Roads closed today for girls run/walk

Lane and street closures are ro rout traffic from Waldo Stadium through downtown Kalamazoo today for the Girls on the Run New Balance 5K run/walk. The detours will be in place prior to the start of the event at 6:30 p.m. and remain until 8 p.m.

An expected 2,100 girls will leave Waldo Stadium and head downtown on South Street for their 3.1-mile journey through the downtown streets then back on West Lovell to Waldo Stadium.

Last travel info meeting tomorrow

WMU’s online travel authorization process has been changed to include all ground and air travel. Training sessions have been taking place this month for employees to learn about the new procedures.

The final training session is set for tomorrow from 10 a.m. to noon in the Fetzer Center’s Kirsh Auditorium. Visit www.fm.wmich.edu/travel for more information.

Trustees alter two meeting dates

A scheduled June 1 meeting of the WMU Board of Trustees was cancelled and replaced by a conference-call meeting May 26. Also, the July 27 board meeting has been changed to Friday, July 23.

Among the items scheduled for consideration by trustees at the cancelled June meeting was the approval of promotion and tenure for faculty members across the University. That item was addressed during the conference call.

Payroll website announces change

Beginning June 1, paycheck information prior to September 2009 will no longer be available through the payroll website. Paycheck information from September 2009 and later will still be available and accessible through the Employee Self Service link in GoWMU.

Two groundbreakings scheduled

Groundbreakings have been scheduled Tuesday, June 1, for two major campus construction projects. The ceremony to officially begin construction on the new Sangren will start at 8:30 a.m. while a similar ceremony for phase one of the University’s new apartment complex will start at 2 p.m.

The first event will take place near Sangren. The second event will take place at the apartment complex construction site, which is between Knobwood Avenue and Kohrman. Visit the Facilities Management website at www.fm.wmich.edu for more information about the two building projects.

Western News hiatus is approaching

The next issue of Western News will be distributed on Thursday, June 10, and will be the second to the last issue published this summer. The deadline to submit items for the issue is 5 p.m. Friday, June 4.

Campus getting ready for visit by Obama

President Barack Obama will address the graduating seniors of Kalamazoo Central High School in a commencement ceremony set for 7 p.m. Monday, June 7, in University Arena.

The decision to hold the event in WMU’s arena, which seats more than 5,000 people, was made by Kalamazoo Public Schools to accommodate a larger-than-usual crowd.

The president’s decision to speak at the Kalamazoo Central commencement was the culmination of a national Race to the Top Commencement Challenge. That contest attracted proposals by more than 1,000 schools to have Obama give their commencement address.

The Kalamazoo Central entry was one of three finalists in the contest, and the president personally made the final selection to speak at Kalamazoo Central.

Obama’s visit will mark the second time this decade that a sitting president has visited the WMU campus. President George W. Bush came to campus in March 2001 to deliver an address on tax cuts that was sponsored by Southwest Michigan First and the Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce. The first sitting president to visit the campus was William Howard Taft, who visited what was then Western Michigan Normal School in 1911.

Tickets to attend Kalamazoo Central’s commencement ceremony are not available to the general public. Kalamazoo Public Schools will distribute tickets to members of central’s graduating class as well as some other students who attend central and Kalamazoo’s other two high schools.

WMU names new business, honors college deans

Deans have been named to fill vacancies at the helm of two colleges. Both appointments would be effective July 1 and are pending approval of the WMU Board of Trustees.

Kay M. Palan, associate dean for undergraduate programs at Iowa State University’s College of Business, has been selected to head the Haworth College of Business. Additionally, Nicholas Andreadis has been selected to head the Lee Honors College, which he has been serving as acting dean since January.

Palan, an associate professor of marketing at ISU, was chosen following a national search. Her selection as dean includes an appointment as a tenured professor of marketing. She replaces David Shields, who accepted a new deanship at Mercer University in Atlanta last summer.

An ISU faculty member since 1994, Palan is a business educator with an extensive background in marketing, the health care industry and managing collegiate entrepreneurial programs. She has been ISU’s associate business dean since 2006, and began serving in that role on an interim basis in 2004.

Previously, Palan was at Texas Tech University, where she completed her doctoral degree. Her background also includes marketing-related consulting projects with various civic, nonprofit and corporate entities. Her current research focuses on gender and youth-based marketing issues, especially teenage girls’ autonomy and competence as shoppers and how children learn to be consumers and make consumption decisions.

