

# First Monday

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*From the desk of: Marilynn Miller, President and CEO  
Monday, February 6, 2006, 8:00 a.m.*

**Dr. Joe Michels, Dean of the College of Business**, has resigned due to cardiac health problems. Dr. Mary McNally is serving as acting dean until a permanent replacement for Dr. Michels is appointed.

“I feel privileged and honored to have served as dean for the College of Business and for the taxpayers of Montana,” said Dr. Michels. “It was not my plan to have to leave this way, but I am following the strict recommendations of my doctors. My biggest regret is that I no longer will be able to serve with my faculty colleagues at the College of Business.... These outstanding academicians are the most talented academic professionals with whom I ever have had the pleasure to work.”

We at MSU-Billings are keeping Dr. Michels in our thoughts and prayers and are hoping for his return to health.

**The Montana Board of Regents** has started the process of outlining priority initiatives for the 2007 legislative session. At a two-day planning meeting in mid-January, regents reviewed a series of system-wide initiatives grouped in six areas:

- Transferability and Integrated Student Data Systems
- Indian Education for All
- Affordability
- Distance Learning
- Community Colleges and Workforce Development
- Eliminate Health Care Workers Shortage

State Budget Director David Ewer has said there will not likely be much extra money to go around for the 2007-09 biennium due to commitments and expected needs for Medicaid, the prison system and K-12 education. If current projections hold true, Ewer said the University System could see a proposed budget increase of just 1 percent.

The system initiatives will be further discussed at the March Board of Regents meeting, after which budget priorities will be forwarded to the governor’s office and the legislature in preparation for the 2007 session.

**Our appreciation** goes to all January donors, some of whom are listed below:

- **An anonymous out-of-state alumnus** has given \$100,000 for scholarships to benefit full-time accounting majors with demonstrated financial need.
- **Gary Hines, Lew Hines, and Tom Hines** each contributed \$50,000, for a total of \$150,000 to help purchase 6.1 acres of property adjacent to the College of Technology campus.

- **ConocoPhillips** donated a self-contained pump assembly training module worth \$25,000 to the College of Technology for use in the Process Plant Technology program.
- **Underriner Motors-Bill & Mary Underriner** pledged \$25,000 over the next 5 years to help sponsor the Foundation's annual Wine & Food Festival, a popular event held each May that raises funds for student scholarships and University initiatives. The 2005 festival netted \$280,000.
- **Cougar Mountain Software** donated accounting software worth \$18,302 to the College of Business.
- **MDU Resources Foundation** in Bismarck, North Dakota sent the first \$10,000 of a \$50,000 pledge for a management information systems lab for the College of Business.
- **Computers Unlimited** committed to a \$10,000 corporate partnership for Wine & Food Festival 2006.
- **Wayne L. Hansen** donated \$5,000 toward the Men's Baseball Endowment.
- **St. Vincent Healthcare Foundation's Arnold Endowment** granted \$4,500 to the Montana Center on Disabilities at MSU-Billings to collaborate with the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind to train Montana teachers and paraeducators who work with low-vision and blind students.
- **Jennifer & Steve Corning** contributed \$2,500 to the Steve & Jennifer Corning Endowed Scholarship Fund, which benefits a full-time English major with a 3.5 or higher GPA.
- **Joe & Jane Howell** donated an additional \$2,000 to the Math Scholarship Endowment Fund.
- **Anderson ZurMuehlen & Co., PC** contributed an additional \$1,500 to the Anderson ZurMuehlen & Co., P.C. Scholarship, which benefits two full-time accounting majors maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA per year.

**The preliminary design for the new \$9 million academic building at the College of Technology** can be viewed on MSU-Billings' web site: [www.msubillings.edu/facilityservices](http://www.msubillings.edu/facilityservices). The proposed design has emerged from hundreds of hours of interview and goal-setting sessions, and continues to be refined.

**Prefer e-mail?** If you would prefer to receive *First Monday* electronically, please contact Administrative Assistant Shannon Behounek ([sbehounek@msubillings.edu](mailto:sbehounek@msubillings.edu)).

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

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