

Angelo State University • Magazine

Summer 2011 • Volume 4 • Number 2

MEMBER, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM



Radical RESEARCH

The Sect Life of Women • Virus Hunters • The Napkin

Message

from the President

Dear Friends:

While hard to believe that time has passed so quickly, June 1st marks the start of my fifth year at Angelo State University. The experience has been gratifying and exciting, though not without its challenges. As I noted in a recent article for the *San Angelo Standard-Times*, our ability to weather the economic and financial challenges now faced by Texas and the nation will depend greatly on how we define our institutional strengths over the coming months. We must be objective about our ability to attract resources – students, faculty, staff and money – in an environment buffeted by competing demands. To succeed, we must build on our historic strengths while positioning ourselves to adapt to emerging trends and possibilities.

This issue of the *Angelo State University Magazine* highlights two of our university's distinctive strengths, which will help us to define and adapt to those new trends. First is our long-standing emphasis on faculty-led research projects that involve undergraduate students in various aspects of the investigative process. This close faculty-student relationship sets ASU apart from many of our peer institutions and creates a signature program to recruit, retain and graduate students. We are now working to strengthen our undergraduate research program and tie it even more directly to the educational expectations set for all of our students.

Our graduates and their career successes are the second area that has defined ASU for many years. As you will read in this issue, our alumni represent a variety of disciplines, careers and experiences, but each of them credits much of their success to the time they spent at ASU. You will also see that some stories involve families who have sent successive generations to Angelo State for their education. Our Alumni Association is working diligently to ensure that each graduate stays connected with the university, no matter where they locate after graduation.

This summer will see the further transformation of the campus as our new Student Recreation Center, our Plaza Verde residence hall project and our enhanced green spaces join with the Learning Commons in the Porter Henderson Library to support our strategic goal of becoming a truly residential campus. By building on our institutional strengths, supporting the aspirations of our students and creating avenues for their success after graduation, ASU is positioning itself for the future. I hope that you will visit the campus to see firsthand the dynamic effect of these changes for all members of our community.

Sincerely,



Joseph C. Rallo
President



Joseph C. Rallo





Angelo State University Magazine

Summer 2011 Vol. 4, No. 2

Angelo State University
Member, Texas Tech University System

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Angelo State University Magazine

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With her exploration of *The Handmaid's Tale*, Molly Swets produced an English thesis on fundamentalist religion's impact on women. Current events fanned interest in the work, now available on amazon.com.

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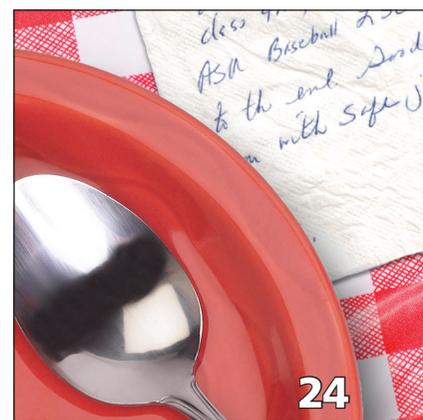
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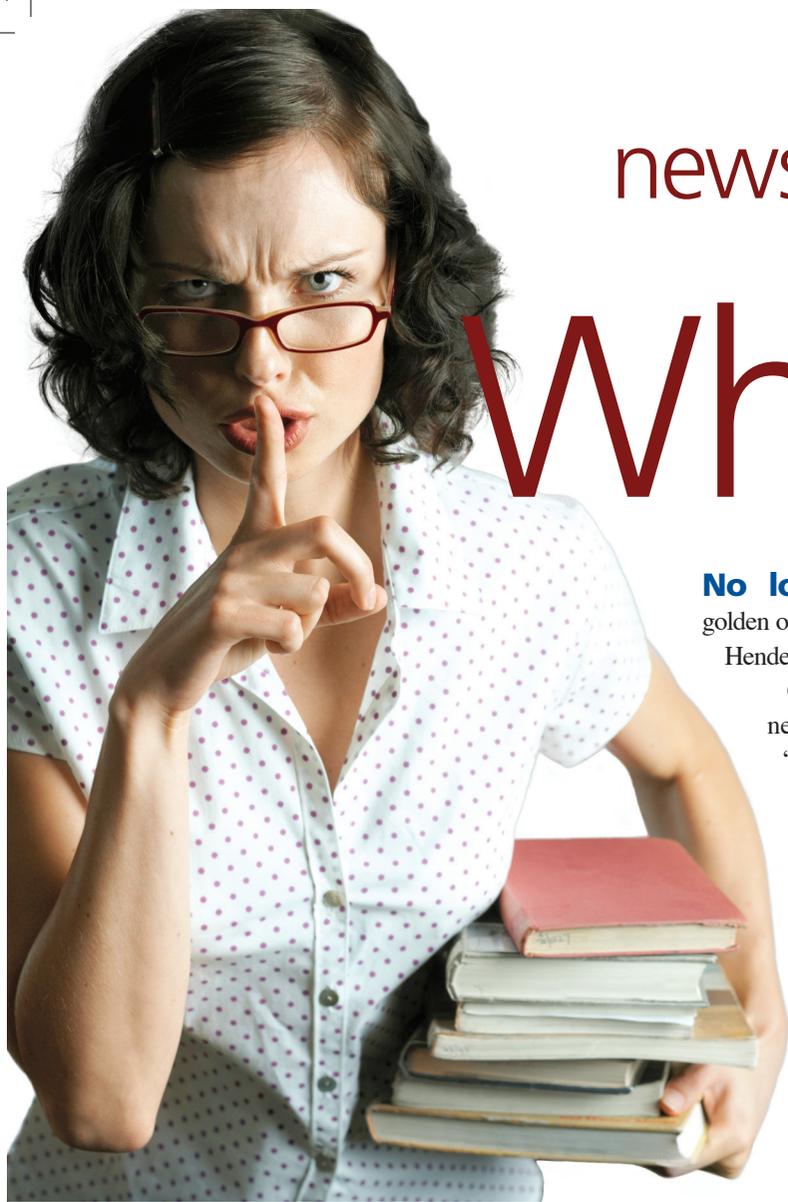
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On the Cover: Dr. John Osterhout, head of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, and Dr. Edith Osborne, assistant professor of biochemistry, are conducting basic laboratory research into the nature of proteins. (Photo by Danny Meyer)

Back Cover: The opening of the Learning Commons in the Porter Henderson Library has given the building a new look and a new main entrance at the northwest corner of the facility. (Photo by Danny Meyer)





Whispering

No longer does silence ring golden on the first floor of the Porter Henderson Library.

Or, as the first library newsletter of 2011 stated, “quietude has been downplayed.” So, grab yourself a cup of coffee from the in-library Starbucks outlet and chat away with your classmates on your group project. This is the library’s new Learning Commons, where digital resources have replaced most of the books, where

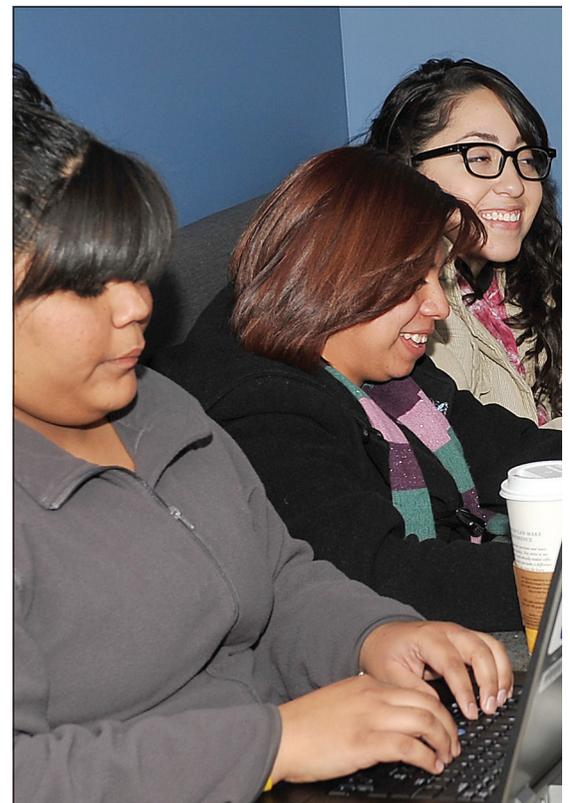
conversation is encouraged and where jaws are dropping by first-time visitors.

“Many of us,” said library Executive Director Maurice Fortin, “have heard comments like ‘Am I still in San Angelo?’ or ‘I never thought I would see something this nice in San Angelo.’ Tour groups of prospective students and their parents often come in the door with the look of ‘why are we coming to the library?’ By the time they leave, their attitude towards the library has visibly changed to awe and ‘this is a place I want to use.’ I have also heard large numbers of parents and alumni say, ‘Why didn’t the library look like this when I went to school?’”

Now the first floor boasts an open contemporary look. Stools are called “pebbles” and the coconut chairs of old have



Blend of digital and traditional resources



Prohibited

been refurbished in homage to the 1960s when the library opened. Most of the tables have disappeared, replaced by reading nooks, study booths and learning pods. Computer terminals and flat-panel screens, which open a world of digital resources to students, faculty and visitors, now dominate the first floor.

Gone is the Reference Room, where just a few years ago a graduate student was asked to leave because his typing on a laptop keyboard was disturbing a fellow patron. Gone are most of the reference books, many re-shelved on the second floor and now available for checkout. Gone is the Reference Desk, replaced by a Research Assistance Desk, emphasizing the use of online and other digital technologies.

Got a problem with your laptop? Visit the information technology service point for assistance with troubleshooting or configuring your computer. Care to write some notes or even graffiti on the wall? Check out some dry-erase markers from the Circulation Desk and scribble away on the specially coated interior columns.

The changes are the library's way of adapting not only to the technology of modern information, but also to contemporary students.

Said Fortin, "Traditional academic library furniture, layouts, services and resources do not match the changing nature of 21st-century students and how they process/seek information, use technology, and interact on a broader social level with

peers. Information storage is rapidly moving away from the old paradigm of paper to a digital medium."

"The purpose of the Learning Commons is to refocus the library as the heart of learning on campus by providing a collaborative learning environment that facilitates student interaction with other students, faculty, staff, technology and information, regardless of its format," Fortin said.

The Learning Commons strategy seems to be working. Since the library opened at the start of the spring semester after work was completed on the \$4.38 million, 28,000-square-foot renovation project, attendance has soared. January attendance, a large part of which might be attributed to

Library – continued on page 37



Coffee and conversation in a study booth



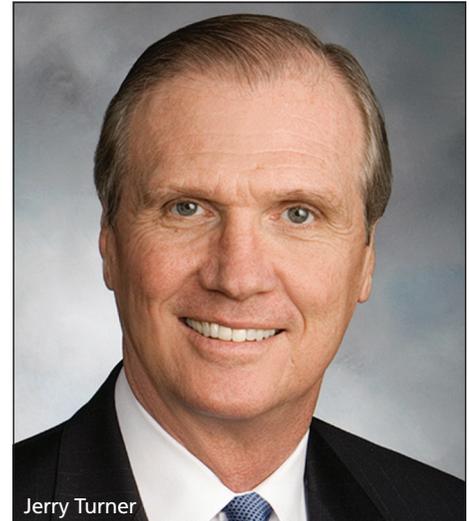
Column art

Bottom photos by Danny Meyer

Board Business



Mickey Long



Jerry Turner

The first formal meeting of the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents on the Angelo State University campus was special for ASU alumnus and Texas Tech Regent Mickey L. Long as he was elected vice chairman of the board.

Though Texas Tech regents had visited campus previously and even held a strategic planning retreat at ASU in the fall of 2007, their February San Angelo visit constituted their first formal board meeting on campus since ASU joined the Texas Tech University System that year.

“Having our board meeting on the Angelo State campus was a great experience for me and the fellow regents,” said Long. “Not only did we get to see firsthand the great things happening at the university, but it was also a chance for me to take pride in the place that provided me with an exceptional educational foundation. I am thankful to Angelo State for all it has done for me and am fortunate to be serving in my new role.”

At the meeting, Jerry E. Turner, a partner in the law firm of Andrews Kurth, L.L.P., in Austin, was elected chairman of the board while Long, president of Westex/WLP Well Service, L.P., in Midland, assumed the duties of vice chairman. Long, Class of 1976, also serves as chairman of the Regents’ Rules Re-

view Committee and the Board of Trustees of the Carr Scholarship Foundation.

Three other regents – Larry K. Anders of Plano, Debbie Montford of San Antonio and John D. Steinmetz of Lubbock – were sworn in for six-year terms on the board.

Anders, chairman and majority owner of Summit Alliance Companies, an independent investment advisory and financial services firm in Dallas, took the oath for a second term on the board. He had served the last two years as board chairman.

Montford, a community volunteer, arts patron and San Antonio philanthropist, was sworn in for her first full term as a regent. She is married to business executive John T. Montford, who is a former state senator and former TTUS chancellor.

Steinmetz, president of Vista Bank in Lubbock, was sworn in for his first term on the TTUS Board of Regents. While attending Texas Tech where he received a bachelor’s degree in finance, he served as president of the Texas Tech University Student Government Association.

During the San Angelo meeting, regents toured ASU’s Center for Security Studies, took in a high-tech video presentation in the Global Immersion Center and inspected campus construction sites. ■

High on Higher Ed

As far as Michael Reid is concerned, the biggest perk about his new job as Angelo State University's vice president for finance and administration is simply that he continues to make a living in higher education.

"Where else but higher education can you work a couple hours looking at financial records or debating issues in a meeting, then go talk to someone about the latest geological events, go visit someone else about research on skunks or go over and learn about theatre?," Reid said. "You have so much knowledge on a university campus."

Sure Reid will be spending time with balance sheets, cost benefit analyses, debt service ratios and amortization schedules, but he will also be educating himself about what other people are doing across campus.

"I really like to get involved with the campus and the people," Reid continued. "I look forward to meeting them, learning what's important to them and understanding their backgrounds and expertise. Nothing excites me more than walking down a hallway and someone coming up to me and saying, 'Hey, let me show you what I am doing.'"

Besides getting to know the campus and his staff since starting to work at ASU in late February, what Reid has been doing is conducting a systematic evaluation of every administrative or financial policy of the university to understand the services his offices provide, increase efficiencies and remove roadblocks to serving students so the university can capitalize on its growth.

