



January 14, 2013
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pope

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THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Washtenaw Community College
Ann Arbor, Michigan

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VP Blacklaw fired

Faculty livid at president's 'cowardly' decision

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

AND BEN SOLIS
Editor

Incited by the abrupt departure of Vice President of Instruction Stuart Blacklaw, members of the Washtenaw Community College Education Association were angered by what they called a "cowardly move."



Stuart Blacklaw

After months of waiting for an answer as to whether or not he would keep his position, Blacklaw learned his fate when he was relieved of his administrative duties effective immediately Thursday, according to an email sent out by Washtenaw President Rose Bellanca.

In his place, Bellanca has appointed Dr. William (Bill) Abernethy, the college's Dean of Humanities, Social

and Behavioral Sciences. Abernethy will act as the Interim Vice President of Instruction until the college can hire a permanent administrator for the 2014 academic year, Bellanca said in her email.

Blacklaw will continue to receive his annual salary of \$128,270 until his contact expires in June, totalling in three months pay of \$32,067.

Abernethy will be paid \$131,400 per year.

"Dr. Abernethy has demonstrated diverse leadership and I have full confidence in his ability," Bellanca wrote. "He is working on a transition plan that includes learning more about all of our instructional areas and working with deans and department chairs to resolve issues."

"We will also discuss a collaborative process to hire a new Vice President for Instruction for the 2014 academic year."

And after CFO Steven Hardy resigned suddenly last November, the college must now endeavor to find a replacement for its two most prominent vice presidents.

Blacklaw was shown the door immediately after meeting with the

VP INSTRUCTION
CONTINUED A6

Faculty: 'deep concerns' about new administration

By BEN SOLIS
Editor

After months of uncertainty, mounting rumors and hushed "mud-slinging," Washtenaw Community College's faculty union aired its grievances concerning communication breakdowns with college President Rose Bellanca.

In front of administrators and trustees at Wednesday's Board of Trustees meeting, the union's chief negotiator David Fitzpatrick made it clear to trustees that the faculty feel they have been pushed aside while trying to communicate with the president and her office.

"At present, there are three paths of communication through which we are hoping to work," he continued. "First, Carrie Krantz (English Department chair) and the other department chairs send an email to President Bellanca requesting that she meet with that body. In liaison, on Feb. 18, the second path, Jennifer Baker and I expressed our deep concerns about the academic cabinet President Bellanca had announced. And third, we're hoping to work through the email that Jennifer sent to you last week. It is our hope that these will result in the discussion that will fix the serious communication problems that exist on this campus and we anxiously await replies to all of those communications."

"I want to be clear here, effective communication on this campus, both lateral and vertical, have all but collapsed," Fitzpatrick added. "This is not just a faculty perspective. We hear this frequently from administrators and mid-grade employees. This thing is not a figment of the faculty's imagination. It is a widely held view that stretches across the college."

"In closing, I want to quote to you from an email that Jennifer sent last week. 'It is my hope,' she wrote, 'that articulating our concerns to you will bring to our institution to a better place - that we can begin to operate in accordance with our policy on staff collaboration. We love this college. I



David Fitzpatrick

UNION
CONTINUED A5

Administrators blame state aid and declining enrollment

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

Washtenaw Community College could see an \$11 million shortfall in total revenue next year, an 11-percent decline from last year's total revenue of about \$97 million, budget officials warn.

At the Board of Trustees's spring retreat last week, Interim CFO Chuck Thomas and budget specialist Barb Fillingner delivered the annual projections and explained many contributing factors, including changes to state legislation and drops in enrollment.

"Over the

past 18 months we've had a decline in enrollment," said WCC President Rose Bellanca. "We know it impacts the budget, but how?"

Trustees discussed a \$5,000,486 decrease in revenue due to low enrollment and a decline in tuition payments, along with another \$5,000,114 loss from the current personal property tax budget of \$46 million, due to recent legislation to phase out pay-ins for personal property taxes.

But the government didn't stop there.

Officials anticipated that state aid is to be reduced by \$690,000 and that the college has already projected a loss of \$40,000 to recent sequestration laws. Investment income to the college will also drop by \$500,000.

"For those areas between tuition and fees and other revenue drivers, it's about \$11 million," Fillingner said of the reduced income. "It will mostly impact investment income because we will have less to invest, so therefore we're

BUDGET
CONTINUED A5



Chuck Thomas

Trustees to raise tuition, but freeze rates for early registrants

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

Washtenaw's Board of Trustees is considering a hike in tuition for next year, but may allow returning students to register early and see no change at all.

Presented to the board at its annual spring retreat, interim CFO Chuck Thomas laid out four scenarios for consideration. And after an initial idea to hold the line on tuition was found to create a \$600,000 deficit for the college, the board settled on the second path.

"That would offer students the option of paying the current year's tuition if they registered early," Thomas said of the second plan. "This would encourage students to register early, commit to

their programs ahead of time and get marching through school at a good pace."

College officials estimated that 80 percent of returning students would take advantage of early registration rates for Fall 2013 and maintain rates from 2012.

Proposing a \$2 increase for in-district students, \$4 for out-of-district and \$6 for out-of-state in Fall 2013, Plan B found a consensus and will be voted on by the board at its March 26 meeting.

Trustees were concerned with WCC's declining enrollment as a major factor in tuition rates and hoped the increase in tuition could create more revenue for the college. They also justified that a zero increase for early registration, by July 1, could help enrollment by encouraging



Mark Freeman

earlier academic commitments.

"I have always been a person, since I've been on the board, trying to keep tuition low or to lower tuition," said Trustee Diana McKight-Morton.

"But I feel because of the uncertainty that's coming, that we don't know what those are, we're in a good spot but it doesn't feel like we are with declining student enrollment."

"I just feel that (plan B) is a good plan. Without having any revenue coming in, especially Plan A could hurt us. I don't want to cut off our nose to

TUITION
CONTINUED A3

Students to get lower fitness club fees

By BEN SOLIS
Editor

Washtenaw Community College's Board of Trustees voted to lower the student Health and Fitness Center membership rate from \$160 per semester to \$140, an action that could result in a \$30,000

shortfall in revenue per semester for the facility.

The change reflects a \$5 decrease in the four-part monthly payment plan offered to students, altering the monthly dues from \$40 to \$35.

The changes will be introduced as a pilot program for the 2013 Spring-Summer and Fall semesters, and will

be reassessed by trustees in November for any necessary modifications. Other changes in the proposed amendment include lowering the non-credit monthly membership rate from \$45 to \$43.

HFC
CONTINUED A3



PRZEMEK OZOG THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Pricey fitness: The WCC Health and Fitness Center, located across the street from the Student Center, offers all the gym amenities students would expect to see after paying \$140 for a semester membership.

wmich.edu/GoWest

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WCC’s economic impact study projects some big numbers

By KELLY BRACHA
Staff Writer

The total economic impact of Washtenaw Community College is estimated at \$379.6 million within the region it serves, according to an analysis presented to the college’s Board of Trustees at its recent bi-annual retreat.

That number represents 2.1 percent of the total regional economy and roughly 7,100 “average-wage jobs,” according to Michelle Mueller, associate vice president of Economic and Community Development,

The comprehensive analysis was created with the help of Economic Modeling Specialists International using two types of analyses, an investment analysis and an economic growth analysis.

“The investment analysis looked at education funding as an investment, in which they view it from the perspective of students, tax payers and society in general,” Mueller said. “An economic growth analysis measures added income in the region due to college operations, spending and accumulated skills of past and present students in the workforce.”

To conduct the study, the economic impact is calculated based off of the school’s tax-paying district.

“Our constituents have to see a return on their investment,” Mueller said.

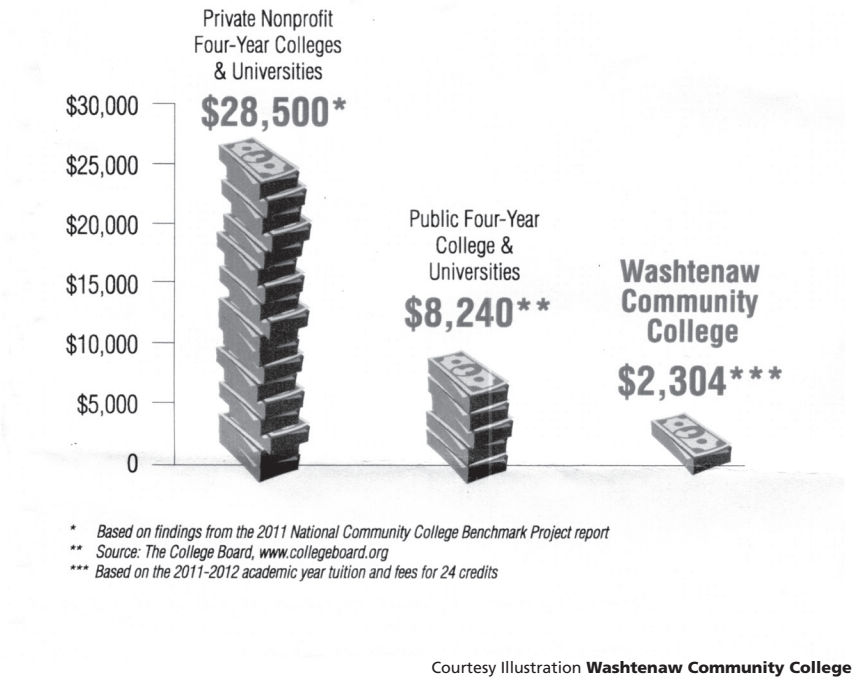
According to the report, higher earnings of WCC students and associated increases in state income expand the tax base in Michigan by about \$58.6 million each year. Michigan will also see avoided social costs amounting to \$3.7 million per year due to improved health, reduced crime, welfare and unemployment.

WCC served 34,095 students in the 2011-12 reporting year, and the college estimates that the average income at the career midpoint of someone with an associate’s degree in the WCC service area is \$49,400.

Mueller expressed that for her personally, these stats matter.

“As a parent, I want to have my child get a job locally. The economic impact here creates an opportunity for job creation.”

Students who attend WCC pay **thousands less** in tuition than those who begin their educational career at four-year institutions.



‘Average income at the career midpoint of someone with an associate degree in the WCC service area is \$49,400.’

- WCC economic impact study

This is why Mueller and Board Chair Ann Williams agree that this information needs to be well-advertised by the college.

“I think we should share this information with the students,” Williams said. “It really shows the benefits of staying in college and receiving an associate degree, not only to the student, but to the economy.”

Williams suggested that if students could see the effect of attending college at WCC, it would further motivate them to obtain a degree.

“By choosing to go to school, it’s helping the community,” Williams said. “This is the overall result of the

Productivity Effect

- The WCC Service Area economy embodies an estimated **2.4 million** credits that have accumulated over the past 30-year period as thousands of former WCC students enter the workforce.

Total Effect

\$379.6 MILLION
IS THE SUM TOTAL ANNUAL IMPACT ON THE WCC SERVICE AREA

Courtesy Illustration Washtenaw Community College

economic impact. This is going to make a difference.”

Some of Mueller’s stats showed student spending effects, indicating that about 33 percent of WCC students come from outside the region. Expenditures of the college’s non-local students generate roughly \$5.6 million in added income in its service area each year, she said.

TUITION FROM A1

spite our face.”

Trustee Mark Freeman explained that in order to maintain viability in academic programs, in light of declining enrollment and subsequent revenue reductions, more funds are needed to be brought to the college – in the form of tuition.

Freeman referred to “terminal” programs such as nursing as providing many returning students that will be grateful for maintaining their rates from last year.

“Once you’re in, they’ve got you on a track; they want to keep you going,” Freeman said of nursing and other intensive programs. “This way, those people know exactly what to sign up for and exactly what they want in the fall and that spares them some of that pain.”

Some trustees also hoped that greater convenience afforded by a frozen tuition rate for in-district

students would gain them political favor among county voters.

“I was hoping not to raise tuition this year if we could get away with it,” said Trustee Stephen Gill. “But early registration does help; at least we’re not raising it on the people that are already in the program. I can support Plan B.”

Trustees did acknowledge that the early registration benefit will look better to voters, and also hoped to cut costs in the classroom as well.

“We are always being cognizant of the voters and how generous they have been with us. If there’s a way we can keep in-district at zero, I think that’s a huge benefit,” said Trustee Patrick McLean. “But a dollar is a dollar whether you spend it on a text book or tuition.”

“There are class costs that go beyond tuition; there’s some real room for savings there.”

Referring to electronic text books and other technological advancements

students have memberships with the HFC. If that group of students shifts to the new fee structure, the proposal indicated, the facility could lose \$30,000 each semester if the change is made permanent. Because of the reduced membership in Spring-Summer, the college could suffer a higher estimated loss of \$75,000 per year.

The only measure acting against the predicted loss in revenue is the hope that more students register for the PEA 115 course.

