RENAISSANCE MA

Professor emeritus Te-Hsiu Ma still involved with genetics, pollution, NATO, poetry & painting

PLUS: • Western’s family ties • Humanities: the human side to Arts & Sciences • Students find their futures
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A note to readers: A computer flaw in May resulted in incorrect names or addresses,
so rather than miss you once, we risk sending Focus to you twice. This had nothing
to do with contact information on WIU databases, which are correct. We hope you
enjoy this corrected copy of the Spring issue of the magazine.

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Cover photo by Scott Minor
I would like to take a moment to offer you an invitation.

On Tuesday, September 25, the College of Arts and Sciences will present the Fourth Annual John Hallwas Liberal Arts Lecture. It is our privilege this year to host Dr. Al Goldfarb, Western Illinois University’s president, as the lecturer, presenting “The Liberal Arts Shape a Presidency.”

I hope you can join us for what will surely be one of the best lectures on campus this coming fall.

Of course, a liberal arts education shapes not only a fantastically successful presidency, but also develops and expands our sense of humanity. It allows us to comprehend, cope and respond to the victories and tragedies that occur in our lives. It helps us to develop our learning potential.

To function in our advanced society, we must learn how to learn. The value of a liberal arts education in this endeavor cannot be overestimated. In our fast-paced, highly technological world, factual data may become outdated very quickly. Students who graduate now will be expected to be successful in both their personal and professional lives for the next half-century and beyond. They will be expected to have a number of different jobs over their lifetimes — some of which have not even been invented yet.

Albert Einstein perhaps put it best, saying that the difference between what the most and least learned people know is inexplicably trivial in relation to that which is unknown.

We all have a responsibility to learn and understand that “unknown,” about the universe as reflected in our chosen fields of study, about our society, about other societies, about what it means to be a human.

The John Hallwas Liberal Arts Lecture celebrates this endeavor, this need to know, this need to learn. Dr. Hallwas wrote, “In the face of increasing vocational emphasis in higher education, pervasive shallowness in our culture, and excessive individualism (that overlooks social commitment), we believe that the liberal arts component of our bachelor’s degree program should dare to assert that there is inherent value in learning, that human purposes must always receive reflective reconsideration, that coherence of thought and clarity of expression are essential values, that breadth of outlook and cultural sensitivity are indispensable, and most importantly, that transformation of the self to prepare for civic responsibility should be central to the undergraduate experience.”

Hallwas, a well-known scholar and historian, and a beloved WIU English professor, delivered the inaugural lecture in the fall of 2003. John’s lecture was a thoughtful and thought-provoking commentary on issues related to higher education. Hallwas served on Western’s faculty for 34 years, teaching American literature and nonfiction creative-writing courses in the English and Journalism department and courses in intellectual history for the Centennial Honors College. Also, he served as an archivist at the Malpass Library from 1979 until his retirement in 2004. The most widely published professor in Western’s history, he has written or edited more than 20 books in history and literature, several of which have won awards.

In September 2004, in tribute to his long and distinguished career, the College of Arts and Sciences designated its annual lecture the John Hallwas Liberal Arts Lecture.

It is through the generosity of John and Garnette Hallwas that we are able to present this signature event for the College of Arts and Sciences. John’s continued support through an initial gift, plus his time and effort, makes the lecture a wonderful celebration of Western’s commitment to outstanding educational experiences for our students. Past presenters include Dr. Charles Helm (Political Science), Dr. Karen Mann (English and Journalism) and Dr. Tracy Knight (Psychology).

We work diligently to make this event an outstanding part of the Western Illinois University experience for our students, faculty and staff. We hope to find a corporate or foundation sponsorship to ensure the bright future of this celebration of education.

Best always …
In the water or on land, this professor has her pride

By Jeff Dodd

When Jeanette Thomas’ train arrives in Chicago on Friday mornings, every minute is precious. So when the Illinois Zephyr stops at Union Station, the race is on to get to the Shedd Aquarium.

Dr. Thomas, a professor in WIU’s Department of Biological Sciences, uses shortcuts through the downtown train station that most Amtrak employees may not know. With feline moves, she makes a right turn here, a couple of lefts there, and she’s out a side entrance, into the sun and charging directly for cabs lined up at the curb.

Making the weekly trek with her are her graduate students, so trailing her are students, backpacks and a multitude of papers.

She’s the “Mama Lion” – as her students call her – leading the pride.

However, this isn’t herding cats. This is an organized attack on the day ahead.

“The schedule is extremely tight for me to teach,” says Thomas, whose classroom experience for 16 years has included Western’s Macomb and Quad Cities campuses, the Niabi Zoo in Coal Valley, Ill., and the Shedd.

“Traffic and parking problems in downtown alone can put us off schedule,” she continues, smiling, “and then there’s the train that can be late, sometimes very late.”

Unfazed by such issues, Thomas proceeds to get things done.

Once at the massive lakefront aquarium, she’s met in classrooms by several more of her students, who swarm around her, the great joy on their faces evident as she begins to unpack her bag and gets down to work immediately. She has to stay focused to make use of every moment.

“Students taking WIU graduate courses through the Shedd Aquarium can earn a post-baccalaureate certificate in zoo and aquarium studies,” she adds. “We make use of classrooms and labs at the facility as well as video conferencing with colleagues at the WIU-Quad Cities campus.”

In fact, this program is highly successful.

"Over the years of the program, three of the top people in the marine mammal department at the Brookfield Zoo have completed the program," she continues. "At the Shedd Aquarium, over the years, WIU students have had positions as the head of the conservation program, trainers in the marine mammal department, and teachers in the education department.

“The program has a great reputation,” she continues. “Most of the students who joined its first year are working successfully now. Veterinary schools are highly competitive to get accepted into. We had a student who came through our post-baccalaureate program and was accepted to two top schools on her first try as a result.”

Thomas’ face beams when she talks about the success of her students.

Her research at the Shedd Aquarium focuses on beluga whales and Pacific white-sided dolphins. She studies the effect of noise pollution on their sensory and echolocation abilities.

“Noise affects animals in much the same way as humans,” she explains. “We find noise annoying, it increases our background stress levels, temporarily damages our hearing, and adds to our agitation and fatigue. In a worse-case scenario, noise can cause permanent hearing loss and bursting of tissues in the ears. It is the same with marine mammals, except that it also may interfere with their ability to hunt, maintain contact with their group, and find mates.

“Sound in water is ever increasing,” Thomas continues. “Noise in the oceans has increased 10 decibels per decade for the last 40 years. Noise comes from shipping, sonar, military and fishing vessels, jet skis and motorboats, geoseismic exploration, and oil drilling. Add to this the fact that sound in water carries five times farther than in air, and you have a large geographic impact.”

Tom Stalf, director of the Niabi Zoo [see page 7], is enthusiastic when talking about Thomas.

Continued on next page
“Because of her, we are able to further Niabi’s mission of education in ways that would not otherwise be possible,” he says.

