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ON THE COVER: Veterinary technician Sigrid Rea preps Candy, a 10-year-old Labrador retriever from St. Louis, for surgery to remove a brain tumor that affects her balance, photographed by Sher Stoneman at the University of Minnesota's Small Animal Hospital. This page, clockwise from top: Darryl Weiss (left) fences with his coach, Stuart Lee, photograph by David Ahnholz; Dr. Therese Zink, photograph by Sara Rubinstein; illustration by Christopher Silas Neal

BASEBALL INJURY Q & A WITH DR. LERVICK OF TWIN CITIES ORTHOPEDICS

Greg Lervick, MD is a fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon, who specializes in shoulder and elbow injuries and conditions

Q: How common are shoulder and elbow injuries in throwing athletes?

A: Shoulder and elbow pain is a relatively common occurrence in throwing athletes of all ages. The development of pain may affect performance and lead to loss of playing time. Some studies suggest the rate of shoulder and elbow complaints in young (for example, high school age or younger) throwing athletes approaches 25-30% of all participants.

Parents often wonder about the importance of seeking medical evaluation if their young thrower develops arm pain. A brief period of rest from throwing (or other precipitating activities) and use of ice or analgesic medication is appropriate initial management. In situations where symptoms are more significant (pain at rest, severe limitation of movement, development of bruising on the skin), more urgent evaluation should be sought. In addition, any throwing athlete with persistent arm pain despite rest should seek medical advice.

Q: Why do these injuries occur?

A: The repetitive nature of overhead throwing in a competitive situation is the main reason these injuries develop. During the throwing motion, the shoulder and elbow are exposed to extremely high rotational and angular mechanical forces. This can lead to bone, cartilage, ligament, or tendon injuries.

In young throwers, it is recommended that pitch counts, innings pitched, and exposure to highly competitive environments be closely monitored. Strict rest from throwing for 3-4 months per calendar year should also be considered. Throwing breaking pitches (curve balls or sliders) at a young age may increase the risk of developing arm pain. However, it is uncertain whether the actual pitch mechanics, or the time and number of pitches required to master the activity, are to blame.

Q: How are these injuries evaluated and treated?

A: A sports medicine professional will evaluate the athlete by inspecting range of motion, tenderness, and strength. Standard x-rays are mandatory to rule out injury to bone. Additional imaging tests, such as MRI scans or CT scans are often helpful to make an accurate diagnosis and recommend treatment.

The specific types of injuries vary depending upon the age of the athlete. In young throwers whose growth plates remain open (typically females under age 13-14 or males under age 15-16), injury to the developing bone or cartilage is a significant concern. In older athletes with mature bone structure, soft tissue injuries to ligaments and tendons are a more common scenario. Recommended treatment is dependent upon the specific diagnosis, and may include rest, dedicated sport-specific physical therapy, and occasionally surgical intervention.

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President and CEO

It's Up to All of Us

One thing I didn't realize before I became a parent was how much more I would think about the future—specifically about what life will be like for our kids.

At least once a week, I hear someone say, "Enjoy it while it lasts. They grow up so quickly. You blink and they're off to college." That advice, combined with my profession, is probably why my greatest wish for my kids (behind their health, safety, and happiness) is for them to experience their first years of adulthood on a college campus.



Phil Esten is president and chief executive officer of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association.

Since they are now just 5 years, 3 years, and 9 months old, it's hard to imagine what college will be like for them. Will they have roommates? Will they still use computers? Will they study in a group or alone? Will they study at all? Will they be taught in a classroom or through Skype? Will their parents be able to pay for it? (We'll save that one for another day!)

I do know that, even at their young ages, they are individuals. As they grow, their interests and choices will be unique, and they'll carve out experi-

ences that I can't even conceive. They'll look for opportunities to imagine, explore, and discover how they can contribute to society in a very distinct way. It's up to my wife and me to foster that curiosity at home, but it's up to the collective us—all of us in Minnesota—to provide that venue for future generations, just as our parents and grandparents provided it for us.

As we think about the future of public higher education, we cannot escape the perennial conversation we have with our 201 legislators and our governor about the state's financial support of the University of Minnesota. At a time when the delivery of higher education is evolving, research that serves a global society is critical, and as the costs of both teaching and research rise, we must work with lawmakers to preserve the University of Minnesota as a statewide asset.

This year the University presented its bonding request in St. Paul, a request that includes funds to preserve many campus buildings, improvements to our Itasca Biological Station and Labs, and, on the Duluth campus, an American Indian Learning Resource Center. All are important pieces of a larger infrastructure that serve the entire University and its mission, but, more important, these investments help ensure that the U will still be here for generations to come.

As alumni you play an important role in this process. Your support is critical as ongoing advocates for your alma mater. Whether you serve as an ambassador for the U in your community and workplace or make a specific call to action to your legislator, your continued contributions on behalf of the U will have a lasting impact on the quality of higher education in our state.

This time of year serves as a reminder that we have a collective responsibility to preserve and maintain the University's position as a place where discovery is encouraged, our economy is stimulated, research serves an international population, and students simply learn who they are—you know, the kind of place where a guy will be proud to drop his kids off in a few years.

To learn more about how you can support the U's legislative request and serve as advocates for the University of Minnesota, please visit www.SupportTheU.umn.edu. Thank you for your continued support of the University and the Alumni Association.

Enjoy Minnesota.

—Phil Esten (Ph.D. '03)

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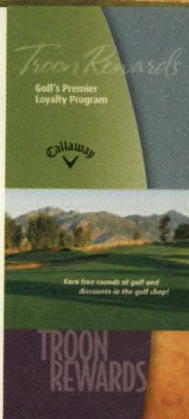
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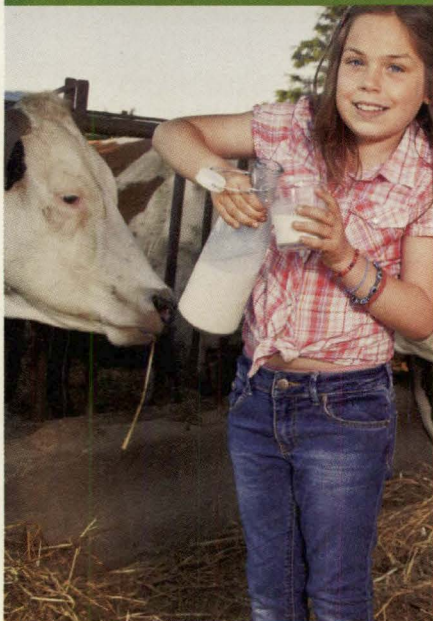
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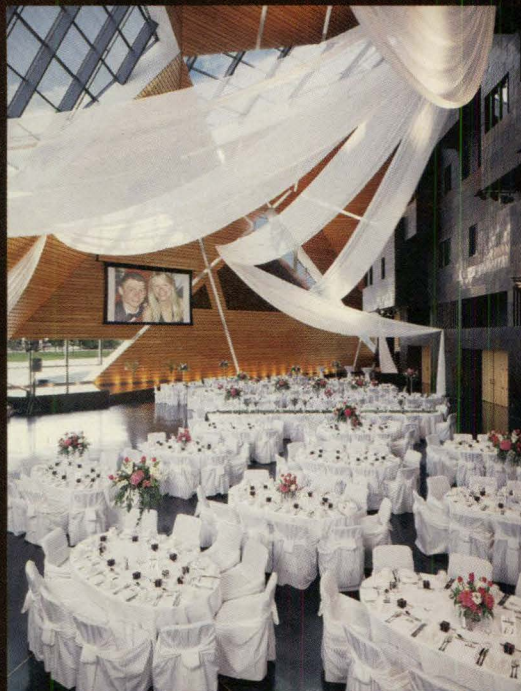
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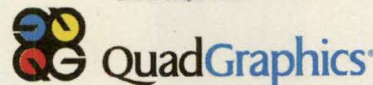
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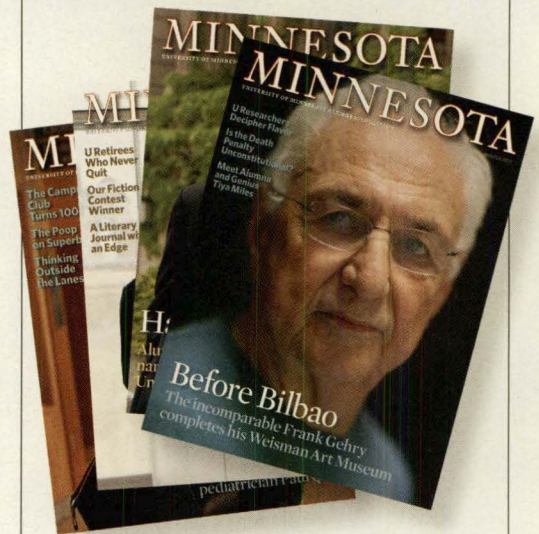
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Letters



KING'S SPEECH IGNITED A CAREER

The Fall 2011 issue of *Minnesota* commemorates the 1959 visit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the University of Minnesota ["King's Speech"]. The next time he came to campus was in the mid-1960s, during the height of the Vietnam War. I remember vividly how he made the profound connections between civil rights struggles with protests against the Vietnam War. I also had a chance to hear Dr. King on the South Side of Chicago as part of an Urban Encounter weekend offered by the College of Liberal Arts board, and it changed the direction of my future. During that weekend, I saw poverty and discrimination intensely despite my own personal experience as an Asian American growing up in Minneapolis when there were few Asians at that time. Moved by Dr. King's message, I along with three other friends made a pledge to work for justice and equality.

Years later, I followed up on this commitment and pursued a career first in philanthropy supporting social justice, then working with national church-related campaigns on justice and peace, then finally a long career with the United Nations—ending as one of the highest ranking Americans with a direct appointment from the U.N. secretary general as U.N. resident coordinator in various country postings.

When asked why I pursued a career in the United Nations, my answer recalled Dr. King's speech in Chicago and on the St. Paul campus, both exposures emanating from my University campus life,

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which included serving as secretary to the Minnesota Student Association. So, I wanted to add my own memories of how the University of Minnesota gave me the exposure to Dr. King and how he also ignited my career choices.

Joyce Yu (B.A. '68)
Brooklyn, New York

ONE MORE FOR THE ARCHIVES

As an alumna who took his doctorate in American Studies in 1966 with professors Barney Bowron and Charlie Foster and others, I was fascinated to read Tim Brady's beautifully written piece about the observance of John Brown that brought Martin Luther King Jr. to campus ["King's Speech," Fall 2011]. Please pass my congratulations along to Brady. He must have had a fine time reading the correspondence about attempts to attract others to campus, including Harry Truman and Robert Frost (that would have started with Foster, who'd studied under Frost at Amherst).

Scott Donaldson (Ph.D. '66)
Scottsdale, Arizona

Editor's Note: Scott Donaldson's memoir biography, *Death of a Rebel: The Charlie Fenton Story*, was published in December 2011.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

I was delighted to see the beautiful photograph of Folwell Hall in the Winter 2012 issue of *Minnesota* ["Venerable Folwell Hall Reopens"]. And I loved to see the pictures of the striking Weisman Art Museum upon its expansion a few pages later ["Before Bilbao"]. I was saddened to read that Westbrook Hall had to go to make room for the Northrop plans ["Make Way for Green Space—Again," Fall 2011] but glad to get to see it pictured one more time.

I don't recognize a lot of the names and faces of the faculty and alumni—and of course not the students—that I see in the alumni magazine these days, but I love to see the photographs of the buildings. I have many fond memories of some of them—and of course have some painful memories associated with others, such as exams that were so distressing I wondered if I had stepped into the wrong class or professors' lectures that left me

feeling at sea. I did not step inside dozens of campus buildings but walked past them a hundred times and they are fixed in my past. I do like to see the remarkable new structures on campus, too, and know that they are much more than bricks and glass to today's students.

Thank you for your fine magazine.

Sally McKay (B.A. '58)
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

CORRECTION

A photo caption in the Winter 2012 issue

incorrectly identified the department affiliation of a contingent in the homecoming parade. The correct name is the Department of Writing Studies. The editors regret the error.

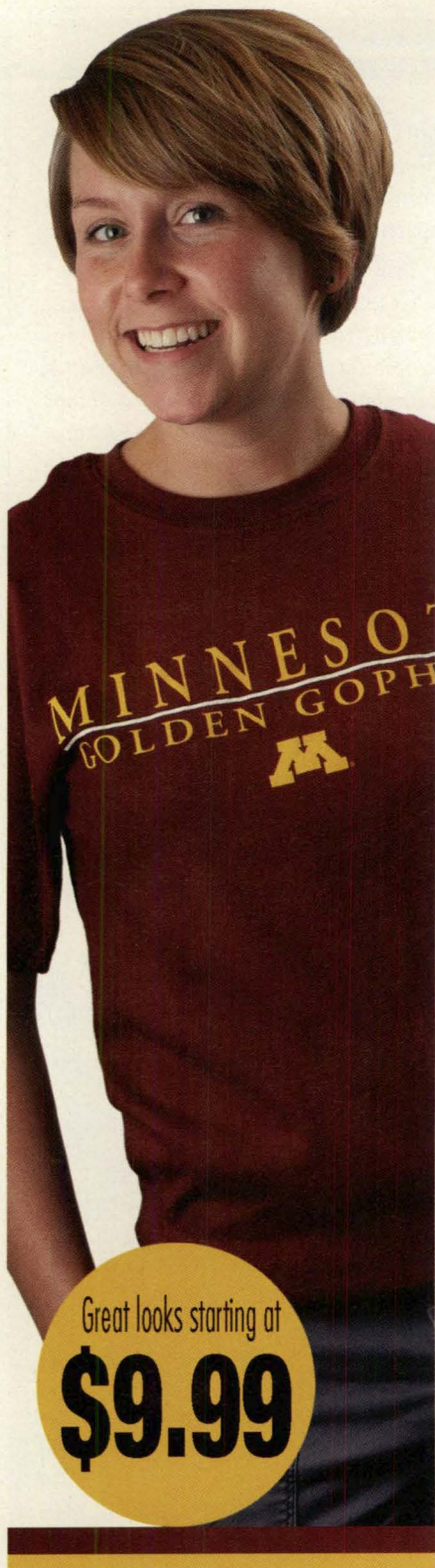
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Editor's Note

An Ounce of Love

When I was a teenager, my dad flew to Cleveland to collect his aunt Ella and move her to Minneapolis to be closer to family. Ella had been born and raised in Minnesota, but marriage and a nursing career had taken her east. I hadn't met her until the previous year, when on a family car trip to Disney World we swung over to Ohio to check on her. In her 80s, Ella was widowed and alone and struggling to maintain her big house buffeted by Lake Erie storms. My dad talked Ella into giving up her old home for a modern, low-fuss apartment in Minneapolis. She put up polite resistance at first, but then winnowed down her belongings for the moving

truck and got into the passenger side of her 1961 Plymouth Savoy, and my dad drove her westward.

Ella and I hit it off, and I loved getting to know my great aunt. I visited her with my mom or dad about once a month and called her weekly to talk to her about life in junior high. We celebrated holidays with Ella and took her on outings, but, day to day, Ella was painfully lonely. She stood for hours looking out her high-rise window over an unfamiliar city. Although her build-



When editor Shelly Fling's cat Femke suffered a broken foot, the local veterinarian sent the X-rays to the U's Small Animal Hospital to be read.

ing was filled with a hundred other souls, she might go days without talking to anyone.

Then my parents bought her a parakeet.

I will never forget Ella's eyes when my dad pulled away the cloth draped over the birdcage. A tiny blue-and-white bird hopped from perch to swing and into Ella's heart. She called him Baby—or, more accurately, "Baby, Baby, Baby." Baby could not have weighed more than an ounce, but he had the might to lift up Ella's spirits like none of us could.

