Theatre Department's Vision Leads to Incredible Success

A small group of faculty members turn declining program into one of the best in the Midwest

There is no disputing the success of the Viterbo College Theatre Department and the mark it has left on the college and in the community the last 45 years.

Not only has the program produced some big names within theatrical circles, it has been recognized for staging some of the most memorable performances in small college theatre.

However, history and tradition aren't the only ingredients for a successful and thriving program. This was the case at Viterbo College at the beginning of the decade.

A declining enrollment in one of the most revered programs at Viterbo College meant that changes were imminent, if not for the survival of the program, for its expansion.

However, before the story of the theatre department's amazing vault into one of the most recognized programs in the Midwest can be told, a little light should be shed on the program's rich past.

Started by Sister Marie Leon La Croix in 1954, the Viterbo College theatre department consisted of very few people and even less space.

Despite the limited resources, the matriarch of theatre kept spirits high and persevered, helping to turn the theatre department into a very respected program.

The first show staged in the new Fine Arts Center Main Theatre was “Sound of Music,” which was performed in 1971. Hundreds of excellent performances followed.

Even though the theatre department continued to stage strong, leading-edge, and sometimes avant-garde shows, one thing became apparent in the early 1990s: the number of majors were declining. It was time for new vision and new ideas.

Enter Dr. Dean Yohnk and a small group of visionaries in the theatre department at the time. They knew things had to change to keep the program alive and well.

“When I got here in 1992, the overall program was on a decline,” said Yohnk, chairperson of the theatre arts department, who himself has a double major from Viterbo in English/theatre.
“There were 19 majors and the number of high school students who were interested in theatre was declining. There was a real problem.”

Much of the problem, Yohnk said, was that the program was only a liberal arts program in theatre.

“We only had the BA in liberal arts, which had served our students well in a liberal arts context, but it really didn’t allow the students the number of credits or the kinds of courses they might need for professional training so that they could be more successful after graduation,” Yohnk said. “I don’t think Viterbo’s program was able to compete against some of the other programs in the state, like UW-Stevens Point, Whitewater and Milwaukee. They had what we didn’t have, and that was a professional training program.”

That was soon to change, Yonnk said.

“We kind of got the feeling that the college did not want to create a bachelor of fine arts degree (BFA), which is what the other schools have, so we created a program that allowed us to maintain our liberal arts context, but also offered our students the opportunity to focus on specific areas of training,” Yohnk said. “So, within the next couple of years, we had a bachelor of theatre arts degree, which now will become a bachelor of fine arts degree.”

Once the degree was in place and the college had signed off on it, the department had a daunting task still ahead of them: They had to sell the program.

“I think the change in the department came when we began to push ourselves, to advertise, and that was due in large part to Dean’s energy,” said Dr. Janet McLean, who has been teaching drama literature, oral interpretation and speech since 1989. “It was just a dramatically different program back then. When I came, there were only three faculty in the department. We were very small and were generalists.

“We learned how to recruit and learned a lot about public relations back then. Things came full circle. We were able to get more students, which led to more faculty, which led to even more students,” said McLean.

From there, the department changed the curriculum, creating courses that focused on specialized areas of training.

“Over the years, that’s the thing that has been helpful for us in attracting numbers,” Yohnk said. “The fact that we offer variety. We still offer the BA, but we offer seven degrees to students.”

The next step in the transformation of the new-and-improved theatre department was to make even stronger the already great production schedule the program offered. Yohnk knew that to woo students from the larger programs in the state and in the Midwest, the department had to have a strong curriculum and a strong production program.

“We had the academic aspect of the program in place,” Yohnk said, “but the students now needed to apply what they had learned in the classroom. You have to be realistic, students will only come to a theatre program if they have a chance to work on shows.

“We’ve really worked hard to try to increase the quality of our productions,” Yohnk said.
“Becoming involved in the American College Theatre Festival has been one way that we've really tried to raise the professional image and integrity of the program, and to get feedback for our program so that we can work to make future productions stronger and better.”

Another way to make the production program stronger, Yohnk said, is to bring in really great guest artists, such as professional director Anne McNaughton from Los Angeles, and professional choreographer Ron Schwinn from New York City. Also helpful was the professional combat company from Minneapolis and actors from the Guthrie Theatre.

“What we’ve tried to do is bring a lot more professionals to work with the students,” Yohnk said. “As a result, the students are getting a better sense of what is out there.”

In the seven years that Yohnk and the other faculty members have been building, rebuilding and tweaking the Viterbo College theatre arts department, an amazing transformation has taken place. The number of majors has risen from 19 in 1992 to 90 today. Yohnk and the other faculty members believe this is just the right number of students for a successful program.

“Sister Marie Leon has said that the theatre spaces were really designed for 25 to 30 majors,” Yohnk said. “Back in 1992, we said that if we had 60 majors, that would allow us to have enough space to do what we needed to do, and would allow us to have extra classes, extra programming and extra productions.

“Right now, we’re just fine right where we are. We are the largest undergraduate theatre program in the state now, which is bizarre, because we are one of the smaller schools. There are only so many productions you can have each year. If there were more students and no more production opportunities added, soon you would lose students because they wouldn’t have the opportunity to become involved in shows.”

In Yohnk’s eyes, 90 is a great number for another reason. He believes that because of the number, the program is pushed to its limits, which he says is a good thing.

“Ninety is a great number because it gets us the talent and the numbers we need to do an ambitious season,” Yohnk said. “But it’s not so many students that they don’t get needed opportunities. Many times, the cream of the crop from other schools are coming to Viterbo because the program they were in was too large and they couldn’t get the professional training they needed.”

This is what graduates of the Viterbo theatre arts department are getting. The program now has the reputation of being one of the best in the Midwest.

“One of the biggest testaments to our program are our graduates,” Yohnk said. “Last year, we graduated 12 students, and all 12 are working in the theatre, making money. So, when you can talk about a college placement rate that is over 90 percent, that’s amazing.”

The Viterbo College theatre arts department is now where it would like to be, due in large part to the vision of Yohnk and the other faculty members charged back in 1992 with transforming a highly esteemed program suffering from declining enrollment into a respected program that is enjoying tremendous success. Even though it has risen from hard times to greatness, the faculty members in the department aren’t about to rest on their laurels.
“Every school is colored by the people who are there,” McLean said. “Our students are incredibly energetic and reach out. That’s the kind of student we want and will continue to bring to Viterbo. We won’t settle for anything less.”

And the winners are...

Viterbo College Theatre department has exceptional showing at Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival

The Viterbo College Theatre Arts Department continued its winning ways in the American College Theatre Festival, held Jan. 5-10 in Indianapolis, according to former Theatre Arts Chair Dean Yohnk.

“We continue to be one of the most awarded theatre programs in our region,” Yohnk said.

At the festival, junior Theatre Arts design major Kelly Ann Behrens was awarded the National Barbizon Lighting Design Award for her work on Arthur Miller’s “All My Sons.” Behrens competed against over 60 other graduate and undergraduate designers in this competition, and was selected the “Best of Show.” Behrens represented Viterbo College at the National American College Theatre Festival held in April in Washington, D.C.