Thomas spends one or two days a week in the Quad Cities teaching courses both at WIU’s Quad Cities campus and at the zoo.

Not only does Thomas teach graduate courses, but she is also a prolific researcher. Her work at the Niabi Zoo currently focuses on Babe, a 32-year old Asian elephant. Curious and intelligent, Babe is participating in research with Emily Walter, a WIU biological sciences graduate student, under Thomas’s supervision.

“We are testing elephant intelligence,” Walter says. “Currently, we are using a flash card type of format in which two identical cards are placed left or right of the elephant and two different cards are placed on the other. Babe has to try to distinguish between the two and point to the side on which the cards are the same. It is very challenging because elephants do not have the best of eyesight, and there is no other sensory input for the elephant. There is nothing to smell, taste, or hear to help her discriminate between the sets of cards.”

Walter, who will have earned her zoos and aquariums certificate from WIU in December, raves about Thomas.

WIU’s Board of Trustees in March approved a new Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences degree. Their action now moves the proposal to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for consideration.

CAS Associate Dean SUSAN MARTINELLI-FERNANDEZ published “Abortion, Autonomy, and Quality of Life: Polyphonic Narratives and Kantianism” in *Teaching Ethics: A Journal for Educators.* Also, following her publication of “Educating Honorable Warriors” in the *Journal of Military Ethics* and attendance at a summer institute on war and morality at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., Martinelli-Fernandez this winter served as a judge for the Naval Academy’s annual Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence Ethics Essay Award.

Retired English Professor MAURINE MAGLIOCCO this year made a substantial donation to the English and Journalism department to endow visiting lectures each fall. University of Nebraska scholar and administrator Linda Ray Pratt in late October spoke about “English Departments in the Age of Accountability.”

Assistant Professor of Spanish SANDRO BARROS this winter delivered “Textbook and Simulation: Knowledge, Cultural Bias, and the Massive Reproduction of Spanish as a Second Language” for the Foreign Languages and Literatures Colloquium Series on Western’s Macomb campus.

Five retiring CAS faculty were honored this semester: JAY BALDERSON of the Department of English and Journalism, DANIEL COLVIN of English and Journalism, JUTTA HELM of the Department of Political Science, RAY MAJERES of the Department of Psychology, and AL RICHERT of Psychology.

A collection of writing by the late RICK JOHNSON, who attended WIU in the 1970s, was published this winter, edited by BILL KNIGHT from English and Journalism and designed by BOB JOHNSON of the Geology...
Soon after graduation from Western Illinois University’s biological sciences program, Tom Stalf answered an ad for a zookeeper’s position at the Niabi Zoo in Coal Valley, Ill. Little did he know that this application would lead him to eventually become the youngest zoo director in the country.

“At least I think I’m still the youngest,” says Stalf, laughing. A disciple of Dr. Jeanette Thomas [see pp. 5-7], Stalf concedes that his career path took unexpected turns.

“Thomas is also always looking for ways to promote and help Western. When she took over the editorship of the journal, it was being printed in Europe.

“At that time, it soon became clear that we had financial problems because of the exchange rate between the dollar and the Euro. I began looking for solutions to print the journal in the United States. When I asked WIU’s Document and Publication Services for their advice, they told me it could all be done on campus through them. I was delighted that we could take care of everything in house. It was a wonderful way to continue promoting the university.”

So the next time you visit WIU-Macomb, WIU-Quad Cities, the Shedd Aquarium, the Niabi Zoo, or maybe just ride the train between Chicago and Macomb, look for this “Mama Lion.” She’ll probably have at least part of her pride of students around her. And she’ll be on the move.
Focus

Sociologist studies fishing communities still suffering from effects of Katrina

By Bonnie Barker

A Summer 2006 trip to Grand Isle on Louisiana’s coast was an eye-opening experience for Western Illinois University senior John Long (Earlville, Ill.), a sociology major and anthropology minor, as well as for his teacher and experienced sociocultural researcher Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, an associate professor in Anthropology.

McIlvaine-Newsad had been researching the livelihood systems of fishing communities through two grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), then the destructive Hurricane Katrina swept through the Gulf Coast in August 2005.

“As an anthropologist, I am interested in why people do what they do,” McIlvaine-Newsad said. “This disaster-related research looks at how people’s relationship to their physical environment has changed as a result of Katrina. More specifically, I am interested in whether people are losing or gaining knowledge about their environment and how they are changing their livelihood strategies in order to adapt to huge environmental changes, like hurricanes.

“For the NOAA studies, we were looking at fishing communities in general and how they responded culturally, economically and socially to the changes NOAA regulations imposed on them.” she added. “After Katrina all you heard about was New Orleans. But a significant portion of Louisiana’s economy is based on fishing and shrimping, which takes place in rural areas. Just as various regions of New Orleans are recovering at different rates, so too are diverse fishing communities recovering differently. It is difficult to see the variation when you don’t see it firsthand. That is one reason anthropological field research is so important. You see firsthand how people are coping with change.”

Researcher and student interviewed people from the Grand Isle, the last barrier island at the mouth of the Mississippi River, an island that helps protect New Orleans from hurricanes. McIlvaine-Newsad then continued her research with NOAA anthropologist Palma Ingles in the communities of Venice and Empire. All three communities suffered tremendous damage from Hurricane Katrina, she said.

Residents of Grand Isle are primarily Cajun and have been shrimping since the 1800s. Shrimpers in Venice and Empire are largely comprised of Cambodians and Vietnamese immigrants who have been shrimping in the area for the past 20 to 30 years. The cultural differences among the communities, their social network systems and their familiarity with their physical environment all influence how they shrim and how they rebuild after the storm, McIlvaine-Newsad explained.

“We were in Louisiana, but in some areas it looked as if we had stumbled into a developing country where poverty is a cultural norm,” said Long, who assisted in the research by conducting and transcribing field interviews, coding data and mapping the area. “The poor are without a voice. They need anthropologists to give them that voice.

“Participating in the research was amazing,” added Long, who received grants from the College of Arts and Sciences ($300) and the Sociology and Anthropology department ($75) to help defray his personal expenses. “Not only was I able to be involved in a project that was unique as the post-Katrina fishery research, but also to become entrenched in this fading way of life (shrimping) and possibly contribute to the greater body of knowledge
Oppression can inadvertently create leaders, according to the Distinguished Faculty Lecture this spring. For the Irish in the 19th century, their leaders were women, notes Polly Radosh, chair of Western Illinois University’s Women’s Studies department, whose presentation is the latest in a prestigious series of lectures that CAS faculty have delivered outside the classrooms.

Delivering her remarks on March 29 in Macomb and April 9 in the Quad Cities, Radosh discussed how racial oppression in Ireland created radically different attitudes toward gender. “The earning power of women gave them some authority in Irish families, which spawned greater tolerance for women’s authority than would have been typical of other Europeans in the 19th century,” Radosh said. “These young women [sent to other countries to save their families] helped to develop new professions for women such as teaching, nursing and social work.”