Ella talked to Baby every day—probably all day—and soon Baby was talking back to her. He was out of his cage more than in it, and he perched on Ella's finger with cocked head and shining eye as she cooed and told him what was what.

After a few years, Baby caught a cold and died. Ella didn't live much longer. I can't say whether the demise of Baby led to hers, but I do know that Baby made Ella's life better—happier, healthier, and, on some days, I think she would even say worth living.

Ella and Baby came to mind as we pulled together this issue's photo essay on the University of Minnesota's Small Animal Hospital. We sent photographer Sher Stoneman there several times this fall and winter to document the care that companion animals receive at the hospital, the specialties that veterinary medicine students are learning, and the human-animal connection.

That companion animals improve the quality of human lives is well accepted. To my husband and me, our animals are priceless. As I write this, I have one cat on my lap and another walking back and forth across the keyboard, while a third is stretched out on a sunny patch on the rug. In exchange for food, water, and a relatively clean litter box (plus freeze-dried fish treats, catnip cigars, and plush beds), our cats fill our lives with vet bills, shredded upholstery, broken blinds, toppled flower vases, flesh wounds, missing earrings, punctured shampoo bottles, and hair balls that show up in the darnedest places. In between, they give us nonstop entertainment, stress therapy, and warm laps.

Did we get a good deal or what?

—Shelly Fling, fling003@umn.edu

With 12 years of service to her credit, including two tours of duty in Iraq, plus one in Qatar, she's found serving her country is more than a job. It's in her blood. But she still takes pride in getting back to her roots when she visits her family farm in Minnesota Lake.

Her family raises soybeans and corn. And they practice responsible, ethical agriculture for life. It's The R.E.A.L. Story. And while soybeans are now our state's most valuable agriculture export, we'd like to salute another valuable export that was raised right on a Minnesota farm.



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No Stage Left—for Now

The \$81 million revitalization of Northrop Auditorium has taken the campus icon down to its bare bones. This is a view of how it looked as demolition crews finished removing seating and the stage near the end of last year.

When the revitalization is completed in 2014, the Northrop will continue to serve its time-honored role as the University of Minnesota's primary gathering place for the performing arts, with a 2,800-seat hall featuring state-of-the-art acoustics and technologies. The new Northrop will also be a vital addition to academic life, increasing the amount of public study and collaborative space on the East Bank by 50 percent. It will be the new home to the University Honors Program, the Institute for Advanced Study, and Innovation by Design, a collaborative for academic technology innovation.

The academic portion of the new Northrop is scheduled to open in September 2013, with a grand opening in March 2014 once the performance hall is completed.

Get Smart

The Humphrey School of Public Affairs Smart Politics blog is a smart way to get nonpartisan political analysis. It covers candidates, issues, and races from around Minnesota, the Upper Midwest, and the nation in interesting and unexpected ways. Visit it at blog.lib.umn.edu/cspg/smartpolitics.

Overheard

"Who else at my age can say they live at a frat house?"

—Jill Lovell, 63, house director at Sigma Chi fraternity, in a *Minnesota Daily* article about her and other live-in "house moms" who help maintain the house, manage budgets, clean, cook, and offer motherly advice.

Bye-Bye, Big Backpacks

The University of Minnesota is one of five universities nationwide piloting a program that aims to save students money by providing course materials in an electronic format. The program relies on institutions pooling their buying power by negotiating discounted rates on e-textbooks. Nine courses that enroll 713 students are involved.

In addition to Minnesota, schools participating in the pilot include Cornell University, the University of Virginia, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

UAW Organizes Grad Assistants

Graduate student assistants at the University of Minnesota took a step toward unionizing in mid-January when they filed cards with the state of Minnesota's Bureau of Mediation Services (BMS). The filing by the Graduate Student Workers United/United Auto Workers (GSWU/UAW) triggered a process that will lead to a union election. BMS will determine what type of election (mail ballot or on-site) will be held and when. According to GSWU/UAW spokesman Scott Thaller, a physics graduate assistant, a majority of the U's 5,000 graduate assistants signed union authorization cards.

Graduate assistants at the U have been unsuccessful in unionizing efforts several times in recent years. This is the first union campaign at the U with the UAW, which currently represents academic student employees at the University of Washington, University of California, California State University, and the University of Massachusetts.

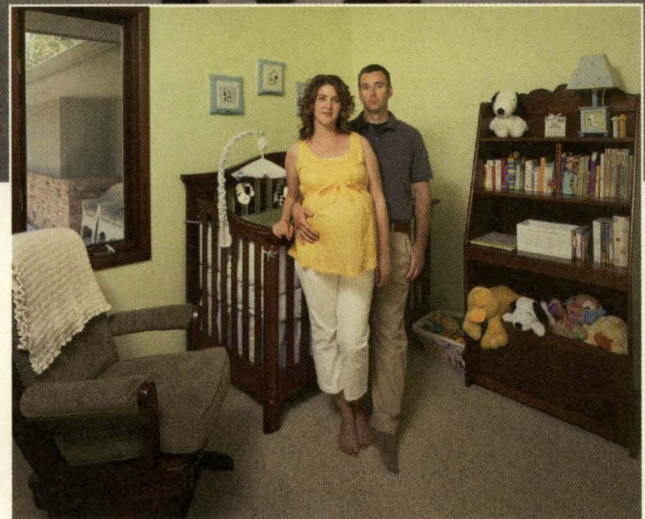
An Eye for Transitions

Photographer and University of Minnesota School of Journalism and Mass Communication instructor Dona Schwartz (Ph.D. '83) won third place in November in the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize, a prestigious annual competition sponsored by the National Portrait Gallery in London. Schwartz's winning portrait, *Christina and Mark, 14 Months* (right), portrays Christina (B.S. '80, M.D. '85) and Mark Bigelow standing in their son's bedroom 14 months after he left home for college. The competition received more than 6,000 entries from 2,506 photographers around the world.

The work is part of Schwartz's ongoing *On the Nest* project, which depicts couples in transition—shortly before their baby is born, or after their young adult child has left home. The Santa Fe Prize for Photography awarded *On the Nest* an honorable mention in December.



Right: *On the Nest* includes *Kate and Jason, 9 Days*, which portrays Kate and Jason Tande nine days before the birth of their child. To view more images from *On the Nest*, visit www.donaschwartz.com.



The Art of Winter

Winter will hang around the Bell Museum through April 13. *Freeze Frame: Capturing Nature in Winter* is a collaborative exhibit between the Bell Museum's artist-in-residence Areca Roe (M.F.A. '11) and members of the public that explores people's experiences of nature and winter in the Midwest. Photographers of all levels submitted photos of winter that Roe used to create the installation. Freeze Frame is part of the Bell's efforts to use the museum as a gateway for exploring the intersection of art and science. For more information, visit www.bellmuseum.org.



This photograph by Bonni Allen is among hundreds submitted by members of the public for *Freeze Frame: Capturing Nature in Winter* at the Bell Museum.

Overheard

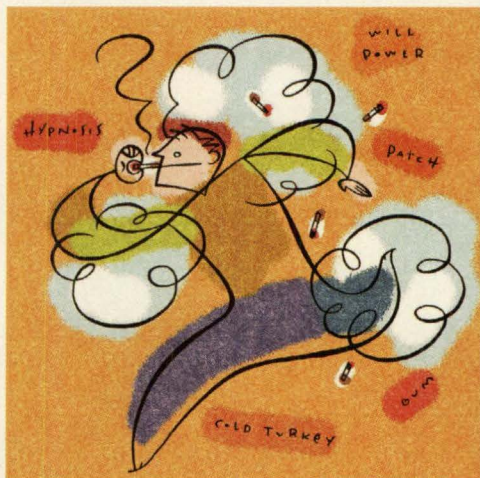
"The far-left groups on campus were trying to get me fired."

—University of Minnesota Professor Emeritus Thomas Bouchard, Jr., in the January 2012 *National Geographic* cover story about twins. The article references the U psychologist's world-famous Minnesota Study of Twins Reared Apart, begun in 1979, which found that 75 percent of the differences in human intelligence are due to genetic makeup, which to some people evoked the denounced theories of the eugenics movement.

The Butt Stops Here

Smokers have a greater likelihood of kicking the habit if they adopt a chronic disease management approach, according to research from the University of Minnesota Medical School. Current treatment, or usual care, involves behavioral and pharmacologic interventions but doesn't typically incorporate chronic disease management principles such as continuity of care, self-management, and seeking steady improvement over time.

Lead researcher Anne Joseph and her team enrolled 443 smokers in a trial that compared the two approaches. In the study, all participants received five telephone counseling calls and nicotine replacement therapy by mail for four weeks. They were then randomly selected to receive either usual care (UC) or longitudinal care (LC, another term for chronic disease



management). The UC group received two additional weeks and the LC group 48 additional weeks of counseling and nicotine replacement therapy.

The authors found that at 18 months, six-month prolonged abstinence was 30.2 percent in the LC group and 23.5 percent in the UC group. In addition, researchers found that the median percentage of days reporting no cigarette use was 57.1 in the LC group and 30.1 in the UC group. Finally, those in the LC group who did not quit reduced their overall smoking more than those in the UC group who did not quit. Researchers estimated that the chronic disease management approach

was 75 percent more effective at accomplishing long-term abstinence.

The study appears in the November 28 issue of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.



The Real Sob Story

Though most parents would consider a child's temper tantrum to be a wall of ear-splitting shrieks, it is actually a complex acoustic symphony, according to a researcher in the University of Minnesota Medical School.

Michael Potegal co-authored a study with colleagues from the University of Connecticut and found that tantrums have a pattern and rhythm. Using specially developed Onesies that had wireless microphones sewn into them, researchers collected high-quality audio recordings of tantrums. Analysis of the audio revealed that different tantrum sounds had distinct audio signatures that emerged in definite patterns. Screaming, yelling, and kicking formed one rhythm; throwing, pushing, and pulling things formed another; and crying, whining, falling to the floor, and seeking comfort formed another. Contrary to the popular perception that tantrums begin in anger and end in sadness, researchers found that the two emotions occur simultaneously. Sad sounds tended to occur throughout tantrums, with sharp peaks of anger superimposed on them.

Researchers said that understanding the patterns could help parents respond more effectively to tantrums and help clinicians tell the difference between ordinary tantrums and those that indicate an underlying disorder.

The study was published in the October issue of *Emotion*.

Hostile Dynamic Begins in Infancy

Negative mothering in early infancy can set off a dynamic characterized by persistent mutual hostility between mother and child in the toddler years, which in turn can result in behavioral problems in the child by age 5 or 6, according to a longitudinal study by researchers at the University of Minnesota and New York University.

Michael Lorber of New York University, formerly of the University of Minnesota, and Byron Egeland of the University of Minnesota's Department of Psychology studied mothers and their firstborn children from a 267-family high-risk urban sample. Mothers ranged in age from 12 to 34 years and received prenatal care from a public health clinic. Approximately 60 percent of them were single.

Before the study, researchers hypothesized that a combination of difficult infant temperament and negative

parenting—defined as expressions of anger and hostility, including rough handling—created the conditions for conflict between mothers and children in the toddler years and put the children at risk for behavior problems at school age. But the study found that negative parenting in early infancy mattered more than infant temperament and more than negative parenting later. When moms parented their infants negatively, the children showed high levels of anger as toddlers, which in turn caused more hostility from the moms.

Researchers said the study's findings can be used to inform the development of appropriate interventions that target negative parenting as early as 3 months to help prevent later behavior problems in school-age children.

The study was published in the October 25 issue of *Child Development*.



Undersea Beach Is Ominous

An international team of scientists, including a professor in the University of Minnesota's College of Science and Engineering, has found evidence that the Dead Sea may have dried up during a past warm period similar to predicted scenarios for climate change in coming decades. Research by others has already shown that the sea's level has fluctuated, but this is the first time anyone has found that it actually disappeared.

The Dead Sea forms part of the border between Israel and Jordan. It is the world's lowest-lying locale, with shores 1,400 feet below sea level and salty waters going down another 1,200 feet. Fed by the Jordan River, it has shrunk rapidly over the past decades—as much as three to five feet per year—due to the region's dry climate and as humans draw water from the river for farming and other uses. Because human activity accounts for a significant draw from the river, little is left to flow into the sea.

University of Minnesota professor Emi Ito and colleagues discovered a layer of pebbles 900 feet deep near the sea's center. The pebbles appear to be a beach, an indication that the sea disappeared. Underneath the pebbles was 120 feet of salt, suggesting that the sea dried quickly. Researchers believe the drying took place around 125,000 years ago, at the height of a warm period when the region was warmer and drier than today.

The finding is important because reports by the United Nations and other bodies have cited water as a potential spark for future Mideast conflicts. One researcher noted that, since the Dead Sea appears to have dried up in the past without human activity being a factor, today's stresses—climate change combined with human activity—mean that arid conditions could return soon.

The research was presented in December at the annual meeting of the American Geophysical Union.

Losing Weight Isn't Child's Play

Children derive many physical, social, and emotional benefits from participating in organized youth sports, but thanks to the pervasive presence of snack foods at most events, losing weight isn't one of them. That's the conclusion of a study by researchers in the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health. A team led by Toben Nelson reviewed 19 studies comparing sport participants with nonparticipants on weight status, physical activity, and diet. Nelson's team found that nearly half of overweight adolescents ages 12 to 17 participate in organized physical activities, but there was no clear association between participation and body weight. While youth involved in organized sports were likely to consume more fruits, vegetables, and milk than their nonactive peers, they were also more likely to eat fast food and drink sugar-sweetened beverages. Researchers suggested that consumption of snack food offset any possible weight loss benefit for participants.

The research appeared in the November/December 2011 issue of *Current Sports Medicine Reports*.

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Barbara Frederickson
on the Science of Positivity
September 28, 2012

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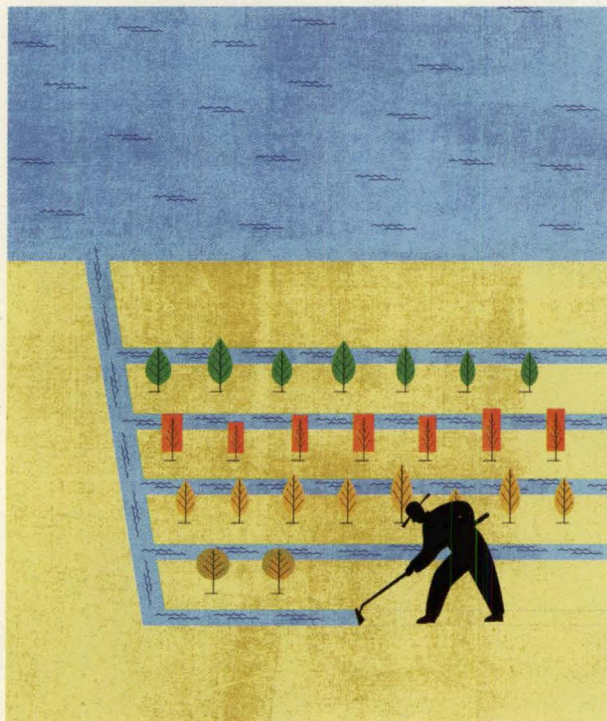
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An Extensive Food Problem

Global food demand is likely to double by 2050, and meeting it could result in significant environmental harm unless current agricultural practices worldwide are modified, according to new research by David Tilman and Jason Hill in the University of Minnesota's College of Biological Sciences.

Poorer nations currently rely on "extensive" agriculture, characterized by clearing vast amounts of land for crop production. That approach results in increased levels of carbon dioxide and nitrogen in the environment and causes the extinction of numerous species. Richer countries typically employ "intensive" agriculture, which relies on chemical pesticides and fertilizers. That method produces high yields but can also contribute to land and water pollution, particularly from excess nitrogen.

