

# PRIDE



UNEARTHING THE PAST, PIONEERING THE PRESENT AND ENGINEERING THE FUTURE


The mission of Texas A&M University-Commerce is to provide a personal educational experience for a diverse community of lifelong learners. Our purpose is to discover and disseminate knowledge for leadership and service in an interconnected and dynamic world. Our challenge is to nurture partnerships for the intellectual, cultural, social and economic vitality of Texas and beyond.

**T**his is a great time to be part of Texas A&M University-Commerce. There's an obvious energy and sense of expectation in the air as everyone is gearing up for the fall. To witness so many people reaching for the stars at this university seems almost like a dream.

The campus itself is changing in a dramatic fashion. Our brand new \$28-million science building is the incubator for thought we hoped it would be. The labs, classrooms and lecture halls are buzzing with excitement as faculty and students unravel the mysteries of the past and redefine the possibilities for the future. Plans are also underway for more new buildings including a music hall, student center and alumni association center.

Our new planetarium is one of the most popular attractions in this part of the country. When it was first opened, I expressed the hope that 10,000 people would visit it in the first year to experience the kaleidoscope of sights and sounds while exploring the wonders of the universe. To my amazement, we had more than 18,000 visitors to the planetarium in the first five months.


This issue of *Pride* pays tribute to our outstanding alumni, faculty and students who are making a difference by what they've done, what they are doing



and what they hope to do. I'm encouraged about the future and am renewed in my commitment to tell everyone I meet what an impressive university this really is and how solid and prestigious our academic credentials and accomplishments are.

It is a privilege to be associated with a university filled with dreamers who are living their dreams as scientists, engineers, archeologists, aviators, teachers, students and alumni.

It reminds me of the verse penned by Edwin Markham, "Ah, great it is to believe the dream as we stand in youth by the starry stream; but a greater thing is to fight life through and say at the end, the dream is true!"



Keith D. McFarland, Ph.D.  
President and CEO  
Texas A&M University-Commerce

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**About the Cover:** Man has always had a fascination with the stars and a need to understand the universe around him. Texas A&M University-Commerce is giving alumni, faculty and students the tools they need to not only understand their world, but to make it better.

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# A Distinguished Honor

The Distinguished Alumni Citation is one of the university's most prestigious awards. Alumni Relations Director Derryle Peace, (B.S. '74, M.S. '75) invites you to suggest the next recipient.

"Alumni play a critical role in the nomination process," says Peace. He notes that, with approximately 70,000 graduates worldwide excelling in every field imaginable, it's just not possible for his staff to hear about every alumni achievement and encourages alumni to nominate potential distinguished alumni or alumnus with outstanding professional or civic achievements.

To formally nominate someone, download The Distinguished Alumnus nomination form from the alumni relations website at [www.tamuc.edu/advancement/alumni/](http://www.tamuc.edu/advancement/alumni/).

## Meet your fellow alumni

**Sally R. Lancaster**, 1994 Distinguished Alumna

Dr. Sally Lancaster, who earned her doctorate in adult and continuing education in 1983, made a long career of helping Texas institutions help others. Before her retirement eight years ago, she worked as a consultant advising nonprofit institutions about their management, marketing and development needs. Before that she was a director of The Meadows Foundation, one of the state's largest foundations, which has dispersed more than \$430 million to 2,000 Texas institutions and agencies.

From 1987 to 1993, Sally served the State of Texas as one of this university's regents when it was still known as East Texas State University. Today she and her husband live on Amelia Island off the northern Atlantic coast of Florida where they retired. Volunteering for community groups, along with her own personal pursuit of genealogical research, keeps her on the run.



**Bill A. Jackson**, 1997

Distinguished Alumnus

"Being named a Distinguished Alumnus of A&M-Commerce was one of the most gratifying honors of my career." After graduation, Bill joined the Bechtel Corporation, a worldwide engineering and construction company. After more than 25 years with Bechtel, Bill retired as vice president. He went on to cofound the Far East Energy Corporation. He took the company public, and then formed the Allied Infrastructure Group in Houston and Kuwait City. "Immediately after the occupation of Iraq, we constructed an 8,000-person prison camp near the city of Basra in Iraq," Bill says. Currently the company is working in Louisiana on reconstruction projects following Hurricane Katrina.

"Wherever I travel, I feel I am a representative of the university, and I stand a little taller and my chest is a little bigger when I talk about it," Bill says. "Today I make regular visits to the campus, and I am encouraged and impressed with progress the university has made."

**Gary J. Fernandes**, 1992 Distinguished Alumnus

Gary had been at Electronic Data Systems in Dallas for more than 20 years and was a senior executive there when he was chosen as the university's Distinguished Alumnus. He was, in fact, a powerhouse behind EDS' expansion and success, particularly on its most crucial fronts in United States and international markets.

In 1998 he retired from EDS, and today he sits on the boards of Computer Associates International, Blockbuster Inc. and BancTec.

His charitable work includes a long involvement with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America at the national and local level.

Recently Gary noted how much he's enjoyed being associated with the Distinguished Alumni of A&M-Commerce, particularly as a way to continue his support of the university. "I believe strongly in the mission of A&M-Commerce and its ability to execute that mission," he says. "I want to be a part of the strong and growing cadre of alumni who can help ensure others get the same opportunities we did." ☺

## From the Bookshelf

### How much should the U.S. spend on its military?



A&M-Commerce president Dr. Keith McFarland and co-author David Roll tackle the issue of military spending in their book, *Louis Johnson and the Arming of America: The Roosevelt and Truman Years* (Indiana University Press). The book outlines the story of Johnson, assistant secretary of war to President Franklin Roosevelt and secretary of defense to President Harry Truman. Johnson had the job of readying the nation for World War II and then cutting the size of the military afterward, resulting in a shortfall when the Korean War began.

"Johnson and Truman thought they were doing the right thing when they cut the military and could use the money on social welfare programs, helping the poor and building highways," said McFarland. ☺

### Alumnus writes second book



Alumnus Randy Pennington (B.S. '75, M.S. '78) has written the book, *Results Rule!*, a look at what sets great businesses apart from the competition. *Results Rule!* provides principles and strategies for building an organizational culture that will make a company the standard by which the competition is measured. The book gives examples of what works for organizations like Southwest Airlines, Wal-Mart and GE, as well as industry-leading smaller, less well-known companies.

Randy is the author of *On My Honor, I Will* and creator of two consulting processes, *Positive Performance® Management* and *Integrity-Driven® Leadership*. He is an adjunct instructor in the Cox Business Leadership Center at Southern Methodist University. ☺

## A&M-Commerce's Online MBA Named Best Buy

With a world of information only a mouse click away, consumers are getting savvier when comparing colleges online. One of the things they will learn while surfing is that A&M-Commerce's online MBA program is one of the most affordable in the nation.

According to GetEducated.com, a consumer-oriented, online degree clearing house, A&M-Commerce ranks third in best buys among 130 Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited, distance-learning and online MBA degree programs around the country. The company found that the average price for an AACSB-accredited MBA program was \$27,644, while A&M-Commerce students currently pay about \$10,455 for their online MBA degree.

"Our graduates are highly successful in business and industry," says Dr. Jerry Parish, Associate Dean for the College of Business and Technology. "They compete very well in the job market with candidates from more expensive programs. We have been able to balance and deliver a high-quality MBA program with reasonable costs."

GetEducated.com has been featured in *Newsweek*, *Wired*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune Magazine* and *LA Weekly*. ☺



# New Faces

In many ways, the university is putting forth a new face this year with a state-of-the-art science building, a revamped football field and beautifully landscaped grounds.

Internally, several offices may get face-lifts under new leadership.

**Robert (Bob) Brown**, a certified public accountant, is overseeing the Division of Business Administration as vice president. For almost a decade, Brown served as vice chancellor of business affairs for the Dallas County Community College District.



Brown has worked in the capacity of chief business officer for several other colleges including North Harris Montgomery Community College District in Houston and Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, N.C.

He is active in many professional organizations and, in 1996, was named National Outstanding Business Officer by Community College Business Officers. Brown received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of North Texas.

**Dr. Yvette Underdue Murph** is the new assistant vice president heading up the Division of Enrollment Management and Marketing.



Underdue Murph is formerly a director of articulation and institutional image at the University of La Verne in California and has worked in various posts at the university. She had been special projects manager in the Office of the

Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and director of admissions and marketing at the university's College of Law, San Fernando Valley Campus.

Underdue Murph earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Cambridge College. She was awarded a doctorate in public administration from the University of La Verne.

**Mike Hutchison** will play a part in the success of A&M-Commerce's Securing the Promise campaign as director of major gifts. He will also manage planned giving to the university in this capacity. Hutchison has more than a decade of experience in higher education fundraising and most recently worked at Austin College in Sherman helping them achieve a \$120 million fundraising campaign goal.



He is a graduate of McMurry University in Abilene and the University of Texas at El Paso.

**Stephanie Peebles** is the special events coordinator for the alumni relations office. She received her degree from A&M-Commerce in 2005, majoring in public relations. She was a member of Kappa Delta sorority and organized their "Adopt an Angel" Christmas project as well as the Kappa Delta 45th anniversary. As part of her duties as events coordinator, she is responsible for alumni events such as homecoming, the ambassador forum and the alumni golf classic.



**Randy Jolly** is the new director of media relations and publications. For the past decade Jolly has served as a corporate communications consultant to Fortune 500 companies and worked closely with the Department of Defense and the Pentagon. With an extensive background in advertising and publishing, he is also a published author of numerous books and articles on military aviation. Jolly received



his bachelor's degree from Abilene Christian University. ☛

# True Grit

Some things are worth the wait. Just ask new Texas A&M University-Commerce alumnus Joe Bockemehl Jr. of Caddo Mills, Texas, who worked 13 long years to earn his bachelor's degree. Joe graduated cum laude in May, majoring in physics and math.

"Any time you work on something for 13 years you're pretty ecstatic about it," Joe said.

It wasn't hard partying that extended Joe's college career; it was hard work. The 30-year-old works fulltime as an equipment engineer at Texas Instruments in Dallas. Since enrolling at A&M-Commerce in 2002, he has commuted about 700 miles a week between work and school, driving to Commerce four times a week for class.

Joe began his college career in 1993, and attended several community colleges before completing his associate's degree at Richland College.

After graduation he took some time off to do something he'd always wanted – build a house. It took three years to complete, but he succeeded, building a two-bedroom house.

With the construction project finished, it was time to head back to school.

Working and attending classes fulltime was a daunting task. Joe took classes in the afternoon and worked at TI from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. In between classes and 12-hour shifts at work, he managed to squeeze in about four hours of sleep each morning.

In January 2006, he began working from noon to 10 p.m., with most days ending at around 1 a.m., which meant taking classes first thing in the morning. It was hard work, but with determination, wife Stacie's support and scheduling help from his professors, he was able to wrap up his college career and earn his degree.

Of his almost inhuman schedule, one of his professors, Dr. Ben Doughty said, "Joe sometimes had trouble fitting everything together and we would work it out."

Physics professor Dr. Howard Richards moved some of his classes to help. "He even scheduled his graduate course at 8 a.m. to meet our scheduling needs," Joe said. "Dr. Richards was always good about working with us."

After a much-needed rest, and a break from college classes, Joe plans to head back to school to work on his master's degree and realize another dream: working for NASA. ☛

by Mary Lou Hazal, Amy Halbert



photo by Stacie Bockemehl

# Discovering New Frontiers

by Amanda Siegfried, Ashley Tubbs; Photos by Craig Buck



The addition of the new science building is changing more than the physical lay of the land at Texas A&M University-Commerce—it is transforming the academic landscape as well, brightening the light of science throughout the region, across campus and in the awestruck eyes of a child gazing at the night sky.

When the new \$28-million science building was officially dedicated in April, the entire A&M-Commerce family had the opportunity to witness firsthand where 21st century technology is driving 21st century discoveries.

“The next century is going to be embodied by new frontiers, new discoveries and new knowledge,” says Dr. Keith McFarland, A&M-Commerce president and CEO. “Science and technology is what will take us there, and we have to be preparing students for it. This is the perfect project for that.”

The start of the spring semester in January ushered in a new era in A&M-Commerce history—the opening of the first solely academic building added to the campus in 29 years. Home to the departments of physics, chemistry and biological and environmental sciences, the facility’s distinctive profile is difficult to miss. The domed top and gentle curve of its front entrance on the corner of West Neal and Stonewall Streets hint at the jewel nestled just behind the front entry—a world-class planetarium.

