The Big Apple: Latest Stop for Emerging Star

Viterbo theatre major Matt Boehler was walking down the hallway in a campus building one day when a sign caught his eye. It was a flyer inviting people to join concert choir.

“For some reason that flyer in the hallway just stuck out at me. I thought, ‘I’ll just do it for fun,’” he said.

Fortunately for Boehler, and for music lovers everywhere, it was. The only singing experience Boehler had when he enrolled at Viterbo was a stint in the chorus during a high school production of Oklahoma. Upon graduation in 1998, he was well on his way to becoming a successful opera singer with a lucrative, all-expense paid scholarship to the Juilliard Opera Center in New York City.

Boehler’s journey of self-discovery began that day. He had extensive musical experience playing both the piano and trumpet, but he had no idea of his hidden potential as a singer. The choir director, Daniel Johnson-Wilmot, noticed Boehler and sent him to see fellow professor Jerry Benser. “I started taking lessons with Dr. Benser once a week,” Boehler said. Not much was happening, but “I enjoyed it, so I thought why the heck not.”

“He obviously had a very big voice,” Benser said. “I could hear the instrument was there.” The two continued to work into the second semester. Benser believed Boehler’s years of trumpet playing without fine instruction caused him to tighten his throat when he played, which now carried over into his singing. They continued working each week, until as Boehler described it, “things just started happening.”

“The walls came down,” Benser said of what happened. “When that happens, it’s just like the sun coming out.”

Boehler went on to win the National Association of Teachers of Singing State competition as a junior and senior. He had roles in many Viterbo productions, including two operas.

“He also entered the prestigious Schubert Club Competition in St. Paul,” Benser said with a smile. “As you can tell, I’m quite proud of him. I’ve been waiting a long time to tell these stories. The contest had cash prizes for the winner. Matt was a senior, and while he wasn’t walking around in rags, he didn’t look like he had extra cash in his pocket. He made the finals, and he told me, ‘you know, I could really use the money,’ So I said, ‘why don’t you go and win?’ And he did.”
After graduating from Viterbo with a degree in theatre, Boehler spent two years doing regional theatre. Being a professional opera singer was still one of the farthest things from his mind, even with his powerful new singing voice.

“I honestly didn’t like opera,” he said. “I liked the idea of opera. I liked the music, I liked what went into opera, except during school I didn’t understand the dramatic part of opera. It still wasn’t theatre to me. That’s why Dr. Benser was such a good teacher over the years, he has always let me draw my own conclusions and never forced anything down my throat.”

Benser did “plant seeds” about opera now and again. “Equipped with the excellent acting skills from the Viterbo theatre department, his 6 foot 6 inch stature, and his booming bass voice, Matt was ideally suited for a career as an opera singer,” Benser said. “The bass roles in opera are often powerful people such as kings, devils, or gods, where physical presence and the depth and size of the voice are big assets.”

Regional theatre was fine, but it wasn’t entirely fulfilling. “I realized I didn’t have any desire to get better at what I was doing,” Boehler said. “And I realized I missed classical music.”

He then joined the Des Moines Metro Opera for a planned eight-week stint. “I was hooked,” he said. “I saw the potential of opera, the potential of opera as real theatre.” Next was a very successful three-year residence with the Minnesota Opera during which he won the two advanced divisions of the Schubert Club Competition, and finally—the Juilliard School. Boehler was one of only six people admitted that year into the free two-year program for emerging professional opera singers.

“The Juilliard School is the most prestigious music school in the nation, and people pay untold amounts of money to get that name behind them, because the Juilliard name opens doors,” Benser said. “And Matt’s not only getting fine training there in his classes, he’ll leave with a performance certificate as well.” During the break from school this coming summer, he has been hired at the Wolf Trap Opera in Virginia. He will play the title role in Sweeney Todd and the role of Leporello in Don Giovanni.

“I don’t think I could have taken the path to what I’m doing now if I hadn’t been given the room at Viterbo to become an artist,” Boehler said. “After four years of school, I don’t care what your major is, you’re not a finished artist. I don’t think you’re ever a finished product as an artist. My experience at Viterbo gave me such a plethora of skills, in music and in theatre, the perfect amount of skills for me to go to the next level.”

The next level will be life as a professional opera singer, quite an accomplishment for someone who began college with next to no singing experience. Boehler isn’t quite as impressed. “There is a different path for everyone,” he said. “A lot of people come into singing much later, and most of the singers I talk to didn’t come in to school wanting to be an opera singer. It’s one of those things you discover.”

“I’m very grateful,” Boehler said. “I don’t know if I’ll be a professional opera singer for the rest of my life, but right now I really, really enjoy it. I love the challenges it brings. When opera goes well, it really is one of the best things in the whole world. When it goes well and it’s real art, you feel like you make a connection with the audience and the other performers on stage. When that happens, I feel like I’m making a contribution and I feel I’m doing what I’m supposed to do.”
So do many other people, including his old friend. “I’m proud of all my students no matter how their lives turn out,” Benser said. “But of all the students I’ve had the pleasure of working with, Matt’s up there in the top two or three in terms of skills and what he’s been able to do with them. To see his progression to where he is now gives me great pleasure. And, he did it his way.”
By Anthony Slaby
aaslaby@viterbo.edu

Now and Then: "High Tech" Changes Campus Life

The old maxim, “The more things change, the more they stay the same,” certainly holds true to form when analyzing the behavior of students of yesterday and today. Students are still wearing jeans and eating pizza as they did in the 70s, and they are still frustrated with political agendas as they were in the 60s. Gas is no longer 35 cents a gallon and Johnny Mathis doesn’t top the charts, but students are still complaining about their homework and worrying about their grades.

Yet, not all is the same, and depending upon your perspective, much of the blame or credit can be traced to the introduction of the computer.

Through the use of technology, students are now able to contact family and friends at the drop of the hat. The “days of old” which involved waiting in line to use the one hallway phone in the dormitory are long gone.

Karen Greer ’65 recalls those days. “I would call home every other week, not because I didn’t desire to contact my family, but because in order to make a call, I had to stand in line to use the one pay phone available to me. And since calling home was long distance, it was necessary to stand and insert quarter after quarter,” she said of her experience with keeping in touch with close relatives.

And today?
“Rain email my parents every day,” says Rachel Lexen, a Viterbo junior biology major. Students like Rachel have the opportunity to use phones in their room or cell phones to keep in touch with family members. Had she gone to school in 1963, as Greer did, her ability to contact her family would have been limited due to physical distance and the availability of a phone.

Connecting with the folks is one thing, but students have discovered that the ease of accessing the Internet carries other benefits as well.

Events can be coordinated through email that would have otherwise relied on “snail mail” or word of mouth. Even the way students organize a protest has been changed by technology.

For example, in the spring of 1965, Greer and several fellow classmates participated in a civil rights sympathy march that ran between Viterbo and the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse campus--known then as La Crosse State Teacher’s College. “The march was to show our support of the protest going on in Selma, Ala., and to provide students the opportunity to participate in a peaceful demonstration,” Greer said.

Greer recalls word-of-mouth constituted the primary means of communication.
Fast forward to 2005

Nicki Sundboom, a senior, joined a number of other Viterbo and UW-La Crosse students who took a bus to Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga., to protest the School of the Americas and demonstrate for human rights. Sundboom was able to communicate with other members of her organization via email. It is this ability that made a large group at the protest possible and Sundboom noted “I found it easier to travel such a distance for the demonstration, because I knew I would have my cell phone and would be able to maintain contact with people at home.”

The times have certainly changed and the political climate is different, but the fundamental issues that spur students to action are the same. Despite the almost 40-year difference, Greer and Sundboom shared a common thread: a love for humanity and a willingness to demonstrate their discontent for the blatant disregard of human rights.

The evolution of computers and the ways in which it has affected students then and now, is apparent in other ways. Greer remembers the frustration of dealing with typewriters and the necessity of handwritten drafts that needed to be typed perfectly. One error meant typing the entire page over again.

Students who would follow in Greer’s footsteps, gradually had it better.

