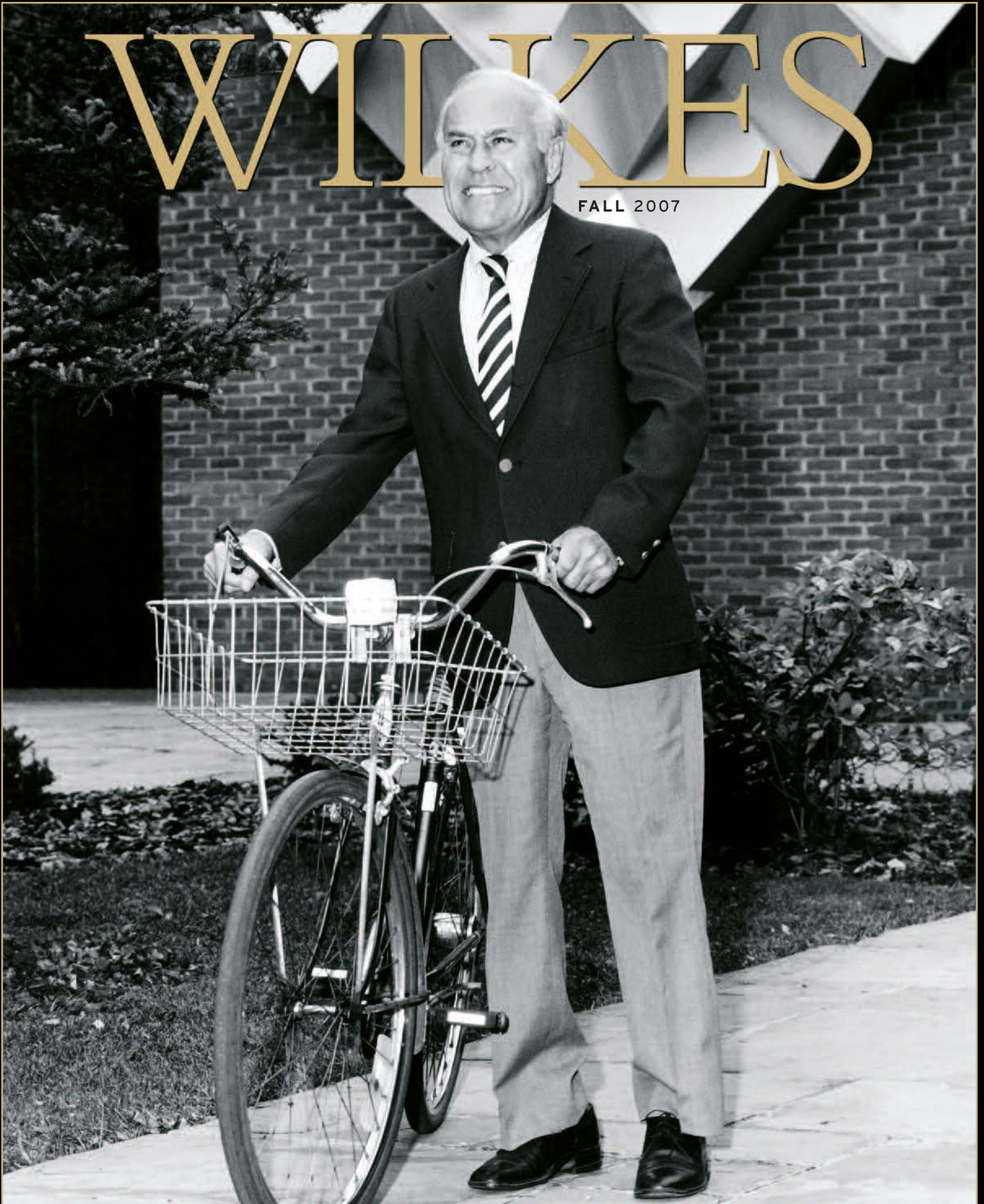


WILKES

FALL 2007



GEORGE RALSTON | REMEMBERING A LEGEND

A Vision of Selfless Devotion

IT IS FITTING THAT THIS ISSUE OF *WILKES* MAGAZINE PAYS tribute to Dean George Ralston. He, perhaps more than any other individual, personified the spirit and essence of Wilkes.

George was a huge and powerful spirit in a small package. No one filled a room fuller with optimism, high standards and fun than George did. When you saw and heard George, you received the best of Wilkes. And what he had to say was timeless. He connected positively and directly for a lifetime with the students in every decade he served Wilkes.



George Ralston

My first encounter with George was not long after I accepted the presidency. We were at a reception for alumni in Naples, Fla. He came up to me and said, "Welcome! Feel free to call on me any time to help you. You have become president of a great institution. Now take care of it!" And he meant every word. Never did I ask him to do something that he did not rise to the occasion.

His loss is a great one, but the memories he has left with us are priceless. His spirit was the essence of our mentoring culture: caring deeply about others — helping them when they need it most, no matter what the time of day or night. Alumni tell story after story about George being there at precisely the moment he was needed and doing absolutely the right thing.

If George Ralston had a vision for Wilkes, I believe it would be for us to become an even stronger community that selflessly devotes itself to others in the name of making the world a better place.

George, in your memory, I believe we will. And as we do come together for others, we will thrive in a way that we all hope will make you proud!

Dr. Tim Gilmour
Wilkes University President

WILKES UNIVERSITY

President
Dr. Tim Gilmour

Vice President, Development and Alumni Relations
Marty Williams

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FALL 2007

Wilkes University is an independent institution of higher education dedicated to academic and intellectual excellence in the liberal arts, sciences and professional programs. The university provides its students with the experience and education necessary for career and intellectual development as well as for personal growth, engenders a sense of values and civic responsibility, and encourages its students to welcome the opportunities and challenges of a diverse and continually changing world. The university enhances the tradition of strong student-faculty interactions in all its programs, attracts and retains outstanding people in every segment of the university, and fosters a spirit of cooperation, community involvement, and individual respect within the entire university.

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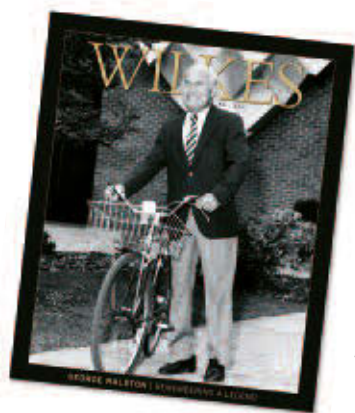
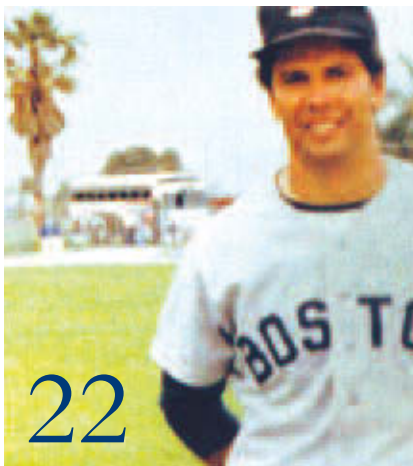
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On the cover: George Ralston graced the Wilkes campus with his wit, wisdom — and bicycle — for six decades. His legacy continues in the lives of alumni he encountered. They share their recollections of “The Dean” beginning on page 12. PHOTO FROM WILKES ARCHIVES

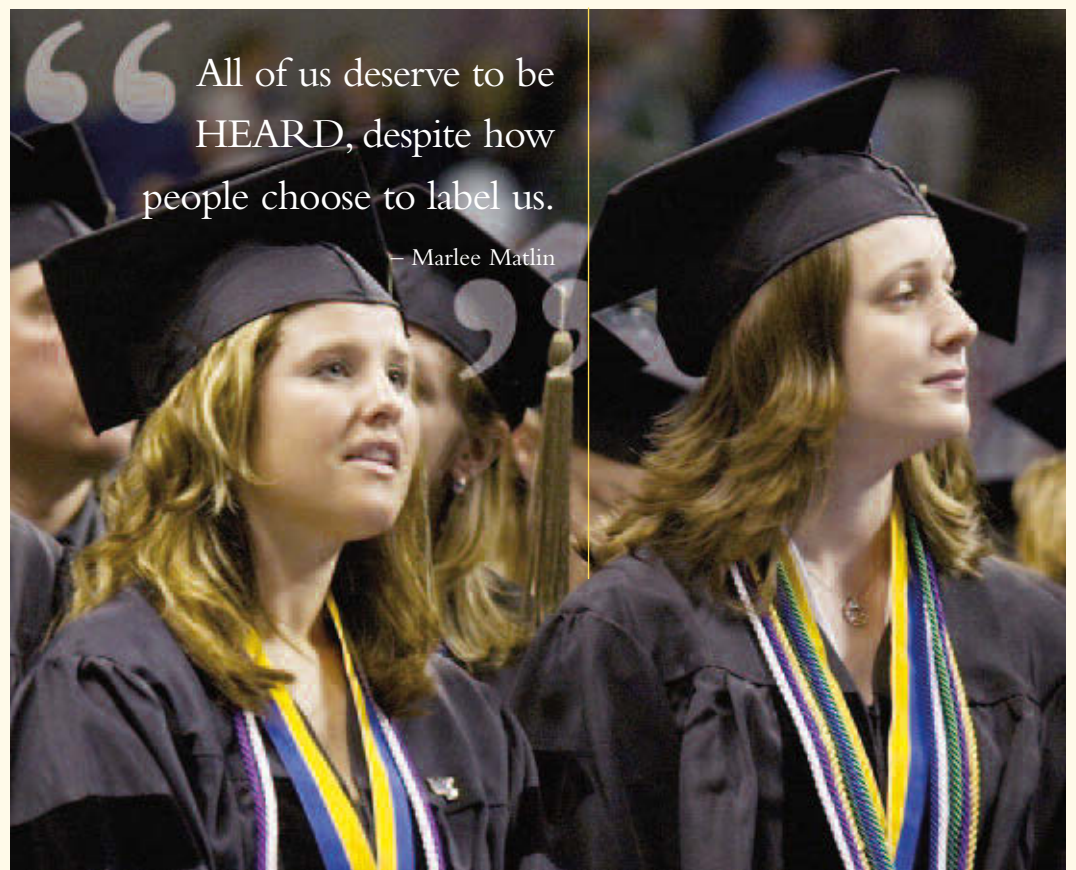


Above: Wilkes' 60th annual spring commencement ceremony moved to a new venue: the Wachovia Arena, in Wilkes-Barre Township.



Above: Proud families, including children, cheer on their graduates.

Right: The University conferred 286 bachelor's, 307 master's and 61 doctor of pharmacy degrees.



All of us deserve to be
HEARD, despite how
people choose to label us.

