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The Westerner (1980-1997)

6-1-1990

The Westerner Vol. 10 No. 4

Western Michigan University

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Micklin well established as an international scientist

Dr. Philip P. Micklin's international reputation as a leading authority on one of the century's great ecological disasters has put his name and views on the pages of many of the world's leading newspapers. "It was a very academic interest that started my research on Soviet water management problems twenty-three years ago. I never dreamed that my work would attract such popular interest," Micklin says of the notoriety he has gained from his research involving the Soviet Union's ecologically devastated Aral Sea.

From the New York Times to the London Sunday Times, Micklin has enjoyed media visibility that does not usually come to an academic whose field is water resource management. He has even had to deal with distortions of his work when one of the most widely-read Soviet daily newspapers attacked him for allegedly supporting an unpopular water diversion project the paper claimed would destroy Russian culture. Micklin recalls that the first mention of the Aral Sea in his writing was part of his doctoral dissertation in 1969. While earning a doctorate in geography at the University of Washington at Seattle, he began research on Soviet water resource management that ultimately led him to the shores of the Aral in the Uzbek Republic.

Although the disaster progressed unknown to most of the world's scientists for twenty-five years, Soviet scientists have met regularly since the mid-1970s to

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to 11,000 square miles or half of Lake Michigan's surface area.

Dr. Philip P. Micklin, a professor of geography and an internationally recognized authority on the Aral Sea disaster, has been studying the "disappearing" lake since the 1970s as part of his interest in water diversion projects in arid regions.

Last September Micklin lived every geographer's dream by taking part in a National Geographic expedition and assisting the magazine's editorial staff in documenting the Aral Sea's devastation.

"Nothing like this has ever happened in modern times," Micklin says of the devastation left by the Aral Sea disaster. "It is so important that we need to gather as much information as possible about the problem, and this was an opportunity to see what I had only been able to study from a distance."

Micklin, a longtime researcher in the area of Soviet water resource management, was invited to join the expedition with National Geographic assistant editor William Ellis and Detroit Free Press photographer David Tulis, a recent Pulitzer Prize winner. The trio, accompanied by a representative from the USSR's Novosti Press Agency, became the first foreigners allowed into what has been an official "closed zone." For Micklin it was an opportunity to visit an area he has studied and written about for years, but was never allowed to see.

A twenty-four-page National Geographic feature graphically and poignantly depicted what he saw—evidence of an environmental catastrophe of unprecedented scope and impact.

Micklin notes that massive irrigation projects diverting the Aral Sea's rivers caused the inland sea to shrink and its minerals and salts to concentrate in the water that remains. The National Geographic in its February 1990 issue termed the result "the broken heart of Soviet Central Asia.

Once home to a thriving fishing industry, the sea today is so laden with salts that native fish species can't survive, and the area's economically depressed human inhabitants are hardly faring better. They live in an area that is now a desert of dry salt left behind in the wake of the sea's receding water. The wind whips an estimated 43 million tons of dust into the air each year. In fact traces of it have been reported as far away as the United States' Arctic coast.

The blowing salt is implicated in a two-fold increase in the per capita rate of throat cancers occurring in the region over the past thirty years. A combination of other factors, such as poor nutrition and pollution of drinking water, have left parts of the devastated region with the highest infant mortality rate in the Soviet Union and a high incidence of anemia and stomach disorders.

Despite the magnitude of the Aral Sea tragedy, it occurred under a veil of official secrecy, which characterized the Soviet response to natural and man-made catastrophes throughout the Cold War era. The extent of the disaster was unknown to the general Soviet populace until the mid-1980s. Prior to that, Micklin had been picking up clues about the extent of the problem while researching large-scale water diversion projects, including one planned to bring water into the Aral Sea region.

Micklin's subsequent research into the problem, and publication of his findings, helped alert the popular Western press and its scientific community to the extent and nature of the disaster.

Could it happen here? The Aral Sea lost one and one-half times the amount of water in Lake Erie in just thirty years. How long would Lake Erie last if the Great Lakes fall prey to this country's growing demand for water?

Micklin says the Great Lakes basin and the arid Aral region have little in common. He points out that the same type of devastation happening is remote. Rain and snow falling directly on the surface replenish much of the Great Lakes' water supply. But, while the Aral was almost completely fed by two rivers. These rivers once delivered the equivalent of 322 trillion eight-ounce glasses of water annually to the sea. When this flow was cut to a trickle, or even disappeared in some years, Micklin says the Aral lost nearly all of its water input.

Although similar to the Aral in surface area, Micklin adds that the Great Lakes are much deeper than the shallow Aral. They contain much more salt and so would be less drastically affected by water diversion projects.

While talk of such projects to carry Great Lakes water to the parched Southwest surfaces from time to time, Micklin does not see any real possibility for such a diversion in the foreseeable future. Though technologically feasible, he says, the political and economic costs of such a scheme are prohibitive. He also notes that an attempt to increase the diversion of Lake Michigan water to replenish the Mississippi River during the 1988 summer drought was easily blocked—not because of any real damage that would occur but because it was a dangerous precedent to set.

Yet Micklin says there are still reasons for concern about the Great Lakes, the United States' most important single water resource. He points out that, "Water quality, not water consumption, is the crucial issue in the Great Lakes," he says, arguing that industrial, municipal, and agricultural contaminants discharged into the lakes are taking a different, but dangerous path.

The real lesson to be learned from the Aral is that no large-scale interference with the environment should be undertaken without a clear, scientifically-based forecast of the long-term consequences," Micklin says. "You've got to be careful about not just what happens immediately, but what the long-term effects will be.

Moreover, Micklin says, these possible long-term effects must be looked at realistically. He points out that Soviet scientists were part of the extensive discussions about the further development of irrigation in the Aral Sea Basin that reduced inflow to the sea. The sea's demise was a distinct possibility all along and in some circles was viewed as a desirable trade-off. Micklin says some people even claimed the dried sea bed would make good crop land, he explains.

"What happened to the Aral was a clear case of cursory evaluation of the possible outcome and a tendency to ignore the critics and dismiss or trivialize the consequences," Micklin says. "Some of the research and planning agencies now raising the cry of alarm are the same ones that supported decisions that caused this disaster."

Micklin cites the Gorbachev era for bringing glasnost and a gradual realization that the help of the international scientific community would be necessary in the effort to save the Aral. These factors, along with six months of negotiations, led to

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Lobbies for more higher education funds

Michigan's system of public higher education—still considered among the best in the nation—is at risk despite recent increases in enrollment, the state's public university presidents say.

