A Mother’s Inspiration

He wasn’t embarrassed at all about the 1.0 grade point average he accumulated, nor was he upset at the Viterbo administration for kicking him out of school. On the contrary. He was happy to be returning to Viterbo College after a very long layoff. Sounds strange, but then again, Tim Taylor is not your typical Viterbo student and he has a story well worth sharing. That’s because after “flunking out” the first time around, he knew he had something to prove not only to himself, but to his mother, who died from breast cancer in 1989.
“I’ll tell anybody I flunked out,” said Taylor, who graduated in May with a 3.3 GPA. “It was an incredible opportunity for me to come back and I’ve turned it around now. I’m pretty proud of what I’ve accomplished.” Although Taylor credits many people for his success and turnaround, he says it was his mother who provided all the inspiration he needed to make it through some pretty grueling times, including college. Taylor’s mother Candace faced the ultimate challenge. As a nursing student, she made it through Viterbo despite being a single mother of five and dealing with the terminal cancer that had invaded her body.
“What I’ve done is nothing compared to what she did to get through school,” said Taylor, who now works full time as a Research and New Product Development Associate with EnPower, a division of Dairyland Power. “She definitely inspired me. After I quit college, I felt like a failure. Mom did it with all of us kids running around but I had no idea how. “She went to school to make life better for us, so she could have a decent job, and so she could be home regular hours. I realized I wanted the same for my kids. I wouldn’t feel like an adequate parent if I didn’t make a better life for them. That’s where the inspiration comes in.”
One of Taylor’s last memories of his mother was the day she received her diploma and her nursing pin from Viterbo. She wasn’t able to take part in her pinning ceremony or commencement because she was in the hospital. Instead, her graduation ceremony took place literally on her death bed with the late S. Grace Clare Beznouz conferring the degree at the former St. Francis Hospital. She died in May 1989 at the age of 41.
“Seeing my mom get her pin and her diploma on her death bed is something I will never forget as long as I live,” Taylor said. “That thought and the thought of how hard she worked to get through school just to make a better life for us will forever drive me.” Although Taylor’s story ends happily, the events leading up to that point were not always pleasant.
As a high school student, Taylor took part in pretty much every sport at La Crosse’s Aquinas High School had to offer and all the extra-curricular activities associated with going to school. He was destined to go on to college right out of high school, get a great job, marry his high school sweetheart, have kids and live happily ever after. Or was he? Although he has ultimately ended up with all of this, a wife, two kids, a degree and a good job, it never came easily, especially the school part.

“I graduated from Aquinas in 1991, a part of a very brilliant graduating class,” Taylor said. “Everyone went on to college. That was just the thing to do. I just did it because everybody else was doing it. I really wasn’t ready to go to college yet because I was still into the partying scene and really didn’t care about the classes.” Exit Viterbo via academic withdrawal, the diplomatic description for “flunking out.”

Quitting college, Taylor discovered, wasn’t the answer. He wasn’t satisfied with the succession of jobs and his day-to-day existence. He knew there was something better. “In the two years I took off, I found out there was nothing I could do besides general, unskilled types of work and that just wasn’t for me,” Taylor said. “Not to demean anybody in those types of jobs, I just thought I could go farther. I was ready to go back to school and pursue my better life.”

But getting there wouldn’t be easy. At the time he made the decision to return to Viterbo, not only was he strapped for money, he found out his girlfriend, now his wife, was pregnant with their first child.

“It wasn’t looking too good at the time,” Taylor said. “Then, my good friend and roommate from Viterbo, Doug Seigle, and his family, decided to loan me a significant amount of money with the stipulation that I go back and get my degree. If I were ever to drop out, I would have to pay it all back on the spot.

“It was perfect. Doug and his family were the keys in getting me back in school, and I owe them a lot more than money. What they did for me was priceless.”

Taylor has now fulfilled his long-awaited quest of receiving his degree from Viterbo. On May 10, 1998, he received a bachelor’s degree in marketing and management. While Taylor will forever remember his graduation day, he also will remember the date for another significant event in his life: It was nine years to the day when his mother died after her long battle with breast cancer.

It seemed only fitting that Taylor received his degree on the same day his mother, and his true inspiration, died. She was, after all, the reason he was there in the first place.

**What’s Next?**

Graduation is a very big event in a student’s life. But what lies ahead after the commencement ceremony, the hoopla and the graduation parties are all over? We’ve asked a few Viterbo College graduates what their plans for the future are and what they have done at Viterbo to pave the way. Here are their stories:

**Viterbo graduates expand their horizons to FSPA missions**

Four Viterbo College graduates have decided to put their careers on hold for a year of volunteer service to the less fortunate.

Viterbo alumnae—Deb Clements, Maggie Reinert, Brenda Kelly and Hether Skoug—are
participating in the Shared Horizons program, sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.
Clements and Reinert are in Amarillo, Texas, where they work with Hispanic people through Catholic Family Services. Clements works with their adoption program, while Reinert volunteers as part of their youth outreach program. Both have spent time in South American countries and are fluent in Spanish.
Kelly and Skoug are currently in Mobile, Ala., where they will spend their year of contributed service. Kelly is teaching in a Catholic elementary school, while Skoug works as a case worker at the Catholic Service Center.

“After graduation, I wanted to do a mission experience,” said Clements, who graduated in May with a degree in sociology. Her minor was in women’s studies. “I knew the sisters (FSPAs) had a program called Shared Horizons and that turned out to be the right choice for me.
“It never occurred to me that I wanted to go out and make a lot of money. I want to volunteer for a year and this is the right opportunity that has come at the right time for me.”

Service is not new to Clements and the others as they have participated in Viterbo College-sponsored service trips to the Appalachian region of Kentucky and to the Catholic Charities and the Dorothy Day Center in Minneapolis.

“It’s an exciting venture,” said Marci Madary, affiliation co-minister. “It’s a wonderful opportunity for the women to live Christian values in a supportive Christian setting.”

Cayman Islands-Viterbo College exchange graduate’s ‘dream’

A little more than a year ago, Barrie Quappe had a dream. Now, with a lot of hard work and a little bit of salesmanship, that dream is on the road to becoming a reality.
Quappe, who graduated in May with a degree in nursing, doesn’t want to save the world or anything sensational like that. She merely wants to open inroads between the Cayman Islands, where she has spent much of her life, and Viterbo College.
And she figures what better way to do this than to create an exchange program that would give Caymanian students an opportunity to come to Viterbo College for an education in the healthcare field, and for Viterbo students to get valuable clinical experience in another country.

“I think it will be a really wonderful marriage,” said Quappe, who spent six weeks during the spring semester working at the Georgetown Hospital on the island of Grand Cayman with Viterbo nursing student Lisa Trueblood. “I would like to see the people from the Cayman Islands get a good education like at Viterbo, and this is a perfect way for that to happen. This one community should definitely meet the other.”

Quappe, who worked in local television and ran a recording studio on Grand Cayman, left the island four years ago to pursue a career in anesthesiology at Viterbo. She became interested in nursing when she was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome. When she found a doctor that she says completely cured her, she knew what she had to do.

“I feel the obligation to give back,” Quappe said. “Not everybody is as lucky as I’ve been. I feel I have the tools to help others and that’s what I want to do with the rest of my life.”

Whether or not the exchange between the Cayman Islands and Viterbo College ever gets off the ground is yet to be determined. One thing is for sure, Quappe said, there hasn’t been a lack of effort.
“Lisa and I spent many hours of our own time making presentations to Caymanian students,” Quappe said. “The Cayman Island government is really behind the idea and so is Viterbo. Now it’s up to them to work it out.”

**Hmong student overcomes obstacles to pursue career**

Mo Moua fulfilled a lifelong dream of graduating from college when she received a bachelor’s degree in dietetics during Viterbo’s commencement ceremony, which happened to fall on Mother’s Day.

And the 32-year-old mother of three is very proud of the fact that she beat the odds to achieve it.

“I’m definitely proud of what I’ve done,” Moua said. “I think going back to school as a non-traditional student is very hard because you have other things to worry about, like finances and your family. When you are able to handle all of these situations and make it through school, anyone should be proud.”

But that’s not what sets Moua apart from other students who have overcome the same obstacles to earn a degree. Moua not only jumped those obstacles, she was able to leap a roadblock that most people would not have even thought about trying.

