

First Monday



*From the desk of: Marilynn Miller, President and CEO
Monday, August 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 teacher, coach and athletic director Oscar Bjorgum was honored at a July 26 ceremony during which a bronze bust in his likeness was installed in the main lobby of the Physical Education Building. Former Yellowjacket athletes from across the nation joined family, friends, and former colleagues of Bjorgum to pay homage to the man who is considered by many to be “Mr. Yellowjacket.” Bjorgum started at Eastern Montana Normal School in 1927, its inaugural year, as part-time coach of the men's basketball program, fielding a team with the only nine men who were students. He became a full-time faculty member in 1931. In 1947, Bjorgum launched the intercollegiate football program and guided Eastern Montana College to its first two gridiron championships. During his 40-plus years here, Bjorgum also coached baseball, track, gymnastics, archery, tennis, and badminton. He retired in 1971 and passed away in 1975.

Busts of Yellowjacket coaches Bob Lee, Mike Harkins and Nels Christiansen have been placed in the P.E. building over the past four years. All four busts were commissioned with funds raised through a grass-roots, fund-raising effort by former MSUB/EMC student-athletes.

Private donations keep MSU Billings on the leading edge. We deeply appreciate every donor's generosity. Here are some gifts made during July:

- **Ken & Karen Farmer** gave \$20,000 to establish a soccer scholarship fund in honor of their daughter, Abby Farmer Wright, former MSUB women's soccer standout, who was inducted into the Yellowjacket Athletics Hall of Fame and Distinction in February 2008.
- **George V. Lombardi 1969** contributed \$10,000 to the Associated Students of MSU Billings (ASMSUB) Future Leaders Scholarship Endowment in honor of Dr. Ronald P. Sexton and Dr. Kenneth B. Card. The endowment will provide two annual scholarships: one to a student enrolled at the College of Technology and one to a student on the main campus. Recipients must be involved in their high school or university and have the potential for campus leadership.
- **Jack & Viki Thompson** gave \$5,000 to the Kassandra Thompson-Christopherson Memorial Scholarship. This endowed scholarship fund was established by Kassie's grandmother, Melina Hawkins, after Kassie's death on May 4, 2008. Kassie was Jack & Viki's great-niece.

- **James R. Thompson** donated \$1,000 to the Kassandra Thompson-Christopherson Memorial Scholarship. James is Kassie's grandfather.
- **PEO Chapter Y** pledged \$1,500 toward the PEO Chapter Y Scholarship.
- **GFWC Billings Junior Woman's Club** gave \$3,000 to fund three \$1,000 scholarships for full-time female students who are majoring in an area that will offer service to others.
- **ASMSUB** donated \$1,000 to the Class of 2008 gift to purchase and plant two trees, one on the COT campus and one on the main campus.

MSU Billings softball player Shay Oberg won the 2008 ESPY award for "Best Female Athlete with a Disability" at the annual ESPN Sports Network ESPY awards ceremony on July 16th. Oberg, who was born without a left hand, was a starting outfielder for the Yellowjackets this spring after transferring back home to MSUB from Southwestern Oregon Community College. Oberg hit .280 on the year with three home runs and 13 RBI.

It's never too late for college. MSU Billings is offering a "College is *Still* Possible" information/help session for adults who want to pursue higher education opportunities. The free hour-long session is scheduled for **Thursday, August 7th** from 6-7 p.m. at the MSUB Student Union Building, 1500 University Drive. MSUB experts will give information about the admissions process, financial aid, academic programs and options that allow people to attend college while taking care of their families. The session is open to anyone of any age and no appointments are necessary.

The controversial new writing portion of the SAT may actually be a better predictor of grades for freshmen college students than the older, more-established critical reading and mathematics portions, according to preliminary results of two new studies reported in USA Today.

The College Board, which administers the SAT, studied test scores from 150,000 freshmen entering 110 colleges in 2006 and then looked at their GPAs at the end of their freshmen year. Results of the study show the writing section to be more predictive of a student's first-year grades in college than the math or reading sections. The board also noted in its study that combining the entire SAT with high school grades was an even stronger predictor of performance.

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