



Western NEWS

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For and about WMU faculty and staff

Computer store gets new name

Microcomputer Sales is changing its name to TotalTech and marking the opening of its new Bernhard Center location by bringing in a barrage of the latest computer technology and related products today and Friday, Feb. 21-22.

The grand opening expo features representatives and products from Apple, Dell, Fujitsu, Lenovo and many other computer and electronics manufacturers. Go to www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2008/02/032 to learn more about the expo, including prizes attendees are eligible to win.

G.C. to perform concerts in G.R.

Gold Company, the University's award-winning vocal jazz ensemble, will give featured concert performances today and Friday, Feb. 21-22, at the American Choral Directors Association Central Division Convention in Grand Rapids. In addition, music professor Stephen Zegree, Gold Company's director, will present a clinic.

The jazz ensemble will perform from 2:30 to 3 p.m. Thursday in De Vos Place and from 9 to 10 p.m. Friday in the Imperial Ballroom of the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel. Earlier on Friday, Zegree will present a clinic called "Vocal Jazz Rehearsal Techniques: How Do They Differ from Traditional Concepts?"

Trustees change meeting date

The next WMU Board of Trustees meeting, scheduled for March 14, has been changed to Tuesday, March 18. Details will be posted online closer to the meeting.

Gibbs applications due Feb. 22

The Environmental Institute's Gibbs House for Environmental Research and Education program is accepting applications through 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22, for year-long fellowships for WMU undergraduate students as well as a coordinator position that is open to members of the community as well students.

Go to www.wmich.edu/env/gibbshouse for applications. More information is available from Samantha Cooper at s3cooper@wmich.edu or (810) 923-5956.

Talk to address Mideast conflict

A visiting professor from Israel will speak about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during a Wednesday, Feb. 27, talk at 7:30 p.m. in the Fetzer Center. The free public lecture will be presented by Neve Gordon of Ben-Gurion University.

Gordon is the author of a pending book, "Israel's Occupation." He will address the prospects for peace and explore the impact of a number of recent developments and their impact on the daily lives of Israelis and Palestinians.

How to learn about campus emergencies

The shooting that left six people dead at Northern Illinois University Feb. 14 led WMU officials to remind the campus community of some basic issues to remember in the event of any kind of emergency.

"Emergency response planning has been an important initiative at WMU for nearly a decade," says Lowell P. Rinker, vice president for business, whose area of responsibility includes public safety. "Our original planning was targeted at reacting to fires, tornados, bomb threats and the like. In the past year, however, we've moved to incorporate planning for how to respond to a Virginia Tech type of incident and the potential for a pandemic flu incident."

In every case, Rinker says, the front lines of communication for emergency information are the University's home page, www.wmich.edu, and WMU's Emergency Information Line, (269) 387-1001. At the slightest sign of unusual circumstances, students, faculty and staff can use either of those resources to access the most current information. Both tools can accommodate multiple users.

Things you can do right now

University officials recommend making www.wmich.edu the default home page in your browser and memorizing 387-1001 and programming it into your cell phone.

"We also have and will use a number of other tools such as e-mail and phone trees, but the Web and emergency phone line will be the first tools we use whenever we need to communicate with our campus," Rinker notes. Other tools that can be used include building public address systems in some locations and police bullhorns in all public safety vehicles.

At NIU, a school almost identical in size to WMU, the home page alert proved effective immediately in letting the campus know of the emergency and was followed by text and e-mail messages.

Emergency planning at WMU

WMU's emergency planning is managed by Pat Holton, environmental safety and emergency management, which is part of the Department of Public Safety. The response plan is continually refined and practiced regularly by holding drills on campus

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Digital technology helping students 'experience' history

Some students were still in their pajamas and sipping java when they went to their African Religions class Feb. 18.

Participating as characters in a virtual 19th-century African village, the students attended class from computers across campus and "experienced" history virtually.

Meanwhile, media representatives and WMU faculty joined several students in Ellsworth to observe how such digital technology is being used to enliven learning.

For the class session, some 45 African Religions students celebrated Black History Month by logging in to a virtual world called "Village of Umuofia."

