Dr. Ron Amel: The Right Chemistry

Chemistry professor Dr. Ron Amel sat in front of the crowd at the annual chemistry club Christmas party, his head wrapped in a towel. He held a card to his head and concentrated before sharing his answer with the group, an answer that drew appreciative laughter. He would then fling the card across the room before reaching for another.

Amel was Carnac the Magnificent, the old fortune-telling character played by Johnny Carson on the Tonight Show. In the week before the party, he had spent time gathering “information” about his colleagues and students for his performance.

“He was wonderful in the role of Carnac,” friend and colleague Mary Hassinger fondly remembered. Hassinger was a chemistry professor at the time and is now the dean of the School of Letters and Sciences. “His answers were hilarious. The students all looked forward to him playing Carnac every year, it was the highlight of the Christmas party.”

Playing Carnac is just one of the many memories Amel has created during his 32 years teaching chemistry at Viterbo. For the past three decades, Amel has been a constant and integral part of the sciences and more importantly, Viterbo itself.

“He’s just a fine, decent, Christian gentleman,” said friend and fellow chemistry professor Mike Collins. “It’s hard to imagine Viterbo or the sciences without him.”

Whether it be a cheerful smile, one of his trademark “Well good for you’s,” or being “Ron-time”--meaning a few minutes late instead of on time--friends, colleagues, and students have all come to cherish Amel’s genuinely warm and calm personality.

“There is just something about his personality that reflects who we are at Viterbo,” said friend and colleague Wayne Wojciechowski, describing Amel as hospitable, warm, and engaging.

Viterbo students have been perhaps the biggest beneficiaries of Amel’s personality, which is directly reflected in his teaching style. “I always remember the students saying he was able to relate to them very well and to present the material in a caring and understanding manner,” Wojciechowski said. “He could tame chemistry so the students could understand it and he is always there trying to help the students learn.”

No place is that more evident than in Amel’s organic chemistry class, one of those classes many students dread because of its challenging material and because of its importance to a career in healthcare. “Ron’s the father figure of the department,” Hassinger said. “Students find him to be a very comfortable person to be around. He is the right kind of person to teach
organic chemistry because he gives students the sense that they are capable and empowers them to get through the course. The result is well trained and qualified students.”

Viterbo has been much more for Amel than a place to teach over the years. It has been a very important part of his, and his family’s life. “This is just such a great place,” Amel said. “It’s the people—the Sisters, the faculty, the administration and staff, and probably most of all, the students.”

Amel was hired as a chemistry professor at Viterbo in 1972. After growing up in the small town of Hunter, N.D., he earned a Bachelor of Science degree from St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minn. He then studied at the University of North Dakota before earning his Ph.D. at the University of Saskatchewan in Regina, Canada.

His first job was at Procter and Gamble Company in Cincinnati, Ohio. “I was in a lab doing research,” Amel said. “I wanted to deal with people more. I went to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater to teach and really liked it.”

Three years later, Amel found himself interviewing for a job at Viterbo. “I visited with Sr. Helen Elsbernd, who was then the chemistry department chair, and I really liked the approach Viterbo took to education,” he said. “She was just a marvelous person who worked closely with the students and had a lot of enthusiasm. And I was interested in developing courses in which students would be actively involved.”

Amel also interviewed with then President Fr. J. Thomas -Finucan and two things immediately impressed him. Fr. Finucan wanted to meet his wife and children (who were waiting in the car at the time). Second, Sr. Theodine (who served as Viterbo president from 1952-1960) found his wife and children in the lobby, welcomed them, and went and got the children some candy.

“I was interested in being here because I’m a Catholic and this is a Catholic institution, but I really didn’t know too much about Franciscanism,” Amel said. “I really learned to appreciate the values of the Franciscans. The values these folks had in relationship to each other and their teaching philosophy was really important to me.”

Things in the early 1970s and into the 1980s were different than today, to say the least. “When I came, Viterbo had just started accepting men, but there wasn’t much of a male presence at all,” Amel said. “And there wasn’t a lot of money. We did a lot of things to be able to teach well without breaking the budget.”

Not a lot of money is an understatement, and the science facilities in Murphy Center were never going to be featured in a magazine. “The department hadn’t had much funding for a long time,” Hassinger said. A good example was the special pens needed in the chemistry lab, she said. When they would run out of ink, instead of throwing them away and purchasing new, the pens would be cut open, injected with ink, and then wrapped with paraffin.

Amel went out of his way to make it work, money or no money, Wojciechowski said. “What was important to Ron was the student,” he said. “He’d make it work because it was important the students got the knowledge they needed.”
Making it work was a philosophy adopted by most everyone at Viterbo. “We wanted a room where the students could gather and talk informally, sort of a lounge,” Amel recalled. “Sr. Helen sewed the curtains and we used carpet pieces for the floor. We also found some furniture somewhere. The students were involved in the whole process, and they felt real ownership of the place they were trying to put together. Not having money and working things out has value.”

Mike Collins joined the chemistry department in 1976, and through the years, he and Amel have overseen remarkable changes in the department. They were joined by Mary Hassinger in 1983, who they made feel “very welcome” in the traditionally male-dominated field of chemistry.

Neither man foresaw the biggest change of all—the construction of the $11 million D.B. and Marge Reinhart Center and its state of the art science facilities. “I never thought it could happen,” Amel said with a smile. Collins and Amel would “make mental notes” about other facilities at meetings and conferences over the years, notes they were able to put to excellent use in planning the Reinhart Center, which opened in 2003. “Ron had some very good ideas,” Collins said. Both credited the whole science department for their hard work and good ideas in the planning process.

“The capabilities in the labs are so much more,” Collins said. “We don’t have to worry about things like electricity or the ventilation. “Now it’s about what’s the best learning experience for the students.”

The Viterbo community also benefited from Amel’s leadership on another occasion, the changing of Viterbo’s governing style. Wojciechowski and Collins both remembered how important Amel was as president of the all-employee senate.

“There were some heated discussions, and Ron was able to retain a calmness,” Wojciechowski said. “He was the stabilizer. He was able to keep things moving forward until we reached a decision.”

“Ron seems to always be able to keep an even keel, and to back off and see the big picture,” Collins said.

The Viterbo of today would be almost unrecognizable to someone at Viterbo in 1972. There have been many changes—a greatly increased number of male students, a much bigger enrollment, a much wider demographic of students, bigger and better facilities, and a university that’s much more financially secure.

“I take a lot of pride in how the school has grown,” Amel said. “All three presidents since I’ve been here (Fr. Finucan, Dr. Robert Gibbons, and Dr. William Medland) have been the right person at the right time.”

“Now we have great facilities,” he said, referring to the challenges brought on by the tremendous growth in enrollment. “We need to remain working closely with the students. It’s harder to do, but it’s important, and as faculty we try to make sure we are accessible and available to the students.”

Three presidents. A brand new facility. The inception, and finally, the flourishing of the school’s athletics teams. Ron Amel has witnessed and made a great deal of Viterbo history during his time here. From the Sisters being surrogate grandmothers to his children, to science field trips to Chicago, to exchanging gifts at an early Christmas party where everyone
gathered in the same room, Amel, now 64, has many fond memories of Viterbo. It always comes back to the students for him, though.

“I’ve had students who have done really good work for society. That’s always a real source of motivation and pride,” Amel said.

Today’s Viterbo also places more emphasis on mission and ethics, Amel said approvingly. “Before, the actual physical presence of the Sisters would be the embodiment of that mission,” he said. “They were such an inspiration.”

Amel has been recognized for his teaching abilities several times during his career at Viterbo. He received a leadership award in 1982-83, was named Teacher of the Year in 1986, received the Finucan Exemplar of Mission in 1998-99, and a Pax et Bonum Award in 2005 for his work with the Pep Band. He and his wife Terry also provided funds for the Ron Amel Organic/Analytical Laboratory in the Reinhart Center.