“Among its many modern features, the physical layout of the Science Building provides ample opportunities for interaction among faculty and students, an important consideration as innovation becomes evermore cross-disciplinary,” said Dr. Rick Kreminski, professor and head of the Department of Mathematics.

“This facility was designed and built specifically to foster synergy among people in different disciplines,” added Kreminski, who led the committee charged with overseeing the planning and construction. “Academic departments are not assigned to floors. Informal lounges with dry-erase boards are placed throughout the building to help facilitate academic discussions and impromptu brainstorming among students and faculty alike.”

The more than 20 teaching and 15 research laboratories scattered throughout the three-story, 110,000-square-foot science building provide the framework for serious scientific research. The facility also houses specialized research spaces, including a cold room, an environment chamber,

# Discovering New Frontiers



Each seat in the 104-seat auditorium, as well as in each of two 60-plus-seat lecture halls, is wired for power and an Internet connection.

a dark room and a machine shop. In addition, it's home to specialized research devices such as X-ray diffraction equipment for experiments in surface physics and two, 400 megahertz nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectrometers for advanced biological studies.

Dr. William Whaley, assistant professor of chemistry, studies natural organic compounds that may one day aid in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease, heart disease and cancer. His research, and that of other faculty members and their students, will be greatly enhanced by the new NMR spectrometers.

**"The new building and all its amenities will most certainly aid in recruiting the best and brightest new faculty and students,"**  
President Keith McFarland

"We spent almost \$3 million on new equipment for the building, so in many areas we are comparatively equipped with much larger institutions like UNT or UT Dallas," said Dr. James Klein, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. "The difference is that our undergraduates will be able to use this new equipment, while at the larger institutions only graduate students and faculty can get 'time' with these state-of-the-art instruments."

The most complex building on campus, the science building requires copious amounts of fiber-optic cable and

sophisticated ventilation and temperature control systems to accommodate specific research needs. Deionized water circulates throughout the building to labs, where researchers can fine-tune the water quality for various experiments and teaching needs.

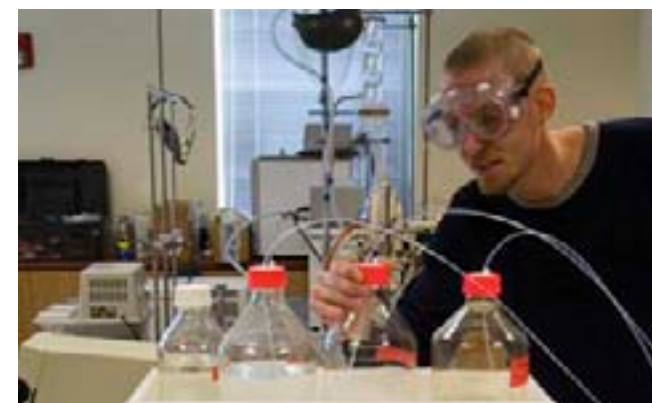
The building also contains more than 40 offices for faculty and graduate students, as well as an area for science tutoring. Each seat in the 104-seat auditorium, as well as in each of two 60-plus-seat lecture halls, is wired for power and an Internet connection. Lobby and lounge areas serve as a gallery for art and scientific displays.

"The new building and all its amenities will most certainly aid in recruiting the best and brightest new faculty and

students," McFarland said. "But it also will contribute to the prosperity of the state and nation by not only training the physicists, chemists and biologists of tomorrow, but also the public school teachers who are challenged with the task of exciting young children about science and math.

"Teacher preparation is where we can really have an impact," he said. Special areas in the building that will aid teacher education include an integrated science lab for combining lessons in physics and chemistry, and a science and math education classroom.

Getting school-age children jazzed about science is one of the primary missions of the new building's centerpiece, an 87-seat planetarium that features a 40-foot tilted dome and



Science students have access to more than 20 teaching and 15 research laboratories.

a state-of-the-art digital projection system. The facility, used for instruction and educational outreach, offers immersive theater viewing, tilted seats, 10-speaker surround sound and the most sophisticated digital projection system available to display video and 3-D graphics.

McFarland said the planetarium experience is like no other. "I'm confident that with 10,000 to 12,000 elementary and high school students coming through the planetarium every year, there will be at least a couple dozen who will have such a life-changing experience here that they will make the decision to become a mathematician or a scientist," he said. "I firmly believe that." ☺



A&M-Commerce undergraduates have access to state-of-the-art equipment, which at larger universities, can only be used by graduate students and faculty.



In addition to the new labs, the science building has specialized research spaces, including a cold room, an environment chamber, a dark room and a machine shop.

# A Stellar Premier

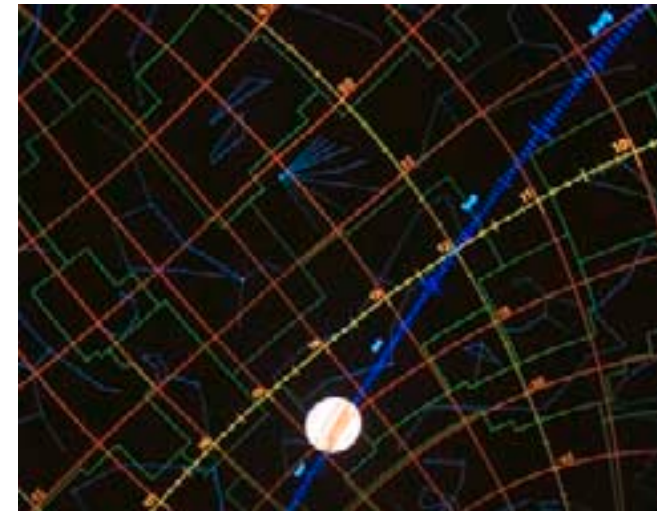
by Deborah Davies; Photos by Craig Buck

When planetarium director Dr. Kent Montgomery opened the doors to the university's brand-new, million-dollar planetarium and ushered in group after group of young teens, he was, in a real way, doing something his grandfather had done for him.

Just on a much, much larger scale.

"It's been fun today—very fun!" he said that day in a barely restrained voice, the kind another man might use to describe an exhilarating day in Vail or Vegas. "It's great to see all their reactions, especially afterward when you hear them say, one after another, 'That was awesome!'"

Montgomery's first visitors were students from Commerce Middle School. Long ago the science teachers there, excited about the remarkable educational venue coming to their very own backyard had asked that their students have the privilege of being among the first to experience the planetarium.



This model, projected onto the planetarium's domed ceiling, shows Jupiter surrounded by colored lines that represent different reference lines in the night sky

It happens that Montgomery was the same age as many of his middle school guests when he first experienced astronomy's pull. He was 14 and visiting his grandfather's farm in North Dakota. In that remote setting the stars revealed themselves like he'd never seen, and Montgomery remembers that the sight of their resplendent bodies making choreographed moves across the heavens filled him with nothing short of wonder.

That same sense of wonder is something Montgomery says every student of science should get to experience. "The first time you see an object through a telescope, or an awe-inspiring image on the planetarium dome, you're filled with a sense of discovery," he says. "It makes you see things in a bigger and grander way."

Also like the Commerce students, Montgomery was introduced to astronomy from one of the finest facilities available. For him, that happened to be from a homemade observatory. Montgomery's grandfather had constructed his own telescope, and then the observatory from which to operate it. The telescope rotated inside the roundish room on the power of a motor from a castoff lawn mower.

"The stars were so beautiful," Montgomery still remembers. "That excitement was something my grandfather gave to me, and it's one of the things that helps me be a better teacher. It doesn't hurt, either, that the planetarium itself is such an exhilarating place to teach." Few planetariums in the nation are as advanced as the one at A&M-Commerce, he says, adding, "I'm lucky to be here, with a chance to pass my love for astronomy on to the next generation."



"Stars of the Pharaohs" explores the relationship between the ancient Egyptians and the solar system.

As his grandfather did with such obvious success, Montgomery is also passing that love along to the next generation within his own family. He has three children, ages 10, 12 and 16—and, fittingly, his 12-year-old daughter was among that very first group of visitors from Commerce Middle School. ☺



Even the planetarium's lobby offers a stunning view of the cosmos as audiences leave the auditorium following a show.

# Starstruck

Greenville students take a trip to the stars at the planetarium



Assistant Director Cheri Davis (left) directs the students' attention to the stars and planets on the lobby ceiling.

They march into A&M-Commerce's science building in pairs, holding hands, chattering loudly. As they pass through the lobby of the planetarium, conversation stops and they stand transfixed by the sight of stars and planets displayed on the ceiling. Their excitement grows.

"Beautiful," a few girls sigh.

"Wow!" others exclaim, followed choruses of, "Cool!"

Cheri Davis, assistant planetarium director, greets a group of kindergarteners and first graders from the Discovery School in Greenville with a smile, and spends a few minutes pointing out some of the planets to them.

"Don't you want a ceiling like this?" she asks.

"No!" they yell in unison.

In the midst of this group of excited youngsters is Brenda Simms (B.S. '72), owner of the school. "I really like that this is here," she says. Before the planetarium opened, Simms had to make the long journey to Dallas or Fort Worth to take her students to a planetarium. Now there is one in her own backyard.

"It's so much more enjoyable for the kids than the ones we've been to in Fort Worth and Dallas. It's a very good thing."



Planetarium director Dr. Kent Montgomery points out some of the planets displayed on the lobby's ceiling.



Montgomery shows how the celestial sphere acts as a road map to the stars.

Five-year-olds Tyler and Taylor Knickerbocker of Cooper seem to agree, as they continue to stare in awe at the unique ceiling.

"We live on stuff like that," says Tyler, pointing to one of the planets. "Cool," his twin says.

Tyler and Taylor scurry down the hallway inside the planetarium to join their classmates inside the theater. The young crowd stops squirming in their seats after planetarium director Dr. Kent Montgomery turns down the lights and starts presenting the night sky.

"You want to see some stars?" he asks.

"Yes!" is the enthusiastic reply.

As the introduction starts, swirling pictures of stars are projected onto the 40-foot domed ceiling, giving the audience the sense of soaring through space.

"Awesome!" they shout.

As the show finishes, Montgomery starts talking about constellations, pointing some of them out on the screen

with his red laser light. They are impressed with the red light, but not the sparkling dots that don't look anything like the images he's talking about.

That white line does not look like a lion, they complain.

The mood changes rapidly when Montgomery turns on animation that shows graphics of constellations such as Hercules, Hydra the serpent, Corvus the crow and Leo the lion.

Now that there are pictures to accompany the constellations, the children's excitement returns. "I see Jesus!" shouts a young voice in the audience.

Lesson concluded, it is now time to start the show, "Larry Cat in Space," the tale of a precocious cat that goes to live on the moon. The children are silent throughout the movie, only speaking when prompted by Larry Cat to say "Meeoown."

"Meeoown!" they repeat.

Once Larry Cat's adventure ends, the kids again pair up and file out of the planetarium, chatting animatedly about what they've just experienced.

It's a sight Montgomery and Davis enjoy. And it's children this age who ask some of the most intriguing questions. Davis says one of her favorites was during a STARLAB visit from a very serious first grader: "If we come to the planetarium, can we see the aliens?"

In addition to being used as a teaching venue for university students, the planetarium will be open to the public for shows on weekends throughout the year. Average run time for shows is 30 minutes; in addition, planetarium staff briefly present what visitors can look for that very evening in the nighttime sky, bringing the average planetarium visit to about 45 minutes.

#### Currently Showing

"Secrets of the Sun"

An intimate look at the role the sun plays in the life of our solar system.

Experience the power of the sun and its impact on the planets and ultimately life on Earth. Shows at 7 and 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays through the beginning of August.

"Rock Hall of Fame"

Based around a "Rock Hall of Fame" theme, this show includes music from groups like Aerosmith, Pink Floyd, Metallica and many more. Shows at 9 p.m. on the first and third Fridays of the month.

#### Upcoming Showings

"Big"

Just how big is the universe? "Big" tackles this question by taking the audience on a journey to the far reaches of the universe.