When Moua came to La Crosse from Thailand when she was 13, her English was choppy at best. She had only been in the United States for just over four years and hadn’t had basic grammar school like everyone else attending school.

Although Moua made it through middle school and graduated from Logan High School without any English as a Second Language courses, she felt she wasn’t ready for college, so she got married, had children and worked.

“I wasn’t ready after high school,” said Moua, who is believed to be the only Hmong to become a registered dietitian in the U.S. “I worked, but in the back of my mind, I knew I was going to go to college someday. I knew that if I was going to have a good life, college was the key.

Five years ago, Moua began coursework at Viterbo, determined to get her degree not only to help achieve a better life for her family, but to show that virtually everyone can achieve their goal if they try hard enough.

“I wanted to be a role model for my children,” said Moua, who admits she sometimes thought she couldn’t do it. “I tell them anybody can do it if they are determined enough. I wanted to show them that if they have set goals and work hard, they will succeed.”

Moua did what she set out to do five years earlier. And in the end, it was only fitting that the mother of three children, ages 12, 10 and 9, receive her degree on Mother’s Day.

**What a Way to Go**

It was a fitting end to a glorious 25 years. Daniel Johnson-Wilmot, standing in St. Rose Church in the city Viterbo College was named for, directing the Viterbo College Concert Choir for the very last time.

To Johnson-Wilmot, it was a little slice of heaven.

“It was just absolutely beautiful,” Johnson-Wilmot said. “That was a very special moment for me to be in Viterbo, Italy, directing the choir, knowing it would be my last time.

“They sang so well and beautifully that night that I decided it was my end. I wanted that to
be my last memory."

The “fabulous” concert in Viterbo may have been Johnson-Wilmot’s last memory of the concert choir performing, but it wasn’t his only memory. The choral director and chair of the music department at Viterbo said the entire European tour will provide him with memories for the rest of his life.

“For me, it was a very emotionally charged two weeks knowing it would be my last as choral director,” Johnson-Wilmot said. “The last full concert in Gross Reidenthal (Austria) was fabulous and one I will never forget,” Johnson-Wilmot said. “It was packed with people, and at the end, they wouldn’t stop clapping and stomping their feet until we performed another number.

“For me, there were many times that the choir sang so well that I was moved to tears. That has only happened a couple of times in 25 years.”

Johnson-Wilmot and the concert choir were a part of the European tour that included Viterbo’s Ninth Street Singers, led by director Diane Foust, and a group of sightseers led by Father Tom O’Neill. The groups toured cities in Austria and Italy, and, appropriately, Viterbo, Italy, the last stop of the two-week tour.

Although the tour wasn’t billed as Johnson-Wilmot’s last hurrah, concert choir members wanted to make his finale as choral director one he would always remember.

“We knew this was it for Dan and we all wanted to do the very best we could the entire tour,” said Phillip Hart, 22, a May graduate of Viterbo with a degree in music education and in music performance. “Especially the last concert. We dedicated it to him and wanted it to be the best and most special one of all. One he’d never forget.”

And it was, according to Earl Madary, associate professor in the Viterbo religious studies department. Madary has been “lucky” enough to be a part of the concert choir under Johnson-Wilmot’s direction both as a student and a faculty member and said he was honored to be a part of his final tour.

“It made the concerts more special,” Madary said. “Ten years ago I went as one of Dan’s students. To be there for his last tour, and last concert as director, was very special for me. The concerts were really spectacular, and that’s a real tribute to Dan.”

The concert choir wasn’t the only group that turned heads on the tour, either, Madary said. While the concert choir was receiving standing ovations at nearly every stop, Viterbo’s Ninth Street Singers were dazzling crowds as well.

“Diane and the Ninth Street Singers blew people away,” Madary said. “They were just great. The entire tour was a tribute to Viterbo College and the music department, and especially Dan.”

Although Johnson-Wilmot is stepping aside as director of the Viterbo College Concert Choir, he will carry on as chair of the music department and continue his teaching duties. He said he would also help new director Nancy Allen as much as he can.

“I’ll help Nancy in the transition when and if she needs it,” Johnson-Wilmot said. “I’m certainly not ready to be put to pasture.”

Allen steps in as concert choir director

After 14 years, Nancy Allen has found her way back to Viterbo. The 1984 graduate with a Bachelor of Music Education degree is back in La Crosse as the new director of the Viterbo College Concert Choir. Daniel Johnson-Wilmot, who has been choral director for 25 years, said it was time to step aside and let someone else have some fun.

“I feel it was an appropriate time to let someone else experience this,” Johnson-Wilmot said.
“Nancy is an excellent musician and will do a very fine job. She’s a Viterbo College graduate and has been in the Concert Choir, so she knows what level of excellence we strive for.” To take the job, Allen is leaving her teaching position at Hudson (Iowa) Jr. and Sr. High School that she has held for 10 years. More than 300 students are currently enrolled in the 7-12 choral group. When she began at Hudson, only 98 students were enrolled in the program. She also worked with student teachers and participants from the University of Northern Iowa, Wartburg College and Luther College. Allen received a Master of Music from the University of Northern Iowa in 1988 with an area of emphasis in music education. She titled her research paper “Teaching To Individual Learning Styles in the Choral Rehearsal Classroom.” Johnson-Wilmot is excited about the future of the choir and believes Allen is the right person for the job. “The choir is in good hands,” he said.

**Her Script Includes Hollywood**

When Anne Marie Gillen came to Viterbo College as a bright-eyed 18 year old from the small Minnesota community of White Bear Lake, she had aspirations of making it big someday. Twenty-seven years later, she’s living those dreams, but not before embarking on a journey filled with many ups and downs.

She’s making her mark in Hollywood. Not as an actress, a TV star or a performer. Those aspirations are just memories. Gillen is doing what she says she was always meant to do … produce.

Gillen is the chief operating officer of Revelations Entertainment, a production company owned by actor Morgan Freeman and film producer Lori McCreary. She leads the company in its strategic financing and distribution of all Revelations projects.

What drew her to the Santa Monica-based company was the actor’s integrity. Not only did Gillen believe Freeman and McCreary were in the business for all the right reasons, she believed her ideals were shared by the star of such movies as Driving Miss Daisy, The Shawshank Redemption, Glory, and Deep Impact.

“I’ve been with Revelations for nearly two years now and the experience has been wonderful,” Gillen recently said in a telephone interview from California. “When you work with someone like Morgan and Lori, you’re working with quality people. I’m with the best of the best right now.”

Gillen also has her own production company with Jody Price called Gillen and Price, which presently has in pre-production four films, starring such actors as Vanessa Redgrave and Drew Barrymore.

Gillen enjoys her place in the Hollywood scene and wouldn’t trade it for the world, she said. But it isn’t exactly where she thought she would end up when her journey first began at Viterbo back in 1971.

“When I came to Viterbo, my aspirations at the time were to be a performer,” said Gillen, who indeed took to the stage in the Black Box Theatre’s very first production, A Phoenix Too Frequent. She also had a part in Taming of the Shrew and played Lucy in You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown. “I truly enjoyed those moments. But as I look back, I was always producing.
When I was a little girl, I would gather the kids in the neighborhood for a puppet show or a circus.

“Although it took a while to get the title of producer, I’ve been doing it most of my life.”

Before she earned that title, however, Gillen continued to try to find her niche as a performer. After three years at Viterbo she left and eventually went on to graduate from St. Benedict’s College in Collegeville, Minn. One of the main reasons she left Viterbo was her newfound love of dancing.

“Instead of going back to college, I wanted to be a dancer after dancing summer stock in Colorado,” Gillen said. “It wasn’t Viterbo. I have absolutely wonderful memories of the college. I learned how to think for myself at Viterbo, and that’s probably one of the most important things I’ve ever done.”

Many in the theatre department had fond memories of Gillen as well, including Sister Marie Leon La Croix, who at the time was the person most responsible for the success of Viterbo’s theatre department.

“Anne Marie brought vitality to the program while she was here,” La Croix said. “She was an excellent student and a creative actress who worked very hard.

“Knowing she was a wonderful organizer, I could see why she went into production work. She was as good behind the scenes as she was on stage.”

Before she made her way westward, Gillen performed in the Minnesota Jazz Company and the Children’s Dance Company of the Twin Cities. She eventually ran her own dance company in the Twin Cities and even choreographed a couple of commercials.