When Amel is not concentrating on Viterbo and his students, he enjoys spending time with his family. He and Terry have two children, Eric and Elise, and five grandchildren. Terry is a 1976 Viterbo graduate and has been an active member of the alumni association, has served as the alumni board president, and has received the Outstanding Award for Service to the University.

“I’m in the process of thinking when I might retire,” said Amel when asked if he was considering it. “I don’t have any particular plans, but it won’t be next year.”

His friends and colleagues hope it won’t be for a long time.

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**Viterbo Alum Discovers Right Ingredients at Subway**

Just after graduating from Viterbo with a degree in accounting in 1991, Pete Hansen joined some friends in playing in a local volleyball tournament. There he met Don Rottinghaus, the owner of nine Subway restaurants, and between games the two began talking. Hansen had worked for Classic Burgers restaurant in La Crosse during his junior and senior years of college, doing five hours of accounting work a week. There he saw the burger industry up close. He had also written two relevant research papers while in college.

“About the two things I knew best, burgers and beer,” he said with a laugh.

The two enjoyed themselves discussing the restaurant business at length, and both agreed the fledgling Subway franchise was “going to be the next McDonald’s.” Hansen urged Rottinghaus and his brother to build their business “as big as they could, as fast as they could,” before more people discovered the Subway franchise. Rottinghaus felt the same way.

The two went their separate ways, but before he left, Hansen told Rottinghaus, “If you need an accountant, I’ll always be around.”
A few years later, Rottinghaus called. The La Crosse-based Rottinghaus Subway empire, today known as RCI, has 175 stores, 1,500 employees and is projected to do $65,000,000 in sales next year. Pete Hansen is a big reason why.

Getting His Start

Hansen grew up on a dairy farm on St. Joseph’s Ridge near La Crosse and graduated from West Salem High School in 1987.

“Back then, Viterbo was much smaller” (with an enrollment under 1,000 students), he said. “It had just started its growth phase. I went to a smaller high school, and at the time I came to Viterbo, it was like one step up from high school, it was bigger but it wasn’t overwhelming.”

Viterbo’s size was an asset and he was quickly able to establish a relationship with his business professors. “Marv Friedewald and JoAnn Marson were great,” he said. There were just over 20 freshmen accounting students, including himself. Eleven would eventually graduate.

“It was so small, you had to be ready for class,” Hansen said. “That makes students more outgoing. Everything you do is about talking in front of people or being able to deliver your ideas to people.”

He was also working his way through school, and by his junior year, he gained his first practical experience at Classic Burgers, a small fast food restaurant near La Crosse’s downtown. “We had this tiny office in the back,” he remembered with a smile. The burgers were a hit, but problems with efficiency and competition eventually caused its demise. “We did well for a while, but we never seemed to get anywhere. Then I’d go over to Subway and see two people making sandwiches.”

After graduating, Hansen landed his first full-time job as an accountant at La Crosse Transport and Refrigeration. He then took a job with Collins Outdoor Advertising as director of market scheduling, where his job was to “make sure every billboard had the right advertising on it at the right time.” He was also put in charge of developing a new information system in 1992, the dawn of the new computer age. It was a huge amount of work he said, but it had tremendous long-term benefits. “I got to learn everything about the business,” he said. “And I learned how to manage, from not only the owners, but also from the salesmen, artists, office staff, billboard maintenance crew members, and the billboard posters. I realized that to run a successful business you need everyone to feel that they are an integral part of that business.”

In 1994, Hansen received a call from Don Rottinghaus, asking him to come to work for RCI as an accountant. It took a year before he was convinced, but Hansen eventually accepted the job. RCI then consisted of 45 stores. The allure of a much bigger upside was too much to resist.

Some Lean Years

“In 1994?96, Subway was really struggling,” Hansen said. “I spent the first year with RCI just catching up and trying to make sense of everything.” Those were dicey times for the highly leveraged company, said Hansen.
By 1997, things had started to look up. “We started seeing a shift ahead,” Hansen said. “Other Subway owners had decided to sell, and we started buying them on the cheap.”

Then along came Jared Fogle.

**Boom Times**

Jared Fogle, the college student who lost 245 pounds, walking and eating at Subway every meal, was the center of an incredibly successful marketing campaign. “He made so many Subway owners so much money,” Hansen said. “Those were unbelievable years. I went to a Subway convention and Jared was like a rock star.”

Under Hansen’s guidance, RCI kept right on expanding. “Dennis and Don have always said there are two kinds of companies--those that are growing and those that are dying,” Hansen said. RCI promotes from within, giving people great opportunities to advance their careers after a job well done. “There are some wonderful success stories with many of our employees,” he said.

Hansen’s job title is controller, even though his duties are more along the lines of chief financial officer of the company, second only to the owners. “I have been a driving force in the company’s success because the information system that we created allows Don and Dennis to see trends sooner than most other Subway owners and flag problems,” he said. “This information allows them to make informed decisions and add stores when others were selling stores and slow down when the trends didn’t look as good.”

Like any business, there are many challenges to face, problems such as an ill-fated salad campaign or hurricanes sending produce prices through the roof. Hansen has met each challenge as the company’s navigator.

“I’ve been very happy with the choice,” he said of deciding to work for RCI. “It’s amazing the opportunity these guys have given me, but it’s been back and forth, I’ve pushed hard.”

**Going Forward**

Hansen, 35, is enjoying life with his wife of 12 years, Patricia, and their three sons, Brice, eight, Kyle, six, and Kadon, three. It’s busy season at work, and he doesn’t get to spend as much time with his family as he’d like, but he says, “you have to make hay when the sun shines.”

“I’m most proud of the system I’ve been able to develop,” he said. “And I’ve been able to get good people in the office. Without good people, you’re not going anywhere.”

Hansen has tried every item on the Subway menu, and still eats there every day. “The key to being a good accountant is understanding the business,” he said with a smile. The sky is still the limit, RCI has no plans to stop their expansion and should soon own over 200 stores.

Hansen offers some advice for this year’s groups of graduates. “Don’t be afraid to stick your neck out, if you have an idea and really believe in it, follow through on it. That’s how I got here.”
Laura Bibby: A visit with Viterbo's "senior-most" alum

When Laura Bibby walked into a Viterbo classroom for the first time, her reaction was quite different than that of other students.

“I almost walked out,” she laughed.

What Bibby saw was a classroom full of Sisters, habits and all. “I was the only lay person,” she said.

The year was 1957. Church relations between Catholics and Protestants were quite different than they are today, and Bibby was Lutheran and had never met a Sister.

Intimidated to say the least, Bibby stayed. She’s glad she did. “I got to like it so much,” Bibby said. “The Sisters were so much fun, and they included me in everything.”

Her career at Viterbo was very successful and rewarding, she said. Today, at age 96, Bibby is believed to be the oldest living Viterbo lay alum. Her route to Viterbo was anything but traditional, returning to college at an age and a time that made her a bit of a pioneer.

“People asked me at the time what it was like to go back to school, and I told them it doesn’t make a bit of difference,” Bibby said. “If you’re good at school when you were young, you’re still good at it.”

Attending a Catholic school was an excellent cultural experience that greatly expanded her horizons, she said. The Sisters were probably curious about her as well. “But I was welcomed,” she said.

Bibby was born Laura Conrad in rural Galesville. She enrolled at Gale College, a Lutheran high school in Galesville. At that time, attending high school was a luxury and it was a hardship for her family to send her. “I think my father sent me there so I would live at home,” she laughed. “They provided supervision and a good Christian education. I had an excellent piano teacher and it was a very good school.”