— Marlee Matlin

“
Take those warning signs, take
the NAYSAYERS, take any
label that someone slaps on
you and consider instead the
MIRACLE that lies in
POSSIBILITIES. You will
soar so much higher.
”

– Marlee Matlin

A photograph of actress Marlee Matlin speaking at a podium during a graduation ceremony. She is wearing a black graduation gown with a purple and white stole. She has long blonde hair and is gesturing with her right hand while speaking into a microphone. The background is a blurred crowd of graduates in blue and white gowns.

Actress Marlee Matlin, who won the 1986 Academy Award for Best Actress for her motion picture debut in *Children of a Lesser God*, delivered the keynote address via sign language and an interpreter. Matlin's speech was titled "From Disabilities to Abilities: The Miracle of Possibilities."

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL P. TOUEY

Toward a Law School

A law school moved one step closer to reality when the University Board of Trustees in June approved hiring a legal education leader to develop a plan, further investigate market demand, explore potential specializations and raise funds for the school's founding.

“We are MOVING FORWARD in a thoughtful way and are overall very EXCITED about the POSSIBILITIES this LAW SCHOOL will have for Wilkes and the region.

— Jack Miller '68
Board Chair

“We are moving forward in a thoughtful way and are overall very excited about the possibilities this law school will have for Wilkes and the region,” says board chair Jack Miller '68.

The education leader will report and make recommendations to the board at its June or September 2008 meeting. With a favorable report and further faculty approval, Wilkes could open a law school in fall 2009.

“The University recognizes how important it is to proceed with the greatest due diligence when it comes to establishing a law school,” says Wilkes President Tim Gilmour. “The entire Wilkes community

wants to provide a distinctive legal education that is based on the core values of the University and will graduate well-motivated and effective lawyer-leaders.”

In spring, faculty also backed further planning for a law school. “With its vote, the Wilkes faculty overwhelmingly agreed that developing an academically strong and fiscally well-conceived law school at Wilkes would benefit the institution, its students and the

region,” observes Kenneth Klemow, professor of biology and chair of the Academic Planning Committee. “We anticipate working productively with the Board of Trustees and administration to develop a solid plan that will ensure the law school's success.”

The law school would likely incorporate Wilkes' core value of mentoring into the heart of its educational program, including a strong experiential education model that will span the length of the curriculum and integrate concepts of lawyering skills, professionalism and ethics. The law school will complement and strengthen the university's existing mix of academic programs and provide the region with an area of educational training that is in demand and currently not offered in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Preliminary plans call for enrolling 80 first-year students in 2009.

Former Mexican President to Speak At Outstanding Leaders Forum



Vicente Fox

Former Mexican President Vicente Fox will discuss the new Latin American economy at the 2007 Outstanding Leaders Forum, 8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 5, at the F.M. Kirby Center.

Fox, who started his career as a truck driver for Coca-Cola, rose to play a vital role in Mexico's democratization and strengthening the country's economy. He served as president from 2000 to 2006. Fox will speak about his business-centered approach to Mexican development and opportunities available for international corporations.

Sponsored by the Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership, the Outstanding Leaders Forum features national and international

luminaries who embody exceptional leadership and strategic excellence. Forum proceeds fund scholarships for Sidhu School students. To date, the event has generated more than \$150,000.

Tickets for the lecture may be purchased from the F.M. Kirby Center, (570) 826-1100, or from Ticketmaster for \$25 or \$35.

For information, contact Wilkes events coordinator Rebecca Van Jura at (800) WILKES-U Ext. 4306 or rebecca.vanjura@wilkes.edu.



Professors Ernie Trujillo and Marcia Farrell crochet scarves for the Stitch-a-Thon auction.
PHOTO BY CHRISTINE SEITZINGER

Stitch of Awareness

The Wilkes campus community raised more than \$2,000 for three Darfur relief organizations by participating in an all-day Stitch-a-Thon. Led by assistant professor of English Marcia Farrell, with assistance of the women's studies club, students and staff knitted and crocheted items that were auctioned during the Rosenn Lecture on April 29.

One of the benefiting organizations, American Care for Sudan Foundation, was founded by Rosenn Lecture guest speaker John Bul Dau, one of the Lost Boys of Sudan.

American Care for Sudan partners with tribal chiefs in Duk Payuel, the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement and the Ministry of Health, and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and Europe. They aim to build, equip and staff a medical clinic in Duk County, Sudan, the area hardest hit by genocidal atrocities. The groups plan to name the clinic the Duk Lost Boys Clinic.



“If we keep our eyes on the prize of INDEPENDENCE, we will ignore the distractions and temptations certain to be placed in our way by the Khartoum government. FINDING UNITY in a shared vision is my prayer for my NEW HOMELAND.”

– John Bul Dau, speaking of his hopes for southern Sudan in his book, *God Grew Tired of Us*

John Bul Dau, one of the “lost boys” of Sudan, and documentary film director Christopher Dillon Quinn discuss Quinn’s film *God Grew Tired of Us* during April’s Max Rosenn Lecture in Law and Humanities. Inset: Dau signs a copy of his book documenting his escape from Sudan and new life in the United States. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL P. TOUEY





Junior Kate Baas and senior Jon McClave signed up for a new text and voice message service. They will receive emergency or urgent news directly to their cell phones.
PHOTO BY CHRISTINE SEITZINGER

Emergency Communication for Generation Text

Students, faculty and staff can now receive University emergency alerts via their cellular or landline phones.

Besides providing text and voice alerts, the system will also ring classroom emergency phones so students and faculty who have switched off or muted their cell phones will be alerted to emergency news. The system enhances the existing emergency communication plan, which includes mass e-mails, a phone hotline, a Web-based news delivery system and more than 40 emergency phones in campus buildings that directly dial into the public safety office.

“We were getting ready to implement this system when the unfortunate events at Virginia Tech occurred,” says President Tim Gilmour. “There cannot be a higher priority than ensuring the safety and security of the campus community. Now we have a more direct and effective way to communicate in case of threat or emergency.”

This system will be used only for emergency communication and not for general information or advertisements. Notices may include closures and delays, community crime notifications and weather emergencies. The service is free, but cellular service providers may charge for air time used when receiving messages.

Graduate Nursing Goes Online

Wilkes’ Department of Nursing now offers its master’s program in an online format.

Students can currently take only core graduate courses online. The 38-credit program, which will take most part-time students three to four years to complete, offers concentrations in gerontologic nursing, psychiatric/mental health nursing, nursing education and nursing management. The concentrations prepare registered nurses for careers with abundant opportunities for advancement.

Bridgette Zielinski ’76, associate professor and co-director of the master’s program, says the online format offers flexibility and convenience. “Our online program allows nurses to enroll in graduate courses and advance their careers regardless of location.” A low-residency requirement will become part of the program, giving the online learning community the opportunity to meet in person.



Online enrollment in core courses begins in August. Enrollment in the full program will begin in fall 2008. For more information, contact Zielinski or co-director Deborah Zbegner at (570) 408-4071 or (800) WILKES-U Ext. 4071.

A Masterful Work

Steven Thomas, associate professor of music, served as chorus master for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic's performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*.

Thomas recruited and organized four participating choirs with more than 150 singers, served as liaison between philharmonic music director Maestro Lawrence Loh and other choral directors,

and helped rehearse choirs at one of two combined rehearsals.

"Being able to perform a masterwork like Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with a large, well-prepared chorus and a professional orchestra was a tremendous opportunity for my students at Wilkes. They lived with the work throughout the spring semester, strove to understand and to master it, and ultimately gave a truly inspiring performance of it. I'm very proud of the work they did, and proud to be able to help provide both them and the community with such an important musical experience."



Wilkes University singers joined three other choirs and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic to perform Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. Steven Thomas served as chorus master for the performance.

PHOTOS BY CURTIS SALONICK

ReStore-ing Environmental Responsibility

Wilkes donated about \$30,000 worth of commercial products to the local Habitat for Humanity ReStore.

The trailer full of lavatory equipment, lighting fixtures and solid maple doors came from a former call center built to accommodate 1,000 employees. Wilkes renovated the building, now known as University Center on Main or UCOM, in 2006. It houses a recreation and athletic center on the main floor and 100 employees on the main and second floors.

Patty Gilmour, wife of President Tim Gilmour, spearheaded the Habitat project. She frequently buys products from Habitat's ReStore for her freelance home renovation and restoration business. Contractors find bargain products at the store, which also raises funds for Habitat.

This recycling project is one example of Wilkes' effort to become a "green" campus. The University purchased a trash compactor to reduce the number of trips waste haulers make to

campus. All electronic waste, including computers, monitors, printers and light bulbs, has been removed from the waste stream and components are recycled whenever possible. Recently, more than 40 indoor and 18 outdoor commingled recycling containers were added to campus. The University is working with faculty in the environmental engineering and earth sciences department to develop a recycling awareness program.



Wilkes donated a trailer of products from the renovated University Center on Main to the Habitat for Humanity ReStore. PHOTO BY CHRISTINE SEITZINGER

Relay For Life Tops \$15,000

Students organized a Relay For Life that raised more than \$15,000 for the American Cancer Society.

The April 27 to 28 event at Ralston Field took place weeks earlier than traditional Relay For Life events so more college students could participate, explains student organizer Blaine Madara, whose grandmother and aunt are breast cancer survivors. Organizers recruited 20 teams and more than 200 participants from the University and neighboring communities. The event

exceeded its original fundraising goal by more than \$5,000.

Madara hopes to make it an annual event and encourages alumni to participate. Those interested can email blaine.madara@wilkes.edu.

More than 200 people participated in a student-organized Relay For Life event.



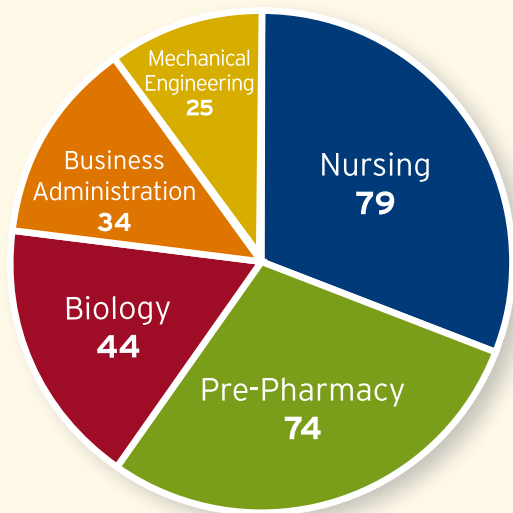
Wire Free Wilkes-Barre

Wilkes and Wilkes-Barre will have a wireless broadband Internet infrastructure thanks to the efforts of Wire Free Wilkes-Barre, a nonprofit corporation founded in 2006 by Wilkes, the city, Luzerne County and King's College.