The study calls for the adoption of strategic, sustainable intensification methods that raise yields of existing croplands in developing nations and more efficient management practices to lower nitrogen use in all nations. The study noted field trials of an integrated soil-crop management system in China that achieved a 90 percent increase in maize yields with no increase in nitrogen use. Integrated soil-crop management is a practice that features planting legumes and other cover crops in order to enhance soil.

The research was published in the November 21 *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.


 **Discoveries** is edited by **Cynthia Scott**. University of Minnesota Alumni Association members may access many of the journals that publish these studies through the Libraries Online member benefit. Go to www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/Libraries.

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SIEBERT FIELD

LEGACY CAMPAIGN

Saturdays with Pena

The legacy of a beloved aunt's lifelong love of learning

I enter the hospital with my letter in hand, anxious to visit Pena, my aunt. She's here as a precaution—I was told earlier by her husband, Pena Bill—to monitor some nagging but minor heart problems.

Riding the elevator, I finger the envelope and consider for at least the thousandth time whether I should do this. I'm proud of myself for writing the letter but ashamed for taking so long—at least 20 years—to do so.

Pena and I are both introverted and shy. While I know my letter will make her feel good, I also know that warm feeling might lead to embarrassment for having actual feelings expressed (or, more accurately, *exposed*). Even as an adult I've struggled to start a conversation with her about anything personal. Thus, I find myself on the brink of middle age never having told her about the important role she has played in my life. How will Pena react? I've almost decided to abandon the visit when a soft tone sounds and the elevator doors open.

I find the cardiac unit, with the rooms arrayed in a circle around a nurses' station, and immediately see that something is wrong. Pena Bill, standing down the hall, starts talking excitedly before I'm even within earshot. I rush toward him, my heart in my throat, and hear him say, "They say it's gonna be OK, Marty. She's in a little pain but OK. She'll be OK," as if trying to convince himself, not me. I enter her room and see Pena lying on her back. A doctor and nurse are bent over her determinedly hooking up IVs and wires, their hands flying. Pena is awake but covered in blankets up to her chin. I can see only her round face, normally olive and smooth, now pale and damp and obscured by

an oxygen mask. But mostly I notice her eyes, open wide in fear.

When she sees me, she strains to raise herself up and tell me something but I can't make out the muffled words. She tries again and begins to cry in frustration, and then the nurse notices me and quietly asks me to leave.

Sitting with Pena Bill in the hospital waiting room, I fiddle with the envelope, now smudged and frayed. When he asks what it is, I tell him the truth. That it's a letter to Pena. He takes it, nods, and slips it silently into his jacket pocket.



THE YOUNGEST OF FOUR CHILDREN, I grew up in an old house in a working-class neighborhood on the East Side of St. Paul in the late 1960s and early '70s. My parents were proud of our old house and its maintenance-free slate siding. But I often wondered about the ring of fine dust that seemed to encircle our home like a noose, the dust having worn off the asbestos siding over several decades of harsh Minnesota weather.

Both of my parents worked in the neighborhood, my mom on the night shift at the Whirlpool freezer plant and my dad in his small cinderblock barbershop. Neither had attended college, and my dad's senior year of high school was cut short when he was drafted to serve in World War II. They loved us and each other deeply and fiercely protected us kids from any threat, even when one didn't exist and especially if it involved any discussion about leaving the confines of the East Side.

A large part of my youth was concentrated within a tiny section of my neighborhood. My days consisted of a 15-minute walk to and from the neighborhood Catholic grade school. Afternoons and summers were spent playing in the narrow alley behind our house. Our block was bursting with children, almost all of whom attended the same school and came from hard-working, blue-collar households like mine. Teams of boys and girls engaged in truly epic football and baseball games, with power lines serving as goalposts or home-run fences. We were amazed at our athletic feats and wondered why the local sportscasters never covered our games and broadcast our best plays on the 10 o'clock news.

My small world included growing up directly across the street from my father's immediate family. My grandparents came to the East Side via Swede Hollow, an immigrant settlement located in a ravine less than a mile away (now a city park). They found jobs and eventually bought a small grocery store blocks away from the hollow. They traded the store for an old, white duplex (which they later turned into a triplex), where they raised my dad and his sister, Lucille. It was a strict home, and my dad found an outlet in sports. But Lucille was shy and sheltered, and my grandmother in particular rarely let her socialize, so the girl found her escape through books.

When my dad returned from the war, he was soon visited by a war buddy, Bill, who met and fell in love with Lucille. They married and moved into one of the triplex units. When my parents married, they moved into the third unit. The two young couples worked and saved until they could buy houses of their own—Lucille and Bill two doors down, and my folks across the street. All that separated us was the constant hum of traffic.

I grew up calling my aunt and uncle Pena and Pena Bill, and to visit them I had to navigate a life-threatening dash across Third Street. I'd perch on the curb, watching for an opening, while my mom hollered from the front porch, telling me not to cross. "Stay home, Marty," she'd yell. "You can see Pena later!" When I'd ignore her long enough, she'd give up and watch for a lull in the traffic and then yell, "Run run run!" I still remember the warm rush of

air and exhaust pulling at my T-shirt as cars and buses whizzed just behind me, horns often blaring, when I cut the sprint too close. Once on the far curb, I felt as if I'd escaped to another planet.

Most of my Saturday afternoons were spent at Pena's. We talked about everything—sports, politics, and school—often accompanied by opera records. We'd sometimes have these talks while Pena got caught up on her ironing. During the week she worked in the payroll department at the Whirlpool plant. Pena Bill was a mailman and worked most Saturdays. They had no children of their own, so I often had Pena completely to myself.

Pena let me browse her vast collection of books arranged neatly on shelves that Pena Bill built in the basement. Pena Bill, prone to storytelling and exaggeration, wasn't a reader, but he understood Pena's love for books and added shelves as her collection grew.

Her tastes were eclectic, to say the least. An avid Louis L'Amour fan, she also read Hesse, Descartes, and Jung and joked that, in the '60s, Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged* left her "really screwed up." She'd let me scan the titles and then would make recommendations, softly clicking her tongue when she had picked out a favorite. On my next visit, we'd discuss what I'd read and then start the whole process over again.

Her basement was a haven. Even the incinerator (these were the days when people burned their garbage) lent a certain smoky warmth and charm. When lit it transported me to my own private library with a fireplace. As a boy with no real experiences outside of my neighborhood—and maybe because of that—I knew my aunt was unusual in my family: well read and inquisitive, in stark contrast to almost every other adult in my life.

Even her name, Pena, was unique and seemed to reflect her unorthodox nature. The Italian term for godparent, *padrino* somehow evolved into Pena and, by extension, Pena Bill. In fact, all of the neighbors referred to them in this way.

Pena stood out for other reasons too. She loved to lie out in the sun for hours on her reflective blanket reading. Controversially, she took up smoking cigarettes in middle age. Even though she never glorified her new habit, I was captivated by the way she elegantly yet absent-mindedly held her long, thin cigarettes—again, usually with her nose in a book. My parents loved Pena but didn't seem to know what to make of this behavior and criticized her in private. I think they actually envied her nonconformity.


Also mysterious—and somewhat controversial, at least to my parents—was Pena's ever-changing circle of friends, many of whom at one time or another stayed in her and Pena Bill's spare bedroom. Through my aunt and uncle I met my very first homosexual. I remember the stormy family argument when my parents learned Pena's friend was gay. They forbade any of us kids from setting foot "in that house" when he was there. Although we calmed them down and they allowed us to return, I had to face my parents' prejudice and compare it with Pena's open-minded worldview.

My Saturday visits to Pena's became less frequent when I entered

Martin Russo (B.S. '04) is a vice president at a Fortune 150 company in Minneapolis and lives with his wife and youngest children in St. Paul.

First Person essays may be written by University of Minnesota alumni, students, faculty, or staff. For writers' guidelines, go to www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/firstperson.

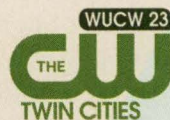
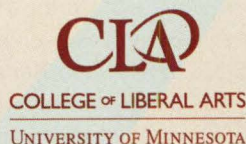
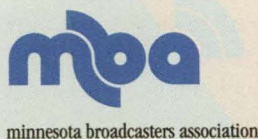
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high school. I loved school and good grades came easy for me, and it looked like I might become the first in my family to go to a four-year college. Money was tight, so I applied for and won the Whirlpool Foundation scholarship that would cover tuition and expenses. My family was thrilled. Part of the scholarship prize involved a tour of the Twin Cities Whirlpool facilities, including the factory where my mom now assembled vacuum cleaners. When we got to the corporate offices where my aunt worked, Pena hugged me so long and tight I became dizzy.

In the spring of my high school senior year, however, my dad suffered a heart attack that caused him to stop working. Our household quickly descended into chaos, and my mom begged me to stay home to help out for "just one year." To stay was a painful decision. When I told Pena, she made me promise to keep it to one year. I decided to attend the University of Minnesota and to live at home. One year of commuting turned into four. I began foundering in my attempt to earn a degree in biology, and when my scholarship ran out and I was deemed academically ineligible to continue I felt relieved.

I got married, found an entry-level job at a student loan company, and started a family, living blocks from my folks and Pena and Pena Bill. I could tell Pena was pleased to see how happy I was, but she always encouraged me to finish my degree. After sporadically taking night classes over several years, I received permission to re-enroll at the U of M and soon earned a degree in economics. A few years later, I got my M.B.A. from the University of St. Thomas.

Just as my life began to take off in a new direction, however, Pena's was slowing down. She would gradually recover from the heart surgery, but her failing health affected her eyesight and concentration. She could no longer escape through her books into the rich life of her mind, and she became increasingly despondent and depressed.

That's why I wrote her the letter. I wanted her to know how her intellectual curiosity helped me through my own tough academic times. How her support for me as a boy played a big part in me encouraging my own children to live full and diverse lives. How the man I am still becoming had so much to do with the wonderful aunt she had been. How every time I open a book, for a moment I'm a young boy back in Pena's basement on a Saturday afternoon. ■

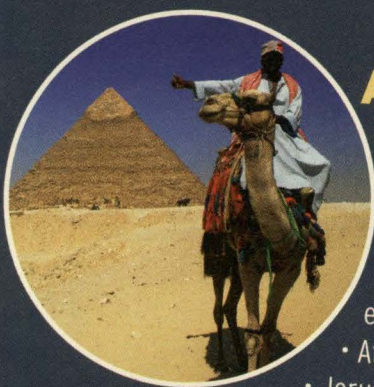


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Patient Pets

About 100 dogs and cats visit the University of Minnesota's Small Animal Hospital every day, where they receive state-of-the-art veterinary medical care.



Many patients dread the hard work of physical therapy. But Sushi, a 10-year-old chocolate-and-red dachshund, always gets excited when he arrives at the rehabilitation clinic at the University of Minnesota's Small Animal Hospital. "He knows he'll get to see other dogs and eat a lot of treats," says Sushi's owner, Nicole Kanne of St. Paul. Stroking Sushi's side, she pops snacks into the dachshund's mouth and talks to him in a soft voice as he lies on a table where he receives a neuromuscular stimulation treatment on his hind legs.

It's been two and a half months since Kanne called Sushi to go outside and noticed he was dragging his back legs. "We brought him here immediately," she says, and Sushi was diagnosed with degenerating discs. "They did spinal surgery right away because they said time was of the essence." Sushi's recovery has been slow, but weekly (initially twice weekly) treatments along with exercises and laser therapy have put Sushi well on his way to recovery.

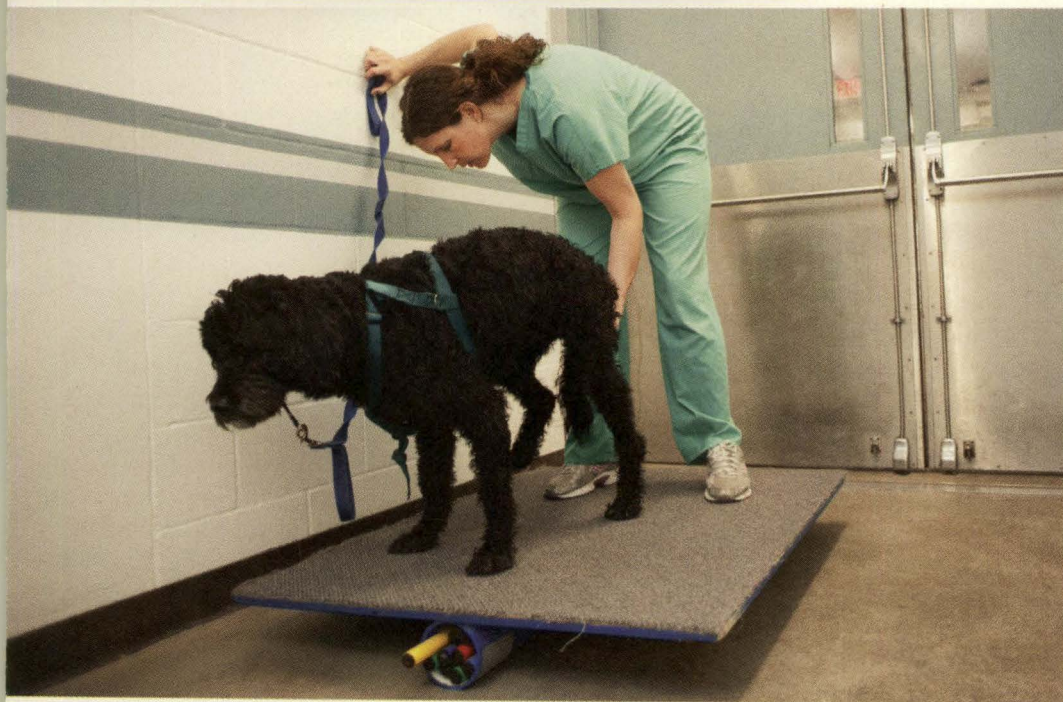
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHER STONEMAN // TEXT BY MELEAH MAYNARD



Opposite page: **Muggins**, an Old English sheepdog, had surgery last year for hip dysplasia but fell at home during his recovery and fractured his femur. He's been in rehab since September, walking in the hydro tank to strengthen his leg and hip muscles and receiving laser treatments on his hips. The hydro tank is full of warm, chlorinated water and has a treadmill on the floor. Muggins has progressed to walking 0.8 miles per hour for three 9-minute sets.

Left: Rehabilitation specialist Kimberly Barrett works with **Sushi**, a dachshund who had back surgery, in the hydro tank. He wears one-eighth-pound weights on his back legs to add more resistance in his training.

Below: **Chloey**, a 9-year-old "goldendoodle" (golden retriever-poodle mix), had back surgery in August because she couldn't move her legs. The surgery and rehab initially seemed unsuccessful, but she began to regain limb function while recovering at home. Rehabilitation specialist Kimberly Barrett works with Chloey on the wobble board so that her muscles work to keep her balanced while she learns to walk again.



Rehabilitation is one of 16 board-certified specialties practiced by 60 veterinary medicine specialists at the Small Animal Hospital, which is the biggest and busiest of the 20 veterinary teaching hospitals in the United States. Other specialties include neurology, cardiology, anesthesiology, dermatology, and oncology. "It's our research mission that really sets us apart," says Dr. David Lee, director of the University's Veterinary Medical Center, which includes the small and large animal hospitals, as well as the satellite equine hospital in Maple Plain.

"We're not just providing



Left: **Millie**, hospital director Dr. David Lee's 3-year-old pug, became an unhappy patient at the Small Animal Hospital in September after she ate almost an entire pack of sugar-free gum. Xylitol, a sweetener in the gum, can cause liver damage in dogs. Veterinary technician Monique Rambo cared for Millie while vomiting was induced, and Millie eventually threw up 31 pieces of gum.