After graduating in 1928, she stayed home for a year because she “didn’t have any money to go to school.” Then amazingly, during the Great Depression, she found a benefactor affiliated with Gale College who was willing to give her the $300 she needed to attend the music conservatory in Madison.

She studied piano and voice there for two years, working for her room and board. “Oh my, yes, I enjoyed it,” she said.

After earning her teacher’s certificate, she returned to Galesville and began giving piano lessons, traveling to the students’ homes or meeting them at the Galesville school. “I enjoyed it but I sure didn’t get rich,” she said.

She married William Hollis Bibby in 1932, someone she had gone to school with and known all her life. They had two daughters, who kept her very busy, she said. Hollis farmed and later took a government job in Galesville.

During the early 1950s, Bibby began teaching the children of the superintendent of the Melrose School District. The music teacher at Melrose had just been drafted to fight in the Korean War and the superintendent encouraged her to send in a resume.
Bibby was employed as the music teacher when the superintendent decided she and several other teachers needed a four-year teaching degree. She took two classes a summer, beginning in 1957 until she graduated in 1969 with a Bachelor of Music Education.

Attending Viterbo in the summers was challenging. She had to drive 25 miles from her home every day, a feat made more difficult when there were “threshers to feed,” during her other role as a farm wife. She also remembers many days were very hot and feeling sorry for her Sister classmates wearing their habits.

Bibby most enjoyed her music classes and teachers, she said. Her teachers, Annarose Glum, FSPA and Arlene Laverdiere, FSPA traveled to Melrose three times to observe her teaching, giving her credit for a teaching methods class thereby saving her a great deal of time and expense.

She retired from her teaching position in 1972, but not voluntarily. She and the other “older teachers” as she described herself and her co-workers, were forced by the district to retire so the district could hire younger teachers, a decision that would involve her in a landmark age discrimination lawsuit. The teachers union sued the district, and was victorious.

“It took quite a few years, but we did very well,” Bibby said. “I did better that way (monetarily) than if I had taught. It made us feel very good, but it was very difficult.”

Bibby lived alone until the age of 94, when she broke her hip, prompting a move to the Galesville nursing home two years ago. She still plays the piano for church services. She also was a long-time patron of many Viterbo music and theatre events.

Bibby found her teaching career to be both rewarding and highly enjoyable and she is able to enjoy some memories through visitors. “I don’t know them, of course, but they say they remember my music class and that makes me feel good. Some of my students ended up going into music, and that makes me extra proud.”

President Medland Announces Transition

As he begins his fifteenth year as president of Viterbo University, Bill Medland announced that he will transition to a newly created position as Chancellor of the University.

Medland will assume his new duties effective July 1, 2006, when he concludes his tenure as the longest serving president in Viterbo’s history. The new position will involve community relations and fund raising responsibilities. It is a senior position which will report to the president.

In related news, a committee of trustees has been formed by the board chair to begin a national search for Medland’s successor. A search firm will be hired to assist in the process.

During the course of Medland’s tenure, endowment has grown from $2.7 to $14.1 million and enrollment has more than doubled to a current figure of over 2,700. This growth, along with other changes in curriculum transformed Viterbo from a college to a university in 2000. Other milestones that occurred since his appointment as Viterbo president in 1991 include the
expansion of graduate programs into the areas of business, nursing, servant leadership, and educational leadership. In addition, this year, Viterbo will confer over 460 Master of Arts in Education degrees compared to the 41 which were awarded at the time of Medland’s arrival. Most significant to the university is the leadership he provided to the successful completion of the strategic plan, VISION 2005: A Renaissance for Living and Learning in the 21st Century. The plan, which dramatically changed the landscape of the university, included: construction of the D.B. and Marge Reinhart Center for Ethics, Science, and Technology (2003); the development of Rose Terrace, an apartment style student residence (1997); construction of the Viterbo Outdoor Athletic Complex along Highway 16 (1998); and the establishment of the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership (1998). Elsewhere, the addition of a clock tower, landscaped green spaces, walkways, and courtyards, have been part of a campus beautification effort.

The final project identified in VISION 2005 will be completed when the doors open this fall for the Amie L. Mathy Center for Recreation and Education which will be the first collaborative facility of its kind in the nation that combined the efforts of a university and a Boys & Girls Club in joint fund raising and construction. In all, over $42 million dollars in enhancements to the university campus and endowment occurred during the VISION 2005 strategic plan.

Medland himself has been the recipient of a number of honors including the 2003 Iverson-Freking Ecumenical Award and the La Crosse Tribune Person of the Year Award for 2003. Recently he earned the 2004 Chamber of Commerce Chair’s Community Service Award and the National Man and Youth Award from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Medland is also a cancer survivor who has undergone three surgeries over the course of seven years. In 2004, he was named honorary chair of the American Cancer Society’s Tri-college Relay for Life.

Meanwhile, Medland is looking forward to the changes that will occur as part of the announced transition. “I have always said that change is good and this is a great example of where it applies to me and to the university,” Medland said. “As I look forward to the year ahead, I am very excited to be working with the faculty and staff in making a smooth transition to new leadership. It has been an honor to serve Viterbo and the people who comprise this campus community and I owe a great deal of thanks to the Trustees, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, and the faculty and staff for their gracious - support.”

The president appointed to succeed Medland will take office July 1, 2006. The individual selected will be the eighth person in the history of Viterbo to serve as president.

ON CAMPUS

Earl Madary Named Teacher of the Year

Earl Madary, chair of the religious studies and philosophy departments and a professor who has touched the lives of countless students and co-workers with his outstanding teaching,
faith, and kindness, was named Viterbo's 2005 Teacher of the Year at the annual Rose Awards ceremony.

“Earl possesses the teaching skills and commitment to the profession which surpasses anything I have previously witnessed,” said Bill Medland, university president.

Madary, an associate professor of religious studies, began teaching part-time at Viterbo in 1993 and was named an assistant professor in 1995. He began serving as chair of the department in 2003, and was appointed associate professor last year. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Viterbo, a Master of Arts in Theology from Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Graduate Theological Foundation in South Bend, Ind.

Other Viterbo employees honored at the Rose Awards ceremony were:
- **Glena Temple**, biology, received the Alec Chiu Award, an honor given for exceptional work at Viterbo to foster and develop scholarly opportunities for both students and faculty.
- **Bonnie Nesbitt**, nursing, was presented with the Sr. Helen Elsbernd Distinguished Service Award. The award goes to an individual who has served the university with distinction for more than 20 years, usually in more than one capacity.
- **Denise Probert**, business, received the Outstanding Academic Advisor Award. The award is given to someone who has demonstrated the qualities associated with the outstanding academic advising of students.
- **The Viterbo University Pep Band** and **Ron Amel**, chemistry, were presented with the Pax et Bonum award in recognition of their skill in demonstrating the Franciscan values of service, respect, hospitality, stewardship, and joy throughout the Viterbo community. The band regularly performed at the varsity basketball games.
- **Mike Collins**, chemistry, and **Barry Fried**, athletics, were presented with Servant Leadership Awards for leadership and service.

**President Medland Receives Top Chamber of Commerce Award**

Viterbo President Bill Medland was awarded the Chair’s Community Service Award at the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce annual dinner. The award, the chamber’s most prestigious, recognized Medland’s achievements in the community and his efforts to build Viterbo.

Medland was also honored in May at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater La Crosse Wall of Fame Dinner with the National Man and Youth Award for promoting the collaboration that led to the construction of the Amie L. Mathy Center for Recreation and Education.

