East Hall input sessions scheduled

Public sessions have been set for members of the campus and extended communities to comment on the design process for converting East Hall into an alumni center. The sessions are solely to gain design input and will take place at 1 and 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 1, in the Little Theatre.

Interdisciplinary work group forming

The University Center for the Humanities is organizing an interdisciplinary work group to explore the possibility of establishing a more centralized digital humanities presence on campus. The group was scheduled to meet four times during the fall semester, beginning Sept. 18. Visit libguides.wmich.edu/dighumworkgroup for more information.

Grant funding deadline approaching

Applications are due by 5 p.m. Friday, Sept. 27, to request financial support under the College Discovery and Dissemination Award program for faculty and the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award program for students. Visit wmich.edu/arts-sciences/about/awards for details.

Volunteer career mentors sought

The Seita Scholars Program is seeking 40 or more volunteer career mentors to work with new and returning Seita Scholars. More information and applications can be found at wmich.edu/fyit/Giving/volunteering.php. Direct questions to Kirk Reber at kirk.reber@wmich.edu.

Free courses offered to some residents

Free, non-credit college-level courses in the humanities are being offered through the Humanities for Everybody program operated by WMU’s University Center for the Humanities.

The courses are taught by experienced WMU professors for low- to moderate-income Kalamazoo area residents. Participants selected receive free books, tuition and supplies and may sign up for any course offered during fall or spring. Details are available at humanitiesforeverybody.org or (269) 384-0296.

Events focus on funding scholarly work

Faculty and staff are invited to a series of professional development workshops on funding support for faculty scholarship. The first workshop is set for Tuesday, Sept. 24. Registration closes the Friday before each session, and space is limited. For details, visit wmich.edu/research or call (269) 387-8270.

Staff award nominations due Oct. 31

Nominations for the spring round of WMU’s semiannual Make a Difference Award program are due by Thursday, Oct. 31. The award recognizes staff members who provide exceptional service to the University. Visit wmich.edu/makeadifference for guidelines and nomination forms.

Rare potash deposit rediscovered in state

Rediscovery of a long-forgotten mineral deposit located under two West Michigan counties is set to spark a new mult trillion-dollar industry in Michigan that will quickly position the state as the nation’s leading source for a critical agricultural tool that is in demand internationally.

Potash—potassium chloride—is an essential plant nutrient and critical ingredient in fertilizer mined in only three U.S. locations. Supplies are dwindling and prices skyrocketing.

The discovery was made by using the treasure trove of geologic data that is housed in the Department of Geosciences’ Michigan Geological Repository for Research and Education. The result of the rediscovery, say geologists, will be the introduction of a new industry in Michigan worth as much as $65 billion, easily surpassing the state’s historical oil and gas production revenues and triggering explosive job growth in Oceola and Mecosta counties.

Verification of the quality and amount of the potash in the Borgen Bed, which lies under more than 14,500 acres in the two counties, was done by using geologic core samples provided by WMU geologists under the direction of William B. Harrison III, emeritus geosciences and MGRRE director. In 2008, Harrison and his wife, Linda, an MGRRE administrator, obtained core samples collected in the early 1980s by a Canadian company prospecting for potash in Michigan. That company established a mine and small processing plant but pulled back from fully commercializing the potash deposit.

“This is conceivably one of Michigan’s most valuable resources,” says Theodore A. Pagano, a potash geologist and general manager of Michigan Potash Co. LLC. His firm now controls the rediscovered potassium ore reserve. For the past three

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WMU again on U.S. News’ top-tier universities list

WMU is making its 23rd consecutive appearance this year on the U.S. News & World Report’s annual list of “best national universities.”

The publication’s 2014 ranking of more than 1,500 four-year colleges and universities was unveiled Sept. 10 at usnews.com and will be available later this month in a print guidebook on newsstands. WMU is listed as one of the top-tier universities among 281 institutions—173 public, 101 private and seven for-profit—that the magazine singles out as having national standing and being among the nation’s best.

WMU’s overall numerical rank among the top public and private universities this year is 181—the same as its 2013 ranking. The University also is one of 27 public universities on the list.

Surge seen in several 2013 enrollment categories

WMU’s fall 2013 enrollment figures show a 5.1 percent increase in the number of new freshmen, as well as strong surges in the number of both international students and graduate students seeking doctoral degrees.

The official fall census was taken at the close of the day Sept. 10. As predicted earlier this month, smaller upper-level classes from earlier years’ entering classes led to a slight overall enrollment decrease of 1.2 percent over last year’s figures. WMU’s total enrollment for fall 2013 is 24,294.