Like most success stories, however, Gillen wasn’t completely satisfied with where she was. She wanted more. And in the winter of 1984, she did something about it.

“I hit my stride in the Twin Cities and decided then to go out to Los Angeles,” Gillen said. Although she continued to try and make her way as a performer in Los Angeles, her true calling was producing. A look at her resume reveals that: Program Planner for the American Film Institute; producer of the TV pilot Klub Maddness for Bob Banner Associates; Director of Development for Sunrae Productions for Charlotte Rae, star of NBC’s hit TV series The Facts of Life; Vice President of Production for Four Seasons Entertainment; and Vice President of Acquisitions and Ancillary Sales for Hemdale Releasing Corporation, one of the leading independent film companies producing such films as Platoon, Hoosiers, and The Last Emperor.

“I really fine-tuned my skills working for Hemdale,” Gillen said. “They were in their ‘hey-day’ making movies like Hoosiers, Platoon and The Last Emperor, and distributing them. I got to see how a passionate film-making company works. I also got to see and learn how to distribute films.”

Prior to joining Revelations Entertainment, Gillen was co-founder of Electric Shadow Productions, eventually ascending to president and CEO. While there, Gillen was executive producer of the company’s first feature film, Fried Green Tomatoes, starring Kathy Bates and Jessica Tandy. The movie went on to earn over $200 million in the worldwide marketplace, garnered two Academy Award nominations and received three Golden Globe nominations.

“Fried Green Tomatoes was a wonderful experience for me,” Gillen said. “I came in on the last three years of the project and after it was turned down a number of times, we finally sold the story to Universal Studios.

“They opened it in only five theatres in the nation, and then created a want-to-see atmosphere by spending close to $10 million on national air time. When they released it in more markets, I remember having to wait in a line the first day. You can imagine how that
made me feel.”
Gillen fondly remembers the journey she’s taken from an idealistic 18-year-old student at Viterbo, to her daring adventure to the West Coast, to the person who controls the purse strings of a multi-million dollar company.
“Getting to where I am today was a long process,” Gillen said. “There were many stages I went through.”
And although she says it was a bumpy ride at times, she’s happy with where she’s landed. “This is where I belong.”
Editor’s Note: Gillen’s saga continues with a Viterbo-Hollywood connection. While reading her Spring ’97 “Strides,” she found the tale of Viterbo alum Will Kilkeary ’96 particularly inspiring. See page 18 for the complete story.

High Achievement

Wegner joins coveted teacher of the year honor roll
For nearly 20 years, Wendy Wegner has “applauded” the recipients of Viterbo College’s Outstanding Teacher of the Year award, saying each has been more than deserving of the honor.
And for nearly 20 years, despite not being on the list, Wegner has told herself that her hard work and devotion has been rewarded in other ways.
All that changed this year when Wegner was added to the coveted honor roll. She joins a very special and honored group of Viterbo faculty known as “Teachers of the Year.”
“You always say you’re rewarded in other ways and that not everybody gets an award,” Wegner said. “But when I found out I was chosen, I was not only surprised, I was thrilled and honored.”
Wegner, a 1976 graduate of Viterbo, is an assistant professor in the nursing department. She has been around for each of the 19 honorees before her and thinks of them as more than just outstanding teachers.
“So many of the people who I modeled myself after have been teachers at Viterbo College,” Wegner said. “Being an alumna and knowing what kind of education you receive here makes the honor even more special.”
“Many of the recipients were my professors when I was a student in their classes, so the award would have special meaning for me in those years,” she said. “These teachers were all people who made me want to be a good teacher. They’re all very special.”
And some of those “special” people think a lot of Wegner as well.
Ron Amel, chemistry department chair, believes Wegner was a good choice for the outstanding teacher award for more than the obvious reasons.
“She has a deep concern for the students’ progress and is very supportive and encouraging in her manner while at the same time she is very rigorous, recognizing that it is essential that our graduates become competent professionals,” said Amel, the 1986 recipient of the award.
And this is what 1983 teacher of the year Larry Krajewski (mathematics) said about Wegner: “Students speak highly of her knowledge of the field, her fairness in evaluating their progress, her concern for high standards and her genuine interest in their development as nurses and
human beings.”
Wegner believes one rule of thumb is critical in being a good teacher. It’s a rule she tries to live by not only in the classroom, but also on the hospital floor.
“You have to remember what it was like to be a student,” Wegner said. “And with that, you have to somehow be strict and maintain your standards and professionalism.”
Wegner says making sure every student who comes out of the Viterbo College nursing program has that professionalism is what drives her as a teacher.
“Sister Grace Clare Beznouz, the founder of Viterbo’s nursing program, said something many years ago that I will never forget. She said: ‘Every client deserves a professional nurse,’ and I have always had that in the back of my head. It was her philosophy, and now I share in it,” Wegner said.
Wegner says she cherishes her role as a teacher at Viterbo, but in her 20 years has developed a case of favoritism. Not for students, she says, but for where she would rather teach those students.
“While I enjoy classroom teaching more and more each year, I still feel happiest and most fulfilled teaching students in the hospital at the bedside,” Wegner said. “I want my students to feel as I do about nursing—that it’s not just a job, but a way of life that permeates their being. I want them to look forward to each workday and not be filled with dread when the alarm clock goes off each morning.”

**On Campus**

**Secretary to the presidents: A long career ends**
Viterbo College said so long to one of its “treasures” this summer when Arlene Sikorski retired from her post as secretary to the president, a position she has held since 1971.
All agree: she will be sorely missed.
“Arlene is an original; there are no duplicates,” said Viterbo College President William Medland. “I can’t even begin to convey how much she will be missed not only by me, but by many people around here.”
Medland said when he thinks of Sikorski, words like devoted, committed and competent come to mind. But the president thinks of his longtime secretary as a close friend, too.
“For me, Arlene has not only been an assistant but also a confidant,” Medland said. “She has helped me celebrate in good times and has provided solace in other times.
“Arlene’s retirement really represents the passing of an era. She has proudly served three college presidents over the past 27 years.”
Former Viterbo College president Bob Gibbons, who is now executive vice president of Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas, agrees with Medland’s assessment.
“While ever and always the consummate professional, Arlene was also a tremendous source of personal support for me and my family,” said Gibbons, who served as Viterbo’s president from 1980 to 1991. “She took an interest in my wife Pat and our children. She never let one walk past her desk without engaging them in a little conversation and letting them know that they mattered to her.
“The closer I came to my departure from Viterbo, the more I relied on Arlene’s generous spirit. It dawned on me one day that she was looking after us and that thought gave me both
good feelings and confidence.”
But Gibbons almost prevented those memories from ever happening when he was hired by
Viterbo, saying he remembers thinking for a brief moment about bringing his own secretary
with him to Viterbo. In hindsight, he said, that would have been a huge mistake.
“Early in 1980, when Viterbo had confirmed my appointment but before I took office, I was
carrying around in my head the idea that new presidents sometimes brought their secretaries
with them,”
Gibbons said. “I was flirting with the idea, but all I can say in retrospect is what a colossal
blunder that would have been. Arlene made the transition from former boss to new boss with
great tact, grace and, I blush to remember, compassion.”
Father J. Thomas Finucan, who served as Viterbo’s president from 1970 to 1980, had this to
say about Sikorski: “I would describe Arlene as highly intelligent, always gracious, and she
taught this president how a good secretary could truly contribute to the work of the office
and the work of the college. Above all, she was remarkable and sensitive to people. Arlene
could anticipate someone who was in pain or concerned or hurt or needing to be spoken with,
and she would alert me to that in a gentle and very confidential way. It was just one of many
things she did extraordinarily well. She has been an enormous gift to the Viterbo community
and certainly to the three presidents.”
Arlene Sikorski herself will take many memories with her as well. She’ll tell you that nearly
three decades is a lot of time to draw from.
“Twenty-seven years went by in the twinkling of an eye,” said Sikorski, who plans to travel
and catch up on things she hasn’t had a chance to do while working. “The change in
presidents, college milestones, the constant growth, always kept me interested and
challenged.
“People ask why I stayed. For me, Viterbo has always been more than just a nice place to
spend the day. There is a feeling of community which pervades the campus—almost like an
extended family of sorts,” she said. “Personally, I felt like I was doing something worthwhile
and maybe even a little important with my life, in a place I really liked to be, not just
improving an employer’s bottom line somewhere. What more could anyone ask of a career?”