**Viterbo Hosts State WURHA Conference**

More than 375 students from 18 colleges and universities across the state were on campus when Viterbo hosted the 2005 Wisconsin University Residence Hall Association (WURHA) Conference.
“The conference is usually hosted by one of the large state universities,” said Jason Ramaker, Viterbo director of residence life. “It was quite an honor for Viterbo, and our students did an outstanding job putting it together.”

The WURHA conference is held annually and Viterbo was named host after an extensive bidding process. Major goals of the WURHA conference are to give participants an opportunity to get together with people from other schools to share information about their respective schools and programs and to recognize outstanding achievements by member schools and students in a variety of areas over the last year.

Record Attendance at Humanities Symposium
Then-La Crosse Mayor John Medinger, Couleecap Director Grace Jones, and Viterbo’s Rick Kyte participate in the panel discussion.

Judging by this year’s attendance figures and comments heard by committee chairperson Bill Reese, the “Poverty and Children--It’s About All of Us” Humanities Symposium was a complete success.

“I had people I didn’t even know stopping me and thanking Viterbo for putting on this symposium,” said Reese, a member of the religious studies faculty. “It was the best ever attended, I think because it was just so timely. I think everyone there knew someone living in poverty.”

Reese estimated 300 people attended the concert for hunger, 600 at the daily sessions, and 250-400 attended each keynote speaker. The reactions to the evening presenters varied greatly, he said. “Maybe that’s why they were so good,” he said. “They raised the ire of some people and the hopes of others.”

Attendance figures and positive comments are nice, but the goal of the symposium was always to do something about poverty, not just to talk about it. Reese said the goal was accomplished.

“We raised people’s awareness and sensitivity to the problem,” he said. “We moved beyond the talking stage. Now the real work begins.”

School of Education Again Receives Accreditation

The School of Education was recently notified by the National Council for Accreditation (NCATE) that continuing accreditation was approved at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

The School of Education passed all six of the NCATE standards and all six of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction standards based on the joint visit. Viterbo was among the first NCATE-accredited institutions in 1954.

“We are proud of over 50 years of continuing accreditation,” Sue Batell, dean of the School of Education, said.

Three Honored with Pope John XXIII Award
Marie Leon LaCroix, FSPA --founder, director, and -promoter of Viterbo theatre; Fr. Bernard McGarty--a proponent of ecumenism and a better understanding of world religions;
and Obang Okello—a man who escaped the genocide near Sudan to share his story of faith and courage, were presented with 2005 Pope John XXIII Awards for Distinguished Service in a ceremony on campus in April.

Recipients of the award are selected by the Viterbo Board of Advisors. It represents the highest non-academic honor conferred by the university.

As an FSPA educator, Sr. LaCroix has opened the minds and hearts of students to “beauty, truth, and goodness” by emphasizing the arts. Her career as founder, director, and promoter of Viterbo theatre spanned 40 years until her retirement in 1994. She is a Professor Emerita and a recipient of Viterbo’s Teacher of the Year Award. Viterbo’s LaCroix Black Box Theatre is named in her honor.

Fr. McGarty currently serves as Visiting Scholar of Ecumenical Studies at Viterbo University, promoting a better understanding of world religions and the relationship to Catholicism.

Within the Diocese of La Crosse, Fr. McGarty has served as Vocation Director, Director of Communications, Times Review Editor, Director of Ecumenism and co-founder of LARC (Lutherans, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics) in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. He has been pastor of several parishes within the Diocese including: St. Patrick’s Parish in Onalaska, St. Patrick’s Parish in Eau Claire, St. Matthew’s Parish in Wausau, and most recently, Blessed Sacrament in La Crosse. He has also served as chaplain for St. Rose Convent in La Crosse.

In 1999, Fr. McGarty received the Bishop John Paul Award for distinguished service to Catholic education. At Viterbo, the majority of his work has concentrated on creating a better understanding of the Catholic religion and its relationship to those who practice their Lutheran, Protestant, Islamic, Jewish, and Greek Orthodox faith.

Living in a border village between Ethiopia and Sudan, Obang Okello was an 11-year-old when his life dramatically changed. One day in school, the building was bombed and in the resulting inferno he escaped and began a treacherous 1,000 mile, 40-day barefoot walk to the refugee camps of Kenya. Eventually, he resettled in the United States where he began a new life. He is a graduate of Bethel College in St. Paul where he studied business and theology.

In addition to his job in the banking industry, Okello shares his story, particularly with youth, about how courage, tenacity, and faith can contribute to our ability to survive under the most extreme of circumstances, including the calamity of war.

Eye on Viterbo

The newly created WisconsinEye Network has announced plans to broadcast Viterbo’s D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership. “Our goal is community and public education, beyond the traditional sense, to help create a civil society and to bring important issues to public discussion,” said Rick Kyte, institute director. “WisconsinEye’s statewide broadcast of the institute’s events is a great way to expand participation.”

Social Work Club Collects Over 1,500 Books

The Viterbo Social Work Club Feed Hungry Minds book collection drive netted 1,514 new and used books for local children in need.
The books collected in the fund raiser, which included a donation of over 500 books from St. Patrick’s Elementary School, were delivered to the WAFER Food Bank, Birthright, the Hamilton After School Program, and the Neighborhood City Church of La Crosse.

**Tenth Anniversary of Volunteer Recognition**

More than 50 students from the area’s universities and high schools received a certificate of appreciation from Viterbo President Bill Medland for their volunteer service to others throughout the year at the tenth anniversary of the Student Volunteer Recognition program.

More than 500 students personally recognized by Medland over the past 10 years have contributed 28,000 hours of community service in the Coulee Region. The program was started for area universities and high schools in 1996 to recognize the servant leadership qualities of students who care enough about others to volunteer.

**Streets Renamed Franciscan Way**

The streets between Viterbo and St. Rose Convent have a new name--Franciscan Way. The new streets include portions of the former Ninth and Winnebago Streets. The change was made possible after the city vacated the streets, and now the FSPA and Viterbo jointly own the property.

**Earl Maary Releases Gilead**

Earl Madary, alumnus and religious studies professor, recently emerged from the recording studio after completing his second CD, *Gilead*.

“Everything went really, really well,” said Madary, who gave a free concert celebrating the release of *Gilead* in the Fine Arts Center Main Theatre.

Madary describes his music as Christian Folk, and all of the songs on the CD are his originals. He sings and plays acoustic guitar, while his friend, Jason Kalemb, plays percussion on a few songs.

The themes of *Gilead* are “the natural world, the environment, and faith,” Madary said. He draws his inspiration from his own prayer life, which includes his family and his students, and from his practice of being in nature, especially on the water.

His first CD, *Prodigals*, was released in 2000 and all of the 1,000 copies printed were sold.

Copies of *Gilead* are available by emailing Madary at ejmadary@viterbo.edu.

**Fr. Tom O’Neill Wins Fulbright Scholarship**

Viterbo’s Fr. Tom O’Neill, vice president for mission and ministry, spent the month of July studying in Australia as the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship to participate in its Seminar Abroad Program. He is the second person affiliated with Viterbo to receive a Fulbright Scholarship in as many years. Alumna Margaret Elvekrog ’04 received a Fulbright Scholarship to conduct chemistry research in Sweden last year.

Highlights of the seminar included Canberra, Sydney, Uluru, and time studying at the Australian National University, the National Museum, the National Library, and the National Gallery, where specialists lectured on Australian history, politics, economics, the arts, and folklore. Time was spent visiting sites that complemented the lectures.
“I wanted to learn how they dealt with various ethical and medical issues such as euthanasia, abortion, and cloning,” O’Neill said.

Fr. O’Neill was one of sixteen people nationwide to receive an all-expense paid Fulbright Scholarship to study in Australia. He was selected after a rigorous application process.