Opposite page: Jillmarie Stich (left) of Minneapolis brought **Samantha**, a 7-year-old beagle, to the Small Animal Hospital after years of failed attempts to solve the dog's skin allergy problems. Dr. Sandra Koch (M.S. '03), right, an assistant clinical specialist in dermatology, discusses treatment options, including antibiotics and a new hypoallergenic shampoo, and removes a skin lesion to test it for bacteria.

veterinary medicine," Lee says. "We're creating it and teaching it so others can use what we've learned here, and that's the exciting part." Competition for admission to the University's College of Veterinary Medicine is fierce: Just under 1,000 people applied for 100 open spots in 2011. Currently, 384 students are enrolled in the college, and about 44 per-

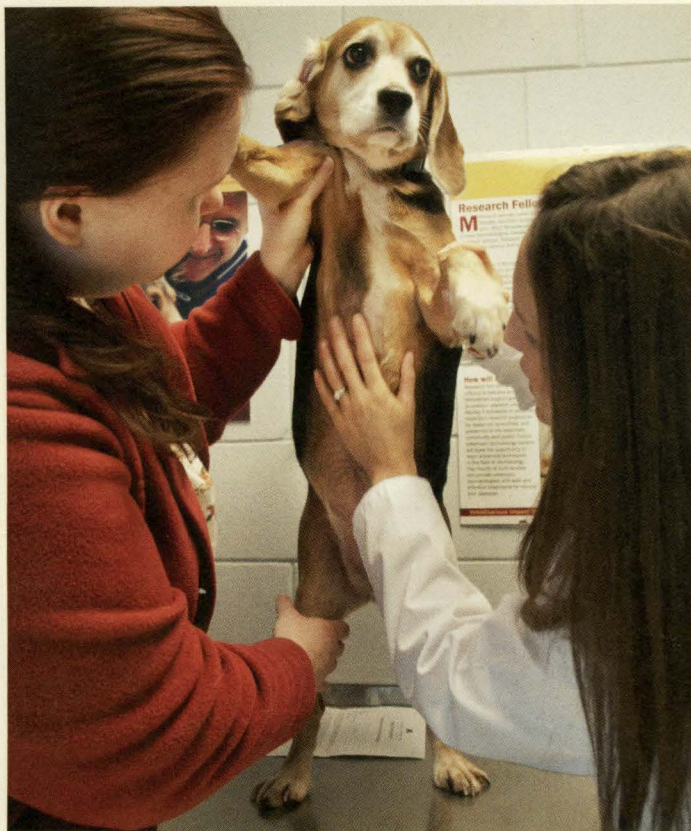
cent of the students in the class of 2011 focused their studies on small animals.

Open since 1983 on the University's St. Paul campus, the Small Animal Hospital is a nonprofit supported primarily by fees charged for services, though some state funding helps offset the teaching aspect of its mission. "Money spent here is used to directly

support veterinary medicine in the state by teaching students, driving research, and doing outreach," Lee notes, adding that 62 percent of practicing veterinarians in the state graduated from the college.

The Small Animal Hospital records about 32,000 visits annually. Patients come primarily from the Twin Cities metro area, but the specialized

treatment offered at the University also draws pet owners from around the country, and even the world. In the past few years, for example, a cat from North Dakota received treatment for mammary cancer, a dog from Florida had heart surgery, and a dog from India had orthopedic surgery followed by rehabilitation. In the third case, the dog's



owner, Ratan N. Tata, chairman of the India-based business conglomerate the Tata Group, was so pleased with the treatment his dog received he established the Tata Group Chair in Veterinary Orthopedic Surgery. The gift will also be used to advance veterinary education in India by creating an exchange program with the Karnataka Veterinary College

in Bangalore.

Local veterinarians often refer pet owners to the U's Small Animal Hospital, though people may bring their sick or injured pets to the hospital without a referral too. And sometimes animals end up at the U hospital in dramatic fashion. Just over a year ago, the hospital opened its Animal Trauma Center (ATC), offer-

Right: Kelly Gasper (left) adopted **Uno**, a calico cat, in South Africa several years ago and brought her back to Minnesota, where the cat now lives with Gasper's mother. On a recent visit to her mother's, Gasper noticed Uno was ailing, with swollen limbs and belly, and brought her to the Small Animal Hospital. Uno's kidneys aren't functioning properly, and the medical staff believes she has nephrotic syndrome, a type of renal failure in which the kidneys leak protein from the blood into the urine. Dr. Kristin Schafgans (D.V.M. '08), right, a resident in internal medicine, listens to Uno's heart.

ing state-of-the-art emergency care to dogs and cats that are triaged and treated by a team of critical care specialists. Considered efficient and highly successful, the ATC's treatment model is currently being adopted by the American College of Veterinary Emergency Critical Care Specialists.

"We frequently have clients say, 'Gee, I don't take this good of care of myself,'" says Lee, acknowledging the costs associated with specialized veterinary care. "But the people who come here typically want to know they've done everything they could for their animals." In some cases, Lee points out, that may mean opting to do nothing. "An awful lot of pet owners don't realize they have the option to see a specialist," he explains. "Here, we offer a lot of possible alternatives for treatment and people can decide for themselves what they want to do." ■

Meleah Maynard (B.A. '91), a Minneapolis-based freelance writer, and photographer Sher Stoneman (B.A. '87), based in St. Paul, worked together at the Minnesota Daily.

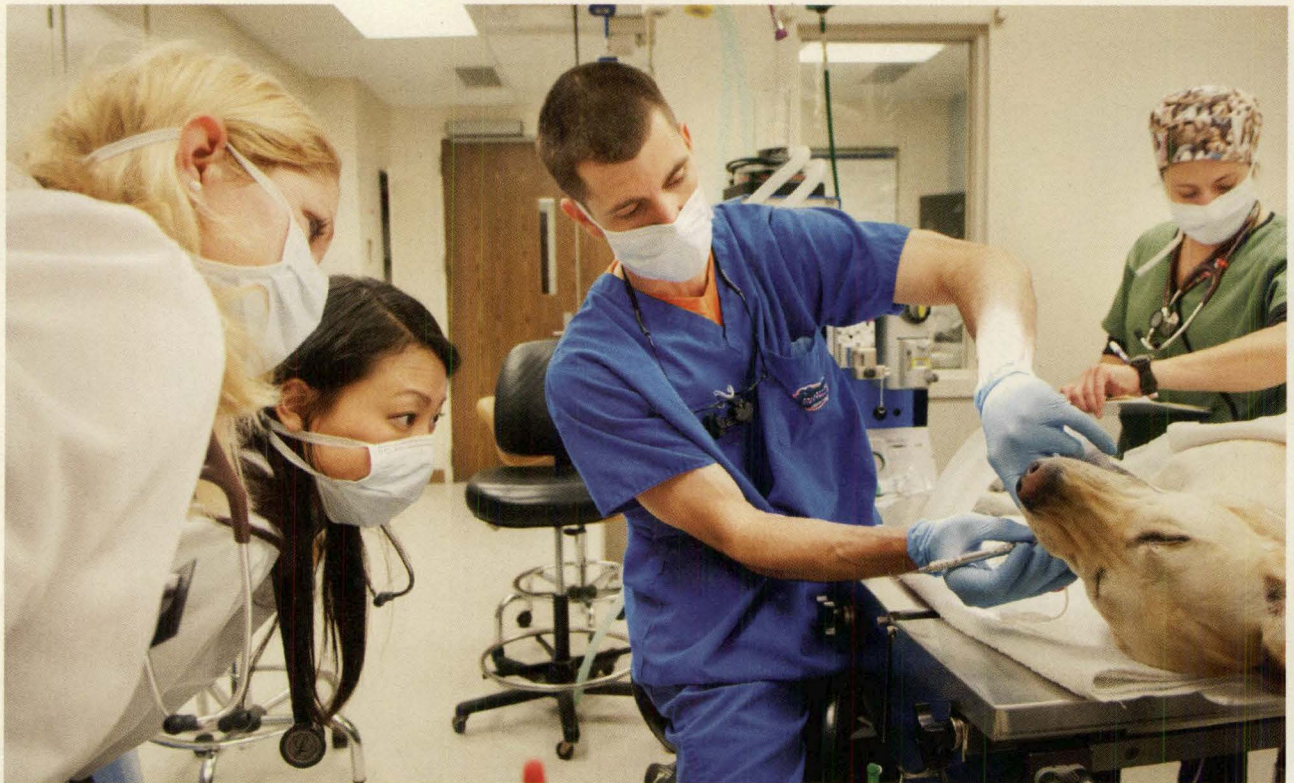


Left: Ultrasound images of Uno's kidneys help the doctors diagnose the cat's health problem.



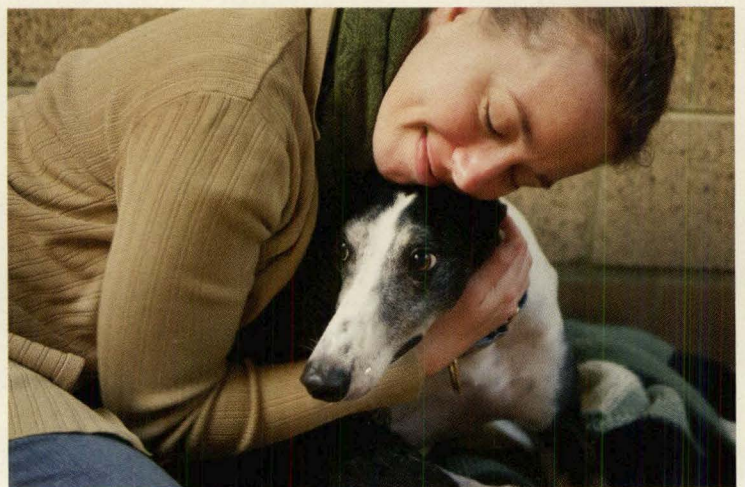
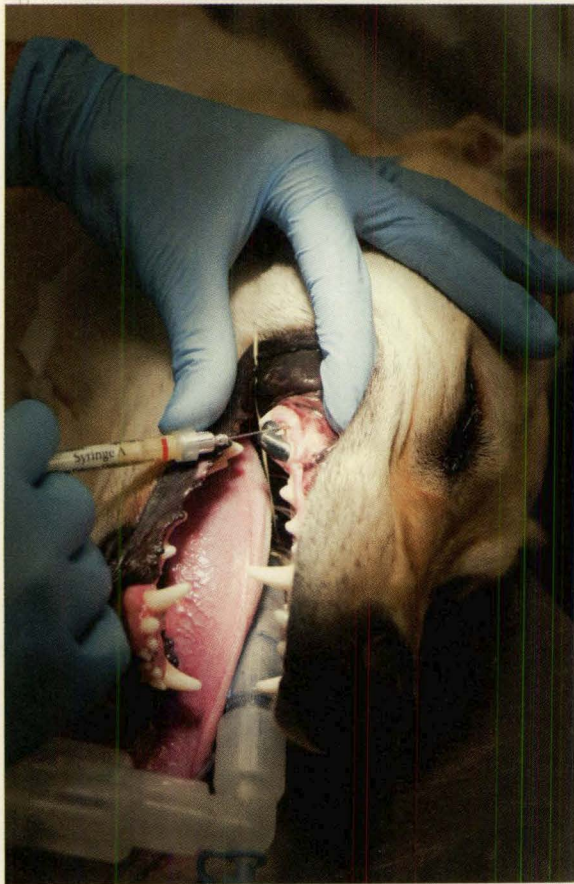
Above: Fourth-year veterinary student John Lloyd holds **Uno** while senior veterinary technician Stacy Ziegenhagen (B.A. '02) draws blood. Behind her are veterinary technicians Maggie Croud (left) and Shannon Moore. In the foreground, Dr. David Polzin (Ph.D. '81), a professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine, and Dr. Kristin Schafgans (D.V.M. '08) observe.





Above and left: **Sophie**, a yellow Labrador retriever, is put under anesthesia in order to undergo dental work, including a crown and teeth cleaning, by Dr. Wade Gingerich, a third-year resident in dentistry and oral surgery. College of Veterinary Medicine students Ann Kinsley (left) and Jean Kim look on while veterinary medicine student Jen Gallus monitors Sophie while under anesthesia.

Below: Jennifer Marcus Newton of St. Paul brings her rescued greyhound **Ryan** to the Small Animal Hospital every day for radiation treatment following surgery to remove a cancerous facial tumor. The two were photographed on day 14 of 22 days of treatment. Before each treatment, Ryan must be sedated so that he lies still during the procedure.



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SERVING WHO



THOSE SERVE

Most people look forward to kicking back on their days off. Mathew Meyer's idea of a good time is to spend Saturdays working a booth in a hotel conference room or mediating a dispute between an employer and an employee. Both are part of the drill in his volunteer role to advance and promote the services offered to veterans by Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). Intensely devoted to ESGR's mission and modest about his successes, Meyer (B.A. '92) speaks out often on behalf of service members. For his multifaceted efforts, the Department of Defense honored him with ESGR's Minnesota Volunteer of the Year award in 2010.

ESGR was established in 1972, near the end of the Vietnam War, by the Department of Defense to promote understanding between civilian employers and veterans of the National Guard and Reserve. In the post-9/11 era, ESGR is more relevant than ever, primarily because almost half—48 percent—of United States uniformed service members are National Guard and Reservists, a historic high. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan wind down, veterans are returning to a civilian economy that is experiencing levels of unemployment not seen since the 1930s.

Meyer, who estimates he spends about 20 hours a month on ESGR activities, is one of 4,700 ESGR volunteers nationwide. "All are great people, true patriots, dedicated to helping the next generation," he says.

A South Dakota native, Meyer joined the Marines after high school, serving for six years and reaching the rank of sergeant, before enrolling at the University of Minnesota to study political science and international relations. He earned his J.D. from Cornell University and is now a commercial litigation attorney with the Minneapolis law firm Moss & Barnett.

When Meyer first got involved in ESGR, in 2004, he began as an ombudsman, using his legal background to resolve conflicts arising from an employees' military commitments. He soon started to help wherever he could, presenting briefing and training sessions or manning a booth at employment assistance workshops, job fairs, and other local community programs. He particularly enjoys presenting Patriot Awards, often a surprise, to supervisors or managers nominated by employees in appreciation of support related to their military obligations.

Meyer trained in Japan, the Philippines, and Korea, followed by embassy guard duty in Sudan and Switzerland, with one last stop in Honduras before discharge. "I felt a certain amount of reverse culture shock in making that transition from military into civilian life, though I was never in combat," he says. "I am aware of what these young service members go through. It's a 24/7 job. ESGR is one area where I saw I could help; anything to help the transition of these service members."

Meyer spoke more about his work on behalf of members of the Minnesota Guard and Reserve with *Minnesota* magazine.

Alumnus
Mathew Meyer,
a Minneapolis
attorney and former
Marine sergeant, helps
Minnesota members
of the National
Guard and Reserve
transition to civilian
life and a bleak
employment picture.

By Laura Weber
Photograph by Mark Luinenburg

MINNESOTA: *What is the employment picture for returning vets in Minnesota and nationally?*

MEYER: Information that came out in November 2011 from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed a dip in the unemployment rate overall [from 9.1 percent in November 2010 to 8.1 percent], as well as for veterans overall [from 8.6 percent in November 2010 to 7.4 percent]. The unemployment rate for post-9/11 vets, however, actually ticked up to 11.1 percent, from 10 percent a year earlier. Also, the Department of Defense found that among reserve component service members [those in the Guard and Reserve], the unemployment rate was much higher, over 19 percent. Furthermore, Minnesota was the state with the third-highest disparity between its unemployment rate for civilians and post-9/11 service member veterans.

We see this because our newest veterans are younger and don't have the kind of work history or networks that a lot of civilian employees would have already established. Many just graduated from high school and then went through training. So when there is a downturn in the economy, it will impact them much more than their civilian counterparts.

