Challenger Center celebrates the astronauts

While the nation mourns the Feb. 1 loss of the space shuttle Columbia, Americans also remember the Challenger disaster of 1986. Then, as now, grieving was combined with a celebration of the astronauts’ pioneering spirit and quest for knowledge.

Both were evident in Tallahassee when the College of Engineering prepared for a March opening of the Challenger Learning Center, a project designed to honor the space pioneers and recruit young students to engineering, math and science.

The Challenger Center for Space Science Education was founded in 1986 by the families of the STS 51L Challenger crew. The first Challenger Learning Center opened in Houston, Texas, in 1988. Now, there are 47 in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. The Tallahassee center, located downtown in Kleman Plaza, is the third in Florida (the others are in Jacksonville and Tampa).

The Tallahassee Challenger Learning Center was organized and is run by the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering. Financial support for the roughly $6-million project has come from both universities, the state, Leon County and the city of Tallahassee.

Engineering Dean Ching-Jen Chen said he first heard of the Challenger Learning Center in 1996. At that time, Chen said, he and Al Hall, president of the Tallahassee Scientific Society, had been speaking at middle schools in an effort to interest young students in science and engineering. But Chen said it was difficult to make an impression on the students.

“Even though we two worked very hard,” Chen said, “I don’t think the result was spectacular.”

When retired NASA astronaut Norman Thagard joined the College of Engineering in 1996 as a professor and director of college relations, Chen said he and Thagard discussed his efforts to get young students interested in engineering. Thagard, who had been an office-mate of space shuttle Challenger commander (Continued on page 5)

Recruiting young students for science and engineering was hard work before the Challenger Learning Center

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New medical dean described as perfect fit for the mission

A young Ocie Harris was inspired by a doctor in tiny Picayune, Miss. The doctor taught him at Sunday School and cared for his family and friends.

“I learned that doctors are important people in the community and can help in many ways,” Harris said. “They are looked up to and have an impact beyond medicine.”

Today, at 62, Harris is a doctor and is the new dean of the FSU College of Medicine. He is focusing on training students to become doctors themselves, and, by design, some will be small-town doctors.

He was named dean Jan. 28 to replace Dr. Joseph Scherger, who was the first dean of the College of Medicine.

“Being dean is a challenge I didn’t expect to have when I came over,” Harris said. “I certainly want to make sure we stay on track and realize our dreams. There’s a solid foundation here, and having been part of that from the beginning, I feel like I have a good idea what needs to be done. My main task is to make sure we stay focused on our mission and don’t drift away from that.”

Harris has done many things in medicine, but medical education has been his passion and his main task most of his still-expanding

(Continued on page 15)

New Eppes professor means FSU can take lead in social psychology

An internationally recognized social psychologist—a man who says he does his research because “people are fascinating”—has joined the FSU faculty and plans to help establish a new social psychology program in FSU’s 100-year-old department of psychology. Roy Baumeister comes as a Francis Eppes professor.

He is known as “one of the most prolific and creative researchers in the field of social psychology,” according to Janet Kistner, chairwoman of the psychology department.

Baumeister has been the E.B. Smith professor in the College of Liberal Arts at Case Western Reserve University.

The instant recognition he brings to our department will help our newly developed graduate program in social psychology

(Continued on page 14)
In one man—science, art, charm and high academic standards

A physicist and a musician, Steve Edwards impressed his recent boss, Sandy D’Alemberte, as a man with “two brains.” At least two. He is also a talented teacher, FSU’s unofficial in-house historian—and the dean of the faculties.

He’s planning to retire in June from that last position. He’ll probably continue with most of the others, the science, the music, creative teaching and studying FSU’s history as it occurs.

Edwards is “a bright person who is very committed to higher education … (and) a wonderful musician,” former FSU president D’Alembeurte said recently.

In the early 1960s, Edwards made his way through FSU playing the bassoon with the University Symphony and the State Symphony of Florida.

If he impressed D’Alemberte with his music, he impressed Kirby Kemper, chairman of the physics department, with his creativity and enthusiasm as a physics teacher.

Kemper said Edwards always looked for ways to make physics easier and fun. For non-science majors struggling to understand the complicated basic physics, he invented the course Fundamental Physics, PHY1020.

In the classroom, Edwards’ enthusiasm makes students interested in the subject, Kemper said. “The answer was in getting the students excited about it [physics].

But first, you get excited yourself, look as if you are having a good time.

Edwards was chairman of the physics department before he was dean. One of Edwards’ characteristics that has impressed Kemper is his charm.

While his passionate colleagues engaged in heated discussions in the coffee room, Kemper said, Edwards never raised his voice and “made his points in a very gentlemanly way.”

“He smoked his pipe and said, ‘I don’t think this works’ and explained why. He always had a good way of explaining things.”

For Edwards, who says “physics is an art,” being both a scientist and an artist is not a mystery. In February, from his office at Westcott, Edwards talked about Al-bert Einstein’s creativity: “He played the violin.”

Surrounded and almost hidden by the stacks of papers and books in his office, Edwards admits he doesn’t like calling attention to himself. An unpretentious man with a candid smile, he said he prefers to be in the background.

Born on June 16, 1930, in Quincy, Fla., Edwards entered FSU in 1948. In 1951, he became president of his fraternity, Kappa Sigma, and in 1952, at the fraternity’s banquet in the Cherokee Hotel, he received the Man of the Year Award.

Edwards graduated from Florida State with a bachelor’s in 1952 and a master’s in 1954. He obtained his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in 1960 and returned to Tallahassee the same year to join the faculty of the physics department.

Upon his return, Edwards met and married Helen W. Carothers, the daughter of former FSU president Milton W. Carothers. They have two daughters.

Edwards’ contributions have been recognized in academic circles.

In the physics department, Edwards is praised as a talented teacher.

But campus-wide, he has another value. He is “this institution’s unofficial historian,” said D’Alemberbte, who retired as president in January.

He said Edwards’ knowledge of the history and rules of the university and his experience in the fields of physics and education have made him highly regarded.

Because he knows and cites the traditions and traditions of the university, “making sure we don’t make the same mistakes of the past, he will be remembered as a fierce defender of the high academic standards of the university,” D’Alemberbte said.

—Vida Volkert

New dean of the faculties

Anne Rowe

Anne Rowe’s turning point came in 1967. She was married with three children and had just graduated from Florida State with a degree in English. Her father, Robert Ervin, was a prominent lawyer and a founder of the FSU law school. Rowe thought about law school.

But she was immersed in Flannery O’Connor’s description of the South. Rowe decided to pursue her passion: southern literature.

