Sindecuse announces summer hours

The Sindecuse Health Center has switched to summer hours, and appointments for laboratory or x-ray imaging services before 8 a.m. Tuesdays are no longer offered. Hours for summer I and II are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday. The pharmacy drive-up window is open until 5:30 p.m. weekdays.

Gilmore ticket discount available

As a benefit of WMU’s sponsorship of the Gilmore Festival, University employees are eligible for a 15 percent discount on most festival tickets. Visit thegilmore.org to view festival events or call (269) 342-1166 to request a brochure. To get the discount, order by phone, fax, mail or in person at Miller Auditorium. Use the password “2014.”

H.R. now administering certain leaves

For the past few years, WMU has used the services of BASIC for administering family and medical leaves of absence. Effective May 1, WMU Human Resources resumed coordination of family and medical leaves. Employees with a leave or those interested in applying for one should contact their Human Resources representative by visiting wmich.edu/hr/employees/benefits/fmla.html.

Proposals accepted through May 30

Applications are being accepted through Friday, May 30, for a poster presentation, mini-workshop or resource table included in the Teaching and Learning Bash Friday, Sept. 5. Proposals should be submitted online. Visit wmich.edu/facdev for details.

Database accepting profile updates

Employees may add more content to their Discovery Experts Database profiles through Monday, June 30. Content added during this third phase will be uploaded to the database en masse by September 2014. Visit wmich.edu/research for more information.

Awards given at Lavender Graduation

Several awards were presented during the Lavender Graduation April 24. The event recognizes the contributions and achievements of lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender students and their allies. It also recognizes the contributions and achievements of lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender students and their allies. It also recognizes the contributions of high school students and K-12 teachers in a 12-county southwest Michigan area.

On this occasion, the inaugural benefit gala at the Air Zoo in Portage, Mich., will honor science and arts innovation shown by high school students and K-12 teachers in a 12-county southwest Michigan area.

It will also continue a local tradition of inducting new members into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame, which is housed at the Air Zoo. Those two sets of honors will be combined at the acclaimed museum with an evening of dancing, dining and a silent auction that will include unique, one-of-a-kind items from the Air Zoo archives.

Researchers get major grant to improve canes used by blind

People who are blind or visual impaired could be the ultimate beneficiaries of a $4.3 million grant awarded to WMU researchers to improve the design and use of canes.

The grant, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and National Institutes of Health, was awarded to Dae Shik Kim and Robert Wall Emerson, blindness and low vision studies, and Koorosh Naghshineh, mechanical and aerospace engineering. The research team will study how to improve the ergonomic design and cane-use biomechanics to see what has the greatest impact on detecting obstacles and drop-offs in the walking environment. Kim, the project’s principal investigator, says the long cane and how it is used was developed during the 1940s during World War II and has changed little since then, partly due to lack of research.

Researchers will test whether cane rigidity, length, weight and weight distribution impact the ability to detect obstacles and drop-offs. Part of that will involve experimenting with different materials.

“Not only empirical research has shown the advantages and disadvantages of using different cane shaft materials,” Kim says. “So one of the things we plan to do is systematically manipulate the rigidity, weight, weight distribution and length to see how those variables affect how well the person can detect drop-offs and obstacles.”

How the cane is wielded is also a main focus of the three-year project, which began Feb. 1. The team will study employing the
Two big campus events start today
Thousands of visitors will be on campus as WMU hosts the 52nd annual Michigan Youth Arts Festival Thursday through Saturday, May 8-10, and the 49th International Congress on Medieval Studies Thursday through Sunday, May 8-11.

The festival is the culmination of a nine-month search for the finest artistic talent in Michigan high schools, with 1,000 being invited to participate in the annual spectacle.

Dan Scallon, film director and artist at Pixar Animation Studios, will serve as the official artist-in-residence and special guest artist at a public film festival with a post-show talk from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday in the Richmond Center for Visual Arts. That presentation is one of many public events offered during the three-day festival. Visit michiganyoutharts.org/festival for details.

Meanwhile, more than 3,000 of the world’s leading academics and others interested in the Middle Ages will gather on campus for the Medieval Congress, which is the world’s largest annual gathering of professional academics, students, performers, enthusiasts and independent scholars interested in all things medieval.

