

# First Monday



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*From the desk of: Marilynn Miller, President and CEO  
Monday, July 6, 2009, 8:00 a.m.*

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

**I hope you and your families enjoyed Independence Day 2009** and took a moment to think about the men and women who have fought and died to keep us free since July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776. You can hear directly from one of those brave soldiers this month on campus, as you'll see in the next article.

**Hear a first-hand story of survival** that will take you back to America's worst World War II defeat and the horrors endured by the soldiers who became prisoners of war as a result. On April 9, 1942, after a ninety-nine-day battle with the Japanese on Bataan in the Philippine Islands, 76,000 American troops surrendered their arms. The weak and starving captives were forced to march sixty-six miles under a scorching sun to a Japanese prison camp, an infamous walk that became known as the Bataan Death March.

*Tears in the Darkness: The Story of the Bataan Death March and its Aftermath*, a new book published to critical acclaim in June 2009, tells the story of the atrocities and suffering that followed the surrender on Bataan. The authors of *Tears in the Darkness*, Michael Norman and Elizabeth M. Norman, interviewed hundreds of individuals, and their book tells the saga through the perspectives of both the Japanese victors and the American prisoners of war. The central figure of *Tears in the Darkness* is **MSU Billings Professor Emeritus Ben Steele**, a Montana cowboy before the war and professor of art after, who, according to the authors, is the only American who experienced almost every aspect of the surrender, the death march, and the long, brutal aftermath of imprisonment and torture.

The public is invited to join Ben Steele and the book's authors, Michael and Elizabeth Norman, for a special lecture and reading on **Friday, July 17, 2009, at 10 a.m. in Library 148 at MSU Billings**. There is no charge for the lecture/reading.

**The Yellowjacket softball team took top honors in** the Great Northwestern Athletic Conference, winning MSUB's first athletic championship since joining the GNAC conference two years ago. On their way to seizing the title, the softball team set eighteen single-season team records, including most wins in a season, nine hitting records, and six pitching records.

**As always, I extend sincere appreciation to the donors who give so generously to the university and its students.** Here are a few of the gifts received during June:

- **Lorraine Jensen (1970) & Douglas Aden** notified us that they have included a \$225,000 bequest for Montana State University Billings Foundation in Lorraine's Will.
- **The Heisey Foundation** gave \$10,798 for the 2009/2010 Heisey Foundation Scholarships to be awarded to upper level students from specific counties in north central Montana.
- An **anonymous** donor contributed \$2,000 to the Geoffrey A. Fishbaugh Memorial Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded to male elementary education students who have been admitted into the teacher education program and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA.
- **MDU Resources Foundation** donated \$2,000 to the MDU Resources Foundation College of Technology Scholarship for the 2009-2010 academic year. Recipients are Anya Mohr, majoring in Process Plant Technology and Daniel Delao, enrolled in the Desktop/Network Support program at the College of Technology.
- **Allen L. Jones (1982)** pledged an additional \$1,500 to the R.A. Jones Family Scholarship to augment the 2009-2010 distribution from the family's scholarship endowment fund. The scholarship was awarded to Lizza Kister. The R. A. Jones Family Scholarship Endowment was established in 2008 through a bequest from Sonja C. Jones.
- **GFWC Billings Junior Woman's Club** gave \$2,000 for GFWC Billings Junior Woman's Club Scholarships. Recipients Jennifer Colenso and Megan Covington were awarded \$1,000 each for the 2009-2010 academic year.

**To make a gift online** go to <http://www.msubillings.edu/foundation/> & click "Make-a-Gift."

**Prefer e-mail?** If you would prefer to receive *First Monday* and *Corks & Cuisine* electronically, please contact Darla Crumbaker ([dcrumbaker@msubillings.edu](mailto:dcrumbaker@msubillings.edu)).