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Main Hall to Main St.

Vol. 6, No. 7

Connecting Campus and Community

September 2000

Missoula business drive aims at \$345,000 to meet UM needs

Leaders of this year's Excellence Fund's Missoula Business Drive have set their sights on raising \$345,000 for academic programs at The University of Montana through the annual peer-to-peer solicitation of the city's business and professional community.

The drive officially began with a kick-off celebration before the Sept. 16 football game between the Montana Grizzlies and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. More than 100 community volunteers will contact colleagues asking for their support over the next six weeks.

"For the past 22 years, the Missoula community has been generous to the University and always said 'Count Me In' when asked for an Excellence Fund gift," said Phil Barney, chair of this year's drive.

To reach the goal, Excellence Fund volunteers and UM Foundation staff identified the community's growth industries to expand the list of prospective donors.

"The economy in Missoula is strong — thanks in part to the University's \$211 million annual spending in local businesses — and there are some industries where there has been substantial growth," said Kathy Schaub, director of annual giving at the UM Foundation.

Schaub and associates studied business lists and have added almost 150

prospects that will be visited by volunteers.

She noted that while the local community has provided \$3.5 million since the business drive started in 1978, there are many businesses that benefit directly from University student and employee purchases that haven't been asked to support the fund-raiser in the past. That's something that drive volunteers intend to change, Schaub said.

The Excellence Fund's Missoula Business Drive is a major source of undesignated gifts for UM programs. With the money provided annually, President George Dennison has allocated funding for scholarships, including one specifically restricted to a graduate of each Missoula high school; outreach efforts such as public lectures, concerts and exhibitions; faculty, staff and student travel to professional conferences; extended library and computer lab hours; and on-campus events such as the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, which drew 1,500 students from 200 U.S. colleges and universities to the UM campus in April.

The Missoula Business Drive was founded by five local businessmen in 1978 to provide private funding for unanticipated academic opportunities and to cement the relationship between the University and its hometown.

Firefighters offered deadline extension

Firefighters saved the day, and now UM is saving them some seats and some money.

To show its appreciation and support of students fighting fires during the worst season in 90 years, UM offered to save classroom seats and waive late fees.

More than 150 student firefighters took advantage of the offer that kept them on the fire lines well after the Sept. 5 start of classes. Firefighters have

until Sept. 25 to show up for classes. Faculty members are holding seats for them, and the administration is waiving late enrollment fees.

Meanwhile, the School of Forestry will offer a six-week special topics course on fire management beginning in early October. The class will include a lineup of guest speakers that should be interesting to students, as well as the Missoula community.

Homecoming Highlights

Thursday, Oct. 5

Art Fair—10 a.m.-6 p.m. through Saturday, University Center atrium.

Friday, Oct. 6

Book sale—10 a.m.-3 p.m., Mansfield Library Mall.

Journalism school reunion open house—2 p.m., A.B. Guthrie Memorial Reading Room (old J-School Library).

Class of 1960 reception—no-host bar and hosted hors d'oeuvres, 5 p.m., Davidson Honors College.

Carillon Concert—by UM carillonneur Nancy Cooper, 6:30 p.m., outside of Main Hall.

Singing on the Steps—7 p.m., Main Hall. Presentation of the Distinguished Alumni Awards, crowning of homecoming royalty.

Post-SOS—UM's Big Sky Winds and Alumni Band play, 8:15 p.m., Holiday Inn Parkside. Everyone welcome.

All-alumni social and dance—9 p.m., Holiday Inn Parkside. Music by the Alumni Band. Everyone welcome. Free.

Saturday, Oct. 7

Homecoming Parade—10 a.m., "The Discovery Continues" Lewis and Clark theme, travels from downtown south on Higgins to University Avenue, then east to Helen. Entry deadline is Sept. 29.

Tailgate parties—11 a.m., north side of Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

Football—Grizzlies vs. Cal State Sacramento Hornets, 1:05 p.m., Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

Homecoming dance—8 p.m.-1 a.m., University Center Commons. \$5.