Thirty-five years later, Rowe is a published writer, scholar and English professor at FSU who is happy about her choice.

And now she has a new job: dean of the faculties. She will replace Steve Edwards in June. “She is intelligent, diligent and has a strong sense of integrity,” said former FSU President Sandy D’Alemberbte.

Rowe has been associate dean of Arts and Sciences, chairwoman of the English department, a faculty senator and active on several committees.

As dean of the faculties, Rowe said, she wants to be an “advocate of the faculty and a bridge between faculty and administration.”

Rowe said she is proud of her graduates who come back to tell her about their lives.

Many are lawyers, because that’s where the English degree often takes them, said Rowe, who almost became one herself.

She has a master’s and a doctorate in literature from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“She has been good to me,” she said, remembering that her most challenging experience was “working full time and raising three children.” She is working on her third book.

The first two are “The Enchanted Country: Northern Writers in the South, 1865-1910” and “The Idea of Florida in the American Literary Imagination.”

—Vida Volkert

Anthony LaMolinara

Anthony LaMolinara’s life is like a choose-your-own adventure book. He has ridden a horse across Mexico, shot documentaries around the globe, done commercial fishing in Alaska, won a British Academy Award and been nominated for an Oscar.

When you see Spiderman swinging from building to building, you are seeing LaMolinara’s animation.

A 1978 Florida State fine arts graduate, LaMolinara wanted to be a painter or a sculptor. Tallahasseeans see his art in Mom and Dad’s restaurant, owned by his family.

After college, he went straight to New York, expecting to satisfy his artistic soul.

“I couldn’t get out of there fast enough,” he said of Pensacola, his hometown. “I was seen as a freak and told to get a real job.”

In New York City, he said, “I got a good dose of reality; I was very naive when I went there.”

Looking for a smaller pond, he went to Atlanta. As he had in New York, LaMolinara found the art world inhospitable.

“All the cruelty and nastiness Hollywood is famous for does not hold a candle to the art world,” he said. “It is just full of pretentiousness and nastiness.”

After Atlanta, LaMolinara did odd jobs all over the globe, including a stint as a professional boxer in Mexico City.

“I got engaged to some rich, Mexican girl, I rode horses all over the countryside, and I shot documentaries.”

Instead of marrying his rich Mexican girl, he went to Alaska, where he shot documentaries and worked at odd jobs, including commercial fishing.

His entertainment career picked up in 1986, when he was animator-director of the California Dancing Raisins commercials. Then he was an animation director on Canadian commercials in Toronto.

In 1993, a Canadian trade magazine named him “best commercial director.”

He loved Canada, but California was calling, and he answered. From 1993 to 1995, he was an animator in San Francisco on the movie “Toy Story.”

He traveled to France, Germany, Hawaii and Japan to direct animation on features.

In 1998, LaMolinara went back to Los Angeles, where he worked on “Blade,” “T-Rex” and “Planet Ice.”

He has been lead animator on the “Stuart Little” and animation director of “Hollowman,” “Spiderman” and now, “Spiderman 2.”

He is proud of his adventure and travel. “I at least have a background and life experience rather than going straight to La Land,” he said.

At Florida State, before it had a film school, LaMolinara studied painting and sculpting, cinematography and film.

“T was just fascinated in the idea of film, and motivated to be good and different,” said Tyler Turkle, a former cinematography instructor at Florida State.

“I knew he would continue to do more animation, but I knew it probably will,” he said. “Maybe I’ll just quit it all and sculpt.”

—Megan Altman
The late Chick Austin, first director of the Ringling Museum, would be pleased to know that the University of Florida (November 2002) reporting the contribution of the Roskamps and partnership with FSU.

In April 1948 Austin organized a three-week seminar in conjunction with FSU and Beatrice Williams, head of FSU Art Department. The theme was “The History of the Art of Mexico.” He brought to Sarasota a roster of national authorities and artists. For those of us attending, it was an exciting, unforgettable event.

Ringling had left the Museum complex to the state of Florida, but during the ten years of litigation, the art collection was in precarious condition. Many paintings were cracked or mildewed when Governor Millard Caldwell appointed Austin director. After a year and one-half Austin was able to open the museum on Dec. 15, 1946, I am happy to see that the affiliation of the Museum and FSU continues.

Phyllis Allopp Ward

Economist on every list of top scholars

Florida State economics Professor Ray Canterbery has been named by the International Biographical Centre (IBC) in Cambridge, England, as one of the 500 Living Legends in the world. He has also been named by IBC as one of 1000 Great Americans and 2000 Outstanding Scholars of the 21st Century.

At home, the American Biographical Institute is also including Canterbery in its Great Minds of the 21st Century, “a tribute to the minds that have shaped our modern world for the benefit of humankind.”

Canterbery’s prominence started with athleticism.

In the Army, he decided he wasn’t cut out for life in a tank, so he tried out for the track team and then joined the special services. His running partner was Dick Gregory, a well-known comedian.

After his service was completed, Canterbery said, “Dick convinced me to go back to Southern Illinois University with him.” He called the track coach and convinced him to give me an athletic scholarship.”

Canterbery was also offered an appointment to West Point where “they were short of distance runners.”

He chose Southern Illinois, where he was introduced to economics.

“It seems to inform so many areas of society,” he said. “It is important culturally, socially and internationally—especially under American capitalism. We are very consumer-oriented and materialistic. And whether that’s good or bad, it is critical to unemployment and poverty, the early social concerns I had.”

He says that in economics, theories can help solve problems.

“You can find connections in every area of economics to some area of social welfare,” Canterbery said.

He has been a consultant for the United Nations, the State Department and private companies.

“I developed the ability to answer questions,” he said. “We use it as a ‘public intellectual’—a person willing to share knowledge with a broader public.”

Canterbery, who received his doctorate from Washington University in St. Louis, is an accomplished author, with titles such as “Wall Street Capitalism,” “The Making of Economics” and “A Brief History of Economics.”

All three have been acclaimed by IBC as one of 1000 Great Americans and translated into many languages.

He believes the intellectual exposure may be the reason he has been honored on prestigious lists.

The professor also has a presence in Florida, as he is often called upon to speak on the economy and consumer shopping patterns.

“I was right on the nose with my predictions for Christmas,” Canterbery said, “I guess if you’re right enough often, you get called by the media.”

He says another reason he gets calls is that very few economists today can talk about the economy anymore.

“They need a broader background,” he said. “They need to understand what the consequences are. Consumer confidence or confidence in business or the stock market changes. To me, to be an economist, at some point you have to have intuition, not just use modeling. If you have seen something once— if you’ve analyzed it over and over and have seen what happens—you have a better grasp of the subject.”