In the last year alone, Michigan's rank among the fifty states slipped from twenty-sixth to thirty-second place in state support per full-time student. The reason, the presidents council says, is higher education must become a higher priority in the state.

"We are pleading for a healthy and competitive university system in Michigan, which we feel is hindered by trouble," Western Michigan University President Dieter H. Haenicke said at a March 29 higher education forum in Detroit. The forum was one of several held across the state sponsored by the presidents council.

Haenicke cited other alarming statistics during his presentation. In 1965 Michigan ranked sixth in the nation in public support for higher education, but now the state ranks in the bottom third, he said. Also, in the past ten years, state funding for higher education in Michigan increased by only 82.3 percent, 30 percent below the national average. This has placed the state last among the nation's eleven largest states in rate of increase during this period.

To stem the erosion of funding, the public universities in Michigan had to increase tuition, Haenicke said. "The burden to pay for college was shifted from the state to the students and their families."

The result is that the student now pays 34 percent of the cost of education, up from 28 percent ten years ago and 21 percent twenty years ago, making Michigan seventh highest in tuition costs in the nation.

To reverse the trend and preserve quality, Haenicke and the presidents of the state's other fourteen public universities have called on the people of Michigan and their elected leaders to make the state at least fifth highest in state support per full-time student in the next five years.

To do that, the presidents council recommends that state appropriations for higher education be increased by about 8.5 percent in 1991—5 percent for inflation and 3.5 percent for "catch up"—and by similar amounts each year through 1995. The council plan also calls for an increase in bonding capacity and a general obligation bond for physical plant needs.

Haenicke said he is encouraged by early signs. "The governor's recommendations for higher education funding for the next fiscal year, at a 5 percent increase, are higher than in recent years..." He added, "While other agencies face executive budget cuts, the governor has exempted higher education."

"These are positive signs," he said. "We want to build on them."

At the same time, Haenicke said, the presidents council plan reflects a commitment to keep tuition in line. "Our public universities will commit themselves to keep tuition increases at affordable levels, yet not compromise quality.

Haenicke also promised that the universities would be "good stewards" of public funds in their care. "We shall respond with cost containment programs and with excellent planning," he said. "We shall preserve quality by stubbornly insisting that the students of our universities deserve the best."

"The future well-being of our state and of our nation rests on that commitment," he said.

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Pentagon News Brief

Murchison named to hall of fame

Former WMU world record-holding track sprinter Joe Murchison was inducted into the Mid-American Conference Hall of Fame's third class of inductees May 25. Murchison, who attended WMU in the 1950s, is currently an assistant track coach at Chicago State University. He is the third Bronco selected among twenty-six MAC Hall of Fame members. At the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, Murchison placed fourth in the 100meter dash and won a gold medal as a member of the winning United States 400meter relay. He shared the world record of .935 in the 100yard dash and also set tie marks for the 100meter and 60yard sprints.

Conferences touted by national group

Two co-sponsored nationally reputed conferences through the Office of Conferences and Institutes have won national awards for creative programming. "Visually Impaired Sports Camp" and "Facing North/Facing South: A Colossus on Canadian Relations" have been named winners of Creative Programming awards from the National University Continuing Education Association and its Division of Conferences and Institutes. The two awards, made for outstanding efforts in noncredit continuing education programs, bring to the universities the number of national awards the association has given the University."

Two professors earn national honors

Dr Kenneth A. Dahlberg, a professor of political science, has been appointed as one of nine members of the Human Domination Systems, a national organization devoted to research on the human stewardship of public funds in their care. "The future well-being of our state and of our nation rests on that commitment," he said.

New corrections program offered

Michigan Department of Corrections employees will be able to earn a master's degree at WMU this fall through a master's program designed for correctional employees. Intended for administrators and prospective administrators, it represents the expansion of WMU's successful Lansing master of public administration degree program.

University News Brief

Four place in top three in nation

Graduates of the Physician Assistant Program are demonstrating they are ready for the challenges of their chosen profession. The class of 1988 ranking third in the nation on the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination. This is the second time in sixteen years WMU graduates placed third on the test, and the tenth time they have been in the top ten. All twenty-three students in WMU's undergraduate program who took the examination last year's test placed in the top 20 percent, 96 percent of WMU students taking the examination passed it in the past five years, 98 percent passed.

Smeenge selected to NFL draft

The New Orleans Saints selected former defensive end Joel Smeenge as the eighteenth pick in the third round of the National Football League draft April 22. Smeenge, who was a senior last winter at WMU, was selected as a Fellow of the American Physical Society. Society fellows are chosen based on some other special service to the cause of the sciences.

Conference wins second national award

A 1988 conference on race relations, sponsored by the Kulamansou Gazette and WMU, has won a second national higher education award. "Still a Dream...Exploring Race Relations in Greater Kuala Lumpur" received an Innovations in Continuing Education Award from the National University Continuing Education Association in conjunction with the American College Testing Program. The combined award is the most prestigious honor the association bestows for creative programming. The award is one of only three or four made annually in a competition open to any university continuing education program implemented during the past three years.

Pat Elliott named women's basketball coach

Pat (Charity) Elliott, B.S. '81, a player and former assistant coach at WMU, is the new women's basketball coach. Elliott succeeds eight-year coach Jim Hess, who resigned March 12 after compiling a 254-113 record. The highlights of Hess tenure were winning the 1985 Mid-American Conference tournament and a subsequent National Association of Intercollegiate Athletic tournament berth and reaching the 1988 MAC tournament finals.

Elliott, a Kentwood native, was an assistant at the University of Arkansas for the last three years. Prior to that she was assistant coach for the Broncos for five years and in 1984-82 played one season as a professional in basketball in Italy. She is the only woman cager to tally more than 1,500 career points (1,542) and clear more than 1,000 rebounds (1,028). She also owns the career field goals (709) and season rebounds (396) records. As an undergraduate she represented the United States at the World University Games (1979) and was an honorary member All-American (1977 and 1978), and was one of fifteen nominees for the Wade Award as the nation's top collegian.
Research and Service Summary

In laboratories and communities, Western is working for all of us.

Historian receives humanities fellowship

Dr. Ernst A. Breisach, a professor of history, has received a senior fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support his current sabbatical-year research on a generation of historians called "progressive historians." Those scholars dominated historical thought during the early years of this century and their ideas still play a prominent role in the way American scholars view history. His study is being developed into a book that is scheduled for completion in late 1990.