“When you have a junior from Viterbo putting her lighting design up against probably 100 others, most of whom are graduate students, it’s a nice indicator of where our program is,” Yohnk said.

Viterbo’s April 1998 production of “All My Sons” also was honored with a number of additional Awards of Merit at the festival. The production received certificates of merit for its acting ensemble, direction (Yohnk), lighting design (Behrens) and scenic design (Michael Ranscht).

Viterbo actors also fared well in the Irene Ryan Regional Acting Competition. Over 600 actors competed in this prestigious college acting competition.

Three Viterbo students, including senior Eric Graves, and juniors Sara Ochs and Ellie Hino, advanced to the semifinal rounds with partners Abbie Barth, Jennifer Duckwitz and Jodi Jean Amble.

Two Viterbo College playwrights also were honored by ACTF in Indianapolis. Seniors Christopher Karbo and Kerby Joe Grubb were selected as finalists in the 10-minute Original Play Competition from among a field of more than 50 playwrights. Karbo’s “The Last Dance of the Evening” and Grubb’s “The Belt” were two of the five original scripts performed and critiqued at the festival.

Will Weber and Kelly Behrens were selected as “Honorary Guest Technicians” and assisted with the staging of full-length shows that appeared at the festival.
Men's Basketball Team Makes School History

at NAIA Division II National Tournament

A trip to the NAIA National Tournament was predicted but once there, the V-Hawk men’s basketball team made the most of it. The team which earned the “Cinderella” tag, went on to defeat two highly seeded nationally ranked teams before giving way in the third round to Berea College, Kentucky.

Cinderella? Not a bad designation for a team that finished 20-15, notching seven straight victories during their phenomenal season ending run.

“I’ll take whatever name they want to give us,” said Coach Todd Eisner after the unranked and unseeded V-Hawks dispatched 12th-seeded California State University-Hayward on March 12 for its second win over a seeded team in as many days. The V-Hawks knocked off the tournament’s 5th seeded team, MidAmerican Nazarene University, to advance to the second round. “We’re just thrilled to be here. We’re focusing on the moment right now and not the prize,” remarked Eisner.

Although the V-Hawks came up short in their quest for that prize—the NAIA Division II national championship—they made school history, nonetheless, by making it into the NAIA tournament’s “Elite Eight.” The only other V-Hawks team to make it to the national tournament was in 1995. Viterbo lost to Hastings College (Nebraska) in the second round.

Viterbo’s “Cinderella” story ended with an 85-74 loss to Berea College in the 32-team tournament quarterfinals, the memories will forever be etched on the minds of those who participated in this fantastic journey.

The V-Hawks in Nampa
First Round
Viterbo College 76
MidAmerican Nazarene University 68
Second Round
Viterbo College 91
California State University-Hayward 82
Third Round
Berea College 85
Viterbo College 74

After 23 years, Marv Friedewald Keeps Going, and Going...

When you think of Marv Friedewald, you think of things like Halls cough drops, Diet Mountain Dew, the Wall Street Journal and noon basketball.

These are things that will forever be a part of the man the Viterbo community has come to know and respect.

But there’s more to Marv Friedewald than that. Much more.
For those who attended the first Viterbo College Dahl School of Business Reunion: “A Roast and Toast of Marv Friedewald,” you found out about some of the many sides of Friedewald. But that, too, is only a part of the story.

Friedewald, an associate professor, has seen many people come and go. In fact, he carries with him the entire history of the business program he helped to found at Viterbo College.

Friedewald recently reflected on his time at Viterbo, and also set the record straight on a few matters.

“I’ve really enjoyed my time here,” said Friedewald, who began his career at Viterbo in 1976. “Not every year has been a pure joy, but most have been.

“The students are the most important thing for me, and the friendships that I’ve made will be lasting.”

While Friedewald holds those things near and dear to his heart, he has made room for two other very important aspects of his Viterbo life: the Viterbo business program and his tenure as faculty athletics representative.

“I started the business program and took it through six years as chairman,” Friedewald said. “Then I found someone who really wanted to be a chairman (Bill Jensen).

“Sister Mynette Gross, (Viterbo academic dean 1953-76) was responsible for getting the college to approve a business administration major. If that wouldn’t have happened, I wouldn’t be here. She deserves a lot of credit.”

Viterbo College athletics also has become a big part of Friedewald’s life, which according to him, came about purely by accident.

“My first year here, Jim Glasshoff was athletic director and men’s basketball coach,” Friedewald said. “I get a call from him at about 9:20 (a.m.) or so and he asked me if I would like to be the faculty athletics representative. After a little dialogue, at about 9:40, I agreed. The annual conference meeting was at 10 o’clock. I wonder what he would have done if I would have said ‘no’?”

Lucky for Viterbo, he didn’t and Friedewald is proud of what he has accomplished in athletics at Viterbo.

“You like to feel that you’ve made some kind of impact someplace,” Friedewald said.

While Friedewald has touched many lives and accomplished much at Viterbo in the business department, he will probably be equally remembered for those little idiosyncrasies, namely: cough drops, “the Dew,” the financial newspaper tucked under his arm and noon basketball workout with his colleagues and students, many now half his age.

For those of you who thought the roast was Friedewald’s final farewell, think again. The 60-year-old Friedewald isn’t ready to “cash it in” just yet. Instead, he will gradually reduce his teaching load but plan on him being around for at least two more years to add to his many memories of Viterbo.

Memories of Marv
“Financial Management, Marv pops in his fifth Halls cough drop of the hour, heads to the overhead projector and starts writing out the next formula in his permanent ink overhead marker, thinking there was a transparency already down. Oops, there wasn’t. Smeared ink all over the projector screen with his thumb and then covered it with a white piece of paper for the rest of the hour.”
Heath J. McFaul ’97

“My freshman year, I had my appendix out on spring break. I returned to school, needless to say quite behind in my work. Marv met with me, tutored me on what I missed, and even extended the test date for me. I also remember having to know what the Dow Jones was for every test. Also, the cough drops, who could ever forget the cough drops.”
Tina Daniels ’96

“Marv was a patient man, even with those of us who were far from perfect. I remember with great fondness the many classes Marv held for only Kelly Libert and myself, and the afternoon golf outings when golf seemed a bit more fun than class. Marv touched many young lives and I feel fortunate that I was one of them. Thanks Marv! May God bless you.”
Arlene (Burg) Poling ’80

“Diet Dew and cough drops. Messiest office on campus. Noon basketball with the same shirt and shorts for four years. Generously giving his time to help me through some rough academic moments. Thanks for everything, Marv.”
Pete Anderson ’86

“As I get older, I appreciate how active Marv was with all of us as students and even when we graduated...I remember everyone giving Marv a hard time about braces and wraps all over his body. Marv never complained about his pains and was always a tough competitor. If you didn’t respect him, he could make you look foolish. His hook shot in slow motion was the worst thing that could happen to you if you were guarding Marv. He always found some sort of shot to accommodate his aging as well as short body. I reflect back to those times now as I put on my braces and change my shot so it does not hurt so bad.”
Tim Clements ’81

Vietnam Stories Shared at Viterbo

They gathered for what was called “Retelling the Stories of Vietnam.” It was one heck of a story and it took three days—February 2-4—to retell it.