Andreadis, an associate professor of counselor education and counseling psychology, was chosen following an internal search. His selection as dean includes tenure with his faculty post. He replaces Keith M. Hearit, who now serves as WMU’s vice provost for strategic enrollment management.

In addition to leading the honors college, Andreadis also will continue his role as director of the college’s Academically Talented Youth Program, which serves gifted middle and high school students from more than 50 school districts in West Michigan.

A faculty member since 1999, Andreadis led the University’s regional education efforts from 2005 to 2006 as dean of Extended University Programs. At the time of his acting honors college dean appointment in January, he had been serving as interim associate dean of the college since 2007.

As an assistant professor of counselor education and counseling psychology, Andreadis coordinated WMU’s master’s program in human resource development and has taught in the doctoral programs in interdisciplinary evaluation and in interdisciplinary health studies.
WMU slates info sessions for MPSERS employees

The University has scheduled two information sessions for employees who are part of MPSERS—Michigan Public School Employee Retirement Services—and those eligible to take advantage of new retirement incentives recently approved by the Michigan Legislature.

Sessions will be at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, May 27, and Tuesday, June 1, at the Kresge Auditorium of the Fetzer Center. Richard Schaper, manager of WMU retirement services, will conduct the sessions to answer questions eligible employees have about the decision-making process and the impact of the incentives on retirement planning.

He also will discuss timing, benefits coordination and issues relating to employees who may not meet MPSERS eligibility requirements but not those of the University.

The early-out incentives apply to about 56,000 eligible employees statewide. At WMU, about 300 employees meet eligibility requirements and have received letters from MPSERS. The MPSERS plan was an option once offered to new WMU employees, but the University ceased new enrollments in the plan in 1996.

Education Library relocated

The Education Library is being relocated within Sangren to accommodate ongoing construction activities.

The library will move to 1101-05, 1210-12, and 1301-08 for about two years, at which time the facility's home in the new Sangren will be ready for occupation. The move is expected to be completed by June 4.

Reserve services, as well as pulling titles requested, will be available in 3307 Sangren with 24-hour turnaround. Reserve services will be open this summer from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fridays.

Also, Sangren's Visual Resources Library has been closed. Its slide collection is being moved to the Music and Dance Library in the Dalton Center. Its video and DVD collection was moved to Waldo Library last year.

Sangren's south wing, which housed the Education Library relocated last year with 24-hour turnaround. Reserve services will be open this summer from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fridays. Sangren's south wing, which housed the Education Library, is scheduled for demolition in June. The north wing will remain in use until the new building is ready for occupancy, and then be demolished.

Jobs

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

Translator wins national book prize

Jeffrey M. Angles, foreign languages, has been awarded the 2009 Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission Prize for the Translation of Japanese Literature for his forthcoming translation of Tada Chimako’s “Forest of Eyes: Selected Poems of Tada Chimako.” Columbia University’s Donald Keene Center for Japanese Studies annually gives one prize in modern literature, which Angles won, as well as one prize in classical literature. The 2009 prizes were presented during an April ceremony in New York.

An associate professor, Angles is the director and advisor for WMU’s Japanese language program. He has been spending 2009-10 at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto, Japan, as a visiting professor.

Service project earns state funding

Debra Lindstrom-Hazel, occupational therapy, has designed the Home Fit Program, which has won a Michigan American Association of Retired Persons’ AARP Member Value Innovation Award. An accompanying $10,000 prize will be used to improve the program in collaboration with the American Occupational Therapy Association Commission on Patient-Centered Outcomes Research.

The program evaluates the homes of senior citizens and helps educate people about how their homes can fit them for a lifetime.

It was initiated in the College of Health and Human Services in October 2009. Students in the occupational therapy class on assistive technology have been involved in planning and presenting Home Fit projects.

The program also was carried out in April in Okemos, Mich., and is being undertaken this month in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Prof to head national organization

Jennifer Wiebold, blindness and low vision studies, has been chosen president-elect of the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association.

Wiebold will serve as president in 2011.

An associate professor and certified rehabilitation counselor, she coordinates the dual master’s program in rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation teaching offered through the departments of Blindness and Low Vision Studies and Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology.

The NRCA is the largest national organization representing practicing rehabilitation counselors. It helps advance the profession by promoting public understanding, setting ethical standards and establishing supportive programs that assist all persons with disabilities in becoming self-sufficient and contributing members of society.
Improved service focus of Ellsworth remodeling

Consolidation and improvement of several student-service functions has prompted a mini-renovation of Ellsworth.