By mid-August, Wilkes students and employees were to have access to high-speed Internet and wireless capabilities for laptop computers and other handheld devices around the 27-acre campus and downtown.

Wire Free Wilkes-Barre aims to enhance public safety, increase economic development and improve government efficiency by implementing the network throughout the city. Surveillance cameras in strategic locations throughout the city will deter crime and aid flood monitoring, organizers say. Frontier telecommunications company has been selected to build and maintain the infrastructure.

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

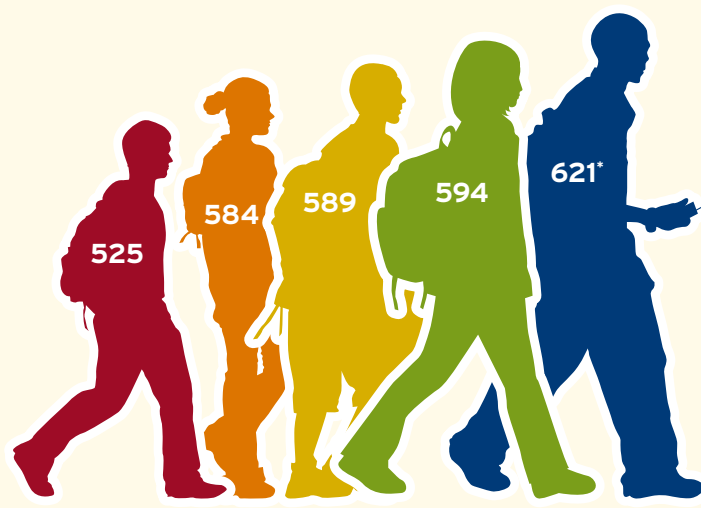


TOP 5 MAJORS

More than 50 percent of Wilkes' incoming freshmen class will pursue studies in science, health and engineering fields. Nursing, pre-pharmacy and biology attracted the largest number of students.

INCOMING FRESHMEN

Wilkes welcomes its largest freshmen class in 25 years this fall. The University has seen steady increases in freshmen enrollment for five consecutive years while maintaining small class sizes and SAT scores above the national average. With a current enrollment of 2,300 full-time undergraduates, Wilkes has already exceeded its enrollment goal of 2,200 students by the year 2010.



2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007

*Pre-census figures. Actual number of arriving freshmen may be slightly less.

New Administrators Join Wilkes Family

The University welcomes four new administrators.

- **C. Reynold Verret** becomes provost, leading initiatives to build enrollment and enhance quality of academic programs, develop plans for a new science, health and engineering building, and create a plan for a law school.

Verret served as dean and professor of chemistry and biochemistry at University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. During his tenure at USP, he led the revision of a university-wide general education curriculum, developed a study abroad program, established collaborative agreements with neighboring institutions at the K-12 and higher education levels, instituted new, state-approved academic programs and oversaw relocation of major programs to a new science and technology center.

He also worked at Clark Atlanta University as associate professor, interim chair and later chair of chemistry. A widely published researcher, his interests include cytotoxicity of immune cells, biosensors and biomarkers.

Verret received his undergraduate degree cum laude in biochemistry from Columbia University and doctorate in biochemistry from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He replaces Maravene Loeschke, now president of Mansfield University.

- **Petra Carver** takes the post of vice president for finance and support operations. At Northland College, Ashland, Wis., she developed and implemented an institution-wide reorganization plan to streamline operations and led new construction and renovation projects. She also initiated a purchasing consortium and established an internal control system.

Carver holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and accounting from Fachhochschule Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany, and an M.B.A. from St. Martin's University, Olympia, Wash.

- **Maggie Lund** is vice president for human resources and organizational development. She brings more than 20 years of experience and has held senior-level leadership positions in human resources. She most recently served as vice president of human resources for Mercy Health Partners Northeast Region, based in Scranton, Pa.

Lund earned undergraduate and graduate degrees at University of Scranton and completed doctoral coursework in industrial relations and human resources at Rutgers University.



New administrators joining Wilkes over the summer are, from left: C. Reynold Verret, provost; Maggie Lund, vice president for human resources and organizational development; Petra Carver, vice president for finance and support operations; and Maria D. Suarez, special assistant to the president for multicultural and community affairs. PHOTO BY KIM BOWER-SPENCE

- **Maria D. Suarez** serves as special assistant to the president for multicultural and community affairs. Suarez will work with President Tim Gilmour, the vice president for student affairs and the Diversity Task Force to develop a diversity strategy.

Suarez served as dean of math and science at Gloucester County College, in New Jersey. She comes with extensive experience implementing and funding programs to recruit and retain women and underrepresented minorities in science.

Suarez is a published researcher in biochemistry and molecular cell biology. Suarez holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from University of Puerto Rico and a doctorate in biochemistry from Michigan State University.

Post-Season PROWESS

By John Seitzinger



**BASEBALL TEAM
POWERS UP
LATE IN SEASON
TO CAPTURE TITLE**



Pitcher Tom Buckler earned most valuable player honors for the Freedom Conference Tournament. ALL PHOTOS BY WARREN RUDA

The Wilkes baseball team found itself behind the proverbial eight ball after opening Freedom Conference play with a 3-7 record.

However, the Colonels rallied to win seven of their final eight conference games to reach the playoffs. Then they swept all three games in the conference tournament to claim their first conference title since 1994 and first NCAA Division III bid since 1978.

“We put our own backs to the wall, and then we caught fire. The team played great under pressure,” explains 12-year head coach Joe Folek. “This was not a very vocal, rah-rah type of team. Our guys didn’t say much during our streak. They just got back to playing good, old-fashioned, hard-nosed baseball.”

The Colonels ended the year with an overall record of 24-12 and won 14 of their final 17 games. They opened the conference tournament with a 4-3 win in 11 innings over top-seeded

DeSales University. The Wilkes bats then came alive in a 17-8 victory over number-two seed King’s College in the winner’s bracket final. In the championship game, junior Tom Buckler, named the tournament’s most valuable player, pitched a complete game four-hitter to lift the Colonels to an 8-1 win over DeSales and the conference crown. Buckler was also the winning pitcher in the Colonels first win over DeSales.

The Colonels placed four players on the All-Conference team, including junior outfielder/pitcher Kyle Follweiler. Follweiler, who was also the MAC’s Defensive Player of the Year in football last fall, hit .370 during the season to lead an offensive attack that hit at a .294 clip. Junior third baseman Chris Mayerski, junior outfielder/pitcher Corey Helfrich and junior outfielder/pitcher Brad Woznisky were named to the second team. Folek picked up the conference’s Coach of the Year award, a title he also collected in 2002.

Fall Season Forecast



Al Karaffa begins his fourth year as starting quarterback.

Football Adds Rival Rowan to Regular-Season Schedule

The Wilkes University football team defends its Middle Atlantic Conference championship this fall. The Colonels come off a perfect 10-0 regular season and an 11-1 record overall.

“Our team is anxious to face the challenges of the upcoming season,” says head coach Frank Sheptock. “A more difficult schedule and the graduation of an outstanding senior class will make this season a true test to our program.”

That schedule includes the addition of Rowan and Montclair State universities to regular-season play. Rowan blasted the Colonels’ playoff bids in both 2005 and 2006. This fall, they meet at 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 15, at Ralston Field.

Sheptock, who was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in July for his standout performance as a linebacker at Bloomsburg University, welcomes back six All-Conference players from a season ago. “Our players understand the commitment and work ethic it takes to reach a championship level. We need to take a very ‘blue collar’ approach to our preparation, and play with the pride that this program was built on through many great players and teams.”

Women’s Tennis To Defend Title

With five of six singles starters returning, expectations are running high for the 2007 Wilkes women’s tennis team. Under the guidance of head coach Chris Leicht, Freedom Conference Coach of the Year in 2006, the Lady Colonels posted an overall record of 18-2 last fall, winning their first Freedom Conference title and earning their first NCAA Championship bid.

Sophomore Xiaoqiao Zhang headlines the list of returnees. Zhang earned conference Player of the Year honors after posting a 19-2 singles record and winning the MAC number-one singles title. Junior Alison McDonald joined Zhang on the All-Conference first team after compiling a 17-3 singles record out of the number-two position. Singles player junior Kristin Wilt was a second team All-Conference selection last season, registering a 15-4 record in individual play.

“I am very excited for the upcoming women’s tennis season,” Leicht explains. His biggest challenge will be integrating freshmen with upperclass players. “I have a strong recruiting class coming into Wilkes, and they will be ready to challenge for varsity positions. I would like to emphasize our doubles play. I feel this is one area we can improve upon.”



Junior Alison McDonald joined the All-Conference first team after compiling a 17-3 singles record.

Field Hockey

A more experienced field hockey team takes the field this season. The Lady Colonels return all but one player from last year’s squad, which posted a 9-9 record.

Says head coach Sara Fuller, “With our talented veterans and a strong group of incoming freshmen, I am excited to see how the season unwinds. This year, our main goal will be playing a full 70 minutes intensely, and supporting each other in all positions on the field.”

Women’s Soccer

Women’s soccer welcomes its largest team in history. “We have 20 newcomers, including 11 recruited freshmen, six walk-ons and three other current Wilkes students. This will be an exciting team,” promises head coach John Sumoski.

The team looks to build on last season’s 13-6-1 overall record. “We have continued to schedule nationally competitive teams,” Sumoski notes. And fitness standards are significantly more difficult than in the past.

Men’s Soccer

With three All-Conference players returning, the men’s soccer team is eager to begin the new season. The Colonels went 12-6-1 a year ago.

“We graduated eight seniors from last year’s team, including four-year, all-conference players in the goal, central midfield and forward positions,” says head coach Phil Wingert. “That group will be difficult to replace in one year, but the current, senior leadership is excellent, and there’s a strong nucleus of returning players from last year’s playoff team. The incoming group of new players should complement the returnees.”

Volleyball

With five starters returning, the volleyball team is anxious to begin the 2007 season.