The 5.1 percent increase in the number of beginning freshmen is among the largest percentage increases officially announced this fall by any Michigan public university. Despite steep decreases in the number of
Open house slated for University’s Kleinstuck Preserve

Kalamazoo’s 49-acre Kleinstuck Preserve will be celebrated during a public gathering from 5 to 7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 22, at the University’s Kleinstuck Preserve Open house slated for University’s Kleinstuck Preserve (effective Oct. 1), from 3 to 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26, in the Parchment (Mich.) Community Library.

Ethics center presentation slated

Ron Kramer, sociology, will address the possible criminality of climate change in a Center for the Study of Ethics in Society presentation at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 25, in 105-107 Bernhard Center. His talk is titled “Is Climate Change a Crime? Moral, Legal and Political Perspectives.”

Engineering Expo set for Sept. 26

A range of job opportunities for engineers will be showcased during the Engineering Expo from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26, in the main lobby of the Engineering and Applied Sciences Building.

Correction

Newly married Debby Honsberger, Make a Difference Annual Award winner, was incorrectly listed under her previous name of Bitterman in the Sept. 5 Western News.

Exchange

For sale—Professor’s charming 1,300-square-foot home, plus furniture pieces. Two to three bedrooms, two baths, full library, fireplace, finished walkout basement, two decks, and new roof and chimney. Near Kalamazoo County Club. $125,000. Also, a like-new Gov. Winthrop desk, $450 (originally $1,600), and a light mahogany Kanabe grand piano, $800. Call (269) 344-2365.

For sale—Four trailers, three vans and two forklifts by WMU Surplus Sales. This is a sealed-bid vehicle sale set for Monday, Sept. 30, through 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4. Available items will be on view in Parking Lot 95 by WMU Surplus Sales. This is a final auction, and all items will be sold individually. Starting bid prices: a 1965 grand piano, $800. Contact (269) 387-8829.

Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources website at wmich.edu/hr/careers-at-wmu.html. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.

Translation expert teaches in U.K.

Jeffrey Angles, world languages and literatures and director of the Soga Japan Center, was invited to Norwich, England this summer to teach in the British Centre for Literary Translation Summer Programmes.

Internationally known for his translations, Angles was chosen to lead the Japanese-to-English workshop. The centre offers a unique model for teaching translation. It brings together an accomplished translator, some 10 advanced students from around the world and a famous author.

The translator and students spend a week with the invited author, working on the author’s translation and critiquing each other’s final results. Those activities often lead to publication of a translated work.

Prof elected to international board

Yvette D. Hyer, speech pathology and audiology, is serving on the董事会 for the Board of Directors of the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics. Association members from 57 countries elected Hyer to the post during their triennial congress in Torino, Italy, Aug. 25 through 29.

Founded in 1924 in Vienna, Austria, IALP is the oldest international group working from a global perspective on scientific, educational and professional issues affecting people with communication, language, voice, speech, hearing and swallowing disorders.

In addition to her role as chair of IALP’s Child Language Committee and a member of the Special Interest Group on Global Issues in Communication and Related Disorders of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association at WMU, she chairs the College of Health and Human Services Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and serves on the Faculty Senate International Education Council.

Psychologist earns national recognition

Ron Van Houten, psychology, has received national recognition for being lead author on a paper titled “Effects of High-Visibility Enforcement on Driver Compliance to Pedestrian Yield Right-of-Way Laws.”

The paper earned the Transportation Research Board Executive Committee’s Waller Award as the best 2013 paper in the area of safety and system users, and also was acknowledged by the U.S. secretary of transportation as an important work. His co-authors were WMU faculty member Bradley Huitema, psychology; Sarah Casella, WMU doctoral student; Louis Malenfant, Center for Education and Research in Safety; and Richard Blomberg, Dunlap and Associates.

Van Houten joined the faculty in 2005 and has attracted nearly $2.5 million in federal funding for his traffic safety research. His pedestrian safety research has led to a new way to improve pedestrian safety. Many of his discoveries have made their way into the Manual on Traffic Control Devices.
Five employees earn Universitywide service, teaching awards

One staff member and four faculty members will receive 2012-13 Distinguished Service and Distinguished Teaching awards. They will be presented during the Academic Convocation at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall. 

Distinguished Service Award

This award recognizes one staff member and one faculty member who have built careers that exemplify exceptional service to the University and to the larger community.

• Alan E. Kehew is professor of geosciences and director of the Michigan Geological Survey. Kehew joined the faculty in 1986 and has twice served as chair of the Department of Geosciences. For advancing understanding of Michigan’s glacial geology, he was named Outstanding Geologist of the Year by the state section of the American Institute of Professional Geologists. Several of his nominators cited him for that work as well as his environmental work. He also was praised for distinguishing himself and elevating his department through both service and research.

• Toni Woolfork-Barnes is director of First-Year Experience. Woolfork-Barnes joined the staff in 1984 and previously served in administrative positions housed in the Division of Multicultural Affairs and as a science education research associate. She is known as a tireless advocate and supporter of students who has shaped FYE into the student-centered, well-rounded and effective program it is today. She also was praised for her caring nature, never turning away students in need and her evident desire to help students excel.