“It is almost like the old-style good economic brain is better than a computer, because it holds more information and processes it better, because the computer is no better than the person who put the information in. Computers can calculate faster, but a person understands the nuances and has intuition.”

Canterbery has taught at the University of Maryland and Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

He says he still enjoys teaching, especially when he has good students.

“I went through a few years when the undergraduates didn’t care about learning anything,” he said, “but last year was much better. I thoroughly enjoy the grad students—they are really good students.”

— Dave Fiore

Retiring friend-raiser is unlikely to quit history

She was in the circus and Pi Beta Phi sorority, was a dorm sweetheart and was the Sigma Chi fraternity sweetheart.

“It was just absolutely wonderful,” she said, “I don’t think anybody could have had more fun than I did.”

Joanos has a bachelor’s in home economics education from FSU, a master’s from Florida A&M and a doctorate in educational leadership from FSU.

She went to school, raised a family and worked full time, teaching home economics at Leon and Lincoln High Schools and then coordinating home economics education programs for FSU.

In 1989, Joanos worked for the FSU Foundation and helped raise the first $10 million for what she called “the dream of the University Center.” Two years later, she moved to the Alumni Association.

“I’m a friend-raiser,” Joanos explains with a contagious smile. “Meeting with alumni and friends all over the country and the world is wonderful. The one thing Joanos and I have in common is their love for FSU.”

— Bayard Stern
Leon Golden, a senior faculty member and director of humanities in the department of classics, plans to retire at the end of the spring semester. Golden is an expert in Greek literature and ancient literary theory.

After earning a doctorate in classics from the University of Chicago in 1958 and then working on the faculty of the College of William and Mary, Golden came to FSU as an associate professor of classics from the University of Chicago in 1977 and then working on the faculty of the College of William and Mary, Golden came to FSU as an associate professor of classics from the University of Chicago in 1977 and then working on the faculty of the College of William and Mary, Golden came to FSU as an associate professor of classics from the University of Chicago in 1977 and then working on the faculty of the College of William and Mary, Golden came to FSU as an associate professor of classics from the University of Chicago in 1977 and then working on the faculty of the College of William and Mary, Golden came to FSU as an associate professor of classics from the University of Chicago in 1977 and then working on the faculty of the College of William and Mary. Golden is the author of numerous articles, including several in which he makes an influential explanation of Aristotle's theory of catharsis.

His books include "In Praise of Prometheus: Humanism and Rationalism in Aeschylean Thought," Aristotle's "Poetics: A Translation and Commentary" (with O.B. Hardison), "Transformations in Literature and Film," "Aristotle on Tragic and Comic Mimesis" and "Horace's Ars Poetica: A Translation and Commentary for Students of Literature" (with O.B. Hardison). He has also directed and served on many dissertation committees. He has directed the program in the humanities since 1976.

FSU's psychology lab grew up with Freud and Skinner

Sigmund Freud was in Vienna, toying with a novel idea he dubbed "psychoanalysis." The "Skinner box," one of the most famous experimental tools ever devised in psychology, was unheard of—it's inventor, a Pennsylvanian named B.F. Skinner, was yet to be born.

As a scientific discipline, in fact, these were the nascent days of psychology itself. Which makes it doubly remarkable that the young science made its Florida debut in a small college that eventually became Florida State University.

This spring, FSU's psychology department celebrates the centennial of the first psych lab to open on a college campus in Florida. The 1902 catalog of Florida State College (an FSU forerunner) announced the lab's establishment, advertising that the new course offered students "almost every opportunity for studying the different senses, memory, illusions, time relations, and the nervous system."

H. Elmer Bierly, armed only with a Princeton bachelor's degree and a smidgeon of graduate training at Harvard, is credited with starting the lab. Bierly saw to it that his charges would find the lab properly equipped for conducting experiments in hearing, sight, taste and smell, and "affective processes."

In time, the seed Bierly planted would grow into a deeply rooted, robust tree of research that today commands national respect. But the evolution was hardly without incident. In 1926, when the institution was the Florida State College for Women, an ad hoc "Florida Purdy League" loudly objected to the teaching of Charles Darwin. The furor touched off two rancorous years of debate by local and state religious and political leaders before common sense prevailed.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the granting of the first psychology Ph.D. at FSU, awarded to one Robert Hattwick (it was the second Ph.D. given by the university). In tribute to these notable milestones, an anniversary committee of the psychology faculty has created a Web site chock-full of interesting details that highlight the history of psychology at FSU and its earlier incarnations.

The site—www psy.fsu.edu/history/history.html—is slated to include a calendar of special events planned for April.

—By Frank Stephenson, editor
Reprinted from Research in Review

How to write a hit

Jeanie Long and Michele Alexander have done what many aspiring writers only dream of. The two English majors out of FSU wrote a book called "How To Lose a Guy in 10 Days — The Movie," starring Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey.

The post is supported by a Web site chock-full of interesting details that highlight the history of the site—www.psy.fsu.edu/history/history.html—is slated to include a calendar of special events planned for April.

Correction

The Florida State Times gave an incorrect title for Tim Quinnan in the March issue. Quinnan is associate vice-president for student affairs at FSU.
Mary Coburn, an FSU alumna with a reputation for understanding student life, is Florida State’s new vice president for student affairs. In January, she replaced the astronaut Winston Scott, who moved to the engineering school to be a professor and associate dean.

Coburn, 50, has more than 20 years experience counseling and advising students, supervising programs and staff, managing budgets and advocating for student rights.

Describing herself as an outgoing, disciplined and positive person, Coburn said she believes in “continuing strong working relationships between student affairs and the entire university.”

“She said she wants to help students “find their niche here.”

The job she takes at FSU—vice president for student affairs—is the same one she leaves at Tallahassee Community College. Co-workers say she is an innovative, warm and friendly leader who takes time to talk to students who need guidance.

Terry Cox, TCC’s director of counseling, said he has seen the transition “where we were before and where we are now after Mary left... Mary elevated the status and the quality of the student affairs department.”

Barbara Sloan, TCC’s vice president for academic affairs, said Coburn cares not only about the students’ education but also about their personal development, helping them cope with the stresses of college.

She credited Coburn with being the “first VP who really understands both sides; student academics and student life.”

Sloan and Coburn worked together on numerous projects, from raising money for TCC to hiring tutors for high school students in the college service district to attracting students to the college.

Before she went to TCC, Coburn worked in managerial positions at FSU.

The FSU campus is like “home to me,” she said. At FSU, she earned a degree in sociology, a master’s degree in counseling and human systems and a doctorate in education.