It was an amazing gathering that took place at Viterbo this past winter when people from all backgrounds shared their stories of Vietnam, 29 years after the end of the most divisive conflict in the history of America.

Conscientious objectors, war veterans, policy-makers, academicians, the Hmong, and students who weren’t even alive at the time of the Vietnam conflict, converged on campus
for what turned out to be an emotional gathering. For those haunted by the memories and for others trying to understand what actually took place, it was very evident from the start of the symposium that the Vietnam War was far from over in the hearts and minds of those who attended.

Robert Froehlke, former secretary of the Army under the Nixon Administration, talked about the politics of war. He candidly and willingly accepted, debated or rebutted many aspects of the war that his questioners brought up at a public forum and in classes with Viterbo students.

Historians are able to be more accurate, and in hindsight, he admitted, there were mistakes and miscalculations associated with the conflict, but he defended the honor and integrity of the leaders who were running the war. “I never told a lie, and I believe all the leaders and presidents who were involved did what they thought was best for our country at the time. However, our national policy must have popular support. The people didn’t get behind us. And we miscalculated the readiness and fighting capability of the enemy.”

To this day, Froehlke, who is 78, readily talks about his experience and is open to hearing from others. “You’ve got to do what you think is right but you have to have an open mind,” he said. “You don’t learn if you don’t let others express their view.”

Other views were definitely expressed at the symposium. Deacon Michael Cullen, a member of the infamous “Milwaukee 13” was part of the group that broke into nine draft boards, removing an estimated 15,000 draft files which were then burned. Cullen was subsequently imprisoned and upon his release, deported. He spent 18 years out of the country before returning in 1991. “We are all brothers,” he said. “We must look to the new century with much more hope. And it’s important for us to seek healing and reconciliation.” Cullen apologized to the veterans and others who were offended by his earlier actions or who misunderstood his motives.

Others who participated included several former Hmong soldiers who fought in the “secret war” in Laos on behalf of the U.S.; Randy Ebert, an author who chronicled the everyday life of the Vietnam soldier; Larry Germanson, a Viterbo graduate who shared his personal story of Vietnam, and Michael Smuksta and Ron Schafer, members of the Viterbo faculty who moderated and provided historical perspective to the conflict.

During the three day affair, musicians also played the music of the Vietnam era and at other times, individuals on opposite sides of the spectrum, shared “soup and conversation” regarding their experiences.

“It was an unbelievable gathering of people,” said Sister Anita Beskar, global education. “Here we are, nearly 30 years later, and still, there remains a tremendous need to talk about this very traumatic experience which affected so many lives.”

Vietnam remembrance
What we went through by Frank McIlmail

I was a Captain in the Army Nurse Corps stationed at Camp Zama, Japan from September 1966 - August 1969. Ninety-five percent or our patients were Vietnam casualties...
One morning at 7 a.m. four of us nurses were given the order to convert an old room which
was stockpiled with all sorts of odds and ends into a unit to treat burn victims and be ready to
receive patients by 3 p.m. that afternoon. Amazed we looked at one another, trying to
remember when was the last time we treated a burn victim if ever. Anyway, we were ready
by 3 p.m. and about ten soldiers came to us by helicopter. In those days the patient would be
wrapped in gauze, and silver nitrate would be applied to the gauze. All you could see of the
patient was his eyes. Naturally, the patient needed help with all activities of daily living. One
evening I was in charge of the unit. There were about 20 patients. I went to each patient and
asked if they would like pizza. Some couldn’t imagine they would ever see a pizza again. So I
ordered about 15 large pizzas and coke and beer. Then I realized I needed help feeding these
guys. Ward 14 was a holding area for the guys who were discharged from the hospital and
were awaiting orders either back to Vietnam or the States. I told the sergeant in charge that I
needed help feeding these patients. Within a few minutes there were lines of soldiers, all in
pajamas and bathrobes (this was the “uniform of the day” for Ward 14) using canes, crutches
and whatever, sitting down and feeding their fellow companions. It was a wonderful sight! At
that time I had a supervisor who was strictly military, everything was by the book. Pizza
parties was not in her book so I figured. The next day after she gave me report she explained
that she had heard about my pizza party. I acknowledged the fact and she slipped me 50
dollars explaining the next party was on her!

In 1969 the dissatisfaction of the American people with the Vietnam war became apparent to
us in Japan. During this period I received word at 2 a.m. to ready the operating room for a
patient who was coming to us by helicopter. I met him at the chopper. His legs had been
blown off by a land mine. After he went in surgery I took his personal belongings to a locker.
A letter fell out of his duffel bag and I read it. I don’t know what possessed me to do that but
I did. It was from his wife. They were newlyweds when he went to Nam, he had only two
weeks left in Nam when she wrote and couldn’t wait for him to come. I cried and remember
almost yelling: “What was this war all about.” The boy died the next day. I remember that
incident as being a turning point for me…wondering what the war was about and questioning
my role in it.

These are memories of that time and I hope it helps the younger generation appreciate what
we went through.

New arrivals seek refuge

by Sister Bernyne Stark FSPA

n the smoke-and?fire years of the war in Vietnam, 1975 marked a moment of life or death for
the family of Peter and Cecilia Nguyen, who then lived in Saigon.

Their 10-year-old son John and 8-year-old daughter Rose attended the top schools in the city
and lived there snugly and securely with their parents.

Peter worked in the U.S. Embassy there, while Cecilia plied her skills as a Red Cross nurse in
the busy hospital.

In the spring of 1975, the world of families, people, homes in Saigon, blew apart. Terror
prevailed.

Embassy personnel heard an emergency order: get out of this dangerous spot within 15
minutes; your lives and those of your families are threatened by the Viet Cong.
The Nguyen family of four, together with Peter’s niece Ann, 12, (she had lost her parents in the tragic turn of events) escaped with their lives and little else.

Sponsored by St. Francis Hospital, La Crosse, the Nguyens were welcomed to their new home by two representatives of that institution, Sister Joyce Bantle, FSPA, and Philip Utz, M.D. The sponsors procured rent-free housing for them in La Crosse. Franciscan Sisters from nearby St. Rose Convent readied the house for them, and a new life awaited these refugees in a new country.

Cecilia, eager to perfect her English-speaking and reading skills, wasted no time seeking the help of a volunteer tutor on the Viterbo College campus. Sister Bernyne Stark, FSPA, French instructor, accepted Cecilia as a non-traditional student who came to “class” four days a week to advance through several different levels of proficiency with the help of an instructor. Graded skill-building materials were generously supplied by the education department.

Admirable and impressive was the goal of the parents to secure a future for Rose and John, one which would open the door of opportunity for them.

The family moved to Wichita, Kansas, where Peter has relatives; he secured employment with Boeing Aircraft. Cecilia developed a career in social work.

John was eventually accepted at MIT and later earned a Ph.D. He recently joined a small team who founded a new company and he serves as director of technology for that firm. He lives in Boston. Rose received her undergraduate degree at Duke University, then received a Ph.D. also. She lives in Madison.

Ann, a graduate of Aquinas High School and Viterbo College, now lives in Aurora, Illinois, with her husband and two pre-teenage children, Amanda and Nate.