Although she aggressively led the charge for lower rates beginning last year, when she was chair of the board, Trustee Pamela Horiszny said it was never her intention to affect a financial loss on the Fitness Center in the pursuit of offering cheaper access to students.



Pamela Horiszny

According to the amendment proposal given to the trustees at their March 6 meeting, the financial impact of modifying the rates is “difficult to gauge, as the number of students who will take advantage of the new rate is unknown.”

At present, approximately 1,500

HFC FROM A1

Students enrolled in the half-credit PEA 115 physical fitness course will not be affected by the changes and the price for the course will remain at \$160.

SNIPS

Dr. Jill Biden for an honorary associate degree?

By KELLY BRACHA
Staff Writer

College officials are hoping to offer Vice President Joe Biden’s wife, Jill, an honorary associate degree in Community Service at this year’s commencement. Only problem is, they can’t seem to reach her.

Dr. Jill Biden, who teaches English at a community college at North Virginia Community College, is Washtenaw’s top choice for the degree, but as of last Tuesday they had not been able to get a response from her.

“We’ll see where that goes,” Wendy Lawson, vice president of Advancement Foundation told the college’s board of trustees at their retreat last Tuesday. “We recognize that it might be a little bit of a reach.”

Trustees began soliciting ideas for who else may be considered for the honorary degree.

“Think of folks that would be great role models,” Lawson said. “Think of someone in the community with a significant reputation. Get creative.”

Campus could be crawling with kids this summer

By MARIA RIGOU
Staff Writer

Starting in May, Washtenaw Community College will offer summer camps for children and teens in grades K-12.

“The board has put together some very intensive summer programs,” said Rose Bellanca, WCC’s president, at the Board of Trustees’ spring retreat.

These programs are designed so that students of all ages can do fun and constructive activities over the summer.

“We’re trying to get our students younger and younger,” said Wendy Lawson, vice president of Advancement Foundation. “If your friends and neighbors ask about summer camps, we have them.”

Camps are divided according to age groups.

The Camp Invention program immerses elementary school children in hands-on, creative problem-solving activities. Camp Invention is a nationally acclaimed program that stimulates children in a variety of ways, including experimenting to prove theories, role-playing and case-scenario situations.

For this age group, there is also something called “College for Kids.” The programs are designed for students from grades K-8 and include acting, improvisation, guitar, pottery and drawing camps.

Older students who are currently in grades 9-12 can either take summer enrichment courses like ACT preparation, improvisation and acting and finance classes or the “career academies” courses, which help students to learn about in-demand career fields and develop skills needed for academic and career success.

“The career academy camps) will be focusing on advanced manufacturing,” said Linda Blakey, vice president of Student and Academic Services. “This will give them a background on career areas.”

“We haven’t had specific career camps like these,” Lawson added.

Registration begins March 25 though the Lifelong Learning website. For more information call 734-477-8942 or email youth.activities@wccnet.edu.

SECURITY NOTES

CSS resolves crime-reporting ‘glitch’

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

After more than a week of being unavailable, incident reports are available again at Washtenaw Community College.

Computer problems were resolved on the evening of Friday, March 1, but reports were not made public until the following Monday, March 4.

When reporters paid a visit to the school’s security office last month, the crime log hadn’t been updated for more than 10 days due to problems with the school’s computer database, according to Director of Safety and Security Jacques

Desrosiers.

“We’re switching reporting software over,” he said on Feb. 28. “There are glitches that we’re working through with the vendor.”

Without an update, even when no crime occurred, since Feb. 16, Campus Security was in violation of the Clery Act, which mandates that updates must be made public every 48 hours.

The Clery Act is a federal regulation. Each time a college is found in contradiction of the law it can be fined \$27,500.

Staff Writer Anna Elias contributed to this report

Art gallery incident

A miniature speaker was reported stolen from Gallery One, where a ceramic head was also damaged. The incident happened on Oct. 27, 2012 at 11:38 a.m., but Campus Security wasn’t notified until March 4.

Green means stop

A false alarm was triggered in the counseling department on March 11 at 12:25 p.m. in SC 206. According to security officials, someone accidentally triggered a green-button or panic alarm.

iTheft

An iPod was reported stolen from the first floor of the Student Center near Garrett’s on March 13 at 5:35 p.m.

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Always Listening

EDITORIAL

Faculty union, president and trustees: we’re counting on you

A silent hush fell over attendees at a recent meeting of Washtenaw’s Board of Trustees, as David Fitzpatrick, chief negotiator to the college’s faculty union, began to air serious grievances directed at the board and WCC President Rose Bellanca.

Internal problems at WCC that had been rumored for months and talked about behind closed doors had now boiled over into the public domain, and recently came to a head with the firing of Vice President of Instruction Stuart Blacklaw.

Fitzpatrick spoke delicately about problems in communication between himself and other union members when attempting to work together with college officials.

He felt that his ability to communicate within his own chain of command had faltered along with any ability to cooperate directly with administrators, all the way up to the president’s office.

When Fitzpatrick concluded his remarks, he optimistically quoted an email from union President Jennifer Baker sent to Dr. Bellanca the previous week.

Baker expressed similar concerns and worried about the cancellation of last month’s board meeting, an essential public forum that brings together administration and instructors to discuss changes to the college.

“We love this college,” Baker said in the email. “I am asking you personally, on behalf of the faculty and the staff, and the county citizens who elected you and who you represent, to address the issue our institution is currently facing.”

All trustees stood firm in their decision to hire Bellanca, almost two years ago.

They made clear that they were previously unaware of any problems between WCC’s president and the union.

As board members delivered their responses, in some cases emotionally defending a president they hired, it became clear that a wall had been built.

How could the teachers, the most important employees to the objective of any school, be in such direct opposition to the views of the college’s administration and governing body?

As students, we’re not sure what the problem is. And we have no interest in picking sides in this confrontation. All we can do is go to class, keep our heads down and try to learn. But as people paying good money for a degree at a renowned college, we do have our stakes in this fight.

And to say that we, the students, love this place too would be an understatement. We need this place.

We don’t just hope the communication breakdown will be resolved, our futures depend on it. It’s hard to even imagine the detriment that a vote of no confidence would create for student and teachers alike, and what damage its rumor has already caused in past weeks.

We ask that college officials and teachers work together to come to a resolution before everything that past employees, from top officials to part-time teaching assistants, have worked for comes crashing down.

Work it out now. Thousands of students’ futures are on the line and they are counting on you.

COMMENTS FROM THE WEB

Posted on the story *VP Blacklaw fired*

‘Hey Trustees, are you sorry you didn’t check references now? How much more damage will you allow before you do the right thing and end the reign of ineptitude.’
~ **ROB**

‘I hope the Board of Trustees are paying attention to the fact that EVERYONE on campus IS NOT HAPPY with the new president and her decisions. This last decision just goes to show just how divided the college has become under this new dictatorship. Us students, the faculty, and staff may not get to make the deciding factor in who our college President is but WE DO IN FACT VOTE ON THE BOARD MEMBERS AND WE WILL REMEMBER THIS COME THE NEXT ELECTION! WE ARE PAYING ATTENTION!!!!’
~ **KITTEN**

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One huge leap for Latinos, also a huge step for mankind?

“As he was praying in San Damiano church, he heard Christ on the crucifix speak to him, ‘Francis, repair my Church.’”
From the life of Saint Francis of Assisi

By MARIA RIGOU

The news bulletin about the white smoke came to me on my iPhone as I sat down to take a quiz in journalism class. Appropriately enough, it was from my app of The Associated Press, the world’s largest news-gathering organization.

The world had a new pope – and Latin America would never be the same.

Nor would I.

For the first time this millennium, a pope from a non-European country

revealed himself from the balcony of St. Peter’s Church in Vatican City. Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who served as archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina – my country – was elected by College of Cardinals to serve as the 266th pope of the Catholic Church, a church that faces so many challenges.

His election follows the stunning resignation of Benedict XVI, something that hadn’t happened since the year 1415.

Before and during the papal conclave, I wasn’t optimistic that a cardinal from my country would be chosen. But I knew one thing though: I was rooting for a Latin-American pope.

So I rushed through the quiz and turned the computer on, searching for a news portal that was streaming live from the Vatican. This was a good exercise in breaking-news journalism. And just for the record, CNN was far behind on this story.

I refreshed my screen every 30 seconds to see if there was progress, if the name of the new pope was being reported.

I had never experienced such an intense papal election. I knew Bergoglio was second or third favorite, behind

the frontrunner from Italy. So I was more interested and alert about this story than usual. But I have to admit, I still wondered if my church was completely ready for a Latin pope. I was betting on the Italian, Cardinal Scola.

Yet there, on the balcony, was Pope Francis I, a man from Argentina. I think about it and I can only partially believe it. Every time I say his name, I get goose-bumps.

Immediately after his naming came phone calls and texts from friends and family members. Facebook and Twitter exploded with the news.

This is all they are talking about back home. And it is all they will be talking about for days, even weeks.

The pope is from Argentina.

Francis was elected after much deliberation. It took five tries, but it was all worth it. This man, the leader of the Catholic Church, is from the Americas.

In a world with 1.2 billion Catholics – 40 percent of whom live in Latin America – this *has* to be significant.

It also means that Latin Americans are capable – and this is good for a church that so badly needs healing.

So yes, this is huge for us, everywhere.

With sincerest gratitude – and a few words of advice about giving

By BENJAMIN KNAUSS

The power of generosity, especially when it is from strangers, is amazing. My faith in mankind has been strengthened many times over during the past month, in my time of need. The giving of others has touched my soul in many ways, but not every act of kindness left me in a better situation.

After losing everything in an apartment fire last month, I have been the recipient of many examples of great charity, and I owe lots of people a debt of gratitude.

The last thing I want is for anyone to think that I am not grateful for all the acts of kindness bestowed upon me, I just want to take the opportunity to share what it can be like on the receiving end of some not-so-great donations and give donors something to think about.

Some people just do not have a “filter” for what can be seen as generosity or an insult by the person on

the receiving end. I have even been a part of a few situations that left me questioning if the gift being given was out of generosity or just a way to get some unwanted items carried out of the house by someone else.

I had to deal with a bed that was reported to be in great shape and practically brand new. I found the bed in a junk filled basement with a strong smell of cat urine and mold. The mice droppings where enough of a sign that I was wasting my time, the floor of my apartment would be better than this.

The owners of the bed said that if I did not want the bed they were going to throw it on the burn pile and seemed insulted that I did not want to take the bed with me. I was insulted they would even think to offer it to anyone, let alone someone in need.

In dealing with yet another bed, I got to take a pee and mystery stained mattress off the hands of an owner. If it was not for the bed frame that I did want, I would not have taken it at all. This bed’s owner was smiling and feeling great about helping out some unfortunate people, never once acknowledging the reality of the mattresses condition.

You would’ve thought this person was donating a bed gently used by the Royal Family.

Clothing donations have been an

adventure as well. Again, I am sure everyone was giving with an honest and caring gesture, but clothes that are only in style around the retirement communities should have stayed in a closet other than mine.

The items donated more than anything else have been toiletries. It seems like the one thing no one thinks about is the one thing everyone thinks about. I have a bathroom closet now stocked so well it rivals a drug store.

I love how thoughtful everyone has been when it comes to this stuff except for the half-used bottles. An open bottle just leaves too many questions in my mind.

I know I have done it myself without even realizing what I was doing. I stand over a box of items and think to myself “someone can use this stuff.” I don’t want to just throw the stuff away; I still believe it is good stuff. I don’t buy or own trash after all.

The box sits around for a few more months as I ponder if I should try and sell the stuff on eBay or if I should just take it to a donation center. Finally, I drop everything off and part ways with it believing I am doing some good. The reality is I just made my problem someone else’s.

For more information about giving visit washtenawvoice.com

Faculty communication clamped down

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

College administrators shut down an essential communications tool used by faculty in the wake of Vice President of Instruction Stuart Blacklaw’s abrupt firing.

The day after Blacklaw was relieved of all duties at WCC, a memo was sent out at 11:21 a.m. Friday from Director of Curriculum Assessment Joy Garrett, Friday to all the chairs that the use of their email list server had been discontinued. Department chairs were left to communicate internally direct email messages to their staff.

On Wednesday, however, instructors were told by administrators that a communication failure between Blacklaw and faculty resulted from a computer “glitch.”

When he attempted twice to release information about a monthly-scheduled general faculty meeting, his emails were not received by their intended recipients.

Blacklaw turned to the faculty union’s email server to announce the 3:30 p.m. meeting for Thursday and just one hour after the meeting concluded at 4:15 p.m., faculty and staff were notified of his firing via email from the college president’s office.

“I think there was a glitch,” Blacklaw said in an email to faculty

on Thursday. “Jennifer (Baker, union president) provided these avenues, so I’m keeping my fingers crossed.”

The union believed that the correspondence was interrupted on purpose. When they attempted to contact Blacklaw on the school server, the day of his departure they received no response.