Fireworks display—9:15 p.m., Southgate Mall.

Guest Editorial

by George M. Dennison, University of Montana President

President proposes a sales tax that's not a plain, old sales tax

In a recent editorial (Sept. 6, 2000), the Missoulian questioned the wisdom, even the sanity, of anyone who proposes a sales tax in Montana, for whatever worthy purpose. The editorial focused specifically upon a suggestion I made in the annual "State of the University" address. I outlined some goals for the next five years and stated our need for additional funds in order to achieve those goals. The editorial accepted the goals as worthwhile and "doable" and also noted that support for education at all levels has eroded in Montana during recent years but rejected my suggestion about the means to reverse the damage. The summary of the editorial put the criticism as follows: "Sales-tax talk could overshadow worthy goals at UM."

I write specifically to correct a misimpression conveyed by the editorial. In my comments, I did suggest "a well-crafted sales tax" as a possible solution to the challenge before us in Montana. Many people, not just those in higher education, believe that the state cannot change its intolerable position as third from last in a listing of states ranked by



Dennison

average annual per capita income unless it invests in human resources and economic development. The states that have invested in their higher education systems and held them accountable have prospered. North Carolina and Georgia provide examples of the value and benefit of such a strategy. My suggested means of securing the funds for investment grew out of recognition that the state must find a way to respond to the challenge that has plagued us for a decade.

State support for higher education in Montana ranks nationally at a comparable level with the average annual per capita income: dead last. Montana provides the lowest support per student in higher education of any system in the country, and dedicates the lowest portion of every thousand dollars of that low average annual per capita income to higher education of all the states, roughly \$7.50. These rankings make the issue very clear. Not only does the state invest much less than other states, including those in the region, it also dedicates a much smaller portion of every thousand dollars of average income. I submit that we should not be surprised when we find that the average annual per capita income matches the investment level.

How can we respond to this challenge? Policy makers have only two ways of finding funds to invest in higher education. They can either reallocate the existing pool, thereby diverting funds from their current uses and depriving other critical programs of needed support; or they can identify new sources of revenue, which typically means adopt new taxes or increase existing ones. In my view, the pool of available funds will not stretch far enough to support current service levels in critical programs in the state. Thus, reallocation will not solve the problem and if implemented will exacerbate it. That leaves the second alternative, and everyone knows that most people demand tax relief, not more taxes. So how can we solve the problem?

I suggested a sales tax that includes a rebate to Montana residents in their property and income tax bills for the sales tax they pay, thus holding them harmless, with actual refunds to those residents who pay no income or property taxes. As another alternative, residents simply will not pay the tax. But, since as usual the devil is in the details, many people will want

to know how such a tax works. Several approaches come to mind. As one approach, the state can assist stores and businesses to implement the sales tax by charging it only to non-residents. The cost of the technology for the seller to check the residency of the purchaser is minimal and can come from the proceeds of the tax. As an alternative, residents can take a percentage of their income and claim it when they file their tax returns, or if they pay no tax, can claim a refund. Certainly other possibilities exist to reach the desired objective. Most important, I believe Montana residents will need to know the procedures to hold them harmless before any such tax is implemented.

Some also have inquired about the amount of revenue potentially available. As many people know, the voters approved a constitutional amendment that limits a sales tax to 4 percent. The estimates I have seen of currently untaxed non-resident expenditures in the state — i.e., excluding gasoline sales and the cost of hotel and motel rooms — produces an estimated revenue stream of at least \$40 million. When the number of visitors to the state grows, as it clearly will in response to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, so will the revenue. Why not claim a portion of it for investment in the state's future?

Thus, while I suggested a sales tax, the kind of tax I have in mind will not impact Montana residents. Several other states have used a similar approach, in each case because of the relatively large number of visitors to those states and the sense that the visitors should have the opportunity to help support the critical infrastructure of the states. In that regard, we need to remember that non-residents who attend public colleges and universities in Montana pay the full cost of instruction; they receive no state support. It seems only fair to allow other non-resident visitors to pay their way as well. As you can see, I have not advocated a traditional sales tax, but a variation on one that has some potential to assist us in responding to the challenge.