Researcher consolidates school districts

According to research undertaken at WMU, reducing the number of school districts and buildings in Michigan could remove hundreds of administrative jobs from school payrolls, with the dollar savings used to increase the number of course offerings and educational opportunities for students. William M. Johanns, M.A., J.D. '89, a Battle Creek area educator, has finished constructing a model that defines what Michigan's system of two executive levels of the district, which is one school district—one for each county. Johanns believes Michigan legislators are on the right track with their stated intention to reduce the number of Michigan school districts from 556 to 500 or fewer, but he says those attempts may prove futile unless their decisions are based on research and a sound plan.

Center evaluates science initiative

The Evaluation Center has received a $52,674 award from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek to evaluate the impact of the foundation's new science education programming initiative. Dr. James B. Sanders, associate director of the center, is directing the evaluation activities as part of the science education projects around the state are examined. The projects are intended to upgrade elementary-level student and teacher training in science and technology areas.

WMU team heads up statewide project

If U.S. math students are to be number one in the world by the year 2000, the approach to teaching mathematics now used in elementary schools must drastically change, say two WMU professors who are heading up a statewide initiative to promote such change.

Dr. Robert A. Laing and Dr. Ruth Ann Meyer, both professors of mathematics and statistics, have received a nine-month, $145,934 grant from the Michigan Department of Education to develop instructional materials and lay the groundwork for forming a collaborative effort to enhance the mathematics teaching skills of elementary school teachers across the state. The project is a cooperative effort by the Michigan Department of Education, the Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics, WMU, and school districts across the state.

Young women athletes 'dying to win'

Young women athletes drive to develop the perfect competitive body may be earning them more than athletic titles and trophies, researcher Dr. Jay Griffin says. It may be leading to severe health problems and even death. The assistant professor of health, physical education, and recreation reviewed some of the trends documented by researchers across the country who have examined female athletes in connection with eating disorders.

Griffin found that the incidence of eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia nervosa is increasing among high school and college women athletes. In some sports these disorders affect a majority of competitors, she says, and the severest disorders are most often found in the highly successful competitors.

Pathogenic weight control methods, such as the use of vomiting, diet pills, laxatives, diuretics, and binging, affect about 31 percent of all female college athletes, compared to 17 percent of male college athletes, Griffin says.

Science education unit gets two grants

The Center for Science Education has received two grants totaling $130,000 from the National Science Foundation and Department of Education to help the state's public schools improve science education. The center has been awarded $78,000 to fund its role in STEMplus, a two-year-old Science Education in Michigan Schools project involving the cooperation of seven state colleges and universities. A second grant for $52,000 will fund continued efforts to extend the physics knowledge of middle school teachers through a national program called Operation Physics.

Packaging efforts earn national award

Dr. Robert M. Wygant, a professor of industrial engineering and director of the Institute of Technological Studies, has won a national poison prevention award for his three years of research in developing child-resistant packaging that is easy for adults to open. He received the seventh annual "Protective Package of the Year" award from the Children's Hospital of Alabama and the Southeast Child Safety Institute.

The award, which is made to the "corporation or individual involved in the development of a new packaging concept which contributes to the safe sale, storage, and use of medication," honors his recent work with other WMU members of a research project for the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. This is the only second such award made to recognize contributions by an individual.

New institute focuses on service quality

The goals of WMU's new Service Quality Institute are interdisciplinary research and assistance to Michigan's growing service industry. Under the direction of Dr. Linda M. Delene, a professor of marketing, the institute will draw upon the expertise of faculty members from across the University to address concerns and challenges common to all sectors of the service industry.

$200,000 IBM grant establishes laboratory

The College of Education has received a $200,000 grant from the IBM Corporation to train new and practicing teachers in the expanded use of technology in the classroom. The gift enables the college to establish an IBM computer laboratory in Sangren Hall to support pre- and in-service teacher preparation and will serve as a national model for teacher education in kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

David L. Swanson, IBM's senior location manager for West Michigan, said the grant includes a laboratory of networked IBM Personal System/2 workstations, IBM kindergarten through the twelfth grade educational software and training and technical support. Included in the award is the ability to participate in a conferencing network of IBM computers which will allow WMU to communicate with other grant recipients, as well as other users of IBM educational software throughout the United States.

Swanson says last May IBM announced a five-year, $25 million, two-part grant program to improve U.S. elementary and secondary education through more effective use of technology. The second part of this program provides grants to develop innovative uses of information technology in K-12 classrooms. At the time of the award, the College of Education was the only such unit in the state to receive one of the grants.

Not a rapper shall fall—A $147,000 jet crashes, killing everyone on board. The next day hundreds die in a massive earthquake. Are these tragedies and countless others partly the work of God? Dr. Rudolph J. Siebert, a professor of religion, examines this question and others in his book, From Critical Theory to Communicative Political Theology: Universal Solidarity. The death of his wife from cancer prompted him to write the book.

Siebert says tragic incidents can be caused by humans and nature, but they also might result from "divine intervention," meaning God's influence in allowing tragic events to occur. He refers to this divine intervention as the "theodicy problem"—the understanding of God's justice. But the world's religions, he notes, are full of contradictions regarding this justice. So, he says, religions are in a crisis because they are unable to give adequate answers to why catastrophes happen.

In search of God—Dr. Francis L. Gross, Jr., a professor of religion, is helping people in their quest for God, church, and a meaningful faith. In his book, From Critical Theory to Communicative Political Theology: Universal Solidarity, he asks the question: "Who is God?" He wrote the book for people who are re-examining their religious convictions. It does not expose any particular church or religious tradition. It is a message for all college students, who may be the first time questioning their religious upbringing—or lack of one—when they go to school.

The Book Nook

Scholar edits international journal—A WMU scholar in the first North American editor of Nenam, an international journal of comparative religions published twice yearly. Dr. E. Thomas Lawson, chairperson of the Department of Religion, has been named to a two-year term on the editorial board of this journal which is published by the International Association for the History of Religions. Lawson and his co-editor, a scholar from the Cistercian Studies Library's rare book room. However, it was on display May 10 through 13 for the Medieval Institutes' twenty-fifth International Congress on Medieval Studies. The Congress attracts 2,000 scholars annually to present and hear papers about the Middle Ages. Persons may view the book by appointment by calling the Cistercian Studies Library at 482-3521 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. weekdays.