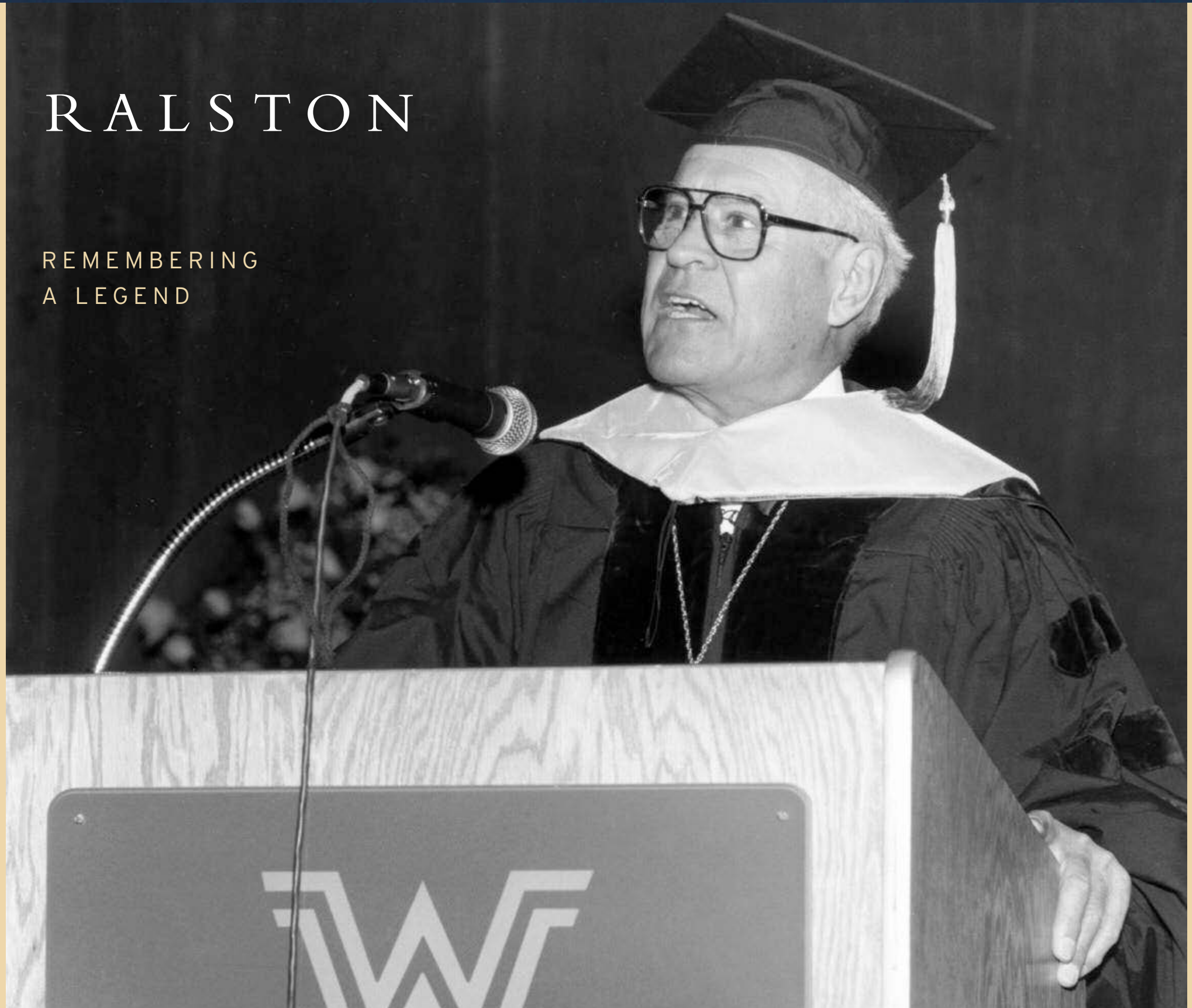
Junior Katherine Harrington leads the group after registering a team-high 290 kills a year ago. Also returning are senior Kristen Linhart, who had 255 kills and 291 digs; sophomore LeeAnn Searfoss, who added 151 kills and 51 assists; senior Katherine Simons, who contributed 116 kills; and sophomore Julie Page, with 95 kills.

GEORGE RALSTON

WITH THE EXCEPTION perhaps of the University's first president, Eugene Farley, no

one has impacted this institution more than Dean Emeritus George Ralston. The World War II major with two Purple Hearts joined Bucknell University Junior College as a counselor to veterans. He founded the athletics program in 1946 and eventually retired as dean emeritus of student affairs. Legendary for his ability to remember names, he personally interacted with virtually every student to cross campus during his tenure. His passing on March 2 generated hundreds of notes and letters to his wife, Helen, and the Office of Alumni Relations. We share a sampling here. See more remembrances online at The Colonel Connection, community.wilkes.edu.

REMEMBERING A LEGEND



Ralston's affiliation with Wilkes spanned 60 years.
ALL PHOTOS FROM WILKES ARCHIVES

A Healthful, Disciplined Life

It was my good fortune to have first met George Ralston at Forty Fort (Pa.) High School, when I was a student there and George joined the faculty after his WWII military service. He was a helpful teacher and coach who participated fully in school life. I remember his ringing baritone voice singing “Waterboy” at a school concert. He promoted the living of a healthful, disciplined life and warned everyone of the evils of tobacco. He taught us a little poem:

“Tobacco is a filthy weed,
From old Satan came the seed.
It steals your money and soils your clothes
And makes a chimney of your nose.”

George Ralston was very helpful when I came to Wilkes as a student in 1947, and throughout my four years there. Although I left the area upon graduation, I kept in touch with George over the years when I came to visit family and drop by Wilkes to see how it was growing. He always remembered me, and I thought this was truly amazing, given the thousands of lives he had touched.



When I visited Wilkes for my 50th anniversary in 2001, I recited the tobacco poem during a private moment with George and he hugged me, as was his style, but had to ask, “Do you smoke?” No, George; I learned from you.

– Wade Hayhurst '51 (left), Mollusk, Va.

Second Chances

The year was 1957 and I was called in to see Dean Ralston in June. In the 1956 semester, I had mostly A's and B's, but in the 1957 semester I had a C, D and F's.

I can hear the first words out of his mouth even now: “Son, what happened to you?” Before I could say anything, he went on. “How can you go down so far?”

I explained that my father had died, and that I took the finals between funeral services. Dean Ralston said, “Did you ever think to tell anybody? You could have taken the finals later.”

Then he said, “Here is what we are going to do. Those grades with F's, you will be allowed to take the finals over. But those that you passed – even if it's a D – those grades stand.” And then he called the professors and explained what happened. If he hadn't been reviewing students' grades, no would have known. For that I'm very grateful to Dean Ralston.

In 1954, Wilkes' football team was over visiting the Wyoming Seminary post-graduate football team. I was on the high school team watching the teams play, and Wilkes was getting the worse of it.

In September 2003, the Ancestral Colonels honored Dean Ralston with a plaque at the football field that bears his name.

Dean Ralston called his team together and stood in the middle of them (he came up to their shoulders) and said, “Men, we have to do better than this, or it is going to be a long year.” That was all he said, and they started playing again.

– Kelly J. Mather '58, Sebastian, Fla.

Buy Sneakers Or Leave

September 1961: About 75 veterans met the dean at 8 a.m. on the commons to protest taking four years of physical education. George said, “OK, vets, I'm one also.... Buy your sneakers, take two years of physical education, or leave Wilkes.”

– Gregory J. Lester '61, Deposit, N.Y.

Giving Thanks

In a room full of clergy, George would be asked to say grace!

– Robert L. Evans Sr. '62, Wilkes-Barre

Civil Rights Eye Opener

I went on the Hampton Institute/Wilkes student visit exchange with Dean Ralston, and it was a life-altering and affirming experience. It was a civil rights experience during the turbulent '60s, with all the racial tension.

– Claire Handler Silverstein '63, Tampa, Fla.

Make a Joyful Noise

I was amazed at the enthusiasm of a man who stood before the large class in the gym and stated, “If you can't sing, make a joyful noise!” We did. I never forgot that day. He was always upbeat!

– Ruthanne Macri Porter '63, Perkasie, Pa.



A Gentle Push

My father, a barber, told George one day as he cut his hair that I had not done well at school, that I had been asked to leave for one year, and that my meeting with the dean of women proved fruitless in turning the tide. George suggested that I call him and make an appointment. He told me that he didn't care if I took basket weaving, but I could return to school at night and that my focus should be on “acing every course.” He asked that I keep him up to date on my success, which he believed was a given.

Needless to say, I graduated from Wilkes, albeit one year after my class, and I have gone on to secure a master's degree with 39 years of professional experience as a rehabilitation counselor and case manager. I give credit to George Ralston.

I am certain that he believed in me, and his actions at that critical time in my life were the lifeline that I so desperately needed. Dean Ralston epitomizes what great educators are all about. He was a real human being, caring and fair. Words cannot express my high regard for this great man and gentleman. With his passing, someone great and wonderful has left a void in this vast world of ours.

– Rosemary Baiera Hieronymous '68, Springfield, Pa.

A Lasting Impression

Dean Ralston is the reason why I came to Wilkes, stayed at Wilkes and returned to Wilkes. I first met Dean Ralston when I was in ninth grade, long before I was thinking about college. He made such a positive impression on me that I decided to attend Wilkes. While at Wilkes, I saw Dean Ralston as a role model. On occasion, I would find the opportunity to talk to him. His words, and the way he said them, made me see him as a role model.

After I graduated from Wilkes and dipped my toes in the chilly waters of the work world, I decided to attend graduate school. I sought Dean Ralston's counsel. He said, “Why not come to Wilkes?” So I did, and three years later earned my second degree from Wilkes.

In 1999, I returned to Wilkes for my 30th reunion. While attending an event on the quad, whom did I see but Dean Ralston. He strolled toward me in one of his bright jackets and greeted me with warmth. It's always GREAT to be remembered! We will miss him.

– Bryn Kehrli '69 M'73, Ithaca, N.Y.

Hello and Good Morning

“Always say good morning and hello on campus!” Value another human being was the message. He emphasized this during my freshmen orientation in 1967. He learned this and passed it on. I've been doing it ever since.

– Theresa Dybach '71, Reedsville, Pa.



The Dean is IRREPLACEABLE, not just because he was able to connect the history of Wilkes ACROSS the GENERATIONS, but because no one will ever have the lasting influence over Wilkes that he had.

George's focus on the individual and the emphasis he placed on the bonds formed through relationship are the very core of the student experience at Wilkes.

His MARK on Wilkes is INDELIBLE. I can't imagine anyone will ever better demonstrate through word and deed what it means to value each student, no matter her/his aptitude. In everyone, he could see the GOODNESS and POTENTIAL.

– Paul Adams '77, Kingston, Pa.
Vice President for Student Affairs
Wilkes University



Dean Ralston is transported to festivities in his honor at a football game in 2003.



Let's Go Wilkes!

I vividly remember, during freshmen orientation in September 1967, Dean Ralston leading us in his special cheer. The freshmen in beanies and blue and gold ties sitting on the ground, Dean Ralston raised his arms in front of his face, fingers wiggling. "Let's go Wilkes," he whispered. As he drew his arms across his face again and again, the volume increased until we were shouting, "Let's go Wilkes!"

— *Walter Furtney '71, Shoreview, Minn.*

Oh, Brother

My brother, Grover, had come to visit me and was a little put off by the rules at Sterling Hall that would not allow guys to visit my room. My dorm mother would not believe he was my brother, so Grover got an idea to climb up the fire escape near my room. We visited a while, and when he went to climb down later, the security guards greeted him!