“Usually we get an email the day before our regular staff meetings with an agenda,” said Rosemary Rader, chemistry instructor and chair of the college assessment committee. “The day of (the meeting) we received a forwarded email from Stuart saying ‘I think there was a glitch.’”

But according to Chief Information Officer Amin Ladha, there was no malfunction. The server was temporarily shut-down in light of excessive, public use, he said. Any connection with Blacklaw’s departure, Ladha said, was a coincidence.

“I was not asked to do anything to stop messages from the list server,” he said of allegations of interference. “This had nothing to do with Stuart. We’re not trying to curtail anyone from communicating.”

The decision to turn off the faculty email group was made by Director of Systems Administration and Information Technology Services Michael Aldrich, as IT’s servers had become deluged with correspondence unrelated to the college via the

faculty’s private email group.

“Someone made it public earlier this week,” Aldrich said of the private server. “It turned out there were so many people using it at the college that we weren’t aware of. I renamed it. It got out in the open, and we had to change it.

“It was a coincidence that it happened in the same week as Stuart Blacklaw’s departure. There were a lot of complaints. It could’ve happened anytime.”

The IT department was contacted by Executive Director of Public Relations and Marketing Anessa Carlisle to reinstate the email group at 11 a.m. on Friday, but notification did not reach faculty until 1:02 p.m.

The PR department would work to develop a new policy in the meantime, Ladha said.

“From here on, we need to better communicate,” Ladha said. “What is the process? That has to come from marketing. You always have a gatekeeper.”

Faculty members attempted to contact Blacklaw shortly after notification of his firing was given, but the former administrator’s email contact had been eliminated.

“It’s like he never existed,” Rader said.

Editor Ben Solis contributed to this report

Always Listening



‘Francis, repair my church’: The new pope blesses the masses gathered in the Piazza Saint Pietro, Vatican City. MCT COURTESY PHOTO

Voice Box

INTERVIEWS AND PHOTOGRAPHS **MICHAEL J. HLYWA** *STAFF WRITER*

With the college raising the cost per credit-hour by \$2 for in-district, \$4 for out-of-district and \$6 for out-of-state students starting this Fall semester, what is your reaction to the tuition increase? Does it help knowing that early registration guarantees the current rates for fall term?

JASMINE GLOVER
21, Ypsilanti, Physical Therapy



"I used to go to Eastern, so anything that's still cheaper than going there is fine with me. So if you register early, you get to keep the same (rate)? Oh, yeah, I'm registering early!"

KIRIN QIDWAI
30, Canton, Human Resources



"I'm okay with it because it is not a lot. Obviously it gives us more incentive. I used to go to Eastern and their credits are like \$350 per one credit, so if it's only a couple of dollars more then it's still way cheaper than there."

KYLE JACOBS
23, Tecumseh, Business Management



"As long as it is being used in a useful manner, I don't really see a problem with it. It's not really too much money to increase it by, but as long as it's for something good then I'm down for it. I guess that'll just give more people a reason to get it done earlier. I could see maybe that'll initiate more people to pre-register."

ETHAN BURT
19, Ypsilanti, Retail Management



"Well they're small changes you wouldn't notice at first, but in the long run they make a big difference. Would these increases be a sign of allowing future increases, which would be a big long-run change? I'm kind of wondering why the sudden

increase — what's it supposed to really cover? If you're taking 13 credits per semester, you're really not going to notice it. But if you want to save a couple of bucks in the long run and avoid future increases, pay attention to the issue, and see what you can do to prevent this increase. That's definitely an incentive to promise that to students, but I think the increases themselves are coming from the loans given to students affecting tuition across the board for all colleges, because it's money being promised to them that isn't necessarily based off of the capital of the college."

LYZA MUCKLER
23, Milan, Dietician



"It doesn't sound like the worst thing as long as it doesn't go up each year, because it sounds really small for the time being. But if that kept increasing and increasing over time, I could see that being an issue. "Only current students? I could see how it might be unfair, but I think it's always like that at colleges how current students have some sort of advantages anyway. I don't see a huge problem with that."

AMANDA PRUITT
26, Pinckney, Elementary Education



"It's crazy. Even though I'm not paying for school right now, it is crazy. It doesn't seem like they should be charging so much for people who want to learn for something that's just by district. Anybody can go to a community college. There shouldn't be a fee no matter where you live. A lot of people are coming from Dundee and beyond — coming here to go to school. They have to spend so much on gas, and gas goes up every other day. To charge people a silly fee for district, it's kind of stupid. "It makes sense to, but at the same time it's very confusing. Because when I was registering today, they were like, 'Oh, you can register now.' I know what I need to take for my program, but at the same time I don't know what I'm going to be taking. It seems like they're trying to rush everyone to get in and get out. But me, I need to take my time or pretty much fail."

UNION FROM A1

am asking you personally, on behalf of the faculty, and the staff, and the county citizens, who elected you and who you represent, to address the issue our institution is currently facing."

Aside from the communication breakdowns, faculty had been worried since January about the future of former Vice President of Instruction Stuart Blacklaw, who was fired on Thursday. Other topics weighing on the minds of faculty, and not addressed in the public forum, include the sudden resignation of the college's Vice President of Administration and Finance Steven Hardy in late November.

Both situations have left the faculty union with unanswered questions, adding to the communication complaints issued before trustees.

And while this formal interaction marks the first time trustees have been made publicly aware of the union's distress, each trustee defended Bellanca, her goals and actions thus far — and most of all their decision to hire her.

"I feel that in this point in time, my support has been and will always

be with this president, Dr. Bellanca," said Trustee Diana McKnight-Morton in an emotional appeal to the union. "Dr. Bellanca came to this table, in our interviews from the board, from the campus community, very honest, very forthright in what she had to say and what she would do for this campus and for us to be in the 21st Century. If there are any issues, I feel that we're big people, and we know how to talk. All of this mud-slinging, and what's going into the newspaper at *The Voice*, we need to say 'let's see if we can come to the table and try to work something out,' because at this point in time, we need everybody's cooperation."

In her own brief defense, Bellanca acknowledged the issues that now face her and the instructors and vowed to address it.

"I'd like to thank the board for your support, and I will do my best to continue to collaborate with the faculty, staff and students and I know that we can work together to resolve whatever it is we have to," Bellanca said. "We may have differences in communication, but we all have the same end in mind."

MARIO OCHOA
20, Chicago, Auto Body Repair



"I know my parents live by Muskegon, so my first semester I had to pay the out-of-district, and I had to find a place here to move to — at least for the week — because it cut my tuition in half. I wouldn't like it to increase. I think my first semester here was like \$2,200, and my second semester here I moved to Ypsi. That pretty much got cut in half, like \$1,600. I think that's a good idea. I have to take advantage of that."

DEVAUGHN ROLAX
22, Ypsilanti, Culinary Arts



"I guess I will come to school, but most kids won't come. They're paying too much now. Keeping it the same makes it more easier for students to come to school. New students may be very disappointed with prices and make them not want to come back here."

STORM CICHON
19, Ypsilanti, Orthodontic Medicine



"Honestly it's not that much. I take 16 credit hours, so there's \$32 extra I'd have to pay out-of-pocket. And most teenagers nowadays live on their own, so they have to pay bills besides tuition. They've cut down on grants a lot, too, so we don't have as much money that we could get to pay for school. That \$32 could go towards gas to getting here. So I don't believe they should raise it at all; I actually think they should lower it. "I believe that's good for the students that come here — who have been here before. But for the students who are coming in, it's not fair to them, especially because they're just fresh out of high school. Most of them don't understand how college works yet. So they're going to have to pay more for a place they don't know much about."

Trustees worry about overspending

By **ADRIAN HEDDEN**
Managing Editor

Washtenaw's Board of Trustees aired concerns for \$400,000 given to "institutional objectives" — a category primarily opened to fund the strategic planning initiatives instituted by President Rose Bellanca.

"Is there no way to cost it out or it is just an unknown cost?" asked Trustee Diana McKnight-Morton of a lack of information in how the \$400,000 will be spent. "How did you come to that number?"

But Bellanca responded that the ambiguity of the funding is its essence. "For me, that's one of the most important categories because it's all about the future," Bellanca said. "To cut costs in innovation is cutting into your future, so that's why that area is extremely important."

"That's where our strategic plan comes in and funding for the new initiatives."

She continued that the fund was established to respond to departmental requests, mainly instruction, to further their programs using new technologies and teaching concepts they need to reach the objectives of the strategic plan, per their own research.

"Every initiative is different," Bellanca said. "Some people ask for brochures, others want to get on a social network. They're all very different. Some may need \$1,000 and some might need \$20,000. I don't know."

"And that's going to vary because next year it might all be different so that's why we can't give just an accurate number. We felt this number we could fit into our budget. I don't recall how we figured it out."

But trustees still wondered how the funding of \$400,000 was decided on for the strategic plan.

"So it was kind of a stab in the dark," McKnight-Morton said in response the vague number.

"A smart stab...", responded Bellanca. "...An educated stab."

BUDGET FROM A1

projecting that to decrease."

But Thomas commended the school for continuing to function despite an annual drop in state aid. Looking back to a peak in 2002, he said there has been no increase in government-allocated funds to WCC and that the school is receiving \$6 million less, not adjusted for inflation, than it was 11 years ago.

"If this was adjusted for inflation, we'd be in the double digits," said Trustee Richard Landau.

Thomas also said that the school has experienced a 26-percent increase in enrollment since 2002 and, despite reductions in state aid, has continued to flourish.

"This is an amazing statistic," he

said. "It's to the credit of community colleges everywhere that can maintain their service to their communities in the face of this. The college is growing and very healthy. Overall the trend is up."

But WCC's faculty community is on the decline. Fillinger reported that the biggest savings the school can expect are due to 20 vacant instructor positions caused by low enrollment.

"Our biggest empty pot is faculty," she said.

But non-personnel spending, Fillinger said, will be maintained from last year's allocation, a facet of the budget she said she watches carefully.

"There really hasn't been much of an increase, they've maintained relatively flat," she said. "That's something

we watch very closely to make sure things don't skyrocket."

But although a 15-percent decline in funds taken for a furniture-replacement plan were reported in WCC's general fund budget projection and planned for the 2012-13 year, a 507-percent increase from \$28,820 to \$175,000 was reported between last year and the previous.

Comparisons between WCC and other schools for 2012-13, however, show that Washtenaw is one of the lowest-spending schools in terms of administration expenditures.

"Everyone is concerned that we're not spending too much on administration," Thomas said. "We're one of the lowest. It speaks highly of WCC."

this year.

"I think we were fairly clear that this was a priority for us," said Trustee Stephen Gill of the resolution. "I hope we can protect those dollars."

Other trustees were concerned at the dramatic drop in funds for campus repairs and maintenance, hoping that cuts could be made elsewhere.

"I think if we do 800 (thousand) that's a lot better than what we have been doing but we do have that

resolution out there that we passed," said Trustee Pamela Horiszny, regarding the board's deferred maintenance plan. "The campus maintenance and repair number has really been pared back."

Budget specialist Barb Fillinger explained that cuts had to be made to keep overall expenses consistent with last year.

"We started with the scenario that we'd zero out," she said of the budget.

"In order to keep the other costs rather flat, we had to pull back somewhere and we took it out of campus repair and maintenance."

Horiszny suggested that savings could be made in non-personnel expenses, which saw little change this year. She worried that reducing the maintenance budget will fail to address the necessary problems with the physical campus itself.

"We have to be realistic about

needs," she said. "And for campus repair and maintenance to drop \$337,000 is a lot of money."

Fillinger responded that in April, budget hearings will take place in which each department will have the right to make requests for the reallocation of funds.

"We do try to move funds around per the requests," she said of the hearings. "There will be movement between the categories."



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Administration takes ax to deferred maintenance

By **ADRIAN HEDDEN**
Managing Editor

A resolution passed last year by the board mandated that \$4 million would be put into a fund for deferred maintenance and that \$1 million would be spent annually for next three years before reassessing.

But financial planners pulled back on that expense, allotting only \$800,000 for deferred maintenance

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VP INTRUCTION FROM A1

faculty union in a scheduled monthly meeting.

“Of course it happened during the WCCEA meeting. They did everything they could to not handle anything professionally,” said graphic design instructor Kristine Willimann. “He’s out immediately, which a nice way to say he’s fired.”

Blacklaw had concluded the meeting just one hour before Bellanca sent out the announcement, via email, that Blacklaw had been “relieved of his duties effective immediately.”

WCCEA President Jennifer Baker was bitterly disappointed by the decision as well, asserting that Blacklaw was one of the most respected VPs ever at the college.

“We don’t support this at all,” she said somberly. “It was less than ideal. I think it’s fair to say that this institution has not had a VP of instruction that has more support from faculty.

“That’s all I have to say.”

Teachers were certain that the WCCEA would take a stance against the change in personnel that they felt they’ve had little say in despite continuous attempts to collaborate with the president’s office.