Living in the computer age—In today's age of information, more than 50 million computers are in daily use worldwide. Dr. Andrew S. Taggart, a professor of business, gives graduate business students and computer professionals a better understanding of information systems in all areas of business, such as management, production, and engineering.

Learning to resolve legal disputes—Dr. F. William McCarty, chairperson of the Department of Finance and Commercial Law, has co-written a textbook preparing business students to resolve legal disputes and understand other legal problems. He wrote The Legal Environment of Business with Dr. John W. Bagby, a professor of law at Pennsylvania State University.
Presidents’ portraits paint a picture of WMU’s continued evolution

The Board of Trustees and President Diether H. Haenicke honored two former Western Michigan University presidents recently in dedication ceremonies unveiling their official University portraits. Dr. James W. Miller, WMU’s third president, was recognized in a dedication February 10 in Miller Auditorium, which was named for him, and Dr. John T. Bernhard, WMU’s fourth president, was recognized in a similar dedication April 21 in the Bernhard Center, which was named for him.

Both of the ceremonies took place in buildings where the portraits will hang—the University’s 3,500-seat auditorium and its campus center. Portraits of the University’s first two presidents, Dwight B. Waldo and Dr. Paul V. Sangren, hang in places of honor in the buildings named for them. “This is a special opportunity to express our appreciation of and to President Emeritus Miller for his many contributions to this institution and higher education in Michigan, to our community, and to the state,” the University’s current president, Dr. Diether H. Haenicke said of the Miller ceremony.

In speaking about President Emeritus Bernhard, Haenicke noted that committee selecting, and service characterized his leadership. “During more than a decade of service, he both developed this University and sustained it. I am delighted that we have this opportunity to give him our thanks,” Haenicke said.

Miller was president from 1961 to 1974. During this time the University experienced one of the most sustained periods of growth in its history. On-campus enrollment grew from 9,000 to 22,000 students, graduate programs increased in number, the first doctoral programs were offered, and more than $100 million was spent on thirty-seven major construction projects, including nine academic classroom buildings, Miller Auditorium, Shaw Theatre, and Lawson Ice Arena.

Miller, a political scientist by training, was controller of the state of Michigan for five years and then secretary to the Board of Trustees at Michigan State University before coming to WMU as president. He holds degrees from Amherst College and the University of Minnesota. He continued a lifelong pattern of public service while president, serving as a member of several local and state organizations.

During the “Bernhard Years,” between 1974 and 1985, the WMU Foundation was established; the University’s first capital campaign, “Partners in Progress,” was successfully completed; the arts flourished; relations with the larger community and business and industry were enhanced; the Dorothy U. Dalton Center was completed; and the John E. Fetzer Business Development Center was dedicated.

Bernhard also worked to preserve the University’s academic core during one of the worst economic periods in Michigan’s history—the recession of the early 1980s—and advanced the institution’s affirmative action goals. He served WMU and higher education at local, state, national, and international levels and was a member of various other local organizations. Bernhard, who was president of Western Illinois University before coming to WMU, returned to teaching in 1985 as a professor of political science. He will retire this year.

Larry J. Bloxists of Grand Rapids, an internationally recognized, award-winning portrait and landscape artist, painted the Miller and Bernhard portraits.

Honorary degree given

Renowned violinist Yehudi Menuhin, center, received an honorary doctor of fine arts degree from Western Michigan University March 2 for his outstanding work in the performing arts. The degree was conferred during a Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra concert, which Menuhin conducted. Congratulating him at a reception in his honor after the concert were President Diether H. Haenicke, right; and Masato Yoshimi Tateda, music director and conductor of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, who received an honorary doctor of music degree from WMU in 1989. Menuhin spent this February and March in Kalamazoo through a residency arranged by Julius Silberga Auditions in conjunction with the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra and WMU’s Buckley Music Performance Institute. Half a century after his Carnegie Hall debut at age eleven, Menuhin is still active, dividing his time between concerts, lectures, and symposia in the United States and Europe. The founder of two music training schools in Europe, Menuhin in 1986 received the highest award the United States bestows on its performing artists, the Kennedy Center Honors.

THE ARAL

Now you see it, now you don’t

Continued from page 2

the National Geographic expedition being allowed into the Aral region.

Today, officials at the highest levels of the Soviet government, the disaster is occurring. Recently, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said the region’s problem “has practically gone beyond the control of man. It is a zone of ecological calamaties.” Even now, with the Soviet government officially committed to saving the sea, the prospect for cutting the irrigation diversions and allowing the sea to be replenished by its source rivers is not good. Micklin says that just to stabilize the sea at its current low level, the amount of irrigated land in its drainage basin would have to be cut by about 50 percent, leaving this basically agricultural region in economic chaos. To restore the sea to its former condition would require at least a 50 percent cut in irrigated land.

“I am not very popular among some environmental and Russian nationalist circles in the Soviet Union for saying this,” Micklin admits, “but I don’t think there is enough water there, no matter how carefully used, to supply all of the region’s needs, particularly in light of the area’s rapid population growth.”

—By Cheryl Roland
A plan for the future

Gifts of appreciated property are useful

If you're planning to make a significant gift to Western Michigan University or any other nonprofit or charitable organization, be sure to consider the advantages of giving highly-appreciated property, including stocks or other securities, as opposed to an outright gift of cash. Contributions of appreciated long-term capital-gain securities (such as stocks) and real property generate the most favorable tax benefits. In addition to receiving a charitable deduction for the full fair-market value of the gift, you can avoid any potential capital gains tax on the property given and, in some cases, any sales commission that would apply to the sale of this property.

If you were to contribute securities with a current fair-market value of $10,000 for which you paid $1,000 several years ago, you would receive a tax deduction for the full $10,000 value of the securities (the same as a $10,000 gift of cash). You would also avoid paying capital gains tax on the $9,000 appreciated value of the securities. These same types of savings can apply to a gift of real property, such as a home or farm.

Other important points to consider include:
- Effective in 1988, the holding period for "long-term" treatment is a minimum of one year. In other words, you must have owned the property (stocks, real estate, and the like) for at least one year.
- If you elect to give securities, do not sell the securities first. If you do, you are making a gift of cash and will be subject to capital gains tax on the securities you sold. You should contact WMU's director of Planned Giving Services or the charity to which you wish to make the gift and ask about the best way to transfer the securities.
- For a relatively few individuals enjoying an unusually high income year, AMT (Alternative Minimum Tax) may apply and may diminish the tax savings indicated. It is always wise to seek professional tax advice regarding your particular tax situation.

