

THE ALUMNI JACKET SPECIAL EDITION

THE DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

On Saturday, April 10 we held our 28th Annual Outstanding Alumni Awards in the MSUB Student Union Ballroom. I know when you read about the six amazing individuals your Alumni Association honored this year you'll understand why this is my favorite event we do! Without fail the people who help with the selection process walk away from the experience touched and inspired by the incredible accomplishments of these alumni.

Surely as you read this you will think of an alumna or alumnus of MSU Billings/Eastern Montana College who also deserves to be recognized for her or his accomplishments. I enthusiastically encourage you to submit nominations for the 2011 awards. You can do so at: <http://www.msubillings.edu/alumni/outstanding.htm>.

Thank you to Wanda, Dave, Allyn, John, Henry and Ivan for taking time out of your very busy lives to spend time back on campus so that we could celebrate you! You are all extraordinary!

Julia Schetter Seedhouse '89

Director of Alumni Relations



NEW AWARD CREATED TO HONOR CHANCELLOR RONALD SEXTON

Alumnus Dr. Ronald Sexton '59, '64 has spent his career serving the needs of students at MSU Billings. Hundreds of other MSUB and EMC alumni have also chosen to dedicate their professional lives to their alma mater, and your Alumni Association has decided to offer a vehicle through which to recognize and honor this commitment.

We have created a new award called the Ronald P Sexton Award for Professional Commitment. The award will recognize alumni who have demonstrated excellence in their work and have exemplified a passionate commitment to MSU Billings and its students. It will be given from time to time to an alumna or alumnus who has dedicated 10 or more total years of her or his career to MSUB and has significantly contributed to the advancement of the University. Recipients will have emulated Chancellor Sexton's passionate commitment to access, excellence, and student success.

This plaque will hang in the Student Union Building next to the one honoring all of our past alumni award honorees. And Dr. Sexton, of course, is the first recipient of this very prestigious award.



Allyn Calton



Occupation:
Director of Marketing and
Niche Publications
Billings Gazette
Communications

Degrees:
1982, B.A. Business
Administration, Montana
State University Billings

2002, M.S. Public
Relations,
Montana State University
Billings

Billings Gazette Communications. She is currently the Director of Marketing and Niche Publication. She created and developed Magic City Magazine, Lifewise Magazine and her newest venture is reinventing the Billings Business publication. Publisher of the Billings Gazette, Michael Gullede, commented, “Allyn’s vision and planning skills have been a key factor in our continued success with niche publications.” Her passion for these publications – which explore and celebrate the Billings community – demonstrate her commitment to making her community better.

Community involvement is very important to Allyn. She has been involved in Camp Make-A-Dream, reading volunteer at Arrowhead School, founding board member and youth coach for Yellowstone Soccer Association, a member of the Billings Gazette Editorial Board, MSU Billings Foundation Trustee, and Chair and Co-Chair of the Billings Clinic Classic.

Allyn commented, “It’s my hope that by being thoughtful and deliberate, I can contribute to enriching our quality of life. That’s a goal that’s good for the public and good for the soul.”

RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

“Imagine how different things might be if every citizen put the good of the community before self-indulgence. Before greed, before intimidation, before intolerance, before injustice, before criticism.”

These are Allyn Calton’s words—words she spends her life exemplifying in the community of Billings. She is deeply committed to bettering her community not only as an engaged citizen, but also by providing thought-provoking, enlightening publications that serve to educate, inform, and entertain.

After Allyn received her B.A. degree from Montana State University Billings she said she knew exactly two things, “First, I finally had the all-powerful, door-opening, ticket-to-the-future college diploma in hand. Second, I had no idea what I was going to do next.” Next would be several years of a variety of professional opportunities, marriage and kids, coaching youth sports and volunteering at school. Still, she didn’t feel she had found a career that enabled her to truly make a difference in the lives of others.

A series of life-changing events resulted in Allyn reconsidering her life goals, and she found herself back on the MSUB campus pursuing a Masters Degree in Public Relations. Allyn recalled her experience, “Those years were the most amazing, mind-expanding, life-altering I had ever experienced.” And this time she knew exactly what she was going to do.