“We’ve been asking for clarification on this position,” said biology instructor David Wooten as he and other union members congregated near Blacklaw’s office hoping to say goodbye after the decision – in vain.

Blacklaw was already gone.

“And we’ve been getting the run-around,” Wooten added.

The only clarification faculty received came in the form of Bellanca’s email.

“This decision was reached after long and careful consideration,” Bellanca wrote. “As president, building a team with the necessary leadership skills is critical to the success of the college.”

The union was not impressed.

“What a cowardly move,” said chemistry instructor Kathy Butler. “This is at the very least not supported by the union.”

Abernethy was unavailable for comment, and VP of Human Resources Douglas Kruzal deferred questions to the college’s public relations office.

Blacklaw preferred to only recall the good times from his three-year tenure at the college.

“Washtenaw is an awesome place. There are faculty members here who are truly the best I have ever seen – and I have been in this business for 27 years,” Blacklaw told The Voice, Friday. “There are amazing people here who just somehow reach students and inspire them.

“I love that. I am excited by that. I think there is no greater achievement as an academic leader than to help faculty do their work – give them the tools they need, the support they need and the encouragement they need to do great things. Washtenaw’s faculty do great things.”



Speaking to excellence: Former Vice President of Instruction Stuart Blacklaw speaks to WCC students, family members and staff at the Honors Convocation held Jan. 24.

WCC down to two CFO finalists

President uncertain of timeframe, but interim help is gone

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

Since former Vice President of Administration and Finance Steven Hardy resigned suddenly in November, Washtenaw officials have been entrenched in the arduous process of replacing him. But last week they were confident of finding a successor soon.

“We’re at the final round of interviews,” WCC President Rose Bellanca said at a board retreat last Tuesday. “It’s going very well.”

In early December, Bellanca was confident she could have a new CFO in place by Jan. 22. But as mid-March approached, she was ambiguous regarding a target date for filling the position.

She said it depended on the

interview process tailored specifically to each candidate. She offered no information on either of two finalists from more than 50 applicants.

Meantime, Chuck Thomas, a 35-year employee at Macomb County Community College, where Bellanca once taught, has been filling in since November.

“There are always challenges in keeping the costs associated with education low,” he said. “But generally, things are well run.”

Thomas works on campus one day a week and has been available constantly by phone, according to Bellanca, who added that Thomas’ stint at WCC was nearing an end. He retired from Macomb in 2010.

“I knew Rose from back in those days,” Thomas said of his past at MCCC. “I know a couple people in the budget office. It’s been fun, but this week is about the end of it.

“That was one of my conditions in the first place.”

And despite the impending exit of the school’s interim CFO, the Board of Trustees deferred immediately to

Dr. Bellanca when asked about the job opening. Trustee Stephen Gill was indifferent to the vacancy, certain that Dr. Bellanca will take care of its replacement.

“The board is not concerned,” Gill said. “The president has it under control.”

And other trustee members are looking forward to the long-range vision that a permanent CFO could bring to the college. At the board’s March 12 retreat, budgeting information provided by Thomas projected trends spanning just one year.

“Once we have a new VP, we’ll start looking further out,” said Trustee Pam Horiszny.

Past reports have forecast up to 10 years to allow for adequate time in planning for changes. But trustees are wary that such long-term planning may be the victim of circumstance.

“We could have never predicted in 2007 what happened in 2008 and 2009,” said Trustee Richard Landau of a dramatic spike in enrollment and the ensuing challenges it produced. “Our projections were vaporized.”



Future discourse: WCC President Rose Bellanca discusses the future of the college, from the budget to student success, at the Board of Trustees’ spring retreat at Weber’s Inn on Jackson Road, last Tuesday.

Could library have a plan to relieve textbook cost woes?

By MICHAEL J. HLYWA
Staff Writer

For years, students have been clamoring for someone to do something about the cost of textbooks. Well, the college may finally be doing something about it – or at least it’s considering it.

At the March 6 meeting of the WCC Board of Trustees, Victor Liu, Dean of Learning Resources, delivered a presentation about Open Educational Resources, or OER, which encompasses free online media available to anyone – including students and faculty.

According to Liu, OER include e-books, e-textbooks and videos that are published under a Creative Commons license, which makes them flexible, accessible, and – best of all – low-cost or even free.



Victor Liu

“OER cover a lot of subject areas, and they can potentially serve as supplement to or replacement of student textbook requirements, and in the process lower the education costs for students,” Liu said in his address to the board.

Having just heard a different presentation that, among other things, revealed how restrictive purchasing textbooks with financial aid can be, Diana McKnight-Morton, the board’s vice chair, responded enthusiastically.

“I’m really encouraged because this is not too far away, for me, for students to be able to access free textbooks,” McKnight-Morton said.

Liu and his staff have been working hard over the past year to research, compile and publicize OER. The Bailey library website now contains information about OER and links to OER repositories.

“The field is so big, evolving so quickly and there are so many providers of e-resources out there that we felt that we needed to provide some structure, so that when people say, ‘I’m an instructor teaching ENG 111;

if I really want to find an alternative to an expensive print textbook, I need to know how to find those resources,’ and that’s what we have done so far.”

The next step, Liu said, is to get the administrators and faculty to collaborate on a trial course designed around the use of OER in lieu of print textbooks.

“I think that it’s the right time to do some sort of pilot and see how things go,” Liu said.

To further facilitate this process, Liu is sending his librarians to meet with faculty departments. During each meeting, the librarians will explore the department’s needs regarding text content. Armed with specifics, they will then compile a list of relevant OER and forward it on to the department for their consideration.

At that point, Liu thinks it’s up to the departments.

“There’s definitely a difference in the quality of the OER out there, no doubt about that,” he said. “Therefore, it’s very important for the faculty to make a determination about whether the author has the credentials to do it,

and, second, whether the content is appropriate for this particular course given the learning outcomes that they are aiming for.”

Liu acknowledges that redesigning an existing course around OER may be a laborious endeavor, but he is confident that the faculty is up to the task.

This week librarians are scheduled to sit down with the math department. For math professor Brenda Foster, whether to adopt OER comes down to two factors.

“We’re always very interested in saving money for our students,” Foster said. “We also want quality materials for our students at the best price, and if that best price is free then we would make the decision as a department to adopt that material.”

But what do students really want? Many, like business major Jordan Jones, 27, of Ann Arbor, already purchase e-books and would certainly appreciate the cost-savings of their OER counterparts.

“If I had access to download the book physically so I’m able to study without Internet access, or if I had

some type of DRM capabilities, I would definitely be interested in that,” Jones said.

But Liu calls the idea that everyone wants free e-books a “blanket statement.”

“It’s not as cut and dry as that,” Liu explained. “I think you always have a segment of the student population that gravitates toward e-books, while others gravitate toward print books.”

Kelly O’Neil, a 24-year-old occupational therapy student from Brighton, definitely agrees not everyone wants e-books. She routinely studies with an array of texts and notebooks spread out in front of her.

“I hate that I have to pay for books, but I like things that are really tangible. I have to have it in front of me, and I like to write in my book. I study better with the book,” O’Neil said.

So for tech-savvy students who prefer to breeze into class carrying only a tablet, OER may lighten the financial burden as well. But those who prefer the aroma of a stout textbook should continue to expect equally rich educational expenses.

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Surface tension: EMU student Michael Mioduszewski makes the first jump of the day. The event raised more than \$20,000 to benefit SOS Community Services in Ypsilanti.



Ice cold reception: EMU student Michael Mioduszewski exits the water after making the first jump of the day at the fifth annual Ford Lake Frozen Leap. The temperature Saturday was in the teens.

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY
CHARLES MANLEY
Staff Photographer

One hundred and twelve people leapt head-first, feet-first, sideways or upside down into icy cold water recently to raise money for charity. The fifth annual Ford Lake Frozen Leap had a successful run Friday, Feb. 15 with donations from participants totaling more than \$20,000. With temperatures in the mid-teens, those willing to make the leap didn't linger long in the shallow water before being helped out by rescue workers. Most of them were first-timers – for obvious reasons. Organizer Tim Adkins said almost no one makes the jump a second time. “But they always bring their friends in the next year,” he said. Adkins has made the jump himself. “People always ask me what it's like,” he said, “and I tell them it's like jumping into an ice cold lake.” Imagine that. But it's all for a great cause. Proceeds from the jump benefit SOS Community Services of Ypsilanti.



CANNON BALL!: Haden Quinn of Dexter jumps off the dock.

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SPOTLIGHT

THE WASHTENAW VOICE • SECTION B • MARCH 18, 2013

Science buddies

Students showcase their experiments in regional science fair



CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Lead to gold: Tappan Middle School student Thomas Larsen, 12, discusses his project with judges at the science fair.

By MARIA RIGOU
Staff Writer

From plant growth experiments to tests in what type of fabric absorbs sweat the best – all this and more in one place, and all in the name of science.

Washtenaw Community College was host to the 55th annual Southeast Michigan Science Fair on March 8-9. The event, sponsored by the University of Michigan, Washtenaw Community College and Southeastern Michigan Schools, was open to middle and high school students in Hillsdale, Lenawee, Livingston, Monroe and Washtenaw counties.

This event showcased student exhibits designed to show biological, engineering, chemical, physical or

mathematical principles.

Laboratory or logical procedures were explained along with industrial development and a collection of materials related to the broad concept of any branch of pure or applied science or mathematics.

Stephanie Sorter, a 12-year-old 7th-grader from Tappan Middle School in Ann Arbor, participated in the Experiment Life Science category, and was awarded 4th place for her experiment on how food affected growth on guppies.

“It was fun to do,” Sorter said. “It took me a few months, but I got 4th place.”

Exhibits were evaluated on the basis of originality, scientific thought, thoroughness, accuracy, workmanship and clarity of presentation.

“This is an event that has taken place annually for at least 50 years,” said Cinda-Sue Davis, fair director. “Anybody can enter the fair. A lot of these students come from their regional or school fairs, some are home-schooled students.”

Thomas Larsen, a 12-year-old student from Tappan Middle School in Ann Arbor, decided to participate in the fair after attending an Elementary Science Olympiad on straw towers.

“My teammate and I decided to join after going to the straw tower Olympiad,” Larsen said. “We are very interested in engineering and design.”

Larsen and his teammate, Thomas Borgers, also from Tappan Middle

SCIENCE FAIR
CONTINUED B4



CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Acoustic charm: A girl blows across the necks of a few bottles at a science fair display to produce different pitches.



THE GALLERY PROJECT COURTESY PHOTO

A Chalkboard's Thirst: A depiction of a cosmonaut in space by artist Ross Carlisle, created especially for the exhibition.



THE GALLERY PROJECT COURTESY PHOTO

No Difference: A collaborative project with Brad Gieske, “No Difference” is a reinterpretation of Eddie Adams’ famous 1968 photograph of a general executing a Vietcong soldier in the streets of Saigon. The idea portrayed by the artist is that if we treat fellow humans this way, what leads us to believe that we would treat aliens any differently.

AN ARTFUL FRONTIER

By ANNA ELIAS
Staff Writer

If reading a vintage mystery book you just bought at Aunt Agatha’s while getting your hair done at an environmentally-conscious salon isn’t hipster enough for you, then split the difference and critique themed artwork at an independent non-profit art gallery.

Gallery Project, located between Aunt Agatha’s New and Used Mysteries, Detection and True Crime Books and Aveda Salon on 4th Avenue, strives to “present themed exhibits that are culturally aware, individualistic, courageous and thought provoking,” according to the mission statement.

Founded by life partners and co-directors Rocco DePietro and Gloria Pritschet, Gallery Project opened its doors in 2005 to create a space to showcase art rather than artists, according to Pritschet.

“We’ve never wanted to represent an artist and their work and just try to sell it like a store would. And we’ve never wanted to just look at the medium for medium’s sake,” Pritschet said. “And those are two very valid reasons for galleries.”

Every year, DePietro and Pritschet

invite 8-12 artists to collaborate with the gallery for the year. They are selected based on their art, medium, geographic, academic and character backgrounds. For the year artists are on the Gallery Project team, they help brainstorm ideas for themes, serve on the jury for artwork submissions and otherwise make a difference in the project.

For each theme, some collaborators choose to do “extra work,” and because of that they are then named curator of that specific theme. Seder Burns, a lecturer of new media at University of Toledo, is the curator for the current theme, First Contact.

“I thought the idea was a good vehicle to address aspects of humanity, religion and our desire for salvation, and to do it in kind of a different approach,” Burns said. “It’s more than little green people.”

The art displayed for the theme of First Contact ranges from photographs to multimedia prints to large scale woodwork displays. In the basement, four videos are playing, with three running on a loop on one projector, and another short film constantly looping on the second.

Nestled amongst these

multi-dimensional works is a self-portrait by NASA’s Curiosity Rover arm camera. With the arm digitally removed, according to Pritschet, it leaves the guests wondering where the arm stemmed from on the rover, or whether there were other life forms that took the photo NASA claims is a self-portrait.