For more information, write Kenneth J. DeVries, director of Planned Giving Services, at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-3855, or call him at (616) 387-6178 or toll free (800) 876-6178.

The Campaign for Excellence

Major gifts and pledges to continued excellence at Western Michigan University

Family of Jon Rood establishes endowed memorial scholarship

The WMU Foundation has received gifts totalling $22,000 to establish the Jon P. Rood Endowed Scholarship Fund in the Department of Biological Sciences. Gifts were received from Hazel Rood, Jon's widow; Margaret Clark, Jon's sister; and Josephine C. Rood, Jon's mother and the widow of Dr. Paul Rood, who served on the WMU faculty for forty-eight years until his retirement in 1964. Rood Hall is named in honor of Paul Rood, who joined the faculty in 1939 and was, at the time of his death in 1977, the longest-tenured faculty member in the history of the University. Jon Rood, formerly with the Serengeti Research Institute in Tanzania, East Africa, died March 30, 1980.

Kalamazoo Gazette pledges $45,000 for Dwight B. Waldo Library improvements

Michigan's second-oldest newspaper and Southwest Michigan's largest daily, the Kalamazoo Gazette, has pledged $45,000 to expanding and renovating Dwight B. Waldo Library. In recognition of this contribution, a room in the library will be named for the Gazette, which is a corporate member (associate) of The President's Club. Publisher George E. Arnow, a member of the WMU Foundation Board of Directors, announced the gift.

Consolidated Papers Foundation pledges $50,000 more toward paper program

Consolidated Papers Foundation of Wisconsin has pledged $50,000 to the paper program for Excellence. The pledge was made in addition to annual support already received from the foundation. The total of all contributions from Consolidated Papers Foundation during the period of WMU's Campaign for Excellence is expected to exceed $70,000.

Flint Ink Corporation contributes $25,000 to printing program

The Flint Ink Corporation of Detroit has given $25,000 to support the printing science and engineering program. The nation's third largest manufacturer of printing inks, Flint Ink has been headquartered in the Detroit area since its founding in 1920 by H. Howard Flint, Robert H. Flint, company chairman and chief executive officer, and his father, the late H. Howard Flint, company president, is a member of the WMU Foundation Board of Directors.

Faculty couple establishes scholarship through life insurance donation

Two faculty members have donated a $500,000 life insurance policy to the WMU Foundation. The gift, given by Dr. Edward J. Heising, a professor of education and professional development, and his wife, Dr. Ruth M. (Beall) Heising, a professor of communication, will establish an endowed scholarship in their names. The Heising Endowed Scholarship will be designated for full-time students enrolled in the College of Education's kindergarten through the twelfth grade curriculum. Edward Heising joined the faculty in 1963. He received a bachelor of arts degree from Indiana State University and master of arts and doctoral degrees from the University of Michigan. Ruth Heising joined the faculty in 1964. She received a bachelor of arts degree from Valparaiso University and master of arts and doctoral degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. The Heisings of Kalamazoo are members of The President's Club.

Kalamazoo-based Stryker Corporation pledges $50,000 to capital program

The Stryker Corporation of Kalamazoo has made an unrestricted pledge of $50,000 through the WMU Foundation to the Campaign for Excellence. Stryker's medical and surgical divisions develop and manufacture specialized products, including powered surgical instruments, orthopedic implants, arthroscopy systems, and patient handling equipment, such as the "Stryker hospital bed," the company's original product. John W. Brown, Stryker's president, renewed his company's commitment to the campaign in a letter to William U. Parlet, campaign chairman and WMU Foundation president.

Menasha Corporation pledges $50,000 to paper program

The Menasha Corporation of Neenah, Wisconsin, has pledged $50,000 to support the paper science and engineering program. Menasha is in a producer of corrugated containers, wood fibre, paperboard, timber, plastics, machineries, and other products. It has about 3,500 employees in plants throughout the United States, including West Michigan.

Detroit businessman/alumnus pledges unrestricted $25,000 gift to campaign

Jay A. Fishman, B.B.A. '66, M.B.A. '67, a partner and president of Jay A. Fishman of Detroit, has made an unrestricted pledge of $25,000 to the Campaign for Excellence: An investment/fiscal analyst and consultant, Fishman has co-written several articles, as well as the book Corporations in Conflict: The Tender Offer. He is a former investment analyst for National Bank of Detroit and former vice president of Equity Management and Research. A member of the President's Club since 1977, Fishman is also a director of the WMU Foundation and a member of the WMU Alumni of Volunteers. He served as co-chairperson of the Detroit area campaign for "Partner in Progress," the University's successful capital fund drive in the early 1980s.

Faculty and staff appeal garners $400,000 in gifts and pledges

In response to a campuswide appeal, faculty and staff members have already pledged or contributed more than $400,000 to the campaign for Excellence. According to Helen J. Plaeboldt, executive director of development, this amount represents the to-date response to the special appeal, which is still in progress. The total of all faculty and staff gifts and pledges to the campaign from all sources is far greater, she said.

Honors College Library to be named for alumni couple

Marion (Dumond) B.S. '53, and her husband, Robert W. B.B.A. '55, Denison of Kalamazoo, have pledged $50,000 toward construction of the Lee Honors College building. The Denisons' gift will be used for the Honors College Library, which will be named in their honor.

Robert W. Denison is the former-owner, chairperson, chief executive officer, and president of National Bank of Detroit Enterprises in Kalamazoo. A certified public accountant, he was the chief financial officer of Detroit's Detroit Management Company for eleven years prior to becoming president of Laboratory Research (1974-89). The Denisons are members of The President's Club and are lifetime members of the WMU Alumni Association. Robert is a member of the WMU Foundation and a past president of the Alumni Association.

Simpson Paper Company pledges $50,000 to paper program

The Seattle, Washington-based Simpson Paper Company has committed $50,000 through the Simpson Paper Company Fund to assist the paper science and engineering program. Simpson is a leading U.S. producer of paper and paper products, including 100 percent recycled printing papers. The company has about 3,200 employees in plants throughout the United States, including West Michigan.