Her special lecture, “My Mothers Before Me: Gender in the Irish Diaspora,” also addressed the misconception of race. “Race is defined in the U.S. as skin color, but it’s not always skin color,” Radosh said. “It’s oppression.”

For the Irish, their political and cultural oppression by the British happened because of their social designation of race. “[It’s important to study about women] because it broadens a person’s appreciation of life and experience,” Radosh said a few weeks before her talk.

Begun in 1969, the Distinguished Faculty Lecture honors outstanding faculty members whose professional development in research or creative activity, teaching and service to the university represent the highest standards of the academic community.

Other similar presentations made annually at WIU include the Gabler and Morrow lectures.

The Gabler Lecture is usually held during Geography Awareness Week in the fall. Dr. John Fraser Hart of the University of Minnesota spoke about the changing geography of U.S. agriculture at the 2006-2007 Gabler Lecture. The first lecture occurred during the 2004-2005 school year in honor of Robert Gabler, who served as chairman of the Geography and Geology departments and also director of International Programs.

The Morrow Lecture occurs each school year sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Herbert Needelman of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the founder of the Alliance for Healthy Homes, presented the 2007 Morrow Lecture on April 4. The first Morrow Lecture occurred in 1987 in honor of Roger M. Morrow and Jean Smith Morrow. He was the first head of the Physics department and she was one of the first women faculty members.

Stacey Becker is a senior Journalism major from East Dubuque, Ill.
Desiree Bartgen
Glen Ellyn, Ill.

Twenty-one-year-old Desiree Bartgen plans on becoming an attorney, but her double major in Women’s Studies and Spanish are opening so many doors, she’s still unsure which field of law she’ll practice.

Still, she’s already benefited from academics and activities at WIU.

“I decided my sophomore year what I wanted to do after I took the Intro to Women’s Studies class,” she says. “It really opened my eyes and helped give me direction as to where I would like to eventually end up.”

Regardless of where she ends up, her path is paved with involvement. Active in Pre-Law Club and CAS student government, Desiree’s typical day includes meetings, working out and hanging out with friends as well as attending classes.

“My majors are very interesting, and I enjoy the professors that teach them,” she adds. “My majors have allowed me the chance to study abroad in Rome, Italy, and then this summer in Barcelona, Spain.”

With free time devoted to running, shopping, reading, watching movies or traveling, Desiree enjoys the setting WIU and Macomb have offered her.

“I chose Western because the campus had a close, community feel to it and it felt like home,” she says.

Spanish and Women’s Studies major Bartgen may go to law school.

Joseph J Gorzkowski
Chicago, Ill.

Journalism student Joe Gorzkowski realized the challenges when he became a Resident Assistant in Thompson Hall, and that improved his approach to his classes and his future.

“When I was hired as an RA I knew that I would have a lot more added on to my workload,” he says. “I knew I would have to work on my time management skills.”

Gorzkowski, 21, deals with demands by mixing work and play, sleeping until mid-morning, going to classes, watching television and practicing his new bass guitar, studying, and going to meetings and working at the dorm information desk – all typically until 2 a.m.

“I have always been focused on my education, but this has helped me learn to better manage my time and get my work done,” he says.

Joe – whose father is a captain in the Chicago Police Department – wants to work there, too. But the skills he’s developing in journalism won’t be neglected.

“I really like writing,” he says. “I’d like to keep up my writing throughout my life.”

Western’s environment and appearance were appealing to Joe after visiting public universities in Illinois.

“I visited WIU, ISU and U of I, and loved this campus the best,” Joe says. “U of I was too big for me and ISU was really dirty and was not very welcoming. Western had a beautiful campus and really made me feel at home.”

Daya Snapp
Momence, Ill.

Meteorology major Daya Snapp couldn’t wait to engage with her scholarly passion, she says.

“Starting off at a community college helped me to stay focused, and during those two years I just wanted to break away from the gen eds and jump into classes more closely related to my major,” says Daya, 22.

Besides classes – her minor is related, Geographic Information Systems – Snapp’s days are busy throughout the area, from Tillman Hall to Lake Argyle.

Focus
“I get up early (either 5 a.m. or 6 a.m.),” she says. “I go to class almost all day. In between classes, I try to work on homework and then when I am ‘done’ for the day I go to my room and do more homework and studying. Some days I stay in Tillman 201 to work on labs for class.

“I am a student worker in the Geography department office during part of my days,” Daya continues. “Free time: photography, fishing, hiking at Lake Argyle State Park, spend time with my friends.”

Some of her friends are Meteorology or Geography colleagues she’s met through Independent Study (a 3-D mapping project), a senior thesis/survey project with a professor, the Severe Weather Club (she’s president) and the Student Society of Geography (for which she’s vice president). All that participation will help her network and find a career, she says.

“I love my major,” Daya says. “I’ve had an interest in weather since the fourth grade. I have also, since attending WIU, found a love for geography and GIS.

“I want to] try my hardest to find a job related to my major and/or minor,” she adds. “I don’t want to have worked hard for nothing.

Daya found WIU to be welcoming, she says.

“I visited another campus that had the Meteorology program, but they were very discouraging in me attending their school,” Snapp says. “When I came to visit Western I was met with open arms. Here at WIU, the Geography department saw me as a person coming into the program who was passionate about weather and had the drive to succeed. I felt like the program had a lot to offer and being a senior, I can truly say that it has done me a lot of good.”

Amanda Leah Zulas
Crystal Lake, Ill.

Psychology major Amanda Zulas found science more flexible than fine arts, and realized that working with people was rewarding.

“I did attend a music school my first semester of college, which left me broke and wondering what to do next,” Amanda says.

“Playing and writing music was one thing, but studying it and doing it how the school wanted me to was another. So I tried to come up with the best thing that I liked to study in school and that’s how I started to follow my passion for psychology.”

Minorinng in neuroscience, Zulas, 22, enjoys a hectic pace.

“I’m up at 5 a.m. to train for my triathlon, then classes until afternoon, then clubs, committees, meetings, and working as a ref for the intramurals department and maybe some studying,” she says. “I don’t have much free time to speak of, but I watch some NetFlix with the boyfriend, or I play video games sometimes.”

Besides her academic pursuits, Amanda is active in the Feminist Action Alliance, Computer Science Association, Campus Greens, the Psychology department research committee, and two ongoing research.

“One [is] on Internet gaming addiction, and one on the effects of Modafinil on Acoustic Startle response,” she says.

Although she’s certain she’ll compete in her first triathlon in May, and then the Chicago marathon (for the third time), she’s unsure about career specifics.

“I thought I had it all figured out – I was going to become a clinical psychologist and study people who had real problems,” Amanda says. “Now I’m starting to think Industrial Organizational Psychology and Social Psych are more my thing.”

When considering her choices for school, Zulas also felt wanted, she says.

“Snapp’s passion for weather found a focus at Western Illinois University.