**Master of Science in Nursing now offered at Viterbo**
Beginning in August, graduate students wishing to further their education in nursing will be
able to pursue it at Viterbo College for the first time.
The college announced in April that it has been accredited to offer a Master of Science degree
in nursing beginning in fall 1998.
Nurses in the Coulee Region and beyond will now have an opportunity to pursue a master’s
degree in community health or gerontology nursing at Viterbo.
Bonnie Nesbitt, associate professor of nursing and director of the nursing graduate school,
said Viterbo will be the only school in western Wisconsin offering degrees in the two specialty
areas of nursing.
“Other area colleges offer graduate nursing programs, but not in community health and
gerontology,” Nesbitt said. “There is a strong need for both of these specialty areas. Home
health agencies, outpatient settings and facilities serving the elderly want nurses with
specialty training.”
The degree now being offered at Viterbo is designed to prepare advanced practice nurses for
leadership positions in which the health care needs of vulnerable populations—the elderly,
children, those with chronic illnesses and those who are abused—are addressed, Nesbitt said.
“This track will help students learn to assess a community and its problems,” Nesbitt said. “Students will be able to focus on whatever group they are interested in and be able to design a program based on that.”

Integrated into the program will be curriculum addressing future skills needed by healthcare workers. Vicki Moss, an associate professor in nursing at Viterbo, believes nurses entering the field now and in the new millennium must be prepared for new technologies and procedures.

“We’ve looked at future trends and what healthcare professionals will need in the 21st century,” Moss said. “We’ve really been trying to build in the skills nurses will need five and 10 years down the road. This makes us a pretty cutting edge program.”

Nesbitt believes the three-year graduate program will be flexible enough for commuters and those who work full time. A student’s load will be six to seven credits a semester, and all classes will be held one day every week.

“This will be a very user-friendly program,” Nesbitt said. “We want to attract nurses from a 100-mile radius, in cities such as Rochester and Winona, Minn., Eau Claire and Prairie du Chien.”

Viterbo’s ‘Extra Effort Award’ recipient ready to embark on new career journey

Like most new mothers, Katrina Schabacker’s life changed when her daughter, Kayleigh, was born two years ago.

At the time, Schabacker was just 16 years old and finishing her sophomore year at Whitehall High School.

To Schabacker, it was merely a bump in the road. She wasn’t going to let this change her mind about becoming a pediatrician.

But something did change. The experience of having a baby so moved Schabacker, she decided right then and there that she wanted to be a midwife, like the person who helped bring Kayleigh into the world.

“Mary Baumgart was so great and so much help when Kayleigh was born,” said Schabacker, who married Kayleigh’s father, Steve, in 1997. “She’s my role model. I just knew that’s the kind of work that I wanted to do.”

Schabacker will get a chance to pursue that dream starting in August when she begins nursing classes at Viterbo. And to make that new beginning even more special, Schabacker comes to Viterbo as the La Crosse Tribune’s “Extra Effort Award” winner. With that honor comes a one-year tuition free scholarship.

“It’s a real honor getting the scholarship,” Schabacker said. “Viterbo has an excellent nursing program and I can’t wait to start.”

Although Schabacker says her life couldn’t be any better, she’s had to endure many obstacles to get to where she is today, including the breakup of her parents’ marriage last summer and her father’s suicide in September.

“I was in total shock,” Schabacker said. “A lot of things have made me grow up in a hurry. Suddenly, I was not only raising my own child, but I was helping raise my two brothers and my sister. It was a real stressful time in my life.

“It’s better now and I’m ready to start school and although I’m a little scared, I can’t wait to get to Viterbo.”

Viterbo closes academic year with honors

Wendy Wegner, Viterbo alumna and nursing faculty member for 20 years, Tom Thibodeau,
community speaker and faculty member in the religious studies department since 1984, and Peter Fletcher, art department chair and faculty member for 11 years, received three of Viterbo’s most coveted awards during the annual Honors Convocation April 30. Wegner, an assistant professor in the School of Nursing, received the 1998 Outstanding Teacher Award. Wegner is featured on page 19 of this edition of Strides. Thibodeau received the Father J. Thomas Finucan Award, given annually to a member of the college community who embodies qualities exhibiting Viterbo’s mission and values. For excellence in teaching, Fletcher received the Alec Chiu Memorial Award which is named after long-time philosophy instructor Alec Chiu, who died in 1995.

Thibodeau received his B. A. in psychology and English from St. John’s University, Collegeville, Minn., and his M.S. in human and religious studies from St. Mary’s College, Winona, Minn. He is the prime mover behind the concept, development, and implementation of “A Place of Grace,” a Catholic worker home located in the Viterbo neighborhood. He collaborated with the Diocese of La Crosse to provide theological and pastoral training for adult leaders through Viterbo’s religious studies program. This certified program will provide accreditation that is recognized anywhere in the U.S. Thibodeau involves students in problem-solving related to their lives, and he is known for his exceptional teaching skills.

Colleagues praised Thibodeau’s achievements:
• “Tom embodies, both in his philosophy and in his sharing in the classroom and in public lecture, the great qualities of an educated leader and teacher,” said S. Laurian Pieterek, FSPA. “He is a notable factor in the loyalty and love that his students have for Viterbo College. In working with the poor and homeless, Tom is tireless in giving of himself and keeps Viterbo on the cutting edge of progress in his work for the spirituality of teachers in the Master’s program.”
• Another colleague, S. Arita Dopkins, cited Thibodeau’s commitment to the common good. “Long an admirer of Dorothy Day,” she said, “Tom dreamed of establishing a Catholic Worker House. He shared his dream with a number of friends, and was instrumental in naming, ‘A Place of Grace.’ Now his students have the experience of providing food for the hungry, and showing Franciscan hospitality to those who gather for food and friendship on Thursday evenings.”

Fletcher, a native of Lancashire, England, received a degree from Burnley School of Art, a BFA from the University of Reading and MFA Post graduate certificate from the Royal Academy, England. He is currently chair of the art department and is advisor to Touchstone, Viterbo’s literary magazine. Fletcher is the recipient of many fellowships and awards, including grants to study art abroad. Recently he visited China as a member of a delegation from UW-L, who were guests of the government of Guanxi province. Fletcher traveled in north central China giving presentations at museums, colleges and universities while staying at Luoyang Technical College. He was a guest instructor for Eastern Michigan University, teaching art history in Greece, Turkey and Egypt. Lisa Schonfielder, an art department colleague, had this to say about Fletcher’s commitment to students and his profession. “Peter invites his students to take one step closer to him. He personifies the ancient Eastern saying, when a student takes a step toward the guru then the guru takes two steps toward the student. The questioning process begins with the student focused on the teacher and involves more and more the student learning to think on
his or her own two feet. Peter is a skilled draftsman, an inspirational painter, and a strong role model to students because of his credibility as an artist,” Schonfielder said.

Other awards were presented at the honors convocation. Service awards were presented to Dave Hendrickson (maintenance), Beth Moore (global education), and student Amy Danckwart. Honored for their leadership were: Anita Beskar, FSPA (global education), Bobbi Vandenberg (women’s basketball), and students Julie Rubenzer, and Jason Blasiola.

New to the board
Paulynn Instenes FSPA, has been elected to a four year term on the Viterbo College Board of Directors. She currently serves as principal at St. Luke’s School in Plain. Sister Paulynn has also worked in a variety of teaching and administrative positions in Guam, Zimbabwe, Camden and Canton, Miss.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in biology from Viterbo College, a Master of Arts in Non-Public Administration from the College of St. Thomas (St. Paul) and a Master of Science in Curriculum and Supervision from UW-Oshkosh.

Swantz receives honorary doctorate at commencement
In recognition of his selfless work in education in La Crosse, Richard A. Swantz, superintendent of the La Crosse School District, received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Viterbo College during the May 10 commencement ceremony at the La Crosse Center.

Swantz is only the ninth person to receive an honorary degree from Viterbo in its 108-year history.

William J. Medland, president of Viterbo College, said the honor is fitting for such a devoted educator.

“Viterbo College is both honored and pleased to bestow on Dick Swantz the Doctor of Humane Letters,” Medland said. “Dick has been an exceptional educational leader and has been involved in the advancement of education locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

“He is a role model for educational leaders everywhere. If there were more like him, education would be thriving throughout this country.”