Registration is required to attend the congress’ Exhibition Hall, special musical and theatrical performances, and all other events. A discount is available to Kalamazoo residents and members of the WMU community. For more information, visit wmich.edu/medieval/congress or call (269) 387-8745.

Registration deadline looms for campus’ annual Poker Walk
Registration must be received by Monday, May 19, in order to participate in the 11th annual Poker Walk for all employees.

This fun-filled event to celebrate National Employee Health and Fitness Day is set for Tuesday, May 20. Participants create a team or walk individually around a two-mile course and collect cards along the way. Those with the best poker hands win prizes.

Poker Walk check-in will be from 10:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. in the SRC Indoor Tennis Courts.

Everyone must preregister, either totally online at wmich.edu/rec or by downloading the registration form on that website and mailing or faxing it to Jen Bailey, University Recreation, at Mail Stop 5447 or (269) 387-3766.

Retirement reception
Jeanine Bartholomew, College of Health and Human Services, will be recognized for more than 30 years of service to the University during a retirement reception from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 14, in 4010 Health and Human Services Building.

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources website at wmich.edu/hr/jobs. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.
Trustees approve retirements of six faculty, 15 staff members

The retirements of six faculty members and 15 staff members were approved by the Western Michigan University Board of Trustees at its April 9 meeting. Trustees also signed off on two faculty resignations. All of the faculty members who are retiring are doing so with emeritus status. Their names, positions, years of continuous service, and effective dates of retirement are: Esther N. Gray, special education and literacy studies, 18 years, effective Dec. 1; Richard M. Ochandler, physician assistant/integrative holistic health and wellness, 37 years, effective Dec. 31; Allen J. Schwenk, information technology, 34 years, effective April 30; Mary Lou Brooks, geography; Bruce Carpenter, chemistry; Shona Drake, Haenicke Institute for Global Education; Myla Edmond, College of Arts and Sciences; Elena Cauldron, president’s office; Paul Hillis, Haworth College of Business; Tracey Kauppila, College of Aviation; Steve Kerto, Landscape Services; Nancy Landsberger, civil and construction engineering; Edward Maring, maintenance services; Nicole Millar, student conduct; Patrick Niemi, theater; James Owolt, maintenance services; Dorilee Schuble, history; Gerald Schultz, maintenance services; and N. Gray, special education and literacy sciences, 18 years, effective April 30, 2019; and Gerald L. Sievers, statistics, 46 years, effective Dec. 31; Allen J. Schwenk, integrative holistic health and wellness, 37 years, effective April 30.

The staff members retiring are: Connie Altman, information technology, 34 years, effective Feb. 28; Terry R. Bettiga, maintenance services, 26 years, effective March 31; Craig L. Boucher, information technology, 25 years, effective Jan. 7; Annette Calvert, WMU-Battle Creek, 19 years, effective April 30; Nancy L. Cardoca, Sindecuse Health Center, 15 years, effective April 30; Sandra Custer, Sindecuse Health Center, 26 years, effective Dec. 31, 2013; Cynthia R. Dunaway, public safety, 30 years, effective Jan. 31; Lunny D. Green, Registrar’s Office, 34 years, effective Jan. 31; CARYNE M. HANSON, student financial aid and scholarships, 11 years, effective Jan. 24; Patricia M. Holton, environmental safety and emergency management, 26 years, effective March 31; Arthur Hudson, landscape services, 17 years, effective Feb. 28; Joan E. Johnson, information technology, 24 years, effective Feb. 28; Gregg McChesney, maintenance services, 32 years, effective Jan. 31; Frances N. Morrow, Sindecuse Health Center, 11 years, effective April 30; and Loisjean A. Shuler, building custodial and maintenance services, 26 years, effective April 30.

The faculty members resigning are: Akon E. Ekpo, marketing, effective Aug. 17, and Todd P. White, accountancy, effective April 29.

Sustainability video wins viewer-support competition

Second Nature and Planet Forward announced April 21 that WMU’s submission was the top vote-getter of this year’s Climate Leadership Awards Video Competition. More than 28,000 votes were cast on videos created by the 2012 Second Nature Climate Leadership Award finalists. WMU came out on top, receiving 8,912 votes from site visitors.