When I was looking to transfer, they were incredibly nice to me and helpful through the whole process,” she says “A lot of other schools figure that transfer students must understand the system so they don’t need any help, but I really didn’t know much about a large school atmosphere, and Western helped me with that.”
Focus

Professor emeritus continues his legacy of giving to the community and the world

Scientist. Author. Artist. Diplomat. Philanthropist. Dr. Te-Hsiu Ma, professor emeritus of the Department of Biological Sciences, is a true renaissance man.

But such words only begin to sum up Ma, who retired in 1996. Since then, he has done anything but lead a life of leisure.

Ma still leads a very active research laboratory in Waggoner Hall, where his expertise with methods to detect environmental mutagens makes him one of the world's best-known authorities on the subject. Through his work in this area, Ma has spread his knowledge of plant bioassays to thousands of people across the world.

Walking into his office, visitors immediately notice maps of the United States and the world, filled with tiny pins noting areas where Ma has presented his research and trained individuals and organizations on his methods. Through his work, he was able to make Western Illinois University a conference site for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Advanced Study Institute in 2004, one of many achievements Ma has had since he started his work here in 1969.

Another accomplishment was his developing and disseminating numerous tests to detect environmental mutagens.

“In the long run, this monitoring program and genotoxicity research could contribute to homeland security in this area, as well as other countries of the world,” he says.

The program uses a common plant, the Spiderwort (Tradescantia species) in three tests (Stamen-hair mutation, Micronucleus, and Onion root tip-Micronucleus). The Stamen-hair mutation (Trad-SHM) test, developed by the late Dr. Arnold Sparrow of Brookhaven National Laboratory (N.Y.), detects gene mutation. The micronucleus (Trad-MCN) test, developed in 1976 by Ma during a six-month sabbatical leave at Brookhaven, detects chromosome (DNA) damage from chemical and physical pollutants, including radiation in the air, water, and soil.

Genetic materials in plant cells are more sensitive to pollutants than those of animal cells because there is less protection in plant tissues from the impact of pollutants, Ma explained. These genetic tests—which are highly sensitive, simple and economical—have been used in more than 100 hands-on workshops conducted in the United States and 30 countries across five continents for more than 30 years. Test results of the Trad-MCN test and Allium-micronucleus test can be obtained within 24 to 48 hours, while results of the Trad-SHM test require at least seven days.

Ma feels so strongly about the importance of his work that he generously gave an initial contribution to the College of Arts and Sciences to start a proposed International Center for Environmental Mutagens that will put Western Illinois University at the center of training and research.

“We are grateful to Dr. Ma for his initial contribution to establish an International Center for Detection of Environmental Mutagens,” says Inessa Levi, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. “It is our hope that this is the first step on our journey to raise enough private funds to ensure the continued excellence of Dr. Ma’s legacy to Western Illinois University. The new center could have an enormous positive impact not only on our immediate region, but on a global scale, as well.”

Many techniques could be
taught to practitioners with a relatively limited scientific background, and the techniques could be implemented with limited instrumentation and equipment, Ma says. Examples of use of these genetic tests include: epidemiology of respiratory patients and on-site genetic toxicity monitoring, remote sensing of environmental pollution, ecology and ecosystem change as well as the variation of background radiation around a radioactive pollution, genetic toxicity of common poisons, carcinogen screening, effects of exhaust fumes, contaminated soil from ammunition testing grounds, analyses of drinking water in rural communities, livestock confinement and agricultural chemicals.

When operational, the International Center will focus on disseminating currently known monitoring methods, developing new methods and techniques, and collecting data on genetic cell damage due to environmental pollution. The center will also contribute to the support of genetics instruction and faculty and student research.

Learning to use simple environmental monitoring tests would be very valuable to students in the biological sciences, health sciences, nursing and environmental studies. The center will be housed in the Department of Biological Sciences and will be directly affiliated with the College of Arts and Sciences’ Institute for Environmental Studies.

Some of Ma’s other research efforts have led to more than $1 million of research grants from sources including the State of Illinois, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, NATO, the National Environmental Monitoring Conference, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Ma is a man of many talents, too. A well-known regional artist, his work includes Asian-inspired Sumi painting as well as mixed-media watercolors, oils and acrylics. A walk through the home of Ma and his wife Peggy reveals a man as passionate about his art as he is about his science.

Every painting has its own history and a special story to tell, Ma says. Soon, visitors to the College of Arts and Sciences will have a unique opportunity to view Ma’s work. A sampling of his paintings and his poetry will adorn the walls of the college’s newly renovated conference room in Morgan Hall this spring.

“The generosity of Dr. Ma in sharing his work with the college gives us our first opportunity to recognize WIU faculty and staff whose expertise and talents extend well beyond academia,” says Jeff Dodd, marketing officer for the College of Arts and Sciences.

Art has not been a recent retirement activity for Ma. Pointing to a vibrant pastel of a yawning cat, Ma says, “Fifty years ago, we had a house, but bare walls. I couldn’t afford art paper at that time, so I drew the cat on a piece of cardboard from a box.”
Generations
Family ties span a century at Western

By Bill Knight

John and Mary broke patterns but still followed their families' footsteps by attending WIU.

John Knowles is no teacher, despite the teaching backgrounds of his parents, brother and sister.

Mary Kerr is no journalist, despite the newspapering heritage in her background.

“My dad, mom, brother and sister all became teachers upon graduating from WIU,” says Knowles, now an attorney in Portland, Ore. “My sister Nancy still teaches 6th grade, in Monmouth. My mom taught at VIT for decades and is now retired in Macomb. I never did teach but would love to do so when I retire from being a trial lawyer.

“I do teach a high school mock trial team and love to teach these kids,” he continues. “It is in my blood. I think the pathway to teaching is in Macomb’s water system—that town has been producing teachers for more than a century.”

The Knowles clan came to Western for various reasons, Knowles says.

“My brother went to WIU because he had a baseball scholarship and it was in Macomb,” he says. “I don’t think that any of my siblings went there just because a relative had. Of course, we knew our parents had both gone there, but I did not know about [our] great-great aunts until recently.”

Knowles found out that two great-great aunts, sisters Callie Knowles and Etta (Emma) Knowles, were in the first classes at the Western Illinois State Normal school in 1902.

Mary Kerr also traces her family’s connection to Western to early in the 20th century—but took more of a role in the decisions by her sons, Mark and Andrew, to go to Western.

“Both my husband Richard (Class of 1964) and I encouraged them to attend WIU,” says Kerr, who traces her lineage to the Crabb and Lewis farm families, circa 1910. “Mark and Andrew were always aware of the family connections with Western. Their grandmother (Martha Crabb) and great grandmother (Lida Crabb) lived in Macomb and we visited there often and took part in Western activities.

They were familiar and comfortable with Western.

“My mother—a French and P.E. major at the Western Normal school—was delighted that the boys attended Western,” Kerr continues. “Her living in Macomb was a factor for both of the boys. They had great respect for her and on Fridays they would take their friends to her house for lunch. She loved discussing history and literature with all the young students.”

