado made its way across town, the cloud filling with debris as it chewed up neighborhoods.

“I thought I would be the only one left,” he said.

What he saw when he came back into town was astonishing. Houses were demolished; everything eerily silent. Then he started to hear radio traffic. People began crawling out from under the rubble. Some people had been thrown into trees. The ferocity of the storm had torn the clothing off some – or worse, left them injured to the point of being unrecognizable. While 15 people who had taken shelter in a cellar made their way out safely, Tyson had to report to a good friend that the

man’s mother didn’t survive. In total, seven people died in Picher (more were killed when the storm moved through Southwest Missouri). About 50 percent of the houses in town were no longer standing.

“It looked like a bomb had gone off. We were digging, looking for people,” said Tyson, who worked through the next two days without sleep. “I was shaken. I had never seen anything like it in my life.”

## Cleaning up

Tyson and Todd, who came home immediately from work, made sure their family was safe (the tornado missed their house by one block) and then circled town to hand out water and see what they could do to help. They stopped at the home of Sue Sigle, their first grade teacher, to begin cleaning up. Only her chimney was left standing.

“Those boys have always been a big help to the community,” said Sigle, who was out of town but heard about the tornado on the news. “I live by myself and I know if I have any troubles, I can call them and they’ll come right away. I know they would bend over backwards for me and for many others in town.”

*(see Storm, pg. 14)*

**Tyson, a firefighter, comes from a family with a tradition of civic involvement.**



**Storm** (from pg. 13)

As close as two brothers can be, it seems natural they would come to the aid of their community together. They joke that callers mistake them for one another on the phone, and that they'll probably never stop living together, sharing the same bank account, or pursuing the same interests (in addition to their education at PSU, they both have degrees in art).

"I told him I wanted to go to Pitt State, and he said 'me too,'" Todd said, chuckling with his brother. "Then I told him I wanted to study education and he said 'me too.' We do everything together."

Including sharing in their family's legacy of service. A park next to the fire station is named after their grandfather, and their uncle also served on the department. Their mother works with the developmentally disabled in the area. Although she's lived in Picher 58 years, she says she knows the tornado

**Todd (left) and Tyson stand with their high school's concrete gorilla – a rare mascot that the school has shared with Pittsburg State University.**



will force many to accept the town's fate.

"It's made people realize that it really is over now," she said. She now plans to build a house in nearby Quapaw with her sons. "I think the tornado was a sign."

The twins agree they'll continue to do what they can for their town until the end – including stopping in on Sigle to visit with her students

and create art projects for the school. With an eye on the future, they are still adjusting to the reality that it will take place somewhere else. But they are hopeful their education from PSU will open new doors for them, and in turn, their future communities.

"We'll move on from here," Tyson said. "We still have each other." •

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# A Mother's

## Son's autism reshapes one

Looking back on the past decade, Tysha Potter can see a real before and after to her life.

Before, she was a new member of the faculty in PSU's Department of Psychology and Counseling. She had settled into a comfortable routine that included taking care of her family while contemplating earning a Ph.D.

That was the before.

In 2003, Potter, who has a son studying English at the University of Kansas, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. In what seemed like no time, she

and her husband noticed something was different. Born with an immune system dysfunction, Xander was continuously fighting infections. Potter had trouble finding a formula that didn't agitate his gastrointestinal reflux, and the baby had problems sleeping and dealing with stomach pains. By age 2, when her son's ability to speak began to vanish, Potter knew something was very wrong. The couple received the devastating medical diagnosis that Xander had severe autism.



# Mission

## mother's life

It was news that ended life as she knew it – and sent her on a new journey of education, activism, and motherhood. Watching her child struggle in the abyss of autism and doing everything she could to bring him out of it became her life's work. This has been the after.

Potter, who has spent 10 years as an instructor in psychology and counseling, is a strong asset to her department and students. Honored an impressive three times with the Outstanding Faculty Award,

her fellow faculty members are complimentary of her energy, spirit, and work ethic.

"She's a gifted instructor who is passionate in the classroom and is committed to making a difference in the lives of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder," said Dr. David Hurford, chairman of psychology and counseling. "Her contribution is significant to the region."

With a petite frame and quick smile, Potter has an open seat in her office for anyone needing a

friendly ear. Her walls are adorned with photos of her family, including Xander, now 5. She holds up a photo of him from a few years ago taken at the time of his diagnosis. In it, he stares blankly at the camera.

"I came home one day and he was in his room, and my husband just said, 'It was a bad day,'" she recalled. "I said his name and he wouldn't respond. He was just playing with blocks, in his own world. That was the day we knew something really wasn't right."

Potter took him to his pediatrician, who noted the signs: no language, no eye contact, aggressive behavior. Fearing the worst, she had already researched autism and was crossing her fingers that the doctor would make a different diagnosis.

"He suggested oppositional defiant disorder, which basically means that you have a strong-willed child," she said. "I thought, 'Thank God, it's not autism.' But I was in denial."

The doctor urged her to seek additional help for Xander. After insurance denials and the notification that it would take six months to get

*(see Mission, pg. 18)*



Xander VanBecelaere



## **Mission** (from pg. 17)

an appointment with a specialist at a Kansas City hospital, the family was referred to another developmental pediatrician. During the three-month wait to get an appointment, Potter hit the books, creating a list of questions even that doctor ultimately couldn't answer.

"He told me it sounded like I knew more about it than he did," she said, a trace of surprise still in her voice. He did recommend applied behavioral analysis, but because the behavioral analyst board certification isn't recognized in Kansas, the treatment was hard to find.

Instead of giving into despair, she pushed forward. Potter began studying to become certified herself while continuing to find ways to help her son. She removed casein (a milk

*"...I am seeing my little boy's brain opening up again and healing."*

protein) from his diet and for weeks battled his withdrawal from his favorite dairy products. The transformation was amazing: he began speaking, pointing, jumping, laughing and making eye contact again. She then removed gluten (wheat protein) from his diet. When she got a referral to a DAN! (Defeat Autism Now) doctor in Kansas City, she learned Xander had a host of allergies that were complicating the autism.

"We changed everything then," she said. Potter got rid of household cleaners (opting for vinegar and baking soda instead), started buying organic foods and products, and threw out plastic household items that she believed were proving toxic to him. At

## **What is Autism?**

by Dr. David Hurford, Chairman, PSU Department of Psychology & Counseling

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) or Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD) refers to a range of developmental disorders that includes Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Rett's Syndrome and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder. The latter two syndromes are rare and include periods of development that are relatively normal before autistic behaviors and symptoms appear. Rett's Syndrome occurs mostly in females and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder occurs mostly in males.

ASD is a neurological disorder that is characterized by impairment in communication, social interaction and also includes obsessions and repetitive behaviors. ASD can range from severe impairment (Autism), in which the individual may be mute and not communicate at all, to individuals who have some abnormalities interacting socially (Asperger's Syndrome). In general, Asperger's is characterized as a milder form of Autism.

Due to the recent surge in the number of children diagnosed with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, there is a pressing need for further research to understand the various etiologies of ASD and to determine the most effective mechanisms for interventions. There is also a great need to provide parents of individuals with ASD the type of support that families need while trying to help their children become functional within our complex social environment.

the same time, she made connections with others affected by autism.

This spring, she began serving as vice president for the new Kansas chapter of the National Autism Association, and in June presented a two-day workshop on autism during the Psychology and Counseling Summer Institute at PSU.

As busy as she is, Potter makes time to continue her quest for new treatments found to help children with autism

– knowing that by 5 years old, most experts agree that problems caused by autism are set. Xander receives methyl B12 shots as well as chelation, a topical substance used on lead poisoning patients to draw toxins out of the body.

“Often times by a certain age, the brain damage is done,” she said. “But I am seeing my little boy’s brain opening up again and healing.”

The brain is like a filing cabinet system, she explained, and people with autism have a hard time finding the right file in the right cabinet. Emotions are also difficult to control.

As she takes advantage of a rare day off from school (Xander attends the Ozark Center for Autism in Joplin, Mo., which was made possible when someone anonymously donated the \$60,500-per-year tuition) she feeds him a breakfast of cereal and

potato milk. When they sit to study words, Xander flies through the exercise.

But while putting a puzzle together, he cries in frustration when one piece won’t fit.

“He fights it,” she later says of his condition. “He’s a child with autism, but he’s more than that. We are trying to recover him. We are trying to heal his body so we can heal his mind.”



Tysha Potter and her son, Xander.

Next year, Xander will go to kindergarten, and Potter feels a mixture of excitement and nervousness, as well as the realization that perhaps this struggle in her life has happened for a reason. Professionally and personally, she knows she has found no better reason to focus her research and continuing education on autism.

“The people I’ve come into contact with because of this have shown me the beauty of humanity,” she said. “Xander has brought me purpose in life. He is my mission. I feel now like this is what I was meant to do.” •



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# ABOVE THE FRAY

## Dale Dennis' reputation for straight talk earns respect on both sides of the aisle

# In

an arena in which the state's politics is often played out, Dale Dennis has somehow remained above the fray. For 41 years, Dennis, the deputy commissioner of education in the Kansas State Department of Education's Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services, has had his finger on the pulse of education in Kansas. In all things relating to school finance and school operation, Dennis has long been the go-to guy for conservative, moderate and liberal lawmakers, as well as for school administrators and school boards across the state.

Bill Graves, Kansas governor from 1995 until 2003, knows how difficult it is for someone to build the kind of reputation Dennis has built in Topeka.

"The political and policy disputes that are a natural part of the legislative process make it very difficult for anyone closely involved

to maintain universal respect from the myriad of participants," Graves said. "Dale Dennis is one of the very rare exceptions. He was universally known to be an honest broker when it came to telling the facts of education funding and school finance. Dale always presented the hard facts, irrespective of what would be the popular or welcome message."

Graves said he enjoyed working with Dennis, "even when we were faced with some very tough policy choices. Dale's advice was always sound, straightforward in terms of the fiscal realities we faced, but never without the best interest of Kansas kids in his heart."

For his part, Dennis is more comfortable talking about Kansas students and teachers than about his own accomplishments. In a recent interview, Dennis focused attention on gains that students have made on the statewide assessments and the different strategies teachers are using to meet the needs of all students.

"Over the years, there has been a major shift in attitude toward meeting the needs of all students," Dennis said. "Back in the mid '50s, the high school graduation rate was in the 50s (percent). But back in those days, you could go out and get a job."

That's not an option in today's competitive world.

"Society can't afford not to teach all students," Dennis said. "Every time we lose a student, it ought to bring a tear to everyone's eyes."



*“Society can’t afford not to teach all students. Every time we lose a student, it ought to bring a tear to everyone’s eyes.”*



Dennis gives a great deal of credit for the progress made in helping all students learn to the teacher education programs at the state universities and he quickly points out that other states, recognizing the quality of the students who come out of the state’s teacher education programs, eagerly recruit the new Kansas teaching graduates.

“The universities are doing a better job than they ever have,” Dennis said. Specifically, Dennis said, the programs are teaching students strategies they can use in their own classrooms with children with a wide variety of individual needs. Increasingly, Dennis said, that

Dennis knows the statistics that paint the picture of Kansas education by heart and they pepper his conversation: The number of unfilled teaching vacancies on the first of June – more than 800. The number of teachers eligible to retire in the next five years – 25 percent. The spread between the average property valuations in the richest and poorest districts – \$364,000 to \$15,000.

He knows the districts as well as the numbers, pointing to them on a yellowed, laminated, decades-old wall map as if he were pointing out neighbors on a map of his block.

Dennis said the districts were all helped significantly by the most recent

energy prices – could be a significant challenge as early as this fall. “The effect of that on the budget is scary,” Dennis said.

Despite the difficulties that may lie ahead, Dennis remains optimistic and upbeat about the state of education in Kansas and its future.

“We’ve got a lot of great kids who are doing exceedingly well,” Dennis said. “We have talented and dedicated teachers and administrators who care deeply about students and we have a lot of leaders who will go out of their way to make a difference for people.”