**ON CAMPUS**

Two honored at Viterbo’s most prestigious awards
**Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J.**

Sister Helen Prejean was born April 21, 1939, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and has lived and worked in Louisiana all her life. She joined the Sisters of St. Joseph of Medaille in 1957. She received a B.A. in English and education from St. Mary’s Dominican College, New Orleans in 1962. In 1973 she received an M.A. in Religious Education from St. Paul’s University in Ottawa, Canada. Her ministries have included teaching junior and senior high students. She was Religious Education Director at St. Frances Cabrini Parish in New Orleans and Formation Director for her religious community.

Involvement with poor inner-city residents in the St. Thomas Housing Project in New Orleans in 1981 led her to prison ministry where she counseled death row inmates in the Louisiana State Penitentiary. She has accompanied three men to the electric chair and witnessed their deaths. Since then, she has devoted her energies to educating the public about the death penalty by lecturing, organizing and writing. She also has befriended murder victims’ families and helped found “Survive,” a victims’ advocacy group in New Orleans, Louisiana.
She has been featured in numerous print media and has also appeared on 60 Minutes, NBC’s Today Show, ABC World News Tonight, the Tom Snyder Show on CNBC, Larry King Live (radio), the Phil Donahue Show, BBC World Service Radio, National Public Radio’s Weekend Edition and Fresh Air, and the NBC Special on the Death Penalty, and the Canadian Broadcast Company’s “Man Alive.” She was profiled by the BBC’s “Everyman” in the United Kingdom. ABC did a special on Prejean on Prime Time Live and PBS featured her on Frontline.

Prejean is the recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees including the St. Thomas More Award from St. Mary’s School of Law in San Antonio, Texas. She received the Pope Paul VI Teacher of Peace Award from Pax Christi U.S.A. and the Laetare Medal from Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana.

Her book Dead Man Walking was on the New York Times best seller list for 31 weeks. It was also on the International best seller list.

Rev. H. George Anderson

Rev. H. George Anderson is the spiritual leader of the 5.2 million baptized members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and more than 19,000 clergy who work in church, mission, campus, prison, and military locations throughout the world. He was elected bishop of the ELCA on August 19, 1995, during the ELCA’s fourth churchwide Assembly, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The ELCA is comprised of eight seminaries, one deaconess community, 28 colleges and universities, 27 high schools, 241 elementary schools, 1,957 early childhood education programs, 253 parent corporations with many more subsidiaries and 145 camps and retreat centers serving 450,000 yearly.

Anderson, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate from Yale, earned graduate degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and is known as a translator and author of many works on Lutheran history. He was on the faculty of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina, and served as its president from 1970 to 1981. At the time of his election as Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, he was serving as president of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, a position he held for 13 years.

A gifted speaker, scholar and writer, Anderson writes a regular column in The Lutheran magazine, and has recently completed “A Good Time to Be the Church, A Conversation with Bishop H. George Anderson,” Augsburg Books, February 1997. Other works include co-authorship of several volumes of the “Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue,” many scholarly essays, book chapters and translations over the past three decades.

In addition to serving the church over the years in many different capacities, Anderson’s record of community service includes organizing the College Place Day Care Center, cofounding the Eau Claire Community Organization, and serving as a director of Minnesota Public Radio (1984-90).

Bishop Anderson generously shares the personal side of his life, serving as an example and mentor to others. He was born in Los Angeles March 10, 1932, and adopted by Reuben and Frances Anderson.
1999 Scholl Scholar named
A high school student from Manitowoc was named the winner of the Viterbo College Dr. Scholl Scholarship which covers the cost of four years of tuition. Benjamin Strieter, a senior at Lutheran High School, Manitowoc, indicated an initial interest in pursuing a medical career. The Scholl Scholarship is valued at over $50,000. Strieter was the student selected from a final pool of 24 students who were invited to campus for additional testing and interviewing. The Scholl Scholarship is Viterbo’s most prestigious scholarship and is reserved for a top scholar with an expressed interest in a health related career.

Viterbo top scholar in the news
Some people have all the luck. Others just plain work hard. Include Renee Heuss in the latter category.

Heuss, a senior, was named Honorable Mention to the USA Today All USA College Academic Team. She was one of only 80 students honored nationwide and the only one from a Wisconsin college to receive the honor. In all, 1,000 students from across the country were nominated, and Dr. Mary Hassinger from Viterbo submitted Heuss’ name. Hassinger is the Dean of the School of Letters and Science.

Just what kind of student is included in this prestigious list?
For starters, Heuss is the recipient of Viterbo’s Dr. Scholl scholarship which goes to a top student with an expressed interest in a health related career. She also carries a perfect 4.0 grade point average and is a combined chemistry/pre-med major. Hassinger describes Heuss as a “one-in-a-million type student.” And, if she is successful in reaching her dream to become a physician, Hassinger is equally enthusiastic. “I can just imagine Renee dealing with patients. They’ll be the luckiest patients in the world.” In addition to her academic accomplishments, Heuss is also involved in other pursuits. She served as class president last year and is in the chemistry/biology club. She also has volunteered in tutoring the Hmong.

Viterbo MSN offers new options
Viterbo College is now starting the second year of offering a Master in Nursing (MSN) program. Bonnie Nesbitt, a member of the nursing faculty and coordinator of this program, has asked that nursing graduates be informed of some new options pertaining to the program. Students are now able to take courses in nursing education as part of the gerontological or community nursing curriculum. Also, more content in case management, nursing leadership, and information management has been added. Call Bonnie Nesbitt at 608-796-3688 for more information. She indicates it is not too late to apply for fall 1999.

Health options discussed
Dr. Alan Fleischmann talked about complementary medicine with students March 1 as part of campuswide Wellness Week activities. Covering topics such as acupuncture, massage therapy, vitamin and herbal therapy, Fleischmann indicated that nearly half of patients who see doctors
have tried complementary therapies. “The medical community has changed,” he said stressing that it is important for doctors to understand and work with patients who combine complementary and traditional medicines.

PHILANTHROPY NOTES

Bringing ethics to life

Viterbo College kicked off the D.B. Reinhart Institute of Ethics in Leadership program April 22 with a presentation by Dr. Louis Sullivan.

Sullivan, a recipient of 47 honorary degrees and numerous distinguished service awards, was an excellent choice for the first-ever program.

Sworn in as Secretary of Health and Human Services on March 10, 1989, he served as Secretary throughout President George Bush’s administration. Since January 1993, he has been President of Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta.

Born in Atlanta, Dr. Sullivan received a bachelor of science degree, magna cum laude, from Morehouse College and earned his medical degree, cum laude, from Boston University. His internship and medical residency were at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. He is certified in internal medicine and hematology.

The majority of the audience was comprised of health care professionals and Dr. Stephen Schultz from Franciscan Skemp Healthcare and Dr. Phillip Dahlberg from Gundersen-Lutheran Medical Center provided responses to Sullivan’s remarks.

According to Dr. William Medland, President of Viterbo College, future programs will be directed to ethics in business, education and other major social issues. “We thought healthcare would be a good place to start. Much of Viterbo’s tradition is in that area and healthcare provides much of the employment base for the region. We are off to a good start now and the Institute will be an exciting place for a wide range of discussions to take place.”