Artwork is represented in this show throughout the United States, including local artist Brian Spolans, from Ypsilanti, and a video from cross-country correspondent Kevin Margo of Venice, Calif.

Each artist is also able to say they shared gallery space with world-renowned Swiss surrealist, H.R. Giger. The first piece of artwork on the long wall perpendicular to the front window is a simple alien head titled “Playmate.”

“I can’t really tell if it’s an alien seductress or a product of human-alien relations. I’m not sure if something is going on,” Burns said.

Two homemade telescopes interrupt the multitude of photos and prints on the walls. While much of

GALLERY PROJECT
CONTINUED B4

Spanish teacher challenges students to take on the world—and they do

By MICHAEL J. HLYWA
Staff Writer

According to her reviews on rate-myprofessors.com, Nancy Ferrario, Spanish professor at Washtenaw Community College, is anything but easy, averaging 2.3 out of five in the “easiness” category. But this wife and mother of three who has been teaching language throughout the Midwest since 1971 knows well that anything worth doing requires hard work and tears.

It all began when Ferrario attended St. Louis University in St. Louis, Mo. and turned her childhood fascination with French into an academic pursuit.

“I was in the French club, which was a very serious club. We studied literature, read existential poetry and talked about very serious literary concepts,” Ferrario recalled.

On one day in Ferrario’s second year at college, her roommate, a Spanish major, invited Ferrario to a Spanish club meeting.

“There are all these young Latin Americans with their guitars and their drums and they sing, play music, eat, have fun, dance and I’m like, ‘Whoa! This is much more like my personality,’” Ferrario said.

She immediately spoke with her academic adviser and told him of her desire to change majors. But Ferrario had promised her father that she would complete her education in four years. Her adviser assured her it could be done in two years and began to lay out her schedule.

“Then he looked at me and said, ‘Of course, you do speak Spanish.’

I said, ‘Well, that’s the problem – not a word,’” Ferrario said.

In order to get her to the required proficiency level, Ferrario’s adviser recommended a summer program taught by his colleague in Guadalajara, Mexico.

So Ferrario went to Mexico, lived with a family there and attended six hours of class each day, all in an environment totally devoid of English.

“I had a roommate,” Ferrario continued. “She happened to be half American, half Uruguayan, who knew about my studying language, and she said to me, ‘How badly do you want to learn Spanish?’

“I said, ‘I have to go home and be able to handle upper division classes in Spanish.’ So she said, ‘Then I won’t speak to you in English one more word until the day we leave.’ And she didn’t.

“Even if I cried, she wouldn’t. She’d just tell me ‘don’t cry’ in Spanish. And I did cry – more than once – because it was frustrating. But I learned it.”

Not long after her time in Mexico, Ferrario got another opportunity to study abroad – this time in Spain.

“I went to Spain with all my Mexico experience tucked in thinking, this will be easy,” Ferrario admitted. “But I was in Europe and it was totally different. And, I was in Europe under a dictator when Franco was alive – this was in the early ’70s.”

From her time in Spain, Ferrario learned a great deal about the world by experiencing another culture, another society and another government. She learned what it was like to live in a dictatorship through the eyes of her peers.

Ferrario has taken numerous opportunities to study in Europe and Latin America both before and since accepting a full-time faculty position at WCC in 2001. These experiences have instilled a sense of global citizenship in Ferrario, which she strives to pass on to her students.

“We always think that we have so much to teach the world, we forget the world has a lot to teach us too, and I want my students to understand that,” Ferrario said. “I want to help my students become citizens of the world.”

“I want to help them open themselves to learning not just the language, but experiences, culture, understanding history and understanding what’s happening.”

Along with a passion for Spanish and fervor for educating, Michelle Garey, chair of the Foreign Language department and fellow Spanish professor, shares Ferrario’s global identity.

Garey feels that different cultures have slightly variant world views. By studying those cultures and learning their languages, people are able to gain a better understanding of humanity as well as an additional means to communicate with it.

“We both have a broader perspective of the world – different ways of seeing things by being fluent in another language that we wouldn’t have otherwise,” Garey said. “I think it gives you more neural plasticity. It makes you a little more flexible and a little more open.”

But Garey admits that getting

students to open themselves up to the benefits of learning a new language can be daunting. Fortunately, she says, Ferrario is the perfect woman for the job.

“She tries to make it fun, engaging and interesting without lowering the bar,” Garey continued. “She really maintains very high standards, but she doesn’t make them impossible. She makes them attainable; she’s going to take you there, but you’ve got to meet her half-way.

“She’s not going to spoon-feed you, and I respect that tremendously.”

Garey isn’t the only one who respects Ferrario’s tenacity, however. Gabe Porter, 20, of Ann Arbor, has been taking prerequisites at Washtenaw before transferring to University of Michigan. He took Ferrario’s Spanish classes and is glad he did.

“It might appear challenging initially, but you’ll be thankful if you stick with it,” Porter said. “You’ll actually learn a language, and you’ll feel good. I think she’s the best out of all the teachers I’ve had.”

Another of Ferrario’s students agrees. Cnar Ebrahimian is a 70-something Ann Arborite who graduated WCC in 1993. Now retired, Ebrahimian takes classes at Washtenaw for fun. She respects Ferrario’s expectation for discipline.

“There are rules that she sets and you have to follow, and that’s the way it goes. I think it is a student’s obligation to follow the rules that prevail in a class,” Ebrahimian said. “Foreign language is a hard subject, but her enthusiasm, the way she transfers the curriculum and her interaction with the student is wonderful.

“I have learned a lot from her.”

Clearly, hard work and passion are at the heart of Ferrario’s success as an educator. Ferrario embraced them when she herself was a student, and they continue to propel her through her 43-year teaching career. Even now, as Garey points out, Ferrario refuses to settle for second best.

“A lot of instructors at this point in their career would be jaded, complacent or re-using the same hand-outs for the last 15 years,” Garey said, “but she is constantly reinventing her classes. And that is what I respect her for so much.”

After reflecting on the tears of frustration in her youth that led to a long career of challenging students to realize their full potential, Ferrario concludes that it’s been a labor of love.

“I love what I do,” Ferrario said, “and that’s the truth.”



JOSEPH FERRARIO COURTESY PHOTO

Underground history: Ferrario standing in one of the tunnels beneath a coliseum in Merida, Spain in 2011.



JOSEPH FERRARIO COURTESY PHOTO

Historical beauty: Ferrario standing within the Alhambra, an eighth-century fortress that was converted to a palace in 1333, in Granada, Spain in 2011.



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An advertising campaign of The Washtenaw Voice

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Here’s how it works: For just \$25, advertisers secure a berth in the bracket, and they’re placed by a blind draw.

On Selection Sunday, the NCAA fills out its bracket.

We will have a random draw that will pair our advertisers with their teams. We will all follow the tournament for three weeks, with the full bracket published in *The Voice* in three consecutive issues.

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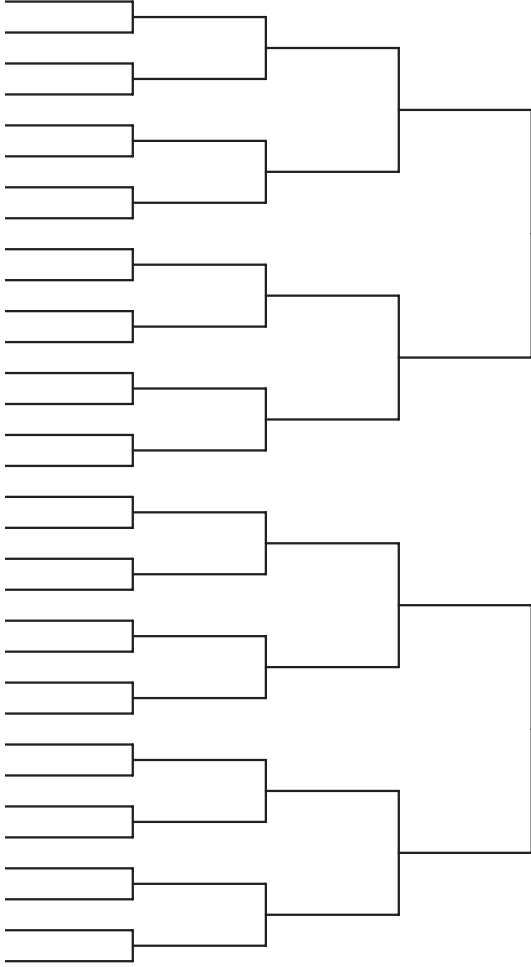
Four advertisers will win a chance at nearly \$1,100 worth of advertising

space in *The Voice*, prizes awarded on the following: the advertiser whose team wins the national championship gets a free full-page ad valued at \$534; the advertiser with the national runner-up gets a free half-page ad valued at \$300; and the advertisers who were paired with the other Final Four teams receive a free quarter-page ad valued at \$150 each.

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—Michigan Press Association Judge



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WINNER
1/2 page advertisement,
value: \$300

WINNER
Full page advertisement, value: \$534

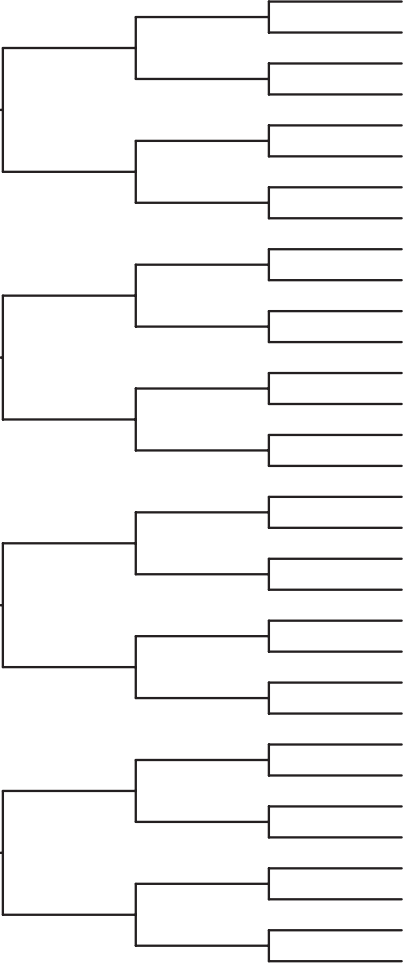
WINNER
1/2 page advertisement,
value: \$300

WINNER
1/4 page advertisement,
value: \$150

WINNER
1/4 page advertisement,
value: \$150



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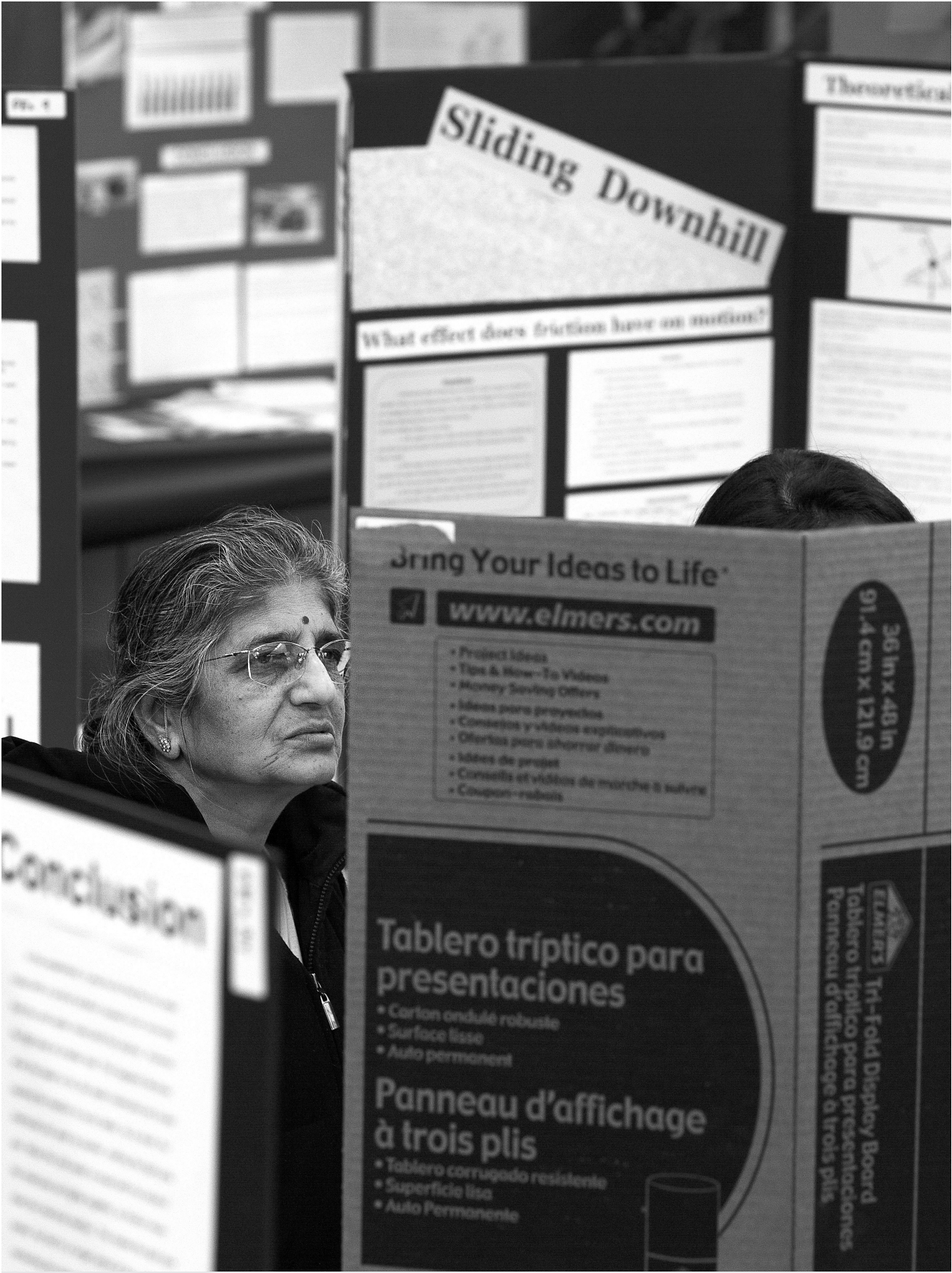