It is a positive assessment and a hopeful prediction from one of the state’s most trusted educators. •

## *“People are shocked when they see the poverty rates in their local schools.”*

includes large numbers of children from poverty.

“People are shocked when they see the poverty rates in their local schools,” Dennis said.

Dennis’ passion about education shines through his affable style and gentle manner. Although he can easily wander through the complexities of the state’s \$3 billion education budget, Dennis always connects the dollars to what best serves students.

“We’ve learned that it’s hard to teach and hard for kids to learn if they haven’t had breakfast,” Dennis said.

school finance plan, which came about after a contentious court battle. That doesn’t mean there aren’t challenges ahead, however.

There will continue to be important demographic changes in the state, Dennis said. “There is an increasing number of minority majority communities.”

The state’s ability to hire and retain good teachers will be tested as states with rapidly growing populations reach beyond their borders to recruit top teachers while at the same time the Baby Boom generation of Kansas teachers enters retirement.

And the wild card – soaring

### **Dale Dennis**

- Grew up in northern Bourbon County
- Degrees from PSU: BS in business education; MS in business education & school administration; Ed.S. in school administration
- Married Laura Beth Klopfenstein, BS ’63
- Teacher, Blue Mound High School, ’59-’60, ’61-’65
- Principal, LaCygne High School, ’65-’67
- State Department of Education, 1967-Present



*Love is always in the*

# *Campus*

# *R*

Editor's Note – In the last issue, we asked our readers to share their stories of romance on campus. As we expected, PSU alumni were eager to tell us how they met that special someone. We hope you enjoy reading about the love stories we've selected for this issue.

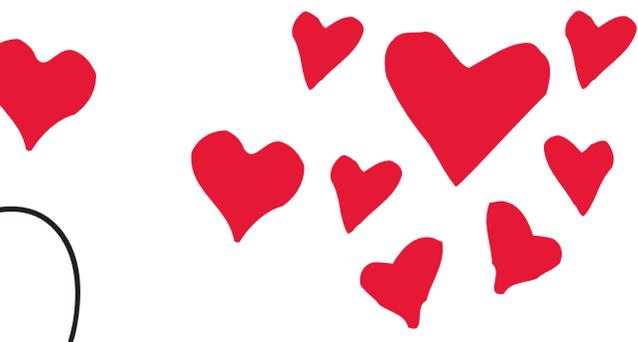
## **If these walls could talk**

Willard Hall has a rich history, but for Dona Maddux Cooper (BS '49), and Don Cooper (BS '49), it will always be the place where their romance began. Dona wrote that she often studied in the basement of Willard Hall in the evenings. Don admired Dona's long black hair and persuaded a mutual friend, Mary Louise Fuller, to introduce them. For Dona's part, she was impressed by the fact that Don kissed her hand when they were introduced.

Dona recalls their first date was to a movie at the Midland Theater on Jan. 9, 1948. Dona wrote that Don, in his 1931 Model A Roadster, "squired me to

**Don and Dona Cooper**

## *air at Pittsburg State*



## *romance*

There's a lot more chemistry on the campus than the stuff you'll find in the chemistry labs. For more than a century, Cupid's arrows have been flying freely at Pittsburg State.

see such popular performers as Burl Ives, Ted Weems and Carmen Cavallaro.”

The day Don was accepted into med school, Dona wrote, the two of them celebrated by driving around the campus honking the “ah-hoo-ga” Model A horn.

Don and Dona were married on June 4, 1950. They have been able to attend all of their class reunions, Dona wrote, and enjoy sharing their PSU memories with their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Don and Dona live in Stillwater, Okla.

### Hand picked

**For Holly (Hutchins) Kent (BS '00) and her husband, Clayton (BS '98), the story began before Holly was a PSU student. Holly recalls attending a PSU football game with her family (her brother, Brian, was quarterback for the Gorillas) at which her father actually picked her future husband out for her.**

**Holly said her dad handed her the binoculars,**

*(see Letters, pg. 24)*

**Campus sweethearts: romance is as reliable as the tulips that bloom each spring in the Oval.**





Holly and Clayton Kent



### Letters (from pg. 23)

pointed out a redshirt freshman on the bench, and said, "What do you think about that guy?"

"That was so unlike him!" Holly said of her father.

Her father's instincts were dead on. Holly graduated from high school and tried out for the dance team as an incoming freshman. Another young woman on the squad knew Clayton, thought they would make a great pair, and quickly introduced them.

Holly and Clayton were married following a football game on Family Day in 1996. She said Clayton and his groomsmen showered and dressed at the Weede PE Building and headed to the church from there.

"I was just hoping he didn't get too banged up," Holly said.

A story about the post-game wedding actually made it into USA Today.

### The way to a man's heart...

Tom Rambo (Class of '72) wrote that it was food that led him to his future bride, Sherri Shults. Because the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity didn't have food service, Rambo found himself regularly in the dining hall. Sherri lived in Mitchell and ate there,

too, so she and Tom were introduced by mutual friends.

"We both loved the area around College Lake and particularly Timmons Chapel," Tom wrote. "We were married in Timmons on December 30, 1972, and have been happily married for 35 years. I remember vividly the first time we returned to Timmons with our oldest daughter, Bethany, when she was about 4 years old and Sherri was pregnant with our son, Wade. It just sort of struck me that Timmons was where it all began, and standing there with my pregnant wife and my little girl, I got a warm feeling of connection that stays with me to this day anytime I am in Timmons Chapel."

All three of Tom and Sherri's children attended PSU, so they have been frequent visitors to the campus and have maintained strong connections with their fraternity brothers and sorority sisters. Tom writes that when he returns for a football game he likes to spend a little quiet time by the lake or watch people pass by on the Oval. "Being in Pittsburg, and particularly on campus, always helps take the weight of the world off my shoulders."

Tom calls the time he spent at PSU "some of the most memorable of my life." It is, he notes, a family story. "Being able to share Pittsburg with my wife and kids is something that I greatly cherish. Now, my oldest daughter is pregnant with our first grandchild. Her Aunt Melanie has already bought her first piece of Gorilla-wear!"

Tom and Sherri Rambo live in Overland Park, Kan., where Tom is an instructional design specialist.

### Love on a dare

A challenge by his Sigma Tau Gamma fraternity brothers planted the seed for romance for John Yantis. He will never forget that first day of the 1958 summer session when he and his buddies were having lunch in the Gorilla Den. When an attractive young woman passed by

their table, the boys took note and soon the brothers had challenged John to meet her to prove he wasn't "chicken."

John accepted the challenge and introduced himself to Jane, who was a Webb City girl and a student at the University of Missouri. She was using the summer session to pick up a few extra credits.

John wrote that a week later he invited Jane to go swimming with him at one of the strip pits west of town. At the swimming hole, Jane challenged John to a race.

"I added a bit of spice by betting her a kiss on the race," John wrote, "and being the debonair dude I thought I was, I coolly added, 'That way, I can't lose.'"

That evening John and Jane went to Lefty's Barn for dinner and dancing. Later on the steps of the womens' dorm, he collected on the bet they made earlier in the day.

Jane returned to Columbia, but the couple dated throughout their senior year and married the following summer. In June they celebrated their 50th anniversary. He wrote that he will always be grateful to his fraternity brothers for challenging him to prove he wasn't "chicken" around women.

Today, Dr. and Mrs. Yantis live in Canadian Lakes, Michigan.

John and Jane Yantis



## 'Leave the driving to us'

Nelda Johnson Liebig (BS '53) remembered an unusual course from the summer of '52. It was a 30-day traveling classroom on a chartered Greyhound bus up the eastern coast of the U.S.

"Students could choose either history, taught by Dr. Alvin Proctor; or geography, taught by Dr. Proctor's student assistant, Carl Eugene Liebig."

Nelda chose Carl's geography class. Back in Pittsburg, Carl invited Nelda to dinner at his parents' home and they began dating.

"Our dates included the drive-in movies north and south of town," Nelda wrote.

Their favorite place to eat was Chicken Annie's and it was there over dinner in a crowded upstairs room that Nelda received her engagement ring. Nelda and Carl were married in 1954. Their shared passion for travel led them to teach in Alaska, American Samoa, Russia and Wisconsin. Carl retired as an elementary school principal in Oconto, Wis. In retirement, Nelda and Carl continue to travel through the 50 states, Mexico, Canada, Europe and Australia.

Nelda wrote that she and Carl return to Pittsburg and the university almost every year.

## Making beautiful music together

**Katie (Burton) Miller (BMEd '04) wrote that she was inspired to share her romance story by the photo from the archives in the spring issue of the magazine. It featured two couples in band uniforms leaving the stadium. (See the letters on pg. 43 for the rest of the story.)**

**Katie wrote that she met her future husband, Kevin Miller (BMEd '02, MM '04), in the Music Department.**

**"We were both trumpet players and music majors," Katie wrote. In fact, Katie and Kevin would often have to compete against each other**

Katie and Kevin Miller



**for chair auditions in orchestra, wind ensemble and jazz band.**

**The Music Department played such an important role in their lives and their courtship that Katie and Kevin were married in the McCray Recital Hall on July 10, 2004.**

**Katie and Kevin now live in Leavenworth, Kan., where Kevin is an elementary music teacher and Katie is a stay-at-home mom to their 9-month-old little boy, Jack.**

## One blind date that worked out

We all have horror stories of blind dates that we'd just as soon forget, but for James E. Brown (BS '48, MS '49), a blind date changed his life. Mr. Brown wrote that in the fall of '42, his freshman year, a friend arranged a blind date between him and another freshman student, Jean Helbig.

At first, it seemed this was one of those one-and-done relationships, because James couldn't get Jean to go out with him again. Qualifying for pilot training in the Army Air Force gave James the confidence to try one more time, so he wrote to her.

"She answered!" Mr. Brown wrote. "That started a three-year correspondence...Oh, how happy I was to receive those letters while flying with the 27th Fighter Group in Europe."

After the war, James returned to the campus and he and Jean began a "wonderful courtship on campus. What a happy time. The war was over and we were in love."

They married and moved into units



on the northeast side of campus. "I will cherish those days," James wrote.

Sadly, Jean died in 1999. She and James were married 53 years.

"When I start to get lonely these days," James wrote, "I quickly go to memories of our time together, and they often include those happy days in Pittsburg."

## Another blind date winner

**Friends seem to play a big role in matchmaking. That was the case for Kelly O'Toole Masters (BSN '99), who wrote that when she and her future husband, Andrew Masters (BS '99) were freshmen, a friend paired them up. Andrew's fraternity (Sigma Phi Epsilon) and her sorority (Alpha Gamma Delta) were having a date dash when they met.**

**Though they hadn't met previously, Kelly and Andrew discovered they lived in the same dorm and grew up just 10 minutes from each other.**

**"We ended up hitting it off and dated all through college," Kelly wrote. "We attended many football games and Greek events on campus. We went on dates all over Pittsburg: the movies, Jim's Steakhouse, Harry's Cafe, and Mall Deli, to name a few."**

*(see Letters, pg. 26)*

## Letters (from pg. 25)

**Kelly and Andrew married in 1999 and have moved seven times with Andrew's job since then.**

**"We now have three kids and have been married for almost nine years," Kelly wrote. "We get back to Pittsburg about once a year and love reminiscing about the old days! Thanks PSU for all the great memories!"**

## Just like in the movies

Sandy (Meserko) Lowery (BS '73) wrote that during the spring semester of '72 she noticed a "ruggedly handsome" guy in several of her elementary methods classes. He noticed her, too.

Sandy remembers dancing at the Tower Ballroom, inexpensive tacos at Taco Bell and Chicken Mary's when they could afford it. Saturdays were reserved for movies downtown for movies like "The Godfather," and "Deliverance."

Sandy and Dave were married in December 1972. In the years since, they have raised two children and have had fulfilling teaching careers (they retired a few years ago.) From their home in Leavenworth, Kan., Sandy wrote that she and Dave

Sandy and Dave Lowery



enjoy travel and other activities, but the movie habit they shared back in '72 is still with them.