John Knothe ’75 remembers Viterbo’s first computer labs used Fortran and Cobalt. Students had to keypunch a little card that would, essentially, program the computer to do what was desired of the user. “The computers were huge and often took up half the room. It was also the beginning of word processing,” he said.

Nowadays, students literally have the world in front of them thanks to the technology revolution. Viterbo has in place 700 computers located in 10 labs and these figures do not include the many students--estimated to be upwards to 70 percent, of incoming freshmen--who arrive on campus with their own computers.

It would seem that students have nothing left to complain about. Revisions can now be done on the computer and mistakes can be corrected with a simple backspace, or better yet, by using spell-check. The Internet provides high speed research capabilities and terms like online learning appear everywhere.

Still, even with the heavy influx of technology, it’s difficult to locate a student who will claim that he or she has it made. Some familiar and some not so familiar complaints include: “My flash drive fell in the toilet and all my papers for this semester were on it. My floppy disc and all the contents are lost. You didn’t get my paper that I submitted electronically? I have no back up files!”

These statements have been heard on campuses everywhere and form the catalyst for Emily Jean Hanson, a Viterbo nursing major, to revert back to the old methods of handwriting her drafts and revising them manually before she types them. Even though she has a laptop of her own, she finds it necessary to use written drafts that cannot be lost by a mistaken click of the mouse.
Hanson isn’t alone. Although the computer has revolutionized the way students study, communicate—even protest, dependable old fashioned methods still find their way into campus life.

Technology aside, the ultimate goal of students of the 60s and those of today remains the same: surviving the adventure that is college to eventually graduate with a degree from Viterbo University.

This story was written by student intern Kelly Sexton with assistance from the staff of the communications and marketing office.

The Nuns Take Care of Everyone

By Tom Thibodeau

Editors Note: The following remembrance was published in the La Crosse Tribune on Nov. 3, 2004 in the Opinion section of the newspaper. The author, Tom Thibodeau, has been a member of Viterbo’s religious studies faculty since 1984.

Almost thirty years ago, I arrived in La Crosse, virtually homeless and unemployed. For the previous three years I had been living in Prince George British Columbia as a volunteer missionary. I had been teaching and coaching in a Catholic diocese for the glory of God and the handsome sum of twenty-five dollars a month plus room and board. The volunteer experience ended, I needed to come home, and the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration took me in at St. Michael’s Home for Children. At the time St. Michael’s was a residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed adolescents. Previously it had been an orphanage, one of the first institutions the Sisters founded in La Crosse, shortly after they came in 1873.

I moved in on January 1, 1976 with a suitcase of clothes and a box of books. Sr. Dolorice greeted me warmly and showed me to my room on the third floor, the room directly above hers. Little did I know she was to be my guardian angel. The room was large, dark, and cold with four beds and a small bathroom. This had been a dormitory room for the Sisters who had worked at St. Michael’s. Later that afternoon Sister Dolorice took me to the boys unit where I’d be working. She introduced me and left. I was no longer homeless and unemployed. Little did I know then, that the next six and one half years would change my life forever.

My story is not unusual. For the past one hundred and twenty-five years the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration have been offering hospitality and opportunity to everyone they meet in their institutions. When I say everyone, I mean everyone. At St. Michael’s we were all taken care of and prayed for by the Sisters; emotionally disturbed adolescents and adults. Even the priests who lived there were nurtured by their care and prayer. And over the years I have witnessed this same hospitality and compassion extended at medical centers, free clinics, board meetings, university classrooms, grade schools, and their own homes, St. Rose Convent and the Villa St. Joseph. These remarkable women are teachers, leaders, administrators, health care providers, servants, friends, and faith-filled witnesses to what the Gospel looks like in the flesh.

How is this possible? Faith and commitment are obvious. Grace and love are palpable in their midst. Authentic joy is expressed in their smiles and dancing eyes. Purpose and clarity of a
century of Eucharistic adoration has shaped their collective DNA. These virtues and characteristics are so visible and real in their lives. However after almost thirty years of being in relationship with the FSPA, Sr. Laurian helped me to name my experience of them and with them; “Reverence.”

I’ve lived in many places and had a number of jobs, but from that first day with Sr. Dolorice at St. Michael’s I experienced reverence, an uncommon spirit of sacred welcome. A reverence that embraces a timid soul and says “you are safe here.” Reverence, indefinable in description, but unmistakable when Sr. Laurian teaches. Reverence, a mysterious force, unleashed every time Sr. Arita prays the scriptures. Reverence, the twin sister of Justice, both accompany Sr. Jean into the prison for ministry. Reverence, a strong protectoress, has been embodied in their leadership and enfleshed in their service. Reverence, the felt presence of beauty, in the art of Carlene, Marie Leon, and Annarose.

Reverence, the adversary of arrogance; reverence, the antidote to cynicism and bitterness; reverence the foundation of justice; reverence, the virtue of the FSPA who continue to shape our lives personally and communally by their faithful presence before us and God. Peace and all good to you our Sisters, on this your sponsorship day.

**ON CAMPUS**

**Viterbo Welcomes New Faculty**

Michael Alfieri is an assistant professor in biology. He received his bachelor’s degree from the State University of New York at Binghamton and his Ph.D. from the University of Louisville.

He can be reached at msalfieri@viterbo.edu.

Nikki Balsamo is a dance instructor. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota. She can be reached at nmbalsamo@viterbo.edu.

Barbara Christopher is a music instructor. She received her bachelor’s degree from Mannes College of Music and her master’s degree from the Julliard School of Music. She can be reached at brchristopher@viterbo.edu.

Connie Fossen is an associate professor in social work. She received her bachelor’s degree from Mankato State University and her master’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She can be reached at cmfossen@viterbo.edu.

Trevor Hall is the new assistant director of the Master of Arts in Servant Leadership program. He received his master’s degrees from Edgewood and the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. He can be reached at tmhall@viterbo.edu.

Jason Howard is an assistant professor in religious studies and philosophy. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Wilfrid Laurier University, a master’s degree from Brock University and Catholic University of Louvain, and a Ph.D. from Catholic University of Louvain. He can be
reached at jjhoward@viterbo.edu.

Pam Johnson is an assistant professor in nursing. She earned her bachelor’s degree and master’s degree from Viterbo University. She can be reached at pajohnson@viterbo.edu. Tom Knothe is an assistant professor in business. He received his bachelor’s degree from Viterbo University and his JD degree from Willamette University in Salem, Ore. He can be reached at teknothe@viterbo.edu.

Sherri Lisota is an assistant professor of art. She earned her bachelor's degree from the University of South Carolina and her master’s degree from Vermont College. She can be reached at sjlisota@viterbo.edu.

Raffle is Huge Success

Left, Joel Chilsen, one of the raffle organizers, and Vic the V-Hawk sell raffle tickets at the groundbreaking. The raffle was a huge success because of the hard work of countless volunteers and donors.

Over $100,000 was raised for the Amie L. Mathy Center for Recreation and Education from “La Crosse’s Greatest Raffle.” The proceeds went to a good cause, and several of the winning entries had reason to cheer, in particular Tom Thibodeau (religious studies).

Thibodeau was the lucky entry, winning a 2004 VW Jetta GLS. Two Viterbo alums were also prize winners: Mary Maney Morgan ’54 of La Crosse ($2,000 tuition grant) and Doris (Ampe) Hautala ’59 of Morton Grove, Ill. (dinner for 60, aboard the new La Crosse Island Girl). Viterbo student Riley Hunter received a $500 tuition voucher for selling the most tickets. Students Maribel Wehrenberg, Julie Hajewski, and Staci Pedretti each won $100 in a raffle for students who sold up to 49 tickets.

A pontoon boat, diamond pendant, 2004 Chevrolet Colorado truck, and a grandfather clock rounded out the raffle prizes.

Campus Landscape Undergoes Change

The Viterbo community now has more parking spaces, more security light poles, and a more beautiful campus now that the city of La Crosse has vacated the 900 block of Winnebago Street and the 700 block of South Ninth Street between the Viterbo campus and St. Rose Convent.