Kahler request provides for endowed humanities scholarship

James R. Kahler, Jr., a counselor at Loy Norrix High School in Kalamazoo, and his wife, Marjorie, a former Kalamazoo Public Schools teacher, will provide $100,000 toward their estate to establish the James R. and Marjorie A. Spitters Kahler (endowed) Humanities Scholarship. Marjorie and James are both Western alumni and members of the President's Club. James earned a bachelor's degree in English and history in 1961 and a master's degree in counseling in 1971. Marjorie attended WMU but did not earn a degree from the University.

The Kahler Humanities Scholarship will provide for students majoring in English or history, with preference given to minority students with demonstrated financial need.
Dear Friends

Since making some major changes in the Westerner twelve months ago, the feedback from our readers has certainly been positive. As I have talked with many of you at reunions, Homecoming, and regional events, you have complimented me on this new look—more color, a different format, larger type.

During those conversations, I have accepted and thanked you for your kind words on behalf of the entire "team" of dedicated staff members who work together on each issue. The Westerner is our way of bringing the campus to you. For instance, in the most recent editions we have shared with you news of our numerous construction projects and their importance to the institution. We also have described our faculty's dramatic increase in research activity and how this affects the quality of instruction. In addition, we have told you of the confidence alumni, corporations, and foundations have in WMU as demonstrated through their charitable gifts and through their willingness to give their time and energy to various Alumni Association sponsored programs.

Through the Westerner we want to share with you the excitement those of us on campus experience daily as we witness first hand all of the tremendous things taking place. We know we have been successful in meeting this objective when we receive letters like the one from Julie Harris, which is printed on page 8.

I hope each of you experience, as Julie has, a great sense of pride and enthusiasm when you read what is happening at WMU. I hope too that you share the information with others, as Julie has.

But as our readers get excited about what is happening on campus, I get excited as I proofread the Alumnunotes section of each issue. I am continually amazed at the myriad ways our graduates are making their mark through their countless professional achievements. We're pleased to be able to share this news with your friends and former classmates. The entire University community as well, especially your professors, takes great pride in reading of your achievements. Because so many good things are happening with our alumni and our institution, we often find ourselves short of space in the Alumnunotes section. Let me assure you, all of the career-related information we receive, will be printed. The paper's production schedule calls for material to be submitted more than two months before publication. With this schedule, combined with periodic space restrictions, it may appear as though we have forgotten to share your news. We have not. Please, bear with us.

Okay, you graduates, are the Westerner's primary audience. We continually strive to enhance the paper's effectiveness as a communication channel, so we encourage you to share your thoughts and opinions regarding content, design, and readability. We want to ensure that this communication channel between you and your University is two way.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

M. Jamie Jeremy
Executive Director, Alumni Association
**MAIL BAG**

**From night shows students have ‘class’**

**Editor's note:** The following is a letter to the editor from the Kalamazoo Gazette. It was written by Larry Rolfe of Vicksburg about the second annual “Senior Prom,” sponsored by Draper-Siedschlag halls in conjunction with the WMU Alumni Association and Kalamazoo Jaycees.

March 21 the residents of Draper-Siedschlag halls hosted a senior citizen prom at the campus center for about 400 seniors and nearly 100 students. These young people didn’t appear in Reeboks, tattered jeans, and leather vests, but beautiful dresses, high heels, suits, ties, and shiny shoes. With this description already you can see just how bad they really are. The room adjacent to the ballroom was filled with helium-filled balloons as centerpieces.

They had a fine local band (Pieces of Dreams) that played for ballroom dancing from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. There was punch all evening long and a very nice buffet of cheeses, dips, fruits, party crackers, and desserts. This was all done at no cost to the seniors.

The party was just terrific and took a tremendous amount of planning, but the real plum was meeting all those terrific young people. They were having as much fun as all us old codgers. Professional photographers took pictures of everyone and presented the guests with the picture in a nice frame for ballroom dancing from 10:00 p.m. to midnight.

Larry Rolfe, B.M., ’50, M.A., ’55

Let me tell you about my school

**Editor’s note:** Julie Harris is a senior consultant for Anderson Consulting, a division of Arthur Andersen and Company in Chicago. A graduate of WMU’s computer science program, Harris is assigned to Anderson’s Manila, Philippines, office until late August.

A quick comment on the Westerner. It really makes me feel great to see the things that are going on at WMU. Sometimes I believe that Dr. Haenicke is the president who is most likely to make real changes in this world. All my co-workers, who come from Big 10 or Ivy League schools, needle me for attending a school which some of them have never heard of. They are quickly silenced when I rattle off all the things we were able to enjoy at WMU that they never have dreamed of: class size, actually being taught by professors in our freshman year, not being lost in the shuffle.

With the addition of the new business college building, I know that WMU will soon be known to all (but still dearest to me) alumni and I can truthfully say I really feel that Dr. Haenicke is the president who is most likely to make real changes in this world.

Julie Harris, B.S., ’86

**Welcome graduates**

A new tradition began April 28 during the 1990 spring commencement when current Alumni Association President Richard F. Chor- man, B.S. ’56 congratulated graduates on their new status as Western Michigan University alumni. Chorman also extended an invitation to the graduates a one-year free membership in the Alumni Association.

**Annual Alumni Association Calendar**

**JUNE**

20 Jackson Alumni Chapter outing—7:00 p.m., Jackson Harness Raceway, Jackson.

21 Hastings golf outing—1:00 p.m., shotgun start, Hastings Country Club, Hastings.*

25 Grand Rapids alumni golf outing—10:30 a.m., Forest Hills Golf Club, Grand Rapids. Buffet lunch at 11:00 a.m., shotgun start at noon, dinner at 6:30 p.m.*

**JULY**

30 Annual WMU Bronco Golf Outing—Pineview Golf Club, Three Rivers.

**AUGUST**

6 Detroit alumni golf outing—8:00 a.m. breakfast, Dearborn Country Club, Dearborn.*

**SEPTEMBER**

29 Alumni gathering—before the WMU versus Iowa State University football game, Ames, Iowa.

**OCTOBER**

6 “WMU At The Zoo”—1:00 to 6:00 p.m., Binder Park Zoo, Battle Creek. A University-sponsored event open to families of WMU alumni and friends in Calhoun, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Eaton, Barry, and Branch counties.

14-20 Student Homecoming celebration—a week long series of special activities and programs.

20 Homecoming—“Here’s Looking at WMU!”

Class of 1965 silver anniversary reunion—6:00 p.m. reception/dinner, Bernhard Center, WMU. Alumni reception/brunch—10:00 a.m., Bernhard Center, WMU.