And it was at FSU that she met her husband. Both were on the Study Abroad Program in London, the “most significant experience of her college years.

She says David Coburn, also an FSU graduate, has been an inspiration.

After meeting him, she said, “went from being a 3.0 student to being a 3.5 or 4.0 student.”

She thinks her self-disciplined and very organized husband added an extra push to her life. Today he is staff director of Senate Appropriations. They have two daughters.

At FSU, Coburn joined the band and Alpha Delta Pi sorority. Coburn said her parents, both teachers, instilled in her the principles of a life helping students.

“They taught us education was an extremely important part in a person’s life,” she said. “To be an educator is noble work, and I wanted to be part of that.”

—Vida Volkert

WebStars—professors with technology ideas

By Reinhart Loch, FSU Office for Distributed and Distance Learning

Faculty who use technology in useful and innovative ways are getting attention on FSU’s Web page. Beginning this year, faculty named “WebStars” are showcased on the campus.fsu.edu page, which is among the most visited on the FSU Web site.

Called the WebStars page, it will be updated frequently with stories of faculty members who are using technology to enhance instruction.

It all begins with student access. WebStars use their course Web sites as learning hubs, where students have access to course materials, find out about Web sites or join asynchronous discussions.

The course Web sites contribute to the reputation of FSU’s electronic campus as one of the best in the country. (Yahoo! Internet Life magazine, for example, ranks FSU as the 17th “most wired” campus in the country, first in Florida.)

George Bates, a biology professor, has his students print course outlines before class from his Web site and annotate them during his lectures.

“I don’t have to waste time writing things down,” Bates explains, “and they don’t have to waste time copying them. It means their attention is not divided between the board and me.”

Other WebStars use more complex strategies. Simon Capstick and his colleagues in the physics department use software to deliver homework assignments and then join with students to field homework questions online.

“Some of the students make as many posts to the bulletin board as the professors do,” Capstick said.

The course Web site has become an online coffee house for students.

WebStars have also used their Web sites to give students access to foreign cultures.

Melanie Annis and Aaron Lan in modern languages provide links on their course Web sites so students can immerse themselves in modern Hebrew and Chinese through live radio and television and daily newspapers.

Jane Reimers, a professor in accounting, uses her course Web site to respond to her students any time, day or night.

“Between the last class of the semester and the final, I can post something that may help them,” she said. “I can say to them, ‘I made a note of your Web site makes our relationship ongoing.’

By posting these strategies,” said Larry Dennis, director of the Office for Distributed and Distance Learning, “faculty members can share their ideas on how to teach best using technology.”

Space draws students

(Continued from page 1)

Francis Scobee, told Chen about the Challenger Centers. Chen was enthusiastic.

The Challenger Learning Centers use space exploration to get children interested in math, science and engineering.

The core of the center is a simulator, with a mock-up of a space station in one room and a mission control in the other.

Upon arrival at the center, students are briefed about their mission for the day, then divided into two groups, one for the space station and one for mission control.

Chen and Thagard wanted to create a Challenger Center that would attract students from schools up to 100 miles away. To make a two-hour bus trip to the center worthwhile, they came up with a day’s activities (the simulator program lasts roughly two hours). So they decided to add a planetarium with a laser show and an IMAX® movie theater.

“We get stories about the kids doing car washes and bake sales to raise money to come here.” —Michelle Personette

Ching-Jen Chen

The IMAX® and planetarium have special effects and lasers in a 50’ domed auditorium with a digital sound system. The IMAX® theater has a 50’ X 70’ flat screen.

“We get stories about the kids doing car washes and bake sales to raise money to come here.” said Marketing Manager Michelle Personette.

The IMAX® and planetarium theaters will be open to the public in the evenings and on weekends, said center Director Richard Fisher.

Chen changed the topic of his talk about the Challenger Center from raising money for TCC to a healing process for us.”

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Ching-Jen Chen
FSU author and teacher to write the sequel to “The Godfather”

Mark Winegardner is now part of the “family.” And if you could ask any of the characters from “The Godfather,” they would tell you that’s no small distinction. The director of Florida State’s creative writing program was chosen after an international search to write a sequel to Mario Puzo’s original 1969 bestseller.

Jonathan Karp, executive editor of Random House, said that Random House was looking for a well-regarded novelist at mid-career, who, like Mario Puzo when he began “The Godfather,” wanted to create an artful, popular novel about crime and power in America.

“We were looking for an original writer who would bring his own vision to Mario Puzo’s mythic characters, just as Francis Ford Coppola did in the films,” Karp said. “After being deluged with proposals, it was immediately clear to all of us that Mark Winegardner is the one. Just as book reviewers said of Mario, he is a 22-caliber literary big shot.”

Winegardner said all the buzz about the search almost scared him away.

“I was not interested in this if it was only a publicity stunt—I would only do it if I was convinced that it was absolutely serious,” he said. “So I called the publisher and said, ‘When this is all over, it is going to a crime writer, isn’t it?’ But they convinced me it would be going to a literary fiction writer. They said they wanted someone who would take the material and make it their own.”

Winegardner’s track record gave the publishers every reason to believe he could do that. He has received considerable acclaim for his first two novels, “Venecuz Blues,” about the 1946 Mexican League baseball season, and “Crooked River Burning,” a comic love story set in a time of social and political upheaval in Cleveland.

“Both of my previous novels are set in historical fact,” Winegardner said. “This project is the same. The framework is Mario Puzo’s ‘Godfather,’ and I am using that as historical fact, even though he made it all up. But I will write the story that is true to his characters and then add my take on it.”

Winegardner, 41, says no matter what happens with his career after this book, he has no plans to leave campus.

“There are lots of writers in my position who would have already resigned, but I hope it never comes to that,” he said. “I love FSU and my job, and I feel like I worked very hard to get it. I spent 20 years to get a job like this, and I am proud to be part of one of the three or four best creative writing programs in the country.

“It is just as bizarre a thought to me to be a writer but not a teacher as it is to be a teacher and not a writer.”

Commercially successful writers are crucial to a good program, he said.

“To have a first-rate creative writing program, you need teachers whose work is out there – publishing with the best publishing houses and being read nationally and internationally. We have very excellent writers and teachers here. We don’t even interview anyone who has not published a book.”

The timing for writing the Godfather sequel is perfect, Winegardner said, because he was already approved for a one-year sabatical to write a book.

Winegardner said that while he is glad the scheduling worked out, he’s not sure what to think about the timetable.