Master of Nursing Program Re-accreditation

Viterbo University School of Nursing is seeking re-accreditation of its Master of Nursing Science program from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). An on-site evaluation visit is scheduled for Oct. 12-14, 2005. Written and signed third party comments will be accepted by CCNE until 30 days prior to the scheduled visit. Comments should be directed to:

CCNE Accreditation Coordinator
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
One Dupont Circle NW
Suite 530
Washington, DC 20036-112

PHILANTHROPY NOTES

$7.5 Million Goal Exceeded for Mathy Center

Viterbo officials and community members announced fund raising for the Amie L. Mathy Center had exceed its $7.5 million goal at a press conference held in the Reinhart Center.

Don and Roxie Weber and family presented representatives from the club and university with a check for $50,000 at the conference, putting the fund raising total over the $7.5 million mark. Don is CEO of Logistics Health which has its headquarters located in La Crosse.

In addition to exceeding the goal, the new Mathy Center will also receive a $100,000 dollar-for-dollar endowment matching challenge grant issued by the La Crosse Community Foundation. This challenge was the largest endowment grant issued in the foundation’s history.

According to John Desmond, co-chair of the fund raising committee, the proceeds from the campaign will be enough to pay for the building that is scheduled for completion in late summer, and fund an endowment for youth programming and maintenance.

Viterbo Calling

Almost $96,000 was raised in this year’s Alumni Phonathon, 22 percent more than last year. The Parent Phonathon raised $14,095. The funds were designated for the Amie L. Mathy Center for Recreation and Education.
Dollars for Scholars

New scholarships funded this year include:

- **The Computer Information Systems, Technology, and Administration Scholarship** will provide funds for a student pursuing a degree in an applicable major.
- **The Barbara Innocent-Charles Scholarship** was created to help a foreign exchange or international student.
- **The Lakeland Union High School Scholarship** will be designated to a Viterbo student who has graduated from Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua.
- **The Sr. Madonna Steines Art Scholarship** will provide funds to a student studying art.
- **The Xcel Energy Scholarship for Women in Science** will provide two female students studying chemistry or math with $2,500. The scholarships are made possible by a $5,000 grant from the Xcel Energy Foundation.
- **The Greg Lind Men in Nursing Endowed Scholarship** will provide funds to a male student studying nursing. Lind is a 1976 graduate of Viterbo University.
- **The Dr. Linda Malick Endowed Scholarship** was created to help a student studying biology.

Viterbo Raises Over $3,500 for Tsunami Victims

Members of the Viterbo community raised $3,572 to benefit the victims of the devastating tsunamis in Asia.

Jeans Day for tsunami relief generated $672, money that was donated to a larger fund put together by the State Bank of La Crosse. Viterbo Cares collected $150 and the money was given to UNICEF. Ashes to Easter raised $1,375, which was matched by the Student Government Association and given to UNICEF.

“Generosity is a characteristic of the women and men of Viterbo,” said Fr. Tom O’Neill, campus minister. “They are always ready to help others and do so often and well.”

Franciscan Circle

Keeping tuition affordable for everyone is one of the primary goals of Viterbo and programs like Franciscan Circle are designed to achieve that goal.

The Franciscan Circle is made up of people who have made a gift to Viterbo in their will. The money received goes to offset rising tuition costs.

Members of the Circle gathered June 15 for a seminar on identity theft. They also honored current members, welcomed new members, and remembered members who have recently died, including Dorothy -Jiracek, Fr. Michael Braun, Anna Mann, and Frances Balduzzi.

Individuals interested in knowing more about the Franciscan Circle should contact Gary Klein, vice president for institutional advancement at 608-796-3074 or glklein@viterbo.edu.

Pre-Professional Scholarship Winner

Heather Dietrich of Hustisford, Wis. was named this year’s winner of the Pre-Professional Scholarship. Dietrich received the honor after a day of testing and campus interviews given to 25 finalists competing for the scholarship, all of whom have expressed an interest in
healthcare or science. Dietrich, who had a score of 30 on the ACT test and is valedictorian of her class, plans to major in nursing. The scholarship covers complete tuition costs for up to four years and is valued at more than $60,000.

### Senior Class Gift

The class of 2005 has left their mark on Viterbo in many ways, but none more substantial than their senior class gift of $14,000. The money will be applied to student needs in the new Amie L. Mathy Center for Recreation and Education.

### Former Faculty Member Creates New Scholarship

Former sociology department faculty member Roger W. Brosig, who taught at Viterbo from 1972-74, has created the endowed Roger W. Brosig Scholarship for Sociology.

The scholarship will be given each year to a full-time student majoring in sociology. The recipient must be in good standing with the university and have demonstrated financial need.

The scholarship is renewable for up to three years. The selection process and the scholarship award are to be left to Viterbo’s discretion.

### Liberace Scholar

Viterbo student and Holmen native Andrew Waffenschmidt was named a Continuing Liberace Scholar for the 2005-06 school year. The Liberace Scholar receives a $6,000 scholarship, $3,000 from the Liberace Foundation and a matching $3,000 grant from Viterbo.

The Liberace Foundation has awarded Viterbo with a grant six of the last seven years. Waffenschmidt is a senior majoring in vocal performance and music theatre. Viterbo’s previous Liberace Scholar, Suzanne Flater ’04, was accepted to the Manhattan School of Music.

### SPORTS CORNER

**Women’s Basketball Team Wins Conference Tournament and Trip to Nationals**

For only the second time in school history, the women’s basketball team earned a trip to the NAIA Division II National Women’s Basketball Tournament. The V-Hawks earned the invitation by winning the Midwest Classic Conference postseason tournament.

After starting the season 5-14, the V-Hawks finished strong by winning 10 of their final 13 games to earn a share of the regular season conference title. The V-Hawks opened the conference tournament with a hard fought 72-60 victory over The Franciscan University. The V-Hawks then defeated Grand View College, a team they had lost to twice during the regular season, 66-50. In what Bobbi Vandenberg says “may be the most intense game” she has coached, the V-Hawks defeated Mount Mercy College 56-49 to win the conference.
tournament. Shelly Brueggen was named MCC player of the week for her efforts, averaging 17 points, 5.7 rebounds, 4 assists, and 2 steals for the tournament.

The V-Hawks received a number eight seed in their bracket of the national tournament and had to face number one seed Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU). Coming into the tournament, IWU was ranked number three in the national polls and had a 31-2 record overall. Although the V-Hawks fell behind by 16 points early in the second half, they did not panic and gave IWU a scare. Trailing 55-39 with less than 10 minutes to play, the V-Hawks used an 11-0 run to cut their deficit to five with seven minutes remaining. The V-Hawks would then cut it to 63-59 with 41 seconds remaining but could not get any closer and lost 67-59.

V-Hawks Hire Two New Coaches
The V-Hawk volleyball and men’s soccer team have new head coaches. Ryan DeLong was hired to take over the volleyball team and Al Driscoll was named the head men’s soccer coach.

DeLong comes to Viterbo after spending the last two years as head coach at We-tern Wisconsin Technical College (WWTC). In DeLong’s two seasons at WWTC, his teams compiled an overall record of 5020 and won back-to-back Wisconsin Technical College Conference Championships. Prior to coaching at WWTC, DeLong was at Aquinas High School where his teams were 417 and won two conference championships.

Driscoll takes over the V-Hawk soccer program after spending time playing and coaching at both the collegiate and professional level. Driscoll spent the last three seasons as an assistant coach at Midwest Classic Conference foe Grand View College. He also worked as an assistant with the Atlanta Silverbacks during the summer of 2004.

Viterbo Names Athletes of the Year
Basketball players Jeremy Fradette and Anne Wilson were named the 200405 Viterbo Athletes of the Year. Softball player Rikki Bush was named the 200405 Senior Scholar Athlete of the Year.