"Ultimate Universe"

#### For More Information

Call the "Starline" at 903-468-8652 for a recording of current shows and times [www.tamu-commerce.edu/university/planetarium/](http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/university/planetarium/)

# Operation Spark

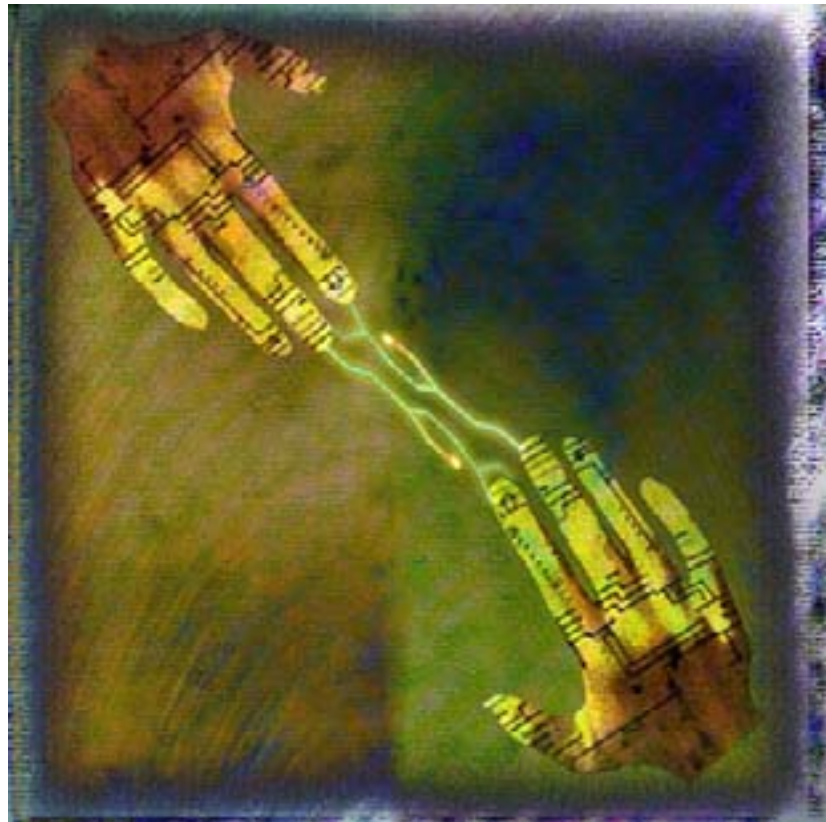
## Igniting a Passion for Math and Science

by Ashley Tubbs

**A**lthough Operation Spark is not a top secret military initiative as its name implies, some may say it is just as essential to the nation's future.

The endeavor, launched by A&M-Commerce in collaboration with L-3 Communications Integrated Systems, is aimed at getting middle and high school students in grades 6-9 excited about math and science. Long-term goals include improving TAKS test results in math and science and increasing the number of students who pursue these areas of study in college.

"The need for an educated workforce solid in math and science skills is paramount to the success of the nation, local communities and business," A&M-Commerce president Dr. Keith McFarland



real-world career applications. For example, in a university integrated physics and chemistry class, college students will work with high-school or middle-school students to design, test and use a wind tunnel.

Through other strands, high-school biology students will gain experience working with modern techniques for genetic engineering middle-school students will learn about chemical forensics and math classes will be exposed to the basics of cryptography and image processing, important tools used in computer science fields.

"Our business relies heavily on engineering and technology," said Bob Drewes, president of L-3/IS. "It is crucial not only to our business, but also to the nation's defense and the national

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**"When it comes to cultivating interest in math and science, we must find ways to ignite the spark and keep it burning." – President Keith McFarland**

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said. "When it comes to cultivating interest in math and science, we must find ways to ignite the spark and keep it burning."

With Operation Spark, L-3/IS engineers will work with A&M-Commerce faculty and area school districts to develop hands-on classroom activities, or "strands," that reflect

economy that we continuously improve the education of our youth in mathematics and the sciences."

The project is a three-year partnership between L-3/IS, A&M-Commerce, Commerce and Greenville Independent School Districts, Greenville Christian School and Phoenix Charter School. ☺

# Project Corvus

## A&M-Commerce Researchers Push Limits Of Artificial Intelligence

by Amy Halbert, Lorraine Pace



**C**uriosity may have killed the cat, but it's the driving force behind a groundbreaking research partnership between L-3 Communications Corporation's ComConcept Division and Texas A&M University-Commerce. Known as Project Corvus (Latin for raven, another curious creature) it seeks to create curiosity in specialized computer networks.

Artificial curiosity pushes the concept of artificial intelligence a step further by not only making a computer "intelligent," but also making it "curious."

Currently, to perform complicated tasks a computer is still dependent upon a user to tell it what tasks need to be accomplished and in what order. The Project Corvus team is working on a way to take the human element out of that equation. "We want to see if we can create a truly curious system that can take on some of the human function," says Dr. Derek Harter, professor of computer science.

Project Corvus researchers are working with computer grids, which allow a single computer user to unite pools of servers, storage systems and networks into a single large system. Instead of having one computer perform complicated tasks or calculations, that computer links to others (when they are idle) and uses the power of multiple systems complete the task. To a user, data file or an application, the system appears

to be a single enormous virtual computing system.

Jim Turner, senior staff research engineer at ComConcept Division, says the ultimate objective of Project Corvus is "to document research into the feasibility and practicality of creating artificial curiosity in a distributed network cyberinfrastructure."

"A comparison of sorts is Google, which allows people to enter queries and which returns sources of information," says Dr. Linda Morales, computer science professor at A&M-Commerce. "Right now there is no capability by specialized networks to issue queries and gather this kind of information."

"This is groundbreaking research," says Turner, "so we are not sure where the

project will lead us. However, if we are successful, it will have applications ranging from health to defense."

"This is the start of a fruitful relationship to push the frontier of technology and science further," says Dr. Allan Headley, dean of Graduate Studies and Research at A&M-Commerce, commenting on the partnership between ComConcept and the university.

The A&M-Commerce project team includes Drs. Harter, Shulan Lu, Morales, Sam Saffer and Sung Chuhl Suh, who are assisted in their research by several graduate and undergraduate students. ☺



# Alumnus' Research Targets Drug Addiction

by Deborah Davies



medications that will help those addicted to methamphetamine or cocaine. It's work that could change the face of drug treatment almost immediately.

There's little comparison between how long it takes to get an all-new medication into the hands of those who need it versus one already approved, even for another use. It can take 10 to 15 years before a new compound is ever even tested in humans – much less approved, De La Garza says.

The team has already moved ahead and begun testing a second drug, modafinil (also known as Provigil) that may also help with methamphetamine addiction. Modafinil is approved by the FDA to treat narcolepsy and generally enhance wakefulness. But recent reports in healthy volunteers, patients with ADHD and patients with schizophrenia, reveal that modafinil enhances cognitive abilities. That has important implications for those who use methamphetamine.

"As a group, methamphetamine users have poor cognition and very often poor decision-making abilities," De La Garza explains. "It's easier for those with in-tact cognitive function to say no when they should and also to remember their relapse prevention strategies. Clearly if we can offer methamphetamine users a drug that will help them make better decisions, it would be incredible.

"The possibility that we've found medicine that will actually work for people addicted to methamphetamine – that's what gets me up every morning." ☺



De La Garza and his team are leading the research on the positive effects of antidepressant drugs with methamphetamine-addicted patients. Photo by Dan Page.

Alumnus Richard De La Garza II (B.S. '85) and his closest colleagues are penetrating the frontiers of medicine to treat drug addiction. An article they have written, which appeared in the Nov. 23 issue of the high-profile journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*, is still making waves – in fact, some might call them small tsunamis – in the field.

In the article entitled "Bupropion Reduces Methamphetamine-Induced Subjective Effects and Cue-Induced Craving," De La Garza and his colleagues reported preliminary findings that Bupropion (used as an antidepressant known as Wellbutrin and as a smoking-cessation medication known as Xyban) could reduce the "high" and "desire" in methamphetamine-addicted patients.

"The research is making such a huge wave because Bupropion is already approved by the Food and Drug Administration for other medical conditions," De La Garza explains. "Doctors can prescribe the drug if they think it's something that can help their patients."

De La Garza works at UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine where he is an associate research professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences and the Integrated Substance Abuse Program.

He is actively testing the safety and effectiveness of

# Popular Science

by Amy Halbert

## Summer workshop puts teachers in the hot seat

For three weeks each summer, many brave Texas teachers take on the role of student as they learn to be more effective science teachers. For the past six years, Texas A&M-Commerce has hosted the workshop for teachers who want to learn more about their subject field, their craft and their students.

This year, approximately 30 Pre-K through eighth grade teachers from the northeast Texas area and beyond have journeyed to Commerce for the training. For four and a half hours each day, they learn ways to implement creative, active learning activities into their curricula to enhance their students' learning of science, specifically astronomy and earth science.

Their training is very hands-on. They make models of Stonehenge to understand astronomy. They construct the layers of the earth and make scale models to understand the solar system, and create star charts to understand stars and other objects in space.

Cynthia Pierce, an eighth grade science teacher at Commerce Middle School, is enjoying learning more about astronomy. "Kent Montgomery (director of the planetarium) is a real astronomer who has taken his time to help science teachers learn a few new tricks," she said. "Science is constantly changing, and by coming to workshops like this, you can keep your students fluent in 'real science,' not just what is printed in a textbook."

A&M-Commerce's summer workshop is now so popular that the university has to turn away dozens of interested teachers each year. In tandem with the teacher's program, the university also offers a weeklong science camp for young students.

Science camp is a chance for the teachers in the workshop to put all they've learned the test. They pair into teaching teams and test what they've learned on the eager science campers.

"This is a great way for the teachers to try some things they've learned that they might otherwise be a little nervous to try on their own when school starts again," said Dr. Glenda Love-Bell who, along with Dr. Gil Naizer, spearheads the summer program. "They feel more comfortable trying out new things while they're here and have a partner, and have us on deck to ask questions."

Though teachers come to learn creative ways to get their students excited about science, some have found an added benefit of the program: higher test scores on state mandated exams.

Naizer's wife Tammy, who teaches fifth grade at Commerce ISD, has noticed an improvement at her school. "While the state average on the fifth grade science TAKS test was 75 percent, our average in Commerce was 89 percent, 14 percentage points above the state average.

"I attribute much of the success of my students to the excellent training and exposure I have received during the past five years of the summer science program," she said. ☺



Texas A&M-Commerce alumnae Valerie Nobles (B.S.I.S. '05) (left) and Guadalupe Hernandez (B.S.I.S. '05) learn it doesn't take a lot of money to show their students how black holes work: they just need marbles, fabric, tape and a plastic bucket. Organizers Dr. Glenda Bell (right, front) and Dr. Gil Naizer said nearly 300 teachers attended this year's workshop.



# COMING HOME

She flew around the world in nine days without refueling. She's the only woman ever to be awarded the prestigious Collier trophy. Now Jeana Yeager can add honorary doctorate to her impressive list of accomplishments.

*by Deborah Davies & Amy Halbert; Photos by Craig Buck*

The Commerce High School graduate didn't attract much attention in school. That changed in December 1986 when she attracted the world's attention with a treacherous journey around the world in a strangely configured, futuristic-looking aircraft called Voyager.

For nine days Jeana and co-pilot Dick Rutan shared piloting duties for Voyager, an innovative, lightweight airplane that was essentially a giant fuel tank with tandem wings, twin booms and an engine on either end of the fuselage. The duo was determined to fly around the world without stopping or refueling.

Packed into the cramped interior of the airplane, which was barely the size of a phone booth, Jeana and Dick found themselves battling exhaustion, mental fatigue, fear and a typhoon named Marge.

## On her way up

Jeana was born in Fort Worth and moved to Commerce with her family in 1967. She graduated from Commerce High School in 1970 and moved to California, where her sister lived, in 1977. There she went to work with rocket pioneer Robert Truax and his Project Private Enterprise. Jeana said she did a little bit of everything at the company, trying to soak up all she could about aerodynamics, rocket propellants and guidance systems.

"In anything I do, I learn much about what I am working with as well as new things about myself," she said. Her sister encouraged her to try flying, and by 1978, Jeana had earned her pilot's license.

In 1980, she met her future Voyager co-pilot, Dick Rutan, at an air show in Chino, Calif. At a restaurant one night, Jeana and Dick, along with Dick's brother Burt, an airplane designer, hatched a plan to circle the globe on one tank of fuel without stopping. Jeana and Dick spent the next six years figuring out how to build an aircraft that could carry two people, their equipment and enough fuel to cover 25,000 miles.

And they had to figure out how to pay for it all.