The African Religions course is taught by Mustafa Mirzeler, comparative religion, an anthropologist who specializes in African and Kurdish storytelling. Allen Webb, English, created "Umuofia," which is based on the novel, "Things Fall Apart" by Chinna Achebe.

Webb's virtual village incorporates archived photos and traditional music with a live-action role play where students who have read "Things Fall Apart" interact as if they were various characters in the book. The activity takes advantage of technology made available through a 3-year-old project that integrates virtual reality environments and video games into teaching and learning.

The WMU project received a \$117,000 grant from the President's Innovation Fund in 2006 and is the brainchild of Webb and a group his department colleagues. It aims to improve learning by immersing students in literary subjects. To date, 17 virtual worlds have been created based on the works of such writers as Shakespeare, Virginia Woolf and Charles Dickens. Go to www.literaryworlds.org to learn more about the project.



Allen Webb helps students and faculty observers navigate around the "Village of Umuofia." (Photo by Jeanne Baron)

Around Campus

New Issues poets read tonight

Poets David Keplinger and Heather Sellers, both with recent collections published by WMU's New Issues Press, will offer readings tonight. Their presentations are part of the spring Gwen Frostic Reading Series. All programs in the series are free and open to the public and take place at 8 p.m. in the Little Theatre.

The remaining programs scheduled are: playwright Lisa Kron on Monday, Feb. 25, (due to a schedule conflict, her reading will be at the Epic Center Theatre on the Kalamazoo Mall); novelist Kellie Wells on Monday, March 17; and novelist Paula Nangle and poet and essayist John Rybicki on Thursday, April 17.

Quintet offers afternoon show

The Bullock Performance Institute continues its 2008 Faculty Artists Series with a performance by the award-winning faculty ensemble the Western Brass Quintet at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 24, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall. Visit the Bullock Performance Institute at www.wmich.edu/mus_bpi for ticket information and other details.

Falk program rescheduled

Nancy Falk, emerita in comparative religion, will discuss "Hindus in Kalamazoo" from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 27, in the Heinig Emeriti Lounge on the second floor of Walwood. The talk, which was postponed from January

and is open to the public free of charge, is part of the WMU Emeriti Council's Wednesdays II program series.

Talk examines global issues

Hadi Saleh Esfahni, a professor of economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, will talk about development and globalization during a 3 p.m. presentation Wednesday, Feb. 27, in 3508 Knauss.

The presentation is part of the Werner Sichel Economics Lecture-Seminar Series. Esfahni's talk is titled "Development Policy in a Globalizing World: New Perspectives on Options and Constraints."

Health care, cultural clashes subject of Feb. 27 program

Critical issues in health care, ethics and cultures will be the focus of a speech at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 27, in 1010 College of Health and Human Services Building. A reception will follow the free public talk, which will kick off a series of on-campus group discussions related to Anne Fadiman's book, "The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down."

Speaking first is Ia Kue, a first-generation Hmong woman who is a family practice physician in the Lansing, Mich., area. She brings a unique perspective as a Hmong individual who practices Western medicine with respect for the cultural context of her service.

Clinician earns lifetime award

Nickola Nelson, speech pathology and audiology, received the 2007 Frank R. Kleffner Lifetime Clinical Career Award for her "visionary leadership, clinical excellence and passionate advocacy for students with language learning disabilities." An American Speech-Language-Hearing Association award, it honors an individual's exemplary contributions to clinical science and practice.



Nelson

Nelson is known nationally and internationally for her work in oral and written language processing in classroom contexts. She has created innovative approaches to assess and treat children with language disorders across listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Her work has led to broad-based professional collaborations to meet the needs of struggling school-aged students and has improved service delivery for these students with language disorders.

Staffer praised for service

Sue Oole, Lee Honors College, is a Michigan Campus Compact Faculty/Staff Community Service-Learning Award winner. The award is the highest annual honor MCC



Oole

bestows on faculty and staff members in the state. It was presented to Oole Feb. 7 for making the most outstanding contributions to community service learning at WMU during 2007.

Oole is the honors college's academic advisor and administrative advisor for Alpha Lambda Delta. Last year, she was appointed to a four-year term on the Michigan Honors Association planning board and received the Executive Director's Outstanding Advisor Award during the Alpha Lambda Delta National Leadership Workshop.