Since obtaining her Masters Degree, Allyn has worked for

Henry Real Bird



Occupation:
Rancher and
Educator

Degrees:
1971, B.S. Elementary
Education
Montana State
University, Bozeman,
MT

1990, M.S. Education
Montana State
University Billings

RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

“Change life through thought is my main cue card,” wrote Henry Real Bird. He has devoted his life to sculpting the lives of those who are fortunate enough to come in contact with him or have the privilege of learning from him.

Since completing his Masters Degree from Montana State University Billings, Henry Real Bird has worked constantly

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SPECIAL EDITION

Henry Real Bird, continued

at improving the quality of life for the students on the Crow and Cheyenne Indian reservations. He has taught school from kindergarten to the college level. He has served as a teacher, administrator and perhaps most importantly as a mentor. His latest endeavor is to save the Crow language by changing the alphabet to the American English alphabet. Crow is still his primary language.

Henry Real Bird began writing poetry in 1969 after an extended stay in the hospital and has never stopped.

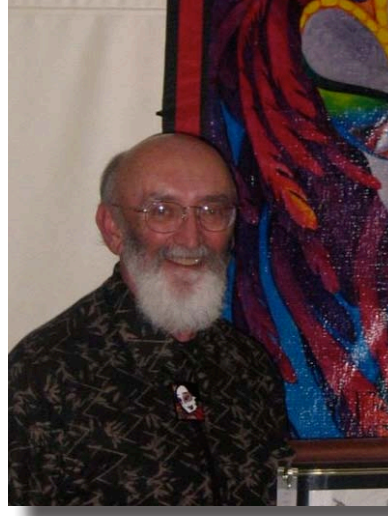
According to Hal Canon, founding director of the Western Folklife Center, Real Bird's work is in the "greatest tradition of the best poets. His work is an interesting melding of cowboy, horsemanship and Crow culture. There is no difference between his poetry and everyday life."

Henry Real Bird has worked for the YMCA Writer's Voice since 1992 as a visiting poet in dozens of schools all across eastern Montana. He has shared his work and the Crow language with thousands of students and teachers. Corby Skinner, Director of the Writer's Voice wrote, "As an instructor he infuses a love of language and an appreciation of landscape into the minds of his audience and students."

In 1996 Real Bird won the Western Heritage Award for the National Cowboy Hall of Fame. In 2002, he and Stephanie Davis performed her song, "Why the Cowboy Sings" at the Salt Lake City 2002 Olympic Arts Festival. He also performs annually at the Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nevada and will be the 2010 keynote speaker. Henry has had six anthologies, four poetry collections and twelve children's books published, along with many other articles, tapes and CDs. In 2009 Governor Brian Schweitzer appointed Henry Poet Laureate of Montana. His wit and humor, combined with his deep commitment to the traditions of the Crow Indians, make him exceptionally qualified for this honor.

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John Pollock



Occupation:

Professor, Department of Art, Montana State University Billings

Degrees:

1969, B.S. Education
- Art, Montana State University Billings

1973, Masters of Applied Arts, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Very few people can unquestionably say they are the best in their field. John Pollock is one person that can make that claim. John Pollock has taken kitemaking to a whole new level and has the national and international awards to prove it.

John Pollock graduated with a Bachelors of Science degree in Education from Montana State University Billings in 1969. He attended graduate school at Montana State University and received his Masters of Applied Art degree in 1973. He then became a professor at MSU Billings in 1974, where he continues to teach, advise and mentor students.

Professor of Art Emeritus Ben Steele commented, "Throughout his many years of teaching at MSUB, John has demonstrated excellence, creativity, and inspiration as well as deep concern for each student's needs, and his teaching has extended beyond the campus to many, many workshops."

John's focus lately has been on kitemaking. John developed a method of painting on nylon and making kites that are beautiful and captivating. These kites have won him numerous awards including the Grand National Champion Award and The Lee Toy Memorial Kite Artist of the Year Award at the recent 2009 American Kitefliers Association National Convention. The list of awards is numerous for his kites.