"One of the advantages of a new person coming in is that you can see things, com-



Michael Reid

pare processes and seek good rationales for why we do things so we can become as effective and efficient as we need to be," Reid said. "It's more than just managing a budget."

Even so, much of Reid's time will be spent in addressing budget issues, particularly as the implications of the state's budget shortfall impact ASU over the next two fiscal years.

"Short-term financially, we need to get beyond current budgetary issues while long-term financially we want to become secure and stable to be able to sustain that growth with strong viable academic programs. From what I see, we have the faculty talent and staff ability to do that," Reid said. "All of my fears are dissipating as I realize the caliber of people I am working with. They are people who want to work and have a desire to excel in their professions."

Reid came to ASU after six years at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, where he had been vice president for finance and administration, managing business operations, facilities, athletics, auxiliaries, safety, security, residence life, food services and human resources.

Prior to going to Mansfield University, he served as vice president for administration and finance at Pueblo Community College in Colorado from 2001-04. He was director of procurement and capital facilities planning at Southern Utah University from 1996-2001. He served as director of purchasing, risk management and telecommunications at Dixie State College in Utah from 1994-96. He began his career in higher education as material manager at Utah State University in 1991.

Reid earned his Associate of Arts in general studies from Dixie College in 1990. He received his Bachelor of Science in finance in 1993 and his Master of Business Administration in 1998, both from Utah State University.

A Utah native partial to the big skies and broad vistas of the western states, Reid enjoys outdoor activities ranging from running and biking to hiking and camping. In addition to his wife, Shauna, he has a 19-year-old daughter Mikayla, who is a geology major at Utah State; a 16-year-old son, Logan, who just got his driver's license; a 15-year-old son, Nathan; and a 13-year-old daughter, Jessica. ■

Capital Gains

By the halfway point of the 2010-11 academic year, annual donations to the university had already set a record and gotten the public phase of Angelo State University's first capital campaign off to a great start, even in trying economic times.

"The response of our alumni and friends has been unprecedented," said Dr. Jason Penry, ASU's executive director of development. "In the first two quarters of the fiscal year, which started in September, we have received more than \$7 million from supporters. In just six months, we have surpassed ASU's previous record of \$4.8 million received for the entire 2008 fiscal year."

Despite a sluggish economy and some state budgetary worries, Penry said ASU alumni and supporters have multiple reasons to be excited about the university, including

its second year of national recognition in the *Princeton Review* as one of the best colleges in the nation, one of only three state-supported institutions in Texas to make the national list. The string of record fall, spring and graduate enrollments has also demonstrated significant movement toward a strategic goal of 10,000 students by 2020.

ASU President Joseph C. Rallo said, "I truly believe that decades from now we will look back at this period of time at Angelo State and see it as a defining period for our university. Angelo State has big dreams to change the lives of students and empower faculty, and that's why this fundraising campaign was launched. I'm gladdened at the generosity and conviction of the Angelo State University family. They have responded to the call to invest and help our university secure the future we envision."

That generosity has been manifested in a variety of ways by ASU friends.

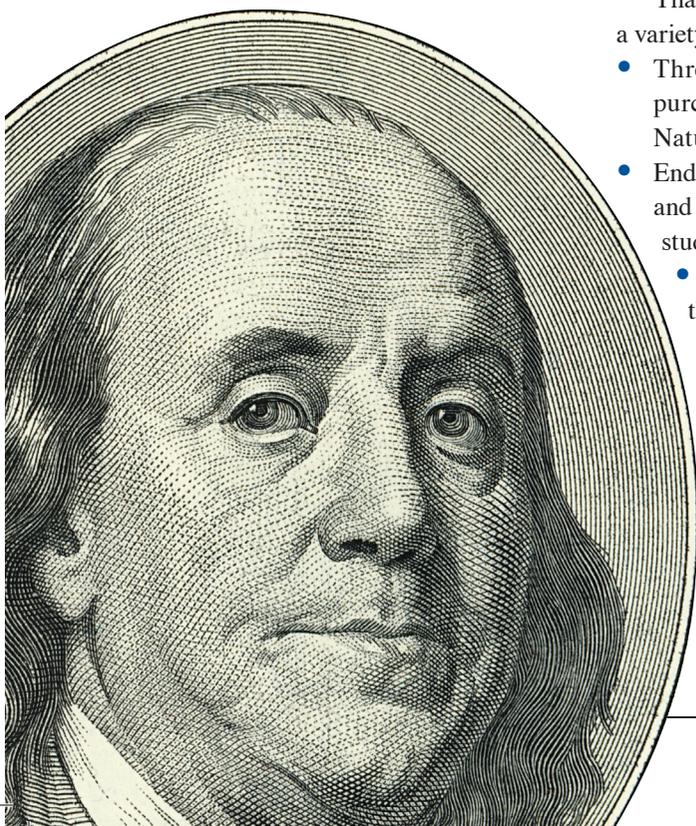
- Three San Angelo families joined to purchase ultra-cold freezers for the Natural History Collections.
- Endowments established by Houston and Midland families now support student-athlete scholarships.
- A President's Circle grant helped the Biology Department continue student-led research on various small West Texas mammals.
- An Austin alumnus has created three \$2,500 annual awards each for faculty, staff and administrators.
- A Washington, D.C., area alum assisted in the renovation of a classroom in the Rassman Building.

- Multiple gifts from faculty and staff members provided supplemental funding for the Porter Henderson Library.
- A gift from a San Angelo donor is funding a major technology commercialization project that provided students with practical experience in startup companies.

"Launching our first comprehensive fundraising campaign has brought great awareness that Angelo State is actively seeking investors to help define the future of our university," Penry said. "We want to give everyone an opportunity to participate. One of our goals was to grow our donor base, which has more than doubled in the last 12 months. The momentum started when our faculty and staff gave in record numbers, their giving rate increasing from 11 percent to more than 27 percent this fiscal year."

Another goal for the campaign has been to increase the number of donors who include ASU in their estates. Such documented planned gifts earn donors membership into ASU's Oaks Society in recognition of their charitable gift plans. The Oaks Society was established in 2005 in acknowledgment of the live oak trees planted in front of the Mayer Administration Building in 1949 in memory of the 30 former students who lost their lives in World War II.

"When it comes to planned giving, the main idea is that your legacy is Angelo State's future," Penry said. "There is no better example than the vision and generosity of Robert and Nona Carr, whose planned gift has meant more than \$67 million in scholarships awarded to some 25,000 students since 1981."





Jason Penry

“One of the messages that we would like to clearly communicate is that if you have already included the university in your estate plan, you are encouraged to inform ASU of your planned gift,” he said. “We want more of our loyal supporters to enjoy the benefits of Oaks Society membership.”

The public phase of the Campaign for ASU began in September, though the fundraising that would be counted toward the \$25 million goal began in September of 2005 with what is called “the silent phase” in the fundraising profession. Through February of 2011, 5,103 donors had invested \$22,050,969 in the university. Of those donors, 65 percent or 3,354 alumni, friends, foundations and corporations made their first gift to Angelo State during the campaign.

“Our time is now,” Penry said, “but our future is forever. We encourage everyone to help us maintain our momentum and participate in the vision and mission of Angelo State through this campaign.”

To follow the Campaign for Angelo State University and learn about the donors who have invested in ASU’s future, visit www.angelo.edu/giving. ■

Of Mice and Men by Roy Ivey

Cross-pollinating his father’s account of the Holocaust with the comic book genre won Art Spiegelman a Pulitzer Prize and helped change the way people think about graphic novels.

Spiegelman’s signature book, *Maus*, which garnered the only Pulitzer ever won by a graphic novel in 1994, and *Maus II* were inspired by documents he found at his parents’ home. In the books, he used cartoon animal characters to tell his father’s and other Holocaust victims’ stories. He did not expect the impact *Maus* generated.

“Twenty-five years ago,” Spiegelman said, “I only hoped that it might be discovered sometime after I died. It is swell to get recognition, but it’s kind of hard to be seen behind the mouse.”

Speaking at ASU’s 15th annual Writers Conference in Honor of Elmer Kelton, the New York-based cartoonist discussed his prize-winning works. Originally a cartoon series in *Raw* magazine, *Maus* was followed by the second volume addressing the tumultuous relationship Spiegelman had with his father, Vladek Spiegelman, whom he called a “collaborator” on the *Maus* project. He also drew material from Adolph Hitler and his book, *Mein Kampf*.

“In *Mein Kampf*,” Spiegelman said, “there really was taxonomy in what was planned for the Thousand-Year Reich. There was the master race, and as a subset, there were the Slavic slaves, the Poles and Russians, who were not meant for extermination, but just to be a slave workforce for the Germans. Then, there were the Jews, who were meant to be exterminated.”

Spiegelman depicted Hitler’s Nazis as cats, Poles as pigs and Jews as mice, thus the title *Maus*, which is German for mouse.

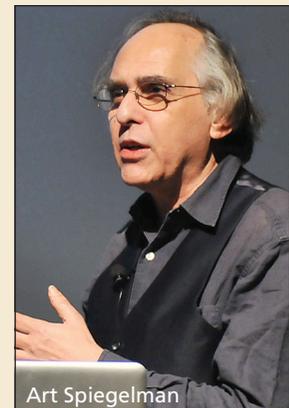
“Ultimately, the pig is outside the food chain where the cat is chasing the mouse,” he said. “What’s the pig doing there? Well, the Poles were the witnesses.

They weren’t effective witnesses in some cases, but Jan Karski, who was the first to spread the word to England about what was being done, was incredibly noble.”

Besides *Maus* and *Maus II*, Spiegelman also penned *In the Shadow of Two Towers*, a personal take on the World Trade Center attack of Sept. 11, 2001. In an earlier, happier period, he also drew mini-comics for Bazooka chewing gum.

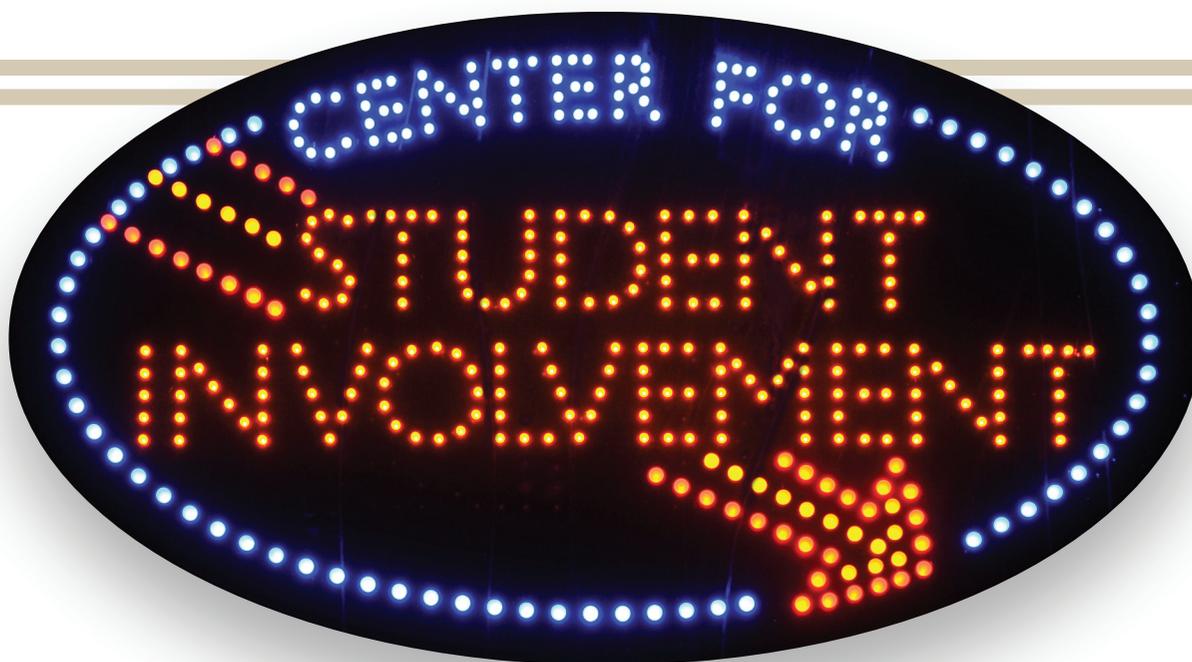
Spiegelman credited other artists’ graphic icons, like Donald Duck and Batman, and *MAD Magazine*, as influences for choosing comics as his vehicle.

Spiegelman – continued on page 37



Art Spiegelman





Sign of the Times

A colorful, neon-style sign near the Houston Harte University Center's south exit directs visitors to the downstairs offices of the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) and symbolizes an increasing focus on the UC as the student nerve center for ASU.

All of CSI's student-engagement components, including programs, leadership, student organizations, campus life, Greeks, community service and the Student Government Association, are now grouped in one office to maximize the synergies they produce, said Dr. Vance Valerio, ASU vice president for student affairs and enrollment management (SAEM).

"Specifically, these changes better align all SAEM components and functions to work toward a more holistic approach to developing campus life, student services and programming," Valerio said. "I coined a motto – 'Spirit is Alive at ASU...Catch It!' – for the SAEM division for the year. This concept is something that I have asked all SAEM units to embrace and emulate. The consolidated offices are one way we are doing that."

The changes are the latest step in the reinvigoration of the UC that began when ASU President Joseph C. Rallo upon his 2007 arrival had televisions, video games, couches, pool tables and ping-pong tables

added to the UC. A subsequent remodeling project expanded the food-service area to accommodate students living in the new Centennial Village residence hall.

"We are building on the TVs and the pool tables to make this the center of the campus for student activities," said Nolen Mears, executive director of student life. "Part of the recent increase in student traffic at the UC is due to more activities, and part of it is having Centennial Village on this side of campus. A lot of things are coming together here."

A new lunchtime program called Crossroads Café features student musicians playing under the stairs across from the snack bar from 11 a.m.-noon as their fellow students walk through the building from class to lunch.

"We are trying to create a sense of energy and activity here in the building with programs like Crossroads Café," Mears said.

While the UC's first floor focuses on recreation and student gathering spots, the downstairs CSI offices are bustling with students conducting meetings, making signs in the graphics area or stopping by to check student organization mailboxes. Most recently, the Student Government Association (SGA) offices were relocated to the CSI.

CSI Director Rick Greig sees the advantage of grouping student entities in his area.