Prof invited to lecture in China

Robert Ulin, anthropology, has been invited to Sun Yat-Sen University in the Peoples Republic of China to give a series of lectures and will travel there under a Fulbright Senior Specialist Program grant. Senior specialists are leaders in their disciplines who are supported for two to six weeks to work cooperatively with their host institutions.



Ulin

Sun Yat-Sen is said to have the best anthropology department in China. Ulin was invited to lecture there through an informal exchange program with WMU that Sun Yat-Sen would like to formalize along the lines of agreements already in place with Harvard and Yale universities. Ulin, who chairs WMU's anthropology department, is known to Chinese scholars in part because of his book on "Understanding Cultures." The work, which was recently revised, has been translated into Chinese and is one of the 10 best-selling academic books in China.

West Hills Athletic Club slates spring fitness open house

Every full-time benefits-eligible employee at WMU has a membership at West Hills Athletic Club. All employees have to do is activate their memberships.

Membership is redeemable as a taxable-benefit, which means employees do not pay any out-of-pocket expenses.

Those interested in learning more about West Hills are invited to attend a free open house from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 19. Attendees will be able to tour the facility and participate in free tennis,

fitness and Pilates Reformer classes.

Go to www.westhillsathletic.com for a list of events. For more details, contact the membership office at wh-membership@wmich.edu or 387-0410.

Exchange

For sale—2002 Cavalier SL Sedan in great shape. Mileage: 55,000. Automatic, newer brakes, newer tires. Asking \$6,000. Call Teri at 387-4303 or 327-0458 after 6 p.m.

For rent—Great Wheaton Avenue apartment. Two people maximum. Townhouse layout, 1.5 bedrooms on second floor. Bedroom/study on first floor with kitchen, bath and living/dining area. Refinished hardwood floors, new carpeting in bedrooms. Basement with washer/dryer, storage. Off-street parking, garden space, front porch. No smoking. Water, garbage collection included. \$500 per month. Call 377-1569.

For sale—Traditional Portage home with four bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms. Three levels, 2,934 finished sq. ft. Overlooks the Moors golf course. Close to Westnedge shopping and dining. \$224,900. Call 352-2308.

Jobs

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



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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Trustees approve faculty, staff member retirements



Delene



Kelemen



Piatkowski



Newton

The retirements of three faculty members and two staff members were approved by the WMU Board of Trustees at its Feb. 15 meeting. Trustees also accepted the resignation of one faculty member.

All of the faculty members who are retiring are doing so with emeriti status. Their names, positions, years of continuous service and effective dates of retirement are: Linda M. Delene, marketing, 31 years, effective Aug. 30; Joseph A. Kelemen, electrical and computer engineering, 41-1/2 years, effective Jan. 1; and Thomas F. Piatkowski, computer science, 18-1/2 years, effective April 30.

The staff members retiring are: Richard Nabors, physical plant-maintenance services, 21 years, effective June 30, 2008, and Carl A. Newton, physical plant-utilities, 12-1/2 years, effective June 15.

The faculty member resigning is: Adelia M. Van Meter, speech pathology and audiology, effective Dec. 21, 2007.

Kalamazoo agency puts out call for former 'bigs,' 'littles'

The Kalamazoo area's Big Brothers Big Sisters organization will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year and is looking for former "bigs" and "littles" from any BBBS agency to participate.

The local organization, which serves Allegan, Barry, Kalamazoo, Calhoun and Van Buren counties, will formally celebrate its anniversary during an on-campus "Rally for Kids" at 2 p.m. Saturday, April 19.

The event is the organization's fourth such rally to encourage Kalamazoo-area individu-

als and families to become mentors.

"Former 'bigs' or 'littles' from any BBBS agency will be honored during the event," says Jodi Victor, director of marketing and public relations for the agency. "We know the campus has many veterans of the program—people like basketball coach Steve Hawkins—and we want them to be on hand to help us celebrate."

Go online to www.bbbsmi.org/Default.aspx?tabid=155 to register as a former "big" or "little" or any other type of volunteer.

Event slated for book buffs

The Friends of the University Libraries has scheduled a fund-raising event that allows attendees to find out what their old books are worth.