Fradette, a junior from Soldiers Grove, was selected to the Midwest Classic Conference First Team as well as the NAIA All-America Honorable Mention Team. Fradette had a breakout season for the V-Hawk men’s basketball team, leading them with 13.3 points and 7.5 rebounds per game.

Wilson, a junior from Richland Center, was among the top post players in the MCC this year. She was selected to the NAIA All-America Honorable Mention team and the MCC First Team. Wilson led the team all season in scoring and rebounding by averaging 16.8 points and 7.6 rebounds per game. Wilson ranked among the top 10 in the conference in scoring (second), rebounding (third), field goal percent (eighth), blocks (first), and free throw percent (seventh). The V-Hawk women finished the season 1818 and advanced to the NAIA National II Tournament for just the second time in school history.

Bush, a senior from Eau Claire, had the highest cumulative GPA, 3.82, among seniors in the V-Hawk athletics department and will graduate in December with an elementary education degree. Bush started all 46 games for the V-Hawks and batted .286 with 18 RBIs, 15 runs
scored, and one home run. Bush was moved back to her normal position of third base after playing second base last year because of a shoulder injury and had a .917 fielding percentage for the season. The V-Hawk softball team finished the regular season with a fourth place finish, a 1513 conference record, and a 2323 overall record.

Head Coaches Reach Milestones

Head women’s basketball coach Bobbi Vandenberg won her 200th collegiate game this season. Vandenberg has been at the helm of the V-Hawk women’s basketball program since 1993 and has compiled a 211175 record in that span. All 200 of Vandenberg’s collegiate wins have come at Viterbo University during her 12 years. She has had five 20-win seasons at Viterbo and two Midwest Classic Conference championships, including sharing this year’s conference championship with Waldorf College. Vandenberg was named MCC Coach of the Year for the third time this season.

Men’s basketball coach Wayne Wagner won his 100th collegiate game this season. Wagner had a successful playing career as a V-Hawk, returning to Viterbo in 1999 to take over the V-Hawk basketball program. During the 2001-02 season, Wagner was named MCC Coach of the Year after directing his team to a second place finish in the MCC.

Head baseball coach Larry Lipker won his 100th collegiate game earlier this season as well. Lipker took over the V-Hawk baseball program in 2001 and has accumulated the most wins of any baseball coach in Viterbo history, passing former V-Hawk coach Kevin Johnston with his 87th. During the 2002 season, Lipker led the V-Hawks to the NAIA regional tournament.

ALUMNI NOW

Happy Anniversary

The Viterbo Alumni -Association celebrated its 50th Anniversary this year. The Viterbo Board of Trustees issued a special proclamation commending the association’s 12,000 members on their “outstanding, continuous, and unwavering support of its Alma Mater.” The complete proclamation can be found on our website at www.viterbo.edu/alumni/AssociationInfo/Proclamation.htm.

Promoting the Love of Reading

Two Viterbo alumni recently did their part in an event to promote the joys of reading at Caledonia Elementary School in Caledonia, Minn. Superintendent Mike Moriarty ’88 kissed a llama when the students met their goal, reading over 14,000 books during the March “I Love to Read Month.” The llamas are owned by Beth Dolder-Zieke ’88 and her husband Steve. Beth is employed in the career planning and placement office at Viterbo.
Viterbo University Theatre Hits Half Century Mark
Alumni are invited to a special weekend celebrating 50 years of theatre at Viterbo Feb. 25-26, 2006. The event will feature an alumni lunch, a sneak preview discussion of The Importance of Being Earnest, a behind-the-scenes interactive tour featuring designs and creations of current students, a performance of The Importance of Being Earnest, an alumni cabaret and cocktail reception in the LaCroix Black Box Theatre, and a Sunday Liturgy and buffet lunch. For more information, visit www.viterbo.edu/alumni/theatre.htm or email theatre department chair Rick Walters at rhwalters@viterbo.edu.

Art Reunion and Dinner
All Viterbo art alumni and friends are invited to a reunion and dinner Oct. 15. The event will feature a dinner prepared by the art faculty, a reception, and the official opening of the alumni art exhibit. Invitations were mailed to all art alumni. Contact Sherri Lisota at 608-796-3753 or sjlisota@viterbo.edu for more information.

Outstanding Alumni Awards
Alumni Earl Madary ‘88, Barbara Winters ’99, and Antona Schedlo, FSPA ’65 were presented with outstanding alumni awards at the annual reunion in June.

Madary, chair of the religious studies and philosophy department, is the 2005 Viterbo Teacher of the Year. He is a Catholic Worker and a founding member of the Place of Grace Catholic Worker House in La Crosse. He has also released two recordings of Christian Folk Music, Prodigals and the recent Gilead. See page 5 for more details.

Winters is the winner of the Outstanding Alumni Award for Professional Development. She is a 1999 graduate of Viterbo who works as the Allamakee Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator/County Department Head and Community Connections Project Director for the Allamakee Community School District. She has served two four-year terms on the Governor’s Commission on Substance Abuse and has received the Governor’s Volunteer Award for the State of Iowa and the Citizenship Award from the Iowa Bar Association.

Sr. Schedlo has spent a lifetime helping and teaching others. She is a member of the FSPA who taught at various schools in the United States before moving to El Salvador to study Spanish, doing pastoral work, and coordinating activities at a school. She continued her work in El Salvador, serving as a pastoral worker as part of an international war zone presence, financing and building a Catholic Church, starting a soup kitchen for the elderly, starting an Alcoholics Anonymous group, rebuilding a church after an earthquake, and working to get water for a town. She has been recognized with the outstanding Alumni Award for Community Service.

Homecoming 2005
Homecoming 2005 was a big success as Viterbo welcomed back alumni for the weekend in February. Alumni and guests were treated to the Wall of Fame induction of Rich Rust and Kim Hendricks, the men’s and women’s alumni games (Kara Brandau, Scott Koenen, and Eric Brieske were named MVPs), the varsity games versus Grand View College, a post game party at the Recovery Room, and Mass on Sunday.
Spotlight On

In a new recurring section, Strides recently caught up with three alumni with interesting careers

Rob Cress ’04

Rob Cress is living in Burbank, Calif. next door to Warner Brothers Studios and the Disney Cable Channel Tower, and within six blocks of NBC, Disney, and ABC studios.

He recently landed a job with Feature This!, a company that helps businesses market their products by getting them placed in films and television. “When I pay my dues, meet the right people, learn the necessary skills, hopefully I’ll be able to use this job as an opportunity to grow,” Cress said.

Cress has been spending time with Dave Smith, the director of the Disney Archives. He and Smith attended a performance of the L.A. Philharmonic at the new Disney Concert Hall with tickets Smith received from Diane Disney Miller, Walt Disney’s daughter. Cress has also met the public relations director for Disney and a producer for Touchstone Television.

“Sometimes I still can’t believe that I’m actually where I am,” he said.

Chad Hrdina ’01

Chad Hrdina was appointed to the position of Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Public Health Emergency Preparedness in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by President George W. Bush.

His duties differ from that of a typical special assistant--Hrdina’s job is to plan countermeasures to terrorism. “My charge is to examine the situational quality of nuclear terrorism incidences, develop the medical requirements for response to these events, and further create management scenarios to be followed in the national response plan,” he said. “My appointment to this office is a humbling experience. I am a colleague to a deputy surgeon general of the army, the military’s premier biological, chemical, and radiological weapons experts, the man responsible for eradicating small pox, and numerous others of great authority and eminence in their fields.”

Julie (Gratz) Walker ’82

Julie Walker has traveled a good portion of the world in her job as Lands’ End’s home division technical design and manufacturing specialist.