Mary’s grandparents, Carle and Lida Crabb, were well known newspaper publishers of area weeklies, and Lida, a history major, also taught at area schools. Her parents, Martha and Carle Jr., graduated from Western Academy (the “lab school”) and attended Western until they took over the newspapers, including the McDonough Times.

Although a Macomb correspondent for daily newspapers in Quincy and Peoria, Mary was steered away from newspapers, she says.
“My mother was very determined that none of us would go into the family business and encouraged all of us to become teachers,” she says. “I became a social studies teacher at Peru (Ill.) and then at Richwoods in Peoria.”

After becoming a reading specialist, then an administrator, Mary retired from education in 2000, when she was a principal in Canton.

“As I moved through the education world I realized what great people I had been privileged to meet at the Lab School and at WIU,” she says.

Knowles agrees and sees his family’s roots extend from current students Nick and Liz Knowles (John’s nephew and his wife) back through his dad, Alred “Buck” Knowles – a 1986 recipient of a WIU Alumni Achievement Award— to his grandparents.

“I have traced the Knowles family in Macomb back to 1838, when my great-great-great grandfather William Knowles moved his family here by covered wagon from the Washington, D.C., area,” Knowles says. “My grandmother Winifred Lester Knowles and my grandfather Alred Lee Knowles attended the Training School in the pre-World War I years,” Knowles says. “My dad Buck, who still lives in Macomb, graduated from WIU in 1946 or so, after the war. He also graduated from Western Academy, as the high school was then known, in 1940. My mom Shirley, who still lives in Macomb, graduated from WIU in 1962 (in English). My brother Steve, who is still in Macomb, and sister Nancy graduated from WIU and my brother’s daughter Amy attended WIU and was a cheerleader.

“I am so proud to have graduated from WIU with a degree in sociology and psychology,” he continues. “Grant Bogue was one of my favorite teachers in the sociology department. I strongly believe that my liberal arts studies at WIU were instrumental in giving me the skills I needed. I recommend to aspiring law students that they study sociology and psychology during their undergrad years so that they better understand the world we live in.”

The world today is is considerably different than the one in the ‘70s when John and Steve Knowles went here — or a decade earlier when Mary Kerr majored in English and social studies. One of her sons, political science graduate Mark, is stationed in Afghanistan with the U.S. Army’s Judge Advocate General’s (JAG) Corps.

“In 2004 he quit his position as associate in a Miami law firm and joined the JAG Corps,” Mary says. “He has served in Korea, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

“He was actually encouraged to attend Western by Helen Buckley, who had been one of my teachers at the Lab School,” she recalls. “She said he could get personal attention, good teachers and could save his borrowing power for graduate school. He followed that advice, completed his academics in three years (with one year off campus) and went on to graduate from Yale Law School. He felt he had some excellent teachers at Western, personal attention that friends attending larger schools did not receive, and he still maintains contact with several of his professors.”

Besides the changing world, Western is much different than earlier decades, she notices.

“We visited there recently... Sherman Hall doesn’t have classes there... the “new” library is a classroom building, the “new” fieldhouse is an old building and the lab-school gym is now a recital hall,” she says.

But some things never change.

“Students are always friendly when we visit on campus and it is good to see another generation laughing, talking and studying,” Mary says. “We know they are having an opportunity to obtain a great education.”
OK, OK! But what are the Humanities?

By John K. Simmons

There is an apocryphal tale traveling around higher education about a scientist who is stopped in the hall by an angry humanist colleague and accused of speaking against the humanities at a recent faculty senate meeting. The scientist assures her colleague that she was doing nothing of the kind. She exclaims, with noticeable frustration, “I love the humanities! I would die for the humanities! All I asked was – what the hell ARE the humanities!”

The scientist need look no further for her answer than the wisdom expressed by Hall of Fame rocker Bruce Springsteen, in one of his most popular tunes, “Everybody has a hungry heart.” To be human is to yearn, to experience life with a “hungry heart.” Regardless of time, place or cultural niche, human beings are born into a world with a piece of the existential puzzle missing. To paraphrase philosopher René Descartes’ famous metaphysical axiom, “I yearn, therefore I am human.” We yearn for love, God, glory, knowledge, power, peace, beauty, enlightenment, fill-in-the-blank, and the irony of it all is that once found, we are dissatisfied or, tragically, lose the cherished existential bobble. The journey starts all over again. The humanities comprise an open-ended anthology, a bible of sorts, chronicling the historical roller-coaster ride of everything that has happened between subject and object, I and thou, yearning and the never-ending quest to find fulfillment.

Muriel Rukeyser, American poet and political activist, beautifully and succinctly describes the matrix of the humanities. “The universe is made up of stories, not atoms.”

Most of all, human beings are storytellers. To yearn is to seek with hopes of finding, and, thus, the archetypal and paradigmatic story of the humanities is the journey, including the celebration of finding and the tragedy of losing. We are fascinated by stories of the journey of life precisely because all of us have our own story to create, our own journey to take. Indeed, every human being is a worthy co-author of The Humanities Bible. Teaching in the humanities transforms yearning into learning. The story of human yearning has spawned the variegated disciplines often simply listed as being within the indefinable rubric of “the humanities.” Teachers share their knowledge across a wide domain of subject areas, including literature and language, art, music, history, the classics, philosophy, and religion. However, much more is happening, pedagogically, than just passing on content. Like a genetic imprint hidden within every student is the essence of this wondrous, magical journey that represents millennia of human intellectual and creative endeavor in response to existential yearning. Life is not just lived; it must be interpreted.

Down through history, human beings have sought to understand themselves in relationship to the natural world, the cosmos, divinity, other human beings and their cultures, and their own dreams and inner fantasies. Though the answers to the most profound life questions regarding identity, meaning, purpose and destiny have been as diverse as the cultural expressions in which they arose, the fact is that all human beings stand against the whirlwind of joy and suffering, hope and despair, life and death, and wonder and horror which is the stuff of human existence. If nothing else, our mortality is the commonality that binds us together and sparks the interpretative flame. A humanities course asks students to join this grand interpretative journey. Springsteen’s “hungry heart” spawns an irresistible urge — “lay down your money and you play your part.” To be sure, the most satisfying, if rare, classroom occurrence for a teacher of the humanities is to witness that leap of consciousness which propels a student into full participation in our human story. That is why the humanities will always be an essential part of any authentic educational venture, especially higher education.

Simmons is chair of WIU’s Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies.

Aristotle embodied the humanities.
By Bill Knight

Attorney Gary Baise doesn’t just see doors of opportunities before him, he helps build them, uses them and tries to fix them when he thinks they get a bit off plumb.

The 1963 WIU graduate, 65, helped set up the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1970, was a Nixon administration lawyer there and for the Department of Justice and FBI, and now advocates for various clients in litigation involving environmental regulations.