"This will be a good hub," he said, "and we think it's really going to play into a better interchange for the student government leaders because they will be down here every day, and they can share ideas and collaborate a lot more with other student leaders and staff who provide student programming and leadership training on campus."

Credit for the attention-grabbing sign pointing students to CSI goes to Valerio.

"Every time he walked by that area, he said, 'I want something that blinks,' and waved toward the wall," Greig said. "What he wanted was something that would catch the students' attention. Once we get them to come down here, it becomes our job to make them feel like this is the place they want to be."

Valerio sees the changes in the UC and CSI as a natural progression toward ASU becoming a truly residential campus.

"ASU is a great university," Valerio said, "and we all need to consider how best to serve 'her' and the students who choose to come here for their higher education. Hopefully, these efforts can positively affect how we engage and ultimately embrace our broader community endeavors as well." ■

Open Door Policy

by Kimberley Parker

The influx of South Korean students on campus this spring can be attributed to the growing reputation of Angelo State's English Language Learners' Institute (ELLI) and the networking of a native Korean on the criminal justice faculty.

As a result, the institute, which helps international students improve their English proficiency, welcomed 28 new students from Ulsan University in South Korea to campus this spring for a one-month program.

Now in its second year, ELLI has enrolled more than 100 students from abroad in its English language programs since 2009. As its staff continues the mission to "internationalize" the ASU student body, South Korean students make up the greater part of ELLI recruits.

"The purpose of the program is to help increase enrollment at ASU by having these international students come to our

program first and then move into regular classes," said Carole Simpson, ELLI director. "We have students who come with the aim of going to ASU, but they haven't got a high enough English level yet. In addition, we have other students come because they just want to improve their level of English."

Vital to ELLI's success in bringing Korean students to campus has been the work of Dr. Won-Jae Lee, associate professor of criminal justice. Recognizing the growing number of Asian students wanting to learn English and attend college in the U.S., he helped ELLI staff make connections at three universities in his Korean homeland. The results exceeded expectations.

"Following the first class, Korean universities e-mailed and asked if they could send more students to attend the ELLI program," Lee said. "We have found our

strong points through this process, and we can make it much better. San Angelo is the ideal setting for foreign students. We have good people, low tuition, and a safe and friendly learning environment."

Lee said Korean university officials are so impressed with the institute's programs that in addition to sending more students to ASU, they have promised to help ELLI team up with universities in Japan and China. Also, 15 ASU students

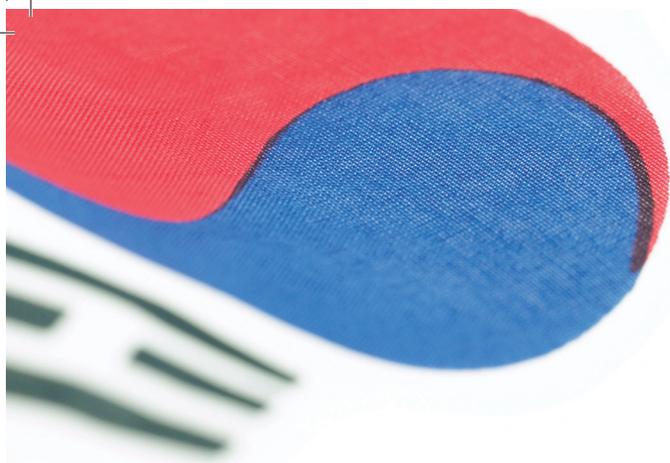


Yongtae Jung, Ga-Yeong Park, Kee-Yoon Noh and Insu Ku



Won-Jae Lee

Photos by Kimberley Parker



will make the university's first study abroad trip to South Korea this summer.

In addition to being an entry point for international students, the ELLI programs help provide other benefits to the ASU campus.

First, the ELLI, which is a service of ASU's Center for International Studies under the direction of Dr. Sharynn Tomlin, is self-sustaining, being funded directly from participant fees, ranging from \$3,495 for a 14-week semester to \$2,195 for a seven-week session.

Second, some participants go on to enroll in ASU for their college work.

"Now I have become a regular student taking regular classes at ASU, and I got all A grades last fall semester," said Kee-Yoon Noh, a student from Ulsan University. "The new 28 students also came from the same university where I came from. I am helping take care of them and helping them adapt."

Ga-Yeong Park from Kyungnam University said, "I would like to describe my experience at ASU and San Angelo as a stepping stone to my future dream. When I become an English teacher, I will be able to share my experience in the United States with my students."

Not all of the Korean students remain at ASU after completing the ELLI program, but the ones who do stay are enjoying academic success. The first group of seven, who enrolled in regular ASU classes for the fall of 2010, all made the Dean's List. They have also added their own culture to the ASU melting pot.

"Our students learn from Korean students their culture and strong academic enthusiasm, too," Lee said. "It's a win-win."

While Lee is not an official ELLI staffer, he is a member of the International Education Committee and plans to continue helping the institute make ASU a more international campus.

"I like helping informally with the ASU international effort because I sense it is a good thing," he said. "I can sense it is rapidly growing. We have done a good thing and it's mutually beneficial." ■

briefs

Spring Ahead

For the second year in a row, Angelo State University set a spring semester enrollment record as 6,191 students were taking classes on the 20th class day (Feb. 7), the date used to determine the official enrollment at universities statewide.

The 2011 spring enrollment was up 296 students over the 5,895 students who enrolled for the 2010 spring semester, an increase of 5.02 percent. Undergraduate enrollment stood at 5,480 for the current semester, a 2.23 percent increase over the 5,360 undergraduates enrolled in the spring of 2010.

Graduate enrollment set an all-time record for the fourth long semester in a row with 711 students, 10 more than the previous high of 701 recorded just last fall. Graduate enrollment was up 32.9 percent over the 2010 spring enrollment of 535.

Comparisons by classification of the spring 2011 and 2010 enrollments with the percentage change were: freshman, 1,281, 1,364, -6.08 percent; sophomore, 1,418, 1,359, 4.3 percent; junior, 1,186, 1,025, 15.7 percent; senior, 1,473, 1,503, -2.0 percent; unclassified, 122, 109, 11.9 percent; graduate, 711, 535, 32.9 percent; and total, 6,191, 5,895, 5.02 percent.

Math Perfection Again

For the 14th straight year, ASU students have maintained a 100 percent passing rate on the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) teacher certification test for secondary mathematics.

Five ASU students took the TExES in February, and their average score of 274.8 out of 300 is the highest average ever posted by an ASU class. It is also well above last year's state average score of 233.2. The perfect-passing-rate streak began in 1998. Since then, all 143 ASU students who have taken the exam after completing the mathematics program have passed.

"It makes me proud," said Dr. Paul Swets, head of ASU's Department of Mathematics. "It's a great reflection on our program, our faculty and the students we get in our department."

Beta Better Best

For a record seventh time and for the third time in the last six years, Angelo State University's Epsilon Sigma chapter of the Beta Beta Beta (Tri-Beta) biology honor society has been named the recipient of the Lloyd M. Bertholf Award as the top chapter in the nation.

The ASU chapter win for the 2009-10 academic year

makes the chapter the first seven-time winner among more than 550 Tri-Beta chapters in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. No other chapter has won the award more than four times.

"You'd think after achieving the pinnacle of success seven times, it would get less exciting for me," said Dr. Crosby Jones, ASU biology professor and Tri-Beta faculty advisor, "but with each new academic year it is like starting over with a whole new group of members, and their enthusiasm for such success is highly infectious and motivating. We seem to get better every year."

The Bertholf Award has been presented since 1961 based on the success of chapter activity in research, convention/meeting participation, programming/activities, record keeping and communication with the Tri-Beta National Office.

National Championship

ASU's co-recreational intramural flag football squad IM Legends won the American Collegiate Intramural Sports (ACIS) National Championship in late December.

IM Legends' ACIS national title came at the University of New Orleans. The ASU squad dominated its competi-

tion en route to the title by defeating a team from Georgia Southern, 32-0, and then overpowering a University of Kentucky squad, 61-0. It won the championship game over a Florida Gulf Coast University team, 52-16.

Additionally, IM Legends won several team and individual honors. The team was awarded the James L. "Jet" Smith Memorial Scholarship Award for the Co-Rec Division. Individuals receiving honors were Reid Jackson, male MVP on offense; Danielle Watts, female MVP on offense; Trevor Brunet, male MVP on defense; Jodi Jackson, female MVP on defense; and Alysha Currie and Jerrell Jones, all-tournament selections. Two ASU student officials, Josh Boynton and Tyler Gueldner, received All-America honors at the tournament.

'College of Distinction'

Angelo State University is one of 170 schools, representing 39 states, selected to the 2010-11 list of top colleges nationally by CollegesofDistinction.com, an online guide that recognizes colleges and universities that appeal to students' varied interests.

CollegesofDistinction.com, which identified ASU as one of several new "up and

coming" universities, honors colleges excelling in key areas of educational quality, according to site executive editor Tyson Schritter.

"Schools selected as Colleges of Distinction create well-rounded graduates and are among the very best in the country," Schritter said. "While each school is one of a kind, they all share a common theme: they are all a great place to get an education."

Angelo State is the only public university among seven Texas universities included in the 2010-11 Colleges of Distinction list. To qualify for inclusion on the website, colleges must demonstrate excellence in areas CollegesofDistinction.com calls the "Four Distinctions:" 1) engaged students; 2) great teaching; 3) vibrant communities; and 4) successful outcomes.

Security Matters

ASU's new Center for Security Studies (CSS) hosted its first major intelligence class in February, attracting 23 participants hand-picked from the ranks of Air Force intelligence agencies for the intensive, two-week Air Force Advanced Analyst Course (AAC).

Angelo State is the first civilian institution to host the course, previously conducted

at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala., and a military installation in Germany.

Dr. Robert Ehlers, CSS director, said the AAC is the "flagship intelligence analyst course" for the "best and brightest" analysts in the Air Force. Participants receive daily classroom instruction based on intensive reading assignments, and then engage in complex intelligence-analysis practice scenarios.

The students were instructed by nine faculty mentors, all of them active duty or retired senior Air Force or Army officers.

Ehlers worked with Headquarters Air Force to bring the course to ASU, paving the way for civilian institutions to become regular hosts for the two-week sessions, which are conducted several times a year. Angelo State's CSS will host another course session this summer. ■

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PEOPLE WHO MAKE ASU GREAT

Top Staff

Four ASU employees – David Hartin, Katie Plum, Tammy Speciale and Judy Stanley – have been named recipients of the ASU Staff Excellence Awards for outstanding job performance in 2010.

Hartin is a safety specialist in the Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management Office. He joined the ASU staff in 2007. He was lauded for overall excellence in the performance of his duties, particularly in the field of environmental compliance.

An ASU employee since 2008, Plum serves as the director of the Office of Sponsored Projects. She was recognized for utilizing her broad-ranging knowledge of federal and state grants to the benefit of university faculty and colleges in grant writing, solicitation and funding.

Speciale is a registered nurse in the University Clinic. An ASU employee since 2000, she was praised for her overall commitment to excellence, her organizational and management skills and her ongoing willingness to help accomplish any task.

Stanley, who joined the ASU staff in 1999, works as a student accounts coordinator in the Office of the Bursar. Stanley was honored for her outstanding customer service and her willingness to go

above and beyond the call of duty in serving each individual.

The four were selected from 28 nominees for the awards given each spring semester in recognition of exemplary job performance during the preceding calendar year. The Staff Excellence Awards recognize non-teaching staff members whose job performance exceeds the customary standards. Each recipient received a certificate and a \$650 honorarium during a campus-wide presentation in February.

Lucinda Vernor

Sophomore exercise science major Lucinda Vernor of Camp Wood won first place in the mohair category and placed second overall in the American Sheep Industry Association's 63rd annual national Make It With Wool contest.

Vernor was one of 29 national finalists in the Senior Division invited to the Make It With Wool awards banquet and style show in Reno, Nev., in January. Her winning entries were a black and purple reversible mohair jacket trimmed with lamb wool and a matching wool slacks and top outfit.

For winning the mohair category, she received a \$1,000 scholarship from the Mohair Council of America. For placing second overall, she

won a \$250 savings bond, a Singer sewing machine, a hand-held fabric steamer, wool fabric and several other sewing accessories. About 1,000 contestants of all ages from all over the U.S. and Canada compete in regional and state contests each year for the right to enter the national contest.

Cathryn Rittenberry

Cathryn Rittenberry, a senior accounting major, has been awarded a \$1,500 renewable scholarship by the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants Accounting Education Foundation (AEF).

A native of Carthage, Rittenberry is one of only 50 AEF scholarship winners statewide. The scholarships are awarded to outstanding students planning to become CPAs in Texas.

Dr. Roger Zarnowski

Dr. Roger Zarnowski, an ASU professor of mathematics, has received the Mathematical Association of America's 2011 Texas Section Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics.

Recipients are honored for their documented teaching effectiveness, their influence in teaching beyond their own institutions and their ability to foster curiosity and generate

excitement about mathematics in their students.

Zarnowski, the first ASU faculty member to win the Texas Section award, will now compete against the other 28 section winners for the national Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Awards for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics, which will be announced in the fall.

Kendall Tidwell

Kendall Tidwell, a December graduate with a master's degree in animal science, won second place in the Student Research Poster Contest at the Society for Range Management's (SRM) 64th annual international meeting in February in Billings, Mont.

Tidwell's research project was titled "Do Super Juniper Eating Sires Produce Super Juniper Eating Offspring?" His runner-up finish was the highest placement ever for an ASU student in the annual SRM poster contest, which this year drew more than 100 entries.

Christine Purkiss

Dr. Christine Purkiss, assistant professor of teacher education, has been named to the National Science Teachers Association's (NSTA) Science and Children Advisory Board, effective June 1.

During her three-year term, Purkiss will serve as an advocate for elementary educators and the NSTA's mission to promote excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning.

Austin Osmanski

Senior biology major Austin Osmanski, the 2010-11 president of the ASU Student Government Association, has been selected to serve on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 2011 Tuning Oversight Council for Engineering and Sciences (TOCES).

The 2011 TOCES consists of four advisory committees that will assist the coordinating board as it continues to integrate the "Tuning" process into the state's college and university curriculum for biomedical engineering, chemical engineering, biology and chemistry. Osmanski will serve on the Biology Committee.