Over and over they approached corporations and other entities to partner with them in the daring endeavor. The typical response was, "That's an interesting idea, but now go away." In the end, the entire project relied solely on private funds and donations.

Jeana came up with the idea of the Voyager Impressive People Club, which anyone could join for a \$100 donation. The VIPs became not only the primary funding arm of the project, but also a pool of spirited supporters and



Voyager's journey was almost over before it started when the plane's wingtips were damaged upon takeoff.

volunteers.

"All kinds of people from all walks of life got involved in Voyager," Jeana said. "It didn't matter whether the job was something sophisticated or sweeping the floors."

## Early experiments

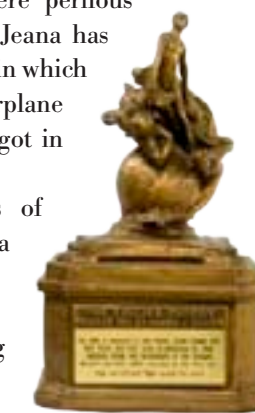
After several years of research and experimentation, Jeana and Dick started the construction of the Voyager from a lightweight composite material made mainly of graphite and Kevlar fiberglass. The design focused on saving space and weight for the thousands of pounds of fuel it would take to make it around the globe. Jeana said the aircraft "weighed about as much as a Volkswagen van."

Voyager made its first test flight in 1984. The slender main wing was so pliable it easily flexed 3 to 15 feet while the aircraft was in flight and could flex up to 35 feet up or down before causing structural damage.

Those early test flights were perilous undertakings, and to this day Jeana has no illusions about the jeopardy in which she placed herself. "The airplane tried to kill us every time we got in it," she said.

After another 18 months of testing and modifications, Jeana and Dick were finally ready, and weather conditions were right, to start their record-breaking flight in the lightweight airplane.

Voyager weighed 939 pounds empty. That ballooned up to 9,894



Nearly 20 years after the historic Voyager flight, Jeana remains the only woman to ever receive the prestigious Collier Trophy.

# COMING HOME

pounds, more than 10 times the original weight, once the plane was loaded with fuel, two pilots and supplies.

## Near disaster

On Dec. 14, 1986, Jeana and Dick prepared for their flight. “I was freezing that day,” Jeana remembers, as she was waiting to climb into the spindly airplane that was to be her home for the next nine days, three minutes and 44 seconds. At Edwards Air Force Base in California, at 8:01 a.m., Voyager’s engines started and the airplane rolled down the runway.

“The airplane tried to kill us every time we got in it.”

The daring aviators’ dreams were almost crushed before they ever left the ground when Voyager’s flexible wings dragged against the runway, damaging both wingtips. There was only 800 feet of runway left before Jeana felt Voyager take to the air.

The team wasn’t sure how much damage the aircraft

had incurred, it was too heavy to land on its fragile gear. “We decided to continue, using Hawaii as a decision point. We made it there and everything went okay, so the decision was to go as far as we could in spite of the damage.”

## Life in a Box

Living in Voyager’s tiny cabin for nine days may have been uncomfortable, but it wasn’t boring. When Dick was in the pilot’s seat, Jeana was busy in back, crouched on hands and knees due to the small space, operating the communications antenna and radio, checking the oil, recording various gauge readings, taking photos and replacing parts when needed.

Although the team had enough food to last the duration of the flight, they had to force themselves to eat. Due to the physical and mental stress of the hazardous journey and meals consisting mainly of Shaklee’s energy bars, dry cereal

and water, the already slender aviatrix lost 10 pounds during the voyage.

Throughout their historic flight, the team narrowly avoided disaster after disaster. Weather and fatigue were their ever-present enemies. Storm systems often dictated changes in their carefully constructed flight plan, costing precious fuel and sometimes taking them over political hotspots, such as Vietnam, which refused to allow them to fly over their airspace.

On the second day of the flight, Typhoon Marge, a 600-mile wide monster of a storm, loomed over the Pacific Ocean. Meteorologists helped the crew safely navigate through the typhoon, which gave them an unexpected boost of timesaving tailwinds.

On day five, to avoid more storms over Africa, they

retreated high into the atmosphere, to about 20,000 feet, only to become ill from lack of oxygen. Jeana was in her non-piloting position behind the pilot when she became ill due to hypoxia. Her oxygen demand lever was set at 50 percent instead of the required 100. Dick was also ill, and began to hallucinate that the controls were bulging outward and the panel was breathing.

Sick as she was, Jeana decided she was better off than Dick, and convinced him to give up the controls and take a break. “After hearing Dick ramble about the breathing controls, I decided that I felt just fine, and convinced him to let me get in the pilot’s seat,” she said.

Changing positions was no easy task, since the person in the back was positioned face-down on hands and knees, and had to slide the pilot’s seat back, then carefully switch positions.

On the last morning, fuel stopped flowing to the rear engine, which promptly died. The front engine had been shut down around day three to conserve fuel. With two engines out, Voyager fell 5,000 feet while Jeana and Dick

## Voyager by Numbers

Voyager: Experimental aircraft and first airplane to fly around the world without refueling, now on display at the National Air & Space Museum; 1 built  
Crew: 2  
Wingspan: 110 ft.  
Canard span: 33 ft.  
Fuselage length: 25 ft.  
Boom tank length: 29 ft.  
Vertical tail height: 10.3 ft.  
Cabin length: 7.5 ft.  
Cabin width: 2 ft.

Structural weight: 939 pounds

World flight numbers  
Takeoff, landing site: Edwards Air Force Base, California  
Actual miles: 26,366  
Takeoff weight: 9,894 pounds  
Landing weight: 2,276 pounds  
Official average speed: 115 mph/100 kts  
Average altitude: 11,000 ft.  
Duration: 9 days, 3 minutes, 44 seconds  
Dates: Dec. 14-23, 1986

recipients include Orville Wright, Howard Hughes, the crews of Apollo 8, 11 and 15, and many more.

To this day, Jeana remains the only female to ever receive the Collier Trophy.

## Hometown honors

In December 2005, Texas A&M

University-Commerce awarded her an honorary doctorate of science degree for her many accomplishments. At the ceremony, President Keith McFarland said, “Jeana Yeager embodies the best in the American character, a desire to go beyond the known and a commitment to advance the frontiers of knowledge.”

“Commerce is the closest thing to a hometown for me, and to have received such a great honor as this—what can I say other than it’s like being honored by family. It fills me with great pride,” Jeana said.

scrambled to restart the cold-soaked front engine. Finally, after several tense minutes, the front engine roared back to life and Voyager climbed to a safe altitude.

## Making history

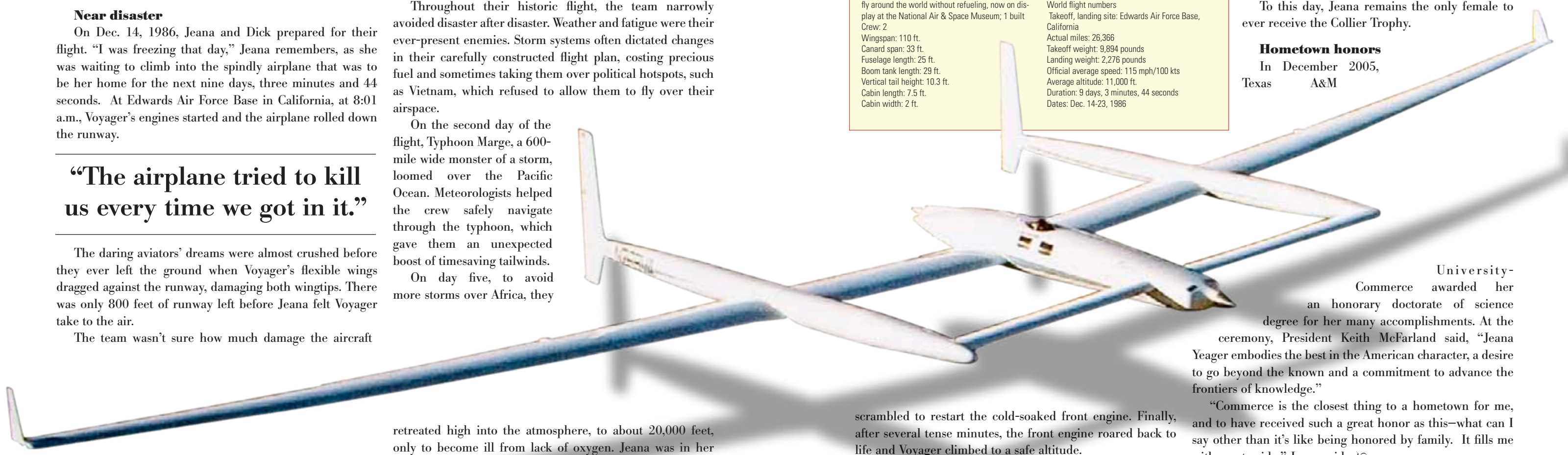
Jeana said that their final landing seemed like a minor miracle, with a tiny opening in the weather that allowed them to fly back into Edwards Air Force Base without further delay. “We landed with 11.6 gallons,” she said. “Still enough, Dick joked, to take us all the way to Seattle.”

At 8:06 a.m. on Dec. 23, Voyager was back on solid ground and Jeana and Dick had made aviation history.

With their historic flight, the pair broke 11 world records, including having made the longest nonstop flight to that date, almost doubling the then-current record, set in 1962 by a Boeing B-52 bomber crew.

A week later, President Ronald Reagan presented them with the Presidential Citizen Medals of Honor, awarded just 16 times before.

The Voyager team also won the coveted Robert J. Collier Trophy for their contributions to aviation. Notable past



# STARTING OVER



Sizzling summer temperatures can't squelch Richard and June's enjoyment of the Texas Archeological Society's annual field school.

## Richard and June Proctor retired from their previous lives to head into uncharted territory.

Richard (M.A. '01) and June (M.A. '03) Proctor are a well-educated couple, yet they don't seem to grasp the concept of retirement. Retirees downsize. They travel. They relax.

They don't go to graduate school, start writing careers and dig pits in the blistering Texas sun looking for a mysterious Native American tribe.

"We don't know how to act like normal people," June laughs. "Relaxation for us is all about learning and teaching."

That's for sure. These two seventy-somethings maintain

active lifestyles that would have most people—even younger ones—on their knees begging for mercy.

But the Proctors couldn't be happier.

## LOVE OF LEARNING

Richard and June have always been in love with learning. They met as college freshmen at Oklahoma City University in 1953 in a bookstore. Many early dates even took place in romantic hotspots like bookstores and libraries. Two years later, they married.

Richard earned his bachelor's degree in biology. June earned hers in psychology. Richard earned his M.D. degree at Baylor Medical School and took his internship and pediatric residency in the Army.



Even 1,000-year-old artifacts need a bath. Each discovery at the Stallings ranch is carefully washed and dried before it is sent to Paris Junior College for analysis.

The Proctors lived the Army life for 27 years, traveling the world, collecting souvenirs and raising six children along the way.

Richard rose to the rank of brigadier general and commanded two U.S. Army hospitals and a U.S. Army medical center. He was a consultant to the World Health Organization and was awarded four Meritorious Service Medals, two Legion of Merit Medals and the Distinguished Service Medal. June was awarded the Outstanding Civilian Service medal.

In addition to being an Army wife and mother, June earned a master's degree in religious education from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington D.C., taught American children in Ethiopia and served as a director of religious education certified by the U.S. Army Board of Chaplains. She served at Fort Huachuca, Arizona Post Chapel and several churches.



Every bit of soil taken from the excavation site is sifted in large trays so that not even the tiniest artifact is overlooked.

Richard retired in 1991, closing one chapter of his life, but opening an exciting new one for both he and June.

## BACK TO SCHOOL

The Proctors didn't spend too much time being truly retired. One day while driving past A&M-Commerce on their way to Houston, they decided to stop by and enroll in the master's degree program in history.

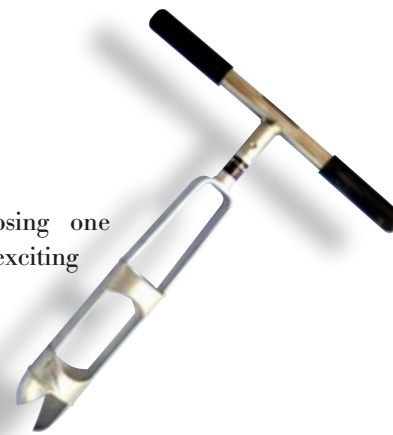
Richard wrote his master's thesis about Captain Randolph B. Marcy, a 19th century Army officer and explorer. Richard was fascinated by the Army captain and thought it would be interesting to reenact Marcy's historic journey through the Southwest with a contingent of 12 graduate students portraying soldiers and three faculty members portraying officers.