Alumni tailgate—10:30 a.m., Kanley Track, WMU.

Ninth Annual Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner—6:00 p.m., Fetzer Center, WMU.

*Contact the WMU Gary Fund office, (616) 387-3100. For more information about alumni events, call the McKee Alumni Center at (616) 387-6179.

**Florida alumni gather.**

More than 100 alumni and friends in Florida gathered together in four locations during February to meet with University President Dether H. Haenicke and his wife, Carol. During each of the events, Haenicke shared news about all of the exciting developments taking place on campus.

**Top:** White in Sarasota, Haenicke, standing, visited with, starting at center and moving clockwise, Grace (Appleby) Alan, B.S. ’38, Frances "Pugt" (Jolliffe) King, T.C. ’38, Robert King, B.S. ‘38 and G. Avery Allen, B.A. ’34.

**Bottom:** At the alumni gathering in Naples, former Bronco football star Kelly Spielmaker, left, B.S. ’88, a light end, chatted with Dr. and Mrs. Haenicke.

**Yearbooks available for sale**

The WMU Alumni Association is pleased to announce that a limited number of Brown and Gold yearbooks representing various years are available for sale. Because copies are limited, orders will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. If you’ve lost your yearbook or never purchased one, you now have the chance to send for a copy that will bring back memories of people, places, and events from your years on campus.


The cost of each book is $7 for Alumni Association members and $10 for non-members. Checks should be made payable to the WMU Alumni Association. McKee Alumni Center, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-3854.

**Celebrate Homecoming**

Circle October 14 through 20 on your calendar and plan to attend the 1990 Homecoming celebration. This year’s theme, “Here's Looking at WMU,” focuses on the vast number of people affiliated with the University, in addition to the institution’s continued growth and progress.

Don’t miss the chance to visit with former classmates and professors and to get a first-hand view of how the campus has changed in the last few years. All alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff, and the greater Kalamazoo community are cordially invited to participate.

Registration forms will be mailed to Alumni Association members in August. Detailed information regarding planned activities will be announced in the September issue of the Westerner.

For more information about the 1990 Homecoming, call the McKee Alumni Center at (616) 387-6179.
1970-1971

Maryln Leonard Cartsall, '81, has been named Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service director for Kalamazoo County.

James Menenchini, '82, '84, coached the Portage Northern High School (Portage, Mich.) indoor team to the state Class A Indoor Track and Field Association 1989 state championship.

John Ostman, '81, '82, has joined the staff at Lake Superior Press, Marquette, MI.

Dr. L. Frank McCar, '83, was recently named dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at University of Maine, Portland, ME.

Herbert E. Evers, '85, is now director of North American sales for CDMA Inc., Plymouth, MI.

Judy Bell Love, '86, in November was named sales director for CORDA, the Plymouth-Crossroads Community Cruiser and the Cruiser's Publishing Inc., Plymouth, MI.

Richard Kent, '82, in February was appointed business acquisition coordinator for the Commerce Bank, Kalamazoo, MI.

Frederick H. Schell, '83, is vice president/business management for the Automotive Industry Division of the General Electric Co. in Torrington, CT.

Stephan P. Hoffman, '85, has been named assistant director of West State University's Federal Savings and Loan Association, Grand Rapids, MI.

Richard S. Cooper, '87, '82, M.ED., '73, in February was appointed director of Fair Lawn High School, Fair Lawn, NJ.

George F. Saxon, '88, '84, M.A., in February was named executive director of rural development for the West Michigan Community Development Council, Kalamazoo, MI.

Larry Deane, '82, '78, in February was named director of the Catholic Social Services of Kent County, Grand Rapids, MI.

Richard Gibson, '83, '89, was recently named director of operations for the National Treasury Employees Union, Alexandria, VA.

Julie H. Coop Hackett, '82, '84, has been chosen chair of the reading and gifted and talented education department of Comstock Public Schools, Rockford, MI.

Susan Washburn Johnson, '80, is selected superintendent of Delton Kellogg Schools, Hastings, MI.

Frank W. Benshoof, '83, was named superintendent of the Greater Detroit Area Chapter of the American Diabetes Association, Detroit, MI.

Carol M. Justice, '80, was appointed principal for Belmont Elementary School, Bloomfield, MI.

E. Kim Gilda, '79, '80, in February was named assistant principal at Fair Lawn High School, Fair Lawn, NJ.

Robert A. Moseley, '81, '78, in February was appointed principal at the Westerner, June 1, 1990.

Jochanan Stenesh, '80, left, M.A., '77, is counselor at Muskegon State College, Willmar, MN.

Richard Cooper teaches art at Manistee High School, Manistee, MI.

Douglas R. Powell, '71, M.A., '72, professor of child development and family studies, was presented with the Best Teacher Award by Parma Township Faculty and Staff, Parma Elementary School, Rockford, MI.

Kend Koope, '81, in January had his second one-man art show at the Miles of England Art Gallery. Cooper teaches art at Marist High School, Detroit, MI.

Michael Drachevsky, '82, in January was chosen police chief of the Detroit Police Department.

Kathleen Parker Keelan, '84, '78, in February was named principal of Plainwell Public Schools, Plainwell, MI.

Mei L. Webb, '81, has been appointed assistant dean of the School of Management at New Mexico State University at Las Cruces, NM.

Robert E. Swick, '73, has been selected for recognition in the 1990 Michigan Hall of Fame.

Barbara J. Stelter, '73, in February was appointed attorney at First National Bank of Muskegon, Grand Haven, MI.

Barbara G. Palmiter, '82, in February was named director of the Catholic Social Services of Kent County, Grand Rapids, MI.

Gary W. Kunkel, '80, was appointed director of the Catholic Social Services of Kent County, Grand Rapids, MI.

Richard A. Wittern, '82, in January was named director of agricultural communications for the University of Wisconsin Extension, Madison, WI.

Gary Waters, '74, has been named director of retail banking at FMB-Bankman, Battle Creek, MI.

Lloyd "Bud" Kraft, Jr., '74, '79, in February was named vice president and design director of the Design Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Gloria Lewis, '74, '72, '82, has been named assistant principal at Gordon High School, Grand Rapids, MI.

Ronald D. McCrindle, '83, has been named director of Bennington Elementary School, Cedar Rapids, IA.

Steve Tannen, '82, is head basketball coach at Edwardsburg High School, Edwardsburg, MI.
More graduates become life members of the WMU Alumni Association

William L. Martin, M.S., '78, is vice president of manufacturing at Commercial Union, Inc., Toledo, OH.