Katelynn Frei, Wesley Brashear

Two biology students won top prizes for their research presentations at the February annual meeting of the Texas Society of Mammalogists (TSM).

Junior Katelynn Frei won the Vernon Bailey Award for the best research poster presentation in classical mammalogy for her project "Use of Camera Trapping to Determine Patterns of Habitat Use

by Medium-Sized Mammals in West-Central Texas."

Graduate student Wesley Brashear won the William B. Davis Award for best oral research presentation in classical mammalogy for his project "Den Site Selection of the American Hog-Nosed Skunk, *Conepatus leuconotus*, in West-Central Texas."

More than 135 students and faculty representing 32 universities in six states attended the annual TSM meeting.

Arnoldo De León, John Klingemann

A manuscript edited by Professor Arnoldo De León and including an essay by fellow History Department member Dr. John Klingemann has received the Robert A. Calvert Book Prize as the best manuscript submitted in 2010 to Texas A&M University Press on the history of the American South, West or Southwest.

The book, *War Along the Border: The Mexican Revolution and Tejano Communities*, is scheduled for publication later this fall and includes 13 essays by scholars in the field. The award, which carries a \$1,000 honorarium, was presented to Dr. De León in March at the annual meeting of the Texas State Historical Association in El Paso.

Klingemann, an assistant professor of history, contrib-

uted "'The Population is Overwhelmingly Mexican; Most of It Is in Sympathy with the Revolution:' Mexico's Revolution of 1910 and the Tejano Community in the Big Bend," an essay on how people in that region responded to the Mexican Revolution.

R. Gary Pumphrey

Federally funded research involving Dr. R. Gary Pumphrey of the History Department has received the U.S. Department of Agriculture 2010 Project of Excellence Award from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, National Water Program.

Pumphrey, an assistant professor of geography, is co-principal investigator on the 3½-year, \$757,528 National Science Foundation grant jointly awarded to ASU, North Carolina A&T State University and Texas Tech University to study the impact of increased ethanol production on water usage in the Ogallala aquifer.

The research looks at attitudes toward water as a resource and at municipal water conservation policy in the area overlying the Ogallala aquifer in light of the increased agricultural production of corn, the feedstock necessary to produce ethanol. The research measures community attitudes toward both free market and regulatory

approaches to allocating the increasingly scarce water resources in the affected areas of the Plains states.

Andrew Wallace

Dr. Andrew Wallace, head of the Physics Department, has been elected vice president of the Texas Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT).

Wallace will serve a one-year term as vice president, followed by consecutive one-year terms as president-elect, president and immediate past president.

Wallace has been head of the ASU Physics Department since 1998. Under his leadership, the department was recognized by *Physics Today* magazine as one of the top undergraduate physics programs in the U.S. ■



RAIDICAL. RESEARCH

by Tom Nurre

Cutting-edge research into proteins, the biochemical molecules that are the building blocks of life, yet so small as to be invisible to the naked eye, may ultimately increase the visibility of Angelo State University's Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

Over the long term, the research could one day lead to new therapeutics for the prevention, treatment and even cure for some of mankind's most debilitating diseases, ranging from AIDS to Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases. In the near term, the basic research is providing laboratory opportunities that are enhancing the résumés of ASU chemistry and biochemistry majors.

In the second year of a two-year, \$312,151 grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), department head Dr. John Osterhout is focused on developing a substance called a Trojan Horse Inhibitor that will eradicate the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes AIDS.

"Our goal at the end of two years is proof of principle," Osterhout said. "Does it work even a little bit in live cells? If it does, we will have something to work with."

"We are at the juncture where if it works a little bit, we could get a significant amount of funding to continue the project, which is titled 'Development of Therapeutics to Eliminate HIV,'" he added. "Perhaps even the millions of dollars that would be needed to bring the Trojan Horse Inhibitor to market as an anti-HIV drug."

Meanwhile, Dr. Edith Osborne, assistant professor of biochemistry, is working on a project titled "Novel Selenocysteine Insertion System for Protein Labeling and Human Selenoprotein Expression," which is being funded by a \$35,000 Single Investigator Cottrell College Science Award from the Research Corporation for Science Advancement.

Photos by Danny Meyer

“Selenoproteins are a type of protein that contains the special amino acid selenocysteine, which contains the micronutrient selenium,” Osborne said. “Selenium deficiency has been linked to increased cancer risk, decreased thyroid function and neurologic conditions such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s, but we don’t know all the reasons why.”

“We need to find the link,” she added. “We know selenium goes into these 25 human selenoproteins, but we don’t know what all of those selenoproteins do or which ones are causing those effects.”

While both projects could have major ramifications for the future of medical research, they originated in completely different ways. Osborne’s is an extension of her post-doctoral work at New England Biolabs. Osterhout stumbled onto his serendipitously while working on an unrelated venture.

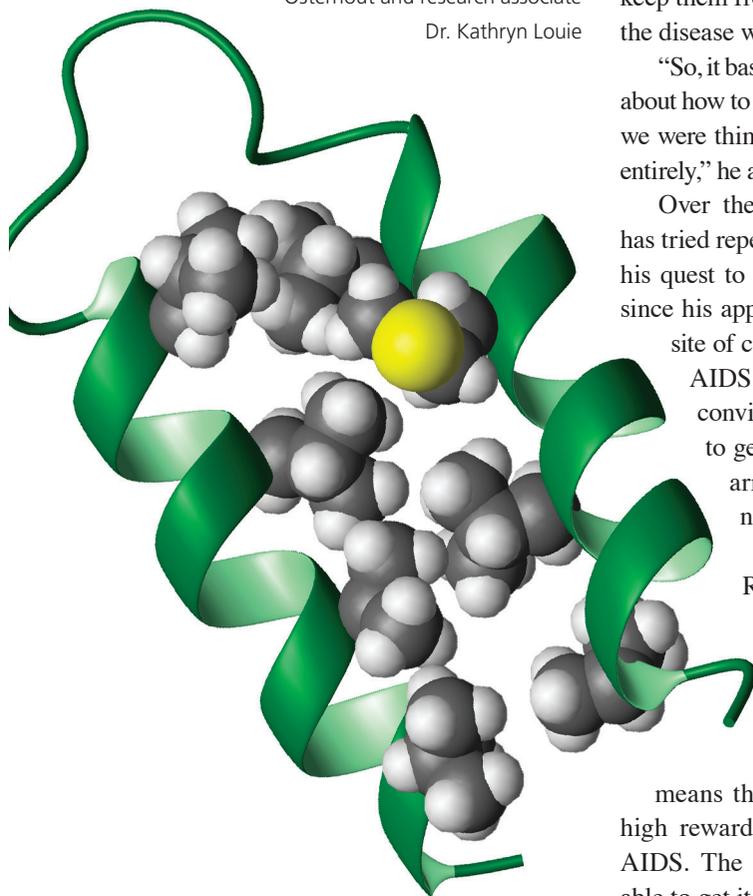
Osterhout’s main area of expertise is protein folding. All proteins that make up the human body are programmed to fold in a certain way. When they fail to fold normally, problems occur. Mis-folding proteins have been linked to neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s. While researching protein folding at the Rowland Institute for Science in Cambridge, Mass., Osterhout and his team designed a small peptide – a molecule made up of linked amino acids – that turned out to be toxic. That simple act indirectly led to his current project.

“When we tried to express it in *E. coli*, which is a common way of making protein, it killed the *E. coli* it was growing in,” Osterhout said. “It turned out that this peptide acted like an anti-microbial peptide and interrupted the *E. coli* membrane. We were then able to show that if





Osterhout and research associate
Dr. Kathryn Louie



we took the peptide in isolation and put it on artificial membranes, it broke the artificial membrane. So, that got us started.”

What it started was the search for a substance that would act as a Trojan Horse Inhibitor (THI) to eliminate HIV. THIs are small, specially-designed protein molecules that are harmless until activated by a viral component called the HIV protease. Once activated, the THIs kill the cell in which the virus is trying to reproduce. The basic idea is that uninfected cells are not harmed while infected cells are destroyed.

“Then we thought, ‘we’ve just cured AIDS;’” Osterhout said. “This idea cures AIDS. It doesn’t slow it down like the current drugs. We could actually kill the cells that the AIDS virus is trying to grow in, and keep them from replicating themselves, and the disease would go away.”

“So, it basically went from zero to an idea about how to cure AIDS one afternoon when we were thinking about a different problem entirely,” he added. “It just happened.”

Over the subsequent years, Osterhout has tried repeatedly to get grant funding for his quest to perfect a THI substance. But, since his approach is admittedly the opposite of conventional wisdom in current AIDS research, it has been hard to convince grant-funding agencies to get on board. It was not until he arrived at ASU that Osterhout finally received some good news.

“We finally applied for an R21 Grant, which is for high-risk, high-reward research,” he said. “For NIH it’s small money. It’s a tiny grant to get you started. My project has got a high risk, which means they think it won’t work, but a high reward because if it does, we cure AIDS. The third time through, we were able to get it funded.”

Working in a converted lab in ASU’s Science III building, Osterhout has been joined on his project by Dr. Kathryn Louie, who is working as a research associate, and Kandice Fryar, an ASU chemistry graduate who is a research technician. They are in the process of trying to produce enough of their THI substance to send off for testing.

“It turns out that it is harder to get than we ever imagined,” Osterhout said. “It has proven to be a difficult technological problem. We just tried a bunch of different things, chemical and biochemical procedures, and we think we’ve finally found something that works. We may also be onto another procedure that may work even better.”

“It is sort of typical of research,” he added. “You keep trying things until you finally find the one that will work for you. It’s just how science works.”

Once they have enough of the THI, they will send it to Dr. Ronald Swanstrom at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill for testing on live cells.

“Ron has agreed to test our product in monkey kidney cells containing live AIDS virus,” Osterhout said. “So, we will see if we can use our material to slow down the spread of infection in those cells.”

Another collaborator on the project is Dr. Celia Schiffer at the University of Massachusetts-Worcester.

“Dr. Schiffer helped us with the initial cloning of our peptide,” Osterhout said. “Dr. Swanstrom is going to test the material that we make. If the results turn out hopeful, then we may be able to get more funding to develop it further.”

Osterhout regularly reports on his progress to the NIH and local AIDS organizations. But, while he remains optimistic, he estimates that even if his THI process works, it would probably be at least 6-10 years before a new AIDS drug would be available.

Professor Osborne also faces a long-term prospect. While her project could also have important implications for medical research, it is also a first step in an even longer process. Unlike Osterhout and his accidental project, she has been interested in her research topic since picking up her doctorate in biochemistry from Texas A&M University.

“Selenocysteine is found in all kingdoms of life,” Osborne said. “Selenoproteins are important in a variety of functions in the body, including thyroid hormone metabolism, and there have been links from selenium deficiency to cancer, Parkinson’s disease and Alzheimer’s disease. So, there is a variety of diseases that are associated with selenoproteins, but much is not known.”

To learn more about selenoproteins, researchers need large quantities for testing. Growing, or expressing, proteins is normally done using *E. coli* as a host, but there are problems growing human selenoproteins that way. The challenge is to generate them in the correct form.

“I want to express human selenoproteins in *E. coli*,” Osborne said, “but in order to do that, I have to create a system that will enable me to take the same amino acid sequence from humans and express it in *E. coli*. The problem with selenoproteins is that there is a specific ribonucleic acid (RNA) structure in the messenger RNA (mRNA), which codes for the protein, called the selenocysteine insertion sequence (SECIS) that tells the ribosome to add a selenocysteine into a protein. But, the location of the SECIS element is different in humans than it is in *E. coli*. That is the biggest challenge.”

“Usually, researchers will study something in a test tube to really be able to figure out what it does and how it works,” she added. “Then they will go further and study it in cells to see how it interacts with other proteins in the cells. But, if you can’t make enough of the selenoprotein to isolate it, you will never have the test tube studies, which really help to understand the cellular studies better.”

Aiding Osborne in her efforts is biochemistry major Elizabeth Leffel. A senior from Panhandle, Leffel started working with Osborne last summer and is currently performing RNA stability studies using ultraviolet (UV) spectroscopy.

“The way that *E. coli* insert selenocysteine into their proteins is different than the way a human does it,” Leffel said. “So, we have to manipulate the *E. coli* mRNA and insert special structures called SECIS elements in all the places where there is a selenocysteine, and do it in a way that minimizes the changes to the amino acid sequence of the human protein. My RNA stability studies on the SECIS hairpins will help develop a better way to express human proteins in *E. coli*.”

“I really enjoy it,” she added. “There are a limited number of us because not every faculty takes on research students. To just be a part of something like this is really cool. We could get published and actually play a part in things like curing cancer. I feel really privileged.”



Biochemistry major Elizabeth Leffel assists Osborne.

Also collaborating with Osborne are scientists at New England Biolabs, a leading international biotech company based in Ipswich, Mass.

“They supply some of the reagents I need, and I’m able to discuss the research with colleagues up there,” Osborne said. “If we can find a system to produce enough of the selenoproteins in *E. coli*, we will be able to figure out what they do. That could help us understand the mechanisms of human diseases that are related to selenium deficiency. It will help us learn what it is about selenium deficiency that affects cells and causes the diseases.”

In addition to its potential uses in medical research, finding a process that aids in the study of selenoproteins will also be of interest to the livestock industry.

“Previously, selenium was thought to be a toxin because there were problems with toxicity in cattle that ate too many selenium-accumulating plants,” Osborne said. “However, selenium is an important micronutrient to livestock, but again, we don’t fully understand why.”

Also, much like Osterhout’s work, Osborne’s project could be a stepping stone to positive publicity for the university and further grant-funded research.

“The intention is to publish journal articles that are based from ASU,” Osborne said. “This grant is really to gather preliminary data, which is why it is a smaller grant.

It is designed to help build a program and make it more competitive for larger grants. In the next year, I’ll be using my preliminary data to apply to larger funding agencies for larger grants to continue my studies.”

While both Osborne’s and Osterhout’s projects could have blockbuster effects on medical research and the reputation of the university, any definitive results from their work will not be determined for some time. However, one immediate impact their projects have is expanding ASU student research opportunities.

“If my system works and is successful, then it will be interesting to go through and study a selenoprotein using this system,” Osborne said. “With 25 human selenoproteins, there are a lot to choose from, so there will be opportunities to expand on this project and involve more students. My current research is just one step.”