The Center for Academic Success Programs, now based in Moore, will move to the first floor of Ellsworth in mid-August. CASP will occupy space being vacated by Extended University Programs, which is moving to Ellsworth’s third floor this month.

The overall renovation will shift several departments within the centrally located building. CASP, in particular, will benefit from the project by being able to house all of its services under one roof and being in close proximity to services and resources available in the Bernhard Center and Ellsworth.

One CASP unit already has relocated to Ellsworth—the Advocacy Office for Transfer Students and Military Affairs. Plans call for that office to be split into the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Office of Transfer Student Services in a reorganization that also will result in new names for two other CASP units.

The Academic Skills Center will be renamed Academic Resource Center while University Curriculum will be renamed Exploratory Advising. No CASP phone numbers will change in the reorganization.

Ellsworth was originally built in 1956 as a men’s residence hall. After a fire damaged the building in the 1980s, the hall was closed as a residential building and reopened as an office building.

For more information about the CASP move or reorganization, contact Randy Ott, CASP director, at randy.ott@wmich.edu or 387-4413.

University receives $1 million to help prepare high school teacher-scientists

A $1 million grant to WMU from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute will put prospective high school science teachers to work in laboratories to help them learn how to translate science into practical experiences for their future students.

The grant, announced by HHMI May 20, is one of a round of awards totaling $79 million made to research universities around the United States to strengthen undergraduate and precollege science education. HHMI, the nation’s largest private funder of science education, has spent $1.6 billion since 1985 to reform life sciences education from elementary through graduate school.

In the current round of funding, 50 research universities in 30 states and the District of Columbia have been awarded a total of $70 million through HHMI’s Precollege and Undergraduate Science Education Program. An additional $9 million will be shared by 13 leading research scientists through the HHMI Professors Program to support their efforts to make science more engaging to undergraduates.

The four-year award to WMU will focus on building cohorts of prospective high school science teachers who are trained first as scientists and will then learn how to turn their own research experiences into practical tools that will help them convey scientific principals to their students.

Susan Stapleton, a noted researcher and associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, will direct the effort. Other WMU scientists involved in the project will be William Cobern and Renee Schwartz, Mallinson Institute for Science Education, and Leonard Ginsberg, biological sciences.

Retirement reception

A retirement reception has been scheduled for Gary L. Wegenke, dean of the College of Education and Human Development. To attend, register at amy.burns@wmich.edu or call 387-2966 by June 10. Wegenke will be honored from 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday, June 17, in the Fetzer Center for 12-1/2 years of service to the University.

Obituary

Irene S. Bibza, emeritus in home economics, died April 15 in Arlington, Va. She was 93.

Bibza came to WMU in 1965 and retired in 1980 after 15 years of service to the University. She was an assistant professor with expertise in textiles and design, clothing construction and tailoring.

She created a scholarship in 1996 for students in the University’s design and technical theatre program.

After retirement, Bibza was active as a volunteer for WMU’s Zest for Life Program as well as community organizations such as the American Cancer Society and Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, where she was a docent.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts or, through the WMU Foundation, to the University’s theater, music or dance departments.

APA, PSSO present 2010 staff awards

Six staff members received 2010 awards from the Administrative Professional Association and Professional and Support Staff Organization. The annual awards were presented during the APA/PSSO Awards and Spring Luncheon held on campus May 21.

Receiving this year’s APA awards were Amy Seif, University Recreation, Outstanding Professional award; Tom Krol, medieval studies, Outstanding New Professional award; and Joe Odellhal, Facilities Management, Sony Griffin Service Award.

Receiving this year’s PSSO Service Awards were Vicky Meinema, accounting services, and Nancy Johnson, investments and endowment management.

The final honor presented during the luncheon, the joint APA, PSSO WMU Spirit Award, went to Tim Holysz, Facilities Management, leadership services.

This year’s award winners are, from left, Saff, Meinema, Odellhal, Holysz, and Johnson. Not pictured is Krol. (Photo by Tammy M. Boneburg)

Poker walk was big draw

Despite hot weather, the fitness-oriented Poker Walk held May 25 attracted numerous employees for a lunch-hour hike around campus. Participants included, from left: (front row) Walt Worthy, Linda Goldner, Gina Betcher and Kelli Bond; (middle row) Wil Emmert, Dania Bazzi, Pam Biller and Charlotte Kelley; and (back row) Joyce Lew. (Photo by Tammy M. Boneburg)
Merrion study presented to White House

A study done by a WMU administrator that assesses undergraduate arts education 10 years into the future has found its way to the White House and beyond.