March 17: Selection Sunday
March 18: March ‘Ad’ness bracket, with advertisers, published in *The Voice*

March 19–20: Round One
March 21–22: Round Two
March 23–24: Round Three
March 24: March ‘Ad’ness bracket update published in *The Voice*

March 28–29: Sweet 16 Games
March 30–31: Elite 8 games
April 1: March ‘Ad’ness bracket update published in *The Voice*

April 6: Final Four, March Madness National Championship Game,
April 8: March Madness March ‘Ad’ness bracket published online and the winners announced
April 9: March ‘Ad’ness bracket published in *The Voice*, winners announced judge



Intensely focused: Radha Kulkarni, of Ann Arbor, reads over a science fair project.

CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE



CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Squirming method: Jacob Corvidae, of Ann Arbor, and his son Ansel open a plastic container in a science fair display about worms and compost.

SCIENCE FAIR FROM B1

School, presented a project that compared tower designs and measured how much weight each tower could hold.

“(By doing two straw towers) we found out that the tower designed with equilateral triangles supported 34 percent more weight than the right-angle triangle tower,” said Larsen. “We got 4th place in the Middle School team award. Maybe next year we will have a better experiment.”

This year’s fair featured about 350 participants, Davis said. “We had to

turn students away because we didn’t have the space for them,” she added.

Apart from the challenge, students receive cash rewards and special recognitions on their projects.

“The fair gives monetary prizes to the winners,” Davis said. “And also there are outside professional organizations that give out their own awards; it can be money, plaques, trophies, it depends.”

Some organizations that participate in giving their own awards were Sigma Xi, the American Statistical Association and Women in Science and Engineering.



CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Teaching his elders: Steven Jarvis and his mother Beth (center) discuss science fair projects with his grandmother Barbara Brownley and grandfather Richard Brownley.



CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Rediscovered science: Esther Rubin of Ann Arbor reads a poster at the science fair. Rubin decided to attend after seeing an advertisement in a newspaper.



CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Spin and win: Hardeesh Johal-Smith, of Ann Arbor, discusses her son James’ science fair project with a judge. The wind-energy project won a third place prize.

GALLERY PROJECTFROM B1

the work is for sale, these two works are not, along with all of the films and a few prints.

First Contact has been on display since Feb. 14 and will run until March 24. At noon on March 28, the next theme, Circus, will be ready for display.

One of the co-curators for Circus was partial inspiration for the theme.

“It would’ve been weird if anyone else was heading this up fully,” said co-curator, silk aerialist and Bowling Green State University instructor Erin Garber-Pearson.

A self-proclaimed circus performer for the past five years, Garber-Pearson wanted to explore the difference between traditional and contemporary circuses, as well as what the American circus means compared to the European.

“We want to look at the culture of circus,” Garber-Pearson said.

Spilt Sugar Photography is amongst the artists to be displayed for the circus theme. A Detroit-based aerial performer and photographer, Spilt Sugar is able to capture the culture of circus – not from a spectator’s point of view, but rather a participant.

“We thought about the idea of having actual performance at the show, but really it’s not exactly what we are

concerned with for the show,” Garber-Pearson said.

The opening reception for Circus will take place at Gallery Project on March 29 from 6-9 p.m.

The Gallery Project is free to the public with many sponsors and financial contributors to keep it alive.

Submissions can be made free-of-charge and all submissions will be reviewed.

However, Circus will be the last exhibit in the 4th Avenue location.

“We are making some changes,” Pritschet said. “(Relocating) and slightly reinventing ourselves.

“We had only thought we would only be here for 3-5 years. We’ve done a lot of creative projects together and Gallery Project was our gallery project. So here’s now eight years and people are starting to link us with the space and link us with a certain model. And so we want to get out and back to the edge again.

“We’re still enjoying it. People keep saying, “Oh, you must be burned out” or “you must be running out of money,” but we never had any money to begin with, so we’ve always done fine.

“We’re thinking it might already come around the fall, but I know it took us two years from our plan to opening this place, so it’s possible that it may take a year or so.”



THE GALLERY PROJECT COURTESY PHOTO

First Contact: The Gallery Project features a wide range of artwork centralizing around how the world would react to first contact with extraterrestrial life.



LAUNCHGRAM.COM COURTESY PHOTO

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

Each year as the allures of 3D and CGI effects tighten their stranglehold on Hollywood and its wallet, directors eagerly buckle under the chance to redesign the classics, taking liberties with audience expectations and brand loyalty like never before.

So it was only a matter of time before the legendary “Wizard of Oz” fell under the ire of the future’s supposed movie magic, dragging moviegoers back into theaters out of mindless

curiosity and retroactive wonder.

Thrown together as a prequel to the mythic tale of self-discovery and friendship, Sam Raimi’s “Oz: The Great and Powerful” may brainwash the pre-pubescent into delight with its flashes of pretty colors and dramatic visuals.

But anyone actually watching will find wretch in a revolving door of static, campy characters given just barely enough depth to harken back to the 1939 classic. Leading man, James Franco’s goofy grins and grandiose mutterings do little but complete

snarky punch lines between him and a largely animated cast.

A cliché, modernized storyline finds a young Oz, in his early days as a sideshow magician, taking back the Land of Oz from a tyrannical pair of witches. If that echo doesn’t reveal enough stupidity, the movie’s themes are sure to.

Rather than following the heart-warming, but politically allegorical tendencies of its predecessor, this film stutters childishly without metaphor around the misallocation of power among citizens of Oz, an

obvious choice in light of the Occupy Movement’s sensationalism.

Since sitting in the hot seat for three cheese-fest renderings of Spiderman, Raimi delivered himself from blockbuster euphoria in 2009, back to his intellectually cult-enthusied brand of horror with the gleefully gothic “Drag Me to Hell.”

But in a year marked by the return of his quintessential saga of cult-horror flicks, “Evil Dead,” in a remake where Raimi will take a back seat as producer, the cult is left to wonder if this master of modern horror has

finally seen the light and forsaken the darkness.

And after \$40 million in incentives, every tax-paying resident of Michigan has already been strangled of almost \$9 for the production of this infantile romp.

Don’t get charged again.

Genre:	Fantasy
Runtime:	130 minutes
Rated:	PG
Grade:	D-



FANART.TV COURTESY PHOTO

‘Exai’—Dance pioneers offer challenging return to form

By ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

Leading electronic dance music away from the mindless movement that marked its inception, pioneering British label Warp Records injected intellect into the mix, slowing down dancers with synthetic cacophonies and branding an early ‘90s subgenre: intelligent dance music or IDM.

And Manchester duo, Autechre has been pushing Warp’s intellectual boundaries from the beginning. Exclusively releasing all full-length recordings on the legendary label, the group’s most recent “Exai,” could mark a smoothly subtle return to the ambient beauty of their initial wave of cold, electric splendor.

But that’s not to say the controlled abrasion on the newest album doesn’t come without agenda. After a nail-bitingly busy opener expresses, in four minutes, nearly every direction the band has taken since its debut in 1993, a 10-minute opus poses an immediate challenge.

While listeners are treated to a nearly a-rhythmical tapestry of auditory drones and synth lines echoing into nothingness and comprising second track: irlite (get 0), they begin to ask themselves: can I go on?

Or has Autechre succeeded in weeding out another wannabe? Another supposed fan captured by its strangely danceable legacy. Those hipsters will only find their hopes for

hedonistically obvious beats and araignments sullied by Autechre’s affront to the boorish club tones of the past.

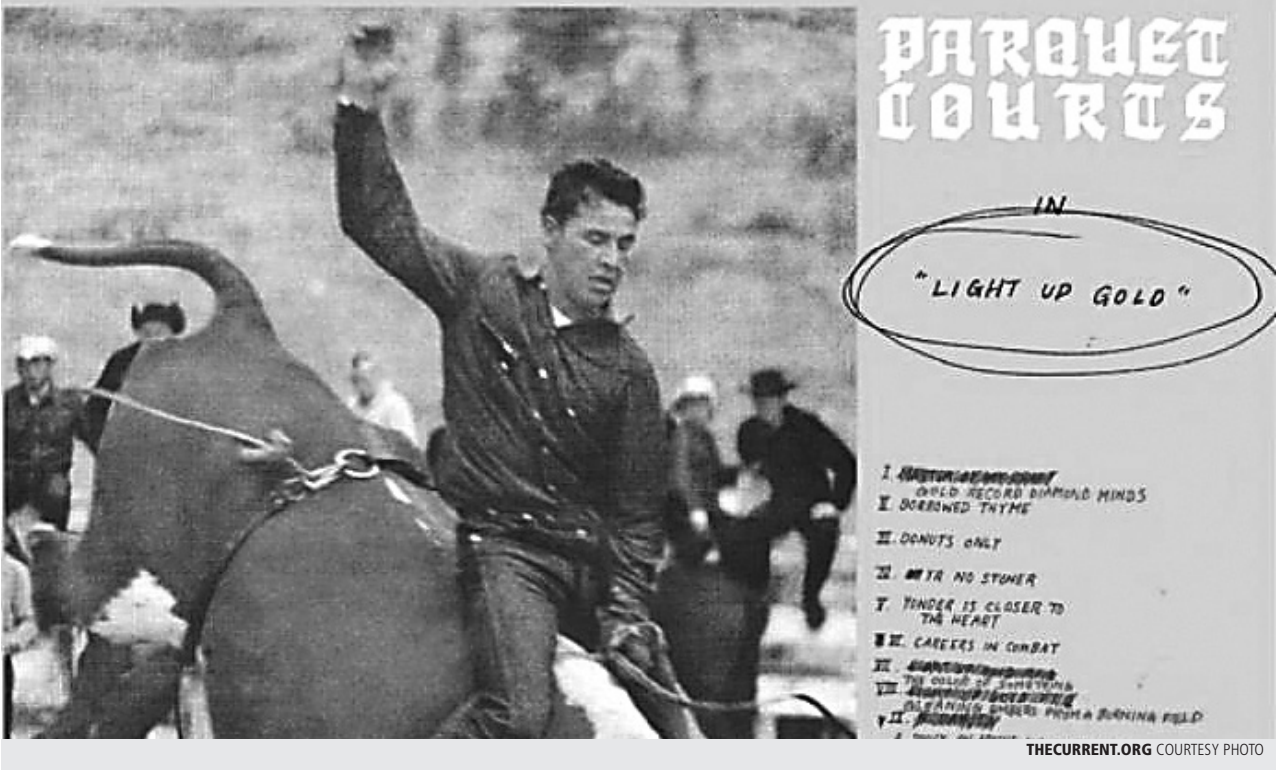
One certain to attest to the metallic grooves of their past synth pop, but unwilling to follow the duo into the deeper annals of auditory experimentation will suffer as “Exai’s” roughly rhythmic beats gouge in and out of their headphones.

With recent releases departing from typical measurable structures and digging deeper into bizarre sonic paintings, Autechre has seemingly struggled to satisfy its scientific curiosities while crafting sounds that sound—musical.

But informed by the free-form techno of the past decade and harkening back to the cool, chillingly controlled blips of their glory days, this latest release challenges listeners to follow its re-established repetition while embracing the oddness of its musical exploration.

Rather than attempt the latest dance craze while “Exai” hits the floor, true believers in the electronic revolution will have to step back, as with any piece of fine art, and be gradually enamored by the textures and techniques materializing before them.

Genre:	Dance
Label:	Warp Records
Runtime:	120 mintues
Grade:	B+



THECURRENT.ORG COURTESY PHOTO

Parquet Courts relight punk rock’s fizzling fuse

By BEN SOLIS
Editor

With all its sneering intensity and calls for urgent action against a violent, decadent Western civilization, the punk genre gave the impression that its mission was to destroy radio pop music much like a few sticks of dynamite blow apart rotted tree stumps.

