Event puts ‘home’ in Homecoming

The campus community is invited to register to participate in the Parade of Nations Saturday, Oct. 20. The parade features many of WMU’s international students from 84 countries carrying flags of their home countries across the football field just before the start of the Homecoming game.

To participate and show support for those international student ambassadors, register with International Services and Student Affairs in person or by calling 387-5872. Participants may attend a free get-acquainted tailgate party prior to the parade.

Benson, Pennock to receive Distinguished Service Award

Academic Covocation set

WMU will hold its 2007 Academic Covocation at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 25, in the Dalton Center Recital Hall. The event will feature WMU President John M. Dunn’s State of the University address as well as the presentation of a number of campuswide awards. Slated to be honored are this year’s recipients of WMU’s Distinguished Faculty Scholar, Emerging Scholar, Distinguished Teaching and Distinguished Service awards.

Distinguished Alumni Award winners announced for 2007

The Alumni Association has selected a veteran broadcaster, prominent businessman and top executive to receive its most prestigious honor, the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Dybek named MacArthur Foundation Fellow

Stuart Dybek, an acclaimed short-story writer who has taught at WMU for the past 33 years, was one of 24 Americans named Sept. 25 as the recipient of a coveted John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.

Popularly known as “genius awards,” MacArthur Fellowships are awarded to nominees selected for their creativity, originality and potential to make important future contributions. Each fellowship comes with $500,000—no strings attached—designed to provide support for the recipient’s work during the next five years.

In outlining the variety of endeavors and caliber of winners of the 2007 awards, a MacArthur Foundation news release describes Dybek as “a short story writer borrowing from the Old World yet emerging from the New World to feed the imagination of contemporary Americans."

Dybek, who retired from full-time teaching at WMU earlier this year, is a Distinguished Writer in Residence at Northwestern University. He remains closely connected to WMU as an adjunct faculty member, and he teaches in the University’s renowned Prague Summer Program.

Reached in Chicago shortly after learning of the honor, Dybek said he had no idea he would receive it before being contacted by a MacArthur Foundation representative.

“I took the call on my cell phone and checked the number to see if it was a friend who was playing a practical joke,” he said.

Dybek added that, like all writers, his challenge is finding time to write, and he will...
Documentary keeps Borish busy

Linda Borish, history and women’s and gender studies, has been traveling overseas and across the nation to present and show her film “Jewish Women in American Sport: Settlement Houses to the Olympics.” Borish served as executive producer and historian for the documentary, which was directed and produced by award-winning, Chicago-based filmmaker Shuli Eshel.

Another presentation and screening is set for Sunday, Oct. 14, at the St. John Neumann Center in Pittsburgh and the Rauh Jewish Archives. The film also has been selected for upcoming film festivals, including the Jewish Eye-World Jewish Film Festival Nov. 14 to 22 in Beersheva, Israel; Palm Desert Jewish Film Festival, also in November; and International Jewish Film Festival in Hawaii in February.

Film features Angles commentary

Jeffrey Angles, foreign languages, is featured in the audio commentary of the digital release of a classic movie that is part of a prestigious collection of new releases of classic international films. Angles provides the voice-over commentary to the Criterion Collection’s release of Kenji Mizoguchi’s film “Sansho the Bailiff,” a moving tale of a mother separated from her children and sold into slavery in medieval Japan.

His commentary is featured throughout the more than two-hour film, a feat that required an enormous amount of preparation. He also contributed to an 80-page booklet included in the box set with the film.

Angles, head of the Japanese program and associate director of the Ichihashi Sanyo Japan Center, was picked for the project after producers heard him on National Public Radio’s “All Things Considered” in 2006 talking about a book he co-edited.

Targowski heads national group

Andrew Targowski, business information systems, was elected in June to a three-year term as president of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations.

ICSC members are academics and independent scholars interested in the history of world cultures and related global issues. The society is affiliated with comparative studies programs worldwide and believes complex, civilization-related problems need diverse, multidisciplinary analyses.

It fosters internationalism through annual meetings and publications. In 2009, WMU will host the World Congress on “One More Chance for Civilization,” which is being organized by the ISCSIC and WMU’s Haenicke Institute for Global Education.
University launches this year's United Way campaign; schedules campus rally for Oct. 17

WMU officially kicked off its 2007 United Way campus campaign Oct. 1 with a goal of $215,000. The funds will support the Greater Kalamazoo United Way’s $11.1 million overall target. The campus community is encouraged to step up again this year to make a difference to better the lives of people right here in our community—our neighbors, friends, coworkers and sometimes our own family members.”

We definitely have power now, so 'Beam' me up

WMU will formally name its power plant after Robert M. Beam during a brief public ceremony at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 12. A reception will immediately follow in 4010 College of Health and Human Services Building.

Beam headed the University’s business and physical plant operations for 21 years. He retired in June, after 42 years of service to the University. The decision to name the power plant in his honor was announced at a retirement event held during his final days at WMU.