“At the moment, I am representing a major pesticide manufacturer who has a product that is vital to thousands of farmers who grow corn, alfalfa, cotton, rice, melons and numerous other commodities,” he says. “My role is to attempt to reverse an interim decision made by EPA.

“The risk that EPA believes to be associated with this pesticide is so incredibly small you would say to yourself, ‘How can something like this happen?’ ”

More remarkable than government bureaucracy is the path Baise took from his childhood in rural Morgan County to WIU, Indiana and Washington, D.C.

A history major and political science minor, Baise’s undergraduate experience at Western seems to have been a classic example of activism. A member of the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity, an actor in several plays and chairman of Union Board, Baise led student efforts to build the student union building. While working two part-time jobs off-campus, he met people from the campus radio station and started there as an announcer and commentator with Art Fritchell for Western football and basketball games.

In class, he says he was mentored by the likes of near-legendary WIU faculty including John Raatjes, Victor Hicken, Don Marshall and Marcy Bodine.

“All these gentlemen apparently identified me from the beginning and gave me opportunities, as a farm boy from Concord, Ill., that were amazing and unique,” Baise recalls. “For example, I was chosen, along with four others, to go to New York and meet with [India’s] Prime Minister Nehru and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt at the Collegiate Council of the United Nations. Later I was selected to attend a summer conference at Sarah Lawrence College with this Collegiate Council. I was also selected by these gentlemen to lead tours into the Middle East through the university’s travel program.

“Mind you, I had never been east of Indianapolis, west of Kansas City, south of St. Louis and Chicago was the farthest point north I had ever traveled,” he adds.

After Baise graduated, he worked as Western’s director of student affairs for two years, after which he took Raatjes’ advice and went to law school at Indiana University. There, he earned a Ford Foundation grant to study the new 18-year-old vote and met Jill and William Ruckelshaus. Ruckelshaus was an Indiana state representative and brought the new young attorney Baise onboard when he ran for the U.S. Senate in 1968.

Defeated by Birch Bayh, Ruckelshaus was asked by newly elected President Richard Nixon to join the Department of Justice – and so was Baise. In less than two years, Ruckelshaus and Baise were the administrator and chief of staff of the newly formed EPA. In the next few years, Baise followed Ruckelshaus to the FBI and later became an Associate Deputy Attorney General back at Justice.

Since then, in business, government and private practice, Baise has served on the board of Ocean Spray Cranberries and as an executive with Browning-Ferris Industries; served on the Virginia State Air Pollution Control Board, the Farm Foundation and the Illinois Agricultural Leadership Foundation; and represented the National Association of Wheat Growers, municipalities and housing developers.

And he’s written for Progressive Farmer magazine and the conservative Heartland Institute on environmental issues – particularly on agriculture and environmentalism.

“As an advocate for those who

Continued on page 22
1907 - Second Hague Peace Conference adopts 10 conventions on rules of war.

Held from June to October 1907, the Second Peace Conference built on the 1899 Hague Convention, changing parts and adding some, with increased attention to naval warfare. The Hague Conventions were treaties that were, along with the Geneva Conventions, among the first formal statements of the laws of war and war crimes in international law.

Among the most significant humanitarian movements in history, such pacts were the brainchild of Henry Dunant, a survivor of 1859’s Battle of Solferino who sought to end wartime atrocities. There have been four Geneva Conventions with many protocols, or amendments. The Third Geneva Convention of 1949 was arguably the most far reaching. Enacted at the end of World War II, it expanded the role of the International Red Cross and called for the humane treatment of prisoners of war, wounded enemy combatants, civilians and women in combat zones. Furthermore, violators became subject to prosecution by the international community. More than 190 nation-states have signed the agreement.

— Rick Hardy, Chair, Department of Political Science

1917 - First U.S. combat troops in France as U.S. declares war on Germany

In June 1917, Gen. John J. Pershing’s initial contingent of 190 Americans arrived in Boulogne-sur-Mer, France. The delegation was historically significant, representing the first appearance of U.S. combat troops in Europe. For the French, however, their first contact with their new associates was disappointing; the nation had expected a wave of troops flooding across the Atlantic. Later in June and July, however, tens of thousands of U.S. troops disembarked and paraded through Paris’s streets.

Perhaps the Parisians’ reaction conveys the significance of the event best: boisterous cheering as many women kissed the Americans and openly wept.

— Walter E. Kretchik, assistant professor, Department of History

1927 - Georges Lemaitre proposes Big Bang Theory.

The dominant scientific theory about the origin of the universe, the Big Bang Theory holds that the universe was created about 15 billion years ago from a cosmic explosion that was simultaneously creating space and hurling matter in all directions.

The idea of a Big Bang was first suggested by a Belgian Roman Catholic priest, Monsignor Georges-Henri Lemaitre, a professor of physics and an astronomer.

Lemaitre’s Big Bang explained why distant galaxies were observed to be red-shifted, which implied they were moving away from us. He proposed that the universe began with the explosion of a primeval atom and has been expanding since.

Years later, Edwin Hubble found experimental evidence to help justify Lemaitre’s theory. He found that distant galaxies in every direction are going away from us with speeds proportional to their distance. The Big Bang also predicts the existence of a cosmic background radiation (the glow left over from the explosion itself). This theory received its strongest confirmation when this radiation was discovered in 1964 by Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, who later won the Nobel Prize for this discovery.

— Vivian Incera, Chair, Department of Physics

1937 - Amelia Earhart lost somewhere in Pacific on round-the-world flight.

Aviator Amelia Earhart embarked on the first around-the-world flight by a woman in 1937. Flying a Lockheed Electra, Earhart and copilot Fred Noonan were lost somewhere over the South Pacific on June 27, 1937.

Public interest in aviation began in World War I and grew in the ‘20s and ‘30s, when newspapers and movie newsreels heralded flying “firsts” almost weekly. This was the era of the celebrity aviator, from barnstorming heroes like Capt. Frank Hawks to explorer-aviators such as Roald Amundson. Fliers such as Wiley Post and Jimmy Doolittle
became famous as they broke distance and speed records. Howard Hughes designed aircraft, made movies, romanced Hollywood beauties and flew airplanes.

The most famous celebrity pilot, of course, was Charles Lindbergh, who made the first solo trans-Atlantic flight in 1927, but Earhart was the most famous woman aviator, achieving fame in 1926 by setting an altitude record and a few years later becoming the first woman to fly across the Atlantic – as a passenger. (Earhart resented the fact that she received more acclaim than the two men who did the flying.) Because she vaguely resembled Lindbergh, some reporters dubbed her “Lady Lindy,” to her displeasure. In 1932 she demonstrated her own piloting skills by flying transatlantic solo, thereby becoming the first person to fly across the Atlantic twice.

Earhart continued to set records and advance civil aviation, and before starting her around-the-world flight in 1937, she said, “I have a feeling that there is just about one more good flight left in my system and I hope this trip is it. Anyway, when I have finished this job, I mean to give up long-distance ‘stunt’ flying.”