But at the end of the day, when each punker went home and took off his combat boots and patch-covered leather jackets, punk rock and its aesthetic was nothing more than poorly played rock and roll, dolled up with hair spray and bleach and made for teenage girls looking for an outlet for their first-world frustrations.

So when a band like New York’s Parquet Courts comes around nearly 20 years after punk’s great leap into candy pop, is it even fair to call them a punk act?

The tunes offered up on its debut venture, “Light Up Gold” – a

reissue of the same album released in 2012 on a semi-larger independent label – are fast, stripped-down, rough and awkward. The lyrics are smart and thoughtful, filled with short quips about stoned 20-somethings (“Stoned and Starving”) living in a world shaken out of a second-wave of apathy, only to find that there isn’t much any of them can do at all about failing economies, corporate pirates (“Master Of My Craft”) and the proliferation of war (“Careers in Combat”).

At its core, “Light Up Gold” at least resembles old school punk, and the album’s self-awareness of its own rhetorical sonic aggression has caused fans to label Parquet Courts as a venerable relighting of the movement’s fizzled fuse. Reviewers aren’t far behind them, with *Rolling Stone* and *Spin* giving the band slim-yet-valuable real estate on their pages and websites.

And rightly so. Parquet Courts’ flair for mixing transcendental indie rock with punk overdrive is not only highly effective, it’s absolutely fun, despite some of the songs’ heavy-yet-veiled themes. Without pretention, or rather a heavy dose of it lampooned

to near absurdity, the band succeeds at bringing back a kind of punk feeling that is as in-your-face as it is non-confrontational.

While any group that pokes fun at our government’s plight or muses about being high in the city or strums guitars without precision can be lumped in as punk, Parquet Courts lives up to the title by not allowing its music to be exploited even if it has found growing popularity – and even if the categorization seems to be misplaced.

At the end of the day, when a new wave of punkers takes off their Converse sneakers and horn-rimmed non-prescription glasses, isn’t what they’re glorifying just more poorly played rock and roll?

The members of Parquet Courts seem to direct that question at themselves, and laugh while they do it, making them more punk in the process.

Genre:	Punk Rock
Label:	What’s Your Rapture?
Runtime:	36:17
Grade:	A-

OPEN

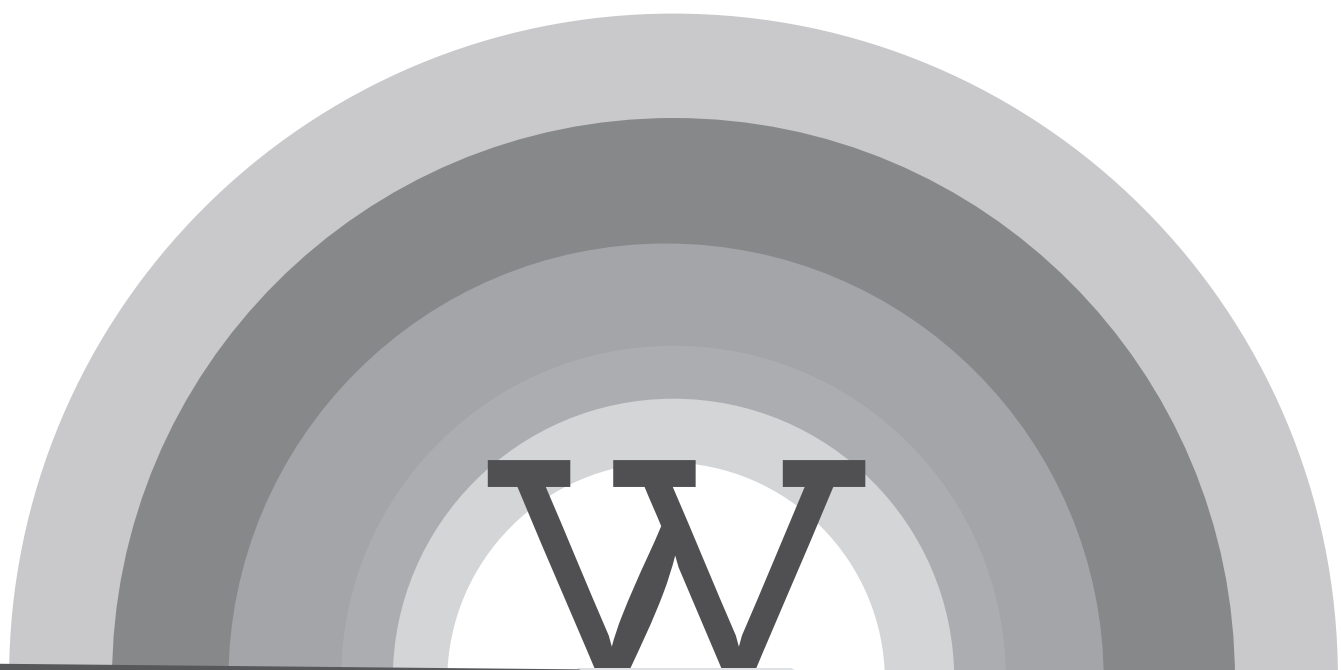
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Sudoku

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Answers

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Crossword

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L	S	Z	4	8	E	1	9
S	E	6	L	Z	4	8	1
Z	9	1	8	E	S	6	L
4	L	8	9	1	6	E	S

Sudoku

Crossword

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1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
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DOWN

1. Sale scenes

2. In ____: in trouble

3. “Seeing red” feeling

4. Brood X insect

5. Court pos. for Yao Ming

6. Chalice veil

7. Defeat soundly

8. Canadian native

9. ‘30s blond bombshell

10. Ream out

11. NBA star, and reserve cop

12. Depicts

13. ____ up one’s sleeve

18. Kitchen lure

22. Harte of letters

24. Nuclear missile, briefly

25. A bit peculiar

27. Trot or canter

28. Pep rally cheers

29. Farm-area mail rtes.

30. He lost to Clinton

31. Without a break

35. “ ____ Your Enthusiasm” (Larry David sitcom)

36. Shin neighbor

37. It’s new after 12/31

39. Watchmen

41. Sooner State: Abbr.

44. Ped ____ (traffic caution)

46. Capital of Bolivia

49. Circumferences

50. Crybaby’s sound

51. Wallops

52. Convex moldings

53. Put back to zero, say

56. Quite

57. Water diverter

59. Join, as metal

60. Like most of west Texas

61. Buntline and Rorem

64. Up to now

65. Gene material, in brief

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Students and WCC employees: Classified ads in *The Voice* are free.

Local business owners: Looking for help? Post your free help wanted ads in The Voice. Send ads to thewashtenawvoice@gmail.com. Deadline for the April 1st issue is Tuesday, March 26, at 5 p.m.

SERVICES

Game system not working? Michigan Video Game Repair can help – usually on the same day and at a low cost. Call 734-707-8725 or visit michiganvieogamerepair.com.

Need Health Care? Are you between the ages of 12-22? Contact the Corner Health Center at 734-484.3600 or visit online at: www.cornerhealth.org

HELP WANTED

SALES ASSOCIATES, CASHIERS, LOADERS AND LABORERS: English Gardens seeks seasonal help. Positions available in Ann Arbor, Metro Detroit and Pontiac. All candidates must possess enthusiasm, initiative, excellent customer service skills and a willingness to learn. Must have experience in retail. Garden Center knowledge a plus. Must be able to: stand and walk up to 8 hours per day; move and travel to work location; see small print; lift up to 50 pounds; maneuver racks and pallet jack, which can weigh up to 500 pounds; adjust to seasonal temperatures. Applicants must apply at: www.englishgardens.com/our-team

Below is a sample of recent employment want ads that have been posted with WCC’s Career Services. Students are invited to read these ads and to contact the employers as indicated, or to stop by Career Services, located in ML 104, to review the complete posting. Or contact: or: 734-677-5155; careers@wccnet.edu; or www.wccnet.edu/employment/

Law Office Assistant. An Ann Arbor civil rights law firm is seeking one full-time and one part-time candidate. Excellent phone demeanor, MS Office, verbal, written and organizational skills a must. Candidate must be able to work with minimal guidance to prioritize and handle multiple concurrent tasks.

Assistant Managers/Technicians. Openings for full-time and part-time employees who are enthusiastic, efficient, friendly, self-motivated, hard-working and have a

great customer service attitude. Experience in the automotive industry is not required. Looking for lube technicians and management positions. Job duties include: friendly customer service, changing oil and preventive maintenance services on vehicles, training and development, daily operations (i.e. stocking, cleaning, and ordering supplies). Managers are responsible for all day-to-day operations of the facilities. This hands-on position includes staffing, scheduling, inventory control, cash control, and taking care of customers.

Part-time Dental Assistant. General dental office in Dexter seeks reliable, hard-working and motivated quick learner. Great communication skills required to interact with patients. Hours are: Monday 9:45 a.m.-7 p.m.; Tuesday 8:45 a.m.-6 p.m.; Wednesday 8:45 a.m.-5 p.m. Duties include: cleaning, sterilizing and setting up operatories for patient treatment; organization and maintenance of instrument sterilization and lab area; taking radiographs; and assisting with patient treatment.

Layout/Fitter. Read blueprints, layout, fit and fabricate structural steel. Operate vertical band saw, ironworker. Mig and Tig welding. Layout and fit stairs and handrails. Drive lift truck and operate paint sprayer. Full-time position in Dexter.

Graduation Photographer. Our company is looking for enthusiastic photographers who enjoy being a part of a team of photographers. Graduation event photography is done at actual graduation ceremonies during commencements. Candidates must be flexible, have the ability to adapt to fast-paced settings and the willingness to do any tasks required by the team captain at the event and enjoy working with a variety of people. Prior DSLR professional photography experience is a plus. However, we will train novice photographers who have some experience with a DSLR camera and the eagerness and commitment to learn our system. Part-time

seasonal position in Ann Arbor.

Entry-level Java Developer. Experience working as a Java developer/Java programmer intern. Familiarity with Blaze, Python, Servlets, ORM, DI, some Web UI framework like struts or JSF + HTML, CSS, JavaScript. Design patterns like MVC, Delegates etc. Intern or co-op programming experience in an object-oriented development environment. Familiarity with multiple programming languages and test-driven development (TDD). Work hours: 30-40 hours a week; flex-time available. Ann Arbor location.

Medical Scribe. PhysAssist Scribes provide real-time charting for physicians by shadowing them throughout their shifts and performing a variety of tasks including: recording patients’ history and chief complaints; transcribing the physical exam; ordering X-rays and recording diagnostic test results; and preparing plans for follow-up care. Each shift scribes are assigned to a doctor or physician assistant and works side-by-side with them as they see patients, documenting the conversation between the doctor and patient. Full or part-time positions in Ann Arbor.

Customer Care Associate. Fielding a high volume of inbound calls, data entry, responding to requests and inquiries, and creating and sending correspondence in accordance with performance expectations and company policies, product specifications and procedures. Major areas of accountability in the true call center environment: making outbound calls and/or taking high call volume of 50-100 calls per day and applying government benefits, account and product information to specific situations in such a manner that the client/customer fully understands the information provided and any necessary next steps. Full-time position in Novi.

Server. Serve food and beverage to guests at a local golf and banquet center. Complete other service-related tasks as directed. Part-time position in Plymouth.

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2012-2013

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

May 18, 2013, at 9:20 a.m.

Are you ready to Graduate?

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For more details go to www.wccnet.edu and type “graduation” in the search box.

If you’ve already applied, look for important information in the mail.

☐ Fill out Graduation application

☐ Buy Cap, Gown, Tassel

☐ Announcements

☐ Rehearsal

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For More Information

Contact a Student Records Technician:

Mary Singer734-973-3546

Nancy Farmer734-973-3658

Washtenaw Community College



NATHAN CLARK THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Wall of inspiration: Dance instructor Noonie Anderson reflects in her office in the Morris Lawrence building, sitting in front of some of the many photos of her students from past and present classes and performances.

Choreographing a life of Olympic proportions

By **MICHAEL J. HLYWA**
Staff Writer

Three pairs of U.S. ice dancers are on their way to the 2014 Winter Olympics thanks, in part, to the guidance of Washtenaw's own dance instructor, Noonie Anderson.

The three recently swept the medals at the Figure Skating National Competitions held in Omaha, Neb. in January.

Lately, Anderson has played a dual role as a performing arts faculty at the college and dance coach on the ice for the ice dancing pairs of Madison Chock and Evan Bates, Maia and Alex Shibutani and 2010 Olympic silver medalists Meryl Davis and Charlie White.

Davis and White, who *USA Today* called "U.S. Figure Skating's best bet for a gold medal at the Olympics," finished first at Omaha and are now ranked first in the world among Olympic ice dancing contenders. They were in first place heading into the weekend at the World Championships

in London, Ontario over the weekend.