Swantz, who began his career in education as a social science teacher in the McHenry, Ill., school district, resigned as superintendent of La Crosse schools recently after 21 years in that position.

Swantz has left his mark on La Crosse education in many ways. Under his leadership, the school district’s curriculum became unified, making it much easier for a student who has moved from one school to another to pick up where he/she left off. Before his tenure, each school had its own curriculum.

Those who know Swantz and who have worked with him during his tenure as superintendent, know exactly why he has lasted so long in a position not known for its longevity. His peers will remember him as a true leader in good times and in times of controversy. He will be remembered for changing the boundary lines between Logan and Central High Schools, which was a radical move at the time. In addition to providing a more equitable economic and racial balance, the change provided Logan with enrollment numbers to support more advanced courses, which were previously only offered at Central.

Swantz also has given his time generously to many area civic organizations, including the Riverfront Foundation board and the YMCA board, and chaired the Community Attitudes Task Force Education/ Employment Subcommittee. Although he has received awards too numerous to mention, two special honors should be noted: Swantz was selected as Wisconsin’s

**Growth in graduate degrees continues**

A record 249 teachers received Master of Arts in Education degrees at the Viterbo College Graduate commencement ceremony.

La Crosse School District Superintendent Richard A. Swantz, who received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at Viterbo’s undergraduate ceremony in May, delivered the commencement address.

Just eight years ago, Viterbo awarded its first master’s degrees—41 in all. That number has continued to rise each year, with 248 graduates receiving master’s degrees last July.

In addition to the on campus offerings, Viterbo offers classes throughout the year in dozens of sites in Wisconsin and Iowa. Recently, offices were opened in Milwaukee and in Des Moines, Iowa.

Years ago, few people would have predicted the level of growth of the program. In fact, the program is one of the largest of its kind in the nation. The graduate program also is rivaling the undergraduate program in number of graduates this year. At May commencement, 270 students received undergraduate degrees, just 21 more than the 249 teachers who received their graduate degrees during the summer.

**Sister Thea Bowman’s life celebrated with song, dance and prayer**

In a celebration of her life and many gifts, Sister Thea Bowman was recognized eight years after her death, in a special memorial concert March 30 in the Fine Arts Center Main Theatre by the music and religious studies departments.

Remembering Sister Thea with lively songs, personal testimonies, video clips and prayers seemed only fitting for a person who brought life and enthusiasm to her music, dancing and poetry, and who proudly celebrated her African-American heritage.

“Thea was one of my closest friends and I miss her dearly,” said Daniel Johnson-Wilmot, chair of the music department at Viterbo. “To me, she is inspiration. She is vision. She is wholeness. She is sincerity. She is honesty. She was dearly loved by many people at Viterbo.”

To know how special Sister Thea’s life really was, one has to look back at her roots. The granddaughter of slaves, Sister Thea was born in Yazoo City, Miss., on Dec. 29, 1937. Her given name was Bertha. Soon after her birth, her family moved to Canton, Miss., where she began a spiritual quest that at age nine, led her to become a Catholic. The next year, she was enrolled at Holy Child Jesus School, which was staffed by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. She was so impressed with the life and works of the sisters, that she joined them at the age of 15 by entering St. Rose Convent, where she was given the name Thea.

Sister Thea was blessed with extraordinary talents and became a poet, a preacher, a master teacher, a vocalist and an evangelist, she proudly shared with the Viterbo community, even after she moved back to Mississippi. She died March 30, 1990.

In honor of her many talents, the Viterbo College Concert Choir, and the Ninth Street Singers sang gospels in memory of Sister Thea’s undying love for Jesus Christ.

During the final song, chorus members poured out into the audience and encouraged everyone to clap, sway and sing “This Little Light of Mine.” - a fitting end to a celebration of such an energetic, devoted friend of Viterbo College.

“The whole program was a fitting tribute to a very special person,” Johnson-Wilmot said. “I
call it a program and not just a concert because the whole program was crucial in telling who Thea really was and how much she truly meant to the Viterbo community.”

**Olympic curler Mike Peplinski undergoes kidney transplant**

Olympic curler and Viterbo graduate Mike Peplinski ’96 underwent a successful kidney transplant in June, according to an article which appeared in the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Peplinski received a kidney from his father-in-law Bill Brendel after he had battled for three years, idiopathic membranous nephropathy, a degenerative disease that interferes with the kidneys’ ability to process protein. He expected to receive a new kidney from his mother, Rita, but Brendel agreed to the transplant after tests revealed that Rita Peplinski was not a perfect match.

In the Star Tribune article, Peplinski said that during the first three months of his recovery, he cannot do any lifting, which means no curling and no picking up his 3-year-old son, Jaren. Peplinki said he is taking 12 medications daily to prevent infection and to ensure his body’s acceptance of the new kidney. The transplant will be deemed successful, Peplinski said, if no infections set in during the 12 months following the transplant.

Peplinski, a seventh and eighth grade science and geography teacher for the Alma school district, was pictured in the Spring 1998 edition of Strides magazine receiving gifts and accolades from class members upon his return from the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan. Peplink’’s thoughts on the Olympics experience also were featured in the magazine. The United States Curling Team, which consisted of Peplinski, Tim Somerville, John Gordon and Myles Brundidge, finished fourth in the Olympic curling tournament in February. They were one victory away from winning the bronze medal.

**Lumen receives national honor from press association**

Lumen, the Viterbo College student newspaper, was honored recently with a first place award from the American Scholastic Press Association for excellence in the newspaper industry. Lyon Evans, Lumen advisor, said the award was a feather in the cap of a staff that worked hard to put out a good product.

“This is the first time the Lumen editors sent in the materials for consideration,” said Evans, who has been the Lumen advisor for 11 years. “To win a prize the first time out is a tribute to all the hard work each and every student put in.

“I hope this can be the standard of excellence for the new editors coming in. I certainly hope they will submit newspapers to the ASPA in the future.”

Jennifer Reed, the outgoing associate editor of the Lumen, echoes Evans’ sentiments.

“I especially think it’s great because of the small staff we had this year,” Reed said. “We were thrilled because it was Lumen’s first award like this. We’ve really never compared ourselves to any other newspaper and to come away with a national award is just great.”

The paper was established by Sister Celestine Cepress in 1954. Out of 1,000 possible points in six categories, Lumen received 885. The categories included content coverage, page design, general plan, art, advertising, illustrations, editing and creativity. Lumen scored the highest possible points in both page design and editing.
New vice president for Institutional Advancement named
Kenna Christians, CFRE, is the new Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Viterbo College, assuming the position July 1. She replaces Lori Rebhan, who after 20 years at Viterbo, moved to Marquette, Michigan where she is Executive Director of the foundation at Northern Michigan University.

Christians has been at Viterbo College for 10 years, most recently as director of development. In her new position, she will direct fund raising activities including major gifts, alumni and donor relations and grants and scholarships.

In making the announcement, Viterbo president William Medland said, “Kenna brings a great deal of experience to this position and her commitment to Viterbo and our mission is very evident. I look forward to working with her on some unique initiatives we have planned including those associated with ‘Vision 2005.’”

Christians is ready for the challenge. “It is important for me to work for an organization that makes a positive impact on society. The mission of Viterbo College mirrors my personal and professional values and I am committed to the goals in “Vision 2005.” I hope to continue and build upon the outstanding work that has been accomplished by Lori Rebhan and the entire Institutional Advancement Office.”

A farewell scholarship in the name of friendship
When Janet Hoeschler heard that after 20 years of service, Lori Rebhan was leaving Viterbo College, she decided that her departure should consist of something more than just a sincere goodbye. The result, after several discussions with college officials, was the creation of the LoriLee Rebhan Endowed Scholarship which will be awarded to needy and gifted students in the fine arts area.

“I was very happy to do it,” said Hoeschler a long time friend and supporter of Viterbo College. “Lori is well deserving. I have worked with her for a number of years and found her to be nicely aggressive in promoting ideas to benefit Viterbo. This scholarship is meant to honor that association.”

According to William J. Medland, president of Viterbo, others have appreciated Hoeschler’s initiative and have also contributed to the project. “Janet is a very generous and caring individual and for her to make this gesture is very thoughtful and will definitely be appreciated.”

For her part, Rebhan asked that the scholarship go to the fine arts area. “We have many fine students and often they struggle financially to make it. Hopefully this scholarship will lift the burden for one of these students.”