Let me add that the challenge we face in Montana differs only in magnitude, not in kind, from that all states must confront. In fact, national figures reveal that state and student-family contributions to support higher education have fallen in recent years, while the level of federal support — essentially through student financial aid — has remained stable. From about 1950 to 1980, state support rose from 35 to 55 percent of the total, while student-family contributions declined from about 50 to 35 percent. From 1980 to 1999 the reverse occurred: The state contribution fell from 55 to 43 percent, while the student-family contribution rose from 35 to 48 percent. Most recently, between 1993 and 1998, higher education's share of the national GDP (Gross Domestic Product) fell from 1.83 to 1.71 percent, a loss of \$10.2 billion, because of a reduction in the state and student-family contributions. Failure to redress that trend will inevitably result in a decline in the competitive position of the United States.

The same page that featured the editorial I mentioned also had a piece by Robert E. Hall of the Hoover Institution titled "The remarkable prosperity of college graduates." Hall noted that college graduates "have really cleaned up" in income growth during the last ten years. Why? "The industries that hire large numbers of college graduates are technology users." Even though he anticipates that the economy will cool in the months ahead, Hall concluded: "But the message is durable that college matters. College graduates are the architects of the new economy, and they have been amply rewarded for that role." Unfortunately, Montana has not realized that benefit and will not unless and until it makes new investments in its higher education system. Those who dislike my suggested means of making those investments have the responsibility to propose alternatives.



Bear Briefs

Book Hooks—In an effort to encourage lifelong reading habits, UM has teamed up with Missoula news organizations and local bookstores for the second annual book drive for area school-children. The goal is to collect books for the hundreds of children who have access to books only at school. Suitable new or used children's books may be dropped off at participating bookstores: The Book Exchange, Bird's Nest Books, Hastings, Sidneys Used Book, Fact and Fiction, Carth's Book Shop and the Bookstore at UM. Students being tutored through UM's Montana Reads volunteer program will benefit from the book drive.

Smoke Clearing—Continuing Education recently received a \$600,000 contract from the state Department of Public Health and Human Services to establish a center for the Montana Tobacco-Use Prevention Program. Using money from the state's tobacco settlement, the Resource Training and Technical Assistance Center will develop and facilitate workshops and focus groups and coordinate community outreach efforts throughout the state and on Indian reservations. The contract has the potential for annual renewal until 2007 for a total of \$3 million to \$4 million.

New Web—Although still at the old address, www.umt.edu, the University's Web site has a new look. Gordy Pace, manager of the facelift project, said the goal was to make the site more user-friendly and attractive. Planning and design took nine months and the hard efforts of many people across the campus, but credit for the home page goes to students Wendy Foltz and Gwen Landquist, employees of Spectral Fusion at UM's College of Arts and Sciences. For daily updates on UM news and events, click on "News at UM."

Gotta Dance—Mo-Trans, UM's resident dance group, will perform 7:30 p.m. concerts nightly Oct. 18-21 in the Montana Theatre of the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center. New York and San Francisco choreographers are being brought in to set pieces, while works created by Mo-Trans artistic director Amy Ragsdale also will be performed. Tickets are \$12/general, \$10/students and senior citizens, and \$5/required attendance for fine arts students. Call the fine arts box office at (406) 243-4581.

UM On Parade—Get ready Missoula — the city's biggest parade of the year is just around the corner. UM is seeking entries for this year's Homecoming Parade, scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 7. UM's new institutional slogan, "The Discovery Continues," is the theme for Homecoming 2000 activities. Parade organizer Sharon Palmer asks that all entries be related to the theme, which could range from the bicentennial of Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery to future discoveries. Applications are available at the UM Alumni Association office on Brantly Hall's main floor or from the Chamber of Commerce, 825 E. Front St. The entry fee is \$10, and applications must be returned to the Alumni Association by Friday, Sept. 29. For more information, call the alumni office at (406) 243-5211.