## Music to her ears

**Margie Macheers Hampton wrote that as a student from 1956-60, she frequently met friends in the Gorilla Den before events.**

**"One evening, my friend Linda Reese Deneve and I were introduced to several guys. One of them named Harold caught my eye. We arrived late at the concert, which was a ticketed event. I was quite surprised and startled to have Harold seated next to me. Several months later he called me for a date."**

**Margie didn't report on how good the concert was, but Harold made the grade. Harold finished his BME and Margie her BS in education in 1965. The two dated for two years before being married in August that year in Pittsburg. Both have retired from careers in education and now live in Highland, Calif. They have two grown children.**

## Second time's a charm

Linda (Downing) Faith (BBA '96) wrote that a friend's first attempt to set her up with the perfect guy failed. Fortunately, Linda was still willing to trust her friend when she wanted Linda to meet another guy the next fall.

"I told her at the time that there wouldn't be a third blind date from her match making if this one didn't turn out well," Linda wrote.

Linda met Richard Faith in the dining hall. Fortunately for her friend, Linda and Richard hit it off. They were married in 1996 after Linda graduated.

Richard joined the Army shortly after they were married. The Army took Richard and Linda to Germany, a place she said she had always wanted to visit. They moved back to the U.S. a few years later and now have a home, two kids and two dogs near Topeka and Lawrence.

## A handsome barber caught this coed's eye

**In 1933, when Adah Faith Nolan (BS '35) was a junior living in the Sigma Alpha Iota house on Broadway, word started getting around about a "new, good-looking barber working in the Campus Barber Shop just north of the College Inn."**

**Adah wrote that her fashionably short hair needed frequent trims, which gave her an excuse to visit her regular beautician, Claire Mills, in the same shop. It also gave her an opportunity to observe the new barber, Hi Vincent.**

**"He was exceedingly good looking," she wrote, "so I invited him to a school dance."**

**Hi and Adah were married in 1938, following four years of dating, getting degrees, and finding jobs.**

**Adah retired from teaching in Westminster, Colo; and Hi retired from the Mile Hi Chapter American Red Cross Safety Services. Hi died in 2003 in La Junta, Colo.**

## She picked a redhead

Codi Whaley Schale (BA '04) wrote that she had never been much attracted to redheads until she met Nick Schale (BS '03). She and Nick were introduced by Bobby Pantoja, an RA in Nation Hall.

"I didn't pay much attention to Nick's smooth talking then, nor the next time I saw him at a friend's house," Codi wrote,

## Campus cars

We all remember the cars we drove (or that drove us nuts) when we were on campus. Send us your stories of your favorite wheels and we'll share them in the spring issue. Photos are great, too. E-mail us at [psumag@pittstate.edu](mailto:psumag@pittstate.edu).



“but then when he came to my dorm a second time for no apparent reason, I knew his interest in me was something to pay attention to.”

Codi wrote that during the first two weeks of February, she and Nick began talking, playing basketball, watching movies, and spending time together.

“By Valentine’s Day, we were nothing less than a couple!”

Codi and Nick recently celebrated their second year of marriage and Codi writes that she and the redhead make a good pair. “He’s the crimson to my gold!”

## You never know unless you ask

**John Chambers (BS '67) took a big chance in October 1964 when he called Wilma Graham (BS '67) to go to Homecoming with him. Using the most of the opportunity, John also asked if she would accompany him to the Military Ball, which was two weeks later. Wilma accepted the Homecoming invitation, but wanted to reserve her decision about the Military Ball until she saw how the first date went.**

Clearly, the first date was a success. John wrote that between Homecoming and the ball, he and Wilma went out for a Coke and walked in the rain in Lincoln Park. After the Homecoming game in '65, Wilma accepted an engagement ring from John and they were married in August 1966.

Today, John and Wilma live in Bloomington, Ill. There’s a Gus statue in their flower garden that reminds them of where their romance began. John and Wilma have a daughter and a son and five grandchildren.



## Love at first sight

Brenda Rua Chappell (BS '72) wrote that she knew Paul Chappell (BS '74, MA '76) was the right guy from the moment she saw him that spring semester of 1970. Brenda wrote that every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, as she walked out of Yates Hall, she would see Paul walking in. Often he held the door for her.

“It was love at first sight for me,” Brenda wrote. “I would always make sure I timed it so he would be going into the building as I was going out.”

One afternoon, as Brenda sat in the student center with her friend Maureen Murphy, Paul walked in with a group of his Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity brothers.

“I leaned toward Maureen and said quietly, ‘Look Maureen, it’s him, the guy I have been telling you about,’”



Brenda and Paul Chappell

Brenda wrote. “I would give my right arm to have a date with him.”

Fortunately, one of the men Paul was sitting with was a classmate Maureen recognized. Maureen gave Brenda the young man’s name and she called him to get more information about Paul, including his phone number.

“I got up the nerve to call him to ask him to be my date for the Alpha Sigma Alpha spring informal,” Brenda wrote. “We had our first date on May 1, 1970.”

Paul and Brenda celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary on August 11.

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## Dawson is interim chairman for Biology

Dr. James Dawson, a 30-year faculty member of the Department of Biology, has been named interim chairman of the department.

“Dr. Dawson brings great knowledge to the interim chair position,” said Dr. Lynette Olson, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

“As a senior faculty member, he has been integral to the governance of the department and has illustrated his concern for strong academic advising. I am pleased he is willing to provide leadership for the department over the next three years.”

Originally from northeastern Ohio, Dawson received a bachelor of science degree in biology from Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. He did his graduate work at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio, and earned his Ph.D. in algal physiology from the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

With a research focus on algae capable of generating hydrogen gas (a possible source of new energy), Dawson has held research grants from Hercules Aerospace, Astro Zeneca, and is a consultant and adviser with the Culture Collection of Algae at the University of Texas in Austin.

He has served as adviser for the Beta Beta Beta fraternity for 28 years, and is a member of multiple phycological societies at the national and international levels. He hopes to present his newest findings at a conference in Britain next January.

Dawson and his wife Joyce (BS '92, MS '97) have twin sons, David and Adam.



Dawson

## Harmon presents at UN workshop

When a United Nations group planned a workshop on terrorism this spring, Dr. Stephen Harmon was one of the experts who got a call.

Harmon, a member of the faculty in the History Department, shared his views on “Why Terrorists Kill: Factors that Push Muslim Extremists to Perpetrate Violence” at the workshop, which was held in April in Turin, Italy. The workshop was organized by the U.N. Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

Harmon said the event was a rich learning and sharing experience.

“Some of the most valuable information came during the breaks, meals and time outside the formal sessions,” Harmon said.

While the topic of Harmon’s presentation was broad, many of the presenters focused on specific situations in their own countries.

“I’m fortunate that my department and the university encourage us to remain active in our fields and to take advantage of opportunities like these,” Harmon said.

According to the UNICRI, the workshop was designed to bring together experts and stakeholders to exchange views and information about how radicalization and extremism leads to terrorism and to develop ideas and proposals for countering the appeal of terrorism.

Harmon’s areas of specialization include Africa, the Middle East, Islam and Latin America.



Harmon



## Historic McCray Hall gets needed repairs

Renovations to one of PSU’s oldest buildings are ensuring the preservation of a campus legacy.

McCray Hall, which houses the Department of Music, is undergoing the restoration and repair of its windows, exterior doors, air conditioning systems, ceilings, lights, and ductwork. Improvements are also being made to the roof and exterior brickwork through tuckpointing and the replacement of some tiles. The six-month project began in early June.

The projected \$2.5 million cost for the work is being funded by deferred maintenance money awarded by the state. PSU Facilities Planning Director Paul Stewart said that although multiple other restorative projects are going on

across campus, money has been reserved especially to complete the full project at McCray.

“One of our goals was to maintain the building so that it is being restored back to what it was,” he said. “The building continues to maintain its original intention, which is significant for historical purposes.”

McCray Hall was built in 1929, designed specifically to be the first separate home of the Music Department. It was known as Music Hall until 1961, when it was rededicated as McCray Hall. It was named after Walter McCray, the second chairman of the department from 1914 until his retirement in 1947.

Stewart said the renovations would have begun weeks earlier if not for a fax machine error that misidentified the lowest bidder. When he contacted Pittsburg-based Home Center to let them know their bid had won, they quickly rearranged projects and mobilized a crew to begin work immediately, action Stewart believes signifies the importance of the building. Classes are being held in the building this fall while the work continues.

McCray’s “sister” buildings, Russ and Porter Halls, are also getting some restorative work. Repairs to the exterior of Russ Hall were completed this summer. Work on Porter Hall will begin in the summer of 2009.

### Student wins spot in writing program

Joshua Davis, a current English graduate assistant in creative writing, was accepted into the poetry writing program of the 39th annual Squaw Valley Community of Writers as a scholarship student this past summer. This writers’ workshop is highly competitive and one of the most prestigious in the country. Davis had the good fortune of having his poems read and critiqued by some of the most highly esteemed poets in America.

### New degree emphasis gives options to math majors

What do you do with an education in math if you love working with numbers, but don’t necessarily want to teach? A new degree program is giving students an alternative to the norm.

A new emphasis in analytics was offered under the bachelor’s degree of integrated studies this fall. The new, 72-hour emphasis melds courses in mathematics and computer science, preparing graduates for careers in areas such as telecommunications, banking, or any field where math and business skills are combined.

Dr. Bobby Winters, assistant dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, calls the Integrated Studies degree “very marketable,” and describes it as combining courses in math, management and marketing, communication, English and computer science.

For more information on the new emphasis, contact Winters at winters@pittstate.edu.

### Governor appoints PSU’s Pomatto to state nursing board

Dr. Mary Carol Pomatto, chairwoman of the Department of Nursing at Pittsburg State University, has been appointed by Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to serve on the Kansas State Board of Nursing.

The board, whose mission is “to assure the citizens of Kansas safe and competent practice by nurses and mental health technicians,” is responsible for establishing and implementing minimum standards for safe nursing and mental health practice. The board also approves education programs, regulates licensure, and considers current and future trends in nursing/mental health technician education and practice. Last year, the KSBN regulated licensure for more than 50,000 health care professionals.

“It’s an honor to be appointed to serve

in this capacity,” Pomatto said. “I will do my best to serve well the nursing and healthcare professions and the people of Kansas as our state faces the challenges of the coming four years.”

### Allan leads Communication Department

After the retirement of longtime PSU faculty member Dr. Peter Hamilton, a familiar face will officially be heading the Department of Communication.

Dr. Cynthia Allan, who served as interim chairwoman last year, began her duties July 1 as the chairwoman of the department and its seven areas of discipline.



Allan has been with PSU since 1999, serving as an associate professor and as director of theater, a position she continues to hold.

Originally from Florida, Allan earned a bachelor of arts degree in speech and theater from Florida Southern College in Lakeland. She received a master of arts degree in theater from Florida State University, and a Ph.D. in theater and drama from the University of Georgia.

Allan has performed freelance theatrical lighting and design for 18 years, and has written several improvisational plays including “The History of Laundry,” “American Edit,” and “Macaroni and Jell-O.” She has produced her work in Pittsburg as well as at the Clemson Theater in Clemson, S.C., and at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pa., where she worked as an artist in residence.

Allan is a member of the Association for Theater and Higher Education, the American Theater and Drama Society, and the Mid-America Theater Conference.



## Accident inspires invention

When senior business administration major Brandon Meister was paralyzed in a car accident four years ago, the odds of standing his 6-foot frame again didn't look good. For several months, he slowly recuperated from a broken back, head lacerations, and broken ribs.

A student at the time at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla., Meister moved back to Pittsburg after the accident to be closer to his family and to enroll in the PSU College of Business. Discovering that life is much different from the vantage point of a wheelchair,

he couldn't help but let his entrepreneurial brain wander when thinking about products that could make his life easier.

"You don't realize how hard it is to do things like close a door behind you or stay dry when it's raining when you're in a wheelchair," said Meister, now 26. "I'm always creating new inventions in my mind to make things easier."