Lands’ End works with 76 vendors in 16 countries, and Walker has traveled to most of them. Her responsibilities at Lands’ End include translating the creative design into a technical design, working with manufacturers at the production facility, and performing design accuracy inspections.

She began her career at Lands’ End in the apparel division in 1989, when the company had 2,000 employees. Now Lands’ End has 6,000 employees around the world.

Walker earned a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics from Viterbo in 1982. Walker said former Viterbo home economics professor Sabra Mumford was a great influence. Mumford promoted consumer safety, protection, and education, and Walker said she takes those values seriously, working to ensure products are the best and safest value they can be.
CLASS NOTES

1950

1970
Nancy (Wolfgram) Reinart ’71 retired after 30 years of teaching art in the Hillsboro school district.
Mary Lu Gerke ’74 received her doctorate in Human and Organizational Systems from Fielding Graduate University of Santa Barbara, Calif.
Jean (Bahnsen) Krause ’74 currently Gundersen Lutheran’s director of Quality Improvement, will take on additional challenges as the new chief quality officer.
Connie (Barr) Delaney ’75, internationally recognized health informatics scholar, has joined the University of Minnesota School of Nursing as professor and dean.
Terri (Hess) Pedace ’77 was honored with the March 2005 HEROES award by Franciscan Skemp Healthcare. Terri’s HERO award was presented to the American Cancer Society.

1980
Sharon Tourville ’80 accepted a position as senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Children’s Medical Center in Dallas.
Katie (Rowan) ’82 and Scott Koenen ’81 opened Scott Joseph Menswear in downtown La Crosse. The store has a full line of men’s clothing.
Patricia (Spangler) Griffin ’84 is the new Director of Health Information Services at Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, N.C.
Roberta (Boes) ’87 and Fady Nassif celebrated the birth of a son, Samuel, March 25, 2004. He joins his brothers, Mathew, 6, and Jadin, 4.
Kay Anderson ’89 and Colette Sweeney welcomed brother and sister Elijah, 4, and Ebonie, 21 months, to their family, Feb. 26, 2005.
Chad Clift ’89-’91 accepted a position at Midwest Orthopaedic Center in Peoria, Ill. as an accountant.
Phillip Johnson ’89 received his MBA from the University of Chicago, March 2004.
Alison Relyea married Christopher Parr ’89 Sept. 6, 2004 in Madison.

1990
Core (Method) ’90 and Paul Limburg celebrated the birth of a daughter, Eleyna, Nov. 19, 2004. She joins her brother, Ben, 4.
Renee Kowalski ’90 married Christian Ames March 12, 2005 at the Little White Wedding Chapel in Las Vegas.
Jennifer (Domask) Larson ’92 has been promoted to administrative director of the Nutrition Clinic at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center in La Crosse.
Beth (Jaekel) ’93 and Kevin Erickson adopted a baby boy, Benjamin William Aeden, born April 9, 2005.
Brian Bridgeforth ’94 had an article accepted for publication by The Journal of Leadership Education. Brian’s article “Advancing the Practice of Leadership: A Curriculum” was published in the June 2005 issue.

Paula (Johnson) ’94 and Chad Gregerson celebrated the birth of a son, Micah Steven, Jan. 12, 2005. He joins his brothers, Thomas, 13, Garth, 9, Brandon, 7, Gabriel, 5, and Dalton, 2. Marlet (Litscher) ’94 and Tony Pyka celebrated the birth of a son, Benjamin Anthony, July 9, 2004. He joins his sister, Grace, 2.

Cindy Lund ’94 married Michael Hrdi Sept. 18, 2004 in Milwaukee.

Angela (McCurdy) ’94 and Verghese Mathew celebrated the birth of a son, Kiran Manapurathu, April 12, 2005.


Krista (Clements) ’95 and Steven Orlan moved their business, West Central Computer Solutions, out of their home to Central Avenue in Elbow Lake, Minn.

Jennifer Hedrick-Erickson ’95 competed in the Boston Marathon on April 18, 2005. This was her second marathon and she finished with a time of 3:47:44, fifteen minutes later than her qualifying time. She placed 7,414 out of 18,319 runners. This also placed her 1,632 of all females including the elite division.

Kris (Marohl) ’95 married Mark Weis Sept. 4, 2004. Kris accepted a position at Onalaska Care Center as a social worker.

Martin Kolar ’96 was awarded the Certified Master in Navision Development certification by Microsoft Business Solutions. This is the highest level of certification from Microsoft Business Solutions, there are only three individuals in the United States that have achieved this designation.

Diane O’Shaughnessy ’96 celebrated the birth of a grandson, Jesse Mark Olson, Feb. 2, 2005.

Eve (Molzhon) Zellmer ’96 was the marketing chairwoman for the La Crosse Area Builders Association “Rebuilding Dreams” project in which volunteers completely remodeled a home for a family of three young people who lost their parents. She is the owner of EZ Print and Copy in West Salem.

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

Ariane and Andy Honkamp ’97 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Emerson Grace, Dec. 26, 2004. She joins her brothers, Andrew, 3, and Sam, 2.


Amy Preisler ’98 will be attending graduate school in the fall at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul.

Kelly Ross-Tokarski ’98 received a Master of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire on May 21, 2005.

2000

Jennifer Barnard ’00 and Brett Sargent celebrated the birth of a daughter, Abigayle Claire, Jan. 1, 2005. Abigayle was the first baby of the New Year born in La Crosse.
Jocelyn (Branson) '00 and Josh Buxton celebrated the birth of a daughter, Elliott “Ellie” Marilyn, March 29, 2005.
Jill and Scott Paetzold '00 celebrated the birth of a son, Grant Walter, Dec. 22, 2004.
Daniel Lesniak '00 accompanied six students to Belize as part of the Belize & Beyond program—a joint effort of We Energies and the Zoological Society. The program has classes and field trips each fall that focus on comparing the ecology of temperate and tropical forests and how economic factors can affect the environment.
Kathi Snyder '00 received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. The award from the National Science Foundation was presented April 14, 2005 in Washington, D.C.
Brenda (Nees) Christian '02 accepted a position as President/CEO of the Bay Area Housing Development Corporation, a non-profit agency that helps low to moderate income families purchase homes.
Terra Jenson '02 accepted a position with the USDA at the National Veterinary Service Laboratories as a microbiologist in the avian virology section.
Michelle (Newman) '02 and Wayne Owens celebrated the birth of a daughter, Sydney Rae, Aug. 24, 2004. She joins her sister, Olivia, 2. Michelle is a registered nurse in the ICU at the New Ulm Medical Center. She is entering her final year of the Family Nurse Practitioner program at Minnesota State University-Mankato.
Jaclyn Harbaugh '03 married Ryan Wirth Aug. 21, 2004. Jaclyn graduated from the Respiratory Care Practitioner program at Western Wisconsin Technical College in 2004 and is a respiratory therapist at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare.
Jen (Jahnsman) '03 and Taka Kuvaoga '02 celebrated the birth of a son, Faustino, Aug. 21, 2004.
Amanda Jandt '03 celebrated the birth of a daughter, Madysan Joye, April 18, 2005.
Molly Nesbitt '03 received a Masters in Library and Information Science degree from Dominican University in River Forest, Ill.
Jesse Dreikosen, '04, received his Masters of Fine Arts in Theatrical Set Design from Purdue University. He is resident set designer for New Theatre in Miami.
Teresa (Kast) '04 and Brian Miller celebrated the birth of a daughter, Hannah Bethany, Sept. 10, 2004.
Rebecca (Morphe) '04 and Glenn Morse celebrated the birth of a son, Jared Dale, Jan. 18, 2005. He joins his brother, Aiden, 2.
Jennifer Oestreich '04 accepted a position as a quality control/assurance chemist at Minntech Corp. of Plymouth, Minn.
Dana Voss '04 married Kurtis Read July 6, 2004 in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

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.
George Rohlik, Jan. 1, 2005, brother of Mary Rohlik, FSPA, '45.
Doris (Terpstra) Lepsch '45-'47, April 12, 2005.
Herman Maier, March 1, 2005, brother of Genelda Maier, FSPA, ’52.
Mary Burich, Jan. 25, 2005, sister of Margaret Hassel, FSPA, ’53 and mother of Mary Ann (Burich) Wetterling ’90.