This means 35 new parking spots for Viterbo University and 24 for the FSPA, 20 specially designed light poles to provide extra security, and eventually, landscaping and other beautification projects.

The change took place in August. Viterbo and the FSPA share ownership of the former streets. Both streets are now one-way, with traffic entering from South 10th Street by the San Damiano Chapel and exiting onto Market Street. Parking is by permit only.
**Founder’s Day**
The FSPA Choir performs for Viterbo students, employees, and others during Mass at Maria Angelorum Chapel on Founder’s Day.

The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Choir performed for Viterbo students, employees, and others during Mass at Maria Angelorum Chapel on Founder’s Day Oct. 4. Father Tom O’Neill presided at the liturgy. People also enjoyed other activities held in honor of St. Francis Day: a music prelude prior to Mass, a complimentary luncheon, an ice cream social, and a pet blessing. A neighborhood group of Aquinas Schools, Chileda Institute, the FSPA,  Franican Skemp Healthcare, and Viterbo also celebrated the Feast Day of St. Francis by delivering bread to neighbors in the community.

**Brown Bag Means Business**

Former Northern Engraving owner and CEO Charles Gelatt (far right) spoke to a capacity audience at the Reinhart Center for the first Brown Bag Lecture series of the year. Gelatt entertained the crowd with tales of his father and his business. He also offered some insight into what made him successful.

Viterbo picked up where it left off last year, continuing the highly successful Brown Bag Series. The four-part series entitled “The Ethical Business: Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future” features local business owners discussing the values that go into operating a business for the long term and the benefits that accrue to the community and future generations.

Former Northern Engraving president and owner Charles Gelatt opened the series in September. The series continued in October with Inland Printing owners Jack and Mark Glendenning. Paul Fuchsel of La Crosse Sign Company and Phil and Lyle Quillin of Quillin’s IGA will finish the series Feb. 15 and March 16, respectively.

“We are very fortunate to have many businesses in La Crosse that have demonstrated a real commitment to making our community a good place to live,” said Rick Kyte, director of the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership. “The business leaders who will be speaking at this year’s Brown Bag Series are people who are able to share from their own experiences how operating a business according to sound ethical principles is a key component of successful businesses and flourishing communities.”

**Campus Fountain**

The campus landscape will soon include a water sculpture designed by two members of the Viterbo faculty. The fountain, “Precarious Balance,” is the artistic vision of Gerard Ferrari (art) and J. David Blatt (theatre). Installation is tentatively set for summer 2005. The project was made possible by a generous donation from a benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous.

**Saying Good-Bye**

David Allen Willman (left), a respected professor of psychology at Viterbo for the past 10 years, died in his home in Limestone, Mich. Nov. 4 after a courageous battle with
mesothelioma. Memorial services were held in the San Damiano Chapel on the Viterbo campus. A tree was also planted in Assisi Courtyard in his memory.

Father Michael Braun (right), who taught at Viterbo from 1973-80, and was a priest for the Diocese of La Crosse for 46 years, died June 15 in the Community Health Care Wausau Hospital.

Science Department Partners with Kids
Three aspiring scientists pose for the camera.

Approximately 60 students from Lincoln Middle School visited Viterbo for a morning of hands-on biology and chemistry activities.

“Students who are majoring in elementary education and have a minor in science design the lesson plans for the day,” said Glena Temple, biology, who coordinated the activity. “Science majors volunteer to assist, providing many youngsters with their first taste of teaching. Last year we had a science major decide to become a high school teacher as a result of this volunteer activity.”

Twenty science majors volunteered during the event.

Iraq War Prompts Call-ups

We continue to keep the Viterbo students who were called to active military duty and are serving our country in the Middle East in our thoughts and prayers: Kelly King, Eric Hamilton, Russell Daines III, Crystal Paisley Knoll, Jason Zych, Thomas Campbell, Greg Stetzer, and Brenda Johnson, who were all on active duty at the time of publication.

A New Twist on Money

The author of The Soul of Money: Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Life presented “A Conversation with Lynne Twist,” an evening of compelling stories and insights from her book. The event was part of the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership at Viterbo University’s Fall Lecture Series and was co-sponsored by the La Crosse Community Foundation.

Twist formed the Soul of Money Institute, a center for further exploration of theories, attitudes, and best practices that enable people to find peace, freedom, and sufficiency in their relationship with money and the money culture. Twist was an original member of The Hunger Project when it began in 1977 and has served as one of its leaders for the past 20 years.

Viterbo and FSPA Celebrate 120 Years of Music

The Viterbo University Concert Choir, Women’s Chorale, Ninth Street Singers, and Platinum Addition joined with the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration Schola Choir to celebrate 120 years of music with a concert in the Maria Angelorum Chapel.

The history of the Viterbo music department is closely tied to the history of the FSPA’s commitment to music and fine arts. The FSPA taught instrumental music as early as the 1870s.
in La Crosse and established the St. Rose Conservatory of Music in 1904, the direct predecessor of Viterbo's Preparatory School of Arts. In 1944, the St. Rose College of Music merged with Viterbo College and became the Viterbo Department of Music, which gained full National Association of Schools of Music accreditation in 1952.

**Viterbo Scares Up Food for A Place of Grace**

Members of the Social Work Club and Connect Club organized a fundraiser and spent Halloween trick-or-treating for nonperishable food products to donate to The Catholic Worker House A Place of Grace. Viterbo employees and students also contributed by placing nonperishable food items in donation boxes on campus the week before Halloween.

**Better Character Through Sport**

Bruce Brown of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics presented “Teaching Character Through Sport” in the Fine Arts Center Main Theatre, a presentation dealing with themes such as courage, integrity, enthusiasm, work habits, perseverance, confidence, poise, sportsmanship, winning and losing, friendship, teamwork, discipline, and great competitors. “Teaching Character Through Sport” is sponsored by the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership at Viterbo University and the Viterbo Athletics department.

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**Graduate Student Named Teacher of the Year**

Lodi High School teacher and Viterbo graduate student Mark Kohl was named the Wisconsin Department of Instruction’s (DPI) 2005 Teacher of the Year. Kohl, who is enrolled in Viterbo’s Master of Arts in Education Program, is expected to receive his degree in 2006.

Kohl, who teaches U.S. history and communications, will represent Wisconsin at the National Teacher of the Year competition. He was originally named Wisconsin High School Teacher of the Year and then was chosen by the selection committee as the Teacher of the Year. “It is a tremendous honor and I am proud to say Viterbo University certainly played a significant role in this achievement,” Kohl said.

Kohl was recognized by the DPI for taking concepts learned in Viterbo’s Quality Classroom Management: Disciplining Without Coercion class and implementing them in his own classroom. His students wrote their own class preambles, constitutions, and classroom laws and used restorative justice to address consequences.
Servant Leadership Program Speaking to National Audience

Viterbo University’s graduate program in Servant Leadership will be available nation-wide in June 2005, just three years after Viterbo’s initial launch of a Master of Arts in Servant Leadership Program (MASL) on the La Crosse campus, the first of its kind in the nation.

Over 65 students are currently enrolled in the program and because of the strong response, university officials decided to expand the program and create an institute that would offer flexibility for adults who could earn their master’s degree by attending classes at Viterbo each summer for two weeks over a four-year cycle. Students will be sent their coursework in early spring and begin working with faculty at a distance using the Internet.

Independent projects will take place over the winter.

Because of the popularity of the program, Carl Koch, director of the MASL program, said he has received queries from individuals living in other regions of the country, which lead to the move to expand. “We knew the traditional classroom format wouldn’t work for busy adults living hundreds of miles from campus. But, by using the tools of distance education along with the on-campus summer coursework, we are able to create an institute that will be attractive to adults who want to study and practice servant leadership.”

Viterbo has hired Trevor Hall, a former educator from Aquinas High School to coordinate the activities of the summer institute. “This new program really offers something exciting to the adult who is not looking for the traditional approach to leadership,” Hall said. “We are expecting applicants from all over because a graduate program of this kind is unique and there is nothing else like it out there right now.”