In the Carnegie Doctoral category that WMU won, the University of Massachusetts Amherst came in second with 8,576 votes. Final overall Climate Leadership Award winners will be chosen by a group of Second Nature directors and announced later.

Obituaries

Francis William “Bill” Doolittle, a retired head football coach, died April 10. He was 90. Doolittle was coach from 1964 to 1974 and Mike Gary Athletic Fund director from 1975 to 1990.

A celebration of his life is set for noon to 3 p.m., Sunday, June 22, in the Seelye Center. Gifts may be made to the Gary Fund. Visit allenfuneralhomeinc.com to make a memorial guestbook entry.

Clyde S. Phillips Jr., founding director of the Institute of International and Area Studies, died April 17. He was 91.

Phillips joined the faculty in 1957 and retired in 1990. He developed the Master of Development Administration and helped develop other international-related programs. Visit avinkcremation.com to make a memorial guestbook entry.
This month is excellent time to sign up for SRC membership

Benefits-eligible faculty and non-bargaining staff are eligible to sign up for a Student Recreation Center membership and pay nothing more than the taxes on $270. The membership year will run from May 5, 2014, through May 10, 2015. Members may use the SRC Monday through Sunday anytime the building is open. Family hours are anytime during the summer, and kids under 18 can come in free. To sign up, go to wmic.edu/rec and click the orange SRC Access icon, then click Benefits Eligible Faculty/Staff Membership Form. Complete the form and submit it electronically.

The SRC is a convenient way to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Call Cindy at (269) 387-3115 for more details, to schedule an SRC tour or to arrange for an in-office presentation.

On Campus with Doreen Brinson

Doreen Brinson has been drawn to Kalamazoo since her college days. Brinson earned a bachelor’s degree in English literature and teaching from WMU in 1973 and has lived in the same historic home in Kalamazoo for the past 30 years.

Now Facilities Management’s labor relations specialist, she has most of her career in human resources posts. They began in 1974 at a Veterans Affairs hospital in San Francisco, followed by a job in WMU’s Human Resources unit in the town she had missed so much.

Brinson was the University’s training and development coordinator from 1985 to 1991 and director of staff collective bargaining until 1997. Then came a professional opportunity she couldn’t pass up—heading the city of Kalamazoo’s H.R. department. After a decade there, she worked locally as an H.R. consultant and served an interim stint as San Antonio’s H.R. director instead of accepting a post at a city’s full-time director.

“I love working in labor relations. It’s my favorite part of H.R. because it’s the hardest part,” Brinson says. “Everything gets done through people. That’s what makes this place tick—you, the plumber, me, the president. There’s a wonderful sense of community in Facilities Management and a common interest in what we’re all about. Once a Bronco, always a Bronco.”

Brinson’s duties include serving as the grievance officer and contract administrator for AFSCME and MSEA and serving on both of those unions’ management negotiating teams and on the training committee for the power plant’s apprenticeship program.

“My clients are directors and managers needing assistance with contract interpretation and disciplinary issues,” Brinson says. “I advise, counsel and work with the unions so we don’t get into grievance situations. My job is to have healthy employee relations. And it’s fun. It’s my life’s work.”

Brinson is a past management co-chair and 10-year member of the boards of directors for two joint labor and management organizations, but her main extracurricular activity of the past seven years has been volunteering at the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center in Augusta, Mich., home of her beloved equine buddy, Harvey. She has two adult sons and enjoys gardening, collecting locally made art, and attending theatrical performances, lectures, Art Hops and many other events on and off campus.

Continued from page 1

WMU-Air Zoo relationship being enhanced

“Some blind individuals use a guide dog for their mobility. But that is a relatively small percentage of individuals,” Kim says. “The vast majority use the long cane to get around. So by redesigning and improving its design, and also improving how the cane is used, we hope to improve the safety of blind individuals, which will obviously improve their quality of life.”

APA award winners feted—

The Administrative Professional Association honored three staff members April 17 during its annual awards reception. This year’s honorees, from left, are: Chris Voss, Student Recreation Center; Tony Griffin, Service Award; and Suzanne V. Baals, development and alumni relations; Outstanding Professional. (Photo by Jeann Baron)