From Osterhout’s standpoint as head of the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department, his and Osborne’s research offers great value for ASU, regardless of its ultimate success or application.

“It is important in the modern age to send our undergraduates off with research experience,” Osterhout said. “That really helps get them into medical school, graduate school or a job. That is the kind of experience I want to give undergraduates in our department, and I think we are moving in the right direction.” ■

Viruses

Hur
by Tom Nurre



Photo by Danny Meyer

Serena and Darin Carroll

Angelo State alum Dr. Darin Carroll and his wife, Dr. Serena Carroll, both went viral long before Facebook.

As disease ecologists at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, the Carrolls are charged with investigating outbreaks of often deadly zoonotic diseases, those that can transmit from animals to humans, in the U.S. and around the globe. Darin has been at the CDC since 2002, and Serena since 2003.

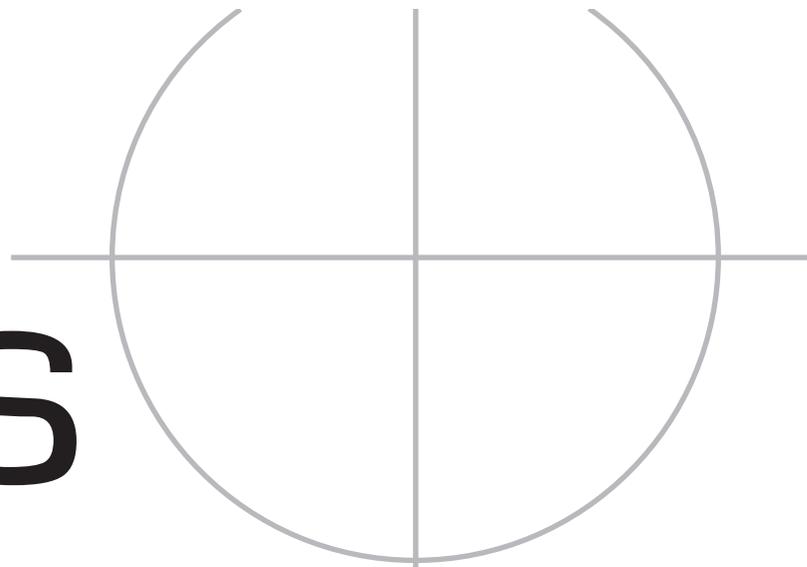
“We are tasked with describing, identifying and characterizing the transmission of diseases like poxviruses and hemorrhagic fevers that circulate in animals and can then infect people,” Darin said. “Our job is to gain a good enough understanding of that mechanism to be able to keep people from being infected by those diseases that are spread from animals to people.”

“We are looking to reduce or prevent the infection of humans with zoonotic diseases,” Serena added. “Our particular role is to look at the animal populations and try to understand what is going on with them, and to use that information to let the human populations know how to avoid infection.”

The Carrolls revealed glimpses of their field work to a group of ASU students, faculty and staff who crowded into the Boulware Lecture Hall in the Cavness Science Building this spring for the Biology Department’s “Bio Lunch” program.

A member of the CDC’s Poxvirus and Rabies Branch, Darin talked about a 2003 outbreak of monkeypox that spread through Wisconsin, Illinois and several other states. He was part of a team that eventually traced the cause of the outbreak back to a shipment of rodents from Ghana bound for the U.S. exotic pet market.

riters



“I talked to the exporter who shipped the rodents, and at that time he said he liked selling to dealers in the U.S. because we let anything into the country,” Darin said. “Whereas in Europe, they have to quarantine animals and the dealers have to pay for the quarantine. But now, as a result of that outbreak, there is a ban on the importation of bats and rodents from Africa.”

Serena, a member of the Viral Special Pathogens Branch, spoke of her involvement in a probe of a 2007 Marburg hemorrhagic fever outbreak centered around a lead and gold mine full of bats in Uganda. More work is still needed on that case as she and her team try to confirm the virus’ source and method of transmission to humans, though the bats are the prime suspects.

In each case, the CDC was called in to investigate the outbreak, which meant both field work and lab work for the Carrolls.

Darin holds a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree from ASU and earned his doctorate at Texas Tech University. Serena has a master’s degree from Texas Tech and a doctorate from Emory University. In their work at the CDC, the Carrolls have also investigated outbreaks of Hantaviruses, Arenaviruses, Ebola and Nipah viruses, among others, in Africa, Asia and both North and South America.

There is also a touch of glamour to their jobs as Darin served as a consultant on the Hollywood movie “I Am Legend” that featured megastar Will Smith. But, the pair is quick to point out that their jobs are nothing like another movie, “Outbreak,” in which Dustin Hoffman and Rene Russo played married disease ecologists investigating an Ebola outbreak.

“The Hollywood depictions of outbreak responses usually aren’t a good representation of what we do,” Serena said. “This kind of work is often sensationalized in the media.”

“Every research trip is an adventure,” Darin said. “Each is a learning experience, and they can be sad, obviously. But, outbreaks and field research expeditions are never quite as smooth as the movies indicate. Plus, we don’t load up and fly anywhere in black helicopters.”

Since they work in different CDC branches, the Carrolls seldom travel together at all. Their only joint project is ongoing in Peru.

“There is a project that involves the construction of a transcontinental highway from one side of South America to the other,” Serena said. “We are looking at how the distributions of diseases and disease-carrying animals change as the road is constructed.”

“We are working with the Naval Medical Research Unit in Peru on that project,” Darin added.

Periodically, their work does take them to neighboring locales, but the natural terrain has so far kept them separated.

“In 2007, I was dealing with a monkeypox outbreak as part of a team in the Republic of Congo,” Darin said, “and Serena was in the Democratic Republic of Congo working on one of the Ebola outbreaks. So, we were just separated by the Congo River. The two capitals are only a mile apart, but the mile is river.”

“We could see each other’s hotels across the river,” Serena added. “But, the next day, we headed out into the field in opposite directions.”

In 2010, though, the pair were rarely apart as they took time off from traveling while Serena was pregnant and Darin underwent some medical procedures. They will be heading out into the field again this summer, but are trying to reduce their travel to minimize the time spent away from their year-old son, Austin.

“Eventually I would like to start bringing him to many of the places where we work,” Darin said. “Not into the actual outbreak zones, but at least to the capital cities. We want him to see other cultures and grow up with a more worldly view of how folks are living in other places.”

Ironically, despite all the locations they have been, one of the Carrolls’ favorite places to visit is San Angelo.

“I really consider San Angelo as close to home as anywhere can be,” Darin said. “ASU is where I really grew up academically. I’m always looking for an excuse to come back here. We love to come here. It’s nice to get to see all the old friends and see how everything is changing around the university.”

It was actually a previously planned trip to San Angelo that gave the Carrolls the opportunity to participate in the ASU Biology Department’s Bio Lunch, and they jumped at the chance to tell how things really work in their world.

“If anyone could put one of the outbreak investigation stories together in a format that actually told it like it really is, that would be an amazing thing to see,” Darin said. “The rewarding thing about being involved in outbreak investigations is to be able to do some good for the people who are suffering. That is the goal and what gives you a good feeling at the end of the day.” ■

the Sect Life of Women

by Jayna Phinney



Molly Swets

Photos by Danny Meyer

Molly Swets never imagined her Angelo State University graduate thesis would one day be available on Amazon.com, but some topics have a way of capturing worldwide attention.

Because of Swets' subject – fundamentalist religion's impact on women – and ASU's proximity to Schleicher County, the April 2008 raid by state law enforcement agencies on the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) ranch near Eldorado turned her English thesis into a high-demand document, receiving worldwide notice by some.

Her 2006 thesis, "Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*: Fundamentalist Religiosity and the Oppression of Women," explored how several fundamentalist religions, including the FLDS, use their faith as a tool to restrict women throughout the world.

The raid of the FLDS ranch made global headlines when more than 400 children were removed by state authorities following allegations of abuse. The children were put in temporary custody of the state while Texas legal officials strained for a few months to identify families and care providers for each child, a process complicated by the FLDS practice of polygamy and its members' preference to stay within the confines of their own communities.

Dr. Mary Ellen Hartje, ASU English professor and chair of Swets' thesis committee, said that shortly after the FLDS raid,

she, Swets and the Porter Henderson Library began receiving requests for copies of Swets' thesis. Hartje said such calls for thesis work are highly unusual, especially for English theses, but the relevance of Swets' topic to current events made it timely.

Verlag Dr. Müller (VDM), a German company that publishes academic research worldwide, contacted Swets in 2008 when executives noticed the popularity of her thesis. Her work is now published on demand and available to purchase under the title "Religious Fundamentalisms and the Systematic Oppression of Women: Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*" by Molly Swets. Her thesis was penned under her former name, Molly Hines.

"It's kind of cool that I can go on Amazon and see my book," said Swets, who heads the English Department at San Angelo's Central High School.

Atwood's novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, which inspired Swets' work, satirizes the 1980s movement by the U.S. Christian New Right that called for women to return to the home. Atwood speculated the disastrous results for women if that call were taken to an extreme, creating a futuristic society where women were confined to domestic and reproductive roles.

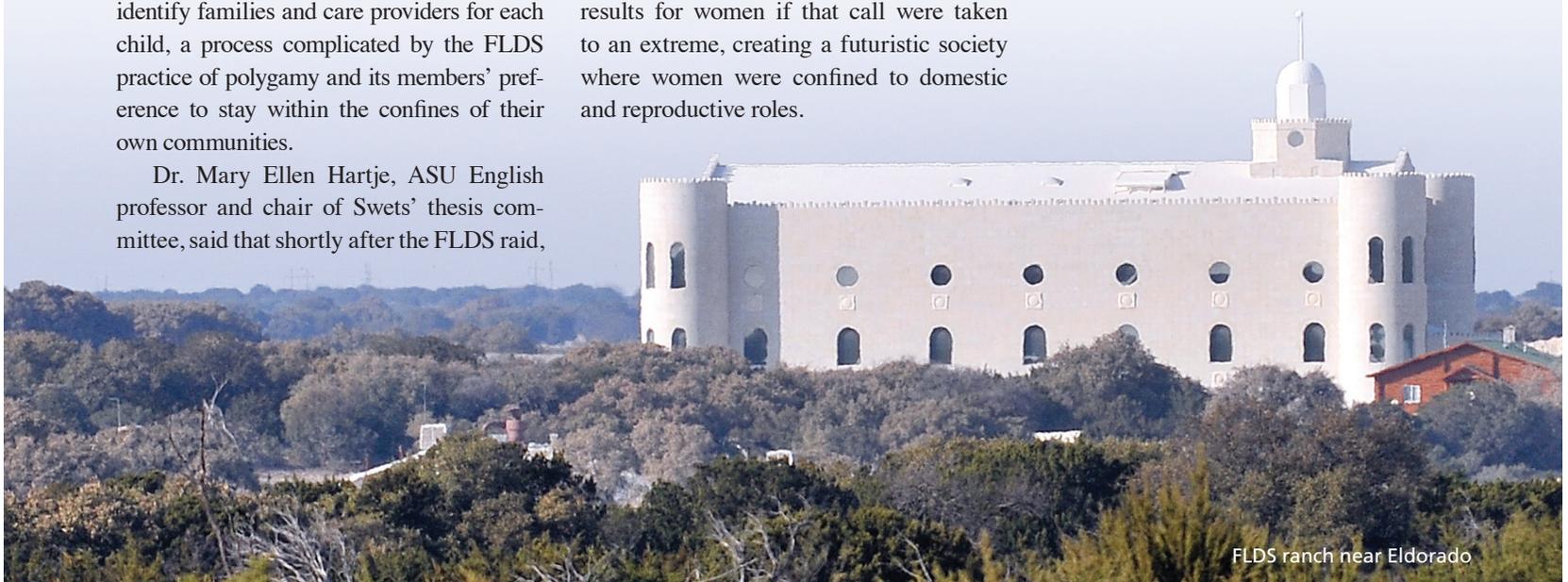
"I think all literature helps us see ourselves more objectively," Hartje said. "It gives us perspective."

Swets compared Atwood's fictional society with contemporary fundamentalist organizations and found similarities in methods used to oppress women, including restriction of dress, limitations on literacy and women's subjugation of other women.

Swets' thesis became a socio-cultural study, examining fundamentalist groups from the Christian, Islamic, Hindu and traditional Judaism faiths.

"Literature contains all other subjects," Hartje said. "When you study literature, you don't just study text. It's hard not to look at the context."

As evidenced with the FLDS, Swets said she found that fundamentalist groups almost always start oppressing women by sending them home, restricting their clothes, limiting their access to literature and education, and misusing religious texts. She said that any time a group claims to want to protect its members, it starts by diminishing their rights.



FLDS ranch near Eldorado

“In a home environment, a lot of these women are happy, but happiness is not the point,” Swets said. “The point is that these women are not given a choice. In the name of protection, these groups have removed choice.”

But the area of research that most surprised Swets was women hindering their own gender’s progress. Women in the FLDS were particularly defensive and supportive of their own way of life.

Swets, who is married to ASU Mathematics Department Head Paul Swets and raising five children with him, noted that the FLDS women who spoke to the media in the aftermath of the Eldorado raid were typically the first wives, not any of the sister or subordinate wives.

“There is a power structure there,” Swets said. “If that’s all you know, you fight for it. You don’t hear a lot about women’s own culpability.”

Dr. Linda Kornasky, an ASU professor of English and the chair of the university’s new gender studies minor, agreed about the FLDS way of life. She pointed out that many FLDS parents allow their daughters to be married off when they are underage, with some documented as young as 13.

“People tend to think that the women are not culpable,” Kornasky said. “The press likes to simplify the blame by putting it entirely on (FLDS leader) Warren Jeffs, but mothers are responsible for protecting their children.”

To understand the sect lifestyle, Swets also examined fundamentalist groups as theocracies, or cultures in which the religion is the government. She said the FLDS operates as a theocracy within the U.S. and lacks loyalty to the U.S. or any state government.

The involvement of faith makes oppression hard to fight, Swets said.

“We’re so afraid of religious intolerance in the U.S.,” Swets said. “We don’t want to step on a religion’s toes, so we wait until there’s a big enough problem to take action.”

In addition to providing insight into sect life of women, the research, writing and self-editing involved in Swets’ thesis enhanced her teaching skills.

“I really had to rethink the way I wrote,” Swets said.