Trustees Add Members

Four new members of the Viterbo University Board of Trustees were welcomed to their first meeting in October. They are: Patrick Murphy (far left), Institutional Advancement Officer for St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity in St. Paul; Curtis Sampson (left center), Chairman and CEO of Communication’s Systems, Inc. Corporation, Hector, Minn.; Robert Nesse (right center), President and CEO of Franciscan Healthcare, La Crosse; Charles Mooty (far right), Chairman, President and CEO of International Dairy Queen, headquartered in the Twin Cities.

Mathy Center

The Amie L. Mathy Center is scheduled to open in the summer of 2005. Construction of the Amie L. Mathy Center for Recreation and Education draws nearer to completion every day. Follow the progress at www.viterbo.edu/collaboration/progress.html. Almost $7 million of the $7.5 million needed for the project has been raised to date.

The Amie L. Mathy Center is a historic collaboration with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater La Crosse. It will include three collegiate-size gymnasiums, a teen center, a cardiovascular fitness room, a 1/8 mile walking and jogging track, game rooms, a free weight strength center, computer lab, and art room.
For Viterbo students, the opening of the new facility will provide immediate relief to a very serious overcrowding situation and it will provide great and unique opportunities for interaction with neighborhood youth.

New Partnership with WWTC

Through Wisconsin’s first partnership between an independent university and a technical college, Viterbo and Western Wisconsin Technical College are offering a new Associate of Arts (A.A.) option for students who are interested in continuing their education after completing their two-year degree. The new associate of arts program began this fall with a pilot group and an associate of science degree will also be available next fall. Approximately 25 students are enrolled.

The program will include a combination of curriculum and courses from WWTC and Viterbo. The collaboration allows for more flexible class schedules, financial aid, and the combined support services of both institutions. Under the unique arrangement, upon completion of the program, students will be awarded an Associate of Arts degree from Viterbo University. Students then have the option of continuing their education at Viterbo or another four-year institution and earning a bachelor’s degree.

“This new partnership continues to build upon the other collaborations we have with WWTC,” said Bill Medland, Viterbo president. “Viterbo and WWTC have a history of working well together and combining their respective strengths.”

Habitat for Humanity

Viterbo students, Amie Vos, Timothy Nielsen, and Mary Jilek work on the Habitat for Humanity house.

Twenty-five people from Viterbo participated in the Habitat for Humanity workday last fall. The home is being constructed near Viterbo at 925 Hood Street. The workday was organized by Campus Ministry.

PHILANTHROPY NOTES

Vendor Social

Kevin Neduidek (left) of Pepsi and Dave Villeneuve of La Crosse Graphics enjoy themselves at the third annual Vendor Social.

Over 70 people from 26 different companies attended the third annual Vendor Social in the Fine Arts Center Lobby. The event was held to thank the businesses and organizations who provide products, support, and service to Viterbo.
Athletics Golf Scramble
Even a little rain didn’t put a stop to the day’s activities.

The Athletics Golf Scramble was held at the La Crosse Country Club in August. The event was sold out, with over 140 golfers and 170 people for the dinner. Proceeds of the event benefit the Viterbo University athletics program.

Calling All Alums
Student callers were able to raise approximately $100,000 during the Oct. 3-28 Alumni Phonathon. Over 1,500 people made pledges while raising $25,000 more than last year.

Sponsor Reception
Representatives from the many businesses and organizations that support the arts at Viterbo were the guests of honor at a sponsor reception before Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. Pictured from left: Jim and Diana Birnbaum, Jen Roberdeau, and Pat and Bobbie Wilson.

A sponsor reception was held prior to the performance of Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. The event is held to show appreciation to the many businesses and organizations that support the arts at Viterbo. The majority of fine arts events offered by Viterbo enjoy some form of sponsorship, which is used to keep ticket prices affordable.

Batter Up
The World Series Party featured a raffle, silent auction, and various games. Over 70 people and the entire Viterbo University Baseball team attended. Proceeds from the event were applied to the Christopher Michael Lee Memorial Scholarship and the Viterbo University baseball team.

New Employees
Viterbo is pleased to announce the addition of three new employees to the Institutional Advancement office. Jen Roberdeau, annual fund associate, Elizabeth Brendel, university relations director, and Wendy Evans, administrative assistant.

Save Our Steinways
Save our Steinways Committee from left: Natalie McGarry, Fe Abellera, chair, Janet Virata, Jan Brock, vice chair, Anne Cina, Sandy Locher, Kay Leonard, Kate Pertzsch. Not pictured: Mary LaBrec.

Over $8,000 was raised at the Save Our Steinways event in September. The 80 people attending the event enjoyed an evening of cocktails and hors d’oeuvres at the home of Dr. Martin and Ruby Smith, and dinner and a musical program in the Fine Arts Center lobby. The third piano is in the process of being renovated and is scheduled for completion this spring.
Planned Giving Events
Viterbo University participated in two gift planning events on Oct. 26-27 in Milwaukee and Madison with the Catholic College Consortium. Alumni and friends attended a lecture series discussing “Are you in your estate plan?” As more Viterbo graduates join the ranks of alumni, estate gift planning is becoming a more popular option. For more information on estate planning contact Gary Klein at glklein@viterbo.edu.

General Awards Announced
- La Crosse Community Foundation awarded a $100,000 challenge grant--the largest endowment grant in the history of the foundation--for the Amie L. Mathy Center.
- Norman Gillette Fund of the La Crosse Community Foundation awarded a $5,000 grant in support of the Amie L. Mathy Center.
- Target awarded Viterbo a grant to develop programming for the Amie L. Mathy Center.
- Northwestern Mutual Foundation awarded Viterbo a grant for tuition remission for Milwaukee inner city teachers to attend master’s degree courses at the West Allis campus. Dr. Scholl Foundation awarded a $5,000 grant toward a Pre-professional Scholarship.
- Renewed: Department of Health and Human Services awarded a $15,598 grant for Nursing Advanced Education Traineeships.
- The Wisconsin Area Health Education Center awarded a $3,820 grant for Community Assessment, Resources, and Intervention through Nursing Guidance (CARING), Inc; the funding will be used for materials and supplies.
- The Franciscan Skemp Auxiliary awarded a $981 grant to benefit CARING, Inc.
- The Research Sites for Education in Chemistry, $18,466, for chemistry faculty member Kyle Backstrand and a student to do research at the University of Minnesota.
- Cisco Systems, Inc. approved a request by Sara Cook in the School of Business for approximately $9,500 worth of networking equipment.
- Wisconsin Foundation for Independent Colleges approved $2,000 from its College Community Partnerships for Business Ethics program for business faculty member Rochelle Cadogan to use for course development.
- Wisconsin Arts Board PAN (Performing Arts Network) awarded a $11,400 grant for support of Fine Arts program seasons.
- Heartland Arts Fund awarded a $2,100 grant to help produce Hubbard Street 2, a performance of the Bright Star Season.
- AHEC awarded a $1,240 grant for community outreach and nutrition and health programming for youth at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater La Crosse.

SPORTS CORNER

Wall of Fame Inductees
The Wall of Fame committee has announced its 2004-05 inductees. They are Mike Murphy (left), Rich Rust ’94 (center), and Kim Hendricks ’98 (right).
- **Mike Murphy** coached the V-Hawk Men’s Basketball team from 1992-95 and compiled an overall record of 71-26. In his final year at Viterbo, Murphy led the team to a Midwest Classic
Conference championship and a National Catholic Basketball Tournament championship. Murphy won all three Alumni Cup games versus UW-La Crosse and produced four All-Americans.

**Rich Rust** played both basketball and baseball for Viterbo from 1990-95. He was a great player for both programs. Rust finished his baseball career with a .305 batting average and his basketball career averaging 7.35 points per game. Rust was used as a utility player on the baseball field playing both infield and outfield. Rust was named to the basketball first team all-conference team during his junior year and to the honorable mention All-Conference team his senior year. During his four-year basketball career, the team compiled a 97-33 record and won a National Catholic Basketball Tournament championship and one conference championship.