The Institute is named in honor of the late businessman and entrepreneur D.B. Reinhart, a philanthropist and mentor who espoused the ideals of ethical leadership.

Most recently, a number of friends and associates collectively donated $500,000 to the Institute to provide for a permanent endowment for programs and speakers.

A first class gift

You never know what you’ll find when you go to your mailbox; and that was definitely the case when President William Medland discovered in his morning pile of letters, a $50,000 check from a Florida donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

According to Medland, this particular donor does not accept applications for support but seeks out information on independent colleges throughout the country, and selects one each year to receive the scholarship. “Apparently from what we have heard, the donor likes the direction the college is taking and decided to support our efforts. Sometimes in ways we don’t even
fully understand, word gets out about the good things we are doing at Viterbo and this instance is certainly a very affirming example of that.”

**In other philanthropy news:**
- The Dietetics Department was also the beneficiary of some good news. The department will receive $2,000 from the American Dietetic Association which will be used to buy educational materials to use in teaching nutrition lessons to elementary school children. Junior dietetic students will visit nine area elementary schools to present lessons on “How much fat?” “The Power of Water” and “Handwashing.”
- Dietetics will also be working with another grant, $5,000 from Humana, which will be used to implement a campus-wide wellness program.
- Viterbo student Joshua Nunn from Kapaa, Hawaii, was selected to receive a $1,000 scholarship from the Sentry Insurance Foundation. The scholarship is awarded to a student who has expressed interest in business, economics, math or related areas.
- Viterbo education graduate students from the Milwaukee area will benefit from a $25,000 gift from the Emory Clark Family Foundation which will be awarded in the form of scholarship vouchers for inner-city teachers who want to take Viterbo graduate courses targeted to the specific needs of instructors working in large-city schools.
- Fine Arts received $3,500 from the Heartland, a 15-state Mid-American Arts Alliance, and the gift will be used to underwrite one of next year’s Bright Star Season events.
- Kenna Christians, vice president for Institutional Advancement, reports that support for the newly formed D. B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership has been “exceedingly strong.” As Strides goes to press, nearly $500,000 in pledges have been made to support an endowment for programming associated with the Institute. She reports that more than 25 individuals have provided generous leadership gifts and these donors were recognized as “Reinhart Fellows” at the April 22 opening Institute program featuring former Cabinet Secretary Dr. Louis Sullivan.

**SPORTS CORNER**

**Barry Fried to head Viterbo athletics**

Viterbo College President William J. Medland wasted no time in hiring a new athletic director for the school after Bruce Erickson announced his departure on Feb. 22.

He didn’t have to look far as he gave Barry Fried, Viterbo’s director of annual giving, the vote of confidence just nine days after the search began. Fried became only the fifth athletic director in the 26-year history of V-Hawks athletics on April 1.

Fried, who has served as assistant basketball coach and in various administrative roles for the college since 1994, will take over for the departing Bruce Erickson, who is leaving Viterbo to take a full-time assistant soccer coaching position at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. Erickson has been athletic director since 1995 and head men's soccer coach since 1993.

"Barry is enthusiastic, energetic and a goal achiever," Medland said. "He is the one person on the Viterbo campus that relates well to every internal constituency: faculty, staff, administration, coaches, student-athletes and other students. He is well respected by all for his demeanor, his insight and his ability to achieve. Barry will do an outstanding job as our next athletic director."
"I've worked in both administration and in athletics and I'm hoping I can tie the two together even more than they are now," Fried said. "This is a challenge I believe I am ready for.

"I am very excited to have an opportunity to lead the Viterbo College athletics program," Fried said. "I will look to build on the foundation that has been established. Bruce Erickson has done a nice job of getting certain things off the ground in his tenure.

“In the past couple of years, the college has shown its commitment to athletics by adding athletic scholarships, adding women’s soccer, and most recently, by building our new athletic facility on Highway 16. These are signs that the school understands the importance of athletics in the total educational process.”

While Viterbo did not break from tradition in leaving the athletic director job a half-time position, in Fried’s case to be coupled with a position in the college’s institutional advancement office, it did break from the tradition of combining the position with that of a head coach.

Fried believes his background as assistant basketball coach and extensive experience as an administrator at the college can only help the athletic program.

Viterbo opens baseball season as giant slayer

There’s no denying that the Viterbo College men’s baseball team at last has its own field of dreams. But to open the 1999 V-Hawks baseball season, another field temporarily laid claim to that title. That field was none other than the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome, home of Major League Baseball’s Minnesota Twins.

On that night (Feb. 15), however, it was the home of the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers, the NCAA Division I perennial powerhouse that just happened to be the 26th ranked team in the nation.

But that didn’t matter much to the V-Hawks, who played the role of David in the famous story from the Bible.

And just like in the Bible version, the V-Hawks, better known on this night as David, became giant slayers and defeated Goliath, played to perfection by the Golden Gophers, representing the largest university in the United States.

Not only was this Dale Varsho’s first victory in his first game as head coach of the Viterbo men’s baseball team, it was without a doubt the biggest win in the history of Viterbo baseball.

During batting practice, you could see the awe in the players’ eyes as they looked around the field and the stadium itself. Especially eye-catching were the giant banners of past Twins’ greats hanging from the rafters: Rod Carew, Harmon Killebrew, Kent Hrbek and Kirby Puckett.

And when it came to game time, while the players and coaches had their game faces on, you couldn’t help but notice the excitement radiating from each of them.

Varsho’s pre-game talk was short but sweet: “We don’t have anything to prove to them, they have something to prove to us. Just go out and play the way we know you can and have some fun.”
And fun they had.
The V-Hawks came out swinging in the first inning, scoring two runs. They added to that with single runs in the third and fourth innings to take a 4-3 lead.

Minnesota knotted the score with a run in the fifth inning before Viterbo exploded for three runs in the top of the seventh to grab a 7-4 lead.

Then it was up to the V-Hawks pitchers to hold the Golden Gophers at bay, which they did by allowing just one more run the rest of the way. The final score: Viterbo 7, Minnesota 5.
It was truly a night to remember for the 1999 Viterbo College men’s baseball team.

Wall of Fame adds three

Three former Viterbo College student-athletes were inducted into the “Wall of Fame” during the Feb. 13 ceremony in the Student Activities Center lobby.

The eighth annual ceremony was part of the Homecoming '99 activities, which included the annual alumni basketball game, an alumni social and the Viterbo men’s and women’s basketball games against Grand View College.

Honored were Wayne Wagner (1988-92), Tiffany Orwan (1988-91) and John Mazzola (1986-90). Their plaques, which are now on the wall in the SAC, relate the stories of their accomplishments:

Former athletic director Rod Popp probably said it best in 1991 when he called Wayne Wagner “one of the consummate athletes in today’s small college athletic scene … an excellent student and a dual-sport athlete, a fine young man.”

The forward from Marshfield became a true team leader his sophomore year, helping Viterbo to a 28-5 record. He then averaged 13.8 and 10.8 points a game, respectively, his junior and senior seasons.

Wagner received 2nd Team All-Conference and Academic All-American honors his junior year, and 1st Team All-Conference and NAIA All-District honors as a senior.