While she expected to learn from her thesis work, Swets did not foresee the global attention her thesis would ultimately attract. ■

Gender Studies

Angelo State University this fall is introducing a new gender studies minor designed to prepare students for careers in a diverse workplace or for graduate studies in gender-related areas.

The gender studies minor, drawing from multiple disciplines, will teach students to analyze gender and sexuality as aspects of human biology, identity and culture.

The new minor grew out of several university courses that focus on women’s studies, said Dr. Linda Kornasky, ASU English professor and chair of the gender studies committee. However, men’s gender roles and sexual orientation will also be examined in the minor.

“So much of who we are is affected by gender that you can see why it’s an important area to study,” Kornasky said.

The 18-credit-hour minor includes one required course, Introduction to Gender Studies, and then students choose five additional specialized courses that vary among these disciplines: teacher education, political science, philosophy, sociology, English, social work, nursing, psychology and communication.

Kornasky said several groups on campus, including members of the Professional Organization for Women’s Equal Rights (POWER) as well as members of Helping Educate Regarding Orientation (HERO), have already shown interest in the program. It can also be an optional area of study for students pursuing a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies.

“We want people to learn something about themselves,” Kornasky said. “We can all benefit from thinking about gender.” ■

Marijo Cifer, Stems, TX.

May 8, 2006

As a fellow alumni, graduate of ASA 1990,
Member of the X-student Assoc., Member and
Record holder in 1988 ASA football team it is
my pleasure to present this check to you with
a zero balance. It only base ball would of
been there when I went to school football and
of taken a back seat, (1983 state champs Snyder Tissues
ASA Baseball LSC Champs take hold of victory
to the end Good Luck and God Bless
with safe journey.

Sincerely,
Echal B.

(windmill man)

the Napkin

by Tom Nurre

A random act of ASU kindness ended up having a much greater impact than Chad Peterson ever imagined possible.

Peterson's chance encounter with another Angelo State University family in a small-town café, his impulse to pick up the tab for their meal and his scribbled note on a napkin still resonate with the Shaun Barnett family nearly five years later.

A 1990 Angelo State graduate and former wide receiver on the Rams football team, Peterson owns and operates Concho Windmill, installing windmills and irrigation systems throughout Texas and other parts of the country. On May 8, 2006, he and his crew had just finished a job and stopped in Strawn to eat at the famous Mary's Café when he saw a man wearing the familiar ASU blue and gold lead his family into the diner. A short conversation established that the man and his wife were also ASU alumni and inspired Peterson to show his appreciation for their school pride by secretly paying for their family's meal. He left a note scribbled on a napkin as his calling card.

"I could tell they were ASU people," Peterson said. "It seemed like the right thing to do at the time, so I just did it. Random acts of kindness are few and far between these days, so I just figured 'why not?' We were done with our job and were on our way home. We had gotten a very good paycheck, and it just seemed like the thing to do."

The man Peterson had spoken briefly with was 1991 ASU alum Shaun Barnett. He and his wife, the former Keri Shults,

Class of 1987, along with both their parents and their two sons were returning home to Paradise after attending their son Travis' high school baseball tournament in Ranger.

"I happened to have a shirt on that said Angelo State Baseball," Barnett said. "That is what made Chad talk to me. When I walked in, he said something like 'hey, you're from San Angelo,' and I told him I had gone to school at ASU."

"We introduced ourselves, and he said he had grown up in Snyder and gone to Angelo State as well," Barnett added. "It was just a normal conversation that you have with someone you don't know. It only lasted about 10-15 seconds, and then I went and sat down and ate."

When his family finished eating, Barnett was trying to beat his father-in-law to pay the check. But, when he approached the cashier, she told him that their tab had already been paid.

"I thought my father-in-law had done it," Barnett said. "So I said, 'I didn't think he beat me over here.' But, the cashier said, 'No, it was that guy you talked to when you came in. You didn't know him?' I told her I had never seen him before in my life, that we had just had a brief conversation while I was walking to my table. But, she told me he had bought our meal and left a note for us. That is when I got the napkin."

Particularly amazing to Barnett was that with eight of them dining, the check was around \$120. In the years since, the Barnett family has moved to Dublin, where Shaun is the school district superintendent



Standing: Chad Peterson and Travis Barnett
Seated: Shaun and Keri Barnett

Mary's Cafe

"Home of the World Famous Chicken Fried Steak"

college graduates," Barnett said. "I've always been kind of jealous of the Texas A&M grads because they have so much tradition. What Chad did made me proud because it was about Angelo State. It made me proud because of my heritage, where I come from and the West Texas way."

"It has been a long time since it happened," Keri said, "but, to us it really hasn't been, because we tell people the story all the time. It speaks well of the personality that ASU has, because the quality of student who comes here has that. To me, what Chad did is just the epitome of ASU. Travis has always thought the story was really cool, and I think it is part of what attracted him to go to ASU."

Almost five years later, Travis has become the 13th member of his extended family to attend ASU. He is an applied physics major, president pro tem of the Student Senate and the latest in a long line of family members to receive a Carr Scholarship. At a student government function, he told the "napkin story" to ASU President Joseph C. Rallo, who thought it should be shared with a wider audience. The problem was, though the Barnetts still had the napkin, they could neither remember Peterson's name nor read his signature.

Fortunately, *ASU Magazine* staff gleaned a couple of clues from the napkin, and, with the help of former Rams head football coach Jerry Vandergriff, were able to establish that Peterson had authored the note. After that, it took just a few phone calls to set up a reunion this spring at ASU.

"I'm flattered," Peterson said. "I never expected, especially five years later, that someone would track me down with no

and Keri, his wife, is the curriculum director. But, they have never forgotten what happened that day in Strawn.

"I've been in the school business since I left ASU, as a coach, principal and superintendent, so I'm always around col-

name, address or e-mail to go on and actually find out who I am. I didn't think it was a big deal at the time, but obviously it was to them."

"It's nice to know that people recognize your acts of kindness," he added. "I just think 'you're welcome.' I'm just here trying to do my part."

The irony of the story is that Peterson was simply passing on a favor that had been shown him because of his ASU roots. Not long before that day in Strawn, Peterson had been hired by Lubbock dermatologist Dr. David Long for a lucrative windmill and irrigation job on his ranch.

"It was about a \$25,000 job," Peterson recalled, "and the determining factor on who he was going to hire to do it, he told me, rested on the fact that I was an ASU alum. Out of 15 years of doing this, he is the only person who has hired me, with all other factors being the same, because we were both alumni. So, at some point I figured I would pass that along, and it just so happened that at Mary's Café on that particular day, I decided that maybe it would be a good idea to do something nice for someone else who was an alum."

Now, Peterson's simple expression of alumni spirit has inspired the Barnetts to also pay it forward.

"I think that is what I'm supposed to do with it," Barnett said. "He chose to honor us by buying our dinner, and so I think it is my duty now, if I ever have that opportunity. I would like to pass that on to someone else, whatever it is, whether it's buying their dinner or something else."

"I went to a smaller school on purpose, and I'm proud of that school and its heritage," he added. "I preach Angelo State and I have my whole career. Now I'm proud that my son is going here."

And, the significance of the café encounter has certainly not been lost on Travis.

"My whole family has been to college at Angelo State," he said. "But, it's not as widely known when you go places and say you went to ASU. So, to have a fellow alumni take care of us that way and build that alumni relationship was a pretty cool statement for Angelo State and the fact that we are growing and going places." ■

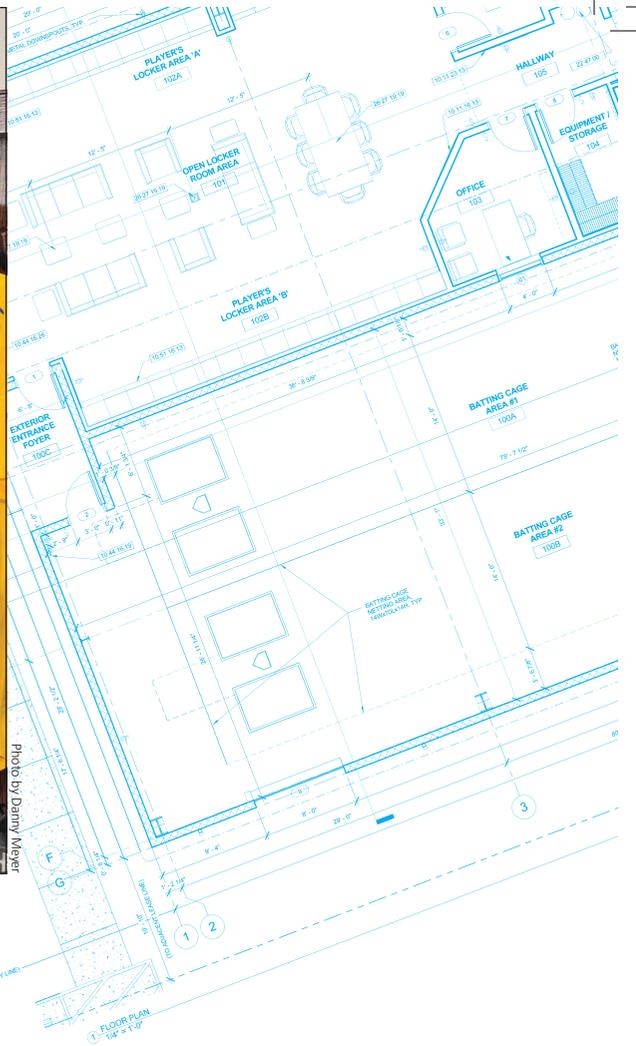


Photo by Danny Meyer

polishing the Diamond

by Lindy Zamora

One of the top baseball facilities in the Lone Star Conference and all of NCAA Division II got even better this spring with the completion of the Norris Baseball Clubhouse adjacent to Foster Field.

Construction started in November, well before the first pitch of the 2011 season, on the \$436,000 facility north of Foster Field's left field fence and was completed in the spring. Thanks to the support and generosity of several local businesses and individuals, led by the Lloyd and Sheri Norris family, the Rams baseball team has a new place to call home.

The 1,875-square-foot field house features a locker room complete with oak lockers for the players, new offices for the baseball coaching staff, a players' lounge and two indoor batting cages, among other features.

"We are really thankful for all the families and businesses who have contributed

to completing the clubhouse, especially the Norris Family for their generous lead gift," said Angelo State head baseball coach Kevin Brooks.

The Norris Clubhouse and its state-of-the-art amenities will assist not only with player development, but also with recruitment, further enhancing what is likely the finest facility in the state of Texas for NCAA Division II baseball.

"We already have outstanding facilities in Foster Field, but the one thing we were missing was a permanent home for our players," Brooks said. "This has helped tremendously as our players develop their everyday routines and strive to get better, both as players and as students.

"The Norris Clubhouse has been a great place for the team to hit and work on their game," Brooks continued. "It's a beautiful facility and has already enhanced our program from a recruiting perspective." ■

Donors to the Norris Baseball Clubhouse

- The Lloyd and Sheri Norris Family
- A-B Distributing Co. of San Angelo
- Alexander Construction
- Mr. and Mrs. Devin Bates
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert Boothe
- Mr. and Mrs. Randy Brooks
- First Financial Bank
- Jeffrey Hamilton
- Lone Star Beef Processors, L.P.
- Mr. and Mrs. Alvin New
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pate



Will Wagner

Photo by Danny Meyer

New Football Rat

by Kevin McCarty

Angelo State head football coach Will Wagner has toppled his share of opponents while assisting teams to 169 wins over the last 15 years, but his biggest foe through the first months on the ASU job has been time.

With his career winning percentage of nearly 85 percent as an assistant coach, even the clock doesn't stand a chance. In a little more than a month after his late-December hiring, Wagner assembled a coaching staff, managed to sign 16 student-athletes on National Signing Day, and inked six more future Rams over the next several weeks.

"It was challenging in the fact that when we had our first visit, we only had two full-time staff members," Wagner said. "Getting a list together and getting on the road to see kids was difficult. I relied heavily on our graduate assistants, who did a good job. I was very thrilled when we had 16 on signing day because prior to that, I didn't think we'd have that many. I was excited about that and I'm excited about the end result.

"We got the type of players we were looking for. We got faster up front on the defensive line and more athletic. We signed some really good skill players that I'm excited about at receiver and running back. Then we signed some local kids, something I was focused on. They're all great players and I'm excited to see them develop into the players that we think they can be over the next couple of years."



Filling the void left by record-setting quarterback Josh Neiswander's graduation is a daunting task, but Wagner signed two high school quarterbacks in Warren Truesdale and Kyle Washington, and has backups Blake Hamblin and Michael Cochran returning. Truesdale and Washington bring an added element to the position with their mobility, an emphasis for Wagner.

"We want an athletic quarterback because I know the problems it causes for defenses after coaching on that side of the ball for the last 13 years," Wagner said. "Anytime you've got a quarterback that can get out of the pocket and is a run threat, it makes it harder for defenses to game plan. We can involve the quarterback in the run game a little bit just to keep people honest."

Other than the quarterback getting out of the pocket on occasion, the Rams will not undergo a major overhaul on offense under offensive coordinator Russell Gaskamp as the team will focus on playing to its strengths. On defense however, the Rams will switch to a 4-3 base defense after previously playing with three defensive linemen. Angelo State added four defensive ends in this year's class.