MINNESOTA: *What are some theories about the high unemployment rate for veterans in Minnesota?*

MEYER: Quite frankly, it really startled me, because I am aware through my work with ESGR that there are a lot of programs and a groundswell of support in local communities. After all, Minnesota came up with the Yellow Ribbon reintegration program, which was adopted as a nationwide model by the Department of Defense. And we also came up with Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, a uniquely Minnesota organization that organizes support among politicians, business leaders, and military families to encourage employers to hire service members to just plain volunteering to do things like mow someone's lawn while they are deployed.

There is some speculation that some of the veteran unemployment is because we have such a low rate of military participation as a percentage of the overall population. So employers—managers, supervisors, CEOs—who have made their way up don't have that kind of tradition. But that's the case nationally, not just in Minnesota.

Probably of more concern, with the war in Iraq over and the situation in Afghanistan ramping down, unemployment will not just affect reserve component troops, but the active duty military who will be discharged, perhaps involuntarily. For instance, the Navy recently announced thousands of petty officers are not going to be reenlisted, to satisfy budget concerns. In effect, they are being laid off [from the military].

MINNESOTA: *What does federal law say about employment rights of men and women who serve in the armed forces?*

MEYER: Employment rights for all uniformed service members, whether regular forces or Reserve and Guard, are covered under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), a federal law intended to ensure that persons who serve or have served: (1) are not disadvantaged in their civilian careers because of their service; (2) are promptly reemployed in their civilian jobs upon their return from duty; and (3) are not discriminated against in employment based on past, present, or future military service. By the way, "uniformed services" also includes the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service and any other category of persons designated by the president in time of war or

national emergency, such as when FEMA responds to a disaster.

MINNESOTA: *What are examples of employers misunderstanding their responsibilities in regard to the law?*

MEYER: The principal misunderstanding is that, with very few exceptions, USERRA applies to *all* employers, whether it's the mom-and-pop store down the road or a big corporation. Most federal employment statutes apply only to employers of a certain size. It's relatively easy for large corporations like Target or Best Buy to adjust their resources to make accommodations for a service member's training and deployment, but when you're dealing with a small employer who employs two or three people and one is deployed for a year, that's more disruptive and misunderstandings can arise.

It's unfortunate, but I'm sure there are some employers for whom the inconvenience and financial burden of employing Reserve and Guard members affect, whether overtly or subconsciously, how they relate to current employees or perhaps with hiring decisions.

The ESGR Ombudsman Services Program that I work with was established to provide information, counseling, and mediation on employment issues related to USERRA. We are essentially a bridge between employers and their service member employees. We are effective because we are mandated by law to be neutral. We are very cautious about explaining to both employer and employee that we do not advocate for either side. We are just trying to figure out what the situation is, advise everyone what their rights and obligations are, and try to patch up the relationship.

The most difficult issue from my perspective is when there is discrimination based on ununiformed service. As in most employment discrimination cases it's hard to prove what's going on in someone's mind as to why they didn't hire someone or choose them for a promotion—unless the employer is foolish enough to make an explicit statement, which does happen.

MINNESOTA: *How has ESGR's role evolved since 9/11?*

MEYER: Keep in mind that ESGR is one cog in a whole machine of resources designed to address unemployment issues. We are constantly trying to connect employers with service members looking for positions.

With more veterans coming out of the Reserve and Guard since 9/11, we've seen employers not familiar with their obligations under USERRA. With more frequent and longer deployments, it only stands to reason there would be more issues that would come up, and more confusion.

It's not a simple matter of reemployment. The crux of reemployment obligations under USERRA involves what is called the "escalator position." In other words, the returning service member must be reemployed in the position they would have attained had they remained continuously employed during their absence due to military service. It may mean the same position—you know, the head cashier may have remained the head cashier. If promotion would have been based primarily on seniority, when the service member returns they have to be put in that position if they have seniority.

But escalators go down just as they go up. Since the downturn in the economy we see more of those situations. Maybe the company goes bankrupt or was bought out by somebody else. To what extent is the purchaser of the corporation bound by USERRA? They may need to reemploy an employee who left for service before they

purchased the company. It can get tricky.

A huge expansion of our mission, just over a year old, is the Employment Initiative Program (EIP), a partnership of ESGR and the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. EIP's goal is to improve employment opportunities for transitioning service members and make it easier for employers to tap into the pool of talented men and women in the Guard and Reserve. We're dealing with significant unemployment issues that are only going to get worse when demobilization gears up.

MINNESOTA: *If veterans worked for a company that then laid people off, does USERRA obligate the employer to hire them back just because they're vets?*

MEYER: No. Let's use the example of "Sergeant Smith," who left for uniform service. If his employer can prove he would have been laid off had he been continuously employed, there is no position for him when he returns.

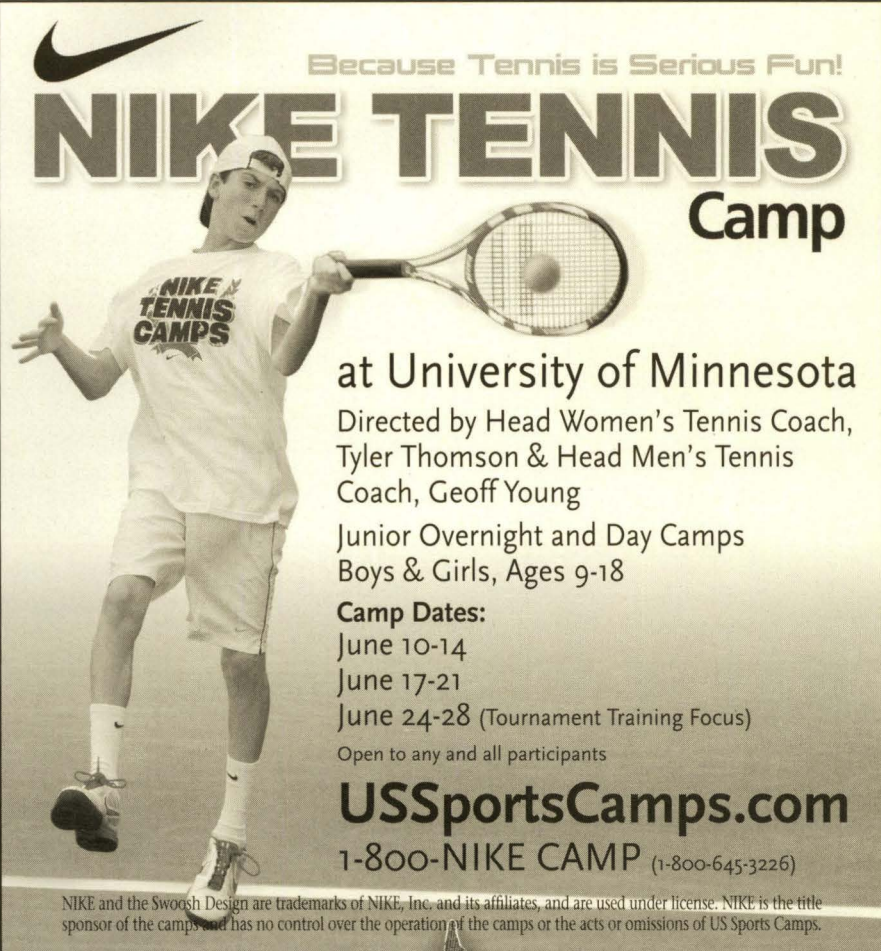
Where you get into a lot of uncertainty and dispute is when there is not a clear formula or standard that is used to determine who is terminated and who is retained if it's not strictly on seniority. If, on other hand, the employer finds it convenient to terminate the service member first because they are off on deployment, then there might be—there probably is—an issue under USERRA.

We work with service members about how to approach and work with employers to keep a good relationship. If a service member, right before he's supposed to work, calls up his supervisor and says, 'Hey, I can't show up for my shift because I'm going to Iraq,' that could cause friction. If they don't give notice, they don't have reemployment rights, with the exception of military necessity and secret missions. And we tell them, when you return, don't just show up on your employers' doorstep. Take into account their disruption, having to shift their schedule around, maybe even having to terminate someone they had to hire while you were gone.

MINNESOTA: *What is most rewarding to you about volunteering with ESGR?*

MEYER: I would say hanging out with young service men and women, but sometimes that just makes me feel old [laughs]. I don't want to overstate my role—but basically to help our national security by doing something for those who protect us. ■

Laura Weber (B.A. '77, M.A. '88) is a Minneapolis-based freelance writer and historian.



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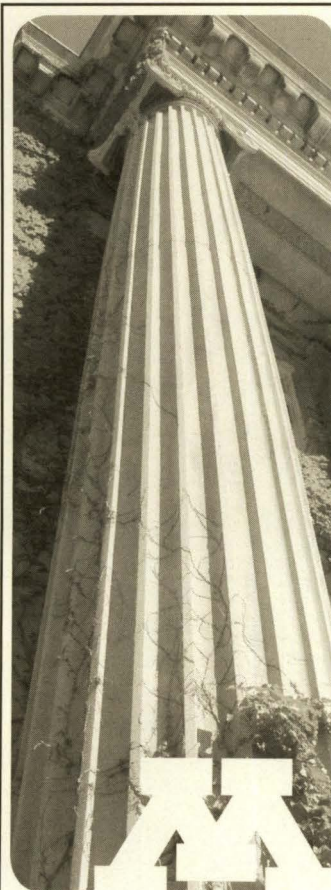
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THE COUNTRY DOCTOR

University of Minnesota physician and professor Therese Zink uses writing and storytelling to engage medical students in rural family medicine.

BY J. TROUT LOWEN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA RUBINSTEIN

A full moon floods the southeastern Minnesota landscape in a pale, wintry light as Dr. Therese Zink pulls away from her small farm and bounces down the gravel road past fields of broken cornstalks. She turns onto Highway 52 and then down a dark, empty road that crosses the middle fork of the Zumbro River before emptying onto Pine Island's main street. Zink parks her Prius in front of the butcher shop, slantwise, the way it's done in small towns, and heads for the Rainbow Cafe.

The hybrid car is just the first indication that Zink (M.P.H. '93) is not the stereotypical country doctor who resides in the collective American imagination: the kindly white-haired gentleman practitioner with a worn leather medical bag and comforting smile. A family physician at the nearby Fairview Zumbrota Clinic and associate director of the University of Minnesota Medical School's Rural Physician Associate Program (RPAP), Zink knows firsthand how the role of the country doctor has changed over the past three decades.

It's Friday evening and the restaurant is filling up.

Dr. Therese Zink on the road near her small southeastern Minnesota farm





The fish fry is popular, but Zink chooses the more healthful salmon entrée. Between bites she talks about her life, where she grew up, what it's like practicing medicine in Zumbrota, and what she hopes to teach the next generation of rural docs. She speaks with the authority of someone used to getting to the crux of a matter—and of someone who knows the power of stories.

In 2010, she edited *The Country Doctor Revisited: A Twenty-First Century Reader*, an anthology of essays, stories, and poems describing in sometimes heart-wrenching detail the daily rewards and challenges of practicing family medicine in rural America, one of the largest underserved populations. Since then, she's been in the media spotlight often. But she's not entirely comfortable with all of the attention the book has shone, like the bright moon outside, on her somewhat solitary, if hectic, life.

Zink says solitude is one of the things she treasures most about living on a farm, coming home at night to the quiet and the simple demands of caring for her menagerie: two horses, a miniature donkey, chickens, a dog, and an assortment of cats. The farm offers a buffer between herself and her patients—many of whom are friends, neighbors, and even members of her book club.

"I've been married and divorced and I don't have a significant other, so I think I've gotten more comfortable with

my solitude, and I've also realized what a gift the farm has been as this incredible space to write," Zink says. "My writing has really grown these past years."

Zink has written a memoir, a medical-adventure novel, and several essays about her experiences as a doctor. And she is now using writing and stories as a way to engage medical students, especially the next generation of rural physicians.

ZINK HAS PUT 160,000 miles on her Prius since she purchased it in 2006, many of them commuting from Zumbrota to the University where, as a faculty member in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, she teaches third-year medical stu-

Above: Zink, who grew up on a farm in Ohio, keeps two horses, a miniature donkey, chickens, cats, and a dog.

Right: Zink discusses *The Country Doctor Revisited* with a group of University of Minnesota medical students.



dents in RPAP. Founded 40 years ago to help recruit and retain rural primary care physicians, RPAP places 30 to 40 medical students a year in rural community clinics and medical centers for nine-month apprenticeships. Zink also works part time at the Fairview Red Wing Medical Center, is a preceptor at St. John's Hospital in Maplewood, Minnesota, and serves as director of the medical school's Global Family Medicine Pathway, which aims to give family medicine residents international experience.

But Zink has never been content with being "just" a physician.

In the 1980s, while director of the Family Tree Clinic in St. Paul, she became involved in efforts to reform Minnesota's health care system. That experience motivated her to return to school, to the University of Minnesota, for her master's in public health. "I wanted to be able to do some bigger-picture things," Zink says.

She has. During her career, Zink has published research on a broad array of topics, including intimate partner violence, death and dying, electronic medical records, school-based health centers, health care delivery, and health disparities. In 2008, the Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians awarded her its Researcher of the Year award. She received the 2011 Rural Health Hero Award from the Minnesota Department of Health. And in October, Governor Mark Dayton appointed her to serve on his Health Care Reform Task Force, charged with developing strategies to reduce costs, improve access, and lessen disparities in health care.

In Zumbrota, Zink has started a violence prevention committee, bringing together police, community members, mental health professionals, and health care providers to improve coordination of services, and she helped raise funds for a peace garden honoring victims of family violence. Zink has also taken her medical skills into the international arena, volunteering in Russia, Chechnya, Honduras, Brazil, and Nicaragua.

What ties all of Zink's seemingly disparate pursuits together is her interest in how the daily practice of medicine informs the bigger picture, says Dr. Vincent Hunt, who served as Zink's residency director at Regions Hospital in St. Paul.

For example, according to Zink's research, 10 percent or fewer of adult family providers screen patients for intimate partner violence and screening among older women is even less frequent. Intimate partner violence can result in chronic pain issues, unin-



Zink treats patients presenting with a breadth of health concerns at the Fairview Zumbrota Clinic.

tended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, depression, and even suicide. Zink suggests physicians help patients see the link between living with violence and their health, not just provide sutures and prescriptions.

"These are the types of issues that are of significant concern to those of us in primary care and family medicine," Hunt says. "And she goes after them with her enthusiasm, her inquisitiveness . . . and translates that into her teaching, her research, and her scholarly activities."

According to RPAP director Kathleen Brooks (B.A. '76, M.D. '80), Zink's commitment to scholarship has inspired other RPAP faculty to publish more about the program and its success. And her passion for teaching and writing has opened new avenues for students to use writing to reflect on their experiences. Last summer, the University, with the Minnesota Medical Association, published a second volume of stories, essays, and poetry written by medical students and edited by Zink. *Becoming a Doctor: Reflections* has become a part of the curriculum for medical students in Minnesota and elsewhere, and student essays have appeared in

established journals, including *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, *Family Medicine*, and *Minnesota Medicine*.

Zink has kept a journal since high school. But her writing became more focused in 2001, after a volunteer medical assignment in Chechnya went dramatically awry. Her colleague, Kenneth Gluck, head of the Doctors Without Borders mission there, was kidnapped at gunpoint just a month after Zink arrived. During the tumultuous 26 days that Gluck was held hostage, Zink became the major source of support for local staff. He was eventually released unharmed.

Zink used writing to process the ordeal. "It's taken me 10 years to figure out what I learned from that," Zink says. "Ten years of writing."

Her experience in Chechnya also shaped her views on how international aid agencies should operate: building community and focusing on local priorities rather than a employing a top-down agenda.