But his plans were put on hold when his parents became ill, and he turned his attention to their care. After they died, Richard suggested that at least he and June should ride horses across West Texas according to Marcy's journal notes.

She was less than enthusiastic, so they came up with an alternative: create a place to teach historical reenactors how to be more authentic in their portrayals of historic figures and events. June says this idea came about when she and Richard were disappointed to observe historical inaccuracies in some of the presentations they witnessed.

Their idea turned into the Red River Institute of Living History and Anthropology, which they built on their 533-acre Whispering Oaks Ranch outside of Paris, Texas.

According to the institute's charter, "It will provide a forum for the exchange of historical, anthropological, and archeological information and a setting for training individuals and groups in skills used by persons who previously lived in the North American continent from prehistoric times to the present."



Dr. Proctor shows that it takes a variety of tools to dig up the past: shovels, trowels, brushes, dustpans and even bamboo skewers.



## STARTING OVER

The institute won't officially open until next year, but the Proctors have already generated a lot of interest in the project.

The Proctors also plan to open the Wild Boar Inn, which has hiking trails and lakes for nature lovers. It features five themed guest rooms, decorated with souvenirs from their world travels. The centerpiece of the inn is the great hall, which will serve as a gathering place for guests, seating up to 40 people.

The hall is decorated in a Celtic style, complete with swords and shields mounted on the walls and tall bookcases (designed by Richard) displaying historical objects. Their 18,000-volume library is also housed in the institute.

### UNCOVERING THE PAST

When not absorbed in planning for the institute and inn, Richard feeds his other passion, archeology. He was the camp director for the Texas Archeological Society's annual field school in 2005 and 2006 at the Stallings' site in Lamar County, Texas. June was the registrar.

The field school features an eclectic mix of professional and avocational archaeologists who come together for one week each summer to work under the direction of the principle investigator, a professional archeologist. Richard is an archeological steward for the state of Texas.

This year, the Proctors and about 300 volunteers are looking for evidence of a little known Native American tribe, the Fourche Maline, which dates between 1000 BC – AD 800. The ancient tribe settled in the four-corners area of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arkansas. For the first time in Texas, evidence of their houses was found when post molds delineating two Fourche Maline houses were discovered at the Stallings site.

"See this," Richard says, picking up what looks like a small arrowhead from one of the washing stations. "This was probably the tip of a lance used by the Caddo. This could have broken off a bigger piece or been a practice one for the kids," he says.

Each artifact found at the Stallings site, no matter how small, is carefully measured and its precise location documented. It is then sent to the washing and drying station before it is bagged, labeled and sent to the lab at Paris Junior College for cataloging, and transferred to the Texas Archeological Research Lab in San Antonio for analysis.



Professional archeologists work side by side with volunteers, showing them the correct way to document each and every find.

The artifacts will eventually be returned to the landowners, Coach Gene Stallings and his wife, Ruth Ann, who hope to build a small museum to house many of the historic finds.

In addition to being members of the TAS, the Proctors are also members of Oklahoma Anthropological Society and the Arkansas Archeological Society. Richard is president and June is registrar and publicist of their local Paris group, the Valley of the Caddo Archeological Society.

### LIVING THROUGH A TRAGEDY

Although the Proctors' lives may seem close to idyllic, they have survived a tragedy that would have destroyed most families.

In 1981, on a frigid Christmas Eve in Maryland, June, four of her six children—Sheilia, Tanya, Terry Glen and Roger—and Tanya's three children were headed to their church's Christmas pageant.

They never made it.

A drunk driver slammed into June's VW Rabbit station wagon. In an instant, the Proctors' two sons and their three grandchildren were dead, and June, Tanya and Sheilia were badly injured.

The surviving family members were devastated. "How do you grieve five people at one time?" June remembers asking. It was a question with no answer, so she started a journal to help cope with her grief.

would never sell because people didn't want to read about death and dying.

Deflated, she tucked her precious manuscript away.

But everything changed after Sept. 11, 2001. Suddenly people were talking about death and how to deal with grief. June's nieces began asking her about the book.

They told her, "If you will publish it, we will sell it." In May 2003, June graduated from A&M-Commerce and in June, she mailed her manuscript to the publisher. True to their word, her nieces have been selling copies ever since.



June Proctor poured her heart and soul into her book, which helped her learn to cope with the grief of losing her children and grandchildren.

### NEW BEGINNINGS

The book not only helped the Proctor family – and countless others – deal with their grief, it led June to a career she hadn't considered: writing. Today, in addition to all of her other activities, June writes a weekly column, "Stay Tuned with June," for the Bryan County Star in Durant, Okla. She also has three more books in the works. Two are history books.

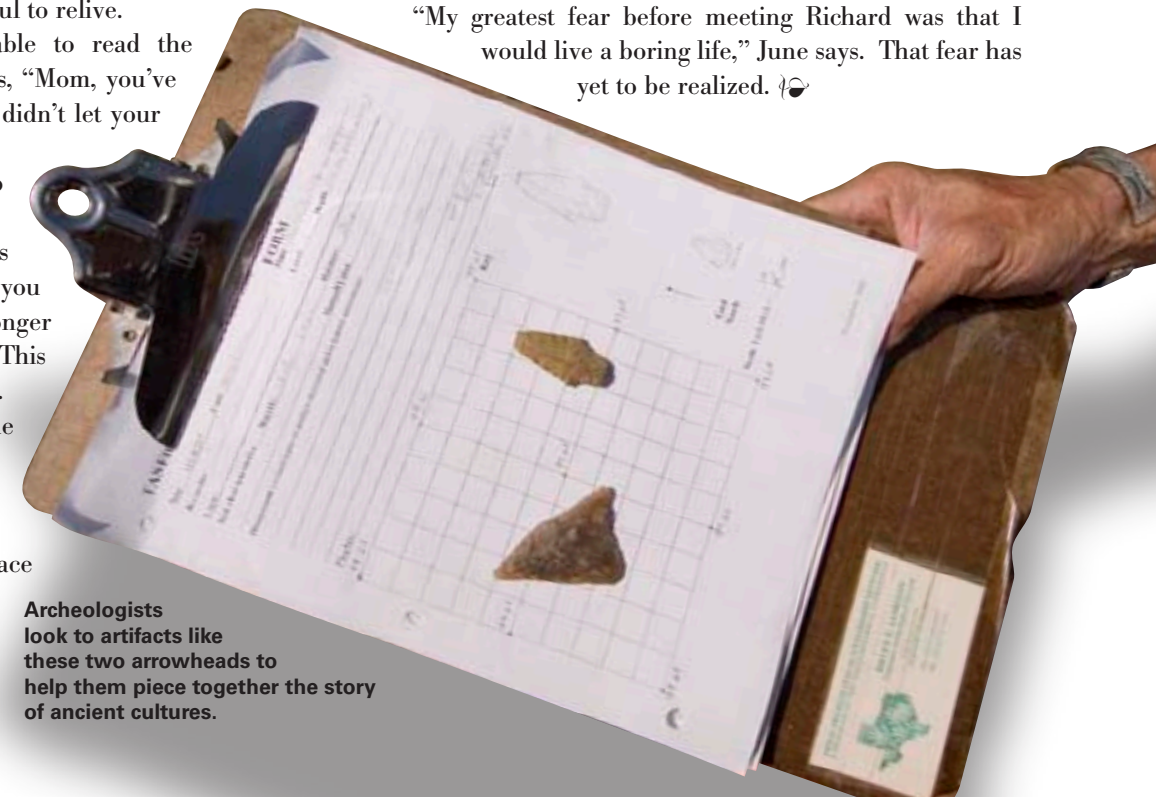
"My greatest fear before meeting Richard was that I would live a boring life," June says. That fear has yet to be realized. ☺

Those journals would later serve as the basis of a book, narrating the first year of the family's grief journey. When the draft copy was completed, she gave it to Tanya and Sheilia to read. It took Sheilia 10 years to finish reading the account. The memories were too painful to relive.

When she was finally able to read the manuscript, her response was, "Mom, you've written a documentary. You didn't let your heart bleed."

June took her criticism to heart. "I went back and wrote it with tears on every page. It's a whole different story when you do that, when you're no longer afraid to cry your heart out. This is what happened," June says.

She rewrote the book, *The Night the Angels Cried: A Mother's True Story*, in two weeks. Her heartbreaking tale later was awarded first place by the Press Women of Texas. Her confidence was short-lived, when a man at the conference told her the book



Archeologists look to artifacts like these two arrowheads to help them piece together the story of ancient cultures.

# Meet Your 2006 Alumni Ambassadors

A&M-Commerce has come a long way since its days as an institution that primarily trained teachers. Just take a look at this year's 27 Alumni Ambassadors.

This diverse group includes an accomplished playwright, trial consultant, entrepreneur, musician and—of course—some of the nation's finest educators.

Despite their different educational and professional backgrounds, these alumni all have one essential thing in common: they are all top achievers in their fields, worthy of the highest award an A&M-Commerce academic department can bestow upon a graduate.

The Alumni Ambassador award was first given in 1983 and so far 613 alumni have been honored for their career achievements.

Earlier this spring, the ambassadors returned to campus to be recognized and spent the day talking with students who are majoring in their field of study.

This year's Alumni Ambassadors are:

**Jim Archer** (B.S. '63, M.S. '65) was the first person to earn a Ph.D. in nuclear chemistry from Texas A&M University in College Station and taught at the college level for 37 years. Recognized by the Department of Chemistry, Jim now operates a ranch specializing in Shorthorn cattle and guest ranch facilities, for which he was named 2002 Resident Conservationist Farmer.

**Dr. Anita Griggs Armstrong** (M.S. '90, Ed.D. '99) is a professor of mathematics at Dallas Baptist University. She was honored by the Department of Mathematics.

**Dr. Linda Ball** (B.S. '75, M.S. '77, Ed.D. '81) is an assistant professor of counseling at A&M-Commerce. Recognized by the Department of Counseling, Linda is also a licensed professional counselor, and marriage and family therapist in the State of Texas.

**Dr. Marvin Crawford** (M.Ed. '66, Ed.D. '79) is an educational consultant who has also served as an adjunct professor at several schools. Marvin, a former



superintendent to Lindale, Grand Prairie, Carthage and Oklahoma City school districts, was recognized by the Department of Educational Administration.

**Ken Crutchfield** (B.S. '76) is director of human resources/equal employment opportunity at A&M-Commerce. Ken is an ambassador of the Department of Political Science.

**Ralph E. Dunton** (B.B.A. '86, M.B.A. '94) is director of Big Safari Special Programs at L-3 Communications Comcept Division in Rockwall. He was honored by the Department of Business Administration and Management Information Systems.

**Dr. Stacey L. Edmonson** (M.Ed. '66, Ed.D. '79) is an associate professor at Sam Houston State University. Stacey was recognized by the Department of Educational Administration.

**William Tims Edwards**

(B.S. '75, M.S. '84) retired in 2004 as a K-12 principal for Oden Public Schools. Honored by the Department of Health, Kinesiology and Sports Studies, William has received numerous honors and awards such as the U.L.L. Coach of the Year Award and Arkansas Game & Fish Commission Educator Award.

**Carol Farek** (B.S.I.S. '02) teaches sixth grade science and social studies and is a teen leadership teacher at Davis Elementary School in Royse City. A 2005 Teacher of the Year, Carol is an ambassador to the Department of Elementary Education.

**Patricia L. Gentry** (B.S.W. '02, M.S.W. '04) is administrator at Leonard Manor Inc., a long-term care facility. Patricia was honored by the Department of Social Work.

**Dr. David A. Giles** (B.S. '71, M.A. '73) is a nationally known trial consultant, author and public

speaker who currently serves as the vice president of a trial consulting firm, The Advocates. An ambassador of the Department of Psychology and Special Education, David pioneered many of the techniques and applied behavioral science principles being used in trial consulting today.

**Debra Lynn Gossett** (B.S. '00, M.S. '03) teaches history, geography and sociology at Greenville High School. Debra was honored by the Department of History.