The "Antique Book Road Show" program will include a talk and book appraisal by noted dealer and appraiser James Best at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 13, in the Meader Rare Book Room of WMU's Waldo Library.

The admission fee of \$5 for students and \$10 for adults will count as an annual membership for Friends of the University Libraries. There is no fee for the organization's current members. Registration and an additional fee are required for book appraisals. The appraisal fee is \$5, and individuals may not have more than two titles appraised.

Best is an emeritus in political science at Kent State University who became a book dealer in 1978. His business primarily deals in illustrated books, 19th-century travel and exploration, handwritten manuscript materials and old and rare books from the 19th century and earlier. Best has conducted a number of insurance-related appraisals, most recently completing one involving more than 3,000 manuscript items donated to the Oberlin University Library.

Go to www.wmich.edu/library/friends for registration information. Those with questions should contact Kathy Gerow at lib-friends@wmich.edu or 387-5202.

Goalball volunteers needed

The nation's top teams in the action-packed sport of goalball will be on campus Saturday and Sunday, March 1-2, when WMU hosts the John Bakos Memorial Goalball Tournament to start the sport's 2008 U.S. season.

Goalball is played by visually impaired or blindfolded athletes. The new season begins the long trek to the 2008 national championships in Salt Lake City later this year and players' aspirations to represent the United States at the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing this summer.

The tournament is free and offers a chance for people to volunteer to keep score, keep time, serve as line judges and fill a long list of other jobs. To volunteer, contact Sherry Gordon at sdgordon78@sbcglobal.net or 337-3276.

New Dominican students get warm welcome, WMU gear

Scores of students from the Dominican Republic participated in a photo session with WMU President John M. Dunn Feb. 13 in the Bernhard Center. Nearly 60 new D.R. students arrived on campus in January to begin studies in English language or enter undergraduate academic programs through a scholarship program funded by their government. With the help of the WMU Bookstore and Haenicke Institute for Global Education, the new arrivals now all have WMU sweatshirts to lessen their first exposure to Michigan's winter weather. (Photo by Mike Lanka)



Expert to brief faculty, staff on post traumatic stress disorder issues faced by combat veterans

Two sessions of a talk on "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: What Faculty and Staff Need to Know" will be held on campus at 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 27, and 10 a.m. Friday, Feb. 29.

Both sessions will take place on the second floor of the Bernhard Center in the Brown and Gold Room and be presented by Carman Stark, a clinical psychologist with the PTSD Clinic at the Battle Creek Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Gerry Schma, a University advocate in WMU's Advocacy Office for Transfer Student and Military Affairs, notes that combat stress may impact some veterans' study skills, classroom functioning, and interaction with other students and faculty.

"Many of our student veterans return to classes immediately upon their return from

overseas deployment," Schma says. "Often they're in a state of transition from the war zone to the daily routines of American life. Most veterans experience a very normal transition, but others have real difficulties that can impact their ability to function academically."

Stark's talk will address some of the challenges combat military face, especially challenges dealing with PTSD. All faculty and staff are urged to learn more about this disorder, which is a disease that is now predicted to affect as many as 40 to 70 percent of returning combat soldiers.

"Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: What Faculty and Staff Need to Know" will help members of the campus community better understand the indicators of PTSD as well as the ways they and the University can

best support combat veterans with this disorder.

To obtain additional information or register to attend one of the two PTSD sessions, contact Eric McConnell in the Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs at eric.mcconnell@wmich.edu or (269) 387-0740.

Obituary

Owen Horton Jr., formerly a longtime WMU staff member, died Feb. 5 in Borgess Hospital. He was 78.

Owen was a bindery operator in WMU's Printing Services for 36-1/2 years. He retired in 1991.

The Plainwell, Mich., resident was a Kalamazoo native and served in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict.

On Campus with James Center



PLAYING IT SAFE
(Photo by Jeanne Baron)

Jim Center's knowledge of radioactivity comes into play when a tenured professor carbon dates a rock sample or a student wants to crush up bits of vintage Fiesta Dinnerware for an art project.