My roommate and I were horrified, and as they took my brother to a station wagon in front of the dorm, we went around the block trying to figure out what was going to happen next.

Finally, in walked the sense of reason, Dean Ralston, and he met with my roommate and me, and he was so kind and respectful of our feelings. He set everything straight, and my brother was released. We will never forget that night. He cared so much about all of us, and it was incredible how he handled things with grace, dignity and a great sense of humor, which calms everything down, so misunderstandings are easily worked through for everyone's benefit.

— *Holly Stults '74, Santa Fe, N.M.*

A Precious Gift Indeed

Many things could be said about George. I mention just two: His marvelous capacity to place names with faces, and his skill at incorporating his faith into his work.

I cannot remember a time when I did not know George, or when he did not know me. So I was not terribly surprised when, during freshmen orientation in the fall of 1971, he greeted me by name among a group of fellow freshmen from my dorm, Sterling Hall. My housemates, however, were very impressed: "Wow! Dean Ralston knows *you*?" The next time we were together with George at some function, he called every single one of us by name, and I understood for the first time how important that mnemonic skill was, and how gifted a practitioner George was. His capacious memory banks must have held thousands of faces, names and factoids about students. What I had attributed, during freshmen orientation, to George having known me from church was translated to a wider world view, embracing everyone even remotely connected with Wilkes.

George's faith was wondrous to behold. Of course, his job at Wilkes was not as a chaplain or spiritual guide; but he stressed core values of fair play, good sportsmanship and academic integrity that grew directly out of his love for and service to Jesus Christ. George was an off-the-scale extrovert, which led

to his behavior being well-known and minutely scrutinized, at some level, by all the undergraduates I knew. When a friend of my roommate's had been "sent down" to see Dean Ralston after a plagiarism incident, my roommate expressed an incredulity that George had dressed her friend down with words that left no doubt about his commitment to leading students down a morality-guided path.

Dean Ralston was Wilkes' biggest fan and most enthusiastic cheerleader.



George was a fine speaker, and the times he filled in for Jule Ayers in the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church were occasions for George to state explicitly what motivated his relationships to students, faculty and administration. George never talked of Jesus at school, but he certainly did, and with great integrity, in other places. His example has motivated me to live, and not just speak, what I believe. He was a role model that has helped me in a variety of both church and secular settings to minister with people who might have no overtly expressed religious beliefs. A precious gift indeed.

– *The Rev. Nancy E. (Rodda) Topolewski, Ph.D. '75, Lempster, N.H.*

Long-Distance Degree

I had a rough start during my first year at Wilkes in 1978, but eventually I was able to stay the course only to fall short of funds to finish my last semester. I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, where I was stationed in Okinawa, Japan. While there, I took several night courses over the course of a year and a half to complete my degree in business administration. I wrote Dean Ralston asking if I could possibly transfer my last semester of courses taken overseas toward my degree from Wilkes. I was very happy to receive a letter back from Dean Ralston, who remembered me and granted the transfer. Due to a problem with flights from Japan, I was not able to attend the graduation and be able to personally thank Dean Ralston for both his guidance and kindness.

*Anton “Andy” Haryluck '82,
Bury Saint Edmunds, Suffolk, England*

Ubiquitous Biker

When I first attended Wilkes back in 1977, I would see Dean Ralston riding around campus on his antique bike, saying hello to everyone. Also, at a pep rally I remember him doing a Wilkes Colonel cheer. He is sadly missed!

Donna Karwaski '82, Avoca, Pa.



Helen and George Ralston

Dear friends,

To all of you who have sent cards, notes and beautiful letters to me, I want to sincerely thank you. Please know that I would love to answer every one of them, but that is impossible. The donations to our scholarship fund have been outstanding. And how better can we show our love and respect for a man such as George, whose whole life was devoted to helping students succeed? Keep his ideals always in your hearts.

– *Helen Ralston*

The Dean will be honored homecoming weekend during pre-football game festivities at 12:15 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 6, at Ralston Field. Memorial contributions may be made to the George F. and Helen B. Ralston Scholarship Fund, Development Office, Wilkes University, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766. Contact Evelyne Topfer, (800) WILKES-U Ext. 4309.

Home, Sweet Business

RHEA SIMMS '78
GROWS SMALL
REAL ESTATE FIRM
INTO REGIONAL
POWERHOUSE

By Kim Bower-Spence



PHOTO BY EARL AND SEDOR

WHEN RHEA POLITIS SIMMS '78 bought Lewith & Freeman Real Estate in 1986, she felt she had to either keep the Kingston, Pa., company small and “boutique” or adopt technology and grow.

She opted for the latter. Simms recruited new agents and sought areas ripe for expansion, buying a small real estate firm in Luzerne County's Back Mountain area. Later she expanded with additional offices in Mountain Top, Drums and Wilkes-Barre. Three years ago, Lewith & Freeman branched into Lackawanna County, opening an office in fast-growing Clarks Summit. The company has grown from one office staffed with eight people to six offices with 120 realtor associates and support staff.

“We became more regional in our thinking,” Simms says, explaining her strategy. She recognized the need for greater regional planning and thinking.

The company added a mortgage department, title insurance and insurance services for clients. Though she's been approached numerous times over the years to join national franchises, Simms remains committed to operating an independent agency. “I've always felt that real estate is personal. People want to be taken care of, and people want personal service.”

She attributes her company's growth to dedicated sales associates and excellent managers. The company hires carefully and emphasizes training. Mentors guide new agents for several months as they learn the business.

The formula works. Lewith & Freeman ranks first in Luzerne County for factored sales volume, just shy of \$330 million in 2006. In Lackawanna County, the company ranks in the top five of 75 real estate offices. “Growth comes with good training, good people, good relationships,” she emphasizes.

One of the Wyoming Valley's most prominent business-women, the Shavertown, Pa., resident entered Wilkes as a music major in 1958. She left in 1960 to marry Ron Simms '60 and move to Oklahoma for his military service. When they returned to the Wyoming Valley, she was raising three daughters while earning her real estate license and taking courses toward the history degree she completed in 1978.

“I was by far a more serious student coming back than I was as an 18-year-old,” confesses Simms, who enjoyed her interaction with the younger students. She recalls gathering around the kitchen table with her young daughters to do homework. “We kind of all studied together.”

Real estate, with its flexible schedule, seemed like a good business for a woman with young children. Those daughters

now help their mother, Lewith & Freeman's chief executive officer, manage the company. Virginia Simms Rose, broker associate, serves as its president, and Emma Simms Kluger is vice president. Margaret Simms Evans serves as corporate secretary/treasurer.

Simms's history degree piqued her interest in biography, particularly in people whose lives benefited the community, whether locally or globally. She has subsequently endeavored that her company should significantly serve the community.

Real estate doesn't consume all of Simms' time. She became the first and only woman to chair the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce, a post she held in 1993-94. She has also served on the boards of directors for King's College, the Wilkes-Barre Board of Realtors and Mellon Bank Northeast Region. She is a founding member and still serves on the board of The Luzerne Foundation and is a director of the Children's Service Center. She chairs the Earth Conservancy, a Wyoming Valley group dedicated to guiding the reclamation of over 17,000 acres of mine-scarred land and contributing to conservation and economic development.

“Rhea is active in almost all aspects of the community, both through her profession and her community service,” confirms Donna O'Toole Sedor '85, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce. “She has this grace under pressure. She's just a great role model for women.”

Says Simms: “I really am proud to live here, work here and contribute to the well-being of our region.”

“
She has this
GRACE
UNDER
PRESSURE.
She's just a
great ROLE
MODEL for
women.
– Donna O'Toole Sedor '85
”

Rhea Politis Simms
Shavertown, Pa.
B.A., History 1978
Career: Owns Lewith & Freeman Real Estate, a full-service agency serving Luzerne and Lackawanna counties.
Notable: Over 20 years, expanded the business from one office with eight people to six offices and 120 people.



Integrative media students learn to create eye-catching imagery.

Technology meets creativity

INTEGRATIVE MEDIA PROGRAM GRADUATES ITS FIRST STUDENTS

By Cindy Taren

JUSTIN ROGERS '07 always loved movies and technology. So when Wilkes University announced its new integrative media major in 2005, he quickly switched from computer science.

"Having always been a big movie and technology guru, the major seemed to better fit my interests," the major's first graduate says. "I didn't want to sit behind a desk for the rest of my life coding languages for computers. This program will help me to get into a field where creative minds come together to create unique experiences and products."

Rogers, of Dayton, N.J., now plans to pursue a master of fine arts degree in computer graphics and then join the industry in either movies or advertising.

"I hope to one day be a lead supervisor for a major motion picture and post-production company, and eventually freelance my abilities to different motion pictures."

The integrative media curriculum blends technology and design training to prepare students for careers in feature film, broadcast, independent production companies, interactive media, corporate and government environments. It started in 2001, when a group of faculty led by Darin Fields, dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, developed a new program to target the convergence of media, information, technology, art, culture, business and entertainment. "Universities today must continually innovate to respond to the changing world graduates will enter," says Fields.

Eric Ruggiero, director and co-founder of the integrative media department, says faculty observed that graduates with the most success in the

job market were those with training in multiple disciplines. "To prepare yourself to dive into the job market, it's optimal to have a highly versatile range of skills, as well as the capacity for collaboration."

The recently completed IM Studio houses systems and software comparable to the best facilities worldwide and simulates an environment supportive and critical to the process of visual content creation, Ruggiero explains. The major blends a design and technology curriculum with one or more minors in art, computer science, entrepreneurship, business, communications and English. Students within these specialties might fill artistic or business positions such as production manager, producer, director, art director, editor, motion designer, writer, interactive guru, coder, animator or special effects artist.

Eric Miller of Dunmore, Pa., had earned an associate degree in computer design before coming to Wilkes. He was to graduate with an integrative media degree this summer. Miller interned last year with Promax/BDA, a worldwide association of entertainment marketers, promoters and designers, representing television stations and broadcast and cable networks, at its international

conference in New York City. He works as a freelance Web site designer for a local accounting and management firm.

The integrative media program "has led to opportunities to become involved in more of the collaborative process of digital design," he explains. Miller's dream job is to become creative director of a design firm.

"The program is project oriented," Ruggiero says, "encouraging students to come up with ideas, either on their own or working with a group." Students graduate with professional portfolios, which will help show off their skills to potential employers and clients.

Matt Beekman '89 directs creative services at Deluxe Digital Studios, Moosic, Pa. He routinely seeks student interns skilled in mixed media. "Our

ideal intern has an eye for art, as well as knowledge of computers, video, audio and editing."

Beekman used his degree in graphic design to start a career in the television industry. "I had to gain the experience needed for my current profession from working in the field over several years and job changes. The (integrative media) major definitely gives graduates an advantage because they will have the skills to get a better job straight from college."