Zink's advocacy for a community-building approach is playing out in Nicaragua, where she volunteers each January with the St. Paul-based Interfaith Service to Latin America (ISLA). Cervical cancer is a major women's health issue in Nicaragua, and ISLA conducts screening and provides follow-up care in the northern mountain community of Jalapa. While the conventional test is a Pap smear, it's a luxury by Nicaraguan standards, and treatment is delayed since the tests have to be read in the United States. The local government urges the use of a less costly, albeit slightly less accurate, procedure, and Zink has been a vocal advocate in support of the change, sometimes butting heads with colleagues.

IN EARLY JANUARY, the sky outside the recruitment center for Fairview Health Services on Energy Park Drive in St. Paul is a blank slate of gray. Zink sits at the end of a long conference room table. She peers over the narrow oval glasses perched halfway down her nose at the eager faces of a dozen pre-med students from St. Olaf College. With one exception, all are women. And they're all here to find out more about what it means to

be a rural family physician today.

Once homogenous communities anchored by families of German and Scandinavian descent, rural Minnesota today is more often defined by large-scale factory farms and struggling main streets—but with a diverse population that includes immigrants from Latin America, East Africa, and Southeast Asia.

Before she tells her story, Zink invites the students to talk about their own interest in medicine. As the conversation moves around the table, she listens intently. Most are from Minnesota, many from rural areas or small towns. Their desire to become doctors stems from a family member in the healing professions or a personal or family health problem. Their stories are not unlike Zink's own, although she tells the students her journey has taken "a more circuitous route."

The oldest of six kids, Zink's family moved when she was 10 from suburban Dayton, Ohio, to the farm where her mother grew up and where her grandfather still lived. Caring for the farm animals was "kind of one biology project after another," she says.

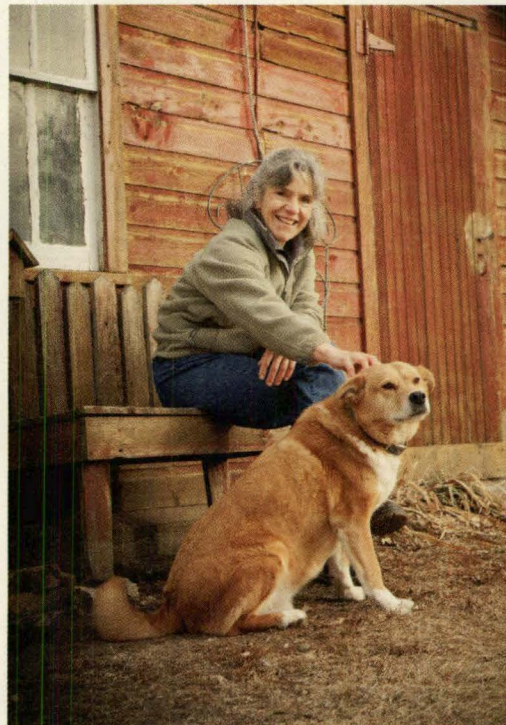
Two of Zink's younger siblings were born with Down syndrome. She helped out in her father's office; he was a dentist who devoted much of his time outside of work to building an organization that created group homes for adults with Down's.

Zink remembers often accompanying her father to meetings, doing her homework in the car. "I always felt like one of the real gifts that my parents gave me is that all of my sisters and I can talk to anybody, whether they're homeless or from the country club," she says.

As a young woman growing up in the 1970s, however, Zink found she didn't share all of her parents' ideas, especially their religious views on contraception and abortion. With women's rights and women's sexuality front and center of the culture, Zink was influenced by the views of Gloria Steinem and other feminists. "I think I kind of grew pretty uncomfortable with my own body," she says. "I think you teach

what you need to learn."

Zink decided to pursue medicine but dropped out of the pre-med program at Marquette University, "turned off" by the competition, she says, and instead earned degrees in English and



Zink savors the quiet solitude of her farm and the simple demands of caring for her animals.

To hear an Access Minnesota interview with Dr. Therese Zink, and to watch a companion video for *The Country Doctor Revisited*, go to www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/Zink.

theology. After graduation, a job as a clerk in a pediatric hospital emergency room renewed her interest in medicine and an experience there, in which she helped a coworker who was being abused by her husband, cemented her commitment to domestic violence prevention.

When Zink finally enrolled in medical school at Ohio State University, she discovered she loved everything about medicine. "When I was in surgery, I wanted to be a surgeon. When I was in OB, I wanted to do that. You can't do everything," she says.

Rural family medicine allows her to do nearly everything: prenatal care, pediatrics, geriatric medicine, and trauma care. Family practitioners minister to broken arms and sore throats, to AIDS patients and drug abusers. But Zink recalls that her choice of family medicine didn't sit well with some of her professors. Most of them were specialists who suggested she was too smart to waste her time on family practice. She vividly remembers one telling her that, as a family doc, she'd be no more than a "well-trained monkey."

The bias against family medicine persists in many places today, Zink says, and it was one of the catalysts for *The Country Doctor Revisited*. "I hear this from students today," she says. "They're discouraged away from family medicine by the specialists saying 'you're too smart for it.'"

According to a *JAMA* study, despite the well-established need for physicians, in 2010 fewer than 3 percent of all medical school graduates nationally said they intended to practice in rural areas or small towns. At the turn of this past century, 20 percent of the U.S. population resided in rural areas but just 9 percent of physicians practiced there. Rural Americans tend to be older, poorer, and sicker and are more likely to be uninsured.

RPAP is designed to nurture students' interest in and understanding of rural health care. Students work with primary care and family physicians, internists, and surgeons at local sites for 36 weeks, immersing themselves in the life and lifestyle of rural practice. One of the oldest programs of its kind in the nation, RPAP has been highly successful; 80 percent of its graduates choose primary care.

"What people do not understand is that specialty medicine is very narrow and very safe, and family medicine is very broad and very encompassing," says Dr. Ray-

mond Christensen, associate director of RPAP. "It takes a special person to be able to handle that breadth."

THE ESSAYS BY ZINK and other physicians in *The Country Doctor Revisited* are testimony to those words. In "Everyone Did Their Part, But," Zink describes a frail, 87-year-old retired farmer who hadn't seen a physician in 25 years. Neglected by his family, he was hospitalized twice for infections and broken bones. He became stuck in a quagmire of medical and social service agencies without a family member or primary physician to advocate for him or manage his care.

"Today's high-tech system means there are many more players," Zink writes in the essay, "and if a patient is unable to voice his needs and does not have an advocate, there are no guarantees."

In another essay, "When Hostility Melted for the 'Funny Accent,'" RPAP alumnus Godfrey Onime, a native of Nigeria, describes the challenges of practicing medicine on too little sleep, with too little time, in a community where he's an outsider.

Onime's experience sparked a good deal of discussion during a lunchtime book group for first- and second-year medical

students at the University. Ten such book groups are meeting at medical schools around the country, funded by a grant Zink received from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine.

On this day, nearly two dozen students gather in a meeting room on the sixth floor of the Phillips-Wangensteen Building, eating pizza and discussing Onime's and other stories from *The Country Doctor Revisited*. Some have already been accepted into the RPAP program next year. It's clear from the animated burble of voices in the room that the book has grabbed their attention.

"How do you get people to trust you in this situation?" asks Ingrid Anderson, one of the book group's student organizers.

"How do you get rid of your own biases?" counters another student.

Zink sits back, watching the discussion flow. For many of the students in the room, these stories are still just that, stories. Soon, however, they'll have their own to tell, of birth and death, joy and heartache. And with Zink's help, they'll have the tools to help them deal with it all. ■

J. Trout Lowen (B.A. '89) is a Minneapolis-based writer and editor.

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Sara Moulton, last year's Big Ten Freshman of the Year

In the Zone

Sara Moulton, Minnesota's Miss Softball in 2010, led her Eagan High School team to the state title and set school records for wins, strikeouts, ERA, no-hitters, and perfect games. But she got shelled in her first outing on the mound as a Gopher last year. "I didn't know what I was getting into," Moulton admits. "The hitters were so good, if you missed a spot, they put the ball over the fence."

Coach Jessica Allister had seen it before: the high school phenom blindsided by adversity once she reaches a higher level. "Sara struggled early but was able to adjust," Allister says. "That's a very mature thing to do. Sometimes it takes two years."

It took Moulton less than two weeks. She studied game film, then employed her poise and impeccable control to begin dominating. During one three-week stretch beginning in late March, she fanned 15 batters a game in three shutout victories. By the end of the season, she had

notched 330 strikeouts (14th best in the nation), allowed only 2.06 earned runs per game (sixth best in the Big Ten), and compiled a record of 28-16. Those impressive statistics earned her the honor of being named Big Ten Freshman of the Year.

Moulton started 43 of 55 games, completed 32 of them and pitched 278.2 innings—far more than any other Gopher pitcher last year. The team rode her workhorse effort to a 31-24 record under first-year head coach Allister, a remarkable turnaround from the previous season's 16-37 mark.

This year Moulton expects even more of herself and the team, which added speed with six freshmen recruits. "Last year's successes set a good bar for this year's team," she says. Allister expects more too. "We're looking for Sara to fill the same role this year," she says. "She's huge for us."

—John Rosengren

Joel Maturi to Retire

Joel Maturi announced February 2 that he would retire as University of Minnesota athletics director when his contract expires June 30. He will remain at the University until June 30, 2013, assisting with course development, fund-raising, and teaching classes in the College of Education and Human Development's School of Kinesiology.

Maturi, 67, who has been athletics director for a decade, made the announcement at TCF Bank Stadium alongside U President Eric Kaler. Maturi said the two came to the decision mutually: "We have a new president and an old athletics director. It makes sense for the president to bring in his person and work with him." He said he and his wife, Lois, would retire in the Twin Cities area and continue to be Gopher fans.

Kaler called Maturi "a terrific human being and a tireless advocate for this university, especially student athletes." He praised his integrity and noted that under Maturi the University has had a "remarkable" record of compliance in the Big Ten and the NCAA. He also recognized Maturi's success in merging the men's and women's athletic departments, building TCF Bank Stadium, and bringing national titles to Minnesota in wrestling and men's and women's hockey.

Kaler said a new athletics director will be named by July 1.

—Cynthia Scott

Football Fan Alert

The Official Fan Tours of Gopher Athletics and the Alumni Association, operated by Creative Charters, will host a tour to Las Vegas when the Gophers open their 2012 football season against the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Runnin' Rebels on August 30. A fan tour to Lincoln, Nebraska, for the November 17 game against the Huskers is also scheduled. Check for the latest details at www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/GoGophers.

Postseason Fever

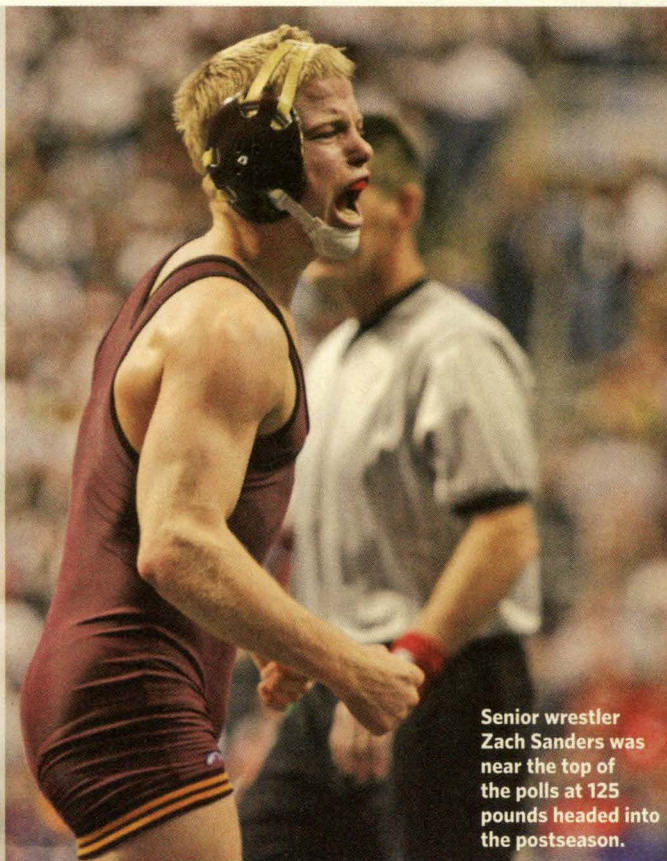
Is there a national championship in the Gophers future? Gopher wrestling and men's and women's hockey have all hovered near the top of the national rankings this season, while men's indoor track has made it to the top 25. Here is the postseason schedule.

Women's hockey: WCHA Final Face-Off is March 2 and 3 in Duluth, Minnesota; NCAA finals are March 16 and 18, also in Duluth.

Men's hockey: WCHA Final Five is March 15 through 17 in St. Paul; NCAA finals are April 5 and 7 in Tampa.

Wrestling: Big Ten championships are March 3 and 4 in West Lafayette, Indiana; NCAA finals are March 15 through 17 in St. Louis.

Men's indoor track: NCAA finals are March 9 and 10 in Nampa, Idaho.



Senior wrestler Zach Sanders was near the top of the polls at 125 pounds headed into the postseason.



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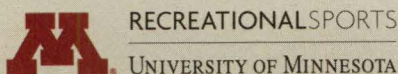
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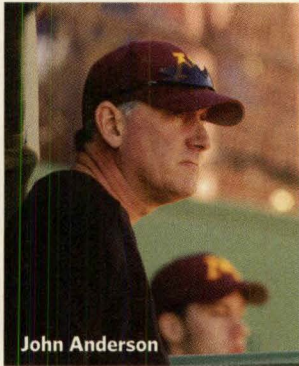
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Gopher Sports

A Diamond in the Rough

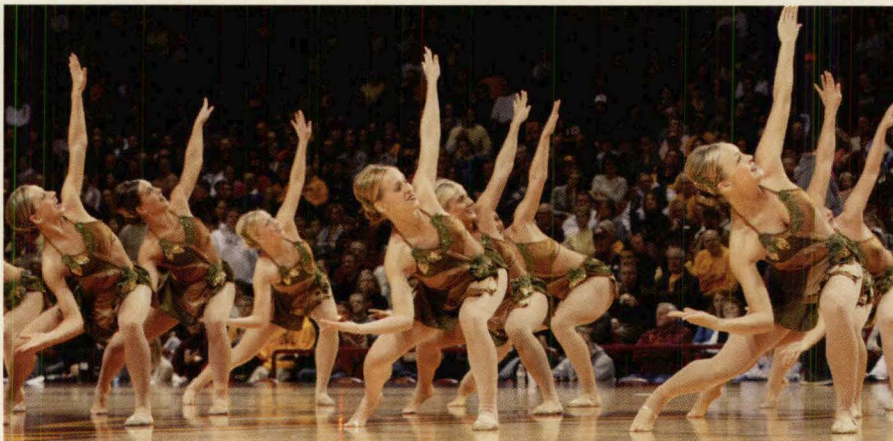
The baseball Gophers' nomadic existence may be nearing an end. Initial fund-raising has been completed for a new Gopher baseball facility to replace Siebert Field, their home since 1971. The athletics department has issued a request for proposals from architectural firms and expects to seek approval from the Board of Regents in May.



John Anderson

The Gophers last played at Siebert Field in 2009 and moved to the Metrodome in downtown Minneapolis. But last season they became homeless when the Dome was unexpectedly shuttered for nine months so that its collapsed roof could be replaced. That hiccup forced the team to reschedule its early season home games to the away site. Later in the season the Minnesota Twins made Target Field available as their schedule allowed. This year the team will again play in the Metrodome, but the long-term fate of the facility is uncertain: It is home to the Minnesota Vikings, who are also seeking a new stadium.

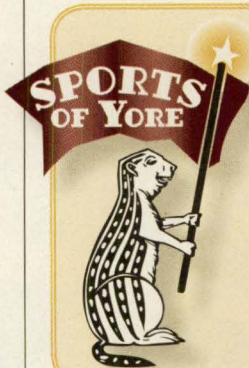
"This is a real need; this isn't a want," says Gopher coach John Anderson. "If you're going to have a Big Ten program, or any sports program, you have to have a place to practice and play."