The Alumni Band is a favorite Homecoming Parade tradition each year.

Funding Boost—UM's Flathead Lake Biological Station can establish an endowed professorship in limnology research thanks to a \$1.5 million commitment from the McKnight Foundation of Minneapolis. Because the grant must be matched by \$1 million from other private sources, it provides a strong incentive for the station's fund-raising efforts. The limnology professorship will be the second endowed position at the station, after the Bierman Professorship in Ecology held by director Jack Stanford.

Habit Kicking—UM's School of Pharmacy has signed a \$36,395 contract with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services to oversee an effort by selected Montana pharmacies to help people who want to kick the tobacco habit. Twenty pharmacies will be recruited to enroll at least five Medicaid patients each in a 12-week

tobacco-cessation behavior modification program. Pharmacists will meet with the patients weekly in half-hour sessions for six weeks. Patients also will use Zyban or the nicotine patch. For another six weeks the pharmacists will monitor the patients by telephone and then will do follow-ups after six, nine and 12 months.

On Display—The work of 14 artists from the Northern Rocky Mountain West can be seen in UM's Henry Meloy and Paxson Galleries. "Forty Freedoms" — featuring drawings, paintings, photographs, sculpture and more — is a mix of art selected to represent insights into the remarkable changes that challenge the ecological and cultural diversity of the Northern Rockies region. The artists represented are Theodore Waddell, Christopher Warner, Clarice Dreyer, George Gogas, Richard Buswell, Nina Alexander, Suzanne Truman, Sandra Nykerk, Walter Hook, Elmer Sprunger, Mark Wilson, Steve Kelly, Ralph Wiegmann and Henry Meloy. The galleries are located off the lobby of the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. weekdays. For more information, call (406) 243-2019 or 243-4970.

Families Welcome—UM's annual Family Weekend is scheduled for Friday through Sunday, Oct. 20-22. Families and friends of UM students are invited to campus to visit and partake in the many activities offered over the weekend, including a Big Sky Conference football contest between the Montana Grizzlies and their rivals the Northern Arizona Lumberjacks. For more information about weekend events, call Bridgit Sommer, community relations and outreach coordinator, at (406) 243-2488 or e-mail bsommer@selway.umt.edu.

Homecoming Shopping—Besides a parade, football game and fireworks, Homecoming 2000 presents some unique shopping opportunities. The Friends of the Mansfield Library will hold its annual book sale from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday. The Homecoming arts and crafts fair will run from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday through Saturday at the University Center. And dues-paying members of the UM Alumni Association will get 25 percent off almost everything at The Bookstore at UM Friday and Saturday.

UM Calendar

Thursday, Sept. 28

Art exhibit—"Small Tales From the Big Sky" by Edgar Smith and "Collaborative Ceramic Works" by Joe Batt and Kelly Connole, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Mon.-Fri., through Oct. 20, Gallery of Visual Arts, Social Science Building. Opening reception, 5-7 p.m., in the gallery. Free.

Friday, Sept. 29

Stargazing—Blue Mountain Observatory, weather permitting, an hour after sunset. The drive to the top of Blue Mountain takes about an hour from Missoula, so call 243-5283 to make sure the weather will allow observing. Free.

Saturday, Sept. 30

Performance—UM musical ensembles, Homecoming 2000 week kickoff, noon, Southgate Mall's Clock Court.

Sunday, Oct. 1

Concert—String Orchestra of the Rockies, "Fall Colors" featuring Paul Hersh on piano, 7:30 p.m., Music Recital Hall. Tickets \$12/general, \$10/students and senior citizens. Call 728-8203.

Wednesday, Oct. 4

12th Annual Big Sky Career Fair—workshops and presentations, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., UM campus. Call (406) 243-2022 for more information.

UM Productions Performing Arts Series—Dar Williams, folk singer/songwriter, 7:30 p.m., University Theatre. Tickets \$14/students, \$16/general; call (888) 666-8262 or (406) 243-4051.