“One year is much faster than I would normally write a book, but I wrote the others without a sabatical,” he said. “There are dog years in writing – writing for one year with a sabatical is like writing for seven years without one. I plan on being a hermit, not returning e-mails or calls for one year. I will give family and friends a different number.”

The selection process and surrounding publicity have already changed Winegardner’s life.

“I was in New York for three days [for the announcement and publicity stops], and when I got back, I had 675 e-mails,” he said. “That Monday, I had a meeting at FSU for 90 minutes, and when I returned there were 50 voicemails just in that time. It is weird going from nothing to getting more attention than most people ever experience. Scrambling around answering calls to People magazine, the BBC and NPR is not typically how I spend my days. Everybody I ever drank a beer with has sent me an e-mail wishing me well. It is weird, but delightful.”

This has been a full-time job, and I am looking forward to turning back into a writer.”

The book, currently titled “The Godfather Returns,” will begin where the action in the original novel ends. It is tentatively scheduled for release in the fall of 2004. —Dave Fiore

Mark Winegardner

GOD BE WITH US
A Daily Guide to Praying for Our Nation
by Quin Sherrer (B.S. ’55, journalism) and Ruthanne Garlock
WARNER BOOKS

“GOD BE WITH US” is dedicated to the memory of the thousands of people who perished in the terrorist attacks on our soil. The book weaves together stories of survivors, volunteers, loved ones lost, important events in history, songs and Scripture.

THE MARGINAL DIFFERENCE
Practical Choices for Enhancing Your Success Quotient
by Freddie Lang Groomes (Ph.D. ’72, executive assistant to academic affairs) 1st Books Library

It happens. Two people have equal levels of education, but one is more successful than the other. What makes the difference? Freddie Lang Groomes, an educator and counseling psychologist, shows readers what makes up that margin for success. He shows probable routes to success and excellence. Groomes shows readers that their own take on it.”

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Panhandle Dreams
by Gwen Parker Ames (A.A. ’77, education)
Liberty Mutual

The novel “Panhandle Dreams” paraphrases Martin Luther King Jr. ’s speeches to illuminate the complexities of a society’s movement toward tolerance and ultimate equality. The story, told through the writings of 12-year-old Indigo Douglas, is set in racially segregated Tallahassee, Florida, the day after the news of King’s assassination came across the radio waves.
Raymond Fielding, founding dean of Florida State's film school—now in its 13th year—unlocks a side door to the University Center. Inside, film students make frantic changes to thesis films. The sound rooms, editing suites and repair shop are all open and doing a booming business.

“This is the only unit on campus that requires students to attend 12 months a year,” he says, smiling. “No summer vacation, no running off for 10 days during spring break.” Fielding has been dean of the school since it opened, but that era is about to end. He plans to retire this summer.

When he arrived in Tallahassee 13 years ago, Fielding said, “We would like nothing less, in five to 10 years, than to see FSU’s film program rank as the top film conservatory in the country.”

By most accounts, FSU is now among the nation’s top film programs.

How does a school that didn’t even exist 15 years ago catch up and pass film programs that are 30, 40, even 50 years old? Simple: money and equipment.

At other film schools, students pay for their thesis films, a degree requirement that can cost $50,000 or more. At FSU, the school pays.

Walking through hallways, Fielding points out top-drawer equipment.

“We have 10 to 12 Avid non-linear editing suites,” he says. “They don’t look like much, but they cost about $50,000 apiece, and they’re what everyone is using now.”

In between are exclamations of near-fatherly pride. (“One of our students just got a deal to direct a $3-million feature film, and they’re what everyone is using now.”)

For nine years, Patterson was the head of production on the graduate faculty of the film school, goes nose-to-antennae with a lead character in Antz, a master’s thesis film.

With a lead character in Antz, a master’s thesis film.

Actors David Caruso (foreground, with pistol) and Adam Rodriguez in the Florida Everglades, filming an episode of “CSI: Miami” for CBS.

From the get-go, the school cast itself as a professional school, training narrative filmmakers to make commercial films, as opposed to a strictly academic program.

“Ray has this kind of clarity and ‘jolly doggedness’ about him that imbues the work of the school with two critical things: a distinctive mission and a distinctive voice,” said Robert Allen, vice-president at Disney in Florida. “I not only think that there is an emerging ‘Florida Voice’ in filmmaking but also that there is an authenticity to the way Ray has pointed the process.”

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New dean to take over film school

Frank Patterson, a film maker and educator who was on the faculty at FSU for nine years, will take over in June as dean, replacing the retiring Ray Fielding.

“Frank Patterson is just what we need — professional experience in the industry and educational experience at a diversity of innovative institutions — and in both experiences he performed at the highest levels,” said FSU Provost Lawrence G. Abele.

Patterson is associate dean and director of the Film School at Chapman University in Orange, Calif. He has also taught film at Baylor University and the University of Texas at Austin and been president of the Los Angeles Film School.

Patterson earned degrees at Baylor and started work as a composer, having “grown up in a recording studio,” where his musician father worked.

He soon moved into film production, writing and directing low-budget genre films in Los Angeles. But he wanted to produce “personal films,” and eventually he did, beginning with “Roses,” which he wrote and directed while he taught in Tallahassee.

For nine years, Patterson was the head of production on the graduate faculty of the FSU Film School in Tallahassee. “A highly regarded film educator, he is one of the finest teachers of film that I have known,” Fielding said.

In 1965, he became head of the University of Iowa’s film program.

From there, he helped create the film program at Temple University.


The University of Houston created the next big film program, and Fielding headed west to run it.

“That started out very promisingly,” Fielding said. “But in the ’80s, the bottom fell out of the oil market, and that was the end of…expansion of programs.”

It was no surprise when he got a call from Tallahassee.

On the set of “Every Lil’ Girl’s Dream” (MFA, 2002) at Wakulla Springs Lodge near Tallahassee.

Each undergraduate writes and directs a film, which rarely exceeds nine minutes. On the graduate level, each student is guaranteed an above-the-line position on each of five thesis films every year.

“Everyone in the business knows us, and the students have a wonderful reputation in the industry,” Fielding said.

Fielding joined UCLA’s film program in 1949. He also worked in the industry.

After earning a master’s degree at UCLA, he joined the faculty, teaching film production and running a company that made travelogues for television.

At UCLA, he taught such future filmmakers as Francis Ford Coppola (The Godfather, et al) and Carol Ballard (The Black Stallion). Fielding wrote “Techniques of Special Effects Cinematography.”

While teaching at UCLA, Fielding earned a doctorate at cross-town rival USC, the world’s second-olddest film program.