**Russell Graves** (B.S. '93) received his degree in agricultural education and currently teaches at Childress High School. A keynote speaker, Russell is also an award-winning photographer and writer. He was honored by the Department of Agricultural Science.

**Don Grisham** (B.S. '72) is an insurance agent at Don Grisham State Farm Insurance in Greenville. Recognized by the Department of Economics and Finance, Don is also a founding member of Omicron Delta Epsilon.

**Chris Gage** (B.S. '72, M.S. '74) is director of athletics at University of Texas at Dallas. Chris is an ambassador for the Department of Health, Kinesiology and Sports Studies and has filled similar positions at Colorado State University, University of Texas San Antonio and Eastern New Mexico University.

**Jason Hudson** (B.S. '96, M.S. '02) teaches at Mesquite ISD and is an adjunct faculty member at A&M-Commerce. Recognized by the Department of Industrial Engineering and Technology, Jason also serves as the vice president of the Cumby ISD Board of Trustees.

**Dr. Toni P. Jenkins** (Ed.D. '98) is executive vice president at Collin County Community College District overseeing district-wide marketing and public relations, continuing education and workforce development, and institutional research. An ambassador to the Department of Secondary and Higher Education,



2006 Alumni Ambassadors: (first row, from left) Dr. James Terry, William Tims Edwards, Dr. James Archer, Gary Don Grisham, Ken Crutchfield, Russell Graves and Chris Gage. (Second row, from left) Key Poulan, Ralph Dunton, Lisa Reeder, Laura Smith and Darwin Shaw. (Third row, from left) Dr. Hong Yin Sun, Carol Farek, Dr. Linda Ball, and Jane Smith. (Fourth row, from left) Dr. Stacey Edmonson, Yan Sun, Dr. Toni Jenkins and Dr. Anita Armstrong. (Fifth row, from left) James Cory Morgan, Patricia Gentry and Dr. Marvin Crawford. (Sixth row, from left) Dr. David Giles and Jason Hudson.

Toni serves on the Executive Committee of the North Central Texas Workforce Development and is secretary of the board for the Baylor Regional Medical Center of Plano.

**James Corey Morgan** (B.S. '96, M.S. '01) is business unit manager of Fugro-Jason doing seismic inversion and interpretation. Honored by the Department of Physics, James is also the sole proprietor of his own company, J-Seis Consulting.

**Harry "Key" Poulan** (B.M.Ed. '95) is the brass arranger for the Santa Clara Vanguard. Key's original work "Carnegie Fanfare and Dance" and "A Fortune in Steel" premiered in New York City's Carnegie Hall. He is an ambassador to the Department of Music.

**Helon Blackburn Razniak** (B.S. '63, M.S. '65, B.S. '93) has spent most of her career with East Texas State and A&M-Commerce. She was recognized by the Department of Biological and Environmental Services.

**Lisa Reeder** (B.B.A. '90, M.B.A. '05) is the manager of subcontracts with responsibility

for the communication systems program group and the Navy P-3 program at L-3 Communications. Lisa is a graduate of the Department of Accounting.

**Darwin D. Shaw** (B.S. '92) is a United States probation officer for the Northern District of the Texas U.S. Probation Office located in Garland. Darwin is a graduate of the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice.

**Jane Ellen Smith** (M.S. '03) is a graduate teaching assistant in the math department at A&M-Commerce and working toward her master's in math. Recognized by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Jane has taught high school math in Winnsboro and Sulphur Springs and was listed in *Who's Who Among American Teachers* in 2004 and 2005.

**Laura Lundgren Smith** (B.S. '91, M.S. '95) is a playwright who has published several plays and poems. An ambassador to the Department of Theatre, Laura has acted in

and directed several plays at A&M-Commerce and Paris Junior College.

**Yan Sun** (M.F.A. '96) is an associate professor of art and chair of the art department at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio. Yan is an ambassador to the Department of Art.

**Dr. Hong Yin Sun** (M.S. '95, Ed.D. '97) is a user support specialist and lecturer of art at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio. Honored by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, her responsibilities include teaching graphic design courses and designing web and print productions for the college.

**Dr. James P. Terry** (B.S. '63, M.Ed. '77, Ed.D. '81) is an assistant professor at A&M-Commerce. An ambassador of the Department of Educational Administration, James has served as a teacher, principal, director of secondary schools, assistant superintendent, deputy superintendent and superintendent with the Mesquite Independent School District. ☺

# Class Notes

## 1940s

**Harold M. Risener** (B.S. '43) recently completed 42 years of perfect attendance at the Rotary Club of San Antonio, Texas.

## 1950s

**Jo Ann Durham** (B.S. '56) won an award from the Salmagundi Art Club for her painting, "Ancient Chinese MysticalForms."The Salmagundi Club is located in New York City and has been an American institution since 1871. **\* Lou Dial Dodson** (B.S. '58) was awarded the 2004 Outstanding Citizen of the Year from the City of Hurst, Texas. Lou is retired from the Hurst-Eules-Bedford ISD. **\* Ralph** (B.S. '59, M.S. '77) and **Barbara Hughes** (B.S. '59) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in October. Ralph taught high school math, chemistry, physics, AutoCAD and HVAC at Leonard, Bells and Whitewright, Texas. He retired in 2002 after teaching for 28 years. Barbara taught English in the Whitewright ISD for 27 years before retiring in 1996. They have two children and three grandchildren.

## 1960s

**Bobby Puckett** (B.S. '65) was honored by the Clarksville City Council, which declared Oct. 7, 2005, Bobby Puckett Day in Clarksville, Texas. His coaching career in Clarksville began in 1973 and he taught biology, physical science, earth science, and health and physical education courses. Bobby was principal of Clarksville High School from 2000-05. Bobby is married to Sandra and they have two sons, Blaine and Bryce, and four grandchildren, Devin, Haley, Zackery and Dylan. He and Sandra celebrated their

45th anniversary in January. **\* Clara McGregor Chandler** (B.S. '67, M.S. '69) retired last year after 37 years in education at Trenton, Princeton and Van Alstyne (Texas) ISDs. **\* Lester Van Winkle** (B.S. '67) is a sculptor and has a studio in Farmersville, Texas. **\* Fletcher Walker** (B.S. '67, M.S. '76) was selected to coach the Virel Kalinowski All Stars in the 2005 All Star Game by the Houston Area Basketball Coaches Association. Fletcher is athletic director at Lamar CISD and is married to the former Nancy Lowrance ('67). **\* At the close of the 2005-06 school year, Wanda** (B.S. '68, M.Ed. '72) and **Loren Stephens** (M.S. '72) have spent a combined 78 years as educators with the Paris, Texas ISD. Loren taught world history and coached all sports the first year before switching to second grade. Wanda and Loren have taught second grade for 38 and 39 years respectively. They recently celebrated their 41st anniversary and have two adult sons and six grandchildren. **\* Dr. Wanda Vassallo** (M.Ed. '68) recently had her seventh book published, *Speaking with Spirit—A Guide for Christian Public Speakers*. Wanda is an adjunct faculty member at LeTourneau University in Dallas and is director of drama at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Garland. She is also a playwright and the author of nearly 40 articles about the use of drama in the church that have been published in various national denominational publications. **\* Terry Parsons** (B.A. '69) is the author of *The Intimacy Jungle* and is an ordained United Methodist minister. Terry is a psychological consultant and adjunct faculty member at Southern Methodist

## Joe B. Hinton appointed to state education coordinating board

Joe B. Hinton (B.S. '57, M.S. '58, Distinguished Alumnus '88), former chair of the A&M-Commerce Foundation Board, has been appointed by Gov. Rick Perry to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

"I am extremely honored that Governor Rick Perry has chosen me for such an important assignment," he said. Joe served as chair of the board for the A&M-Commerce Foundation for 11 years. He is the retired president and CEO of Mobil Oil Corporation Europe in London, which had interests in numerous countries worldwide. He began his career with Mobil Oil Corporation as a college student working as a roustabout and roughneck in the oil fields of Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Kansas during the summer.

Until recently, Joe served as adviser to the chair and CEO of Andrew Corporation, a Chicago-based multinational electronics and telecommunications company.

The alumnus established the Joe. B. Hinton Office of International Studies at A&M-Commerce and the Joe B. Hinton Fellows in Business Scholarship. He also provides miscellaneous financial support as well as scholarships to the A&M-Commerce athletics programs.

His term on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will expire in 2011.



University's Perkins School of Theology. **\* Rosie M.** (M.Ed. '69) and **H.B. Sorrells** (M.Ed. '70) recently celebrated their 50th anniversary with a cruise to the Caribbean. H.B. retired from Dallas ISD as a band and orchestra director and now works part time as a string instructor. Rosie also retired from Dallas ISD as an early childhood education director and was later elected to the State Board of Education. She now works as an education consultant.

## 1970s

**Alan Ackles** (B.S. '71) judged the Miss Texas 2005 contest this past summer. **\* Don T. Norrell** (B.B.A. '71) is president and general manager of The Woodlands (Texas) Community

Association. **\* Albert Rice** (B.S. '71) was named Kiwanian of the Year by the Terrell (Texas) Kiwanis Club. Albert is director of student support services at Southwestern Christian College in Terrell. **\* Denny Whitley** (B.M.Ed. '71, M.Ed. '84) was recently named Outstanding Educator of the Year from Whitehouse (Texas) High School, Secondary Educator of the Year from Whitehouse ISD and Citizen of the Year of Whitehouse – all in one night. **\* Keith D. Balance** (B.S. '72, M.S. '76) retired at the end of the school year after 33 years as a teacher and registered nurse. Keith says all of his sons either have good jobs or are in graduate school. **\* Jean R. Freeling** (M.S. '72) is a health and fitness consultant, writer

and professional speaker living in Dallas. **\* Bettye Harris Herlocker** (B.S. '72, M.Ed. '74, Ed.D. '85) retired last year from Winnsboro (Texas) ISD. She has spent the last 17 years as principal of the elementary school and had also taught and served as curriculum director and middle school principal. Her elementary school was nominated for a Blue Ribbon Award, which means it was recognized as being one of the top 10 percent schools in the state by the governor. **\* Emily J. Wright O'Connor** (B.S. '73, M.Ed. '76) retired in July 2004 after 31 years in public education. Upon retirement, she was the principal of Chisum Elementary School in Paris, Texas. She also worked for Region 8 as the partnership schools initiative facilitator and was a teacher and administrator for North Lamar ISD. Emily continues to serve as a part-time consultant for Chisum and Region 8, and trains teachers in the Schools Attuned process. **\* Charles Helm** (B.B.A. '75) was honored by the Air Force Association as Northeast Civilian of the Year

in October. Charles is a past director of our alumni board of directors. **\* John Perkins** (B.S. '74, M.S. '78) is currently serving as the department chair for the history, cornerstone and philosophy department at the southeast campus of Tarrant County College. John is an associate professor of history and has worked for the college since 1996. **\* Jack Benjamin** (B.S. '77, M.S. '79) received the Suzanne M. Davis Award, the highest award given by the Southeastern Theatre Conference. **\* Myle Vo** (B.A. '77) has been a Montessori teacher since 1980. She has written various training manuals and designed educational materials. Mo directs Montessori Learning Institute, a school in the Houston area for children ages 1 to 11, and teaches elementary children in her school. **\* Gail Herman** (B.A. '78, M.A. '80) recently received a UIL Sponsor Excellence Award. Gail has taught English at Sulphur Springs for 26 years and has sponsored UIL spelling and vocabulary for 25 years. She is department chair and began

sponsoring UIL ready writing this year. **\* Robert F. "Bob" Turner** (B.S. '78, M.Ed. '87) is the principal at Woodland Heights Elementary in Brownwood, Texas. Woodland Heights recently received the 2005 United States Department of Education's No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon and was one of only 26 schools recognized in Texas and 296 in the United States. **\* Michael B. Comer** (B.S. '79) is a health and safety manager for Oxbow Carbon & Minerals LLC in Texas City. Michael is married to Robi, and is father to Jennifer, Jessica, Christopher, Dustin and Keli.