She also had kind words for the benefactor. “When I was told by President Medland that Janet had established a scholarship in my name, I was shocked. It really means a lot to me and it’s a kindness I will always remember.”

Seniors pledge over $26,000
Over 130 graduating seniors set a new record by pledging over $26,000 in gifts which will be applied to a scholarship. The pledges are spread over a five year period and constitute for many students who are still job seeking, a leap of faith and expression of gratitude to Viterbo for their education. The senior gift project was started in 1989 when 20 students pledged $790 to purchase benches for Assisi Court. Over 30 volunteers worked on this year’s effort, including a steering committee made up of Jason Blasiola, Deb Clements, Dan Fuchs, Jeff Kuhn and Maggie Reinert.
Coaches ready to take softball, volleyball reins

A new era in Viterbo women's softball and women's volleyball is about to begin as Chris Helixon takes the reins of the softball program and Mark Jenkins begins his tenure at the helm of the volleyball program.

Both coaches bring years of coaching and playing experience to the program, which is what the Viterbo College Director of Athletics, Bruce Erickson, was looking for.

“In the past, the same person coached both softball and volleyball, and if we were lucky enough, that person was well versed in both sports,” Erickson said. “When we parted with the former softball and volleyball coach, we decided to split the positions to get two coaches that were focused on the respective programs.

“That’s what we have with Chris and Mark. Both know their sport really well and have experience to back up that knowledge. They both will be an asset to Viterbo athletics.”

Helixon believes that with his experience and knowledge of the game, he can build on a program that “shows a lot of potential.”

“I’m very excited about the opportunity to take the Viterbo softball program to the next level,” Helixon said. “I had a chance to see a few games last season and saw a lot of good things in the players and the program.”

Helixon, who earned a Master of Science in Sports Administration from the UW-La Crosse in 1995 and a Bachelor of Science in Leadership Psychology from the United States Military Academy (West Point) in 1990, has pitched and played outfield on successful fastpitch softball teams such as the Menomonie Blues and the Colorado Springs Blues. He also was a three-year starter in the outfield for the Army varsity baseball team. As a coach, Helixon has experienced success in American Legion baseball and youth baseball leagues in Menomonie.

Jenkins brings extensive coaching experience and valuable understanding of the organization needed for developing and promoting a good volleyball program.

“I’m getting a later start than I would have hoped, but I’m confident everything will work out,” said Jenkins, who was hired in late May. “Viterbo College volleyball has a good history and I want to build a program that is consistently a winner.”

Jenkins comes to Viterbo from Whitehall High School, where he has built the program into one that is consistently competitive. Jenkins also has extensive experience working volleyball camps, developing his own summer camp and developing a USVBA club program.

Helixon and Jenkins replace Barb Gross who held both the volleyball and softball positions for three years.

Inaugural women’s athletics golf scramble a ‘success’

Hold a golf scramble and they will come.

That’s what the organizers of the first ever Viterbo College Women’s Athletics Golf Scramble were hoping for, and that’s what they got.

Thirteen foursomes participated in the 18-hole fund-raiser event for women’s athletics held June 22 at the picturesque La Crosse Country Club. And when it was all said and done, the scramble was deemed a success by both organizers and participants.

“From an organizational standpoint, I thought the event was successful,” said Viterbo College women’s basketball coach Bobbi Vandenberg, one of the catalysts behind the scramble. “The
first time you do something like this you don’t know what’s going to happen. All in all, it went smoothly. I received nothing but positive comments from those who took part.”

One of the participants was Rusty Cunningham, editor of the La Crosse Tribune. Cunningham said he was impressed, especially knowing it was the first time the event was held.

“It was a nicely organized event,” Cunningham said. “It was a really nice opportunity to meet folks, support a good cause and to have some fun. I look forward to taking part in it again.”

Alumni Now


Members of the Viterbo community mourned the loss of a good friend of the college and avid supporter of numerous other worthwhile causes.

Virginia Pache Coey Lukasek, 75, of 615 Pearl St., Sparta, died Sunday July 19, 1998, at St. Mary’s Hospital in Rochester, Minn.

She had served as a member of the Alumni Association Board and was very involved in promoting Viterbo’s fine arts programs.

Her life was also rich with other interesting endeavors and adventures. Virginia obtained the rank of Captain in the Army Nurse Corps, and was stationed in the Phillipines and Japan; most notably, she was one of the first 26 nurses to see Nagasaki after the dropping of the atom bomb. Her last assignment was Battle Creek, Mich. She was a practicing R.N. at St. Mary’s Hospital in Sparta, Wis., and the Tomah VA until 1981.

She married Edward Otto Lukasek, M.D., on May 5, 1950, in Battle Creek, Mich., and had lived in the Sparta area since that time. She valued education both for herself and others and had a Diploma of Nursing from Michael Reese in Chicago, Ill., a BSN from Viterbo College and an MS in Health Education from the UW-La Crosse.

She was an active member of the community, lending valuable time to the American Red Cross Sparta Branch, Viterbo Alumni Board, Viterbo Fine Arts Board, La Crosse Symphony, Sparta Concert Association, Monroe County Republican Women and the American Legion.

“All of us at Viterbo who knew Virginia will deeply miss her. She was a strong woman who was delightful to be around because she was so full of energy and ideas,” said Sally Emerson, alumni director. “She was very proud of her alumni status and was always trying to think of new ways to promote Viterbo.”

Virginia would go to great lengths to promote Viterbo. She even appeared in the Octoberfest Maple Leaf Parade in 1996 using the opportunity to gain exposure for Viterbo’s fine arts programs.

Outstanding alumni awarded at Reunion ’98

Three “outstanding alumni” were recognized at this year’s Reunion ’98 celebration held on June 27.

Sister Marlene Weisenbeck ’67 for service to the college. Sister Marlene, a 1967 graduate with a bachelor’s degree in music education, is a true voice of Viterbo College. In 1994, Sister Marlene was elected chair of the Viterbo Board of Directors, a position she continues to hold. She is currently employed as chancellor in the diocese of La Crosse, the first women to hold such a position.
Sue Schmitt ’69 for educational achievement. In 1969, Sue Schmitt graduated from Viterbo with a degree in English. Little did she know that her time at Viterbo was the springboard to her many years in higher education, both as a student and an educator.

Sue has now reached the pinnacle of her career in higher education. In August 1996, the Caledonia, Minn., native was named dean of the School of Education at Seattle University.

Kristine (Koetting) Campbell ’74 for professional development. Kristine Campbell has come a long way since graduating from Viterbo College in 1974 with a degree in nursing. Kristine has spent more than 25 years in the Army—more than eight years on active duty, the rest in the reserves—and has achieved the rank of Lt. Colonel.

In September ’97, Kristine’s Army Reserve medical unit was called to active duty in support of the NATO peacekeeping mission in war torn Bosnia. In October ’97, Kristine, who now lives in Longview, Wash., and 68 of her charges shipped out to Tuzla.

Class Notes

1940
S. Grace MacDonald ’46 is author of an article on Franciscan congregations appearing in the recently published Encyclopedia of American Catholic History, edited by Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelly and published by the Liturgical Press in Collegeville, Minn.

1950

S. Nancy Lafferty ’58 was among 39 support community members present at the University of Nebraska-Omaha Religious Center in December 1997 for a Holy Innocents Retreat. The retreat weekend ended with an annual protest witness at StratCom, formerly Strategic Air Command, at Offut Air Force Base in Bellview, Neb.

1960

S. Joyce M. Blum ’63 received a Distinguished Service Award from the Diocese of Tucson Detention Ministry program in May 1998 for her faithful support to the prison ministry.

S. Cecilia Corcoran ’63 co-directed the FSPA Goddess GATE (Global Awareness Through Experience) July 17-27, 1998 in Mexico City.

S. Marla Lang ’64 was re-elected president of FSPA Mission Council, March 1998.
S. Helen Elsbernd ’65 was re-elected vice president of the FSPA Mission Council, March 1998.

1970
Arlene (Schmitz) ’70 Chamberlain was recently appointed to the National Nutrition Monitoring Advisory Council. This nine member board advises the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture about all nutrition monitoring conducted by the federal
government. Her appointment is for five years. Arlene is currently president of the South Dakota School Food Service Association.