The Best—Again

The University of Minnesota Dance Team continued its dominance with its third consecutive victory at the College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship in Orlando in January. The team, pictured here at halftime of a Gopher basketball game, placed first in both the jazz and pom divisions.

In the mascot competition, Goldy Gopher failed to defend his 2011 title, falling to fifth place. However, he finished ahead of Big Ten rivals Sparty from Michigan State, who placed eighth, and Herky the Hawk from Iowa at No. 10.



Dick Siebert, who coached Gopher baseball for three decades, transformed a mediocre program into a champion. He began his career at the U in 1948 but didn't know what he was doing until the mid-1950s, according to a March 1971 interview with the *Alumni News*.

"I was lacking in every department. I got out-coached in the games. On the practice field I discovered the only thing I really knew much about was hitting and playing first base. The rest of the game I wasn't prepared to teach. . . . During my first five or six years here we had lousy talent and a lousy coach," Siebert said.

At the time of the interview the Gophers talent was improving. Siebert is quoted as saying new Gophers pitcher Dave Winfield was "a very interesting athlete." Both Siebert and Winfield would go on to be inducted into the College Baseball Hall of Fame and Winfield into the Major League Hall of Fame.

Gopher Sports is edited by Cynthia Scott.

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To Foil Disability

In 2005, at age 50, Darryl Weiss (B.S. '77) was enjoying success as a corporate general counsel in San Diego. The former Gopher basketball player and lifelong athlete had also developed a passion for fencing—a sport that would play an unexpected and critical role in his life following a Thanksgiving trip to Minnesota that year. “My wife and I did our Black Friday shopping,” Weiss recalls. “I felt dizzy and slurred my speech a bit. On the plane ride home the next day it got worse, so when we landed we went right to the hospital.” An aneurysm had bled out, causing a stroke.

Surgery saved his life, but that stroke proved to be only the first. “The score so far is two brain surgeries, three strokes, and four seizures,” says Weiss, whose elective studies degree from the University of Minnesota focused on bioscience. Doctors say he will likely continue to have strokes, with the recovery plateau a bit lower each time.

In time, Weiss’s health challenges forced him to end his law career and quit driving. He can walk short distances aided by a cane, but doctors told him that if he wanted to continue fencing—and he most definitely did—he would have to do it from a wheelchair. Weiss didn’t just adapt to the sport, he became passionate about it. “Wheelchair fencing has been called chess at 70 miles per hour,” he says.

The sport originated in England following World War II to help wounded veterans regain strength and coordination. Its speed is similar to, or even surpasses, conventional fencing, and competitors have to develop lightning-quick response time. Because chairs can easily tip during the physically demanding matches, they are anchored to the floor. “One of its biggest aids for me has been eye-hand coordination,” says Weiss. “It has allowed reconnection of neural pathways and makes me think.”

It also propelled him to act. He has become a devoted advocate for wheelchair fencing, working to expand it in San Diego and beyond. One of his current efforts is the Wounded Warriors program at the Naval Medical Center San Diego. Weiss was part of a wheelchair fencing demonstration there that was so well received by the young combat veterans that the hospital added fencing to its rehabilitation program. Weiss is working to get the club classified as a nonprofit. “Once it is up and running we plan to expand it to others in chairs and hopefully develop more fencers wanting to



Darryl Weiss

go on to compete nationally and possibly internationally,” he says.

Weiss also mentors recent stroke survivors at a local hospital, as well as disabled law students through the American Bar Association. He also advises the San Diego Zoo on access issues under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Physical limitations have not diminished Weiss’s spirit. “I am insanely competitive,” he says. “I would like to make one of the world wheelchair championship teams or the crown jewel, the Paralympics.”

To watch a video of wheelchair fencing, go to www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/Weiss.

—Laura Weber



Sonia Maassel Jacobsen

Engineering Pioneer

When Sonia Maassel Jacobsen (B.S. '78) took office in August 2011 as the first female international president of the 8,000-member American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE), it was just her latest "first." Jacobsen was the first non-academic woman elected a fellow of ASABE, and is still only one of four female members. She was the sole physics student of her gender at her Moorhead, Minnesota, high school and went on to become North Dakota State University's first-ever female agricultural engineering student. She transferred to the University of Minnesota after her freshman year.

The 34-year public sector veteran, who works in St. Paul, specializes in wetlands hydrology. She says that new directions in agricultural and biological engineering, such as food safety and the development of biofuels and other renewable resources, make it likely that her field will grow in diversity. There is an "enormous opportunity to give back and make a difference, and that especially resonates with women," Jacobsen says.

—L.W.

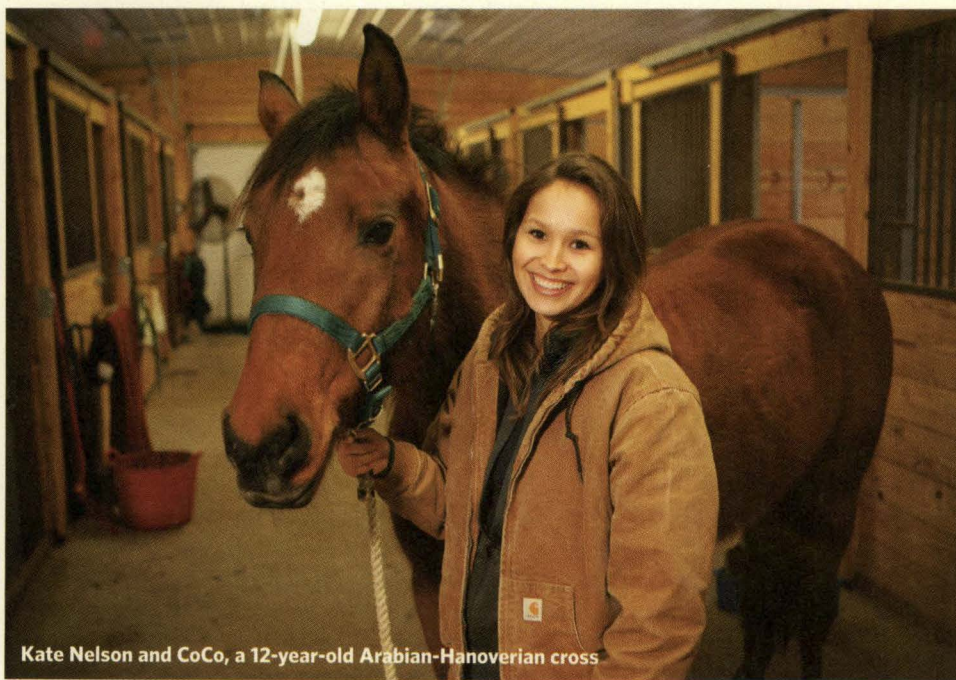
Ride On

Three years after graduating with a degree in journalism, Kate Nelson (B.A. '07) had a budding career at a public relations firm. But she didn't look back when she took the chance to become barn manager for the University of Minnesota site of We Can Ride (WCR), a therapeutic horseback-riding and carriage-driving program for children and adults living with disabilities.

"You read about people who say, 'My volunteer passion became my job,'" says Nelson. "When I say that, it sounds sort of hokey, but that is actually what happened to me."

The horse bug bit Nelson during her childhood in the rural northwest Minnesota community of Karlstad. After moving to the Twin Cities for school, she started volunteering at WCR, a nonprofit based in Minnetonka that has four other facilities in the Twin Cities area in addition to the space they lease at the Leatherdale Equine Center on the St. Paul campus.

WCR's motto is "horses helping people discover their abilities." A horse's gait is similar to the human walk and helps strengthen a rider's spine and pelvic muscles, improve posture and coordination, and increase joint mobility. Beyond the physical benefits for WCR clients, whose diagnoses include autism, cerebral palsy, stroke, and multiple sclerosis, among other conditions, horseback

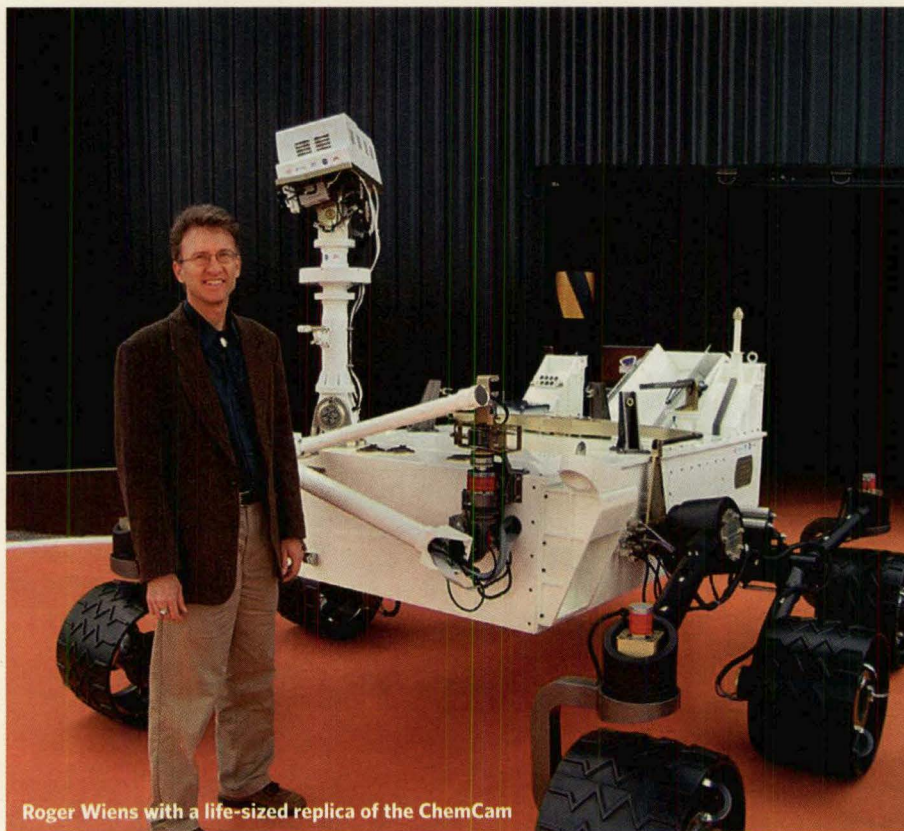


Kate Nelson and CoCo, a 12-year-old Arabian-Hanoverian cross

riding instills confidence and a sense of accomplishment—and is just plain enjoyable.

In addition to managing the barns Nelson teaches therapeutic riding. She is certified to teach by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International. Her barn manager responsibilities include ensuring that the needs of instructors and therapists are met and overseeing nutrition, exercise, and training for eight horses hand-picked for their calm demeanor, consistent gaits, and reliability.

Seeing long-term clients blossom is priceless for Nelson.



Roger Wiens with a life-sized replica of the ChemCam

“There is something that only a horse can draw out of people,” she says. “We are one of the fun outlets, where clients are focused on what they can do, rather than what they can’t do.”

—L.W.

Astronomical Curiosity

Roger Wiens’s fascination with Mars began during his childhood in western Minnesota. Now a scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, Wiens (Ph.D. ’88) has taken his interest to new heights. His handiwork, the ChemCam, is streaking toward Mars aboard Curiosity, a MINI Cooper-sized rover that launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida, on November 26 and is scheduled to land on August 5. “It’s my baby,” says Wiens, who led a team of 40 American and French scientists in its development.

As a new graduate student in physics at the University of Minnesota in the 1980s, Wiens studied under Robert Pepin, who was analyzing meteorites that were thought to have originated on Mars. Pepin’s work was instrumental in providing evidence linking the samples to their martian origin, and Wiens ended up writing the first-ever Ph.D. dissertation on the Mars atmosphere based on actual samples of material from the planet.

ChemCam will probe the surface of Mars with a powerful laser pulse that will vaporize pinhead-sized areas of the planet’s surface. The system’s telescope will then peer at the flash of glowing plasma created by the vaporized material and record the colors of light contained within it. A spectrometer will interpret the colors, enabling scientists to determine the composition of the vaporized material. “ChemCam is designed to look for lighter elements such as carbon, nitrogen, and oxygen, all of which are crucial for life,” says Wiens.

By the time Curiosity arrives on Mars, it will have traveled nearly 354 million miles from Earth. It is scheduled to roam the planet’s surface for about 98 weeks, or one Martian year.

To learn more about Curiosity and ChemCam, visit www.msl-chemcam.com.

—Cynthia Scott

WIENS PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY

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A Stirring Moment How many chemistry students does it take to make soap? The answer is five, judging from this photo—then again, that could be some kind of lye. Truthfully, though, the School of Chemistry students in this 1930 photo seemed to find lots to enjoy in their sudsy assignment. Today, about one-third of the University of Minnesota's 358 chemistry majors are women.

INSIDE

- Arizona Desert in Full Bloom
- A Legislative Primer
- Must-See Theater and Dance
- Annual Celebration Is April 20

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



The Desert Abloom with Learning

What a day of learning it was for 50-plus alumni and friends of the University of Minnesota who gathered at the Hampton Inn in Surprise, Arizona, on January 14 for the sold-out Arizona Minne-College, sponsored by the Arizona West Chapter.

The half-day-long event featured a keynote address by Jon Foley, director of the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment, who spoke about the challenges and opportunities of living on a “shrinking” planet. Following the keynote address participants chose from among four workshops led by University faculty. They included Michael Walters, associate program director of the Institute for Therapeutics Discovery and Development, who spoke about drug discovery and development at the U; physician Brenda Weigel discussing breakthroughs at the U in treating childhood cancer; Jane Davidson, professor of mechanical engineering, on developments in solar power; and Bonnie Westra, assistant professor in the School of Nursing, on electronic health records. The day concluded with a reception with University President Eric Kaler and his wife Karen Kaler.



Clockwise from top:

Vicky Rehmann (left) and Dona Wagner

Jon Foley, director of the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment

Left to right: Jane Davidson, Jennifer Clarke, and Kim Dockter, all with the College of Science and Engineering

President Eric Kaler (left) and Erv Neff

Pete He and Karen Kaler. Arizona West Chapter President Joyce Klonecz is in the background.

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Tumblers featuring depictions of Goldy Gopher through the ages are available in the Minnesota Collection.

MINNE-COLLEGE PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY BELI; MINNESOTA COLLECTION BY MIKE LEE; REED PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH KOHANEK

National Board Chair

All Abuzz about the U

Dozens of alumni swarmed around the Bee Queen, aka University of Minnesota entomologist Marla Spivak, buzzing her with questions about drones and clover. The Distinguished McKnight Professor answered them all with humor and enthusiasm. Here's a researcher who loves her bees! For more than 100 University of Minnesota alumni in Naples, Florida, this 11th annual Minne-College event was intellectual nectar at its sweetest. Professor Spivak, who spoke on "The Importance of Bees to Life: Why Are They Disappearing and How Do We Get Them Back?," was joined by four other luminaries on the University of Minnesota faculty to discuss how their work is addressing some of the most pressing topics of the day.

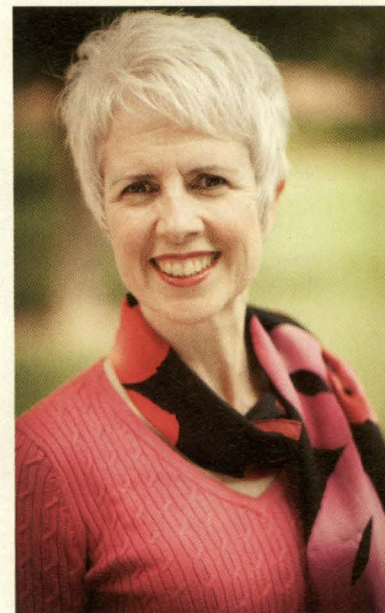
Pauline Boss, professor emerita of family social science, spoke about caring for someone with dementia and how to cope with stress and grief. Jayne Fulkerson, associate professor in the School of Nursing, addressed the topic of obesity and how it affects families. Economics professor V.V. Chari's topic was "Occupy Economics: Perspectives on the Current Financial Environment." And Dr. Margy MacMillan, a pediatric oncologist, spoke about a game plan to defeat childhood cancer.