Wagner also excelled in baseball. As a two-year starting outfielder on the V-Hawks baseball team, Wagner had a career batting average of .295 for Viterbo.

When Tiffany Orwan transferred to Viterbo College from Buena Vista College (Iowa) in 1988, volleyball coach Sonny Calvetti knew he had a special player. Not only did she possess the skills that helped Viterbo College women’s volleyball become a Midwest power, Orwan was also an “exceptional person.”

“Tiffany was a good athlete who put in the extra time in the gym and in the weight room,” Calvetti said. “She was very focused, and her leadership was a big part of Viterbo’s success. Tiffany put her heart and soul into everything and her work ethic was second to none.”

In all three seasons as a V-Hawk, Orwan was a member of conference championship teams. As a junior, she helped lead the V-Hawks into the NAIA District 14 finals.
As a junior, she received 1st Team All-Conference honors. And as a senior, Orwan received 1st Team All-Conference and NAIA All-District honors.

If you were to ask anyone who ever played soccer with or against John Mazzola what his best attribute was, you’d probably hear remarks like: “he played with a lot of heart” or “he worked hard all of the time” or “he was dominant in the air” or “he had great vision.” But the one remark that probably best sums up John Mazzola as a soccer player is one made by former teammate Bruce Erickson, who said: “John is the epitome of tenaciousness on the field.”

It was at the exact time that Mazzola first put on a Viterbo soccer uniform that the V-Hawks amassed a record of 53-20-6 and accomplished what no other team had done before, win the NAIA District 14 championship.

While the team enjoyed great success from 1986-89 with Mazzola in the starting lineup, the defender from Peoria, Ill., enjoyed personal success as well. In 1986 and 1987, Mazzola received Second Team All-Conference honors. In the 1988 NAIA District 14 championship year, Mazzola received All-District honors, as well as Northwestern All-Tournament honors, and NAIA All-District honors his senior year.

ALUMNI NOW

Outstanding Alumni honored

Three Viterbo College alumni were honored for their achievements at a February 12 banquet held in their honor. They are:

**Michael Peplinski ’96** - Young Alumni

It’s a long way from the Coulee Region to Nagano, Japan, but Mike Peplinski found himself there just two years after graduating from Viterbo with a Bachelor of Science in Education.

Peplinski, who teaches seventh and eighth grade mathematics, geography and science in the Alma Area School District, was in Nagano representing Alma, Viterbo College, Wisconsin and the rest of America as a member of the 1998 U.S. Olympic Curling Team.

Peplinski also gives back to his community in other ways. He is varsity volleyball coach, faculty advisor for Alma High School’s Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program, the contact person for the Wisconsin chapter of the National Kidney Foundation, and camp director/instructor at United States Curling Association Junior Camps.

**Theresa Richards ’73** - Professional Development

After graduating from Viterbo, Theresa Richards spent a year at the former St. Francis Hospital in La Crosse before moving on to Marshfield’s St. Joseph’s.

From 1974 to 1975, Richards was a staff nurse in the critical care unit at St. Joseph’s before landing her first managerial position as nurse manager of the Intensive Care Unit. She held that position for four years.
She was named Assistant Director of Nursing, a position she held from 1979 to 1980, and a year later, was named Director of Nursing.

In 1991, Richards was named Vice President of Professional & Support Services at St. Joseph’s and in 1992, she became Executive Vice President of the hospital.

Richards also earned her master’s in Public Health from the University of Minnesota, where she attended from 1983 to 1988.

**Shelly Lamb-Vosen ’80 - Outstanding Alumni**

From her position as vice president of the Viterbo College Alumni Board, which she served for six years, to her service as chairperson for the Emeritus Board, a position she still holds, Shelly Vosen’s service to Viterbo is invaluable. Shelly also co chaired the Fine Arts Center 25th Anniversary committee and served on the Viterbo College Centennial committee.

Vosen studied theatre and English and worked in the Viterbo Development office.

She is Vice President of Development at Chileda Habilitation Institute in La Crosse. She also was the founding director of the Chileda Women’s Board.

In addition to volunteering at Viterbo, she serves as vice president of the Western Wisconsin Regional Arts Board.

**Career Coaching**

A number of Viterbo “alumni coaches” were on campus Feb. 12 to advise students on future employment opportunities. Common questions included: What is the job market like? Am I on the right educational path? What do you like best about your career?

Graduates who shared time and expertise were: Larry Winter ’88 (Social Worker) Dean Witz ’90 (Opera Singer/Vocal Instructor), Michelle Winter ’89 (Social Worker), Beth Jaekel ’93 (Referral Services Coordinator), Amy Hansen ’85 (Director of Human Resources), Brenda Witz ’94 (Elementary Teacher) and Joyce Heil ’72 (Nursing Professor).

The event was sponsored by the Alumni Association.

**Sigma Theta Tau**

Alumni of the Viterbo College Nursing Program will get a one-time opportunity to join the prestigious Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society of Nursing. There are two main ways to be inducted into the Society. The most common is for a student to meet academic criteria: a 3.0 on a 4.0 gpa and rank in the upper 35 percent of the graduating class. Graduates of the Viterbo nursing program are eligible if they meet the academic criteria required of current students, or if they have been professionally active in the nursing community and been out of school for at least five years. The induction of a charter class will be held in November and alumni interested in this opportunity should contact Dr. Vicki Moss at 608-796-3694.

**CLASS NOTES**

1940

S. Yvonne Jenn ’42 received the 1998 Robert H. Miller, RRT Award from the National
Association for Respiratory Care November 1998. The award was in recognition of her work as the group’s registrar during the first 10 years of its existence.

S. Lucille Kleinheinz ’44 received the Saint Francis Staff Award at the first Aquinas High School Founder’s Day celebration January 28, 1999.
S. Althea Meierotto received the Saint Francis Staff Award at the first Aquinas High School Founder’s Day celebration January 28, 1999.

1950
Kay (Sullivan) Larson ’56 was a co-presenter at the 31st annual meeting & educational conference for the American Society for Healthcare Food Service Administrators of the American Hospital Association. The topic was “Expanding the Role of Clinical Dietitians in the Beginning of the 21st Century.”

1960
S. Joyce Blum ’63 was appointed Employee Equal Opportunity Liaison for the Arizona State Complex of Prisons.
S. Charlene Smith ’63 was a presenter at “A Vision realized: Make Us a Light to the Nations,” a day of praise and prayer in celebration of the life and works of S. Thea Bowman at the Holy Child Catholic Church in Canton, Miss. February 27, 1999.
S. Celesta Day ’64 received a Doctor of Ministry degree May 23, 1998. Her thesis was “Examining the FSPA Mission Effectiveness Program as a Way to Shed Light on the Ministry in Our Day.” She was also one of two people receiving the 1999 Spheres of Influence Award from the Franciscan Skemp Foundation in La Crosse.

1970
S. Rose Elsbernd ’70 will serve as the President Elect of Church Women United for the coming year, and will become President in the year 2000.
Barbara (Gerke) Jochman ’74 spoke to the Human A & P II class on January 29, 1999 regarding the nurse anesthetist program at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare, La Crosse.
Jean (Bahner) Krause ’74 received a Tribute to Outstanding Women award November 9, 1998 from the La Crosse YWCA.