Mary Kay (Stanek) Housner ’75 graduated from the Wisconsin Rural Leadership Program in July 1998.

Dr. Maureen Coleman ’78 completed board certification as a chiropractic addictionologist in 1997, specializing in alternative treatment of addictive/compulsive disorders.

Mary Nordahl ’78 was elected president of the Black River Falls Board of Education May 18, 1998.

Carol Brueggen ’79 recently co-authored a chapter, Surgical Oncology, published in Oncology Nursing Secrets by Gates and Fink.

Nicholas Narloch ’79 has been selected to be included in the 1998 Who’s Who Among American Teachers. Teachers are selected for this honor by a successful former student who recommends them because this teacher has made a difference in his or her life.

1980

Shelly Lamb-Vosen ’80 was recently promoted to vice president of development at Chileda Institute in La Crosse.

Clarice M. (Urbanek) Nestingen ’80 was recently appointed principal of Coon Valley Elementary and Chasburg Middle Schools. She had been the Curriculum Director for Westby Area Schools for the past 11 years.

Mary Jo (Reince) Burke ’81 recently received her Master of Science in Nursing from UW-Eau Claire.

Fred Goettl ’81 was elected clerk of the Black River Falls Board of Education May 18, 1998. He will also be the district’s delegate to the CESA annual meeting August 5, 1998 in Bangor.

Julie (Tenner) Meyers ’83 recently received her Master of Science in Nursing from UW-Eau Claire.

Lisa N. Hinde ’84 recently received her Master of Science in Nursing from UW-Eau Claire.

Patricia (Servais) ’84 and Joseph Spurgeon celebrated the birth of a daughter, Leah Claire, October 11, 1997. She joins big sister Katie at home.

Lisa (Kirkenbush) ’85 and Brad Fahlgren celebrated the birth of a son, Seth Bradley, August 7, 1997. He joins big brother Logan, 5, at home.

Elizabeth “Betsy” Lecheler ’85 and Sean Spencer were married November 28, 1997 in San Antonio, Texas. In May of 1998 they were transferred to Warner Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

Misti and Tim McDermott ’86 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Tiera, January 9, 1998. She joins siblings Karleigh, Charus, and Weston at home.

Scott Nandory ’86 graduated from the Introduction to Commercial Lending School, held March 8-10, 1998 at the Wintergreen Resort and Conference Center, Wisconsin Dells. He is employed by State Bank of La Crosse and is the Onalaska Branch Manager.
Terie (Stark) Bush ’87 received her Master of Science as Adult Nurse Practitioner from UW-Madison in May 1998. She is now working as a nurse practitioner for the UW Medical School in the Orthopedic Spine Specialty of the Department of Surgery.

Juline (McClelland) ’87 and Kevin Sloane celebrated the birth of a son, Kody Aaron, July 17, 1997. He joins sisters Katelyn and Marie at home.

Teri (Rudolph) Strabley ’87 started a new job as a Travel Nurse in Critical Care for Medical Express, Inc. She will be doing 13 week assignments around the country.

Richard Betts ’88 has adapted The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling into a new musical. The project was commissioned by the Carribeaner Corp. to perform in Dubai, Abrahian Erimates for the month of April 1988 in connection with their month of family festivities.

Pam (Lindner) ’88 and Lee Alt celebrated the birth of a son, Benjamin Lee Alt, April 27, 1998.

Julie Selness ’88 married Brian Zmolek June 24, 1995.

Jennifer (Knight) ’88 and Douglas Skyer celebrated the birth of a son, Michael Craig, April 9, 1998.

Janet A. Droessler ‘89 received a Doctor of Medicine Degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin May 16, 1998. She was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha National Medical Honor Society for having achieved scholastic excellence for the qualities of integrity, leadership, compassion, and fairness. She was also awarded the Dr. and Mrs. Jack A. Kioeger Endowed Award in Obstetrics and Gynecology for demonstrating superior proficiency in this discipline, and the American Medical Women’s Glasgow Memorial Scholarship Achievement Citation in recognition of outstanding academic achievement.

Carmin (Garbisch) ’89 and Todd Jacobson celebrated the birth of a son, Austin Jerome, March 22, 1998.

Christina (Meier) ’88 and Ralph Valentine ’89 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Katherin Olivia, March 29, 1998. Ralph has recently joined the Walgreens Company as an Employee Relations Supervisor. Previously, Ralph had worked seven years as Human Resources Manager for Leiner Health Products, Madison. Christina has retired from the graphic arts field to take on the bigger challenge of being a full time mother.

Melissa (Weinberger) ’89 and Todd Jacobson celebrated the birth of a son, Matthew Alan, November 15, 1997.

Jayne and Chad Childress ’90 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Nicole Elise, August 11, 1998.

Renee (Clark) ’92 and John Mansour ’90 celebrated the birth of a son, Grant Fuad Mansour, November 11, 1997.

Andrew Stiefel ’90 received his Master of Business Administration from Edgewood College, Madison, in May 1997.
Scott Baeseman '91 recently began working as the music teacher at Lake Forest Country Day School in Lake Forest, Ill. He will continue to do freelance singing and accompanying in the Chicago area. Scott was the Arts Education Administrator for the Chicago Chamber Musicians.

Gina (Kahr) '91 and Brett Zacho celebrated the birth of a son, Cole Brett, May 24, 1998. He joins sister Ashley, 2 1/2, at home.

Paula Hlavaty '92 married Jason Taylor May 2, 1998 in South Milwaukee.

LaVonne (Waite) '92 and Michael Hundt celebrated the birth of a daughter, Sarah Beth, April 21, 1998. She joins her sister Rachel Marie at home.

Michele (Amundson) '93 and Tim Dwyer celebrated the birth of a daughter, Ashley Jeanette, March 24, 1998. She joins her sister, Jordyn, 2, at home.

Paul Callan '93 received his Master of Arts in Education from UW-La Crosse on May 10, 1998. He is the husband of Kathy (Hitchins) '77 Callan.

Teresa Freiberg '93 announced her engagement to William Conrad. A September 19, 1998 wedding was planned in Naples, Fla. with a reception to follow on October 4, 1998 in Wis.

Wendy A. Hansen '93 is currently working on her Master’s Degree in Counseling and Psych Services at St. Mary's University in Minneapolis. She also recently accepted a management promotion with US West Communications in Saint Paul as a Learning Consultant.

Cindy (Soller) '93 and Cory Kleman '93 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Jordyn Elizabeth, March 27, 1998. She joins brother Adam at home.

Stephannie Klitzkie '93 accepted a new position in April 1998 as a loan officer for Metro Mortgage Company, Inc. in Madison. She is also a real estate broker.

Sara Lepak '93 and Brian Kromke were married May 9, 1998 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Marathon.

Richelle Sommer '93 and Cory Fields were married May 23, 1998 in La Crosse.

Amy (Harrison) '93 and Mark Thompson celebrated the birth of a daughter, Courtney Mikayla, January 28, 1998.

Amy Folz '94 and Judd Hanson were married May 30, 1998.

Tara Hager announces her engagement to Adam L. Dresen '94. A June 1999 wedding is planned.

Larry Germanson '94 is in his second year working on his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the Graduate School of America, Minneapolis. He was also elected president of the International Sister City Project for La Crosse, and Malahide, Ireland.

Sandra (Hansen) '94 and Philip Nguyen celebrated the birth of a son, Andrew Phillip, June 19, 1997.
Katherine Garrett and Barton McCarthy ’94 were married June 21, 1997. He began a new job as a high school English teacher and head track coach for the Tri-County Area School District in Plainfield, Wis. in August 1997, after 13 years at Wautoma High School.

Krista Clements-Orlan ’95 is an actress and director for the Prairie Fire Theatre of Barrett, Minn. in an original production of Robin Hood. She is part of a tour of week long residencies across the midwest this summer.

Heidi L. Davidson ’95 recently started a new job as an accountant with Kiesling Associates, Viroqua.

Anna Kania ’95 recently relocated to Black River Falls for her husband’s job at D & S Manufacturing. She is now working at the same company as part time Safety and Health Director.

Elizabeth (Ekern) ’95 and Mark Lakmann celebrated the birth of a daughter, Alexandra Claire, May 16, 1998.

Dianne Lautenbach ’95 married Dan Mueller May 16, 1998 at Zion Lutheran Church, Gilmanton.