What he found he missed most was the feeling of a good standing stretch. Paralyzed from the chest down, Meister searched for frames that would help him stand by himself. Deterred by the complicated straps, hydraulic pumps, and hefty price tags, he and his father set out to build a stand of their own.

Welding together the frame was no big deal. But when it came to fashioning the piece that would support his back as he stood, Meister hit a stroke of genius. Instead of a strap, they created a

foam-covered metal arm that would cradle his back and lock into place. Soon, the 8-Second Stand was born.

"It seems like everything we found took a long time to help the user stand up," he said, demonstrating the quick speed of his invention, which costs about \$1,500 less than most models. "I realized people needed a better way. It's important to get up so your legs don't atrophy. Imagine sitting down for a year straight and never being able to stand. It feels so good, physically and mentally, to get on your feet."

His father, president of Leisure Time, a Pittsburg company that makes recreational yard equipment, introduced Meister to Scott Moser (BS '97), a product design engineer with the company. The two have since become business partners, working to get their inventions patented and to find a manufacturer and distributor. In addition to the 8-Second Stand, they're developing prototypes of an umbrella-type device designed to attach to an open car door, a portable porch ramp for renters, a tool to make closing doors easier, as well as several other products.

In June, the two presented the 8-Second Stand at "Pitch Night at the Joe," a product competition hosted by the Joseph Newman Business and Technology Center in Joplin, Mo. They won first place and the \$1,000 prize. With the help of his PSU business professors, Meister has also been working with an area small business development center to get his inventions patent-protected and ready for sale.

"These products are making his life easier, so that's a good sign," Moser said. "When you live it every day like Brandon does, it puts you in a good position to know what would be useful to other people, too."

For more information on the 8-Second Stand and other products being developed by Meister and Moser, visit [www.eznorms.com](http://www.eznorms.com) or contact Meister at 620-704-2882.



**Top photo:** Senior business major Brandon Meister navigates the PSU campus in his wheelchair.

**Above:** Meister demonstrates an invention that allows him to rise easily and quickly to a standing position. His business partner, Scott Moser (BS '97) is on the left.

## Honor society recognizes student with Award of Excellence

A senior business major was one of just 100 students from across the U.S. recognized by the Phi Kappa Phi honor society this year with its Award of Excellence. The award makes it possible for Elizabeth Perrey, who received a bachelor's degree in business administration, to pursue a master's degree in international business at the University of Wollongong in Wollongong, Australia.



Perrey

The Phi Kappa Phi Fellowships and Awards of Excellence are based on the applicants' undergraduate academic performance; leadership and service on the campus and in the community; evidence of graduate potential; personal statement of educational perspective, purpose and objectives; and evaluation reports from three individuals.

Phi Kappa Phi is the nation's oldest, largest and most selective all-discipline honor society. Membership is by invitation only to the top 10 percent of seniors and graduate students and 7.5 percent of juniors. Faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction also qualify.

## Correction

In our last issue, we incorrectly included Dr. Eric Harris in our retirements column. Fortunately, Dr. Harris, who was named chairman of the Department of Management and Marketing in August of 2007, is not contemplating retirement any time soon. — *the editor*

## Journal of Managerial Issues editor to retire

With retirement in his near future, the editor of one of industry's most respected management journals is stepping down.

Dr. Chuck Fischer, who has served as a professor of economics at PSU for 34 years, is handing over the reins of PSU's Journal of Managerial Issues to Dr. Bienvenido Cortes, chairman of the Department of Economics, Finance and Banking.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the publication, which has been produced quarterly under Fischer's leadership. Persistently recruiting the best and brightest to lead it (many Ivy Leaguers are among the 150-member board), Fischer founded the journal to serve as a bridge of communication between those who study management and those who practice it.

"It has been a huge job for me, so I'm praying for the new editor," Fischer said with a laugh. "Being an editor of a publication like this is like a dark hole for time. It can be very labor intensive if you want quality."

Over the past two decades, the Journal of Managerial Issues has drawn submissions from authors worldwide. With a rejection rate of 80 percent, Fischer and his team of reviewers search for articles on cutting-edge topics, guiding authors through a rigorous revision process and offering prompt, constructive criticism to those who don't make the cut. "For someone under the tenure gun," Fischer said, "that means a lot."

The journal has also been an impressive source of revenue for the college. In the past five years, it has provided \$120,000 in student scholarships.

"Nationally, we have worked to publish something that pushes the boundaries and provides new insights," Fischer said. "I think the key to our success has been providing good service to authors and readers. We're fortunate that Dr. Cortes has the talent and interest to lead it into the future."

## Info assurance program meets national standard

The information assurance and computer security emphasis in the information systems major has been certified by the Committee on National Security Systems (CNSS) as meeting the national information assurance training standard for system administrators (4013E). The certification recognizes that the information assurance and computer security emphasis covers more than 400 topics required by the CNSS 4013E standard.

Dr. James Harris, professor of computer science/information systems, received the official certification at the awards dinner held at the conclusion of the National Colloquium for Information Systems Security Education held at the University of Texas in Dallas on June 4.

The certification was presented by



David Wiennergren and Dr. James Harris

Mr. David Wiennergren, deputy assistant secretary of defense for information management and technology. In 2007, the information assurance and computer security emphasis was certified as meeting the national training standard for information systems security professionals CNSS4011.



## Student rec center/ armory to be dedicated Sept. 27

A formal dedication won't take place until Sept. 27, but students began taking advantage of the new student recreation center/Pittsburg armory as soon as the doors opened this summer. University officials will be joined by a long list of local, state and national officials for the building's dedication at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 27.

The \$16 million, 97,000-sq.-ft. building was a collaborative effort between the university, the City of Pittsburg and the State of Kansas. Located at 2001 S. Rouse, the building houses the student fitness center; the Department of Health, Human Performance & Recreation; the Department of Military Science; and the local Kansas Army National Guard unit. It features multipurpose basketball courts, a cardio/fitness center, aerobics dance studio, fitness labs, and classrooms.

The dedication ceremony is open to the public and will be followed by a reception and tours. Parking will be available on the east side of the recreation center and at the Bicknell Sports Complex. In case of rain, the ceremony will be held inside the building.

For more information, contact the PSU President's Office at 620-235-4101.

## HHPR moves into the future

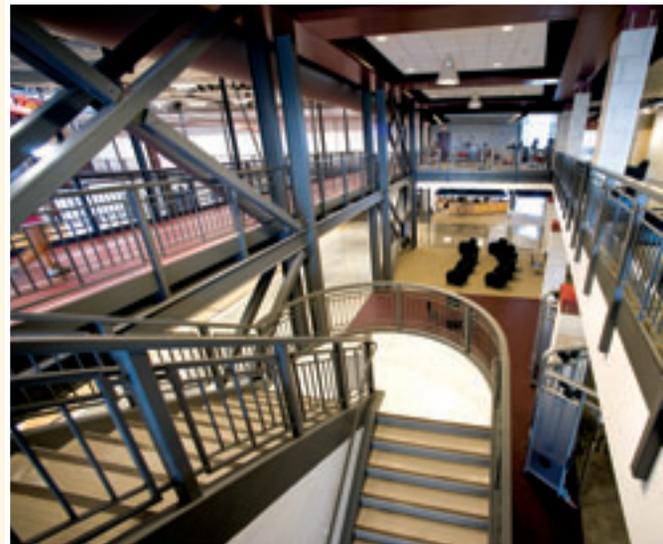
Dr. John Oppliger now has a smaller office than the one he occupied for the past four years, but the chairman of the Department of Health, Human Performance and Recreation doesn't mind. When HHPR moved to the new student recreation center in May, Oppliger was more than excited about what his department would be able to offer its students.

"I can't imagine there being a more modern facility in the state for teaching," said Oppliger.

The state-of-the-art student recreation center is not only the new home for HHPR, but it also houses Intramural Sports, the Department of Military Science, and the Pittsburg National Guard Armory.

HHPR gained a classroom and a recreation lab with the move from the Weede Physical Education Building, as well as the latest in equipment and technology. This new equipment includes heart rate monitors, a body composition machine, and even global positioning systems. According to Oppliger, the new equipment will keep their programs moving forward and greatly benefit students and the department's service.

"The last two or three years we have been in tune with technology. We want to continue to improve on what we had

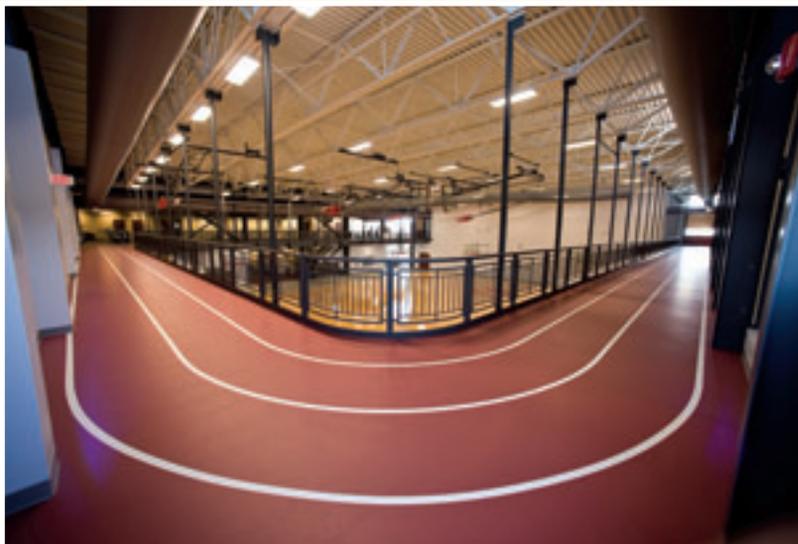


in the Weede and more," said Oppliger. "We consider what experience students need to enter their career fields.

"The labs in the new facility are more conducive to research. We can invite outside groups or various high school physical education classes to use the facility or for fitness assessments," said Oppliger. "Our students will also get hands-on experience with hospital-grade equipment. We hope to increase our research, not just with faculty but also with students."

Oppliger said that he believes the attraction of the new building will benefit their programs.

"We obviously want growth, but controlled growth. We have good numbers now," said Oppliger. "But we're closer to saying that our majors have the best of everything."



The modern student recreation center/National Guard armory is a dramatic addition to the east campus, top left. The modern style carries to the interior where visitors find the latest physical fitness equipment and even a walking track.

## Gift recalls a life devoted to teaching

A donation made to the College of Education proves that even if they aren't in the form of a check, gifts from friends and alumni can play a role in the future of PSU students.

After Geraldine Thompson received her teaching certificate from PSU in 1940, she taught in three one-room schoolhouses in southeast Kansas. Her family honored that dedication with two gifts to the PSU College of Education. One of the gifts is a painting of one of the one-room schoolhouses in which Thompson taught. The other is a framed poem about that experience.

College of Education Dean Andy Tompkins has the poem and painting prominently displayed in the College of Education office.

"This is a wonderful tribute not only to a specific teacher," Tompkins said, "but also to generations of teachers who have dedicated their lives to teaching the nation's children. It is an inspiration to each prospective new teacher who comes into our office."

## Summer Institute proves popular

For the past three years, the College of Education and the Department of Psychology and Counseling have been making the university a summertime destination by offering workshops covering cutting-edge topics in mental health.

The Summer Institute, featuring national experts in behavioral and mental health, has drawn educators, therapists and parents to the campus to hear presentations on everything from autism to youth violence to guidelines on giving testimony in health-related court cases. Organizer Dr. Rick Lindskog said topics are carefully chosen each year to reflect what mental and behavioral health professionals want to know now.

"We select topics that are current and of high interest in our region," said Lindskog, university professor in the Department of Psychology and Counseling. "Due to the training opportunities it presents, many people look forward to it and we get a lot of calls from people wanting to know what the show is each year. It's really been an area of strength for us."