Searches continued for about a month after Earhart and Noonan’s loss. Even today, occasional efforts are made to find evidence of the fate of this celebrity aviator.

— David L. Miller, Department of Sociology and Anthropology (retired faculty)

1947 - Jackie Robinson joins the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Robinson accepting baseball GM Branch Rickey’s offer – and challenge – to integrate Major League Baseball led to his remarkable on-field achievements as well as profound social effects. In Robinson’s rookie season, the former UCLA four-sport letterman and All American won the Sporting News’ Rookie of the Year Award and also MLB’s first Rookie of the Year Award.

Sixty years later, MLB’s racial makeup has changed considerably, according to the most recent annual Racial and Gender Report Card from the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida. They found 59.9 percent of major-league players were white, 28.7 percent were Hispanic (a percentage that’s doubled since 1990) and 2.5 percent were Asian. Just 8.5 percent were Black, a number that has been in steady decline since an all-time high of 25 percent in 1975.

In fact, the Seattle Times newspaper last summer reported that six MLB teams had no African-American players on their active roster: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Colorado, Houston and Seattle.

— Bill Knight, associate professor, Department of English and Journalism

1957 - Russians launch Sputnik I, first Earth-orbiting satellite; the Space Age begins.

Konstantin Eduardovich Tsiolkovsky was the first to write a thesis proposing the use of rockets to launch satellites in his “The Exploration of Cosmic Space by Means of Reaction Devices” (1903). Before then, rockets were used as (mostly ineffective) weapons. Robert Goddard, Wernher von Braun and others began looking for liquid fuel that would effectively propel rockets. While von Braun built V2 rockets for the Germans, he and his research team faced execution by the Nazis at the close of World War II and fled to Allied forces. They continued their rocket research with the U.S. Army.

With virtually every “famous name” in rocket research working for the United States, it was a surprise when the Soviet Union launched the basketball-sized Sputnik I on October 4, 1957. Over the next year the Soviet Union successfully launched two more Sputnik satellites with only one failure. In the same time period, the United States launched four satellites in 12 attempts, making major scientific discoveries (mapping Van Allen radiation belts and finding out that our Earth is pear-shaped).

Sputnik I scared many Americans into believing the Soviets were a greater military threat than they actually were. Sputnik I probably quickened the creation of NASA 361 days later. To reassert U.S. technological superiority, the U.S. government embarked on major and risky space missions, resulting in 17 astronaut deaths on space missions, 24 deaths overall.

People wonder how many of the 32 astronaut and cosmonaut deaths would have been avoided if nationalistic goals had been secondary to scientific exploration.

— Chuck Ehlschlaeger, associate professor, Department of Geography, and GIS Center Director

1967 - Israeli and Arab forces battle; six-day war ends with Israel occupying Sinai Peninsula, Golan

Continued on next page
**Heights, Gaza Strip, and East Bank of Suez Canal.**

I might be the only person in the department alive in 1967 or at least old enough to “remember” the Six Day War. I was about to graduate from high school, playing in a rock ‘n’ roll band, and hiding from the headmaster who was threatening to drag me to a barber to have my long hair cut. I vaguely remember being impressed with the heroism of the Israeli army against such an overwhelming force mustered by the Arab world, but I was also disturbed by the sense that this situation was far from resolved. The vague concerns of a 17-year-old mind otherwise preoccupied by all things Aquarian and counter culture in the rocking and rolling late spring of 1967 has, tragically, turned out to be all too true.

— John Simmons, Chair, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

**1967 – Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first black U.S. Supreme Court justice.**

The first African-American appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, Marshall’s claim to fame had been his role as part of the NAACP legal team during 1954’s *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* case. Among legal scholars, Marshall’s decision to use a social psychologist’s “Colored Doll” test helped overturn the “separate but equal” doctrine established in 1896 with the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* case.

That test entailed giving 16 Black children between six and nine years old various dolls — white and “colored” — and asking them which doll 1) they wanted to play with, 2) “looked bad,” 3) had a nice color, and 4) was the “nice” doll. Ten out of the 16 kids preferred to play with the white doll, 11 out of 16 noted that the brown doll looked “bad,” and 9 out of 16 selected the white doll as the “nice” one.

— Nancy Kwang Johnson, assistant professor, Department of African American Studies

**1967 – Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first black U.S. Supreme Court justice.**

That Marshall, a woman of African-American descent, attained recognition and status as the first, Black female Episcopal priest in a social milieu in which women, regardless of ethnicity, were routinely overlooked, serves as a testimony to critical paradigm shifts in U.S. culture during the latter half of the 20th century.

Today, the ordination of women is widely — but not universally — accepted. And a generation of Episcopalians has known nothing but a church in which women can serve as priests. A church census a year ago showed that the Episcopal church had 16,523 clergy, 4,607 of them women. The leader of the Episcopal Church in the USA is now a woman: The Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, previously Bishop of Nevada.

— C. S’thembile West, associate professor, Department of Women’s Studies

**1977 - Episcopal Church USA permits the ordination of women as priests.**

Women had been excluded from spiritual leadership in the Episcopal Church for centuries until the first day of 1977, when a decision by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church took effect permitting the ordination of women. The governing body of the church passed a resolution declaring that “no one shall be denied access” to ordination into the three orders of ministry — deacons, priests or bishops — on the basis of gender.

A few women had been ordained priests in Philadelphia before church laws were changed, and the application of the ruling has varied since the church’s 38 “provinces” have considerable independence, including deciding who is eligible for ordination.

One of the first officially sanctioned women priests was African-American lawyer, professor, poet, activist and minister Pauli Murray, ordained a week after the change took effect. Born in Baltimore, Md., where she was orphaned at the age of three, and raised in Durham, N.C., by her grandparents and an aunt, Murray earned a law degree at Howard University after being denied admission to law schools in 1938 at the University of North Carolina/ Chapel Hill and Harvard University due to race and gender.

Before she was called to the min-
Lwin’s comments: “In his lifetime, Art Lathrop was such a cheerful and invigorating presence that it was easy to forget how hard he worked at teaching each and every class at Western. He just wanted it to be done right and went to astonishing lengths to be certain that he was well prepared. His students will remember him as a warm and wonderful man.”

Joe Friichenicht didn’t teach, but after earning his Bachelor’s degree in physics at Western in the early 1950s, he worked as a physicist in the military and in industry. Friichenicht died in Palm Desert, Calif., at the age of 75 on January 31.

Born in Matherville, Ill., to Fred and Thelma Friichtenicht, Joe attended Sherrard High School, where he was valedictorian. After graduating at Western, he earned a Master’s degree in nuclear physics from the University of Iowa in 1956.

Joe was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy in 1955. After four years at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in Washington, D. C., he left the Navy with the rank of Lt. J.G. He returned to civilian life and started work at TRW in Redondo Beach, Calif., and retired after 31 years in 1990.