For more information on the program, see www.wilkes.edu or e-mail Ruggiero at eric.ruggiero@wilkes.edu.

Jessica Gannon practices assembling digital imagery on the computer.



Chris Hager works in the well-equipped IM Studio.



Students put theory into practice in Integrative Media 301.



Chelsey Grosse and Pete Mulvey learn about layering text, images and animation. PHOTOS BY MARK GOLASZEWSKI

“Universities today must continually INNOVATE to respond to the CHANGING WORLD graduates will enter.”

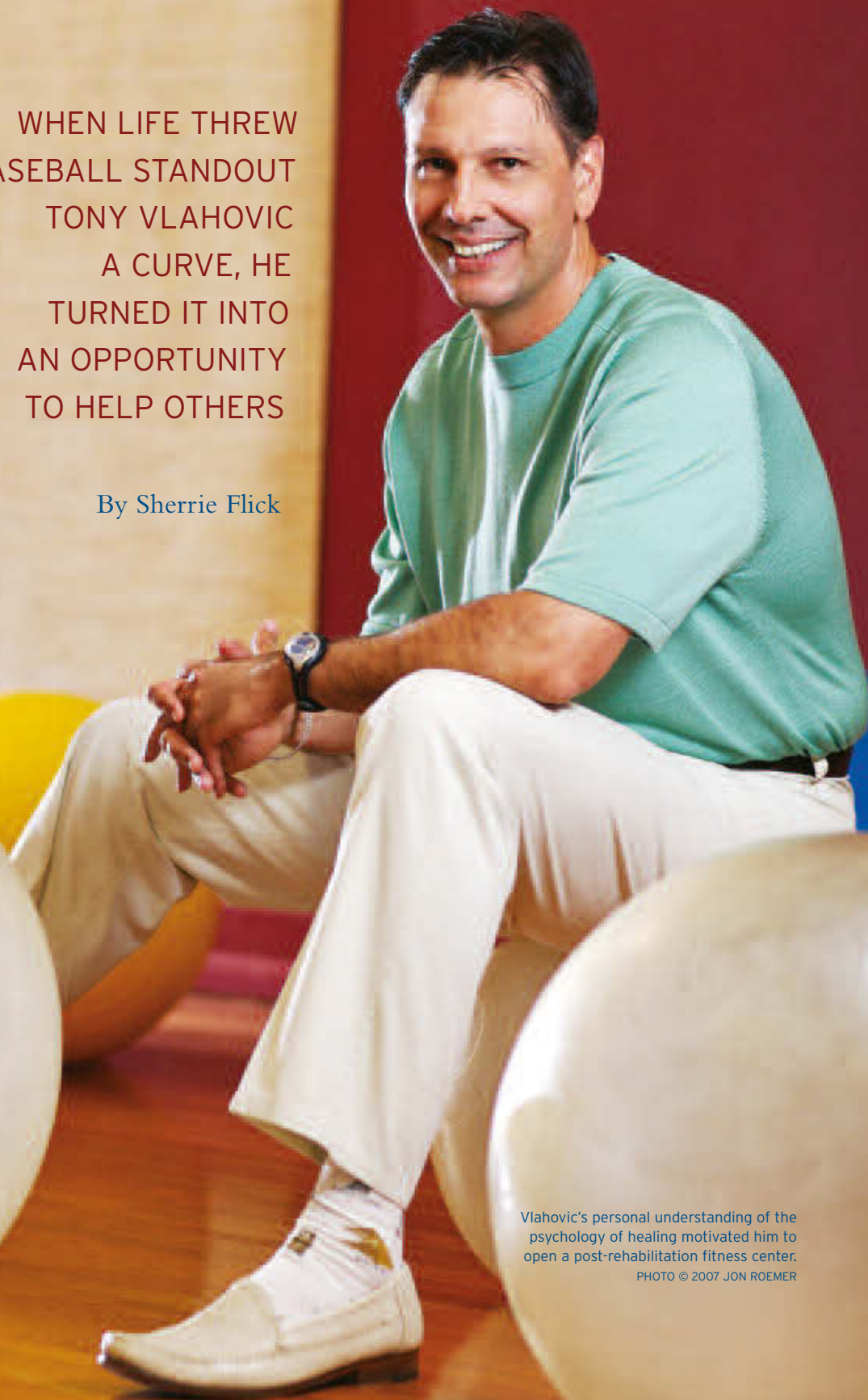
– Darin Fields
Dean of the College of Arts,
Humanities and Social Sciences



Bounce Back

WHEN LIFE THREW
BASEBALL STANDOUT
TONY VLAHOVIC
A CURVE, HE
TURNED IT INTO
AN OPPORTUNITY
TO HELP OTHERS

By Sherrie Flick



Vlahovic's personal understanding of the psychology of healing motivated him to open a post-rehabilitation fitness center.

PHOTO © 2007 JON ROEMER

GROWING UP, TONY VLAHOVIC '82 was what they call “a natural,” a standout in basketball, baseball and football. When cancer and a drunk driver nipped his achievement on the athletic field, they fueled his desire to help others with his own unique mix of fitness and psychology.

At age 14, testicular cancer left him frail and compromised his immune system. “It was a real shock,” Vlahovic says, a setback that would have ended most young athletes’ dreams. But with the help of supportive coaches, he began a health and weight-training program that restored his athleticism. “I think maturity-wise I moved ahead then. My friends might laugh — I have a good sense of humor — but I looked at life differently. It took on a different

“ I had to go from my CHILDHOOD DREAM of being a pro athlete to LEARNING TO WALK again.”

feel. Headed me on a journey I really wasn’t sure where I was going.”

By his senior year, large universities came courting. But then an injury cost him their scholarship offers. Wilkes College baseball coach Gene Domzalski saw past the injury. “He came to see me in person and said, ‘We have a place for you. Here’s a great opportunity to get a great education, go to a smaller school and play in college.’”

The psychology major’s college athletic performance didn’t escape the notice of professional baseball scouts. After a year-long stint in a European league, he signed with the Boston Red Sox as a left-handed pitcher in 1983. A childhood dream fulfilled.

But more challenges lay in store. On his way to spring training in 1986, a drunk driver rear-ended him. “It destroyed both my truck and my left leg.”

Depressed and immobilized, he started physical therapy. “I had to go from my childhood dream of being a pro athlete to learning to walk again,” Vlahovic

recalls. After a frustrating experience with rehabilitation, he realized a desire to help others. He continued his psychology studies, earning a master’s degree from West Chester University of Pennsylvania. He ran the physical therapy department at University Medical Center at Princeton before opening Momentum Fitness, a post-rehabilitation facility addressing both mental and physical health, in 1997.

Vlahovic had found his niche. Personal experience combined with his psychology education translated into professional success. “I went through it myself. I lived it. ... I’m able to make my mark by being empathetic — understanding the psychology of healing.” Vlahovic sought out supportive staff members who would say to clients, “We can do this. This is our first goal; this is where we’re moving to.”

Vlahovic originally set up the business near his residence in New Hope, Pa., but moved the center to Princeton, N.J., to be closer to the university medical center. Until June 30, the two-story facility housed 14 personal trainers, 25 specialized instructors, and weight training for all ages and phases of conditioning using top-of-the-line equipment. Momentum offered yoga, meditation and pilates classes, along with a heated resistance pool for training and aerobics.

Vlahovic closed that facility to open a new one in Hopewell, N.J., this September. The expanded facility will allow more special programming. He plans to offer training for young athletes while continuing special fitness programs for people living with cancer, diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis. The move will also shorten his daily commute and give him more time with wife Nina and children Anthony, 9, and Sabrina, 5.

“I think if you can find something that has some other value to it,” Vlahovic says, “it doesn’t feel like work. You can contribute something while you’re on this earth.”

Vlahovic’s best friend of 25 years, Ivan Shidlovsky '81, confirms Vlahovic’s dedication. “His character is above reproach; honest and caring, always trying to figure out how to help others to improve their lives.”



Tony Vlahovic’s baseball card shows him as a rookie for the 1983 Red Sox.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TONY VLAHOVIC



During his years at Whitehall High School, Vlahovic played both football (number 3) and basketball (number 24).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TONY VLAHOVIC

Tony Vlahovic

New Hope, Pa.

B.A., Psychology 1982

Career: Former pro baseball player who owns a fitness center.

Notable: Overcame cancer and an auto accident injury to help others through post-rehabilitation fitness programs.



Alphonso and the band The Collective take to stages in northeast Pennsylvania about three nights a week.
PHOTO COURTESY OF KERMIT ALPHONSO

“I’VE BEEN SINGING MY WHOLE LIFE,” SAYS Kermit Alphonso Douglas ’94. “My mom says I popped out singing!” He came to Wilkes University to play basketball but is now the lead singer of Wilkes-Barre’s popular band The Collective.

The Collective has opened for a wide variety of nationally recognized bands: Grammy Award-winning hip-hop group The Roots, Bob Marley and the Wailers, Nick Lachey, Drake Bell and Ja Rule. “We play music that everybody can get into,” says Alphonso, who often drops the name “Douglas” to make things simple. “We’re flexible. We cross over. We’re fortunate.”

The band began on the Wilkes campus as the three-man singing group Smooth Enuf. The group achieved some success, Alphonso says, landing a recording contract and moving to California. Things didn’t go as well as they’d hoped; they returned home and went their separate ways a year later.

“It was a very sad experience for me, but I knew I still loved to perform, and I wasn’t done,” he explains. The Collective then formed and began to write and play music throughout the region.

“The spirit and the idea continue to move forward with me,” he says. “Now my full-time job is being an entertainer.” The Collective plays covers and originals — a mixture of rhythm and

He visited bigger schools before choosing Wilkes. “I realized you’re just a number there,” he explains, noting that he wanted to be involved at the university he attended. “I’m from the South. I wanted to go to a place I’d never been before,” he says. “It was an opportunity to grow up, a way to explore.”

At Wilkes, the Greensboro, N.C., native received a Minority Student Cultural Scholarship and went on to double-major in sociology and criminal justice. After graduation, though, he wanted to be an artist-entertainer. All those years in the gospel choir as a kid kicked in. “My education gave me something that no one can take away,” Alphonso says. “My professors and school administration were great. They were polishing me up. I thank them all. They taught me how to be a gentleman.”

“ I got a good base by going to Wilkes. By MEETING the PEOPLE I met there, I became the FREE THINKER I am today. ”

COLLECTIVE MEMORY

KERMIT ALPHONSO

FRONTS POPULAR BAND AND LAUNCHES SOLO CAREER

By Sherrie Flick

blues, soul and hip-hop. They take stage in clubs around northeastern Pennsylvania about three times a week. The band has had some success, receiving awards for best local original band and best local cover band.