Fellow kiteflier and judge of the Kitemaking Championships Drake Smith commented, "Prior to John's innovations, artistic kites were limited to inadequate (heavy, brittle) materials and limited color pallets, and used mostly traditional shapes and sizes. Every year John brought new methods,

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John Pollock, continued

steady improvements, and new configurations that drew broadly from every direction. Every year John taught classes, gave workshops, and has never held back either in competition or mentoring other kitefliers, his peers and his competitors. He has won every significant award at the national level, and repeated several top awards at the master level.”

Because of his successes and willingness to help others, John has been an invited kitemaker to many international kitemaking events, including: Festival of the Winds International Kite Festival, Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia; Windscape International Festival, Swift Current, Saskatchewan, Canada; ARTEVENTO International Kite Festival, Cervia, Italy; Dieppe International Kite Festival, Dieppe, New Brunswick, Canada; and Washington International Kite Festival, Long Beach, Washington.

Ivan Small



Occupation:
Director of Schools
St. Labre Indian School

Degrees:
1977, B.S. Education
Montana State
University Billings
1980, M.S. Education
Montana State
University, Bozeman,
MT

RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL

ACHIEVEMENT

A “Call to Greatness.” This is not only a program conceived and developed by Ivan Small, but also the standard by which he lives his life.

When Ivan Small recognizes a problem, he immediately approaches it as an opportunity to improve. It is this enthusiasm and dedication to Indian education that has allowed Ivan to excel as an administrator and an advocate for all Indian education systems throughout Montana and the surrounding region.

Ivan is extremely proud of his heritage and is an enrolled member of the Crow tribe with Cheyenne heritage. His father is Northern Cheyenne and his mother is Crow.

Ivan graduated from Montana State University Billings in 1977 with B.S. degree in Education. He immediately went to work in the classroom teaching fourth, seventh, and eighth grade in Lodge Grass Public Schools.

In 1979 he was presented with an opportunity to enter an Educational Leadership program offered by Montana State University. He graduated with a Masters Degree in 1980 and worked as a liaison between Lame Deer Schools and Montana State University Billings. He was the Director of Career Opportunities program, which was a teacher training program. Ivan eventually earned his administrative certificate and this launched a whole new career path for him. Ivan has served in an administrative capacity since that time. During his entire educational career Ivan has worked for six schools and three Head Start centers on four of the seven Indian reservations in Montana.

There are two particular programs initiated by Ivan that continue to have a positive impact on Indian education. The “Call to Greatness” initiative was conceived by Small after the news that 33 Indian schools failed to make adequate yearly progress under No Child Left Behind requirements. With the help of the Office of Public Instruction, Ivan gathered school principals, superintendents and school boards together to work toward positively impacting student achievement. The “Call to Greatness” program is dedicated to the systematic improvement of standardized test scores on Montana’s reservation. Since the program was initiated, the test scores have improved.

The other program Ivan championed was the “I Lead” program which was implemented with Montana State University in Bozeman. This program is designed to train Indian School administrators. This first group had 45 participants and by November 2008 there were 90 participants in this program. Every reservation in the state has participated in the program.

One of Ivan’s colleagues wrote, “On the national stage, Ivan had been one Montana’s greatest exports. He is a visionary with absolute commitment to the education of all students, especially Indian children.”

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David Bruce Warne



Occupation:
Retired

Degrees:
1972, B.A. English,
Minor Mathematics
Montana State University
Billings

ALUMNI MERIT MEDALLION

“An important part of a good life is giving of one’s self to help others.”

This has been a guiding principle in Dave Warne’s life; and MSUB, the MSUB Foundation and MSUB students have benefited from Dave’s “giving” of himself.

It was noted by his nominator that Dave’s ties to Montana State University Billings run deep. His father, Dr. Earl Warne, is Professor Emeritus at MSU Billings and his mother Harriet, graduated from MSU Billings with a degree in Education. Dave’s wife, Roxanne Spildie Warne and her mother also graduated from MSU Billings with degrees in Education.