1980
Rosemary (Marshall) Dregne ’80 was selected as special merit award winner for the 1998 Wisconsin Outstanding Nurses of the Year. Rosey works part-time at the Richland Hospital, Richland Center. She lives in Readstown with her husband Dave, and their three sons, Devin 16, Dusty 14, and David 12.
Monica Jacques ’81 and David Prueher were married November 7, 1998.
Julie A. (Johnson) '83 and David Handley celebrated the birth of twin daughters, Rebecca and Caroline, October 16, 1998.

Karen Matzek '83 will be taking a one-year leave of absence from Onalaska High School this summer to teach high school English in Cameroon, Africa.

Tricia and Francisco Perez-Guerra '84 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Rosario, December 30, 1998.

Anita Radloff-Blish '84 and Ron Blish celebrated the birth of a son, Devin Gregory, February 11, 1999. He joins sister Mara at home.

Alicia and David Rodeberg '84 celebrated the birth of a son, Ian Daniel, August 29, 1998. David will be finishing his fellowship at John Hopkins Hospital in July 1999.

Sharon (Towne) '84 and John Zernia celebrated the birth of a son, Michael, December 1998. He joins brothers Peter and Fred at home.

Theresa Cieminski '85 married Andrew Bowser October 4, 1997. Theresa received a Master of Music degree in composition from the University of North Texas, May 1998. She recently received a commission for a choral work with the Arlington school district in Arlington, Texas, which will premiere in the Bass Hall, Fort Worth.

Janine (Enderle) '85 and Venancio Luz '84 celebrated the birth of a daughter November 28, 1998.

Betty (Dean) '85 and Billy Heltne celebrated the birth of a daughter, Maria Louise, February 11, 1999. She joins siblings Molly and Michael at home.

Carolyn R. Schaut '85 received her Master of Business Administration from the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul May 23, 1998.

Lori (Galstad) Bagniewski '86 was promoted to Resident Care Coordinator of Woven Hearts of La Crosse July 1998.

Christine (Flowers) '87 and Mark Sommerfeldt celebrated the birth of a daughter, Ashley Amelia, October 16, 1998. She joins siblings, Whitney and Alexander at home. Christine recently began working at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago as the Corporate Director of Sub-acute Services.

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


Dawn (Lipke) '94 and Jeff Bojarski '89 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Hannah Mary. She joins sister Katelyn at home.
Kathy (Stotts) ’87 and Doug Haefele ’89 celebrated the birth of twins, Carson Alexander and Kendall Marie, December 31, 1998. They join sister Taylor at home.

Darin Magunson ’87-’90 graduated from the Palmer College of Chiropractic October 1998. He recently began working at Craft Chiropractic of Michigan.

Steven Wolfe ’87 is currently working in the Oncology, Hematology, and Bone Marrow Transplant Clinics at the UW- Hospital and Clinics of Madison. His specialty is working with the gastrointestinal, pancreas and liver cancer patients and with specialized care of colon cancer patients with Hepatic Artery Infusion pumps. He is also the secretary of the Wisconsin Capitol Oncology Nursing Society for the year 1999-2000.

Sheila Pierce ’89 married Wally Sjolander June 20, 1998.

Michelle (Schultz) ’89 and Mark Maxwell celebrated the birth of a daughter, Julianne Marie, January 9, 1999.

1990


Amber (Housner) ’90 and Walt Weiland celebrated the birth of a son, Jake Andrew, March 1, 1999. He joins his siblings Mitchell, 5, and Jessica, 3, at home.

Barbara (Humfeld) ’90 and Larry Schamberger celebrated the birth of a son, Hudson John, November 25, 1998. He joins brother Parker at home.

Ellen (Glaser) ’91 and Kenny Koelbl ’90 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Kelsey Ann, February 11, 1999. She joins brother Kyle at home.

Annette (Patterson) ’90 and Steve Kastenschmidt celebrated the birth of a son, Trevor Kenneth, November 16, 1998. He joins brothers Tyler and Trent at home.

Suzanne and Bruce Erickson ’91 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Olivia Grace, December 2, 1998.

Anne and Patrick Gibbons ’91 celebrated the birth of a son, Matthew Thomas, October 1, 1998. He joins brother Charles at home.

Danielle Murphy ’91 married Timothy Sprain December 26, 1999 in West Salem.

Kristie and Jan Prostman ’91 celebrated the birth of a son January 20, 1999. He joins sister RaeAnn Elizabeth at home.

Brenda Valadez ’91 received her Master’s Degree in Social Work June 1998 from the University of Minnesota. She is currently working at the Olmsted County Social Services in the child welfare division working on developing a new program for child protection interventions.

Martin R. Welles ’91 has accepted a six-month special assignment in the UPS legal department in Atlanta where he will be an attorney for the employment law section. Marty earned a law degree and a certificate in international law from Loyola University New Orleans School of Law in May 1998 and was admitted to practice law in Louisiana in 1998. He also received a Master of Arts in Communications from Loyola University in 1994. Marty has been employed with UPS since 1992.

Christine (Conrad) ’92 and David Ott celebrated the birth of a daughter, Megan Marie, December 31, 1998.

Judy Balsitis married Alan Smith ’92 October 10, 1998 in Carpentersville, Il.

Eric Wallbruch ’92 performed in Phantom from September 1998 through February 1999 at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre in Bridgeport, Conn.

Cathy (Adams) ’93 and Joseph Smith celebrated the birth of a daughter, Jillian, April 3, 1998.

Nancy (Anderson) ’93 and Brett Grams celebrated the birth of a son, Nickolas George, December 12, 1998.

Kristin (Theobald) ’93 and Shawn Drager celebrated the birth of a son, Ryan Emerson, January 27, 1999.

Shelly (Danczyk) ’96 and Dan Heerts ’94 celebrated the birth of a daughter January 13, 1999. She joins brother Seth at home.

Holly Gierok ’94 recently began working for Anderson, Bowen & Co. of Eau Claire in client accounting services.

Lisa Linder ’94 and Raymond Linder celebrated the birth of a daughter, Olivia Rae, November 12, 1998.

Susan (Popp) ’94 and Jamie Zelm celebrated the birth of a son, Tanner James, March 15, 1999. He joins his sister, Alyssa, at home.

Shanen (Baures) ’95 and Joseph Kazynski celebrated the birth of a son, Branden, January 10, 1999. He joins brother Tyler at home.

Diana Datka ’95 received her Master’s Degree in Education with an emphasis in Interdisciplinary Studies from National Louis University in Wheeling, Ill.

Scott Krueger ’95 has successfully completed the certification examination for diabetes educators. He also has been accepted into the Indian Health Service School Loan Repayment program. Scott is currently working as the Nutrition Services/WIC Director for the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin.


Svetlana Peker ’95 has accepted a position as Director of Marketing with Whitney Products of Chicago, a manufacturer of medical devices.

Richard Rust ’95 received a Master’s Degree in Sports Administration December 1998 from UW-La Crosse. He was promoted to inventory supervisor at Best Buy in Duluth, Ga.