## 1980s

**Leta J. Foster** (B.S. '80, M.S. '89) is a speech pathologist employed by New Boston, Texas ISD and serves both DeKalb and Hubbard ISD campuses. **\* Jennie L. Vaughan** (M.M. '80) is a music instructor at Paris Junior College. Her career was recently featured in *The Paris News*. **\* Joseph W. "Joe" Dolkos** (M.M. '82) is the new director of the Western Hills High School (Texas) Cougar Band and is a veteran band

director of 28 years. He has been married for 27 years and he and Renee have two children: daughter Jennifer, a freshman at the University of Arkansas, and son David, a seventh grader. **\* Dr. Harriet Boorhem** (B.S. '83, M.S. '84, Ed.D. '93) is executive director of Promise House, a Dallas program and shelter for homeless and runaway youths. The Promise House is a recent recipient of a \$25,000 gift from Oprah Winfrey's Angel Network charity. **\* Jon E. Wall** ('84-'92) won a logo contest held by General Motors Corp. in Arlington, Texas, and his logo will be used by the company. Jon is a graphic artist and private contractor and works with Bell Helicopter designing tools. **\* An exhibition was recently held at the Witte Museum in San Antonio entitled, "Revealing Character: Robb Kendrick's Texas Tintypes." Accompanying the exhibition is an art book, *Revealing Character: Texas Tintypes*. Robb ('86) is based in Blanco, Texas, and is the only photographer in Texas using the tintype process.**



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# Class Notes

\* **Andrew F. Kinser** (B.B.A. '88) is currently vice president/senior lending officer at First National Bank in Dublin, Texas. Andrew was recently elected to the bank and bank's holding company board of directors. FNB is an independent, locally owned community bank with banking offices in Dublin, DeLeon and Gustine, Texas. Andrew and his wife, Michelle, have two children: Kali, 11, and Gabrielle, 7. \* **David Lee Renshaw** (B.S. '88) and **Connie Michael Dishong** (B.S.W. '99) were married in June. David is a partner in the Greenville, Texas, law firm of Renshaw, Davis & Fergusson, L.L.P., and Connie is employed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The couple makes their home in Greenville. \* **Ed Bellman** (B.S. '89, M.S. '91, Ed.D. '99) is an assistant professor (tenured) in the department of technology and engineering at Jacksonville State University and resides in Jacksonville, Ala.

## 1990s

**Dale Frances Beckhusen Krueger** (B.S. '90) was married in September and is currently employed by CEFCO. Dale and her husband, Carl, reside in Hutto, Texas. \* **Kathy Krueger-Brown** (B.B.A. '90) has worked for Farmers Insurance for 15 years and has been promoted to field training and development specialist. She also recently earned the CPCU insurance designation. Kathy and her husband, Darrell, are the parents of Kacie, 5, and reside in Peoria, Ariz. \* **Randy Reid** (Ed.D. '91) is the new superintendent for the Celina (Texas) ISD. \* **Scott Blalock** (B.S. '92) has been named senior business analyst for the production planning department at Pilgrim's Pride, based in Pittsburg, Texas. Scott and his wife, Nicole, have two

children. \* **Garvey House** (M.S. '92, Ph.D. '94) has been appointed dean of Capella University's Harold Abel School of Psychology. Garvey joined Capella in 1999 as an adjunct faculty member and later served as faculty chair. \* **Dr. J. Blair Blackburn** (M.S. '93) was honored with the recent dedication of J. Blair Blackburn Hall, Dallas Baptist University's newest apartment building. Blair has served for 10 years at DBU, most recently as executive vice president of the University. Blair and his wife, Michelle, are the parents of daughter Betsy and sons Parker and Taylor. \* **Amy K. Foster** (B.A. '93) welcomed a daughter, Susan Claire, in May 2005. Amy is a marketing manager for the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida. \* **Tammie Hare Case** (B.S. '94) is a coach with Sabine (Texas) ISD. Previously, she was a teacher/coach in the Rivercrest school district for 14 years. Tammie and husband Bruce reside in the Tatum area. \* **Camika Spencer** (B.S. '94) is an author and has had several novels published. *When All Hell Breaks Loose* was published in 1999 by Random House and *He Had It Coming* was published in 2004 by St. Martin's Press. \* **Dr. Karen Embry Jenlink** (Ed.D. '95) is the dean of the School of Education at St. Edward's University in San Antonio, Texas. Karen has been nationally recognized for her work on curriculum development in science and technology and her participation in school-community partnerships. \* **John Phillip Kempson Langford** (B.S.I.S. '04) were married in March in Las Vegas. She is employed as a teacher with the Blue Ridge ISD and John is a teacher and coach for Whitewright ISD. \* **Hong "Carol" Yin Sun** (M.S. '95, Ed.D. '97) has published a textbook,

*An Exploration into Graphic Design* (Arbor Hill Press). Carol designs for and teaches graphic design at Muskingum College in Ohio. In 2005, 10 of Carol's paintings were displayed in a two-artist show, *Vision and Expression*, at Ohio University-Zanesville. \* **Christin Cannon** (B.S. '96) married Erik Stanford in December of last year. Christin received her master's degree from the University of North Texas in vocal performance. The couple resides in Greenville. \* **Jessica Danielle Stevenson Loss Rogers** (B.S. '99, M.S. '03) was married in October and is the owner of NaNa Gallery in Dallas. \* **Brandon Hurk Steffey** (B.S. '99) married Britt Melendez last December. Brandon earned his doctor of jurisprudence degree from South Texas College of Law and currently practices law in Houston. \* **Sheri Ellerbrock Ware** (B.S. '99) married Phillip Ware of Tamworth, N.S.W., Australia, in January. She is working as a counselor in Australia, where Phillip is a nurse in a older-age care facility.

## 2000s

**Dr. Rose M. Cameron** (Ed. D. '00), deputy superintendent of the Copperas Cove (Texas) ISD, has been named as the lone finalist for the job of superintendent. Rose and her husband, Kevin, have been married for 28 years and they have two daughters: Jamie, 26, an attorney in Austin and Julie, 23, a nurse in Abilene. \* **Heather L. Lemmon Schmitt** (B.S.I.S. '00) married Christopher Schmitt last November. She is a fourth grade teacher at Carver Elementary School in Greenville. \* **Melissa Michele Tadlock Scribner** (B.B.A. '00) was recently married and is employed by McGuyer Homebuilders, Inc. in Dallas. Melissa and her husband, Clint,

live in Garland. \* **Catherine Devereau Hobbs Timmons** (B.Sci. '00) was married in October and is employed by Southwest Securities Inc. She and her husband reside in Fate, Texas. \* **Heather M. Ayers** (B.A. '01) and husband Brandon are parents to Brylan Lake, who was born Jan. 28. Heather is working for a Dallas law firm. \* **Gary D. Brown** (M.S. '02) is in his first year as principal at Wylie (Texas) High School. He has an 18-year career as a teacher, coach and administrator, 14 of which were spent teaching social studies, government and economics, and serving as a football and basketball coach. Gary lives in Wylie with his wife and three children, ages 4, 6 and 11. \* **Christie Walker Forbes** (B.S. '02) and her husband recently celebrated their 10-year wedding anniversary and have three children. \* **Emily Maxwell Herron** (B.B.A. '02) received a Juris Doctor from the University of Tulsa College of Law in December 2004. She is practicing law with LeForce & McCombs, P.C. in Idabel, Okla. Emily was married in June and she and her husband, Justin, live in Idabel. \* **Allison Douglas Mahoney** (B.S.I.S. '02) was married in June, is employed by Alvarado (Texas) ISD as an elementary school teacher and lives in Burleson. \* **Mark A. Rogers** (B.S. '02) was married in October. He is a teacher and coach in the Taylor (Texas) ISD. Mark and his wife, Stacy, reside in Taylor. \* **Amber Stewart Huckabee** (B.S. '03) was married in November and is employed as an agricultural teacher at Plano (Texas) Senior High. \* **Jeremy Vance** (B.B.A. '03) and **Jennifer Bigbee Vance** (B.B.A. '03) were married in June in Rivera Maya, Mexico. Jennifer is a computer/business teacher for Austin ISD and Jeremy works as a mortgage broker and will

complete his MBA this summer. \* **Jason L. Frazier** (M.B.A. '04) has been promoted to vice president of Guaranty Bond Bank in Mount Vernon, Texas. He and his wife, Lee Ann, have two boys, Caleb and Colton. \* **Brandon Heard** (B.S. '04) and **Michelle Mahan** (B.S.'04) were married in July. Brandon is credit manager at Wells Fargo Financial and Michelle is a subcontract administrator with Lockheed Martin. Both work and reside in Fort Worth, Texas. \* **Stephanie Renee Bush Brooks** (M.S. '05) was married in September and resides in Bryan, Texas. \* **Devon Brown** (B.A.A.S. '05) was recently hired by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a grants specialist in Washington, D.C. He resides in Silver Spring, Md. \* **Brian Heath Howie** (B.S. '05) married **Andi Nicol Gillie Howie** (B.S.I.S. '05) in July. Brian is employed by Sulphur Bluff (Texas) ISD as head baseball coach and physical education teacher. Andi is employed by North Lamar (Texas) ISD as an eighth grade math teacher. They are residing in Reno, Texas. \* **Darren L. Pevey** (B.S. '05) is employed by the Clarksville (Texas) ISD and will be coaching football, basketball and baseball, and teaching keyboarding-careers and P.E. He previously coached at Fannindel and Paris Junior College. Darren and his wife, Carrie, have three children: Blayne, 15; Bailey, 12; and Kennal, 2. The family resides in Reno. \* **Russell Ratterree** (B.A. '05) is the associate director of That Wylie Band at Wylie (Texas) High School and is in charge of the drumline. The drumline competed in the 14th annual Plano Drumline Competition in September and took second place out of the eight Class A bands competing. \* **Ashley Ann Allinder Stout** (B.S. '05) was married in November and,

along with husband Logan, works for the Dallas Patriots Baseball Company and lives in Richardson, Texas. \* **Douglas Vance** (Ph.D. '05) heads Brazos County's Juvenile Services Department. He previously served as superintendent of the Dallas County Juvenile Detention Center for nine years and as assistant director of the Hunt County Juvenile Probation Department for three years.

## In Memory

### 1930s

**Opal Atkisson** (B.S. '33) 11-20-06 \* **Walter Harris Ford** (B.A. '33, M.A. '49) 11-11-05 \* **Nora Wells Jones** (B.S. '33) 8-3-05 \* **Sylvia Emma Robb Kersey** (B.S. '33) 8-19-05 \* **Oney Clyde Oller Sockwell** (B.A. '34, M.Ed. '52) 10-31-05 \* **Oliver W. Majors** (B.S. '35) 3-9-06 \* **Oran Price Weeks** (B.A. '35) 7-05 \* **Bonnie Lee Barnett Speight** (B.S. '36, M.A. '61) 3-28-05 \* **David E. Brooks** (B.S. '37, M.S. '47) 8-11-05 \* **Rayburn Parker Nash** (B.S. '37) 11-17-05 \* **Alma J. Fletcher** (B.S. '38, M.S. '50) 2-7-06 \* **Mary Jordan** (B.S. '38) 1-25-06 \* **Mary Emma Neaves** (B.A. '38, M.S. '40) 10-25-04 \* **Wilda Barto Wilson Shoemaker** (B.A. '38, M.Ed. '54) 9-30-04

### 1940s

**Odine Kay Waldon** (B.S. '40) 11-28-05 \* **Mary Helen Henderson Lovelace** (B.S. '41) 10-25-05 \* **Charles A. "Charlie" James** (B.S. '42) 12-11-05 \* **Charlotte Orene Fleming Slider** (B.A. '43, M.A. '49) 9-26-05 \* **Corinne Pauline Gardner Compton** (B.S. '47, M.S. '56) 12-5-05 \* **John Girthie Brunson Jr.** (B.S. '47) 11-27-06 \* **Donnie Faye Plunkett Junell** (B.S. '48, M.Ed. '53) 11-21-05 \* **George Tipton Jr.** (B.S. '48, M.S. '49) 8-21-05. \* **Jessie Lea Stuckey**

(B.S. '48, M.S. '77) 8-14-05 \* **Charles Felix "Hoot" Gibson** (B.S. '49, M.Ed. '59) 1-9-06 \* **Charles Leslie Harris** (B.S. '49) 2-18-06 \* **Charles Roberts** (B.S. '49) 2-24-06 \* **Joe A. Inabinette** (B.S. '49, M.S. '50) 1-8-06 \* **Kenneth T. Marshall** (B.S. '49, M.S. '50) 10-2-05 \* **George Lester Rutherford** (B.S. '49) 10-17-05 \* **Mary Prince Vickers** (B.S. '49, M.S. '56) 8-20-05 \* **Ella Ray Williams** (B.S. '49, M.Ed. '60) 12-14-05 \* **Winfred. B. Wooten** (B.S. '49, M.Ed. '51) 8-19-05