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The presidents’ proposed budget “funds the class-size amendment but also funds higher education and doesn’t shift dollars, for instance tuition dollars, out of the higher-ed system into the K-12 system,” Wetherell said.

Wetherell said the governor’s cuts could have “draconian” consequences such as frozen enrollment, steep tuition increases, fewer courses, cuts in research and halted construction.

The presidents have found some sympathy among legislators—no surprise, since an easy plurality are alumni of Florida’s universities.

FSU, for example, is the alma mater of 21 current legislators, including the President of the Senate. Their names and pictures are on these pages.


Rep. Charles Dean Sr., R-Inverness (B.S. 1963 criminology), first elected 2002


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FSU has always been lucky. We’re lucky to have grown up with this state. At the time FSCW became FSU, Florida’s population was 27th among 48 states. Now, we’re fourth largest and gaining on No. 3. That explosive growth has allowed FSU to expand and compete effectively with older, larger institutions. We’ve been lucky with have endowments bolstered by many generations of giving. While we would like to be there eventually, we are who we are now. We are a very good state university, desiring passionately to become a great one.

Wetherell is a former legislator who knows where all the bodies in the state are buried. He knows who has the money and how to get it flowing toward Florida State. He also has a Ph.D. in education, is a former college professor and successful college president, as well as Speaker of the House in one of the nation’s most important states.

That which T.K. Wetherell does not already know about university governance, he can learn. What he does already know about leadership and fundraising and charting a course, no one can teach.

Once again, Florida State is profoundly lucky.

Much has been made of the differences between Wetherell and D’Alemberte. What is truly remarkable is that the two are so alike in their strengths and abilities, despite the dissimilarity in personalities and style.

Both are Old Florida. Sandy took some heat from those who felt his Florida law degree and his UF pals from his days in the Legislature made him a Gator. In fact, his passion is the Law, and he was always a fierce advocate for Florida State. Sandy went to high school in the Panhandle, to college in Tennessee, and to the only law school in Florida at that time that was a reasonable option. His mother graduated from Florida State College for Women.

None will ever doubt now that Sandy’s loyalties were to the garnet & gold. T.K. was born in the hospital in Volusia County where his father and grandfather were born. When he was a freshman football player at Florida State, his position coach was 35-year-old Bobby Bowden. T.K. has already looked our players in the eye and said, “I’ve been out there on those stadium steps at 5 o’clock in the morning and had [Bowden] standing in the middle of the field as I ran up and down, up and down, for missing duty hall or other screw-ups I’ve done.” Wetherell is one of us.

Both Wetherell and D’Alemberte think in terms of competition. Make no mistake: Today’s landscape is not hospitable to the ivory-tower academic who fails to appreciate the competitive nature of modern higher education. Sandy and T.K. had no illusions; no gains would ever come without a fight.

Both men have positioned FSU to take full advantage of our location in the shadow of the state Capitol. Long-time FSU loyalists have watched with amusement and delight as the colors most prevalent in the Legislature shifted slowly but steadily from orange & blue to garnet & gold. It is exhilarating to think about what can be done for FSU over the decades to come. If T.K. Wetherell has a Bowden-esque run of 20 years or more, Florida State could experience a Renaissance unlike any in collegiate history.

The thing that made political opponents, and now our collegiate rivals, so fearful of Wetherell is the same thing that made them so anxious about Sandy. It is the same strength, the same character that made political leaders as disparate as Ronald Reagan and Dr. Martin Luther King so threatening to their opponents. That is: they wanted nothing for themselves. They are motivated only by their passion and vision, and they can lead others toward that end. Few human emotions are as powerful and as inspiring as selfless passion in a noble cause.

Both Wetherell and D’Alemberte are tough. Woe unto anyone foolish enough to try to bully or intimidate either of them.

If you really want to understand T.K. Wetherell, know that above nearly all things, he hates to lose.

I was having lunch with a friend who wears the other tie. He was musing about T.K., and something he said reminded me of an obscure book I hadn’t read since the 1960s.

There is actually a book, an instruction manual for police officers, on gun fighting. Appropriately, it’s titled “No Second Place Winner.”

One of the anecdotes concerned a couple of rough and ready Border Patrol types who spoke little and kept the hammers of their pistols cocked even while the guns were holstered.

One day they were in a café, and one of the locals tried to strike up a little too familiar. The fellow wandered over and asked questions. He didn’t get the hints, and finally saw that their pistols were cocked.

“Gosh,” the guy said, wide-eyed, “isn’t that dangerous?”

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Finally he admitted the truth: “We just don’t want him up here. He’s too dangerous.”

You damn betcha.

Pause for a moment and think of Seminole native dress.

Ah, you say, native Seminole dress: art expressed in fashion. How beautiful it has been. Well, yes, but not always as artistic.

While the flappers of the 1920s were leading a fashion revolution with their above-the-knee hemlines, a revolution of another kind blossomed among the women of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

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The trend today in higher education is to choose a president based on the CEO model. Twenty years ago, the Gators picked Marshall Criser, a prime example of the manager/fundraiser vs. the pure academic. Criser led UF to its first major successful capital campaign. He knew that money is the fuel that makes the engines run.

The Ivy Leagues may sniff contemptuously at this talk of money, but they all
Big changes for FSU basketball star

Angela Sutton's honesty seems to pour from all her pores. She jokes about her battles with depression, grimaces over her nights as a homeless person—a little less than a year ago—shakes her head as if still trying to figure out how she's back in school and playing college basketball, let alone getting another chance at life.

Whether the topic is alcohol, her stint in the Navy or her rocky relationship with her family, Sutton speaks her life story like a fountain.

Meet the real Angela Sutton. The coaches and players on the FSU women's basketball team have—and they love what they see.

"It's completely inspiring to see what she's done," Florida State Assistant Coach Theresa Gernatt said.

At one time a self-described "good girl," she worked hard on her basketball game, applied herself in school and tried to be a good friend.

Get into trouble? Never. She made the Academic All-ACC team as a freshman. She was a standout guard and a very intense player. But that was basketball to get away from her problems. She didn't know how to shake.

When restriction ended, Sutton says, she worked hard on her basketball game, college and the military. But she was in a depression that she didn't know how to shake.

Sutton had always gone to the basketball court to get away from her problems. She didn't know how to shake.

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"Outside of that, I didn't smile." She had started as guard for most of her first two seasons at Florida State, but Sutton had had enough of the old Angela. She realized that an officer had taken advantage of her. She didn't know it was rape.

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"Just ignore it, numb it, and make it go away," Sutton said of her depression. "But it just got worse."