**Kim Hendricks** finished her four-year basketball career in 1997-98. Hendricks finished her career sixth (ninth currently) on the all-time scoring list with 1,134 points. She earned NAIA All-America Honorable Mention and first team All-MCC honors her senior season. Hendricks was a strong inside-outside player for the V-Hawks and averaged over double-digits in points and nearly eight rebounds a game during her junior and senior seasons. During her four year career, the V-Hawks compiled a 61-60 record and finished second in conference her senior season.

**Damian Miller Signs with Milwaukee Brewers**

Damian Miller had one of his best years yet as a professional baseball player. Miller played in 109 games for the Oakland A’s and batted .272, his best as a professional. Miller had 108 hits and 58 RBIs. Miller only committed one error on the season and threw out 35 runners trying to steal. The Oakland A’s finished the season 91-71 and missed a divisional championship by just one game. Good news for V-Hawk fans is that this off-season, Miller signed a three year contract with the Milwaukee Brewers.

**Fall Sports Wrap-up and Awards**

The men’s soccer team, under the direction of Interim Coach Eric Zimmerman, finished 3-14 on the season. Although the team’s record was not as good as they had hoped, three V-Hawk players received post season recognition for their performances. Seniors Ezra Thormodsgaard and Dustin Naugle and freshman Pat Graham all received MCC All-Conference Honorable Mention.

With no seniors and only two juniors on the volleyball roster, the volleyball team struggled through a 7-27 season. One highlight from the season occurred when the V-Hawks won three consecutive matches to win the Viterbo Invitational. Sophomore Tiare Hurst was named a MCC All-Conference Honorable Mention player for her performances this year.

The women’s soccer team tied a school record for most wins in a season and had seven players receive post season honors. Sophomore Jen Schlesinger became the first player in school history to be named to the MCC first team All-Conference, first team All-Region, and honorable mention All-America. Jessica Bischoff, Claire Murphy, Kailey Husby, Lisa Jaroczynski, and Amanda Lube made MCC second team All-Conference and Charlotte Large made honorable mention All-Conference. Bischoff was also named to the second team All-Region.
Future Star?

After graduating from Viterbo in 2003, Ben Moore was signed by the New York Yankees organization. Moore played for the V-Hawks from 2000-03 and still holds the career records for shut outs (6) and innings pitched (249.5). Moore started with the Tampa Bay Yankees, a class low A team, and played most of this season with the Battle Creek Yankees, a single A team. Moore started five games for Battle Creek and made 22 appearances out of the bullpen. Moore pitched 69.7 innings, struck out 60, and gave up 66 hits. Moore finished the season 73 with a 3.88 ERA. The St. Croix Falls native is hopeful that he will start the season with the Trenton Thunder, a class AA team.

ALUMNI NOW

New York, New York
Linda Balgord Fenton ’82 is currently a featured performer in La Cage aux Folles on Broadway. She and co-star Michael Mulheren play ultra-conservative parents in the musical comedy about marriage, family, and love. She has also performed in Cats and Aspects of Love.

Night at the Theatre
Alumni and guests enjoyed the Viterbo Theatre Department’s production of Great Expectations. Director Rick Walters and several student actors joined the alumni at a reception after the show to discuss it.

King of the Mountain
Jeff Brostrom ’85 and two friends scaled the summit of 14,410 ft. Mt. Rainier in Washington State. “It was one of the hardest things I have ever done,” Brostrom said. “Many people attempt the summit every year and very few make it. I did it.”

Local Artist
A sculpture designed by Donna Gerke-Cuta ’70 was installed at the Pump House in downtown La Crosse. It was the fourth in a series of public sculptures in the Downtown La Crosse Sculpture Project, a volunteer effort involving local business people and artists.

Merry Christmas
Over 250 people attended the Alumni Children’s Christmas Party held in the Fine Arts Center lobby in December. The event featured traditional holiday favorites such as Christmas carols, games, face painting, and a visit from Santa Claus.

100 Years of Music Making
Celebrating 100 years of music making were, from left, Alyssa Bruemmer ’03, Heather (Zubrzycki) Douglas ’02, Kevin Douglas, Cynthea Zubrzycki, Mary Koller-Voss ’79, and Terry Voss ’80.
One hundred people turned out for the “Celebrating 100 Years of Music Making” reunion. The event included storytelling and reminiscing, lunch, and participating in a performance of the Messiah’s Hallelujah Chorus with the student choir.

**Golden Apple Award Winner**

Lori Liss ’87 was the winner of the Portage County Business Council’s Golden Apple Award. The annual award honors “outstanding educators who utilize innovative practices to meet the changing challenges of preparing students for the future.” Liss has taught religion at Pacelli High School in Stevens Point for 17 years.

**Just Wait 'til Next Year**

Viterbo’s Vic the V-Hawk and the UW-La Crosse Eagle duke it out during the annual alumni cup game.

*Photo contributed by Nate Beier.*

The Viterbo men’s and women’s basketball teams came up short in this year’s Alumni Cup games at UW-La Crosse, despite the best efforts of alumni guest coaches Wendy (Young) Wegner ’76 and Scott Koenen ’81. Scott Arenz ’90 brought home the cup for the Alumni Shoot-out competition, making the most free throws.

**Cruisin’ Along**

Milwaukee and Madison alumni enjoyed a cruise this fall on lakes Michigan and Mendota. Milwaukee cruise participants are pictured above.

Seated (left to right): Heather Smart, Steve Smart ’04, Sr. Bernadette Prochaska ’62, Mike Boticki ’91, Dana (Pukrop) Jackson ’00. Standing (left to right): Sr. Jean Moore, Mort Morehouse, Jenifer (Schultz) Blasiola ’97, Jason Blasiola ’98, Maureen Cerniglia ’02, Sr. Josephine Weiler ’54, Jaci Carlson ’02, Brigid Burns ’98, Amy Preisler ’98, Wendy Evans, Derek Jackson ’99, Linda Reed ’77, Don Reed, Marge Melton, LeRoy Emerson, Sally Emerson ’77.

**Music for a Good Cause**

Musician Jeff Iftekaruddin ’97 released his debut album on 424 Records entitled Just Like It’s Spelled. He also participated in Hairapalooza, an event sponsored by his record company designed to inspire people to donate their hair to Locks of Love. Iftekaruddin donated his hair he grew for two and a half years and performed at the event.

**Iowa City Event**

Alumni from the Iowa City area met to reminisce and get an update on the latest news at Viterbo. Seated (left to right): Diane Moeller ’62, Connie Delaney ’75, Lisa (Skemp) Kelly ’77, and Sally Emerson ’77. Standing (left to right): Elizabeth Brendel ’70, Gary Klein, Rob Anderson ’96, Liz Swanson, Jeff Danielson ’98 with Joshua, and Rose Danielson.
Alumni Weekend 2005

Alumni Weekend 2005 will be a celebration of the 50 years of the Viterbo University Alumni Association, and there is a lot to celebrate. The registration form is available at the back of Strides. New this year—be sure to take advantage of our “early bird” registration discount.

Plans include a Friday night cruise, a Saturday picnic, tours, games for kids (and kids at heart), liturgy in Maria Angelorum Chapel, and the “Celebrate Alumni” banquet. Mark your calendars.

Pre-Professional Night

An Evening with the Professionals front left: Mike McCormick ’95 and Judy Harpenau ’83, and back left: Jennifer Tilleman ’98, James Haakenson ’97, and Joe Kotnour ’75.

Over 50 students listened to and learned from alumni guest panelists in the fields of pharmacy, chiropractic, dentistry, family practice medicine, and physician assistance at the “An Evening with the Professionals” event.

CLASS NOTES

1960


Sr. Mary Ann Gschwind, FSPA, ’65 is serving as chairperson of the Viterbo University Board of Trustees, 2004-06.


Carie (Wildschut) ’67 and Paul Weston have been European travelers. Carie is active with the Greendale Community as a past president of the Women’s Club and on the board of the Public Celebrations Committee. She is also a Princess (officer) of the Raspberry Berets of the Root River Chapter of the Red Hat Society.