A series of workshops on autism drew overflow crowds. One of the summer's headliners was Dr. John Maag, a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and author of more than 90 articles and book chapters. One of his four books, "Parenting without Punishment," won a Parent's Choice Award. His presentation "You Can't Make Me! Approaches and Techniques for Managing Resistance," challenged the audience to change their approach in order to get others to be more cooperative. Eight other professionals, including two PSU faculty members, presented workshops this summer.

Lindskog said as long as interest remains high, the department may consider offering workshops year-round.

"Every year the whole department gets involved brainstorming about this," he said. "It's not so much about attendance as it is putting us in a leadership role dealing with issues in mental health services. It's a good thing for Pitt State for this to be offered to the community."



A shiny Cessna jet is the backdrop for PSU student driver Aaron Poe and the Pitt State Formula SAE car.

## Formula SAE car featured during Cessna visit

Engineering technology students at Pitt State are only in their second year of taking part in the Formula SAE West competition, but support from a big backer is already helping to improve their car design – and odds of winning in the future.

A handful of faculty, students and administrators from the college visited the Cessna Aircraft facility in Wichita this June to meet with employees and take part in the company's soap box derby. A lead sponsor of the Pitt State Formula car, Cessna employees viewed the race car and gave students suggestions on how to improve the vehicle.

"We wanted the employees to be able to see what is done at universities these days and to thank them for contributing to the Pitt State vehicle," said College of Technology Dean Dr. Bruce Dallman. "Our students came home and worked on the car all night long, making changes to it before leaving for the competition."

The PSU Formula SAE team competed June 25-28 in Fontana, Calif. They placed 45th out of nearly 70 teams. The team was comprised of juniors – all of whom plan to return and compete again next year.

During the Cessna visit, the company took photos of the Pitt State car and student driver Aaron Poe posed in front of a Cessna aircraft. The photos will be used to market careers in science, math, engineering, and technology to young people.

"Students are getting to design, build, test, and race complicated pieces of equipment at a national level," Dallman said. "Support for these projects is so important for our students."

For more information about PSU Formula SAE racing, visit their Web page at [www.pittstate.edu/etech/manuf/sae/sae\\_overview.html](http://www.pittstate.edu/etech/manuf/sae/sae_overview.html).

## Company Day links students to industry

Connecting students to industry early in their college experience is the goal of the College of Technology's Company Day. This campuswide event will be held September 24 in the Kansas Technology Center. The event is designed for freshman through seniors to become acquainted with businesses and industry in their field of study.

Linda Grilz, instructor in the Department of Graphics & Engineering Technology, said this event is ideal for undergrads.

"I think it's more important to get

younger students introduced to these businesses so they can shape their college career to fit a specific business or industry," said Grilz.

The event is open to business and industry in any field of technology, including engineering, construction, automotive, graphics and imaging, and electrical. An estimated 300 students attended Company Day last year.

Susan Dellesaga, instructional support consultant for the College of Technology, emphasized that the event is not necessarily designed for graduating seniors to find a job, it is for all students studying technology.

"It's a way to get businesses into the College of Technology and a chance for students to learn their industry," said Dellesaga.

For more information on becoming involved in Company Day, contact Dellesaga at 620-231-1325 or [sdellase@pittstate.edu](mailto:sdellase@pittstate.edu).

## Caterpillar donates scholarships

A long time friend of the College of Technology has made a donation that will help ensure students are fully prepared for the workforce.

Two representatives from Caterpillar visited the campus July 16 to present a check for \$10,000. The university will match that amount for a total of \$20,000. The money will go toward scholarships for students in the four-year Caterpillar Think Bigger program at Pitt State.

The Caterpillar Think Big program is a two-year course of study that prepares students to become heavy equipment technicians for the company. PSU has the only four-year Caterpillar Think Bigger program, which expands on the two-year program by awarding students

bachelor's degrees and preparing them for entry-level management positions with Caterpillar.

"These students are coming from coast to coast, and this money helps us recruit and retain them," said Tim Dell, chairman of the Department of Automotive Technology. "We are glad to have Caterpillar assist us in making their educations affordable."

Dan Kennedy (BS '70, MS '71), manager of continuous product improvement for Caterpillar (Americas-Asia Pacific), said the contributions are equally beneficial for both the company and the university.

"We want to be good global citizens in this part of the world," he said. "To help these young people as they grow, it's a win-win situation for us."

## Engineering Tech gets big grant

Months of hard work, were rewarded this summer with a large grant for scholarships in the College of Technology. The National Science Foundation announced in July that it was awarding nearly \$600,000 over the next five years for scholarships in the Department of Engineering Technology.

The grant is part of the NSF Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiative, which is designed to help students who have a strong financial need and show the potential for success in a career in engineering.

A committee will be formed to recruit students, and will continue to work with them throughout their four years of schooling to ensure their success. The \$598,000 grant will provide four-year scholarships to at least 13 students.

"This isn't a scenario where we give them the money and then hope they survive," said Jim Otter, chairman of the Department of Engineering Technology. "We will be developing an infrastructure to give them the support they need."

Otter said a handful of faculty

members had been working to obtain the grant with the help of the College of Continuing and Graduate Studies. Mark Jones and Randy Winzer, professors in the department, along with the help of Brian Perry, PSU grants coordinator, made the case in their proposal that because Southeast Kansas has a high poverty level, many potential students end up pursuing little or no college because they simply can't afford it. The grant reviewers at the National Science Foundation were very receptive to the university's goal of reaching that demographic, said Otter.

"We have a working class kind of student," he said. "Many of them are working at least 20, maybe 40 hours per week. There are many who can't afford a four-year education and instead choose a one- or two-year program and then throw themselves into the workforce, maybe coming back to get more education later. This gives them a chance to get it now."

Graduates often go on to have careers in mechanical engineering, design or process engineering, or quality control. "We're very excited," Otter said. "Now we can reach out to students who hadn't identified PSU as an option."

## Industry reps from around the world attend PSU casting course

Representatives from industry came back to school this summer to learn the latest about investment casting in the Kansas Technology Center. The 30 participants in the Investment Casting Institute's 8th industry certification course represented companies from coast to coast in the U.S. and also Sweden, Brazil, Australia and Mexico.

Participants at the course at PSU earned certification as investment casting specialists. Russ Rosmait, professor of engineering technology at Pittsburg State, is the director of the Investment Casting Training Center.

## Dell appointed head of Automotive Technology

The College of Technology at Pittsburg State University has added a new chairman to its ranks.

Dr. Timothy Dell, assistant professor in the Department of Automotive Technology, has been named department chairman. He took over his new responsibilities July 1.

This is the first time the department, which offers some of the most highly regarded two- and four-year automotive programs in the country, has had its own dedicated chairman. For the past several years, Dr. John Iley has served as chairman of both the Department of Technology Studies as well as the Department of Automotive Technology. Iley will still head Technology Studies.

A native of Pittsburg, Dell earned a bachelor of science degree in automotive technology and a master of science degree in technology education from PSU. He recently completed a Ph.D. in education from Kansas State University.

Dell began his career at PSU in 1999, teaching courses in fluid power, off-highway systems and automatic and advanced hydraulic transmissions. Prior to teaching, he worked for agriculture and construction equipment manufacturer Case-IH in Racine, Wis., where he served as a troubleshooter for dealers with equipment problems.

In addition to teaching, Dell has served as the department's diesel and heavy equipment coordinator for five years and oversees the Caterpillar Think Bigger program, the only program of its kind in the U.S. He also serves on the John Deere National Training Council – one of only two instructors to do so nationwide.

Dell and his wife, Bertha, have a son, Calvin.



Dell



## New video display will change stadium experience

Visitors to Brandenburg Field/Carnie Smith Stadium this fall will have an entirely different experience, thanks to the installation of a new video scoreboard and display. The "Jungletron," purchased with gifts from private donors, will be almost 40 feet tall and nearly 70 feet wide and will include a new sound system. The board will be located on the south end of the stadium.

According to Daktronics, the manufacturer of the new video board, the PSU installation will be the largest at any NCAA D-II stadium in the U.S. The total cost of the project is approximately \$1.7 million.

The current scoreboard was installed in 1988 and uses incandescent bulbs to display the score and clock. In contrast, the new display will rely on LEDs (light emitting diodes). The new technology makes it possible to display color animation, vivid graphics and both live and pre-recorded video. A complete integrated sound system is also included in the package. The system speakers will be housed in a cabinet above the video display.

While the capabilities of the Jungletron are an obvious boon for the football program, the new board is expected to have a much broader impact. Carnie Smith Stadium is used for a number of athletic and student events throughout the year and video board may be used for many of those. The PSU Student Activities Office is already giving thought to hosting outdoor movies in the stadium. The Jungletron will also be an asset as the university and the community vie for the opportunity to host events such as the Shrine Bowl. There may even be opportunities to integrate the video display into the university's emergency notification system.

The university's award-winning television broadcasting programs will

also benefit from the installation of the new video display. Students already tape PSU football games for rebroadcast on the university's public access station and they are expected to play an important role in the use of instant replay on the Jungletron.

The new video display will set Pittsburg State University apart from other similar-sized universities. The size and quality of the Jungletron is equal to or superior to that found at many D-I programs, according to officials at Daktronics. Similar, but smaller video displays can be found at Kansas State University, the University of Missouri, and the University of Iowa.

Plans call for the new display to be in place for the first home football game at 6 p.m. on Sept. 13 vs. Missouri Southern, which is also Family Day.

## Sowder hired as assistant volleyball coach

Head Volleyball Coach Ibraheem Suberu has announced the hiring of Lindsay Sowder as an assistant volleyball coach for the Gorillas. Sowder joins the Pitt State staff



Sowder

after serving as head volleyball coach at Neosho County Community College in Chanute, Kan., the past four seasons (2004-07). The Toronto, Kan., native served as a student assistant (2000-02) and then a graduate assistant (2003) under Suberu at Pittsburg State, before accepting the head coaching job at Neosho County.

Sowder compiled an 85-71 record directing the Panthers program the past four seasons. Her 2007 squad was ranked as high as No.5 in the NJCAA

Division II preseason poll and her 2006 team finished that season ranked No. 14 nationally. During her four-year tenure, Sowder coached a pair of NJCAA All-Americans and 18 All-Jayhawk Conference performers. Additionally, her 2005 team was the NJCAA Division II Academic Team of the Year with a 3.69 team cumulative GPA. Her 2004 squad ranked sixth nationally and her 2007 team ranked seventh nationally in team GPA.

Sowder came to PSU as a student from Neosho County Community College, where she played for the Panthers for two seasons. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from Pittsburg State with a bachelor's degree in physical education in 2003, and she was named the Physical Education Major of the Year her senior year. She also earned a master's degree in physical education from Pittsburg State in 2004, completing her master's degree program with a perfect 4.00 GPA.

## Mantooth hired as assistant track & field coach

Head Track & Field Coach Russ Jewett has announced the selection of Brian Mantooth as an assistant track & field coach for the Gorillas. Mantooth joins the Pitt State staff full-time after



Mantooth

serving as a part-time coach for the Gorillas the past seven years. The Caney, Kan., native first served as a student assistant coach in 2001, after enjoying a two-year collegiate career at Pitt State from 1999-2000. He was a three-time All-MIAA performer in the throwing disciplines during his collegiate days, capturing MIAA titles in the hammer throw and the weight throw on



Pitt State's 2000 MIAA Championship squad.

Mantooth came to PSU from Coffeyville Community College, where he established the school record in the hammer and weight throw for the Ravens. He earned a bachelor's degree in wood technology from Pittsburg State University in 2001. Brian is married to the former Megan Synder, also an All-MIAA track & field athlete for the Gorillas. The couple has an infant son, Logan, who turns 2 in September.

### PSU leads the nation in Academic All-Americans

PSU leads the U.S. in the production of D-II Academic All-Americans this decade (as selected by the College Sports Information Directors of America). PSU produced two honorees during the 2007-

08 academic year to edge out MIAA rival Truman State by one. Since 2000, PSU has produced 42 Academic All-Americans and Truman State 41.