In addition to fronting The Collective, Alphonso stays busy with solo projects. His extended play *Diaries of a Bar Star Volume I* was recently self-released with the song “Last Call for Alcohol,” a most-requested single on WKRZ-FM. Through his new web-based business, Suburban Project Entertainment, he plans to bring exposure to the original music of unsigned artists. Downloadable tracks will be made available for sale via Urban Music Access Key cards sold at clubs. The site will formally launch in the fall via www.wedotunes.net. For now, original songs by The Collective can be downloaded there.

“Making something out of nothing,” Alphonso says. “That’s what I do. I got a good base by going to Wilkes. By meeting the people I met there, I became the free thinker I am today.”

Alphonso notes that he and Robb Brown, who also attended Wilkes for a time, sometimes perform together at Fuse Club and Café, Wilkes-Barre, as The Robb and Kermit Show. Fuse is owned by fellow alumnus Ronald Romanoski ’95.

Alphonso considers Wilkes-Barre home now. “We’ve been trying to create a community here. We’ve been trying to stick together and help each other out, network with each other. We’re just trying to grow something.”

Kermit Alphonso Douglas
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

B.A., Sociology and Criminal Justice 1994

Career: Lead singer for popular regional band The Collective

Notable: The Collective will perform for Homecoming 2007 festivities from 7 to 11 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 6, in the Henry Student Center.

New Leaders Seek to Engage More Alumni

With a special thanks to the past leadership, and especially Colleen Gries Gallagher, the Alumni Association leadership has already met to map priorities and organize itself.

They laid groundwork through the efforts of Colleen and her team for the past two years. Key accomplishments came in the areas of communications and alumni relations. Denise Schaal Cesare '77 and Fred Demech '61 ushered introduction of The Colonel Connection and review of this magazine. Undergraduate alumni relations was chaired by Bridget Giunta '05. Other accomplishments are too numerous to mention, but they provide the springboard for future success. The current leadership team is as follows:

- **President** – George G. Pawlush '69
- **First vice president** – Terrence W. Casey '82
- **Second vice president** – John Wartella '84
- **Secretary** – Bridget Giunta '05
- **Historian** (immediate past president) – Colleen Gries Gallagher '81
- **Past president** – William A. Tarbart '70

New to the board are: Rich Kramer '67, Charlotte Puglia '00, Wendy Gavin '90, Brigette McDonald Herrmann '78, Tom Ralston '80, David

Scordino '07, Jenna Strzelecki '07, Matthew Brown '08 (Student Government president), Amanda Karasinski '08 (Student Alumni Association president), and Blaine Madara '08 (senior class president). They join incumbents Garfield Jones '72, Rosemary LaFratte '93 MBA '97, Lou Steck '55 and Margery Ufberg '69.

Other alumni board members are Laura Barbera Cardinale '72, Allyn Jones '60, Clayton Karambelas '49, Beth Danner Kinslow '02, Ron Miller '93, Steve Roth '84, Dave Carey '83, Fred Demech '61, Glen Flack '73, Ali Qureshi '96, John Serafin '90 MBA '93 and Jodi Viscomi '05. The Nominating Committee works to assure that the constituency is accurately represented by the membership of the board through a demographic decade analysis.

The key focus of the year will be to build relationships, engaging more alumni in an ever-increasing range of programs and events both on and off campus. Committee membership is open on a rolling basis, and new committee chairs are selected through the summer months. If you're interested in being considered for membership on a committee or the board, please complete the online form at <http://community.wilkes.edu/Volunteer>. Or contact the Office of Alumni Relations at (800) WILKES-U Ext. 4134 or alumni@wilkes.edu.

Special thanks to outgoing board members Kay E. Coskey '86, Michael J. Fox '06, Ashley Joslin '06, John Pullo '82 (historian), Matthew J. Sowcik '00 and Peter Zubritzky '76.

Mark your calendars now for Homecoming 2007, Oct. 5 to 7. Read on to see highlights, and make plans to connect and reconnect with friends and classmates.

Explore Exotic Locales with Fellow Alumni

Tropical Costa Rica

Departs Nov. 7, 2007

Price per person: twin, \$1,999; single, \$2,499



Highlights

- San José • Poás Volcano
- Thermal Spa Resort • Caño Negro Refuge • Monteverde Cloud Forest • Guanacaste

Join fellow Wilkes University alumni as they travel to Costa Rica

for nine days. This trip includes round-trip air travel from Allentown, Pa., hotel transfers, air taxes and current fuel surcharges. Eight breakfasts, two lunches and seven dinners are included. Fuel charges are subject to change until trip is paid in full. Cost does not include insurance of \$120 per person.

For more information on any of these trips, contact Michelle Diskin '95, associate director of Alumni Relations, at (570) 408-4134 or michelle.diskin@wilkes.edu.

French Riviera

Departs March 2, 2008

Price per person: twin, \$1,849; single, \$2,249



Highlights

- Nice • Flower Market • Chagall Museum
- Grasse Perfumerie • St. Paul De Vence • Ventimiglia • San Remo • St. Tropez • Cannes • Antibes • Picasso Museum • Villefranche • Rothschild Villa and Gardens • Monaco Oceanographic Museum

The price of this eight-day trip includes round-trip air travel from Newark, N.J., air taxes, hotel transfers and current fuel surcharges (subject to increase until paid in full). Six breakfasts and four dinners are included in the cost. It does not include insurance of \$120 per person.

Homecoming 2007 Schedule of Events

Friday, Oct. 5

- 9 a.m. Golf Tournament, Blue Ridge Trail Golf Club
- 11:30 a.m. Bucknell University Junior College Luncheon and Shuttle Tour, Annette Evans Alumni House
- 5 to 7 p.m. Colonels Happy Hour, Bart & Urby's
- 6 to 8 p.m. Wine Tasting with Maiolatesi Wine Cellars, 2nd floor UCOM
Golden Colonel Welcome Back Reception and Induction, Kirby Hall

Saturday, Oct. 6

- 8:30 a.m. Hungry Colonels Breakfast, Dining Hall
- 9 a.m. President's Breakfast (Ancestral Colonels, Golden Colonels, BUJC Flyboys), Henry Student Center Ballroom
- 10 a.m. 5K Walk/Run, Alumni House to Tailgate
- 10 a.m. Crew Regatta on River, Nesbitt Park
- 10 a.m. to noon Workshops at UCOM:
 - Pharmacy, Art Kibbe
 - Sidhu Executive Leadership Program, Erin Drew
- 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oktoberfest, Lion Brewery
- 11 a.m. Tailgate and SAA Colonels Carnival, practice field
- 12:40 p.m. Dean Ralston and BUJC Flyboys Celebration, Ralston Field
- 1 p.m. Wilkes vs. FDU-Florham football game, Ralston Field
- 4:30 p.m. 5th Quarter, Fuse Martini Bar
- 6 p.m. Pergola Dedication/Reception and Reunion Classes 5-, 10- and 25-Year, Karambelas Pergola
- 8 to 11 p.m. Wilkes Nightclub with The Collective, Henry Student Center

Sunday, Oct. 7

- 9:45 a.m. Memorial Bells - Remembrance of Alumni
- 10:30 a.m. Alumni Hall of Fame, 214 Marts and Henry Student Center Ballroom



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL P. TOUEY



1949

Doris Gorka Bartuska of Philadelphia, emeritus professor of medicine (endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism) at Drexel University College of Medicine, received the Woman in Medicine Award from The Trust Fund of the Alumnae Association of Woman's Medical College/Medical College of Pennsylvania at the Faculty Development Awards Day program on June 1, 2007. The citation reads: "In recognition of her outstanding contributions and untiring devotion to teaching, mentoring, patient care and leadership, as a role model for women in medicine."

1959

Stephen Poleskie recently published a book titled *The Balloonist*, about Civil War balloonist T. S. C. Lowe. He has taught or has been a visiting professor at 26 colleges and art schools throughout the world, including the School of Visual Art in NYC and the University of California, Berkeley. During the 1980s and '90s, Poleskie was known in the United States and Europe for his "aerial theater" performances. A champion aerobatic flyer and artist-writer, Poleskie is professor emeritus at Cornell University.

1973

Joseph Grilli, M.P.A, D.P.A., has been named vice president of training institutes, external affairs and planning at Luzerne County Community College. Grilli resides in Jenkins Township, Pa., with his wife, Lisa, and two children.

1974

Christine (Donahue) Mayo recently became full-time assistant professor of voice at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, Ark., where she resides with her husband, George.

1991

Susan (Adamchak) Smith and her husband, Dan, recently welcomed their third child, Riley Samantha. She joins brothers Jordan and Tyler.

Susan is a human resources manager at a pharmaceutical company. The family resides in Springfield, N.J.

1994

Kermit (Alphonso) Douglas and Matt Smallcomb ('03) performed with their musical group, The Collective, at Susquehanna University. The event was featured in a 2007 edition of *Diversity Digest*, a Susquehanna University publication.

Heather Petruzelli, an adjunct voice teacher in the Wilkes Department of Visual and Performing Arts, was soprano soloist in May with the Astoria Symphony and Central City Singers. The performance of Mendelssohn's masterpiece *Elijah* took place at Church of St. John the Baptist, New York, N.Y.

1997

Reunion Oct. 5-7 

Richard "Hank" Kutz recently completed a residency in general surgery at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H. Next year, he will complete a master's degree in public health at Dartmouth Medical School, focusing on surgical outcomes and continuous quality improvement in health care. He will then continue training in the Harvard Plastic Surgery Residency Program in Boston, Mass. Hank currently resides in New Hampshire with his wife, Kate, and 1-year-old daughter, Lauren.



Enjoying Allenberry: Alumni enjoying an outing at Allenberry Dinner Theater, Boiling Springs, Pa., included, front row from left: Gayle Howard, Donna Argenio '90, Nancy Juris '56, Barbara Nagle, Ann Young '59, Kay Hess, Edna Andrews '50; middle: Carl Juris '59, George Speer, Joe Argenio '90, Jackie Young '58; back: Bill Trethaway '67, Janilyn Elias, Jeffrey Fetterman, Chuck Young, Bob Middleton, George Elias '54, Karen Middleton '71, Clint Hess '64.

\$500,000 Gift Endows Scholarship

Dr. Richard B. Kent '55 of Malvern, Pa., recently honored his late wife with a \$500,000 gift commitment to Wilkes University. It is one of the largest one-time gifts in Wilkes history.

The Edith M. Kent Scholarship will go to a student from the greater Wyoming Valley Area enrolled in the medical science field. Recipients should demonstrate academic ability, good moral character and financial need.

Sandra Carroll, interim vice president for development and alumni relations at Wilkes, says, "Dr. Kent is quite humble. We're grateful that he chose to make a gift of this magnitude at Wilkes, where it can truly transform lives and the institution."