1970

Dorothy Schmaltz ’71 celebrated the birth of a third grandchild, Liza Louise Grinsteiner.

Jamie Barclay, daughter of Kathryn (Haggerty) Barclay ’72, married Allan De Bauche May 15, 2004.


Mati (Vega) Gomoll ’73 published a non-fiction book, Caye to Success, a biography available at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.

Lucy Slinger ’73, FSPA, spent almost a month in Africa as part of the Helping Hands Africa Project.
Mary Kief '74 has developed a scholarship in memory of her daughter, Nicole Sauer. Two scholarships have been awarded so far to high school seniors. Mary is a diabetic educator at the St. Clare Health Mission, a free clinic. She is celebrating 30 years at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare. She will be going to the Caribbean this summer as part of the Goodnews Project, an ecumenical outreach group, building houses.

AnnaMae Mayer '75 received a Doctor of Ministry degree from Bangor Theological Seminary in Bangor, Maine on May 21, 2004. Her topic of research was “From Welcome to Partnership,” an exploration of the full implications of the biblical tradition of hospitality. She was a missionary in El Salvador for seven years and is now associate chaplain at Aquinas House, the Catholic Student Center at Dartmouth College.

Jane (Paulson) '75 and Edward Ryan '75 celebrated the birth of a granddaughter, Riley Mann.

Jean Felber '78 is joining “Intercessors of the Lamb” as a Hermit Sister. She is entering the community, based in Omaha, this winter.

Janet Koller-Narloc '78 is working in the Cardio Cath Lab as an RN at Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee.

Nick Narloch '79 is choral director at Catholic Memorial High School in Waukesha and is currently working on a master’s degree in Religious Studies at Cardinal Stritch University.

1980

Lori (Tomb) Paul '81-'83 is employed by Mayo Clinic as a paralegal.

Linda Balgord '82 has joined the cast of the upcoming Broadway production of La Cage aux Folles. She appeared on Broadway in the original cast of Passion and in Cats as well as in the first national tour of Aspects of Love. Regionally, she has appeared in The Fix, Funny Girl, Evita, and Man of La Mancha. Her performance is dedicated to the memory of her father Richard Balgord.

Ellen Forster-Loy '82 is serving as a Congressional Detailee to Senator Inouye of Hawaii for this calendar year.

Maureen (Austin) '83 and Brian Holder celebrated the birth of a daughter, Meagan Leigh, May 15, 2004. She joins her brother, Andrew, 5.

Susan (Schramke) '83 and Martin Rhoads celebrated the birth of twins, Clare and Thomas, Feb. 10, 2003.

Kathleen (Gundrum) '85 and Patrick Johnston '00 have returned from 14 months active duty with the 452 combat support hospital division out of Milwaukee. They were stationed in Afghanistan.

Jeanette (Hertges) '85 (pictured at left) and Jose Delgado celebrated the birth of a daughter Anna Luisa, July 11, 2004.

Shawn (Reardon) Gibbons '86 released a CD, America’s Pastime by her band Hank and Ruth.


Jill (Counsell) Schuettpelt '87 received a Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems from UW-Stevens Point in 2001. She is employed by Epic Systems Corporation as a Technical Services Representative.

Patricia (Dernelle) '87 and James Kozek celebrated the birth of a daughter, Teagan Grace, Oct. 13, 2004. She joins siblings, Kennedy, 5, and Leo, 1.

Laurie (Johnson) '87 and Christopher Wunrow celebrated the birth of a daughter, Ryleigh Shay, May 10, 2004.
Lori (Liebl) Liss ’87 received a Golden Apple award for 2003-04 from the Portage County Business Council. Each year the Business Council recognizes outstanding educators who utilize innovative practices to meet the changing challenges of preparing students for the future. Lori has taught religion at Pacelli High School of Stevens Point for 17 years.

Eilene McCormick ’87 married David Peters May 19, 2003 in Caledonia, Minn.

Tammy (Scheer) ’87 and Terry Bartowitz celebrated the birth of a son, Zachariah, Dec. 30, 2003. He joins siblings, Anastasia, 3, and Alexander, 1.


June (Hunsley) Johnson ’88 accepted a position as Gifted/Talented Coordinator for the Black River Falls School District. Previously she taught at St. Mary’s School in Tomah, Wis.

Susan (Stone) Danielson ’88 is the new health services nurse at Viterbo University.

Mary (Vaassen) ’88 and Brian Siegenthaler celebrated the birth of a son, Carter Vaassen, June 1, 2004. He joins his brother, Connor, 3.

Denise (Martin) ’89 and Mick Marshall celebrated the birth of a son, Riley James, Dec. 17, 2003.

1990

Dione (Davidson) ’90 and Randall Brandt celebrated the birth of a son, Garron Daniel, July 8, 2004. He joins siblings Camron, 6, Bergen, 4, and Nelson, 2.


Linda Aarness-Gluck ’91 and David Gluch ’92 celebrated the birth of a son, Evan Davis, June 6, 2004. He joins his brothers, Owen, 4, and Alex, 3.

Mike Boticki ’91 completed his Ph.D. in clinical counseling from Marquette University June 2004.

Carmen (Curti) ’91 and Doug Kolstad celebrated the birth of a son, Joergen Matthias, Jan. 25, 2004.


Valerie and Mike Reis ’91 celebrated the birth of a son, Weston Larkin, May 18, 2004. He joins siblings, Payton, Lawson, and Hayden.


Carlene (Buttner) ’93 and John Goddeau ’96 celebrated the grand opening of Sell It All Online.com, a new business in the Village Shopping Center in La Crosse.

Susan (Desmond) ’93 and Michael Borgard announce the addition of two daughters to their family. Anna was born April 25, 2004 and Maggie was born Sept. 26, 2004.

Debra (Kempf) ’93 and Tom Shumaker celebrated the birth of a son, Samuel Lawrence, Sept. 3, 2004.
Kari (Solverson) ’93 and Peter Amrhein celebrated the birth of a daughter, Celia, Aug. 4, 2004.

Daniel Heerts ’94 won American Association of Community Theatre awards for scenery and lighting design in The Angels in Lemnos and The Seventh Monarch.


Stacy Schiltz ’94 married John Lowe III May 22, 2004. Stacy is pursuing her master’s degree in social work at the University of St. Thomas and College of St. Catherine.

Kathleen (Wunnicke) ’94, ’04 and David Schoen celebrated the birth of a daughter, Emma Marie, Sept. 2, 2004. She joins her sister Julia, 3.

Jackie (Blum) ’95 and Scott Bowe celebrated the birth of a son, Jake Timothy, Aug. 1, 2004.

Lori Daugs ’95 was married Oct. 2003.

Julie (Ewing) Lassa ’95, ’03 joined the cardiology department at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare as an adult nurse practitioner. Julie is certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center and is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, an honor society of nursing.

Connie (Gronemus) ’95 and David Kuhn celebrated the birth of a daughter, Lauren Elizabeth, Aug. 26, 2004. She joins her brothers, Brandon, 6, and Evan, 4.

Heidi (Hierlmeier) ’95 and Eric Giese celebrated the birth of a son, Elliot Harry, May 7, 2004.

Heather (Katsma) ’95 and Kevin Abel celebrated the birth of a son, Jacob, July 24, 2004. He joins siblings Isabella and Caleb.

Cherilyn (Loos) ’95 and Ryan Jakobi celebrated the birth of a daughter, Loryn Grace, Aug. 5, 2004. She joins her sister Jenna Rose, 3.

Karin Maresh-Silva ’95 and Mike Silva celebrated the birth of a son, Sean William, July 6, 2004.

Nicole (Roberts) ’95 and Kevin Malovrh celebrated the birth of a daughter, Kayla, May 15, 2003.

Paula and Patrick Rudd ’95 celebrated the birth of twins, a daughter, Erin Leigh and a son, Olwen Samuel, Aug. 4, 2004. They join their brother, Elliot, 3.

Jane (Schieber) ’95 and Daren Boe celebrated the birth of twin sons, Nicholas William and Daniel Joseph, Feb. 21, 2003.