Beam is credited with being a key player in modernizing and upgrading the power plant after the University acquired it in 1994 from the state-owned Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital. The naming ceremony will take place at the power plant, which is located off Stadium Drive between Oliver and Howard streets. Those wishing to attend the event may enter the grounds using the plant drive directly off Stadium just past Oliver. (Photos by Cheryl P. Roland)

New tool helps WMU students track their degree progress

Undergraduate students now have a powerful tool to track their academic progress toward graduation. The Progress to Degree system enables students and advisors to generate electronic reports that evaluate a student’s academic history against the requirements of a selected undergraduate degree program.

“Students can choose to run an evaluation for their chosen major or for another major or minor,” says Registrar Barbara McKinney. “They can run a limitless number of what-if possibilities, and the results are generated almost instantaneously.”

“Progress to Degree, which has been in development since 2006, is not a response to WMU’s new Western Edge commitment to eligible students, but it will be a valuable aid toward graduation. All degree requirements will be verified by graduation auditors, and students will be notified of the results.”

Progress to Degree is available for undergraduate students who entered WMU since fall 2004, for whom academic records and applicable degree requirements are available in the system. The tool is expected to be available for graduate students in 2008.

“Progress to Degree is a resource to aide, but not replace, academic advising or the graduation audit process,” says McKinney. “All students must still file for an audit to apply for graduation. All degree requirements will be verified by graduation auditors, and students will be notified of the results.”

President John M. Dunn and campaign committee members will host a WMU United Way Rally to thank everyone who has already given and provide more information for those interested in giving. The “7th Inn Stretch” will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 17, in the Bernhard Center Ballroom.

For sale—491-7760.

Call Jarl Brey at 585-5800.

For sale—72 inches with two leaves. Six chairs (two arm/ four side). Matching server and table pads. $500 total.

Pros talk turkey to students

Some 100 students will be displaying their good taste by attending the 10th annual Etiquette Dinner from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 18, in the Pether Center. It imparts and better information about proper business etiquette in mealtime situations.

Students must register to attend the dinner, which costs $10 and is open to juniors, seniors and graduate students. Seating is limited. To register, call Career and Student Employment Services at 387-2745 or visit its office in Ellsworth.
Distinguished Alumni winners

The University is pleased to announce the 2007 Distinguished Alumni winners. Each year, the Alumni Association selects a group of individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the University and to society. The recipients of this year’s honors are:

1. Bruce Dybek, a 1974 graduate of WMU’s College of Education, has been recognized for his dedication to the University and the field of education. He is currently the superintendent of the Kalamazoo Public Schools.

2. John Miller, a 1975 graduate of WMU’s College of Business, has been honored for his contributions to the business community and his support of WMU. He is the founder and CEO of a large regional firm.

3. Sally Pennock, a 1977 graduate of WMU’s College of Arts and Sciences, has been acknowledged for her leadership and service to WMU. She is a former college president and current board member.

The three will be recognized at a reception and dinner on Saturday, October 20, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bernhard Center’s East Ballroom. Hickey and McKinley will be in attendance.

To make a reservation, visit www.wmich.edu/alumni and click on “Events” or call the Alumni Association at 387-8777.

Service award winners

John taught us to become dedicated educators, scholars and leaders through his encouragement, patience, trust and foremost, his passion and enthusiasm for our profession,” one such faculty member wrote. “He set expectations high and inspired us to meet them by his own example.”

Also mentioned by nominees were Benson’s legendary advocacy for all graduate students, special generosity toward international students and channeling of his passion for world travel into creating first-rate study abroad experiences for WMU students.

Pennock, who had a career as a financial officer with a number of private-sector firms, came to the University in 1997 as Miller Auditorium’s business manager. He left to serve in the same role in WMU’s College of Aviation, but returned in 2004 as associate director.

Nominees lauded Pennock for his ability to “do it all,” from assisting other units in his division with his business acumen to serving as an advisor to student groups and a mentor to individual students.

“He faces every challenge with enthusiasm and believes there is nothing that can’t be solved with a little ingenuity, teamwork and a dose of humor,” wrote one colleague. “His dedication to the University and the offices he works for is unmatched.”

Other colleagues praised Pennock for his role in helping Miller meet success as it takes on more and more complex programming and scheduling challenges.

Campus members kick up their heels for Homecoming

The University will be treating the campus community to a week of exciting activities during its Homecoming celebration Monday through Sunday, October 15-21.

The highlight of the celebration will be the Homecoming football game Oct. 20.

Among the many activities open to the public during the week-long festivities will be a 5K and 1K run/walk; the student-sponsored Skit Night, Western Games and Soap Box Derby; the Alumni Association PepFest; and the National Pan-Hellenic Council March Down.

For more information about Homecoming activities, including cost and registration details, visit www.wmich.edu/homecoming and click on the links for “Student Events,” “Alumni Events” and “Campus Events.”