On the conference level, the MIAA has produced 172 CoSIDA Academic All-America winners this decade, far ahead of the nearest competitor, the North Central Conference (NCC), which has produced 126.

This year's honorees are Nick Dellasega and Caleb Farabi.

The PSU football program has produced 13 CoSIDA Academic All-Americans, coming in second behind the University of Dayton, which had 14 honorees since 2000.

To be eligible for CoSIDA Academic All-America consideration, a student-athlete must first earn first-team All-District honors following a vote of CoSIDA members in each district

To qualify for nomination to the all-district ballot, a student-athlete must have a cumulative GPA of 3.20 or better, have attended the school at least two terms, be at least a sophomore in athletic eligibility and be a starter or key reserve in their respective sport. Four of PSU's CoSIDA Academic All-America honorees have been additionally honored as the CoSIDA Academic All-America® of the Year for their respective sport: Christie Allen, track & field, 1993; Eric Miller, baseball, 1994; Jenny Pracht, women's basketball, 1996; Ryan Meredith, football, 2006.

As of the Spring 2008 semester, 52 percent of Pittsburg State's more than 300 student-athletes have 3.0, or higher, cumulative GPAs. PSU's student-athletes sport a combined cumulative GPA of 2.989.

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# PSU ATHLETICS UPDATE

## 2008 Athletics Schedules

All schedules are tentative and subject to change.  
All schedules are listed as central time. For more information, visit the Intercollegiate Athletics Website at [www.pittstategorillas.com](http://www.pittstategorillas.com).

### FOOTBALL

- 8/30.....@ Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Okla., 6 p.m.
- 9/6.....@ Chadron State, Chadron, Neb., 1 p.m.
- 9/13.....vs. Missouri Southern, Pittsburg, 6 p.m. (Family Day/ Miner's Bowl, sponsored by Mt. Carmel Regional Medical Center)
- 9/20.....@ Missouri Western, St. Joseph, Mo., 6 p.m.
- 9/27.....vs. Central Mo., Pittsburg, 2 p.m. (State Farm Hall of Fame Game)
- 10/4.....@ Northwest Missouri, Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., 5 p.m. (The Fall Classic at Arrowhead VII)
- 10/11.....vs. Truman, Pittsburg, 2 p.m. (Comfort Inn & Suites Day)
- 10/18.....vs. Nebraska-Omaha, Pittsburg, 2 p.m. (Commerce Bank Homecoming)
- 10/25.....@ Fort Hays State, Hays, Kan., 2 p.m.
- 11/1.....vs. Washburn, Pittsburg, 2 p.m.
- 11/8.....@ Emporia State, Emporia, Kan., 1 p.m.

### MEN'S & WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

- 9/6.....Alumni Race (5K), Home
- 9/12.....UCM Mule Run (4 mi.), Warrensburg, Mo.
- 9/20.....Missouri Southern Stampede (8K), Joplin, Mo.
- 9/27.....Minnesota Roy Griak Invitational (8K) Minneapolis, Minn.
- 10/11.....SIU-Edwardsville Border Wars (8K) Edwardsville, Ill.
- 10/25.....MIAA Championships (8K) Warrensburg, Mo.
- 11/8.....NCAA-II South Central Regional (10K) San Antonio, Texas
- 11/22.....NCAA-II National Championships (10K) Slippery Rock, Pa.

### MEN'S GOLF

- 9/17-18.....@ Truman State Classic, Kirksville Country Club, Kirksville, Mo.
- 9/24-25.....@ Northeastern State Classic, Carly Field Golf Club, Sapulpa, Okla.
- 10/2-3.....@ Drury Invitational, Rivercut Country Club, Springfield, Mo.
- 10/8-9.....@ Fort Hays State Invitational, Hays, Kan.

### MEN'S BASKETBALL

- 11/21-22 ...@ Missouri Southern Classic, Joplin, Mo.
- 11/24.....vs. Saint Mary (Kan.), Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 11/28-29...Pitt State Classic, Pittsburg
- 12/3.....@ Missouri Western, St. Joseph, Mo., 7:30 p.m.
- 12/8.....vs. Newman, Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 12/13.....vs. Southwest Baptist, Pittsburg, 7:30 p.m.
- 12/29.....@ Central Missouri, Warrensburg, Mo., 7:30 p.m.
- 12/31.....vs. Northwest Missouri, Pittsburg, 3:30 p.m.
- 1/3.....@ Missouri Southern, Joplin, Mo., 7:30 p.m.
- 1/10.....vs. Emporia State, Pittsburg, 7:30 p.m.
- 1/14.....@ Washburn, Topeka, Kan., 7:30 p.m.
- 1/17.....@ Fort Hays State, Hays, Kan., 7:30 p.m.
- 1/21.....vs. Nebraska-Omaha, Pittsburg, 7:30 p.m.
- 1/24.....vs. Missouri Western, Pittsburg, 7:30 p.m.
- 1/28.....@ Truman, Kirksville, Mo., 7:30 p.m.
- 1/31.....vs. Central Missouri, Pittsburg, 3:30 p.m.
- 2/4.....@ Southwest Baptist, Bolivar, Mo., 7:30 p.m.

- 2/7.....@ Northwest Missouri, Maryville, Mo., 3:30 p.m.
- 2/11.....vs. Missouri Southern, Pittsburg, 7:30 p.m.
- 2/18.....@ Emporia State, Emporia, Kan., 7:30 p.m.
- 2/21.....vs. Washburn, Pittsburg, 7:30 p.m.
- 2/25.....vs. Fort Hays State, Pittsburg, 7:30 p.m.
- 2/28.....@ Nebraska-Omaha, Omaha, Neb. 7:30 p.m.
- 3/5-8.....MIAA Championships, Kansas City, Mo., TBA

### WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

- 11/ 15-16 ..Pitt State Classic, Pittsburg
- 11/21-22 ...@ Southwestern Okla. Classic, Weatherford, Okla., TBA
- 11/28-29...@ Missouri Southern Classic, Joplin, Mo., TBA
- 12/3.....@ Missouri Western, St. Joseph, Mo., 5:30 p.m.
- 12/6.....vs. Truman, Pittsburg, 3:30 p.m.
- 12/13.....vs. Southwest Baptist, Pittsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- 12/29.....@ Central Missouri, Warrensburg, Mo., 5:30 p.m.
- 12/31.....vs. Northwest Missouri, Pittsburg, 1:30 p.m.
- 1/3.....@ Missouri Southern, Joplin, Mo., 5:30 p.m.
- 1/10.....vs. Emporia State, Pittsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- 1/14.....@ Washburn, Topeka, Kan., 5:30 p.m.
- 1/17.....@ Fort Hays State, Hays, Kan., 5:30 p.m.
- 1/21.....vs. Nebraska-Omaha, Pittsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- 1/24.....vs. Missouri Western, Pittsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- 1/28.....@ Truman, Kirksville, Mo., 5:30 p.m.
- 1/31.....vs. Central Missouri, Pittsburg, 1:30 p.m.
- 2/4.....@ Southwest Baptist, Bolivar, Mo., 5:30 p.m.
- 2/7.....@ Northwest Missouri, Maryville, Mo., 1:30 p.m.
- 2/11.....vs. Missouri Southern, Pittsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- 2/18.....@ Emporia State, Emporia, Kan., 5:30 p.m.
- 2/21.....vs. Washburn, Pittsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- 2/25.....vs. Fort Hays State, Pittsburg, 5:30 p.m.
- 2/28.....@ Nebraska-Omaha, Omaha, Neb., 5:30 p.m.
- 3/6-8.....MIAA Championships, Kansas City, Mo. TBA

### WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

- 8/29-30 ....@ Missouri S & T Invitational, Rolla, Mo.
- 9/5-6 .....@ Texas Woman's Invitational, Denton, Texas
- 9/12-13 .....@ Central Missouri Classic, Warrensburg, Mo.
- 9/19.....vs. Nebraska-Omaha, Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 9/20.....vs. Central Missouri, Pittsburg, 1 p.m.
- 9/20.....vs. Saint Mary (Kan.), Pittsburg, 4 p.m.
- 9/24.....@ Missouri Western, St. Joseph, Mo., 7 p.m.
- 9/26.....vs. Northwest Missouri, Pittsburg, 1 p.m.
- 9/27.....vs. Truman, Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 10/3-4.....Pittsburg State Classic, Pittsburg
- 10/8.....vs. Fort Hays State, Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 10/10.....@ Emporia State, Emporia, Kan. 7 p.m.
- 10/11.....@ Washburn, Topeka, Kan., 5 p.m.
- 10/15.....@ Missouri Southern, Joplin, Mo., 7 p.m.
- 10/18.....@ Southwest Baptist, Bolivar, Mo., 1 p.m.
- 10/19.....Alumni (Exhibition), Pittsburg, 12 p.m.
- 10/24.....@ Nebraska-Omaha, Omaha, Neb., 7 p.m.
- 10/29.....vs. Missouri Western, Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 10/31.....@ Northwest Missouri, Maryville, Mo., 7 p.m.
- 11/1.....@ Truman, Kirksville, Mo., 6 p.m.
- 11/5.....@ Fort Hays State, Hays, Kan., 7 p.m.
- 11/7.....vs. Emporia State, Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 11/8.....vs. Washburn, Pittsburg, 2 p.m.
- 11/12.....vs. Missouri Southern, Pittsburg, 7 p.m.
- 11/15.....vs. Southwest Baptist (Senior Day), Pittsburg, 2 p.m.
- 11/20-22...NCAA-II South Central Regional, TBA
- 12/4-6.....NCAA-II Elite Eight, TBA

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## Family Day weekend will be filled with fun

The Office of Alumni & Constituent Relations and the Campus Activities Center have planned a variety of events for Family Day 2008. The events are designed to appeal to alumni, current students, and friends and family members of all ages. Family Day weekend is Sept. 12-14.

Weekend activities begin with Illusionist/Magician Mike Super at 7 p.m. on Sept. 12 at Memorial Auditorium in Downtown Pittsburg. Saturday activities will start with the Student Health Center Fun Run at 8 a.m. followed by a Freshmen Parents' Session at 9 a.m. in the Overman Student Center. President Tom Bryant will host a brunch at 10 a.m., and campus tours will be available from 11 a.m. to noon. Two GPS scavenger hunts will take place, one at 11:30 a.m. and one at 1:30 p.m. starting at the Overman Student Center and there will be magic shows at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. on the PSU Oval.

GorillaFest begins at 3 p.m. in Gorilla Village just east of the football stadium. There will be food and activities for all ages and an Alumni and Friends tailgate from 4-5:30 p.m. in Gorilla Village. The Pitt State Gorillas will take on rival Missouri Southern State University with a kickoff at 6 p.m. Finally, the weekend will wrap up with a golf tournament sponsored by the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority on Sunday morning.

To register for Family Day events, call the Office of Alumni & Constituent Relations at 620-235-4758 or visit [www.pittstate.edu/alum](http://www.pittstate.edu/alum), or contact Campus Activities Center at 620-235-4795 or visit [www.pittstate.edu/cac/family](http://www.pittstate.edu/cac/family).

## Changes in license plate program create new options

A record number of alumni and friends are showing off their Gorilla



pride through the Gorilla License Plate Program. The Office of Alumni & Constituent Relations announced recently that there are now more than 1,200 of the license plates on Kansas roads. The record was set following a spring contest designed to increase awareness of the license plate program.

"We're glad to have reached this milestone," said Johnna Schremmer, director of PSU Alumni & Constituent Relations.

The program has been made even simpler this fall, Schremmer said, with changes that allow for easier qualification to purchase a plate. Now, any gift of \$30 or more to PSU qualifies a person for a Gorilla license plate. Previously, the only gifts considered were those to the Alumni Legacy Plate Scholarship Fund. This fund still exists, but participants now may choose to direct their gift to any area of the university.

"We're excited about this change. This is an excellent way for people to show off their Pitt State pride and benefit the university in how they choose at the same time," said Schremmer.