Mindy (Schuyler) Huemmer ’96 received a master’s degree in Nursing and a pediatric practitioners certificate from Marquette University.

Michelle (Jenks) ’96 and Thomas Tilson celebrated the birth of a son, Nicholas, March 29, 2004. He joins his brother, Jack, 5.


Jill (Bierman) ’97 and Matt Wenthe, ’95, ’01 celebrated the birth of a son, Quinn Makay, May 10, 2004. He joins his brother, Davis, 3.

Brenda and Brent Brayko ’97 celebrated the adoption of two children from Russia, a son, Alic, and a daughter, Anna. Alic was born Feb. 6, 2004 and Anna was born July 3, 2004.

Kimberly (Dow) ’97 and Chris Riley celebrated the birth of a son, Brandon Christopher, Sept. 3, 2004. He joins his sister McKenna, 2.
Michelle (Glenna) Rein '97 earned her medical degree at the University of Minnesota Medical School, Minneapolis, and completed her family medicine residency at the La Crosse-Mayo Family Residency Program. She is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians. She recently joined the Family Practice department at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare.


Emily (Jones) '97 and Shawn Sackman '99 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Allison Kay, July 8, 2004.


Kerensa (Kreul) '97 and Chad Pink celebrated the birth of a daughter, Madelyn Bailie, Feb. 25, 2004. Kerensa received a master's degree in nutrition and dietetics from Northern Illinois University, Dec. 2003.


Nancy (Satala) '97 and Mark Herrmann celebrated the birth of a daughter, Brianna, Sept. 1, 2004.

Ruth Soulsby-Monroy '97 passed her certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner. She plans to add pediatric practice to her duties at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Regional Maternal Child Program where she is employed as a Certified Nurse Midwife. She is working in the Angleton Clinic as well as at the hospital birth center.

Seated (left to right): Brigid Burns '98, Heather (Whitmer) Klug '97, Jennifer (Schultz) Blasiola '97, Jason Blasiola '98, Donnie Bergdahl, Darin Durfee. Standing (left to right): Tobi Miller '97, Derek Jackson '99, Zach Kaup, Amy Priesler '98, Brian Grove '99, Tammy (Schofield) Klink '99, Brian Kift, Dan Scherbert '98, Joel Klink '99.

Mickey Schofield '98 holding Caitlin Klink.

Jennifer (Schultz) '97 married Jason Blasiola '98 Nov. 15, 2004. It was a great opportunity for Viterbo alumni to gather (photo below).

Jodi (Birschbach) '98 and Lloyd Greer celebrated the birth of a son, Aidan, Nov. 13, 2004.

Nicole (Craney) '98 and Terry Hendrikse celebrated the birth of a son, Aiden Michael, Sept. 9, 2004. He joins his sisters, Madelyn, 4, and Mackena, 2.

Rose and Jeffrey Danielson '98 celebrated the birth of a son, Joshua, June 22, 2004.

Lynne Gaustad '98 and Robert Gaustad celebrated the birth of a daughter, Caleigh Rayne, Feb. 2, 2004. Lynne received her master’s degree in Biology from UW-La Crosse and Franciscan Skemp Healthcare School of Nurse Anesthesia and works as a CRNA at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center.

Heidi (Larson) '98 and Jon Knudson celebrated the birth of a daughter, Rebekah Ann, Aug. 28, 2004. She joins brother Ian, 3.

Quinn (Marquardt) '98 and Brian Hause celebrated the birth of a daughter, Emma Renae, July 29, 2004. She joins her sister, Caitlin Quinn, 3.


Nicole (School) ’98 and Kevin Fischer celebrated the birth of a son, Derek Irvin, Aug. 20, 2004.

James Uhlenkamp ’98 is teaching English at Southwestern Community College in Creston, Iowa.

Kurt Weyers ’98 received an administrative degree from Marion College.

Pamela (Boyer) Wagner ’99 will be starting nurse anesthetist classes at St. Mary’s University Twin Cities campus in May. It is a 28-month course.

Susan (Czapiewski) Hoke ’99 completed the Med-City marathon in Rochester, Minn. May 30, 2004. She finished in 5 hours, 3 minutes.

Pamela (Engh) Lawton ’99 accepted a position at Trane Company in La Crosse as a Financial Services Analyst.

Susan Flodeen ’99 was selected as Teacher of the Year in May 2003, for the Waterloo (Iowa) School District.


Melinda (Wiske) ’99 and David Stuart celebrated the birth of a daughter, Lily Marie, Dec. 11, 2003.

Chad Austin ’00 married Jill Austin Aug. 11, 2004 in Sioux Falls, N.D.

Dana (Bell) ’00 and Tom McCauley celebrated the birth of a son, Grant Michael, April 7, 2004. He joins his brother, Izaak, 2.

Serena (Dolato) Bahe ’00 received a Master of Education: Curriculum and Instruction degree from the University of West Florida, May 1, 2003. She is a middle school English teacher at the Creative Learning Academy in Pensacola.

Emily Downs ’00 was married in May 2004.

Jennifer Drexler ’00 received a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine, May 29, 2004. She began her residency in Emergency Medicine at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria’s St. Francis Medical.
Andrea Erickson ’00 is currently employed by the Gundersen Lutheran Nutrition Clinic as a Winning Weighs instructor, a Bariatric team dietician, and an outpatient nutrition counselor. Carmen Palmi married Rick Larson ’00 May 22, 2004. Rick is employed by Sysco Food Services of Baraboo and is a part-owner of a DJ service called Party Pro DJ’s in the La Crosse area. They live in West Salem.

Nicole Nikles-Cilley ’00 and Terry Cilley celebrated the birth of a son, Noah Michael, July 29, 2004.


Dana Pukrop ’00 married Derek Jackson ’99 Aug. 15, 2004. Derek is supervisor of Workers Compensation Finance for United Wisconsin Insurance Company in New Berlin. Dana was ordained a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on June 13 at English Lutheran in La Crosse. She is the Associate Pastor at Mount Hope Lutheran Church in West Allis.

Kathi Snyder ’00 was named a state finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Program for 2004. She is one of six such teachers, three in science and three in math, being recognized by the state.

Tricia Applegate ’01 and Todd Applegate celebrated the birth of a daughter, Mya Claire, April 1, 2004.

Patrick Davis ’01 was married Sept. 4, 2004.

Theresa Hoeger ’01 married Adam Ronan June 19, 2004 in Milwaukee. Theresa is a medical student at Rush University.


Tara Proffitt ’01 married Ryan Anderson ’02 (pictured at left) Aug. 27, 2004 at Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman in La Crosse.

Catherine Scrivner ’01 married Blaine Wauters ’01 on Aug. 7, 2004 at Holy Family Catholic Church in Woodruff, Wis.

Libby (Zietlow) ’01 and Nick Dobbins ’01 celebrated the birth of a son, Samuel Nicholas, April 28, 2004.


Trisha (Callies) ’02 and Anthony Meyer celebrated the birth of a son, Crispin Kenneth Elliott, July 6, 2004.

Kathleen Charles ’02 has left her position as Hospice Chaplain to continue her education. She is in her first year of seminary at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. She will then transfer to Seabury Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill. She is pursuing a Masters of Divinity and is currently a postulant for Holy Orders in the Episcopal Church, to become a priest.

Lisa (Heim) ’02 and Clint Kanieski ’01 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Faith Audrey, May 20, 2004.

Mary Humfeld ’02 married Matt Sullivan Oct. 23, 2004 at St. Mary’s in Viroqua.


Jessica Pierzina ’02 received a master’s degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis May 2004. She is currently in the Psy.D. program at St. Thomas. Amy Seiler ’02 married Sean Sauter Oct. 16, 2004.
Nikki Washleski '02 married John Draper Dec. 31, 2003. They are currently living in Okinawa, Japan where Nikki is teaching in the DODEA school system.

Jessica Zwettler '02 married Bryan Hughes Aug. 7, 2004 at St. Patrick's Church in Onalaska.

Kate Bohn '03 married Chris Kockler '03, at the Justice of the Peace in Mesa, Ariz. on Nov. 25, 2004.