Thursday, Oct. 5

Homecoming Art Fair—10 a.m.-6 p.m. each day through Saturday, Oct. 7, University Center atrium.

Volleyball—Lady Griz vs. Portland State, 7 p.m., West Auxiliary Gym.

Friday, Oct. 6

Homecoming 2000—see front-page schedule or call (406) 243-5211 for a complete schedule.

Tuesday, Oct. 10

Faculty recital—soprano Ann Basinski, 7:30 p.m., Music Recital Hall. Tickets \$5/general, \$3/students and senior citizens.

Drama production—"The Last Night of Ballyhoo," comedy/drama by Alfred Uhry, Oct. 10-14 and 17-21, Masquer Theatre.

Thursday, Oct. 12

Volleyball—Lady Griz vs. Sacramento State, 7 p.m., West Auxiliary Gym.

Friday, Oct. 13

Women's soccer—Montana Diadora Cup: Grizzlies vs. Weber State, 4 p.m., UM's South Campus Soccer Field.

Faculty recital—oboe/saxophonist Roger McDonald and pianist James Edmonds, 7:30 p.m., Music Recital Hall. Tickets \$5/general, \$3/students and senior citizens.

Saturday, Oct. 14

Concert—Missoula Symphony Orchestra with piano soloist Christopher O'Riley, 7:30 p.m., also Sunday, University Theatre. Call 721-3194 for ticket information.

Ninth Annual Cowboy Ball—hosted by UM Rodeo Club, Lolo Peak Arena. All tickets are sold in advance; seating is limited. For more information call (406) 523-1309 or e-mail kdodson@washcorp.com.

Sunday, Oct. 15

Women's soccer—Montana Diadora Cup: Grizzlies vs. Idaho State, 1 p.m., UM's South Campus Soccer Field.

Monday, Oct. 16

President's Lecture Series—"Why Conserve Biodiversity," Anthony Sinclair, professor and director, Centre for Biodiversity Research, University of British Columbia, 8 p.m., University Theatre. Free.

Tuesday, Oct. 17

Faculty recital—cello soloist Fern Glass Boyd, 7:30 p.m., Music Recital Hall. Tickets \$5/general, \$3/students and senior citizens.

Wednesday, Oct. 18

Dance production—MoTrans Concert, Montana Theatre. Tickets are \$12/general and \$10/students and senior citizens. Call the box office at 243-4481.

UM supports annual HeartWalk to raise money, awareness

For the second year running, UM was a major sponsor of the Missoula HeartWalk to raise money to fight and awareness about heart disease and stroke.

President George Dennison and wife Jane, a heart disease survivor, led a number of UM teams in the fund-raising walk around Southgate Mall.

UM also donated the grand prizes to the top two community teams that raised the most money. The first-place team won a five-course, gourmet heart healthy meal prepared by University executive chef Tom Siegel, a heart attack survivor himself. The second-place finishers will be the guests of the Dennisons in the President's Box at an upcoming Lady Griz basketball game. Individual prizes of Grizzly logowear were provided by the UM Alumni Association, Grizzly Athletics and the Grizzly Athletic Association.

Over the years UM scientists have been generously supported by American Heart Association research grants from both the local, Northwest affiliate chapter and the national grant program. For example, this year two new grants were received by young UM scientists with an award of \$104,000 over the next two years.

Taren Grass, a doctoral student from Box Elder who is training in Associate Professor Doug Coffin's pharmaceutical sciences lab, is using her grant to develop ways to stimulate new blood vessels to grow in areas of the heart that are damaged by a heart attack, thereby allowing a faster recovery of the damaged tissue.

Pakamas Tongcharoensirikul, postdoctoral student training in Professor Chuck Thompson's lab, is using her grant to study an important way in which stroke can cause brain damage. The research implicates a brain chemical called glutamate in causing brain cell death when released in excessive amounts. She is seeking to synthesize a whole class of chemicals that inhibit the release of excessive glutamate. Hopefully, if such chemicals could be administered in a timely fashion, they would minimize or possibly reverse the brain damage suffered in stroke.



The University of
Montana

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