"I want us to be very physical – not only up front, but we've got to be physical at linebacker and in the back end," Wagner said. "I want us to have more team speed, be more athletic and run to the ball. It's going to be a little different than in years past with the four defensive linemen, but we have to be more sound in order to limit the big plays as much as possible." ■

Angelo State 2011 Football Signees

Name	Pos	Ht	Wt	Hometown (Previous School)
Wayne Blackwell	DT	6-1	320	Houston (Ventura College)
Jordan Booty	RB	5-11	205	Richardson (Richardson HS)
Mark Branch	DB	6-3	190	Copperas Cove (Copperas Cove HS)
Chris DiClemente	LB/LS	5-11	223	Katy (Seven Lakes HS)
Matthew Gholston	DE	6-1	220	Austin (Bowie HS)
Andy Gonzalez	DE	6-2	230	Cedar Park (Leander HS)
Zane Hernandez	QB/ATH	6-4	215	Iraan (Iraan HS)
Matthew Hummingbird	DB	6-1	185	San Angelo (Lake View HS)
Brandon Jones	DE	6-2	215	Round Rock (Stony Point HS)
Daymond Lewis	DB/ATH	5-10	170	West Columbia (Columbia HS)
Hamilton Luper	WR	6-3	200	Whitewright (Whitewright HS)
Colton Lyon	LB	6-0	220	Boyd (Boyd HS)
Chase Martin	DB	6-0	180	San Angelo (Central HS)
Jarred Martin	K	5-10	185	Roswell, N.M. (New Mexico Military)
Zachry Mueller	TE	6-3	225	Victoria (West HS)
Daniel Perez	DB/KR	5-9	155	San Angelo (Central HS)
Talon Smith	WR	5-9	150	Odessa (Permian HS)
Austin Sparks	RB/LB	6-1	215	Marble Falls (Marble Falls HS)
Warren Truesdale	QB	6-3	190	San Antonio (Churchill HS)
Kyle Washington	QB	6-4	180	Humble (Humble HS)
Jeffrey Williams	DE	6-3	235	Katy (Cinco Ranch HS)
Reagan Womack	OL	6-1	266	Lakeway (Lake Travis HS)
Lucas Zoller	OL	6-5	290	Austin (Bowie HS)

2011 Rams Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
9/3	@Western State	Gunnison, Colo.	2 p.m.
9/10	@Chadron State	Chadron, Neb.	1 p.m.
9/17	Central Oklahoma	San Angelo	2 p.m.
9/24	@Abilene Christian*	Abilene	TBA
10/1	Eastern New Mexico* (Family Day)	San Angelo	6 p.m.
10/8	@West Texas A&M*	Canyon	6 p.m.
10/15	Midwestern State* (Homecoming)	San Angelo	6 p.m.
10/22	@Texas A&M-Commerce*	Commerce	TBA
10/29	Texas A&M-Kingsville*	San Angelo	6 p.m.
11/5	@Incarnate Word*	San Antonio	TBA
11/12	Tarleton State*	San Angelo	2 p.m.
11/19	NCAA Division II Playoffs	TBD	

*Indicates Lone Star Conference game. All times are Central Time.

Sports**briefs**

by Athletic Communications Staff



Andria Nussey

Indoor Success

Andria Nussey and Chrystal Ruiz helped jump-start Angelo State's first-ever indoor track and field season with All-America performances at the 2011 NCAA Division II Indoor Track and Field Championships in March.

Nussey became ASU's first-ever women's indoor national champion and first track and field athlete to win a title in the 800-meter run when she held off Grand Valley State's Chanelle Caldwell at the meet in Albuquerque. Ruiz posted the third-best pentathlon score ever at an

NCAA Division II meet and set a pentathlon record in the 800-meter run, but finished a close second to Central Missouri's Lindsay Lettow.

Their indoor performances added to their lasting legacy as members of the Rambelles' 2010 NCAA Division II Outdoor Track and Field National Championship team.

Angelo State freshman Kati Holly (high jump) and junior transfer Kelsey Wilson (pole vault) also competed at the indoor national meet.

Gritty 'Belles Persevere

The Angelo State women's basketball team rallied around a slogan of "No Excuses" while overcoming a slew of injuries and returning to the Lone Star Conference Tournament.

The gritty 'Belles made the post-season, even after losing four key players to injuries and hovering around .500 at the midpoint of the season.

Camille Perkins displayed senior leadership as she stepped up and led the 'Belles in scoring. She ended her ASU career as the

program's second all-time leading scorer with 1,764 points. Playing at times with only six or seven active players, the team went on a four-game winning streak in January and closed out the regular season by winning eight of its last nine contests. The 'Belles capped the regular-season on a high note as they recorded a 70-57 win over then-No. 16 Tarleton State and handed the Texanns their first Lone Star Conference South Division loss of the year.

Angelo State entered the tournament field in Bartlesville, Okla., as the No. 3 seed from the LSC South Division and was defeated by LSC North Division No. 2 seed Central Oklahoma in the opening round. The Rambelles finished the season 17-10 overall and 10-4 in LSC South play.

Tough Luck Rams

The Rams basketball team was left thinking what could have been as head basketball coach Fred Rike undoubtedly had his toughest coaching assignment since his first year as leader of the program.

The team was forced to change its focal point on offense not once, but twice as Angelo State lost what was then considered its best player to a violation of team rules and then another top player to injury. The Rams also tied an NCAA record by playing in nine overtime games during the season.

The Rams still managed to emerge from Lone Star Conference South Division play with a .500 record, thanks in large part to Richard Thomas, who led the league with 21.5 points and 7.5 rebounds per game during conference contests. Thomas was named to the All-LSC South Division first team, while Ridge McKeither earned All-LSC South Division second team honors, and Andre Adams was tabbed as the LSC South Freshman of the Year.

Tops in Softball

On the softball field, the Rambelles went 18-0 in early play and challenged the program's record for best-ever start, before falling one game short of the 19-0 mark set in 2003. Angelo State opened the season as the No. 8 team in the country but streaked to the top of the rankings before losing its first game.

The Rambelles swept through the St. Mary's Invitational and the ASU Blue and Gold Classic, outscoring their opponents 68-24 through the first nine games. Angelo State then faced its toughest challenge against No. 8 Nebraska-Omaha in the opening game of the Southeastern Oklahoma Invitational. The then-No. 3 'Belles would break open a 1-1 tie after All-American Alix Dean hit a bases-clearing double and cruised to a 5-1 win. ASU dominated the remainder of the tournament, and its unblemished record increased to 15-0.

ASU had its share of scares during the run, including the next two games against traditional regional power St. Edward's. The Rambelles trailed, 4-2, entering the bottom of the seventh in the opening game until catcher Kacie Easley tied the game with a two-run double to left field. Angelo State went on to earn a 5-4 win in the bottom of the eighth and eventually earned a 2-1 extra-inning win in game two.

The 'Belles continued their heart-wrenching ways and plated eight runs in the seventh inning at St. Mary's to earn a 10-3 come-from-behind win. Despite overcoming deficits in eight games during the 2011 season, including an eight-run deficit to Abilene Christian, the Angelo State softball squad saw the streak come to an end behind eight early runs and a run-rule shortened contest in the second game of the double header with the Rattlers. ■



Photos by Danny Meyer

Richard Thomas

alumni focus

Leap of Faith

by Roy Ivey

ASU alum David Sedeño's decision to leave mainstream journalism for religious reporting came, appropriately enough, in a church pew during a 2008 pilgrimage through Mexico.



David Sedeño

Photo by Danny Meyer

Sedeño and his then-17-year-old daughter Mary were in the midst of a 12-day, 11-state tour of Mexico, where the family had lived previously while he was the Mexico City bureau chief for the *Dallas Morning News*. Made at the request of his daughter who wanted to see their former home one more time prior to her senior year of high school, the trip followed the route Sedeño's father had taken in 1916 to escape the Mexican Revolution to a new life in Texas.

"We were in a church in San Miguel de Allende," said Sedeño, who at the time was mulling over a new job offer, "and this trip was happening while I was asking myself 'am I going to stay at the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* or am I going to the job at the Diocese of Dallas?' What I was looking for was an answer."

"All of a sudden," he said, "this family standing in a corner in the back of the church started singing 'Pescador de Hombres,' or Fisher of Men. When that song started, it was truly a moment when I said, 'Here I go to the diocese.' The song's main line talks about leaving all behind and putting your faith first."

A few days later, Sedeño accepted the job offer and resigned from the *Star-Telegram*, where he had served on the editorial board and wrote columns and editorials, to become editor of the Dallas Diocese's *Texas Catholic* newspaper, *El Católico de Texas* Spanish-language newspaper and *Texas Catholic Football* statewide magazine, which debuted in August of 2010. The *Texas Catholic* newspaper circulates biweekly to about 50,000 readers in the 1.2 million-member Catholic diocese.

Thus, Sedeño took the next step in his long and distinguished journalistic career that began when he was a fledgling student reporter for the ASU *Ram Page*.

"When I was at Angelo State," he said, "I had the opportunity to do many things because it was a smaller school. It gave me hands-on experience, but it also allowed me

to quickly begin working at the *San Angelo Standard-Times*. I was an 18-year-old freshman working at the *Ram Page* and the *Standard-Times* and doing other things, so my career just took off from there.”

After serving as a rewrite clerk, intern and general assignments reporter at the *Standard-Times*, Sedeño took an internship with the *Star-Telegram* and then returned to the *Standard-Times* as a copy editor during his senior year of college. Upon graduation, he oversaw production of the *Standard-Times*’ prototype bilingual newspaper, *Los Tiempos*, for six months before moving on to The Associated Press (AP) and a career marked by reporting on several of the biggest news stories of the last 30 years.

After a stint at the Dallas AP bureau, Sedeño was posted to the Rio Grande Valley, where he got his first taste of Latin-American news, including coverage of the deadly 1985 Mexico City earthquake. It was an event that completely changed his outlook on life.

“When I was in college, I wanted to cover the civil war in Central America,” he said. “That coverage of the earthquake showed me that I didn’t want to be a foreign correspondent because it wasn’t as glamorous as it seemed, and an earthquake was really a hard thing to see.”

Soon after, Sedeño was promoted to San Antonio correspondent and tasked with covering the entire city by himself, including sports and straight news. Particularly intriguing to the young reporter was following the career of the city’s famous leader.

“Henry Cisneros was a high-profile mayor in a high-profile city,” Sedeño said. “In some ways, that San Antonio posting was the most fun I’ve had because, as a young journalist, I was competing with writers from the two city newspapers at the time. But, we really helped each other. In some ways, it was my last true experience in journalism where reporters worked as colleagues.”

In San Antonio, Sedeño also met and married his wife, Ellen. The couple then moved to San Diego, where Sedeño was AP correspondent in charge.

“I saw in San Diego sort of a preview of what’s going on now in the immigration debate,” he said. “California had gone through this surge of housing, development, business and migration from other states. Many immigrants from Mexico and Central America were also coming in to look for jobs, but after awhile, there were no jobs. So, they were stuck there.”

Reporters, however, are rarely stuck in one place for long, and Sedeño was soon back in Texas as assistant Dallas AP bureau chief. The major event of his second stint in Dallas was coordinating coverage of the standoff between government forces and the Branch Davidians at the sect’s Mount Carmel compound near Waco in 1993.

Another move within the AP in 1993 took Sedeño and his family to Albuquerque, where as New Mexico bureau chief, he coordinated coverage of, among other stories, Native Americans on reservations dying from a mysterious malady, later identified as the Hantavirus.

After bouncing around the country so much with the AP, the Sedeños wanted to find a permanent home to raise their growing family. They decided to go back to Dallas in 1995 with their daughter, Mary, and son, David Joseph. Another son, Patrick Gerard, was on the way and was born March 17 of that year.

However, that search for stability also meant Sedeño had to leave the AP, so he signed on with the *Dallas Morning News* as an assistant metro editor and later as an assistant foreign editor, focusing on Mexico and Cuba. After serving as the newspaper’s Mexico City bureau chief from 2001-02, Sedeño and his family returned to Dallas.

Soon, another big event was brewing on his doorstep. Dozens of undocumented workers had been loaded onto a

tractor-trailer rig on the border and headed for Dallas in the scorching summer of 2002. When it stopped in the Dallas area, dozens of men and women tumbled out of the trailer, except for two who died from the heat.

“I wrote 24 stories, starting with those people coming out of that trailer through the sentencing of the people who brought them here,” Sedeño said. “I got a lot of hate mail from readers who thought I shouldn’t have kept following the case and saying that I was biased, but I saw it as a mission to bring the story to the public in the right way.”

Though he has covered a wide variety of stories during his career, immigration and border issues have always piqued Sedeño’s interest.

“There is legitimate concern that you have to protect your borders,” he said, “but you also have to understand the co-existence of all those communities on the border and that they are much more affected than we will ever be by those issues.”

Now that his travels are mostly over and his family has found a home, Sedeño plans to bring that same type of human interest and compassion to his coverage of the Diocese of Dallas.

“I’ve been lucky to have had a front-row seat to many great news events of my lifetime and to meet interesting and ‘famous’ people who are viewed as important people,” he said. “Sometimes people ask me if I miss the news business and I say, ‘No,’ because it has evolved and no longer is the same business that many journalists remember it as.”

“Even as I was contemplating my decision to leave secular journalism, I discussed it with my children,” he said. “My son Patrick said, ‘Dad, are you really sure that you want to move? You are working for a big newspaper right now.’”

“To which my daughter Mary said, ‘Bigger than God?’” ■

Joint Venture

by Tom Nurre

Angelo State University and the Berrie family of San Angelo have been partners for over 35 years.

That partnership includes three generations of Berries and has now stretched into its fifth decade. The family matriarch, Charlene Berrie, started what has become a family tradition when she enrolled at ASU in the mid-1970s, earning her nursing degree in 1976. Since then, six of her children and five of her grandchildren have enrolled at ASU with a sixth grandchild on the way this fall.

"I encouraged my kids to stay home because it was cheaper," Berrie said. "Plus, I don't know where they could go to get a better start than Angelo State. But, I didn't tell them that they had to go to college or to ASU. They just wanted to, and they did."

Starting in 1981, Berrie's children Robert Berrie, Cynthia Bauter, David Berrie, Jessica Lankford, Trenton Berrie and Cathryn Humble all attended ASU. Both Robert Berrie and Bauter enrolled for two years before transferring to and earning degrees at Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas. David Berrie studied for one year before joining the San Angelo Police Department. Lankford got her ASU bachelor's degree in education in 2000, while both Trenton Berrie and Humble have multiple ASU degrees.

Trenton earned his B.S. in 2006 and M.S. in 2008, both in psychology. Humble got her B.S. in 1997 in education and her M.S. in 2007 in guidance and counseling.

For all of them, staying close to home and paying their way through college were major issues they overcame by heading to Angelo State.

"I graduated with a bachelor's and a master's with no debt," Humble said. "I didn't have to get loans or anything. I think that is a pull for some of today's students, too, including my own kids. It is possible to go to ASU without getting loans because the cost is so reasonable."

"The small class sizes are also a plus," she added. "If you seek out the professors, they are willing to work with you however you need. You can know your way around, get to know the faculty and be involved in a lot of different activities, whereas you might not get that at a bigger campus."

Along with her husband, Bobby, a retired SAPD officer, Charlene Berrie is now seeing several of her grandchildren carry on the tradition of attending what has virtually become the family alma mater.