Winners of the recent contest were Paul Hays, Wichita; Ron Brock, Pittsburg; Gary Rimbey, Frontenac, Kan.; Anna Gudde, Pittsburg; and Darren Masten, Stilwell, Kan. Prizes included a flat-panel television, football season tickets in the Rua Skybox, a Gorilla Bookstore shopping spree, 2008 Fall Classic tickets, and a PSU goodie basket. Those who already have a Gorilla license plate and renew in 2008 will

be entered into a separate drawing for prizes.

Applicants must renew or get a new plate within 12 months of their gift. Multiple plates are available based on the size of gift divisible by \$30.

Paperwork must be completed through the PSU Office of Alumni & Constituent Relations before plates can be purchased at a Kansas Department of Motor Vehicles office.

For complete details, contact the PSU Office of Alumni and Constituent Relations at 620-235-4758, [alumni@pittstate.edu](mailto:alumni@pittstate.edu), [www.pittstate.edu/alum](http://www.pittstate.edu/alum), or order online at [www.pittstate.edu/alumni](http://www.pittstate.edu/alumni).

## Pittsburg State University Alumni Association 2008-09 Board of Directors

- Beccy Yocham, president
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- Doug Roberts
- Kerry Sachetta
- Matthew Wendt



## Homecoming activities to include special reunions and more

No other university tradition can capture what it feels like to be



a Gorilla more than Homecoming. PSU Homecoming 2008 is set for October 18, preceded by a week full of campus activities for students, alumni, and friends.

This year, the Office of Alumni & Constituent Relations is hosting a special reunion for alumni of Student Government. Activities for the Student Government reunion begin on Thursday evening and run through Saturday.

On Friday, Homecoming activities include a reception for the winners of the Dr. Kenneth K. Bateman Outstanding Alumni Award at 5 p.m. in the Alumni Center and the annual Crimson and Gold Dinner at 6 p.m. in the Overman Student Center. The dinner is open to current students, alumni, and families and will recognize alumni award winners, the Homecoming Court and the Student Government reunion attendees. Registration is required.

The dinner will be followed by a new activity, the Quest to Save Gus Gorilla, a campuswide scavenger hunt for alumni and students. Registration is also required for this activity.

Homecoming day will begin with the Gorilla Grind run/walk, hosted by PSU ROTC, at 7 a.m. The traditional Homecoming Parade starts at 9 a.m. and will feature marching bands, floats, king and queen cars and a variety of entries.

The parade will be followed by guided campus trolley tours from 10:30 a.m. to noon. Tours will depart every 30 minutes from the Alumni Center. These tours have been a part of Homecoming activities in recent years, but were guided walking tours.

“We’re excited to be able to use the trolley this year for the tours,” said Lacey Taylor, assistant director of Alumni & Constituent Relations. “We hope it will be an easy and enjoyable activity for more participants to see how the campus is evolving.”

GorillaFest, the communitywide free tailgate party, begins at 11 a.m. in Gorilla Village on the east side of Carnie Smith Stadium. Food vendors will offer a variety of tailgate foods for sale, there will be live music in the Gazebo and kids can enjoy free games, face painting, and tattoos. GorillaFest will also feature an Alumni & Friends Tailgate tent, where Southeast Kansas chicken will be served starting at 11:30 a.m. with reservations required.

GorillaFest will end with a pep rally

led by the Pride of the Plains Marching Band and the PSU Spirit Squad. The Gorillas will take on the University of Nebraska-Omaha Mavericks with a kickoff at 2 p.m.

Other specialty reunions and activities during Homecoming weekend include Construction Alumni Day and Legacy of Learning Honors College Reunion on Friday. The College High School Alumni Association will have a hospitality tent at GorillaFest and the Kelce College of Business will also hold an alumni event during the weekend.

For a complete list of Homecoming weekend activities and for registration information, call the Office of Alumni and Constituent Relations at 620-235-4758 or visit their Web site at [www.pittstate.edu/alumni](http://www.pittstate.edu/alumni).

**A fun family event for adults and children**

# Camping on the Oval

**Friday, October 24**

**Enjoy an outdoor movie, s'mores, and more while sleeping under the stars with Gus!**

**Registration Deadline:  
October 10**

**To register:  
Visit “The Jungle,”  
[www.pittstate.edu/alumni](http://www.pittstate.edu/alumni)  
or call the PSU Office of Alumni  
and Constituent Relations at  
620-235-4758.**



**Check our Web site for more family events!**



### Alumni Events

Alumni and Constituent Relations is providing a number of Gorilla Gatherings, family events, reunions, and other opportunities for you to become reacquainted with fellow Gorillas in a location near you.

#### September

- 4..... Hutchinson, Kan.
- 5-14..... Kansas State Fair
- 9..... Detroit
- 13..... Family Day at Pitt State
- 15..... Labette County
- 18..... Kansas City
- 25..... Kansas City
- 27..... Crawford County
- 28..... Neosho County
- 30..... Sedgwick County

#### October

- 3..... Paint KC Red –  
Tanners, Kansas City
- 4..... Fall Classic at Arrowhead
- 13..... Pacific Northwest  
and California
- 14..... Bourbon County
- 17-18.... Student Government  
Association Reunion/  
Homecoming
- 24..... Jasper County
- 24-25 ... Camping on the Oval
- 26..... Sedgwick County
- 30..... Kansas City

#### November

- 1..... President’s Chili Challenge
- 4..... Cherokee County
- 18..... Montgomery County

#### December

- 1-5 ..... Gingerbread House Contest
- 2..... Out of the Jungle

For more information on these and other events, contact Alumni and Constituent Relations at 620-235-4758 or visit their Web site at [www.pittstate.edu/alumni](http://www.pittstate.edu/alumni).

### New activities planned for GorillaFest

All the fun of years past and more – that’s what can be expected at this year’s GorillaFest, the free communitywide tailgate that precedes each home football game. Now in its 11th year, GorillaFest has become a strong tradition for fans of Gorilla football.

Johnna Schremmer, director of Alumni and Constituent Relations, said, “Our goal is to create a tailgate party atmosphere with a fun family appeal before every home football game.”

Activities take place just to the east of Carnie Smith Stadium in the Gorilla Village, next to the University Lake. There is live entertainment in the gazebo and food vendors offer a variety of tailgate options. Free kids games and student and department booths are also part of each GorillaFest event, which begins three hours before kickoff.

Several new activities highlight this year’s GorillaFest. On October 11, get out the balloons and streamers for a Tailgate Decorating Contest. Alumni, family, and friends can put their cooking skills to the test at the President’s Chili Challenge on November 1. Also new this year is an opportunity to get your picture taken as Gus Gorilla. Plus all the live music, food vendors, games, and prizes that you’ve enjoyed in the past.

For more information on GorillaFest, call the Office of Alumni & Constituent Relations at 620-235-4758 or visit [www.pittstate.edu/alumni](http://www.pittstate.edu/alumni).

### Half Century Club reunion

**Dr. Adell Thompson, Overland Park, Kan., reminisces over a page in a Kanza yearbook during the Half-Century Club reunion, top. Members of the Class of '58 shared stories, toured the campus, caught up with old friends and shared a luncheon under a tent on the Oval.**





## Letters

### To the Editor:

Just finished reading the Spring 2008 issue from cover to cover. Believe it was the best ever issue. We especially liked the dining out stories. Believe we visited them all during our Pitt State days. Keep up the good work of promoting Pitt State.

O L ('58) and Judy Cook

*We're glad you enjoyed the dining stories. The Pittsburg Morning Sun ran a feature story on June 22 about Minnie Chambers, former owner of the Plaza Café, who turned 100 this year. She retired in 2000 at the age of 92. – the editor*

### To the Editor:

We've just stumbled across the photo on page 44 of the Spring issue of Pitt State Magazine, and my wife and I are pretty sure of the identities of all four people – since the two closest to the camera are almost surely us.

I'm Jack Copeland (May '78 graduate), and I played trombone in the Pride of Plains; that's my future wife, Nancy Ochs (December '78 graduate). She believes she was the only band member during that time (we believe this is from 1976 but 1977 also is a possibility) who played the instrument she's carrying – a bell lyre.

The couple walking in front of us is Marty Zentner (also a trombone player) and his future wife, Vicki Holtzclaw. Marty currently is band director at Westmoreland (Kansas) High School and Vicki is the city clerk in Westmoreland. We were close as couples – I actually was best man for Marty when he married Vicki (and in fact, Vicki and I dated in high school



in Leavenworth, Kansas, just before I began dating Nancy...the three of us all are from Leavenworth, and then we met Marty, from Joplin, at what was then Kansas State College of Pittsburg).

Marty and Vicki married while we still were at Pitt State; Nancy and I married in 1979 after moving to Oklahoma.

While Marty remained in music, I went into journalism (I'm a former editor of the Collegio), and I'm now associate editor of the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Champion Magazine and the online edition of The NCAA News. Nancy is a test engineer for Sprint, and we both work in Indianapolis, though we maintain a home in Shawnee, Kansas.

As you might imagine, the photo surprised us...neither Nancy or I have seen it before, and we're curious about who the photographer may have been (because I worked on the Collegio, I'm wondering if it was one of our photographers, or perhaps the university photographer – Larry Long?)

Hope this info is helpful, and thanks for making our day!

**Jack Copeland**

*Jack, Thanks for making OUR day. It was fun to learn the story behind the photo. – the editor*

### Class of 1951

**Dr. Donald M. Huffman** (BS) and **Dr. Maxine F. Huffman** (MS) were both awarded doctor of humane letters degrees from Central College, Pella, Iowa, on May 14. Don has served as a professor and department chairman in the Biology Department and the Natural Division Chairman at the college since 1957. Don has been a prolific author and secured a number of research grants. Maxine served as a biologist from 1953-1957, a professor of English from 1958-1996 and chairperson of the English Department from 1985-1996. Maxine developed the college's linguistics

major, the cross-cultural perception and communication course, and the English-as-a-second-language program.

Don and Maxine live in Pella, Iowa. They were accompanied at the commencement honors by their children, James D. Huffman and Kimberley L. Huffman, and by a number of local and international friends including four English professors from China and a medical anthropologist from Ethiopia.

### Class of 1984

**Michelle Carpenter** (MBA) received the Humanitarian award from the World Outreach Foundation in Kansas City. An active hospice worker for the last 17 years, Michelle was honored because of her volunteer leadership and outreach to those in need.

In 2001, Michelle was the first person to receive the Heart of Hospice award as the outstanding hospice volunteer of the year in Missouri. She also received the 2004 Anne Robb Townsend award for philanthropic work. In 2006, she was tri-president of the Harvest Ball, an event that raised \$4 million over the years for needy people in the Kansas City area.

Michelle and her husband, David (BS '77), live in Parkville, Mo.

### Class of 1990

**Sally Long Lundy** (BA) graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of science degree in nursing from Saint Luke's College in Kansas City, Mo., in May 2008. She is employed as a registered nurse in the critical care unit at Olathe Medical Center. Sally lives in Olathe with her husband, Marc, and their three children, ages 8, 10 and 13.

**Mark Wegman** (BS in Electronics Engineering Technology) has a new book, "American Passenger Trains and Locomotives Illustrated," due to be published in October. Wegman's book is published by MBI Publishing. He lives in Battlefield, Mo.



**Class of 1992**

**Jennifer Boren** (BBA) has been named vice president of information technology at Ferrellgas Partners LP in Overland Park, Kan.

**Class of 1994**

**Melinda Ewan** (BS in psychology) received an MS in Management from Indiana Wesleyan University in 2000. In April 2008 became a licensed nursing home administrator for the State of Indiana and Kansas. She currently lives in Indianapolis and works for Golden Living Center, a 208-bed facility for developmental disabled adults.

**Class of 1996**

**Adam Ziegler** (BS) lives in Edwardsville, Kan., with his wife, Kelly. Adam is a firefighter with the Kansas City, Kan., fire department.