After graduating from MSU Billings in 1972 with a Bachelors of Art degree in English and a minor in mathematics, Dave was fortunate enough to start teaching right away at Billings West High, his alma mater. Dave always had a passion for coaching and found a new sport—speech and debate. After four years at West he pursued a Masters Degree at Washington State University in Rhetoric and Communications in order to improve his coaching skills. However, he soon found himself back in Billings—this time at Senior High where he taught Honors English classes and became the head Speech and Debate coach. In 1980 he won the Outstanding Speech Coach of the Year award and rightfully so. The first year he coached the team there were only a handful of participants. Within four years the program had grown to more than fifty students!

Eventually Dave transitioned into the business world and enjoyed a successful career working in the chemical distribution industry, leaving that job in 2008.

“Every university hopes that their alumni will understand the need to give back to the current student body with gifts of time, talent and financial support. Dave has given heartily of all three and set a remarkable example of commitment and support as an alumnus, volunteer and donor,” wrote his nominator.

Dave’s contribution back to MSU Billings is admirable. He served on the MSU Billings Foundation Board of Trustees for eight years, as Chair for two, and continues to serve on the Fiscal Affairs Committee. He was a core member of the National Campaign Leadership Council for five years, which generated over \$30 million for the University. He has also volunteered for fifteen years on the MSU Billings Foundation Annual Drive.

Dave and Roxie have established the Spildie/Warne Education Scholarship, which awards two scholarships each year. Both are for non-traditional students—one in elementary education and one in secondary education for English or math. Dave explained, “The goal is to help those who in turn will help the community.”

Dave summarizes his philosophy and offers excellent advice, “A person’s life is complete only through service to others—it comes from a satisfaction of helping people to be successful.”

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Wanda Grinde



Occupation:
State Representative
Montana House of
Representatives

Degrees:
1966, B.S. Elementary
Education
Montana State
University Billings

1970, M.S. Elementary
Education
Montana State
University Billings

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA

Dedicated, persistent and thorough.

These words describe Wanda Grinde’s approach to everything she has done in life. From working within the education system for 30 years to advocating for school children in the state legislature for over five years, Wanda’s dedication to education and Montana children is commendable. Her impact will be felt by generations of Montanans. As one of her colleagues explained, “Representative Grinde has made a lifelong commitment to fostering quality public education in our community and beyond.”

Wanda began her teaching career in Yellowstone County Schools in 1966. She remained in the classroom for three years before returning to Montana State University Billings for a Masters Degree. She completed her Masters in 1970 and returned to the classroom for a few more years before taking a short pause in her career to raise a family. Wanda joined the staff at Canyon Creek School in 1981. She remained there for twenty-two years serving as both a teacher and a librarian.

Upon retirement from her teaching career, Wanda continued to place her focus on education, but this time from a legislative standpoint. Wanda was elected to the Montana House of Representatives in 2004. She was appointed to the House Education Committee in 2005 and is currently the chairperson of that committee, as well as the Education and Local Government Interim Committee.

“Wanda recognizes that in order for an individual to reach his

or her potential, and for a society to reach its goals, a strong public education system is imperative,” wrote a State Senator.

Among Wanda’s successes in the legislature was her advocacy for full time kindergarten. The legislation was many years in the making and in 2007 it passed. It has proven to be a popular and successful program across Montana. In the 2009 legislature, Wanda sponsored legislation for creation of the Montana Virtual Academy. Grinde described the Montana Virtual Academy as a program for providing distance learning opportunities for students across the state for credit recovery, core curriculum as well as enrichment classes, and greater opportunity for dual credit courses. She also sponsored legislation in 2009 that led to grants to school districts for energy efficiency projects. These projects can save dollars on school districts’ energy bills; money that can then go directly to the classroom.

Wanda explains her deep affinity for education: “Public schools, higher education, and EMC/MSUB have been an important influence in my life. I believe in the power of education and how it improves the quality of life for all the people of the world. Education has created for me a means to pursue a meaningful career, to participate in community organizations and to pursue public service in the State Legislature.”