"I didn't care about playing ball," Sutton told her coach, Sue Semrau. "I'll be a manager. I'll sweep the floors. I just want that sense of family again." Semrau wanted to hear that. But she told Sutton she couldn't come back until she straightened out her life.

Sutton wanted to come back. But being homeless wasn't much better.

"I really had no hope and no reason to live," Sutton said.

"I just got worse," Sutton told Semrau about a program in Pensacola.

Sutton headed for the Pensacola beach, where she would live for six weeks, getting drunk and finding the money to get drunk again.

"Just ignore it, numb it, and make it go away," Sutton said of her depression. "But it just got worse."

Sutton begged for the chance to come back.

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David A. Danielson (B.A.) of Danielson, Clarke, Charbonneau & Rott, PA., in West Palm Beach, presented the 2002 Workers’ Compensation Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award by the Friends of 440 Scholarship Fund.

Frank A. Kreidler (B.S., J.D., ’73) JAG commander in the Navy Reserve, received the Director’s Award for outstanding service and support as a Naval Academy Information Officer from the Director of Admissions for the United States Naval Academy in Palm Beach County.

Miranda Frances Fitzgerald (B.A., J.D., ’78) of Lowndes, Drooksick, Doster, Kantor & Reed, PA., has been named one of the “Leading Business Lawyers in the USA” by Chambers USA. The London-based organization surveys top corporations throughout the world asking their experience and opinions of the best lawyers in their jurisdiction.

Raymond G. Gross (J.D.), circuit judge in Clearwater, has received the University of South Florida President’s Distinguished Citizen Award, which recognizes a U.S. citizen who has rendered public service to the people of Florida, particularly to the University of South Florida area.

Keith W. Houck (B.S., M.S.P. ’77), executive director of the law firm Gray-Harris, was recently elected a member of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the accrediting body in 11 U.S. southern states and in Latin America for institutions that award associate, baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral degrees.

Douglas P. Lawless (J.D.) was appointed by Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Harry Lee Anstead to the Mediator Qualifications Board, which hears grievances against certified and court-appointed mediators.

Stephen J. Dow (B.S.W.) retired from the Deland Police Department in December 2001 and in August 2002 became a Volusia County deputy and school resource deputy at Mainland High School, Daytona Beach.

Howard A. Kusnick (B.S.) is vice chair of the Broward Alliance, the economic development organization of Broward County.

Diane Wagner Carr (B.A., J.D., ’88) was appointed by Gov. Jeb Bush as the new chief business regulator and leader of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation. The department oversees the regulation of alcoholic beverages and restaurants, plus professions ranging from asbestos consolation to veterinary medicine.

Donna Reed Rector (AA) is a freelance voiceover talent for commercials and documentaries and now lives in Houston, Texas. She recently signed with the William Morris Agency in N.Y.

Susan Washington Clarendon (B.A.) is managing editor for Bridge-Logos Publishers in Newberry, Fla.

Julie Strauss Bettinger (B.S.) is editor of Tallahassen and Emerald Coast magazine, published by Rowland Publishing Inc., editor of The Sheriff’s Star, a publication of the Florida Sheriffs Association, and a freelance writer for more than 39 years. She has published several books.

James W. Sabourin (B.S.) is vice president of corporate communications for America West Airlines in Phoenix.

Zandra L. Graham (B.A., M.S. ’93) received the high school teacher of the year award from Florida’s Veterans of Foreign Wars for her efforts to focus on America in her classroom.

Jimmie H. Knight Jr. (B.S.) is an SIS technician at FCI/FDOC in Tallahassee. An SIS technician is a correctional officer who conducts criminal and administrative investigations of inmates, as well as covert intelligence gathering and related information analysis.

Donna Castle (B.S.) has received a CPA license.

Michel Hess (B.S.) is chief of the Service for Strategic Analysis and Prevention at the Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police in Bern, Switzerland. He’s assigned to working on terrorism and organized crime.

Sonia H. Hoener (B.S.), has been named by Marks Gray, Northeast Florida’s oldest law firm, as a shareholder of the firm.

Chris M. Kise (J.D.) of Tampa was named by Attorney General Charlie Crist to be solicitor general, the state’s top lawyer in cases before the Supreme Court.

Lawrence F. Miller (B.S., J.D.) is a partner in Stone, Graham, Charbonneau & Platt P.A. in West Palm Beach.

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Florida State alumnus Gary Fisher, son of FSU biochemist

Florida State University alumnus James Gary Fisher died Jan. 19 of a massive heart attack while working at his computer as a financial software engineer at E*Trade in Houston, Texas. He was 48.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Fisher Fund, Department of Chemistry, Florida State University, Tallahassee 32306-4390.

Six scholarships have been awarded to biochemistry or pre-med students since the fund was established in 1976 following the tragic death of Gary Fisher’s father, Dr. James Robert Fisher. His interests ranged from astronomy and golf to gardening. —Dorothy Clifford Merrick
‘Puzzle of people’ is his career

Social psychology is the study of thoughts, feelings and behaviors of ordinary people. The FSU psychology department already has programs in neuroscience, applied behavior and cognitive and clinical psychology.

“The opportunity to build the new program, including hiring faculty and attracting graduate students, is an exciting professional challenge,” Baumeister said. “This is an intellectually stimulating environment, and I’m happy to be joining such a friendly, energetic department.”

Baumeister has written 15 books and has attracted notice and praise for his work on the concept of self. He has also written more than 250 influential papers dealing with his research on self-esteem, self-control, performance under pressure, reactions in emergencies, guilt, sexuality, emotion, decision-making, risk-taking and self-defeating behavior.

His most recent book, “The Cultural Animal: Human Nature, Meaning and Social Life,” is expected to be published this year by Oxford University Press. It provides an integrated theory and explanation of how the human psyche works.

“I have a basic curiosity about people,” Baumeister said, explaining what drives his research. “People are fascinating—sometimes wonderful, sometimes aggravating—but there’s no greater puzzle.”

Baumeister earned a bachelor’s degree and a doctorate from Princeton University and a master’s from Duke. Following a brief postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California at Berkeley, he came to Case Western as an assistant professor in 1979. A decade later, he became the youngest full professor on the university faculty.

The Eppes professorships are named for Francis Eppes, the grandson of President Thomas Jefferson and one of the founding fathers of the Seminary West of the Suwannee, FSU’s institutional predecessor. —Jill Eloot

By Karl Brozyna

Eugene Imas
20, of St. Petersburg, Russia, sophomore, undeclared major

Professor: Associate Professor Jonathan Grant, department of history

Subject: Central Asia since the Mongols

What makes him great: He’s engaging and energetic, and he is a good lecturer.