**Class of 1997**

**Joe Douthitt** (BA) has joined Level Five Worldwide as its new senior director of marketing in Overland Park, Kan. Level Five Worldwide is a division of Anthem Media Group. Level Five develops strategies to grow business from existing clients and create relationships with new partners while focusing on luxury lifestyle sports.



A veteran in the sponsorship and event agency world, Douthitt has executed integrated programs for a variety of leading brands such as Sprint Nextel, Proctor & Gamble, Castrol, Yellow Transportation and Bayer. His experience ranges from managing PR efforts and promotions in NASCAR, to executing experiential sampling programs at retail locations and developing activation platforms for PGA, Skiing and LIVE Broadway sponsorships.

Joe is married to **Christina Louise (Harmoan) Douthitt** (BS '92).

**Class of 2000**

**Isabella "Belle" Jensen** (BA) works for Utility Contractors Inc. in Wichita. She is working on a master's in business law at Friends University. Isabella and Derek Hake have plans to marry in September.

**Class of 2004**

**Kevin Smith** (BA) is the new editor of the Kearney Courier in Kearney, Mo.

**Deaths**

**Robert F. Baker**, 75, Carthage, Mo., (BS)

**Keith 'Corky' E. Barnes**, 69, Olathe, Kan. (BS '61, MS '64)

**Jimmie R. 'Jim' Bass**, 76, Ottawa, Kan. (Technical School '59)

**Richard B. 'Dick' Booe**, 69, Osawatomie, Kan. (BS '62, MS '64, Specialist '85 )

**Lawrence L. Bowyer**, 87, Pittsburg (BS '42)

**Howard Leon Carpenter**, 84, Irvine, Calif. (BS '49)

**Barry Richard Elliott**, 75, Fort Scott, Kan., (Specialist '73)

**Ernest S. Evans**, 81, Carthage, Mo. (BS '59)

**Fern Maxine Fettig**, 87, Pittsburg (Teaching Certificates)

**Gerald R. Gifford**, 76, Arma, Kan. (BS '53, MS '57)

**Carl Frederick Gump**, 92, Paola, Kan. (BS '41, MS '48)

**Henry G. Hann**, 104, McPherson, Kan. (MS)

**John H. Hensley**, 79, Parsons, Kan., (BSEd)

**Kelly Brooks Hiatt**, 25, Miami, Okla. (BSN)

**Viola Mae Hutcherson**, 93, Fort Scott, Kan. (BS '40, MS '53)

**Carole Ann Jacques**, 72, Pittsburg (BS '58)

**Glen Oliver Johnson Jr.**, 68, Sarcoxie, Mo., (MS '88)

**Richard L. 'Sparky' Keene**, 76, Bella Vista, Ark. (BS '58)

**Floyd E. Leonard**, 82, Miami, Okla., (BS '52, MS '53, Specialist '71)

**Thela Fern Malle**, 84, Stillwater, Okla. (BS '35)

**Ronald Mawdsley**, 66, Pratt, Kan. (AA)

**Robert 'Bob' McClenahan**, 62, Uniontown, Kan. (BA '68)

**Doyle W. Morton**, 79, Tomball, Texas (BS '55)

**Warren Harding Morton Jr.**, 57, Kansas City, Mo. (BS '75)

**Dr. Robert R. Noble**, 87, Pittsburg. (Dr. Noble taught in the Department of Social Sciences from 1950 until 1985.)

**Randy O'Toole**, 45, S. Hutchinson, Kan. (BS '86)

**Gregory Wayne Potter**, 61, Manhattan, Kan. (MS '79)

**Lester C. Ramsey**, 95, Kansas City, Kan. (BS '35)

**Sam C. Richardson**, 104, Newton, Kan. (BS '27)

**Charlotte Ann Akers Sanford**, 72, Coffeyville (BS)

**Carolyn Glee Solera**, 71, Lancaster, Pa. (BA '58)

**Ruben Francis Samora**, 79, Towanda, Kan. (MS '70)

**Frances Crook Staedtler**, 90 (MS '72)

**Jack A. Templin**, 77, Pittsburg (BSED '52)

**Marie Thorton Tuck**, 82, Lamar, Mo. (MS '56)

**Pete 'Wilmur' Wedeman**, 74, Overland Park, Kan. (BS '59)

**Ever wonder what's going on with the kids you were on campus with?**

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**Submit class notes to: [psumag@pittstate.edu](mailto:psumag@pittstate.edu)**



Members of the Pittsburg Community relax in lawn chairs on the Oval during one of the free Community Band concerts held this summer. Dr. Craig Fuchs, chairman of the Music Department, said the concerts are a fun and relaxed way to enjoy music on a summer evening.

Youngsters got a chance to operate some real construction equipment during a workshop for kids at the Kansas Technology Center this summer. The annual workshop is designed to get young students to think about career options in the construction industry early in their lives.



**What was his name?**

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 A stack of yearbooks from Pittsburg State University. The top book is the 2006 KANZA yearbook. Other visible titles include KANZA 2004 and KANZA 2002 PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY.

# In plain sight...on the PSU campus

Ok. Let's test your PSU memory. Below are 10 images from places on campus most of you should be familiar with. Some are pretty easy, but we've included a few that we hope will be a little more challenging. Get all 10 and you are a true Gorilla. Score 7+ and you get a pat on the back from Gus. 3-6 means you need to get back to campus more often (we can arrange a campus tour!) Less than 3 – you must be a Missouri Southern grad!



1.



4.



8.



2.



5.



9.



6.



10.

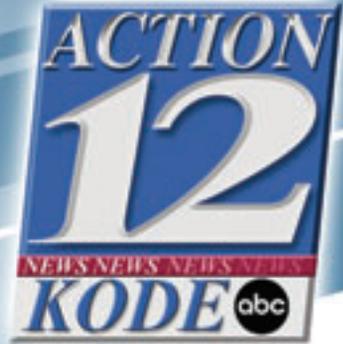


3.



7.

ANSWERS: 1: Russ Hall columns 2: Timmons Chapel doors 3: Art on Carnie Smith Stadium 4: Copper down spout on Willard Hall 5: Floor of McCray Recital Hall 6: Leaded glass above Porter Hall entrance 7: Grubbs Hall "eyelash" window trim 8: Horace Mann Student Welcoming Center entrance 9: Whitesitt Hall architectural trim 10: Seal in front of Overman Student Center



*Lauren Hieger*

*Brian Hamman*



**Home of**



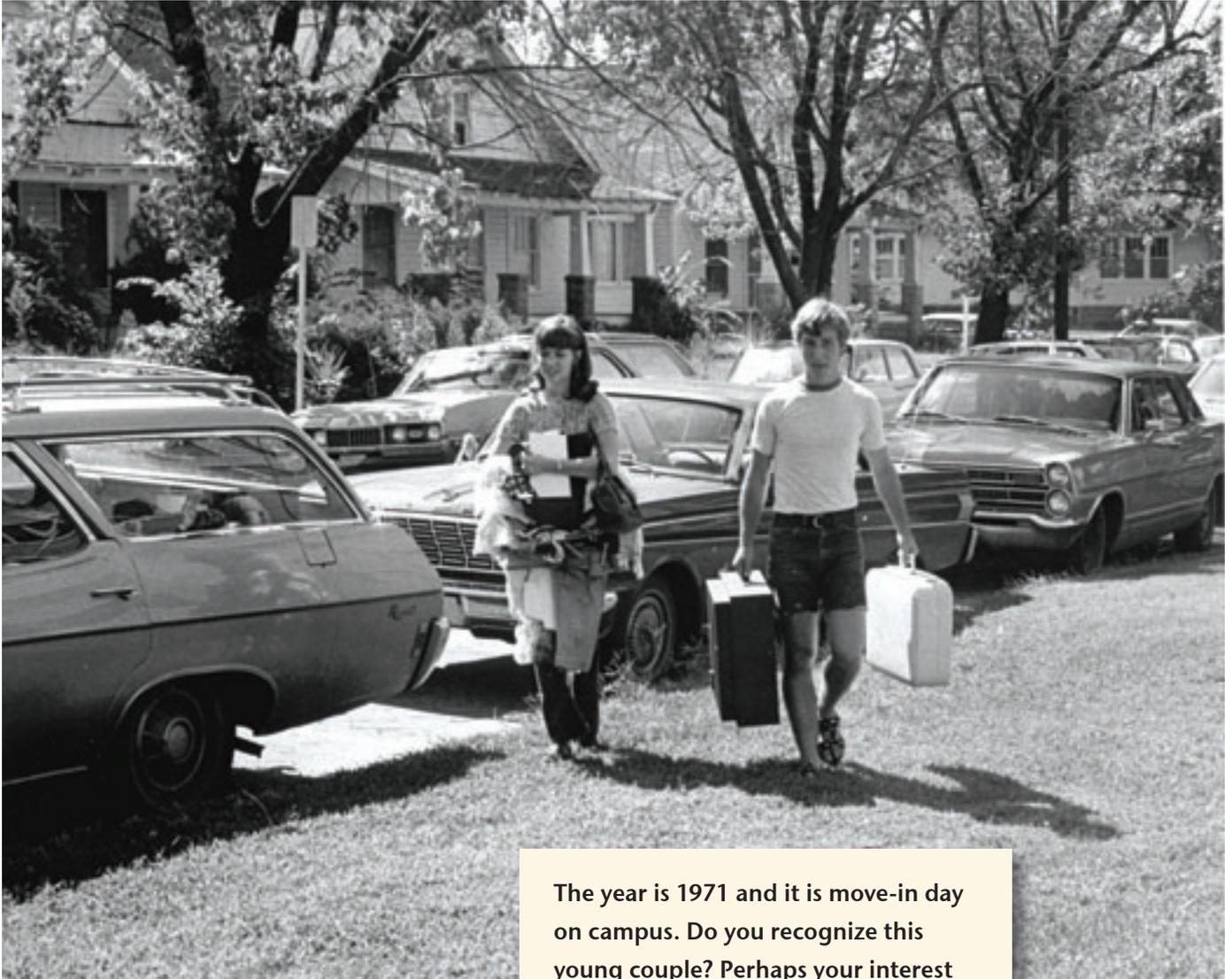
*Toni Valliere*

*Jim Jackson*

**That's TOTAL COVERAGE!**  
Weeknights at 5:00, 6:00 & 10:00



## From the archives...



The year is 1971 and it is move-in day on campus. Do you recognize this young couple? Perhaps your interest goes instead to the line of cars in the background. We all remember the cars we were driving or riding in during our college days. If you have a car-related story to share, we'd like to hear from you. Send your memories (and photos, if you have them) to [psumag@pittstate.edu](mailto:psumag@pittstate.edu).



Eric and Lora Grooms share an exciting Wichita Wingnuts baseball game with other PSU alumni.

## PSU Foundation Spotlight—*Eric and Lora Grooms*

For Eric and Lora Grooms, attending PSU in the 1980s marked the beginning of a lifelong commitment – both to one another and to the university they’ve loved and supported for 22 years.

Eric and Lora met at PSU and married after finishing their degrees in 1986. Since then, PSU has never been far from their hearts. They have given to the university for 18 years and Eric is currently one of the youngest members of the Foundation board. Regulars at Wichita Gorilla Gatherings, the Groomses say few things have brought them as much fulfillment as their service to PSU.

“One of the greatest honors of my life has been serving as president of the National Alumni Association during PSU’s centennial year,” said Eric, executive vice president and chief lending officer of Rose Hill Bank in Augusta.

Events like hosting the Crimson and Gold Dinner and the Half-Century Club Luncheon, as well as taking part in Homecoming, helping with the Phonathon, working the PSU booth at the Kansas State Fair, and catching PSU ball games have been highlights to the couple.

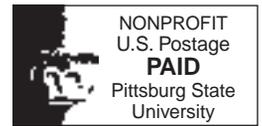
“These events have just made our connection to PSU stronger,” said Lora, a real estate agent.

“I encourage people to go back and get involved,” Eric said. “Things on college campuses don’t stand still, and that’s part of the attraction. It’s always changing. We’ll always be open to helping out and being a part of PSU any way we can.”

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