Rebecca Marty ’97 and Joseph Wuensch ’95 were married November 21, 1998.
Tracy Carresse and Michael Boldt '96 were married October 23, 1998. Michael is employed by the George Shinn Uptown Men’s Shelter. He has been working with the homeless for the last six years.

Will Klekeary '96 proudly reports that he is now a published author. His book: “My Wholly Terra: A Father’s Diary” has been released by Prell Publishing, 18989 Hilltop Road, Sparta. Copies are $12.50 plus shipping. To order, contact the publisher at 800-201-4109.

Nicole (Kluesner) '96 and Thomas Hinkel celebrated the birth of a daughter, Jordan Elizabeth, December 26, 1998. She joins her brother Colin, 11/2 at home.

Erin L. Schroeder and Jeremiah E. Lynch '96 were married September 5, 1998.


Mike Peplinski '96 competed in the USA Curling Men’s and Women’s National Championships February 27 - March 6 in Duluth on the top seeded Paul Pustovar team.


Sarah Neumann '97 recently began working as the Nutrition Coordinator for Aging Services of the State of Arizona.

Traci Hahn '98 and Greg Hahn celebrated the birth of a daughter, Alexis Nicole, January 20, 1999. She joins sister Megan at home.

Christopher Hollister '98 is working at the Vernon County Broadcaster as a reporter. He will be covering government, high school sports, and writing feature stories.

Barbara L. Innocent '98 has been accepted into the Master of Business Administration at Loyola University Chicago.


Cynthia Lueck '98 began working for Lutheran Social Services of Eau Claire January 1999

Kelly Ross '98 married Jonathan Tokarski December 5, 1998 at Saint Stephen’s Catholic Church, Stevens Point.

A FINAL WORD

Franciscan tradition carries on

As the weather turns warmer, the days grow longer and the budding promise of spring turns into the rich harvest of summer, we are reminded of the ever-changing nature of life. Just as young children flourish into adulthood and tiny acorns grow to life-giving oaks, so has Viterbo evolved into a well rounded, highly respected, Franciscan institution, full of opportunity and promise to all who enter its doors.
Viterbo has seen many changes over the decades. From the time the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA) opened St. Rose Normal School in 1890 to prepare sisters to become teachers, to the time 80 years later when men joined lay women on campus, the changes have been obvious, progressive and in the best interest of the students.

In that tradition, one of the more obvious changes today is the number of sisters working daily in the institution. While as many as 45 sisters once labored at Viterbo, only 11 are employed there today. The reason is three-fold.

**Fewer Sisters**

First, there are fewer FSPA members today than there were a hundred years ago. At our height in 1962, we enjoyed 1,100 members. Today, we have about 480 members. Interestingly, this decrease is not due to a dying tradition; rather, it is the result of an unusual surge in membership following the depression in the 1930s. In other decades, new members have arrived in much more modest numbers. And we gratefully see that modest trend continuing today.

In fact, in the last three years we have welcomed 12 new sisters into an initial or final commitment in the community — one of whom, Sister Sue Ernster, is now working in campus ministry at Viterbo. And we are continually helping dozens more women through a discernment process.

That’s because religious life remains a viable lifestyle option today — whether a woman is a recent Viterbo graduate or one seeking a second-career option. As a member of FSPA for 40 years, I see firsthand how our members are blessed with extraordinary opportunities for spiritual growth, lifelong learning and personal development. Together, we find the meaning, relationships and security necessary to meet the challenges of a lifelong commitment to service. And I am confident that FSPA’s influence will still be found working in the halls of Viterbo for decades, even centuries, to come.

**Expanding Ministries**

Second, having worked diligently to meet the basic needs (education and healthcare) of humanity, we are now turning our focus to addressing other human needs. For example, we have expanded our educational efforts to new areas of the world. Sister Mildred Tigges, an FSPA who chaired the teacher education program at Viterbo from 1980 to 1988, is now providing that education in a new college in a relatively new country, Zimbabwe, where there are not enough schools to provide for the massive teacher training needs of the country.

We have also been increasing attention in other areas such as spirituality, peace and justice. These new and emerging ministries require more day-to-day attention from our sisters.

**Lay Leaders**

Third, and most importantly, the sisters laid the administrative groundwork for the college in such a way that their work can continue under the leadership of lay people. Although sisters today continue to be involved in governance of the college and the major decisions affecting it, far fewer need to be involved in day-to-day decision-making.

Through FSPA’s “mission effectiveness” program, we strive to instill Franciscan values of contemplation and reflection, peacemaking, concern for the poor, and respect for creation into the hearts and minds of faculty and administrators. We journey with some of them to St. Francis’ home in Assisi, Italy, and we provide an annual conference to help them keep in
touch with our Christian traditions and values. In addition, we as sisters assist in orienting all new faculty on the roots, values and traditions of the college. These are just a few of several continuing programs designed to ensure the Franciscan spirit pervades Viterbo.

We know from students that our efforts are working. Through their celebration with us on St. Francis Day, their participation with us in prayer and Franciscan Friends, and their own integration of Franciscan values, we know that the Franciscan spirit of Viterbo not only lives on at the college, but in the lives of our graduates, in the families that they raise, and in the institutions where they build their careers.

This universal Franciscan tradition has been the one constant through many seasons of change. Our mission to meet educational needs beyond classroom instruction has always remained, as have our efforts to instill meaning, ethics and values, and to help students grow in their relationships with God, themselves, other people and the earth. Empowering students to live full lives has been our mission and responsibility as Franciscan sisters for more than 100 years, and it will continue through 100 more.

Sister Helen Elsbernd speaks as both an alumna and former dean of Viterbo. She joined Viterbo’s chemistry faculty in 1969 and worked as department chair and assistant academic dean before serving as academic dean from 1976-1989. Today she is vice president of the FSPA. In her mind, service to people is service to God, and she greatly exemplifies both.

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...
Thanks to Tricia (Goldberg) Murtha ’91 for providing the following: “The picture was taken Hog Wild Weekend in April 1989. This was a photo of an airband contest. The members of this group ‘Salty Pepper’ were: (back row, left to right) Danielle Murphy ’91, Sarah Wilson ’88-’91, Sara Everson ’93, and Lisa Knopick ’92, (front row, left to right) Laurie Petit ’91 and Tricia Goldberg ’91. Also, not pictured in the group was Lee Mayfield ’90. The group took second place. “I was very surprised to see this picture in Strides. It’s hard to believe it was taken 10 years ago!”

VITERBO CALENDAR

May 16
Graduation, La Crosse Center
MAY 15
Summer Session (3 week) begins
JUNE 5
Summer Session (6 week) begins
JULY 16
Graduate School commencement
AUGUST 16
Viterbo Athletics Benefit Golf Scramble
AUGUST 28
Fall semester begins
SEPTEMBER 26
Billy Taylor Trio with Branford Marsalis, Fine Arts Center (7:30 p.m.)
OCTOBER 4
Viterbo College “Founder’s Day”
OCTOBER 4-8
FSPA Sesquicentennial celebration
OCTOBER 8-10
A Flea in Her Ear, Fine Arts Center (10/8 & 10/9-7:30 p.m. 10/10-2 p.m.)
OCTOBER 20
Quartetto Gelato, Fine Arts Center (7:30 p.m.)