Dr. Grant’s conversational tone is very engaging, and he makes the student feel involved in the lecture.

“He grabs your attention by being very energetic and occasionally cracking jokes to lighten the mood.

“He doesn’t make you feel stupid by over-explaining things. His lectures are very flowing and fast paced, but he’s more than willing to stop and explain if you have a question.”

Roy Baumeister

(Continued from page 1)

quickly attain national visibility,” Kistner said. “My colleagues and I look forward to the intellectual stimulation and opportunities for collaborative research that Dr. Baumeister is sure to provide.”

Bayard Stern

Don Veller

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Building a new college is a challenge he likes

Ocie Harris

(Continued from page 1)

career. He’s also enjoyed administration, which may have helped land him his new-found responsibilities as dean.

Harris’ research interests include the effects of cigarette smoke on pulmonary defense mechanisms and medical education. He is the author of 70 abstracts and academic publications.

“When I was beginning in medicine, people were expected to do three major tasks, which were research, teach and to practice,” said a deliberate and thoughtful Harris.

“In the beginning I did all those things. I had a productive research career, but I needed to make some decisions because of time commitment, and education won over that…. I enjoy teaching. We’re a small school and a small faculty, so we all get a chance to teach, which is wonderful.”

Dr. Myra Hurt—who was director of FSU’s Program in Medical Sciences, then interim dean of the college and now associate dean—recruited Harris from the University of Florida.

“He has a very broad understanding about clinical training, and we needed somebody like that for the accreditation process as well as designing our curriculum,” Hurt said. “He has the same philosophy about training physicians to work in rural and under-served communities as we all do. He seemed perfect for FSU’s medical school. He’s been an enormous help with planning the clinical-training model. He has the values we believe in, and he’s lived them.”

Harris may have learned values from his family and Sunday School, but he got his M.D. from the University of Mississippi. He completed his residency, residency and a fellowship in pulmonary and infectious disease at the University of Florida.

Harris was director of the internal medicine clerkship at Florida from 1974 to 1995. He moved up to professor of medicine, associate dean for community-based programs and director of the university’s North Florida Area Health Education Centers, a position he held for 10 years. The primary role of the centers is to develop education for health-professions students, especially in rural and medically under-served communities.

After a long career at UF, a new medical school was not in Harris’ plans.

“I was beginning to make my retirement plans,” Harris smiled. “That’s been delayed a little whole. This gave me the opportunity to maybe do one more thing.”

One more thing may be an understatement for creating a medical school.

“The idea of really being a part of a new medical school was very appealing to me,” Harris said. “We’re willing to take the risk and be part of something we all believe to be special. Our students are risk takers of course. They came to a medical school that at the time didn’t have accreditation. They have worked side-by-side with us to make sure we were successful. The students are just as important in building this school as the faculty and staff.”

But the faculty and staff do have major responsibilities for the students.

“The space, the renovation, designing the new building, going out and developing regional campuses and acquiring facilities and hiring staff and faculty there have been an enormous undertaking,” Harris said. “You have to attribute all we’ve accomplished so far to everyone here. All the people involved in the medical school came here highly motivated…. Certainly our senior faculty scholars who left important and comfortable jobs where they were, to come here and be part of this, makes them risk takers as well. None of us had ever done this before, but no one has done it in such a long time. That’s not surprising.” —Bayard Stern

Look Who’s Talking

Compiled by Karl Brozyna

Sally Ride

Sally Ride, the first American woman to be an astronaut, spoke at FSU on Feb. 27 about her nine years with NASA and her two flights on the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1983 and 1984. She was on the STS-7 crew with Norm Thagard, an FSU graduate and now FSU professor.

“She had a productive research career, but I needed to make some decisions because of time commitment, and education won over that…. I enjoy teaching. We’re a small school and a small faculty, so we all get a chance to teach, which is wonderful.”

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Alum likes Cinderella role

Life in the touring company of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical “Cinderella” is nothing but joy for FSU music theater graduate J. Courtney Taylor.

“That’s because Taylor plays wicked stepmother Josephine in the production, which … (played in February in Tallahassee). Local audiences might remember Taylor from the sensational 2003 Lab Theatre production of “Cabaret,” in which she played the unquenchable Sally Bowles.

Taylor also appeared in FSU’s Mainstage productions of “Comedy of Errors,” “Hair” and “Pippin,” as well as Lab productions of “Lucky Stiff” and “Sunset Boulevard.”

Taylor followed that with a stint as Conchita in “Copacabana” at Artpark in western New York.

“I went to Alumni Day at my performing arts high school (in Connecticut) recently and was raving about it to the students,” Taylor said.

Taylor graduated from FSU in 2001 and promptly moved to New York for the traditional post-graduate course in waitressing and auditioning. She landed a job at the Amish Acres Round Barn Theatre in Indiana and spent four months there performing in “Dames at Sea” and “Plain and Fancy.”

Taylor followed that with a stint as Conchita in “Copacabana” at Artpark in western New York.

“Two days after ‘Copacabana’ closed, I started rehearsals for ‘Cinderella,’” Taylor said. “I’ve been very blessed with a lot of work.”

Taylor has had some help along the way from members of the widespread network of FSU theater alumni in New York.

“One thing about graduating from (FSU’s music theater program) is that the alumni take you under their wings and help you out,” she said. “Jay Douglas has created a studio class (in New York City) with Christine Long for FSU graduates who want to meet on Tuesdays and sing and work on audition material.”

“You get great feedback. And looking at these people and knowing they graduated from your school and have accomplished so much is unbelievable. It’s a testament to Kate and Gayle and what they’ve developed at FSU.” —By Kati Schardl, Reprinted from the Tallahassee Democrat

Jamie-Lynn Sigler, who plays the character of Meadow Soprano on HBO’s “The Sopranos,” spoke at FSU on March 3 about the challenges she faced and the lessons she learned in dealing with an eating disorder.

“It started out really innocent, I decided I was going to work out 20 minutes before school…. But then it built up and I was exercising four and a half hours before school and not eating much. I was up on the treadmill at 3:30 a.m. Four and half months go by, and I’m 35 pounds lighter. My mother would cry because she felt all the bones on my body.”

“I blurted out to my parents, I have an eating disorder; I need help.” I started my therapy for what was diagnosed as exercise bulimia. So now June comes and I’m 35 pounds lighter. My mother would cry because she felt all the bones on my body.”

“...Seeing Earth from space is just an unbelievable view....Every Astronaut reacts to it in a different way. The way that I reacted to it was just to have a real appreciation for the first time at how fragile our planet is. Because just looking at it from above you know it’s just this rock flying from space.”

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