Center, who works in the Office of the Vice President for Research, is both the radiation safety officer and biosafety officer for WMU. As RSO and BSO, he oversees the use of radiation-producing machines as well as radiological and biological materials on campus and is the University's liaison with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and other governmental agencies.

"I'm not here to interfere with faculty, staff or students or to create more work for them," he says. "As a safety professional, I sometimes slow them down, but it's always to help them complete their projects safely and lawfully."

Center came to WMU in 1999 as the University's first full-time radiation safety officer. He was assigned the dual role of biosafety officer in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Prior to joining the staff, Center served for 12 years as radiation protection supervisor at the D.C. Cook Nuclear Power station near Bridgman, Mich. Before that, he was a radiological controls and chemistry specialist in the U.S. Navy and spent four years of his six-year enlistment on a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

In his WMU role, Center orders, monitors and tracks materials and equipment; conducts scheduled and unscheduled audits; fields questions from and makes presentations to the campus community and public; serves as the RSO for startup companies housed in the Innovation Center at WMU's BTR Park; and is on call as an RSO local officials can contact in case of emergencies.

He also trains faculty and student researchers as well as custodians and other employees, familiarizing them with the laws and health risks associated with materials and equipment they might encounter and encouraging them, along with all employees, to let him know if they discover potential problems.

Center lives in Kalamazoo with his wife, Marie, who works for the research office as an animal care technician. They have three children, two of whom are enrolled in WMU's elementary education program. Center is active in the local community, coaching swimming and water polo. He is a chief petty officer in the Navy Reserve.

WMU community challenged to take the plunge

Buster Bronco may not be up to the challenge, but numerous students will act like polar bears Saturday, Feb. 23, and jump into Goldsworth Pond.

The students have been securing donations to earn the honor of participating in WMU's first Polar Plunge to benefit Special Olympics. President John M. Dunn has issued a challenge to plunge in himself if students raise \$4,000.

The event, which is being sponsored by the Western Student Association and Special Olympics Michigan, is open to on- and off-campus participants. The money raised will be used to support Special Olympics athletes in the Kalamazoo area and their coaches.

The Polar Plunge is the signature event of the Law Enforcement Torch Run initiative benefiting Special Olympics. Participants must raise a minimum of \$50 to be able to

take to the water and receive a commemorative T-shirt.

Registration for the WMU event will begin at 10 a.m., with the plunge taking place at about 10:45 a.m. Creative plunging costumes are encouraged. Those plunging will have access to changing rooms, hot tubs and a heating room.

There will be a parade of costumes at 11:30 a.m. as well as a party at 12:30 p.m. that will feature a warm meal, prizes and awards. Admission to the party is free for plungers and \$5 for others.

Anyone wishing to participate should send their name to Katie Rollert at wsa-vp@wmich.edu along with their phone number, e-mail address and if representing a group, their group name. Several Polar Plunges are being held across Michigan this winter. Go to www.somi.org to learn more about these events.

Emergencies

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and sometimes in coordination with the community's emergency responders. The plan is practiced using a range of possible campus emergencies, and all of the practices revolve around three key elements.

The key elements in emergencies are:

- speed of first response to the situation;
- immediate communication of the situation to the campus community; and
- convening of campus and community resources to help the campus recover from the situation.

In addition to WMU Public Safety, teams involved in emergency planning represent academic affairs, the Sindecuse Health Center, the Physical Plant, residence life, purchasing, information technology, university relations and other areas.

Details about emergency planning at WMU can be found at www.obf.wmich.edu/safety.

Campus committee announces creation of University Assessment Excellence Award

The University Assessment Steering Committee has created an Assessment Excellence Award to recognize and showcase outstanding efforts in the area of assessment at WMU. Both an individual award and a unit award will be presented.

The individual award is open to employees who have authored or co-authored an

assessment-related article. The unit award is open to academic departments and non-instructional units that have a UASC-approved assessment plan.

Winners of the individual award, which is expected to be presented annually, will receive a cash prize and Universitywide recognition. Normally, the unit award will

be made every other year and coincide with unit submissions of their biannual assessment reports.

More information is available online at www.wmich.edu/poapa/uac by clicking on "University Assessment Excellence Award" or by contacting Eileen B. Evans, institutional effectiveness.