### 1950s

**Will Hill Acker, Jr.** (B.S. '50) 1-22-06 \* **Clyde Ray Baxter** (B.S. '50) 10-1-05 \* **David L. Hurst** (B.S. '50) 2-18-06 \* **Edd Thomas** (B.S. '50) 11-10-05 \* **William Bryan Baxter** (B.B.A. '51) 1-25-06 \* **Leland Casey** (B.S. '51, M.Ed. '59) 2-11-06 \* **W.E. Thornton** (B.S. '51) 2-6-06 \* **Martha Waters** (B.S. '52) 8-20-05 \* **William E. "Bill" Felton** (B.B.A. '53) 2-11-05 \* **Nadine Buie London** (B.S. '53) 8-17-05 \* **Lerlene Johnson Louvier** (M.Ed. '53) 8-24-05 \* **Mox O. Vaughan** (B.S. '55) 11-1-05 \* **Eula Rouse Robinson** (M.Ed. '56) 8-19-05 \* **L.J. Coney** (B.S. '57, M.Ed. '63) 9-2-05 \* **Charley Joe Jones** (B.S. '58, M.S. '59) 3-11-06 \* **Cliff Maddox** (M.Ed. '58) 11-5-05

### 1960s

**Linnie Belle Roman Bain** (B.S. '60) 8-24-05 \* **James Allen Benson** (B.S. '60) 7-25-05 \* **Edith Davis Goodson** (M.Ed. '60) \* **Kenneth Casstevens** (B.A. '61, M.A. '64, Ed.D. '72) 1-30-06 \* **Charles Sheppard Sherrard** (B.S. '61) \* **Irene Penry M.S.** '62) 12-3-05 \* **Robert Lee Bland** (M.Ed. '63) 11-9-05 \* **Mary Drake** (M.A. '63, Ph.D. '69) 2-3-06 \* **Joe Neal Flowers** (B.S. '63, M.Ed. '69) 1-22-06 \* **Doyle A. Wilson** (M.Ed. '63) 8-04-05 \* **Sharon Arlene Buchanan**

(B.S. '64, M.Ed. '67) 7-14-05 \* **Barry Willbern** (B.S. '64, M.S. '65) 3-5-06 \* **Evans C. Hood** (Ph.D. '65) 1-21-06 \* **Paula Ann Geers King** (M.S. '65) 11-2-05 \* **Calvin McKinney Morgan** (M.S. '65) 11-22-05 \* **Bobby Lynn Richardson** (B.S. '68, M.Ed. '76) 1-13-06 \* **June Saxton Dyke** (M.S. '69) 12-19-05 \* **Johnnie Purser, Jr.** (B.A. '69) 10-30-05 \* **Jacquelyn Whitley Schadel** (B.S. '69) 3-17-06

### 1970s

**Velma Christian Echols** (M.S. '70) 12-08-05 \* **Dennis Lee Mann** (B.B.A. '70) 9-27-05 \* **Willis C. McPhaul** (B.S. '70, M.S. '75) 3-24-06 \* **Joe May** (B.A. '70, M.S. '71) 2-12-06 \* **Robert Louis Finning** (M.S. '71) 8-28-05 \* **John Paul Guidry** (B.S. '71) 1-9-06 \* **Sandra D. Conway** (B.S. '72) 1-1-06 \* **Beverly Jane Clark Farrar** (M.Ed. '72) \* **Willie Bernard Moore** (M.S. '72) 8-29-05 \* **John S. Robinson** (M.A. '72) 1-5-06 \* **Eunice Alfreda Washington** (M.Ed. '72) 9-12-05 \* **Billy D. Hardage** (Ed.D. '73) 3-26-06 \* **Beverly Ann Howell Little** (B.S. '73, M.Ed. '76) 8-26-05 \* **Lottie H. Richardson** (M.Ed. '73) 7-19-05 \* **Irby J. Smith Jr.** (B.B.A. '73) 1-14-06 \* **Dolores Kostaskey Clafin Smith** (B.S. '74) 12-4-05 \* **Clarence L. "Buster" Johnson** (M.Ed. '75) \* **Thomas Edward Skipworth** (M.Ed. '76) 11-4-05 \* **Melba Beatrice Fisher** (M.Ed. '77) 2-15-06 \* **Dorothy Davis** (M.Ed. '79) \* **Jim "Doc" Morris** (M.S. '79) \* **Zula Mae Jackson Stewart** (M.Ed. '79) 2-7-06 \* **George Simms Lemon III** (B.B.A. '82) 8-19-05 \* **Ken Schindley** (B.A.C.J. '84) 1-19-06 \* **Lynn Smithson** (M.Ed. '88) 2-6-06 \* **Noemi Ferreira** (B.S. '89, M.S. '92) 12-1-05 \* **Olympia Jenkins Adams** (M.S. '97) 3-2-06 \* **Peggy Ann Cole** (B.S.I.S. '98) 9-24-05 ☺

## Students get their own space



The university's new \$23-million student center will soon become a reality, with construction planned to begin this fall. It's expected to open in fall 2008.

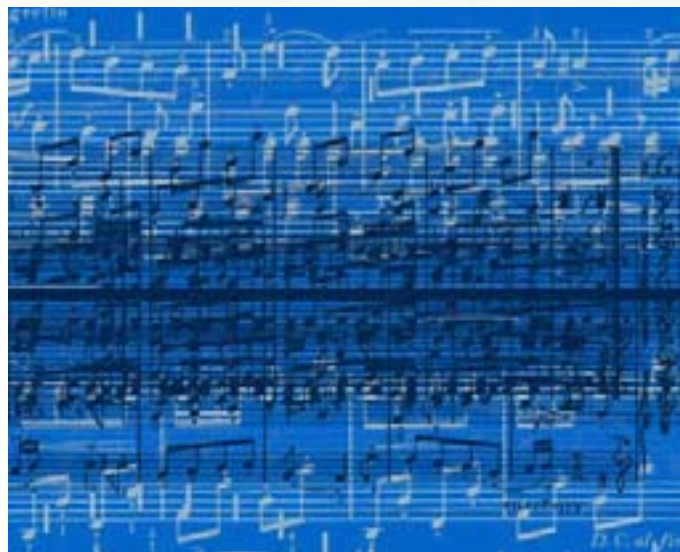
The 100,000-square-foot Sam Rayburn Student Center will be the destination for hanging out, shopping, dining, clubbing and studying. It will be located on Neal Street, diagonally across from the science building.

"It's a great joy to bring something to students that they don't have," says Rick Miller, student center director. "It will be a wireless meeting, work and play space where things are constantly evolving. People will want to go there."

The planning and design team consulted with A&M-Commerce students from the beginning. "They told us they want the maximum use of the maximum space, and that is the philosophy guiding the building," Miller says.

The building was designed by Gideon Toal, an award-winning architectural and structural engineering firm, and WTW Architects, a nationally recognized architectural firm specializing in student union construction and renovation.

## Something to sing about



The Texas Legislature approved \$21.7 million for a new music building, which has an estimated price tag of \$29 million. A&M-Commerce will pay about \$7 million of the cost of the project through private and public funds.

The current music building, built in 1956, is outdated and overcrowded with recital and concert halls that can no longer comfortably accommodate the audiences.

"The new facility will enable us to increase the number of graduates and enhance the quality of the program," President Keith McFarland said. "I am sure a main feature of the building will also be a beautiful recital hall."

The site for a new music building has not been determined, McFarland said. A possible location is the site of the current Sam Rayburn Memorial Student Center, which may be demolished.

I echo the sentiments of President McFarland on how exciting it is to be part of Texas A&M University-Commerce. There is a new commitment among faculty and staff to tell the world that what we do here is first rate and that the students who pass through this university are well prepared to make a difference in the world they live in.

The university has a long and rich heritage of producing leaders. My role on campus has enabled me to recognize that the university has produced thousands of entrepreneurs, corporate leaders, medical practitioners, authors, researchers, inventors, entertainers, pilots, lawyers, politicians and technical staff who have performed at the highest levels imaginable. It is their successes, accomplishments and spirit that make me proud beyond measure to be associated with the university.

I encourage each of you to pay close attention to the transition that is occurring on campus with new buildings, new curricula and cutting-edge research. The vibrancy and activity that is happening all around us is infectious and should lead to more success in the years to come.

I encourage you also to become actively involved in the life of the university by sharing your thoughts, time and resources where possible. In doing so, you make a positive and lasting impact on the current student body as they strive to find their rightful place in the world.

In talking with many of you I have come to realize that the good memories we made while students and the pride we have felt for this university hasn't been forgotten or abandoned; it has been embraced and honored. That sense of pride has become the heartbeat of this institution.

Derryle G. Peace, Director  
Alumni Relations  
(B.S. '74, M.S. '75)



## Donor appreciation

On May 4, Texas A&M-University-Commerce held its donor appreciation banquet. About 250 people attended the event, during which donors were honored and inducted into the Founder's Circle, Heritage Society, Rayburn Society and, for the first time, the Cornerstone Society.

Much of the university's funding comes from private contributions and donors have a significant impact on the institution. The university is raising funds for a number of projects and has revised and established new levels of giving to reflect the generosity of its donors.



### Founders Circle \$25,000-\$49,000

Orine May & Tad Ralph Choate  
Richard W. Ellison  
L-3 Communications Integrated Systems  
Phillip & Cheryl McLeod  
Trezza & Peggy Pressley  
Leonard & Sandi Threlkeld  
Ruth Ann Moore White, Ph.D.  
Joe & Nancy Owens  
We Pack Logistics  
Estate of Samuel & Marthlyn Spears

### Heritage Society \$50,000-\$99,000

Alton L. & Louise M. Biggs  
Cullen Family Foundation  
Keith & Nancy McFarland  
R. R. "Dick" Rothwell, Jr.  
Dr. Mary Beth Rabb Tuck  
Jai & Susan Nargakatti  
Thomas E. Draper

### Rayburn Society \$100,000-\$499,000

Hoyle & Ann Oglesby Julian  
Tejas Club/Sig Ep Endowment  
Ann Bradshaw Stokes Foundation  
Charlotte & Larry Franklin

### Cornerstone Society \$500,000-\$999,000

Joe B. Hinton  
The Estate of H. M. "Jim" & Rachel Lafferty

# Upcoming Events

August 12 – Graduation

August 23 – Foundation Board meeting

September 16 – Tailgate - West Texas A&M vs. TAMU-C Lions

September 23 – Tailgate - Tarleton State vs. TAMU-C Lions

October 5-11 – Play: “Experiment with an Air Pump” Performing Arts Center

October 6 – 50-year Club Reunion

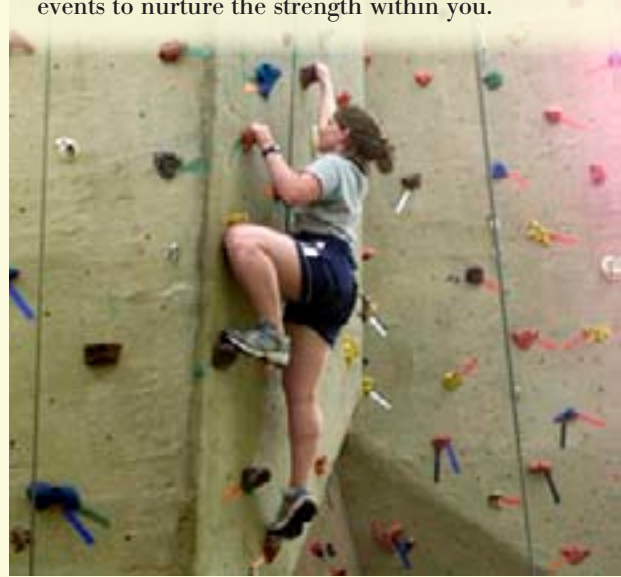
October 7 – Family Day - Tailgate - Southeastern Oklahoma vs. TAMU-C Lions

October 27 – Foundation Board Meeting

October 28 – Homecoming & Tailgate - East Central vs. Commerce Lions

## Scaling new heights takes an inner strength

The Morris Recreation Center at Texas A&M University-Commerce provides plenty of opportunities from aquatics, outdoor adventure, club sports, fitness, intramural sports and special events to nurture the strength within you.



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