All five are wicked smart, great communicators, and passionate about their research. But what is most remarkable is that they are hardly alone. They have several hundred fellow researchers and scholars at the University who could have delivered equally compelling lectures on as many fascinating and critical subjects. And our far-flung grads are thrilled to have these representatives bring the University to them.

University alums and friends, including Zana Sehlin (B.S. '53), professor emeritus Harlan Hansen, and Rob Groth (J.D. '72)—whose Southwest Florida Chapter staged the Minne-College—know the value of the University to the wider world. They and other snowbirds flocked to the Inn on Fifth on this sun-splashed January afternoon for the crash courses. One alumna, Marie Panger (B.S. '73), came all the way from Washington, D.C., to hear these U experts. These are devoted alumni who understand the importance of the University. They absorbed what they learned and now are taking action. By talking about the University's leading economics department, bone marrow research, and honeybee discoveries with their friends and neighbors and business associates, they're building and fortifying the reputation of their beloved alma mater.

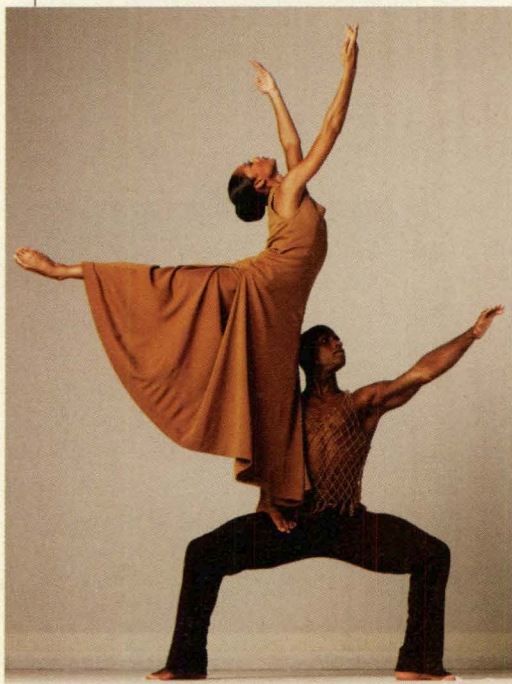
And now they, and all of us, must step it up a notch. To remain in the top flight of public research institutions, our University has a weighty task on its hands. Too many policymakers have forgotten that it is the products of this great institution—the students, the knowledge, the research—that make Minnesota a great place to create businesses, launch careers, and build vibrant communities. It's up to us to remind them and ensure that the U is a key priority this legislative session.

University graduates from southwest Florida to the southwest United States to southwestern Minnesota have an indispensable role to play. We all must assure that our elected officials understand that the University is a public good. To learn more about the needs of the University and how to make your voice heard, go to www.SupportTheUumn.edu.



Maureen Reed

—Maureen Reed (B.A. '75, M.D. '79)



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Linda Celeste Sims and Glenn Allen Sims in *Revelations*

The Alvin Ailey Dance Theater Returns

Renovation of Northrop Auditorium has silenced the facility's iconic stage, but the Northrop Concerts and Lectures series continues to offer world-class dance performances. The 2011-12 season will close this spring with a performance by one of the most beloved modern dance companies in the world.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed numerous times on campus beginning in the 1970s. Widely considered cultural ambassadors from the United States to the world, the company returns for the first time in seven years with its masterwork *Revelations* May 1 and 2 at the Orpheum Theatre in downtown Minneapolis.

The company's return to Minnesota also marks the inaugural tour of new artistic director Robert Battle, honored as one of the Masters of African American Choreography by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Through breathtaking movement set to spirituals and other religious music, *Revelations* explores the motivations and emotions of the African American cultural experience.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater grew from a single performance in March 1958 at the 92nd Street Y in New York City. Led by Alvin Ailey and a group of young African American modern dancers, that performance changed forever the perception of American dance. The Ailey company has gone on to perform for an estimated 23 million people at theaters in 48 states and 71 countries on six continents.

"This is a company that everyone in Minnesota should see and experience, and it exemplifies the richness that the arts can bring to students and alumni at the University of Minnesota," says Ben Johnson, director of Northrop Concerts and Lectures.

Two ballet performances are also scheduled for this season. The Houston Ballet will perform March 23 and 24, and France's Ballet Preljocaj's will stage *Snow White* April 13 and 14.

Alumni Association members receive a \$4 savings on up to two tickets for Northrop Dance season performances. Learn more at www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/northrop. To learn more about the renovation of Northrop Auditorium, visit www.northrop.umn.edu. —Shannon Edholm

Make the Most of U Libraries

The University of Minnesota Libraries are a treasured resource long after graduation, both for those who live in the Twin Cities area and those who live elsewhere.

Members of the Alumni Association have access to the Academic Search and Business Source databases, which carry 1,500 full-text magazines along with thousands of business, academic, and trade publications. The Libraries Online benefit is available from any computer with web access.

Retain the same borrowing privileges you had as a student by joining the Friends of the Libraries, an organization dedicated to keeping the University of Minnesota Libraries one of the state's greatest intellectual assets. Alumni Association members who join the Friends at the \$40 annual rate are automatically upgraded to the borrowing privileges level, which normally costs \$80 per year.

Membership in the Friends brings a wealth of benefits. The Friends host frequent lectures, discussions, readings, and workshops on a wide range of topics; some are open only to



Jane Smiley

members, and others are offered to members at a discount. The Friends' annual dinner is one of the year's highlights. Past speakers have included broadcaster Jim Lehrer, writer Patricia Hampl, and Garrison Keillor. This year's gathering will feature Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Jane Smiley, author of numerous books including *Charles Dickens: A Life*. Smiley's appearance is part of the University Libraries' observance of Dickens's 200th birthday.

The Friends' annual dinner will be held on May 10 at the McNamara Alumni Center, beginning with a reception and awards ceremony at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:15 p.m. and the program at 8 p.m. Tickets for dinner and Smiley's talk are \$46 for Friends of the University of Minnesota Libraries, and \$56 for nonmembers.

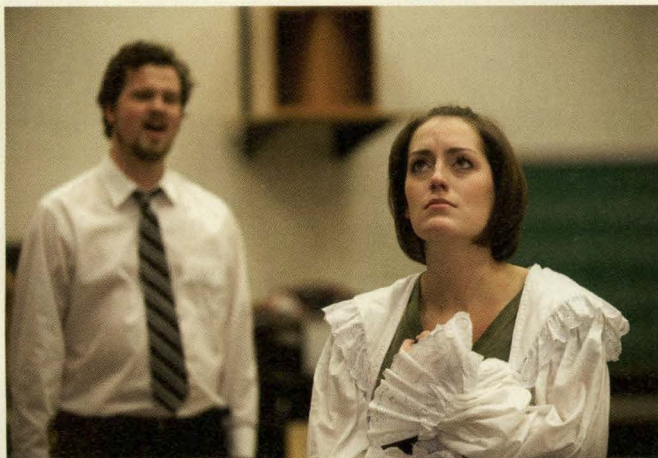
For more information about the Libraries Online and Friends member benefits, visit www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/libraries.

—Cynthia Scott

U Opera Theatre Stages Parables

The University Opera Theatre's spring opera, *Parables*, promises to be a unique and powerful experience for audiences April 19 through 22 in Ted Mann Concert Hall. This dramatic cantata by Robert Aldridge and Herschel Garfein (composer and librettist, respectively) is a timely artistic response to racial and religious intolerance around the globe. Each of the work's seven sections tells a unique story, or parable, featuring the intertwining of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. University of Minnesota Alumni Association members receive two tickets for the price of one, which are \$22 (\$12 for students and children).

Parables has been performed twice previously, on the East Coast, purely as concerts.



Will Bryan and Bergen Baker in rehearsal for last year's University Opera Theatre production of *Elmer Gantry*

Unconventional staging and the inclusion of four languages—English, Hebrew, Arabic, and Greek—contribute to the distinctiveness of the U's production. "We're going to present it visually as well as orally, with sets and costumes and projections," says director David Walsh. Prior to the 50-minute cantata's campus debut, performers will share

music and dance representing each featured religion. Walsh describes *Parables* as the University Theatre Opera's largest undertaking ever, with 200 performers on stage and a full

orchestra. The production is a creative collaboration, with several University departments contributing lighting, costume, and set design, and the University Orchestra, Singers, and Men's and Women's Choruses participating.

An outreach project in conjunction with the production involves Walsh and University music education doctoral student, T.K. Vu, visiting Minneapolis and St. Paul high schools to lead religious and cultural dialogues with 120 selected students. After group visits to a basilica, temple, and mosque, these same students will be invited to an on-campus religious tolerance forum. The project culminates with tickets to *Parables*, followed by a question-and-answer session with the composer and librettist.

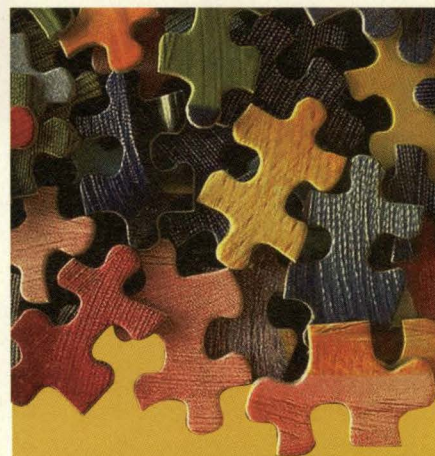
A pre-opera lobby discussion begins 45 minutes before each performance. Details can be found at www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/schoolofmusic or call 612-624-2345.

—Jennifer Benson

Celebrate the U on April 20



Set aside the evening of April 20 to celebrate the U with alumni and friends of the University at the Alumni Association Annual Celebration. This year's dinner and program will be held in the premium club area of TCF Bank Stadium and will feature musical entertainment and a keynote address by University President Eric Kaler. The program will also highlight accomplishments in the areas of research, teaching, and outreach. For more information and to register, visit www.MinnesotaAlumni.org.



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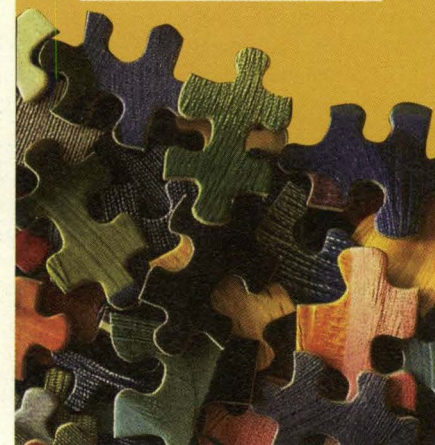
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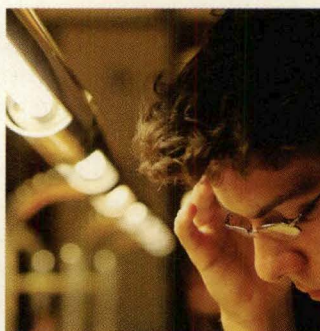
The University of Minnesota's 2012 total capital budget request is \$209.1 million. The state is being asked to provide \$169.5 million of that, with the remainder coming from the University and private sources. Governor Mark Dayton has recommended that the U receive \$107 million of the \$169.5 state portion.

Here are the details of the request, with Dayton's recommended allocation for each item in parentheses:

- ✓ \$90 million in Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement funds for maintenance of existing facilities (\$20 million)
- ✓ \$81 million for a new heat and power plant (\$81 million)
- ✓ \$6.1 million for renovation of the Itasca Biological Station and Labs (\$6.1 million)
- ✓ \$21 million for renovation and space optimization—a University initiative to use buildings more efficiently. Eddy Hall would be renovated while Fraser and Williamson halls would be demolished; the functions currently carried out in Fraser and Williamson would be transferred to Eddy. Demolition of Fraser and Williamson is projected to save the University \$35 million in maintenance costs. (\$0)
- ✓ \$11 million for the American Indian Learning Resource Center at the University of Minnesota, Duluth (\$0)
- ✓ In addition to the University's biennial budget and capital bonding bill, a variety of legislative proposals and policy issues typically arise. Stay up to date by visiting www.MinnesotaAlumni.org throughout the session.

By his own admission, University of Minnesota President Eric Kaler (Ph.D. '82) was all atwitter as he addressed the crowd at his first-ever legislative briefing on February 1. His message to the record crowd of 500 assembled at the McNamara Alumni Center: Go forth and become all atwitter too.

Kaler, with a supporting cast of iPad-toting students, unveiled #UMNproud, the new official University of Minnesota hashtag on the social media site Twitter. It's part of the U's effort to mobilize students, alumni, and friends of



the U to become maroon-and-gold advocates. "Each of our stories is a testament to why this University matters and why we need to aggressively communicate with our legislators and the governor about the importance of our capital request this session," said

Kaler. "Yes, we are the University of Minnesota. But we need to tell everyone we know, everyone with influence, that this university *is* Minnesota."

In his remarks, Kaler listed 13 points that illustrate the U's value to the state, ranging from the 13-to-1 return on investment to Extension's outreach. Each point was 140 characters or fewer, the length of a tweet. During the briefing students fanned out to assist audience members who wished to set up a Twitter account. Those who preferred to tell their U stories in a more traditional mode were provided with preaddressed postcards.

To learn more about Kaler's address and for tools to become an effective advocate, visit www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/advocacy.



These images are from *What Is a Research University?*, a video produced by University Relations at the University of Minnesota. It details how the University's public research mission impacts the state. To see it, go to www.MinnesotaAlumni.org/researchuniversity.

A Primer on the Minnesota Legislature

- The 2012 session convened on January 24 and is scheduled to adjourn on May 23.
- The state constitution requires Minnesota to balance its budget.
- The State of Minnesota operates on a two-year budget cycle, called a biennium. This session is the second year of the biennium. Operational and programmatic funding is allocated in the first year of the biennium only; last year the U received \$545.3 million plus \$88.8 million in a supplemental capital investment bill.
- The even-numbered year of each biennium is typically reserved for legislative consideration of state-funded capital projects, that is, building and infrastructure as opposed to programs.
- Recent forecasts have indicated a projected state budget surplus of \$876 million. By law, a certain percentage of the surplus is required to replenish the state's rainy-day fund. Allocation of the remainder is under discussion.
- Every 10 years legislative district boundaries are redrawn based on census results. This redistricting is currently taking place.
- As a result of redistricting, all 201 legislators (134 House members and 67 senators) are up for reelection in November. Because district lines will be redrawn, these new borders will likely impact the number of returning legislators.

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University of Minnesota student Dylan Cyr puts the “physical” in “physical education” as he works on his form for his bowling class, held in Goldy’s Gameroom in the basement of Coffman Memorial Union. At night, Goldy’s Gameroom and Goldy’s Spot (in the St. Paul Student Center) become hangouts for students drawn to billiards, bowling, and board games.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY NELSON



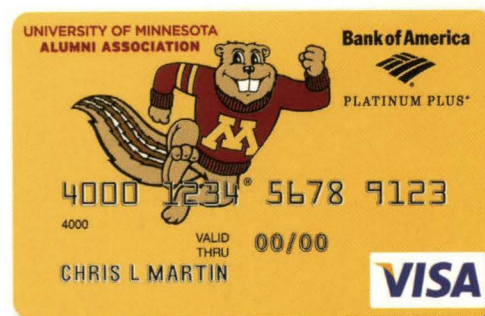
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