"I come from a very humble start in life, and I've been very fortunate," Kent explains. "I always thought I'd like to give something back to my college, and it's a wonderful way to honor my late wife."

Commuting allowed him to attend Wilkes economically, and he recalls close ties with faculty. "Dr. Charles Reif was a mentor and a strong role model for me." He also treasures memories of playing baritone horn with the band, stoking an affinity for art and music he's enjoyed throughout life.

A board member of the Kennett Symphony who seeks out opera houses wherever he travels, Kent urges young people to round out their education. "I emphasized my science studies so greatly I missed some of the humanities courses and some of the arts courses I should have taken. There's a whole other life out there."

Originally from Newport Township, near Nanticoke, Pa., Kent attended the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and served in the U.S. Navy before training in



ophthalmology and establishing a practice in West Chester, Pa. Now a professional corporation, Vistarr Laser and Vision Centers employs five ophthalmologists and two optometrists. His family includes four children, two stepchildren and seven grandchildren.

Kent originally shied from publicity regarding his generosity, preferring to give anonymously. "However, I changed my mind on the hope that the article might inspire others to consider a memorial contribution to Wilkes or some other worthy cause. If this happens, then it was a worthwhile choice."



Rivercrest Reunion: Alumni recently reunited during festivities at RiverCrest Golf Club, located in Montgomery County, Pa. In the first photo are, from left: Eubank "Ted" Travis-Bey Jr. '65, Lonnie Coombs '70 and son Adam Coombs (beginning classes this fall), and Matthew McCaffrey '94 M'97. In the second photo are, left to right: Jeff Churba '89, Jason Griggs '90, Andy Harris '89 and Edward J. Gallagher '88.



A-List members who gathered in Parsippany, N.J., back in March were: row one: Janet Condon Diefenbacher '75, Susan Hansen '77, Frania Polakowski Holloway '76, Bruce Davis '78, Nick Holgash '78, Donald Mock '75, Arlene Rostrun Acoady '75, Gary Gieschen '75; row two: Michael De Vincentis '88, Anthony De Vincentis '79, Gary Paich '76, Billy Winter '76, Jack Brabant '76, John Zimmerman '76; row three (balcony): Thomas Pezzicara '75, Matt McCaffrey '97, Anthony Shipula '78, Dave Taylor '84, Nigel Gray '79, Arthur Daniels '77 and Mary Ann Zielinski Holgash '79.

A-List 71-79 Reunites Wilkes Classmates

As homecoming 2005 approached, two alumni opened an alumni directory in hopes of persuading as many old classmates as possible to get together. The effort yielded more than a healthy turnout at the reunion. It rekindled friendships dormant for 30 years.

"It's just like 30 years melted away," explains Michael De Vincentis '88 of Pequannock, N.J. ("Michael D," as he's known, attended Wilkes during the '70s, and later received his history degree after earning his last credits in New Jersey.)

Now known as the A-List 71-79, the group expanded to include students from throughout the '70s. The 30 or so alumni continue to stay in touch via e-mail, an online social network and occasional gatherings. E-mail "birthday alerts" distributed to the A-List feature both vintage and current candid photographs of the honoree. Discussion topics run the gamut from family to work updates. In March, 21 alumni attended an informal event in Parsippany, N.J., with some traveling more than two hours to meet up with friends.

They majored in psychology, engineering, accounting and chemistry, among others. Today, the graduates include teachers, scientists, public relations professionals, medical personnel, engineers, optometrists, white- and blue-collar professionals, documentary film makers and parents spread across Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Texas, California and even Belize, Central America. "For a bunch of people from a small college, we all did pretty well," says De Vincentis.

"Most of our kids are grown up and in college themselves," De Vincentis says. Such freedom gives the alumni time to reconnect with college friends. "It just recharges your batteries and brings you back to a time when you had less cares and worries. When we're together, it's like we're back on campus again."

De Vincentis posts A-List updates at the website <http://wilkespics4u.multiply.com/>. He can be contacted at Michaeldvg@hotmail.com.

Fashion Designer Transforms Her Letterwoman's Jacket

Kathleen Haughey Maggio '75 couldn't bear to part with her 1971 letterwoman's jacket from her days on the Wilkes field hockey team. So the fashion designer

transformed it into an exaggerated baseball-style jacket. "We all have things in our closets or drawers that we can't bear to get rid of. Although I no longer wore my letterwoman jacket because the collar had frayed and the silhouette was out of style, I kept it and my hockey stick for sentimental reasons," the Bucks County, Pa., native explains. She purchased a cardigan at a thrift store and got busy with her scissors. "It now

accompanies me to the gym, inspiring me to get back into the shape I was in during my Wilkes days!"

Maggio, who has lived in New York City since

graduating from college, included the project in *Altered Clothing: Hip Fixes and Transformations with a Needle and Thread*, released last year. The craft book includes numerous ideas for updating old or outdated clothing. "An editor, who'd been given my name by a colleague, called and asked if I would be interested in writing a book about remodeling clothes. I've been sewing since I was 9 and frequently alter my own designs as well as store-bought clothes (new and vintage). It was a perfect fit," she explains.



Maggio included her memento from days on the Wilkes field hockey team in a book on how to update outdated clothing. © VINEPOD.COM, PHOTO BY TIMOTHY MAGGIO

Maggio studied art at Wilkes and earned a degree in fine art from Moore College of Art and Design,

Philadelphia. She has designed girls' dresses, maternity clothes and christening gowns. She teaches pattern making, draping and construction to juniors in the bachelor of fine arts program at Parsons School of Design, New York City. Her husband, photographer Tim Maggio, shot photos for the book. She also has a daughter, Evie, 28.

Meredith (Cabrey)

Nascimento and her husband, Christian, welcomed their first son, Charles Nicholas, on July 3, 2006.

2002

Reunion Oct. 5-7



Ronald Mecho graduated from the MBA program at the University of Rhode Island. He is an attorney and resides in Philadelphia.

2004

Amee Mehta will begin a residency in internal medicine at Staten Island University Hospital.



John Reese (center with glass) was honored at a May wrestling team reunion. With him are, from left: Mike Evans '95, current wrestling Coach Jon Laudenslager '99, Barry Vanscooten '95, John Stout '95, Bob Hawkins '92, Coach Reese, Dave Habowski '97, Ray Monzon '96, Eric Feese '93, Matt Reinert '92 and Ron Miller '93.

In Memoriam 1935

Dr. Eugene Joseph Gillespie passed away Sept. 18, 2006, in Atlanta, Ga., his home for the last 45 years. He retired from the U.S. Public Health Service after 25 years as associate director of the U.S. Communicable Disease Center in Atlanta. He then became the director of health planning for the state of Georgia, and subsequently medical director for Prudential Insurance Company.

1962

Jozia Mieszkowski, 67, of Seminole, Fla., formerly of Wilkes-Barre, died Thursday, May, 31, 2007. A native of Wilkes-Barre, she was a graduate of Wyoming Seminary, class of 1957.

She owned and directed the Wilkes-Barre Theatre School

& Company from 1966 to 1980. She then became dance director at the Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, Miss., from 1980 to 1995. In 1995, she moved to St. Petersburg to start a new career in activities at the Masonic Home in Florida, where she stayed until her retirement at age 62.

1988

John F. Kepics, 40, Linglestown, Pa., died May 8, 2007, of leukemia. A standout baseball player at Wilkes, he was a pharmaceutical sales representative for Forest Pharmaceuticals for the last 13 years.

He is survived by his wife, the former Debbie Fedor; mother, Edythe Kepics; sister, Mary Louise Harris; and nieces.

Faculty

Robert W. Partridge of West Chester, Pa., former history professor and baseball and soccer coach at Wilkes, died May 4, 2007, at the age of 88. Partridge graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1941. Later, he earned a master's degree in education from Harvard University. During World War II, he rose to the rank of lieutenant and served as gunnery and catapult officer on the light cruisers *Topeka* and *Columbia*.


He began his teaching and coaching career at Wilkes College in 1945. In 1955, Partridge joined the faculty and coaching staff at Kent School in Kent, Conn. He taught history and English before becoming director of athletics, retiring in 1990.

Partridge is survived by his wife, Louise; daughter, Carol Pierce; son, Glenn; four grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Richard Thomas Rees '62, 69, of Lakeland, Fla., died May 25. Born in Kingston, Pa., he graduated from Kingston High School and served in the U.S. Marine Corps. Rees held a bachelor of science degree from Wilkes, with a major in history and a minor in English. He also held a master's degree and doctorate in Educational Administration from Rutgers University. Following a career as a high school teacher, coach and administrator, he spent 10 years as a professor at Montclair State University and Wilkes University.

Since 1980, Dr. Rees was involved in health care human resource education and development. He was president of Rees and Associates Inc., a private consulting firm centering on learning technology, leadership development and educational efficiencies, especially in small to mid-sized organizations.

He is survived by wife Linda Weatherill Rees, son David William Rees, daughter Diane Lynn Rees Mikolon, all of Lakeland, Fla.; mother Anne Rees, sister Margaret A. Fetch of Kingston, Pa.; brother Morgan R. Rees of Naples, Fla.; and two grandsons.



Submitting Class Notes

Send your news to **The Colonel Connection** at community.wilkes.edu. Or mail it to:

Class Notes
Wilkes Magazine
84 W. South St.
Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766



PHOTO FROM WILKES ARCHIVES

Recognize any of these mud-caked men?

Tell us their names or reminisce about football seasons past at The Colonel Connection message boards, at community.wilkes.edu. Or send it to *Wilkes Magazine*, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766.



Corey Carter gets taken down by a Delaware Valley College Aggie during their September 2006 match-up. The Colonels ended the Aggies' 22-game regular season winning streak with a 14-7 win.

PHOTO BY WARREN RUDA

Cherry Blossom Festival 1976:

The photo shows co-chairpersons Ginny Edwards and Jean Johnson. Richard "Charlie" Sullivan is believed to be in the center. Thanks go to Stanley Freeda '80, Bernard Fagnani '74 and Patty Cullinan Spinelli '77.



"I don't think I ever saw a picture of Charlie where he wasn't sandwiched between two girls," recalls Spinelli.



September

15 SummArt Painters Campus Art Auction, hosted by The John Wilkes Society, Sordoni Art Gallery

TBA Alumni Mixer, Pittsburgh

October

5-7 Homecoming/Reunion

November

5 Outstanding Leaders Forum, former Mexican President Vicente Fox, F.M. Kirby Center

7-15 Alumni trip to Costa Rica

TBA Alumni Mixer, Arizona

TBA Alumni Mixer, Colorado

TBA Alumni Mixer, California

PHOTO BY MICHAEL P. TOUEY

For details on dates and locations, check www.wilkes.edu and **The Colonel Connection!**



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