

First Monday



*From the desk of: Marilynn Miller, President and CEO
Monday, February 4, 2008, 8:00 a.m.*

First Monday is provided to friends of Montana State University Billings Foundation to advance the cause of philanthropy.

Former Billings mayor Chuck Tooley heads Montana State University Billings' Urban Institute. Chancellor Ron Sexton conceived the institute as an entity to address issues unique to a growing and urbanized Billings. With a population of over 100,000 citizens, Billings is the only true urban area in Montana. Likewise, MSU Billings is an urban university: 90 percent of our students commute to campus; 80% work in addition to attending university; and average student age is 25.

Tooley says the time is right to focus on key issues ranging from energy and the environment to the arts, health, and the relationship of the Yellowstone River to the city. He also recognizes the importance of the rural/urban interface. Urban and rural residents "have to understand how important we are to each other," he said. Like the university, the city draws from a diverse region and understanding the needs of that region is critical.

Donor highlights from January:

- Because an equal amount in matching contributions has been raised, the **Charles M. Bair Family Trust** released \$20,000 in challenge grant funding for the Petro Theater lighting system.
- An **anonymous donor** contributed \$15,000 to the MSU Billings Foundation General Scholarship Endowment.
- **Arlys & Ted Rieger** contributed an additional \$14,000 to the Lester & Cora Engdahl Memorial Scholarship. The endowment received \$13,000, while \$1,000 will be used for the first scholarship award in the 2008-2009 academic year. The scholarship will be awarded to graduates of Garfield County High School.
- **Bruce & Marsha Putnam** donated a GMC Suburban valued at \$3,600 to the College of Technology automotive program.
- **Dr. Gary & Jean Young** pledged \$2,600 to the Dr. Gary Young Business Faculty Enhancement Endowment and to the Music Department. Dr. Young is dean of the College of Business.

- **Linda & Phil Boggio** donated stock valued at \$2,501 to the General Scholarship Fund.
- **Dr. George & Cathey White** pledged \$2,100 to the Sports Medicine Scholarship and the Geoffrey Fishbaugh Memorial Scholarship Endowment. Dr. White is acting Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost.
- The following individuals and businesses made commitments for the new soccer complex:
 - **Ingrid Gustafson & Boon Ellison** pledged \$10,000, with an initial payment of \$3,500.
 - **Yellowstone Surgery Center LLC** pledged \$10,000, with an initial payment of \$2,000.
 - **Mac & Karen Long** paid \$1,000 on a \$3,000 pledge.
 - **Seafoods of the World Inc.** paid \$1,000 on a \$3,000 pledge.

Our generous **MSUB faculty and staff committed \$55,733** through the Annual Campus Drive. Each gift is designated by the faculty/staff donor to an initiative he or she selects, resulting in funding for a wide range of university programs and scholarships.

The University Honors Program (UHP) at MSU Billings is an optional course of study for professionally motivated, intellectually curious students. Honors courses have smaller enrollment caps than most university courses and emphasize self-expression, active learning, and creativity. Currently, 306 students are enrolled in UHP. After completing 21 credits in honors courses, a student earns the designation of “University Honors Scholar” and is recognized for this accomplishment at Convocation and Commencement. The average GPA of University Honors Scholars at graduation from MSU Billings is 3.8. These graduates frequently earn fellowships for post-baccalaureate study and enjoy a competitive advantage in job searches. For more information on UHP, call Dr. Bryan Duncan, (406) 657-2903 or email bduncan@msubillings.edu.

Want to change the world for the better? Your **bequest** to MSU Billings Foundation could do just that. The hopes and dreams of humankind are closely tied to the purposes and outcomes of higher education: educated people change the world. By naming Montana State University Billings Foundation, (tax identification number 81-0301477) in your Will, you will make a lasting imprint on the future. I recommend that you work with an attorney to prepare your Will, assuring that your loved ones also receive the bequests you desire.

Prefer e-mail? If you would prefer to receive *First Monday* and *Corks & Cuisine* electronically, please contact Shannon Behounek (sbehounek@msubillings.edu).