Lori Doney '03 married Patrick Esser June 26, 2004 at the Gazebo in Pettibone Park in La Crosse.

Erica Haakenson '03 married Erik Mathison June 19, 2004 in the Country Coon Prairie Lutheran Church in Westby.

Jennifer Jahsman '03 married Takawira Kuvaoga '03 June 19, 2004, at San Damiano Chapel in La Crosse. They live in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Matthew Metzger '03 and David Ellenwood '03 opened Essentia Studios, a web design business located in La Crosse.


Claire Bischel '04 married Brian Moore '04 July 24, 2004 at St. Paul's Catholic Church, Bloomer.


Shannon Loomis '04 married Phillip Klar '04 Aug. 21, 2004 at Christ the King Chapel in La Crosse.


Danielle Rajotte '04 and Ryan Rajotte are expecting a baby Jan. 15, 2005.

Jen Roberdeau '04 married Ken Schelper '04 on July 31, 2004 at San Damiano Chapel in La Crosse.

Julie Schultz '04 married James Lenz Aug. 7, 2004 in Green Bay.

Alumna Tessa Smasal '04 shared her prayer practices in a new book entitled God Any Time, Any Place, the Many Ways College Students Pray. The book features testimonials from college students from across the country.

Shannon Tibbetts '04 and Chris Tibbetts celebrated the birth of a son, Jordan David, June 17.

In Memorium

The Viterbo University community joins in prayerful remembrance of those who have died. Eternal rest grant unto them, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.


Joseph Wiesneske, Nov. 4, 2004, brother of Sarah Wiesneske, FSPA '56.


Leo Rohner, Nov. 24, 2004, brother of Gertrude Rohner, FSPA '58.

Irene Roesler, Sept. 29, 2004, sister of Rosetta Trinkes, FSPA '58.

Donald Gerke, June 26, 2004, brother of Malinda Gerke, FSPA '60, Donna Gerke-Cuta '70, Mary Lu Gerke '74, and uncle of Jeffrey Gerke '96.


Algean Manders, FSPA '63, June 12, 2004.

Paul Neman, Oct. 11, 2004, husband of Mary Colleen Walsh '63.

Tony Wilichowski, June 2, 2004, brother of Laverne Wilichowski, FSPA '64.


Evelyn Frisch, June 27, 2004, mother of Margaret Frisch '68 and Mary Frisch '72.


Norbert Schwarz, April 20, 2004, father of Dianne (Schwarz) Ferrell '70, and father-in-law of Barbara (Frederick) Schwarz '74.


Melvin Baumler, April 28, 2004, father of Jean Ann Baumler '73 and Arlene (Baumler) Smith '74.

Elmer Jorgenson, July 4, 2004, father of Susan (Jorgenson) Ecklor '74, and grandfather of Michelle Ecklor '02.


Myrna Brinkley '76, June 24, 2004.

Jean Marie Walton, Nov. 13, 2004, mother of Mary (Walton) Johnson '76.

Theresa Speth, July 3, 2001, sister of Mary (Walton) Johnson '76.


Bernita (Hegenbarth) Bluske '79-'80, May 7, 2004.


Frank Reiple, July 7, 2004, father of Susan (Reiple) Graf '82.

Marian Sauer, June 19, 2004, grandmother of Julie (Sauer) Vietri '82.


Mary Forer, July 18, 2004, wife of Charles Forer ’83.
Mary Schmieder, May 1, 2004, mother of Judith (Schmieder) Harpeneau ’83.
Denise (Bjorge) Anson ’84, July 10, 2004.
Richard Spangler, Sept. 26, 2003, father of Patricia (Spangler) Griffin ’84.
Patricia Marcou, Oct. 12, 2003, mother of Pat (Marcou) Thompson ’86.
Fr. Mike Braun, former faculty ’73-’80, June 15, 2004, uncle of Anne Marie Braun ’91.
Joan Miller, April 18, 2004, mother of Cathy (Miller) Stuttgen ’91 and Suzanne (Miller) Voros ’91.
Joan Metz, July 10, 2004, mother of Renee Metz ’93.
Richard Cotter, April 17, 2004, grandfather of Kate (Bohn) Kockler ’03.
Clara Arndt, July 20, 2004, grandmother of Rebecca Arndt ’04.

A FINAL WORD

From Basketball Courts to Sugarcane Fields: My Journey to Guyana
By Brian E. Konkol ’01

Brian Konkol’s remarkable journey in life took him from the Viterbo basketball team to Luther Seminary to Guyana. “I have learned that the best of life’s pleasures are not planned, plotted, or predicted,” he said. “A life of surprises is a life of excitement and joy.”

During my sophomore year at Viterbo, one of my professors asked, “Where do you plan to be five years from now?” It was not the first time I received this question (my parents seemed to
ask it all the time!), so my answer was already well thought-out. The Five-Year plan was this: enjoy my final two years of college, graduate, and attend law school.

I was rather proud of my “Five-Year Master Plan.” It was well designed, practical, and highly challenging. All together, I figured it was a great strategy. Yet, near the end of my sophomore year I was already noticing potential changes. I was growing both mentally and spiritually, and after being deeply moved by some theological courses and volunteer experiences, I was beginning to consider a different life direction. Instead of strictly contemplating what I wanted to do with my life, I thought, “. . .but what does God want to do with my life?” Specifically, I started to discern a path I had never been mature enough to consider seriously—Ordained Ministry.

My decision was greeted with mixed reviews. My teammates on the basketball team were a bit curious. They wondered, “What ever happened to law school?” Some others figured, “Are you sure? Pastors don’t make a lot of money.” And of course, others questioned, “If you’re going to be a pastor, does this mean we can’t throw any more parties?” Surely, none of my teammates had ever played alongside a future pastor, which made them slightly uncomfortable. Yet, after speaking with them and sharing my thoughts and emotions, everyone could see why I felt as I did. All together, because of the great friendships on the team, they were supportive and proud that I was being led in such a way. To this day, I am extremely thankful for their encouragement.

I graduated from Viterbo University in May 2001, and within a month I enrolled at Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul. Although it was a difficult decision to forego law school, choosing to pursue Ordained Ministry literally opened up a world of possibilities. Specifically, after spending two years at the St. Paul campus, in 2003 I was asked to serve as Intern Pastor of the Ebenezer Lutheran Parish in New Amsterdam, Guyana, South America. The instant I was offered the position, I was excited and jumped at the opportunity. “Send me to Guyana! This is great. Let’s do it!” Only afterward did I stop and ask, “Wait a minute. So where is Guyana anyway?”

Thanks to a “Google Search” on the Internet, I learned that Guyana is located in northern South America, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Suriname, Venezuela, and Brazil. And from the day I arrived, my time was absolutely amazing. I was welcomed with open arms and given numerous opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed. The Guyanese and I fixed old buildings and constructed new ones, we opened outreach ministries for the elderly and poor, we started pen-pal projects, we sparked youth activities, and of course, we constructed the village’s only regulation size basketball hoop! (Once a basketball player, always a basketball player!) All together, by working together and appreciating the unique abilities everyone brought to the process, the Guyanese and I witnessed an amazing transformation in the church. We helped bring people into closer relationships with one another, and of course a deeper relationship with God.

All together, my time in Guyana revealed many life lessons—and it would take a lifetime of lessons to explain them all. But if I could share one thing I learned, it would be this: God is a God of surprises, and life is one unpredictable event after another. So, if you want to make God laugh, just tell Him your “Five-Year Master Plan.” As a 20-year old sophomore at Viterbo, I thought I had it all figured out, yet God gave me a swift kick in the backside and showed me
that something else—something better—was in store. And what a journey it has been. From the Viterbo University basketball courts to the South American sugarcane fields, I have learned that the best of life’s pleasures are not planned, plotted, or predicted. A life of surprises is a life of excitement and joy. So, if someone were to ask me now, “Brian, where do you think you’ll be five years from now?” I would smile and say: “I’ll be exactly where I need to be.”

Check out more on Brian and his experiences at www.briankonkol.org