Brian Murley ’95 recently began working as a flight nurse on the Mayo Medical Center’s helicopter, “Mayo One,” based in Eau Claire.

Christine A. New ’95 announced her engagement to BoDean Dobbs. An August 29, 1998 wedding was planned.

Holly Habelman ’96 announced her engagement to Joe Cook. A June 1998 wedding was planned.

Sarah L. Johnson ’96 recently began working as an elementary school teacher for Mabel-Canton Schools, Canton, Minn.

Kristina Ekern ’97 and Dan Bergdahl were married on June 6, 1998. Kristine will begin teaching kindergarten in Westby this fall.

Melinda Goyette ’97 recently moved to Florence, S. C., and is working as a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist IV for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Linda Hensley ’97 and her husband Doug Hensley celebrated the birth of a daughter, Jenna, March 21, 1998. She joins sisters Ashley and Nicole at home.

Leslie Peterson announced her engagement to John Hotvedt ’97. A July 18, 1998 wedding was planned.

Rene Jacobs ’97 is enjoying working as a substitute teacher in La Crosse and the surrounding area while spending a lot of time with her son, Trent, before he starts kindergarten in the fall of 1998.

Barbara (Krause) '97 and Mark Krautkramer celebrated the birth of a son, Spencer Mark, October 31, 1997.

Kelly Loos '97 married Dean Fleisner May 16, 1998.

Alisabeth Mead '97 announces her engagement to Tim Truebenbach. A December 19, 1998 wedding is planned.

Julie S. Moen '97 announces her engagement to Mark Hanson. A May 1998 wedding was planned.

Carol Pacl '97 chaperoned six middle school students on a trip to Japan in July 1998. This was her second trip to Japan.

Deborah Vicario '97 received a 316 license in May 1998.

Joanne Zintel '97 and her husband Andrew celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary on July 19, 1998. Joanne traveled to Spain in June 1998 with 26 high school students for 21 days.

**A FINAL WORD**

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Michael Lauer is an assistant professor of biology at Viterbo College. He was awarded his Ph.D. in biology from the University of Kentucky in 1996. His undergraduate degree from UW-Green Bay was in environmental science. Since arriving at Viterbo, Lauer has been a leading proponent of environmental consciousness. Variations to this essay have appeared in Viterbo’s employee newsletter and the newspaper published by the La Crosse Diocese.

**These contracts don’t require signatures**

I’d like to write about paper—the kind you read, the kind you use for writing, the kind that gets churned up and spit out of the printer hooked up to your computer. However, first, bear with me as I establish the perspective in which to properly view our use or better yet, misuse of paper.

David Wann, author of Biologic, says that every time we buy something, we sign a hidden contract with nature. That is, each time we purchase an item, there are impacts on nature during its production and there are further impacts due to the use of a product. The contract we sign is hidden because, for the most part, we are ignorant of the effects we have “bought into” and the effects from our use.

We should be concerned. These hidden contracts damage our life support systems. The species making up ecosystems that are affected by these hidden contracts also provide all humans with irreplaceable services such as oxygen production, water purification, water distribution, local climate control, flood control, soil generation, pest control, and pollination.

Paper comes with hidden contracts too. For example, the kinds of paper we use and how we use it, are all indicators of our personal, institutional, and cultural ethics. I don’t want to bludgeon you with facts and statistics concerning environmental impacts—the hidden contract if you will, of paper produced from our limited virgin forests, nor with facts concerning the environmental degradation that occurs during the production of paper, nor with the troubles of trying to dispose of the millions of pounds of paper discarded each year. But, like it or not,
hidden contracts exist. When hidden contracts are brought to light, some individuals could care less; others are horrified and change their actions because their ethics dictate a change in behavior. Now, apply the paper analogy to our other consumptive lifestyle behaviors. I ask: If you found out that children were working 12 hour days to make Nike tennis shoes, do you continue buying them? Depends on your ethics. Here’s a simpler test. If someone falls on the ice and you help them up, your actions says something about you as a person and about your ethics. Hopefully we would all pass that test of common decency and courtesy.

Viterbo, a Catholic, Franciscan institution, even has an ethical framework which hopefully applies to most of its employees and all of it operations. The college also has included statements pertaining to institutional ethics in its mission statement, in Vision 2005, and in the goals espoused in the general education program. For example, our mission “...prepares students for leadership and service rooted in...respect for the world.” In Vision 2005 “...the college will continue to be committed...to a viable stewardship of resources.” And from the goals of the general education program, we “...actively engage in care for the environment... (and)...celebrate and respect all life.” However, the plot thickens. Ethics should not just apply to human-human interactions, but also to human-nonhuman interactions. Ethics constitute our very being, whether it be helping a neighbor or exposing hidden contracts for the detrimental effects on ecosystems and then acting upon this information.

Carry this thought one step further and we discover that even institutions and corporations can demonstrate an ethical persona. So, what does this have to do with paper? Well, knowing the hidden contract and knowing some of our relevant institutional ethics, how do we as individuals act upon the following questions:

• Should we ever ask ourselves about the necessity of using paper for each task it is now used for?
• Should we use both sides of a piece of paper before discarding or, even better yet, recycling it?
• Should Viterbo purchase and promote the use of paper that has some or all post-consumer recycled content?

Think about how very universal these questions actually are and which ones apply to you regardless of your distance from campus. Your ethics and respect for the world are at stake: your commitment to engaging in care for the world; your focus on viably stewarding resources; your celebration of all life are all part of the equation. So don’t be “stationary” because this topic is much broader. Anything could be substituted for paper: like soda cans, laundry detergent, computers, or cars. The same ideas of hidden contracts, actions, and ethics apply with the same relevance as they do for paper. Consider keeping track of all your actions for a day and try to determine the social and environmental impact of all the hidden contracts “signed” during that day. Then ask, what percentage of these contracts would be acceptable to your values?
From the Archives

Does this photo bring back memories for you?
Describe this Viterbo archive photo using as much detail as possible, and mail your caption to Viterbo College, c/o Strides Magazine, 815 South 9th Street, La Crosse, WI 54601. The earliest postmark containing a reasonably accurate and comprehensive description will receive a copy of The History of Viterbo College, compliments of Viterbo College. If possible, try to identify individuals in the photo as well as the context and setting. Current Viterbo employees are ineligible to enter. Look for “From the Archives” to appear regularly in Strides, and if you have an interesting Viterbo archive photo, we’ll be happy to consider it, as well as your favorite memories, for publication in Strides magazine.

Last issue...
After failing to hear from anyone about last issue’s “From the Archives” photo, we contacted a couple alumni from the 80’s who were able to help us out. The women in the picture were Debbie Felchowski, Janelle Welsh, Sue Symes, and Lori “Peanuts” Schultz. It may have been a scavenger hunt or some other activity organized by the Student Activities Board. It was most likely taken in ‘84 or ‘85.

Calendar of Events

September 20
WS vs. Grand View College
September 26
WS and MS vs. Marycrest International University
September 30
WVB vs. St. Ambrose University
October 9-11
Once Upon A Mattress, Fine Arts Main Theatre
October 10
WS and MS vs. Iowa Wesleyan College
October 14
WVB vs. Mount Mercy College
MS vs. Mount Mercy College
October 15
WS vs. Mount Mercy College
October 28
Big Top Chautauqua’s 30th Star, Fine Arts Main Theatre
November 5
Milwaukee Ballet, Fine Arts Main Theatre
November 24
Corey Cerovsek, violinist, Fine Arts Main Theatre
November 30
WBB and MBB vs. UW-La Crosse
in Alumni Cup @ La Crosse Center
December 4-5
MBB hosts Pepsi Invitational Tournament
December 5
Alumni Children’s Christmas Party
December 5-6
Festival of Carols, Fine Arts Main Theatre
January 13
WBB and MBB vs. St. Ambrose University
January 16
WBB and MBB vs. Iowa Wesleyan College
January 23
WBB and MBB vs. Mount St. Clare College
January 28
Heidi Grant Murphy and Les Violons de Roy
Fine Arts Main Theatre
February 3
WBB and MBB vs. Mount Mercy College
February 13
WBB and MBB vs. Grand View College (Homecoming)
* Sporting events listed are Home Midwest Classic Conference games
* WBB indicates women’s basketball/ MBB indicates men’s basketball.
* MS indicates men’s soccer/ WS indicates women’s soccer
* WVB indicates women’s volleyball