Karen R. Spalding, B.A. '75, was appointed chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Great Lakes District Field Office, Tamp, FL.

1976-1977

Dr. Robert Abramowitz, B.S. '76, is a representative from the firm of Tns & McEv, Kalamazoo, MI.

Dr. Frederick W. Born, IV, B.S.M. '76, is October joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI.

Karen Koelling Hudson, B.A. '78, is in the Social Sciences Department at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI.

Gary Ganius, B.A. '76, is a marketing manager for Mutual of America, New York, NY.

Dr. Thomas Carelegg, B.S. '76, is in the Banking and Finance Department of the Coloma Savings Bank, Coloma, MI.

Joanne Semerjian, B.A. '76, is the executive director of the Western Michigan University Foundation, Kalamazoo, MI.

Mrs. Anna Gieseler Bryan, B.A. '76, is the executive director of the Western Michigan University Foundation, Kalamazoo, MI.

Karen Koelling Hudson, B.A. '78, is in the Social Sciences Department at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI.

Frank Guglielmi

Margery Moini Henriott, A.S.W. '85, N.S.W. '87, opened a private counseling practice in May 1989 in Milan, MI.

Michael B. Clarks, B.A. '85, has been appointed counselor at the Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI.

Dr. Jeffrey R. Guegen, M.H.S., '85, has been named director of the New Mexico Mesilla Valley Development Corporation, Las Cruces, NM.

Dr. Jeffrey L. Guegen, M.H.S., '85, has been named director of the New Mexico Mesilla Valley Development Corporation, Las Cruces, NM.

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Touche, education teacher for the Marcellus Telecommunications Corporation, has been named assistant principal of Creative Concepts Group, a zoo, MI.

Richard Howes, BBA '85, has been named assistant principal of the University of Michigan, St. John's, MI.

Drew Stuckey, BS '88, has been named assistant principal of the Nonprofit Central Committee.

Christopher Detrice, MS '88, has been appointed as an elementary special education teacher for the Maharashtra, MI.

Jeffrey A. Bowers, BS '88, has been named as an assistant principal of the State of Michigan, Lansing, MI.

Christopher B. Hofer, BS '88, has been named as an assistant principal of the Western Michigan, Kalamazoo, MI.

Mary E. Murray, BBA '85, has been named as an assistant principal of the Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

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It certainly isn’t an Indianapolis 500 contender with its forty-mile-an-hour average speed, but Western Michigan University’s new race car is expected to be competitive in a long-distance race this summer.

Sound a little far-fetched? Not to scores of WMU engineering students and several more at the Jordan College Energy Institute in Grand Rapids who have teamed up to enter a national solar-powered car race in July.

The event itself seems far-fetched, covering 1,800 miles in eleven days with participants averaging 200 miles a day.

Sponsored by the General Motors Corporation, Sunrace USA pitts thirty-two North American colleges and universities in a cross-country trek from Walt Disney World in Florida to GM’s Tech Center in Warren, Michigan. Times are recorded at the end of each day with the winner’s trophy going to the school with the best overall time. Three of the competing teams will be chosen to represent GM at the World Solar Challenge in Australia in November 1990, a race GM won in 1987.

Designing and building WMU’s car, called Sunseeker, involved nearly every department in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences. It’s a completely student-run project, from design to construction, with members of the faculty working solely as advisors.

“Western became involved in the same way that the other schools did,” says Richard C. Schubert, an associate professor of mechanical engineering and a faculty coordinator for the project. “In December 1988, GM sent out requests to about three thousand universities and colleges asking for proposals covering how they might design and build a solar-powered car. Fifty-five proposals were eventually submitted.

Out of these, thirty-two were accepted, and Western’s was one of these. That in itself is quite a coup.”

Schubert says the Jordan College Energy Institute became involved in the project when it contacted the Sunseeker team, saying it is incapable of building a car, but is knowledgeable about the photovoltaic cells that convert sunlight directly into usable energy and the specialized batteries that store this energy.

“They also said they were knowledgeable about fundraising,” Schubert continues, “probably the single most important aspect of this project. You won’t be competitive if you’re limited by funds, and right now, we’re working with a budget of approximately $40,000.

WMU is handling the chassis, motor, drive train, and aerodynamic body design. Together with Jordan, they hope to compete successfully against teams from such institutions as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Stanford University, and the University of Michigan, which is the only other Michigan competitor.

Several major contributors have assisted the project so far with both cash and materials, including Welch’s in Concord, Massachusetts; Plascore in Zeeland; Consumers Power Company in Jackson; and the Kellogg Company in Battle Creek.

As of mid-April, Schubert estimated almost 200,000 work hours had gone into the project, with the overall number of students involved at any given time ranging from 60 to 120. The initial proposal alone required nearly a dozen students writing “practically non-stop” from October 1988 to February 1989.

Once the proposal was approved, teams of students began designing the car, which runs on both direct sunlight and the power stored in its batteries. Schubert expects an average, sunny-day speed of forty miles per hour without tapping the batteries.

“We have to watch out and not drain the battery too much,” Schubert says. “A typical silver-zinc battery only has about thirty to fifty total discharge cycles, so if you drain it too much in any one day, it’s gone. And there’s a big penalty for changing batteries. That’s why the six drivers we select will have particularly light feet.”

The student coordinator for the project is Jeffrey S. Bordiner of Ortonville, Michigan, a senior majoring in aircraft engineering. Bordiner says WMU has supported the project in a number of ways.

“Some of the students have been allowed to fulfill the requirements of their senior design project through Sunseeker,” he says. “Others are working on it as a design elective. Credit has also been granted for various independent study classes.”

The project has been beneficial in non-academic ways as well, Bordiner says.

“We’re learning how to work as a team as we would in any major corporation. Many times, in the first job you get as an engineer is working with or designing something very simple—like a bearing—for some large-scale project of which you have little or no concept. What this project has given us is the broad picture—how a mechanical design change affects the electrical guys, and so forth.”

Bordiner also likes the excitement the students experience the project offers.

“It involves everything from design to machine work to construction to testing,” he says. “The computer experience is a definite plus. Everybody works on computers nowadays. If you don’t know how to do finite element analysis on a computer, you’re lost. If you don’t know basic CAD, you can’t do the design work, you’re lost. All in all, it’s been a very enjoyable experience.”