Distinguished Teaching Award

This award is the University’s highest teaching honor. It goes to exceptional educators and mentors who demonstrate outstanding dedication.

• Holly J. Nibert is an associate professor of Spanish. Nibert joined the faculty in 1999. She was lauded by former students and co-workers for her commitment to the department, the Spanish program and the success of her students. She also received praise for being a mentor and role model for teaching assistants as well as a key player in advancing the Spanish program.

• Paul R. Solomon is an associate professor of art and director of the Direct Encounter With the Arts Program. Solomon joined the faculty in 1995. He was praised for bringing new art experiences and the latest technology into his classroom, promoting an open and supportive environment, and devoting great attention and dedication to each student’s success.

• Sarah E. Summy is an associate professor of special education and literacy. Summy joined the faculty in 1998. Former students touted her for having an amazing wealth of knowledge in her area of study, continuously expanding that knowledge base, and always being available and approachable. Colleagues described her as someone who challenges them to think outside the box while collaborating with them to improve departmental programs.

Fall book-read events planned

Fall events are underway for the common reading of “Anatomy of Injustice: A Murder Case Gone Wrong” by Raymond Bonner. The public is invited to join Universitywide Common Read 2013-14 by attending two upcoming events being held in the Bernhard Center.

• Tuesday, Sept. 24, features a panel discussion and brown bag lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Faculty Dining Room with panelists Donald Cooney, social work; Ashlyn Kuersten, gender and women’s studies; and E. Daphine Payne, Kalamazoo attorney.

• Monday, Oct. 14, Bonner will make a presentation and sign his book from 7 to 10 p.m. in the North Ballroom.

School celebrates centennial

The School of Music is celebrating its 100th anniversary by staging several events this semester that showcase its wide variety of faculty and student ensembles. Large and small vocal and musical ensembles will be highlighted, from the internationally known Gold Company to novelty groups like the Kalamazoo Laptop Orchestra.

Most events are free, including the Centennial gala featuring the Johnny Rodgers Band at 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 27, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall and the All-Steinway Celebration at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 13, in the recital hall.

In addition, the school is organizing a major conference Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 9-10, that will examine the scientific, artistic and clinical thinking around the use of music in therapy, medicine and education.

For more centennial event information, visit wnmich.edu/music/events and wnmich.edu/brain/conference2013.
During her time working with foster care child placement services, Maddy Day began to appreciate the challenges foster-care youth face.

Her commitment to those young people led her to WMU in 2012, where she is director of outreach and training for the Center for Fostering Success. In this role, she oversees the Fostering Success Michigan initiative, working to increase access and success in post-secondary education for youth and alumni of foster care ages 12 to 25 throughout Michigan.

It’s a job that has taken her to Lansing, Mich., and Washington, D.C., advocating for foster care programs. Fostering Success Michigan works with campus-based programs at 10 colleges and universities, including WMU, in Michigan that support students from foster care.

She was drawn to Michigan because of the state’s reputation for being progressive in helping youth and alumni of foster care succeed in higher education and, specifically, with WMU’s Seita Scholars Program. Her office is relatively new at the University, started in 2012 with a grant from the Kresge Foundation.

“Without Bill and Linda Harrison, Michigan and the United States would be without the rediscovery of a multibillion-dollar potash deposit,” Pagano says, who learned of the Michigan deposit is the purest and highest-grade potash being produced globally. William Harrison says. It is 600 percent higher than that being produced in New Mexico’s vast Permian Basin. It also is twice the grade of deposits found in Canada and Russia, the two nations that control more than 80 percent of the world’s potash reserve.

Years, it has worked quietly to ensure the reserve could be technically, economically and logistically put into production and compete head to head with the major North American sources of potash—New Mexico and western Canada.

“This is the United States’ only shovel-ready potash project,” Pagano says. “Michigan is New Mexico untapped. What we’re looking at is the introduction of an industry that is critical to the economic health of the state. We’ll be producing a Michigan product for Michigan farmers that would dramatically reduce the expensive transport costs on the more than 300,000 tons of potash consumed in our state annually.

“Without Bill and Linda Harrison, Michigan and the United States would be without the rediscovery of a multibillion-dollar potash deposit,” says Pagano, who learned through industry sources that the Harrisons might be able to help him.

Potash is found in just a few areas once covered by inland seas. The seas evaporated and the potassium and sodium chloride deposits crystallized into potash ore and were covered by successive layers of rock and soil.

The Michigan deposit is the purest and highest-grade potash being produced globally. William Harrison says. It is 600 percent higher than that being produced in New Mexico’s vast Permian Basin. It also is twice the grade of deposits found in Canada and Russia, the two nations that control more than 80 percent of the world’s potash reserve.