Gayle Martin, fellow dance instructor at WCC, is exceedingly proud of her colleague's newest accomplishment.

"I was very excited when she told me she was coaching. Some of the skaters are training to go to the Olympics, so we get to see her choreography on ice. That's really cool. And they (the skaters) adore her," Martin said.

For Anderson, coaching skaters is an opportunity to explore a different spectrum of dance education.

"Here (at WCC) I feel like I'm a starter. I'm a platform for a lot of students. Then I go to my skaters, and I'm a finisher. So it's a nice balance," Anderson said.

But coaching skaters – something she started doing last May – is only the tip of the iceberg for Anderson.

This 62-year-old wife and mother also loves making jewelry, collecting rocks and gardening.

"I'm a real dirt-and-earth kind of person. I think it balances out that sort of airy, artsy side," Anderson said.

But her greatest passions have always been dance and education.

Anderson started dancing

professionally in high school, and it has remained an integral part of her life.

"I tend to be a very active person, physically and mentally," Anderson explained, "and dancing really integrates the two parts really well. I truly don't feel balanced unless I dance. And it gives me an outlet to create continuously."

But, as her mother noted early in Anderson's life, dancing doesn't pay the bills. So she became a teacher.

Her true legacy as a mentor began in 1982 when then-president Morris Lawrence hired her to teach at Washtenaw. Anderson remembers her humble start at the college.

"When I first came to campus we were still in portable trailers in the orchard. The orchard was still here when I started teaching. Teaching dance in the portables was definitely very challenging – long, narrow and not very high," Anderson recalled.

Since then she's developed a reputation as an effervescent and generous nurturer. For 28-year-old liberal arts student Jimmie Bae, from Toronto, walking into Anderson's office for the

first time and seeing the collage of photos dominating the wall summed up Anderson's spirit.

"You can tell that each photo is sentimental to her and shows people who are valuable in her life," Bae said. "It was the first time I got a window (into) her life. It kind of made me understand why she is the way she is. You can see her free spirit in those photos. You can tell she has a love for people. It made me appreciate her even more."

Among those photos on her wall is a picture of Willie Baker, 29, of Ypsilanti, a 2010 WCC graduate. He is a founding member of PatchWerk Dance Troupe and is now a senior year at U-M.

Baker first had Anderson as a ballet instructor in 2008, but she quickly became family to him.

"I wouldn't even say she's a professor – I would say she's more like a mother," Baker said. "She's really, really welcoming. She helps you and gives the tough love when it's needed. She gives you guidance. I feel like she could be a mother, a friend, a sister."

"The dance program at WCC is very small, and a lot of the students look at it like a family," Baker explained.

"Some of us don't have friends and don't have family around in the area, me being one of them. And me coming to WCC, that was like my home."

Fellow instructor Martin also shares a sisterly bond with Anderson and appreciates her support in the workplace.

"She's very protective, and she will fight for you. If there's a class you want to try, something new, she will be behind you 110 percent," Martin said.

It is precisely this kind of love and support that she shares with students and faculty that make Anderson, in her words, "gooney like a little kid excited to come back to work" year after year. Reflecting on her winding path through life, Anderson appreciates her good fortune as well as her good sense.

"I know how lucky I am, but I also know that luck was only part of it. The other part was the commitment I made and some of the choices I made," Anderson said.

So when her ice dancing pupils skate toward a gold medal next year, they will surely be grateful for the serendipitous day that Anderson danced into their lives.

RESEARCH STUDY NOW ENROLLING:



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MICHIGAN HEAD•PAIN & NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE

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Joel R. Saper, M.D., *Principle Investigator*

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CAPTAIN AMERICA

WCC student welder best in nation, takes on the world

PHOTOS AND WORDS BY ADRIAN HEDDEN

Under a squelching Florida sun, as temperatures in confined welding booths grew to more than 100 degrees, a national title hung in the balance amid sweat and liquid metal.

And as NASCAR racers and commercial jets whizzed in and out of his eardrums, Alex Pazkowski channeled the calm of his past life as a violinist and emerged one step closer to being named the best welder in the world.

CAPTAIN AMERICA
CONTINUED C2



Grinding down the competition: Alex Pazkowski, 22, of Saline who was named the top student welder in America last month at a national competition in Daytona Beach, Fla., grinds a pipe in preparation to be welded in WCC's welding lab



World champion Alex Pazkowski

CAPTAIN AMERICA FROM C1

"On the first day, I must've drunk 15 water bottles in 16 hours of welding," he said of the heat. "You just have to tell yourself that everyone has the same problems. Make sure everything you do have under control, stays under control."

"It was weird at first, but I got work done."

Between the Daytona 500 racetrack and Daytona Beach International Airport, the Washtenaw Community College welding and fabrication student competed against two other finalists in a national, outdoor welding competition last month.

"I didn't want to count myself in as the winner, but I didn't think I'd lose," he said. "I thought my training would be adequate."

And after 22 hours of on-and-off welding, he was more than a contestant.

Pazkowski, 22, took first place in the American Welding Society and Skills USA Team USA Finals, and will be packing his bags for Leipzig, Germany this July, where he may be crowned with international distinction at the global, World Skills competition.

But he knows that, like music, his welding will never be flawless.

"I got a sense of trying to achieve an impossible goal," Pazkowski said of his welding. "It pushed me to work harder. Like any other art form, practice makes permanent, not perfect."

But one thing that did appear constant to him as teenager was Washtenaw's dominance in welding competitions. It was that distinction that led the native of Saline to enter WCC's program in 2010, convinced that this must be a place where he could distinguish himself from the pack.

"You show up to competitions with a WCC shirt on, and they know who you are," Pazkowski said. "You get those stares; people know your school. We have a reputation and we're very proud."

"I came here because I knew WCC had a rep in Skills USA. It was a really good way to separate from the masses and get my name out there. They were the reigning champs, and I wanted to be a part of that."

Pazkowski took one look at a weld-built pressure vessel by instructor Joe Young – the most common product in competitions – and was shocked by its artful precision.

"Joe was the poster boy for the program at the time," Pazkowski said. "I saw some of his work and couldn't believe it. Every weld looked like it was done by machine. I wanted to be that good."

But to instructor Glen Kay, his coach in the competition, Pazkowski had already proven to be the cream of the crop, overcoming tremendous environmental obstacles at Daytona not previously experienced in training.

"This competition was uniquely different as Alex had to actually compete outside among 300,000 spectators where the elements were certainly a factor," Kay said in a press release. "Despite welding in 85-degree weather, Alex managed to persevere, truly showcasing his skills and talent."

Unventilated to prevent wind currents from distracting competitors, Pazkowski estimated that the booths heated to 110 degrees, causing him to sweat profusely and adjust his instruments for the added moisture.

"He truly did an amazing job," Kay said. "And I couldn't be more excited for Alex as he represents the best of the best welders produced out of WCC."

But this feat wasn't easy for Pazkowski, his friends or family. Training sessions meant weeks of

more than 80-hours in WCC's welding lab. This was similar to 2011's competition where he took second place.

"There was a period of time where most of my friends didn't see me for a year and a half," Pazkowski said. "It was like I came back from the dead."

According to his roommate and childhood pal, Kenny McCormick, Pazkowski has always shown a Midas touch in an array of competitions, but the burden of his unending dedication has become familiar to his closest friends.

"I feel like this competition was the worst," McCormick said. "I didn't see him at all for a month. It was like, 'whoa.' I couldn't believe he was back. Alex works so many hours so that if something was to happen, he'd at least know he gave 150 percent."

"Everything he does, he puts his efforts into. It's always positive when he puts his mind to it."

And despite flying solo throughout the competition, Pazkowski's victory marks another success to be cherished by the entire WCC community, according to WCC President Rose Bellanca.

"This is another example of the great work our Welding Department has done," Bellanca said in an address to the Board of Trustees on March 6. "It takes a lot of contributions. It isn't just the welding department that makes this happen."

Humbled by his experiences and eager to continue absorbing his craft, Pazkowski will be headed to Eastern Michigan University this fall to continue his education, hoping one day to give back as a teacher and mentor to future welders around the world.

"It would be ignorant to say you were the best," he said. "If I win World Skills, I'd have a piece of paper and that'd be sweet, but I'll never be the best. I'll never stop learning. All it means is I get to represent my country. I've achieved my goals."

College goes automatic with new welding robot

BY ADRIAN HEDDEN
Managing Editor

While Washtenaw's welding students are taking on international competitions and becoming employed by the United States Department of Defense, and elsewhere, this burgeoning program is now bonding with the future.

Recently voted on and approved by WCC's Board of Trustees, a robotic welding cell will be purchased by the college using \$72,450 of funding from the Perkins Grant. The remaining \$10,054 will be taken from WCC's former Vice President of Instruction's equipment fund.

"We're trying to bring back manufacturing in this country," said Vice President of Instruction Stuart Blacklaw. "It's a welding robot, but it still takes people to operate."

And those embroiled in welding and fabrications are eager to witness the positive impact they are certain the modernized programs will bring the manufacturing community. To be used instrumentally in a newly developed robotic welding program, the new robot will replace an obsolete machine removed from the lab over the

recent winter break.

Consisting of a Fanuc robot arm interfaced with a Lincoln MIG welder, the machine exactly duplicates tasks used in manufacturing and production systems, according to the resolution presented to a unanimous vote at the March 6 meeting of WCC's Board of Trustees.

"For our students to get a background in robotics as well as welding would be huge," said Alex Pazkowski, a welding student who recently took first place in a national Skills USA competition in Florida. "There are countless companies here that use this technology. It would be huge for the area."

Mark Freeman, secretary to WCC's Board of Trustees and graduate from the welding and fabrication program, applauded the college on its forward-thinking perspective on technological augmentation.

"When I went through the program, I used to ask: 'Isn't this the end of our jobs?'" Freeman said. "Shouldn't this be the enemy?" But it still takes a human element to do the job.

"There are a lot of jobs for our people to go out there and set up the machines. It's something I want to see our

students able to do right out the door."

A joint venture between the Industrial Technology and Welding departments, the robotic welding program will include five robotics classes already developed, but will add two: intermediate robotic welding and advanced robotic welding still to be established.

"It'll be interesting to see what happens in the field," Pazkowski said of the program. "There are several things you can't program."

And trustees are certain that the robot, along with the recent, national successes of WCC welding competitors, a further distinguish their school as major producer of successful welding students with cutting-edge skills.

"WCC is becoming the center for welding in the nation if not the Midwest," said Trustee Stephen Gill.

And Trustee Diana McKnight-Morton asserted that the national success WCC welding students have found over the years can be attributed directly to the unending quality of instruction present in the department.

"I would like to give a shout-out to our welding instructors," she said. "Those students have just taken off and are flourishing. That's no accident."



CHARLES MANLEY THE WASHTENAW VOICE

Master crafting: Pazkowski performs a stick weld on a steel plate.



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Parking Pass available for \$9
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<http://tinyurl.com/WCC2013TeamRelay>
Raise money and awareness for the American Cancer Society

Apply to be WCC's 2013 Student Graduate Speaker

Eligibility requirements:
Be graduating from WCC and participating in the graduation ceremonies; Must be obtaining an Associate's Degree; Must have a 2.0 or higher GPA; Submission of a brief essay on why you'd like to be the speaker

Sign-up:
<http://tinyurl.com/wccgs13>
Or stop by Student Activities, SC 112

Traverse City Bay Getaway!

Friday, June 14-Sunday, June 16
Ticket includes: motorcoach transportation, two-night's lodging, two dinners and one breakfast, hiking on the Sleeping Bear Dunes and tubing on the Platte River.
Only \$115!

Lunch with the President

Sign-up for a chance to win a free lunch with Dr. Bellanca!
Lunches occur on selected Mondays between Noon-1 p.m.
<http://tinyurl.com/wcclunchcontest>

Purchase tickets at the Cashier's Office, 2nd floor SCB, M-F, 8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

UPCOMING SPORTS

Billiards Tournaments

Monday, March 18-Thursday,
March 21 at 6 p.m.
SC Community Room
No registration necessary!

March Madness Bracketology

SC 116
Brackets due by March 18
Pick-up brackets at SC 116 or email
elemm@wccnet.edu

Softball Tryouts (Women's Slow Pitch)

Tryout dates: Monday, April 1 and Thursday, April 4, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
WCC Softball Field
Practices: Mondays and Thursdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Games: Tuesday evenings, 7 p.m. or later. Bring student ID

Baseball Tryouts

Tryout dates: Monday, March 18 and Thursday, March 21, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
WCC Baseball Field
Practices: Mondays and Thursdays, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Games: scattered throughout April and one game in May.
Bring student ID

Upcoming Intramural Sports

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1:00 - 4:00PM

Morris J. Lawrence Building
Washtenaw Community College

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The job fair is free and open to WCC students, WCC alumni and the public. Registration is required. Register online at **wccnet.edu/jobfair** or by contacting Career Services at **734-677-5155** or **careers@wccnet.edu**.



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