Joe Rathburn, March 19, 2005, brother of Rita Rathburn, FSPA ’53.
James Rohn, Dec. 6, 2004, brother of Alice Rohn, FSPA, ’56.

Helen Larkin, Nov. 16, 2004, mother of Sue (Larkin) Gilbert ’59-’60.
Mary Jane Ipsen, Feb. 15, 2005, mother of Shirley (Ipsen) Hetherington ’60.
Frederick A. Hart, April 5, 2005, husband of Gail (Hupfauer) Hart ’61-’63.


Loretta Giampietri, FSPA ’64, May 19, 2005.
Margaret Boyer, FSPA, ’65, Feb. 11, 2005.

Bernard Mader, Jan. 25, 2005, father of Mary (Mader) Palzkill ’70.
Jerome “Jerry” Gran, April 28, 2005, father-in-law of Cynthia (Loper) Gran ’74.
John “Jack” Dammon, April 5, 2005, father of Judy (Dammon) Limberg ’74.
Elizabeth Ann “Betty” Hanson, April 3, 2005, mother of Nancy (Hanson) Galstad ’76.

Frances Lucille Bahl, Jan. 24, 2005, mother of Rose (Bahl) Peterson ’77.
Leo Anderson, Nov. 18, 2004, father of Linda Anderson ’78.

Laura Forsythe, April 26, 2005, mother of Ellen (Forsythe) MacKinney ’80.

Diane (Gordon) Anderson ’82, May 7, 2005, wife of Kevin Anderson ’80.
Royce Hayter, Feb. 21, 2005, father-in-law of Karen (Burt) Hayter ’84.
Stanley Spangler, Jan. 8, 2005, father of Valerie (Spangler) Schaefer ’86.


Mabel Cavadini, April 10, 2005, mother of Wayne Cavadini ’91.
David Hanifl, April 25, 2005, father-in-law of Amy (Clark) Hanifl ’98.

Stanley Miller, Nov. 30, 2004, father of Virginia (Miller) Brochhausen ’00.

A FINAL WORD

Chance Meeting
By Cathy (Tomka) Malone ’80

It’s a Small World: Reunited by pure chance after 24 years, two members of the Viterbo family, Cathy (Tomka) Malone ’80 and Captain Marie Senzig ’80, met on a NATO Base in Keflavik, Iceland.

Have you ever wondered about what a large world it is? Or what a small world it is? Or, maybe even where all your old classmates have gone? Could they have gone to any distant or exotic lands? Webster defines serendipity as “an apparent aptitude for making fortunate discoveries accidentally.” This can occur at the time and place you least expect it.

Now imagine you’re sitting at a fledgling Catholic women’s group on a military base in a foreign country far, far away...when suddenly the person sitting directly across from you seems vaguely familiar. You wonder, why does that person seem familiar. There’s something about them. Could it be their voice, but why? So you start to run the tape in your head and leave still wondering, not yet knowing if that person reminds you of someone, or if they are someone you once knew.

As time passes and you infrequently run across one another, you continue to ponder why this person seems vaguely familiar. In a quiet moment, after the three kids are put to bed, you spot the latest Strides magazine and pick it up, wondering if it will mention an alumnus that you will recognize or remember. Checking for news from the 1980 graduating year, imagine your surprise to find news about a former classmate that had shared the same major, nursing. Suddenly the mystery is solved! WOW, there is a Viterbo grad, a nurse, from my year group here on this base. That’s who she is!

Now, you need to wait for an opportunity for your paths to cross because your social circles differed. She’s a Captain in the Navy and is the senior nurse executive at the Keflavik hospital while you are a stay-at-home mom with a husband who works on a different part of the base. One weekend at Mass, who should be sitting in the pew in front of me but Marie Senzig, my old classmate--although in the intervening years she had lost about two feet of hair! The time seemed right for the re-introduction so you tap her on the shoulder and invite her to coffee. You introduce yourself as Cathy Malone then ask, “Do you remember who I am?” You encounter a puzzled look so hasten to add that your name has changed since she knew you. The quizzical glance remains so you spring the surprise. “We were classmates at Viterbo.” Once you mention this the wheels start to turn and recognition dawns through the fog of time. She exclaims, “You’re right, we were, I recognize you!” We quickly run the database of fellow classmates, where they are and what they’re doing.
Now may be a good time to tell you of the present. Marie Senzig and I both reside on a NATO base in Keflavík, Iceland with 4,000 other residents. There are Canadians, Danes, Icelanders, and of course, Americans from the Air Force, Navy and Army. The base is located on a small peninsula on the southwest corner of the country and benefits from the warm ocean currents of the Gulf Stream. The temperature ranges from 10°40 degrees F in the wintertime and 55°65 degrees F in the summertime. The warm Gulf Stream also results in frequent gale force winds and snow creating challenging weather conditions. Growing up in the Midwest prepared us for the snow and temperatures but not the wind. Keflavík’s wind literally knocks you off your feet, rips doors off of cars, snaps flagpoles, and requires fire trucks as a wind break or forces us to link a human chain of adults to get the children safely to school.

Iceland is known for its fish, lamb, and spectacular Northern Lights displays. At winter’s peak we have about three and one-half hours of daylight. At the summer solstice there is about three hours of darkness/dusk. As you can imagine, during the wintertime, fellowship and friends are extremely important. Marie and I are very active in our parish and our Catholic Women of the Chapel (CWOC) group. We continue to carve out time to catch up on the past 24 years. We thought this was a neat story to share on how our lives have gone on different paths but how they converged at this remote northern spot that so few Americans have ever visited or lived.

**EXTRAS**

**The University of Opportunity**

“*Viterbo University has experienced a wonderful transformation. There is a lot more planned for the future and much of this has been possible because of the tremendous support we have enjoyed on campus and in the community.*”

President William J. Medland announcing The University of Opportunity

Viterbo University has a new plan to guide its future. Details were announced at a press conference May 16. The comprehensive strategic plan includes over 60 separate initiatives, which will affect all aspects of campus life. Called *The University of Opportunity*, the plan calls for expansion of library and nursing facilities, construction of a new student housing complex, and program changes including more “24/7” access for students to their grades, financial aid, and registration information. New opportunities to expand the influence of the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership are also anticipated. A St. Clare sculpture to complement an existing one of St. Francis of Assisi, and a fountain based on the Canticle of the Creatures will also contribute to Viterbo’s Franciscan heritage. For an abbreviated listing of the initiatives found in *The University of Opportunity*, go to [www.viterbo.edu/about/](http://www.viterbo.edu/about/)

**Just About Finished**

Construction on The Amie L. Mathy Center for Recreation and Education is nearing completion and the facility will be open in time for fall classes. See progress at: [www.viterbo.edu/collaboration/progress.html](http://www.viterbo.edu/collaboration/progress.html).

Already, the collaborative project between Viterbo and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater La Crosse has exceeded its $7.5 million fund raising goal as news spread regarding this unique
partnership. The Center features three regulation size gymnasiums, a walking/jogging track, a strength and cardiovascular fitness room, and on the Club side, space specifically designed to serve the youth of the south side. A grand opening is scheduled for September on a date yet to be determined.