Survivors include his wife of 36 years, Virginia; one son, Joseph Dean (Susan); three daughters, Sue Mazzarino (Joe), Julia Greenlea and Janice Stanley (Glen); five grandchildren; two brothers, Richard Friichtenicht (Dixie) of Alexandria, Va. and Ronald Friichtenicht of Rock Island, Ill.; and friend David Anderson.

Services were held in February in Cathedral City, Calif.

Lathrop published several research articles in his area of specialization, radiative transfer theory. Also, from 1983 to 1988 he taught physics in summer sessions at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

“He had insight that enabled him to appreciate the value of his profession, to value the many contributions of his colleagues, to see the good in the mundane, to be supportive, to laugh at his own foibles, to acknowledge his own mistakes,” Lwin continues. “Art’s warmth, good-humor, sensitivity, infectious enthusiasm for science, and concern for others were always manifest to me. I know he was cherished for these qualities by many others as well.”

Lathrop is survived by nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews in Oregon and Washington. In addition to his wife, he was preceded in death by his brother Robert Lathrop and his sister, Beryl Hatchitt. He was buried in Walla Walla.

“He had the capacity to cherish others,” Lwin adds. “His was the most treasured friendship of my life. I consider myself a lucky person to have known him.”

Another colleague hired with Lwin and Lathrop in 1965, retired physics professor John Noble, echoes Lwin’s comments: “In his lifetime, Art Lathrop was such a cheerful and invigorating presence that it was easy to forget how hard he worked at teaching each and every class at Western. He just wanted it to be done right and went to astonishing lengths to be certain that he was well prepared. His students will remember him as a warm and wonderful man.”

Two men closely tied to WIU’s Physics department died this year, leaving legacies in their work in the field and in the classroom, as well as those they touched for decades.

Art Lathrop taught in Western’s Physics department for 25 years before retiring in 1990.

“There are too many memories, too many anecdotes, too many stories – 40 years is a long time,” remembers Yan L. Lwin, himself retired from WIU’s Physics department. “I first knew Art Lathrop when we were both hired in 1965. His warmth and modesty were immediately appealing and he seemed to appreciate the relaxed way the Burmese appeared to go about their business.”

Lathrop was 87 when he died at his Walla Walla, Wash., home on October 7.

The son of Ralph LaVerne and Edith (Sherman) Lathrop, Art and Justina Wood married in 1946 in Peoria. She died in 2003.

A 1936 graduate of Walla Walla High School, Art earned a Bachelor’s degree in 1943 from Washington State University, a Master’s degree in 1946 from the University of Illinois, and a doctorate in physics in 1952 from Rice University.

From 1953 through 1965 he was a research physicist at the Institute of Paper Chemistry in Appleton, Wis., after which he came to Macomb.

“Art was a generous soul, always warm and welcoming, approachable,” Lwin recalls. “He was a mentor, a friend, a colleague, irreplaceable, unique. His ethical and professional standards were always the highest – we still hear him say, when confronted with a sloppy or shady lab report: ‘You cannot do that’.”
occurred on an unknown fault, with a significant amount of vertical motion. The occurrence of the vertical motion was a surprise to structural engineers who had designed the skyscrapers in Los Angeles to withstand horizontal motion.

— Kyle Mayborn, associate professor in the Department of Geology

1997 - The Pulitzer Prize for Poetry is awarded to Lisel Mueller for Alive Together: New and Selected Poems, and the Pulitzer Prize for Biography or Autobiography is awarded to Frank McCourt for Angela’s Ashes: A Memoir.

Both Mueller and McCourt happened to be immigrants. Mueller fled Nazi persecution and McCourt escaped Irish poverty. They shared refuge not only in this country but in language. However, this is a tale of two genres and their disparate public receptions. Alive Together was Mueller’s eighth book of poetry, the award an affirmation of a quiet life’s work. Angela’s Ashes was McCourt’s first book, written after retiring as a teacher in the New York City public schools. McCourt’s memoir became a bestseller, was turned into a movie, and made millions.

— David Stevenson, Professor, Department of English and Journalism

1987 - Severe earthquake strikes Los Angeles, leaving 100 injured and six dead.

The 1987 Los Angeles Earthquake was unexpected in two ways. It

ship with Thomas extends to the late 1980s, when he studied with her as an undergraduate. The bond between the two remains strong.

“The sad fact is, as well as we care for our animals and as with all living things, they get old and we lose them,” Stalf says. “Through our close relationship with Dr. Thomas, we can donate the remains to WIU for further study by students and, thus, extend our education and research mission.”

In addition to running a successful zoo, Stalf can be seen with animal expert Jack Hanna in appearances during ABC-TV’s Good Morning America, CBS’s Late Show with David Letterman, and other programs. Animals shown during Hanna’s presentations come exclusively from the Niabi Zoo. Stalf acts as the animal handler for these appearances.

“Jack is great to work with,” Stalf says. “Together, we will drive 3,000 miles over the course of six days. We get rooms, and the animals stay in the hotel with us.”

Both Stalf and Hanna can soon be seen in a syndicated show, Intro to the Wild, he says.

Riding with Stalf through the zoo’s property, it becomes apparent that he is living his dream. He quickly points out his home, adjacent to the 214-acre nature preserve that contains the zoo. As he drives around the grounds, animals lazing in the noon sun raise their heads, as if to acknowledge a trusted friend’s presence.

“You have a lot of unique opportunities working at a small zoo like Niabi,” Stalf says. “There are more chances to get hands-on with the animals. We will even frequently take animals home with us when they are sick.”

Asked what is his newest challenge for the zoo, Stalf lights up: “Giraffes!”

— Jeff Dodd

from “CAS Alum,” page 7

“Giraffes!”

from “Real Sequel,” page 17

are challenging environmental regulations, I have no problem in representing the defendants,” says the one-time EPA employee. “What I have found is that the former agency I was associated with has become bloated, arrogant and without a real sense of common sense. It is what you expect when an agency or individual is given too much power. I have seen up close the corruption of power by individuals in the agency and in fact, I enjoy representing entities and farm groups who are abused by individuals who have no understanding of agriculture.”

Baise last year told the Washington Post that he considered himself a “conservative, center-right kind of person” and supporter of President Bush—and at press time had just filed papers to run as a Republican candidate for the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in suburban Washington. So he’s still involved with public affairs.

“The problem with EPA, in my humble opinion, is that it has lost touch with reality and is spending millions on minor risks where we should be spending our money on dealing with real health risks to our society,” he says. “As a result, I have no qualms about attacking the agency I helped create at its onset.”

Some may say the cases help polluters. Others say he’s helping repair what he sees as broken.

In court or on the campaign trail, Baise sees doors of opportunity.
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Spring 07
Our VISION: Western Illinois University will be the leading comprehensive university in the United States.

Our MISSION: Western Illinois University, a community of individuals dedicated to learning, will have a profound and positive impact on our changing world through the unique interaction of instruction, research, and public service as we educate and prepare a diverse student population to thrive in and contribute to our global society.

Our VALUES: Academic excellence, educational opportunity, personal growth, and social responsibility.

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