Robert Berrie's daughter, Gwendolyn, graduated from ASU last fall with a B.S. in biology and is now in the occupational ther-

apy program at Texas Woman's University. His son, Austin, is a criminal justice major. Humble's son, Jaxon, is scheduled to graduate this spring with a B.S. in psychology, while her daughter, Haley, is majoring in biology. One of Lankford's daughters, Emily, is an education major, and another, Katie, is set to enroll at ASU this fall.

"We've seen ASU progress steadily since it was still San Angelo College," Charlene Berrie said. "It is making steady progress to offering more and more programs for people in San Angelo and the surrounding area, and those outside the area who like this type of atmosphere and are not interested in going to a campus that is so large."

"I think because of the Carr endowments, a lot of top-of-the-line kids can come to ASU," she added. "I think there are a lot of good programs at ASU, and you get the small school feel rather than being surrounded by a huge city. There is also a lot of family tradition and involvement."

So now the question becomes, will a fourth generation of the Berrie family be heading to ASU in the future?

"Families normally spread out, and you can't expect your family to stay in this one area," Berrie said. "But, certainly there would be a lot of support for that if it is what they want to do. I think my kids and grandkids have all had really good experiences here."

While ASU is in the midst of trying to extend its reach farther outside of West Texas to meet its enrollment goal of 10,000 students by 2020, local families like the Berries remain the bedrock of the institution. However, they also understand the need to expose even more students and families to all the university has to offer.

"I like to see that ASU is becoming more competitive in offering more degree programs," Humble said.

"ASU is just a huge part of San Angelo," Berrie added. "ASU, our medical facilities and Goodfellow Air Force Base are what make San Angelo. I think ASU has a great and growing reputation, and our campus is also beautiful. It's like an oasis." ■



Katie Lankford, Emily Lankford, Jaxon Humble, Charlene Berrie, Austin Berrie and Haley Humble

Photo by Danny Meyer

Alumni Expansion

By Erin Whitford

Under new management and experiencing steady growth, the Angelo State University Alumni Association continues to make progressive strides to connect current students with alumni as well as the ASU community with the city that supports it.

Utilizing a host of new programs, the Alumni Association accomplished a 40-percent increase in membership in 2010. Kim Hunter, who took over as executive director in January of last year, credits the sweeping growth to inventive ideas and a drive to make the association a home away from home for ASU alumni. Most exciting to Hunter is the wide range of alumni who are signing up.

“People aren’t only donating more money,” she said, “but we also have an increase of members across all demographics.”

In addition to expanding outreach to former members, the Alumni Association has been soliciting feedback on all aspects of alumni life. Several new programs are also seen as contributing factors to the jump in membership, including an iPad giveaway, development of a new membership level for current students, faculty and staff at a prorated cost, and enhanced promotion of Ram Jams and tailgating as well as new “Come Study With Us” and “Reunion Round Up” events.

Come Study With Us invites students to study by the fireplace in the LeGrand Alumni and Visitors Center while enjoying free coffee. The Reunion Round Up encourages all alumni to fraternize during annual ASU Homecoming festivities. Both are seen as important ways to get more and better exposure for the LeGrand Center with students, alumni and the San Angelo community. The Alumni Association also offers ASU class ring recipients and recent graduates a one-year complimentary membership.

Another new idea the Alumni Association is launching is its first biannual graduation party at the LeGrand Center the night before ASU’s May 2011 commencement ceremonies.

“We hope this encourages students and their families to come celebrate together and get connected as the students transition into alumni,” Hunter said. “Students become alumni, and we want them to feel connected from when they begin until after they leave. Once a Ram, always a Ram.”

In addition to its fun, and usually free, events, the Alumni Association also promotes networking between students and recent alumni all the way through Golden Exes. The purpose of the association is to help alumni demonstrate their continuing school pride and maintain a connection with their alma mater.

Attaining a 40-percent increase in membership is an impressive feat, Hunter said, and the Alumni Association would like to thank all alumni for their generosity and continued support. As the association moves forward, its goal remains to develop relationships with students and alumni that last a lifetime.

“Our alma mater makes us all family,” Hunter said. ■



Photo by Danny Meyer



Photo by Kimberley Parker

CLASSnotes

Each issue of the Angelo State University Magazine will highlight selected alumni and then invite you to visit the Angelo State University Alumni Association website for the latest on your former classmates. To learn more about Angelo State alumni, visit asuexes.com. Better yet, see what your friends are up to and then update the site with news about you, your family and your accomplishments.

1962

Jerry Vandergriff, former Rams football star and longtime head football coach at ASU, has been inducted into the Athletic Hall of Honor at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, which was previously known as the University of Corpus Christi. Vandergriff attended UCC after his San Angelo College career and quarterbacked the UCC football team in 1962 and 1963, earning All-Texas and Little All-America honors. He was team captain as a senior and student body president. Later Vandergriff coached at ASU starting in 1972 with 10 years as an assistant and 23 years as head coach.

1972

Tommy McCulloch, president and CEO of Fidelity Bank in Wichita Falls, was named Wichitan of the Year at the 20th Annual North Texas Economic Forum in Wichita Falls. The award is presented annually to a citizen of North Texas for tireless efforts to improve the quality of life for the citizens in the community. McCulloch holds a B.B.A. in business from Angelo State.

1989

Rafael Castillo, who holds a B.B.A. in finance, has been named city manager of Windcrest, a Bexar County community northeast of San Antonio. Previously, Castillo had served as city manager of Fort Stockton for three years and of Del Rio for six years.

2004

Kayla Shurley Davidson, who holds a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary child development and learning, has published her first children's book, *Daddy's Little Squirrel*. The book stresses the impact and importance of family on children's individual self-worth. Davidson is a former elementary school math teacher.

2008

Douglas Parsons, who earned a B.S. in applied physics and went on to work on his master's degree in physics and astronomy at Stephen F. Austin State University, discovered a new asteroid, which is dimmer than Pluto, on Dec. 7 while taking pictures of the Crab Nebula with a 41-inch telescope at SFA's observatory.

Parsons' discovery was later confirmed by Harvard University's International Astronomical Union Minor Planet Center. Although the asteroid was sighted previously in 2006, the observer did not have enough data points and information to calculate the orbital parameters.

Triple Crowns

Three more alumni – **Mike Jinks**, **Mark Kirchhoff** and **Johnny Taylor** – have claimed state football championships, further solidifying Angelo State University's growing reputation as the cradle of Texas football coaches.

Jinks, Class of 1995, guided Cibolo Steele High School to the Class 5A Division II state championship in the first year after being elevated from Class 4A, only the second coach ever to accomplish such a feat. His team, led by blue chip running back Malcolm Brown, the state's 5A Offensive Player of the Year, and Defensive Player of the Year Ryan Simmons, took the title with a 24-21 win over Denton Guyer. Jinks quarterbacked the Rams to the NCAA Division II playoffs in 1994.

Kirchhoff, Class of 1986 with a B.S. in physical education, coached Falls City High School to the Class 1A Division II state title, earning his and his school's first state championship. Falls City beat Windthorst, 32-7, in the title game. A Mason native, Kirchhoff has been involved in coaching for a quarter of a century, the first 10 years at Eden, including four seasons as head coach, and the last 15 seasons at Falls City, a Karnes County community southeast of San Antonio.

Taylor, who was a three-year defensive tackle for the Rams under then-ASU head coach Grant Teaff in the 1970s, took Idalou High School to the Class 2A Division II state championship by upsetting heavy favorite and previously undefeated Lexington, 20-3, in the title game. Taylor is 189-64-3 in 22

seasons at Idalou, just east of Lubbock. Although a consistent playoff contender, Idalou had never made it past the state quarterfinal round until the 2010 season.

In Memoriam

James Michael Varnadore, 23, a sophomore geology major from San Angelo, died Jan. 22 in a one-vehicle accident in San Angelo. He previously attended Bonham Elementary and Glenn Junior High before graduating from Wall High School in 2006.

Bill Erwin, 96, a character actor who appeared in more than 250 film and television productions after attending San Angelo College from 1931-33, died Dec. 29 in Studio City, Calif. Erwin, who was honored by the ASU Alumni Association as a distinguished alumnus in 2004, was best known for his Emmy-nominated role of Sid Fields on NBC's 1993 *Seinfeld* episode "The Old Man" and for playing Arthur the Bellman in "Somewhere in Time," a 1980 time-traveling romantic drama that starred Christopher Reeve and Jane Seymour.

His movie credits included everything from "You're In the Army Now" with Jimmy Durante and Phil Silvers in 1941 to "Home Alone" in 1990 and "Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult" with Leslie Nielsen and Priscilla Presley in 1994. His TV credits ranged from "I Love Lucy" to "My Name Is Earl" with appearances in such varied shows as "Wagon Train," "Leave It to Beaver," "The Andy Griffith Show," "The Untouchables," "Twilight Zone," "Perry Mason" and "Gunsmoke."

Erwin also starred in numerous TV commercials, including a CLIO Award-winning Dreyer's Ice Cream spot where his chair-bound character leaps up and break dances when he learns the brand is being served for dessert. A self-taught cartoonist, Erwin had works published in the *New Yorker*, *Playboy* and *Los Angeles* magazines.

Dr. Cheryl Hines, 55, ASU professor of teacher education and Class of 1976 with a Bachelor of Science in elementary education, died Dec. 27, after a lengthy battle with cancer. Hines earned a doctorate in education from Texas A&M University in 1995, specializing in reading and children's literature. She joined the ASU faculty in 1999 and received Professor of the Year honors and the Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award in 2003.

Library – continued from page 5

curiosity, set a record of 19,931, 62 percent higher than the previous January high of 12,232 in 2003. But, the library also set a February attendance record this year of 25,621, up 17 percent from the previous February high of 21,862 in 2009.

"I expect record counts for the rest of the 2011 fiscal year," Fortin said.

Part of the success can be attributed to the more informal nature of the Learning Commons with the dry-erase columns and the coffee shop, named Common Grounds, where students can buy coffee, beverages, pastries, salads, sandwiches and other treats during library hours.

"Student Government asked and received permission to have one column dedicated to its use for announcements and information to share with students," Fortin said. "One student has been seen using the pillars to practice for exams in his anatomy class. Other students simply use the pillars to draw pictures, leave messages to friends or outline projects due in their classes.

"Perhaps one measure of the popularity of the coffee bar is that the library requested four additional large-capacity trash cans to deal with the extra waste," said Fortin, himself an inveterate coffee drinker.

The major change that alumni will notice from the outside is that the library's previous main entry facing the Houston Harte University Center has been reduced to a single door to Common Grounds. The new main entry now faces north onto the University Mall.

Perhaps the best assessment of the Learning Commons came from San Angelo resident Joe Henderson, son of ASU library namesake, Porter Henderson. Speaking of his father at the Learning Commons ribbon cutting in January, Henderson called him a visionary, but said "he could never have envisioned this." ■

Spiegelman – continued from page 9

His works often venture into politics, but he does not see himself as a political cartoonist.

"Someone asked me about that and I said, 'Well, I'm real slow and still working on World War II,'" he said. "I think that political cartooning very often reduces itself, especially these days, to a kind of subspecies of gag cartoon, the kind you would see in the *New Yorker*. Those are more for lighthearted laughs than attempts to draw blood and sway others."

Spiegelman also defended his controversial approach to cartooning, where he often portrays different ethnic groups in a non-flattering light that some find objectionable.

"The language I use is a language of stigmatization," he said. "It's a language that reduces things down to caricature or works a much subtler trick of undoing the locks of stigmatization to make other possibilities viable." ■

Check out the speakers for ASU's other distinguished lecture series this spring by visiting the bonus features on the *ASU Magazine* website at

www.angelo.edu/ASUMagazine/.

alumni association century club

All as of March 1, 2011

DIAMOND

Bryan Heffin, Monahans
Mickey and Renee Long, Midland
Mark and Debbie Low, Dallas
Randy and Emma Russell,
 Round Hill, Va.
J. Milton and Terri Swift, Montgomery
Brian and Droxie Watson, Midland
Jay and Michelle Young, Dallas

PLATINUM

Jeffrey and Deborah Brennan,
 Mill Creek, Wash.
Larry Clark, Richmond
Dan and Terri Herrington, Boerne
Steve and Lisa Hollifield, Midland
Lloyd and Sheri Norris, San Angelo
Gregory Ochs, Dallas
Joel and Suzanne Sugg, San Angelo

GOLDEN

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Steve and Marsha Arvedson, Houston
Gary Baty, Horseshoe Bay
Kyle and Pam Box, San Angelo
Lisa Curry, San Angelo
Randy and Debbie Dews, Dallas
C.B. Franke, San Angelo
Col. (Ret.) Kevin and Rita Gamache,
 College Station
Ronald and Carol Harrison,
 San Angelo
**Maj. Gen. Ronnie D. and Maria
 Hawkins**, Alexandria, Va.
Marc and Amy Hayes, Lubbock
Takeo Ishimasa, Eatontown, N.J.
Robert and Jean Ann LeGrand,
 San Angelo
Allen and Mesha Millsap Jr.,
 San Antonio
John Norman, Houston
Steve and Susan Timms, Humble
Michael Varnadore, San Angelo
Johnell Vincent, San Angelo

SILVER

Dr. Ross Alexander, San Angelo
Craig Bagley, Weatherford
Jessica Biere, San Angelo
Gary and Leslee Bowen, San Angelo
Lane and Elaine Bowen, Mathis
Frances Boyles, Odessa
David and Heather Bushnell,
 New Braunfels
James Campbell, San Angelo
William Caskey, San Angelo
Michael Center, Llano
Guy and Eva Choate, San Angelo

Lana R. Choate-Pierce,
 Englewood, Colo.
Patsy Cleere, San Angelo
William and Karen Coggins Jr.,
 Minneapolis, Minn.
Barry and Karla Cooper, Edmond, Okla.
Dwain and Darla Custer, San Angelo
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Clifton Dews, San Angelo
Norman and Linda Dierschke,
 San Angelo

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 Missouri City
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 Alpharetta, Ga.

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Grady Harlow, San Angelo
Chris Haydon, San Angelo
Darron Hefner, Big Spring
Joey Henderson Jr., San Angelo
Joe and Su Ann Henderson,
 San Angelo

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Virginia Hunt-Edmiston, Murphy
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 Magness, Houston

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Patti Wetzel, San Angelo
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