Margaret Merrion, dean of the College of Fine Arts, conducted the study for the academic magazine Change. Her findings were presented early this year to Kalpen Modi, associate director of public engagement for the Obama administration.

“The panel of experts shaped a provocative view of the future with welcoming and alarming predictions,” Merrion says.

The study titled “A Prophecy for the Arts in Higher Education,” was conducted while on sabbatical leave and took several months to compile.

The experts, who made predictions in eight key areas, came together, critiqued and evaluated before arriving at a consensus.

“The Delphi technique, a forecasting tool where the opinions of a panel of experts are gathered, critiqued and evaluated before arriving at a consensus,” Merrion says. "What’s difficult is finding topics for our employment seminars that will help our students grow but aren’t repetitive. The best part of my job is collaboration with students and staff to get things done—regardless of what project we’re working on.”

Merrion study presented to White House

Cruz participated in the division’s GEAR UP/College Day Program as a middle schooler, then worked for the program as a student employee after enrolling at WMU in 1996. In 1999 while still working on her undergraduate degree, DMA hired her as an administrative assistant, first for the Upward Bound program and a few years later, for the Upward Bound Math and Science program.

In 2004, Cruz completed her college studies, earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in photography. That same year, her grant-funded job ran out, so she accepted the post of office coordinator in the Environmental Institute. Cruz returned to her old stomping grounds this past fall as DMA’s administrative assistant.

“It’s nice to be back. Some faces have changed, but everyone has been welcoming,” she says. “And being familiar with the programs we offer here makes the job easier. I don’t think many people realize everything we do. We have a lot going on, just check out our website at www.wmich.edu/multicultural and see.”

Cruz’s primary duties include taking care of payroll for more than 50 employees, monitoring and processing paperwork for several program budgets, processing student funding requests and awards, helping with multicultural events, and supporting numerous academic- as well as diversity-related activities and collaborations within and outside the University. She also serves on DMA’s Student Employment Committee, helping to organize two annual employment seminars for the division’s student workers.

“I love the budget work. I like numbers so that’s not the challenging part of my job,” Cruz says. “What’s difficult is finding topics for our employment seminars that will help our students grow but aren’t repetitive. The best part of my job is collaborating with students and staff to get things done—regardless of what project we’re working on.”

Cruz and her husband, Umberto, live in Hartford, Mich., and have five children. The youngest child is 3 and the oldest is a freshman in high school. “Between my job, commuting and home life, I’m quite busy and don’t have a lot of time for hobbies,” she says, noting that Umberto has been a stay-at-home dad since she rejoined DMA.

Most of the free time Cruz does have is spent supporting her children and their activities. She likes to garden and sew, and she is a volunteer teacher at her church. Although photography takes a back seat these days, her talent in that arena is displayed in the large, framed photos of two of her children that proudly adorn her office walls.

New stop-smoking program

WMU has launched a new program called Kick the Nic to help its employees and students and their eligible dependents quit smoking.

“The first step to quitting is wanting to quit,” says Lisa Marshall, University medical director. “Recent changes in the law have made nearly all public spaces in Michigan smoke-free, and that coupled with growing interest in improving personal health and wellness has led a lot of people to seek help kicking the tobacco habit.”

Kick the Nic is a confidential, nonjudgmental program administered by the Sindecuse Health Center. It provides a variety of resources, including phone or appointment consultations with tobacco cessation specialists, clinician appointments for prescription products and online programs.

Benefits-eligible employees and dependents may receive full reimbursement of the cost of tobacco cessation products by enrolling in Kick the Nic. The program provides $50 percent reimbursement on nicotine replacement products and prescription expenses after being tobacco-free for three months. The remaining 50 percent of the total cost is refunded after successfully quitting tobacco for one year.

Visit www.wmich.edu/shc/kickkit for more information.

Haenicke honored

Haenicke participated in the division’s GEAR UP/College Day Program as a middle schooler, then worked for the program as a student employee after enrolling at WMU in 1996. In 1999 while still working on her undergraduate degree, DMA hired her as an administrative assistant, first for the Upward Bound program and a few years later, for the Upward Bound Math and Science program.

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