

Briefs

State of universities telecast on Wed.

HOUGHTON — The first annual State of the Universities Address will be telecast live to Michigan Tech University at 5 p.m. Wednesday.

Irvin Reid, president of Wayne State University, will deliver the address at the Michigan Historical Museum, in Lansing. Reid chairs the Presidents Council, which is comprised of the presidents of Michigan's 15 public universities.

In the face of impending state budget cuts, Reid is expected to present a consolidated case on behalf of the universities.

The master of ceremonies for the event will be former state legislator Paul Hillemonds, now president of the Detroit Renaissance and chairman of the University Investment Commission.

Novi students get taste of World War I

NOVI, Mich. (AP) — Novi High School students got a small taste of war when a world history teacher recently had them turn their classroom into a trench.

As part of the study of World War I, Lee Bonner had sophomores, juniors and seniors transform their triangular classroom into an oversized version of the narrow, muddy ditches where millions died fighting. The Daily Oakland Press reported Monday.

Crumpled, mud-colored butcher paper was hung on chicken wire to simulate the trench's side walls. The sound of recorded machine-gun fire punctured the silence.

Students also researched different aspects of the war, such as tanks and artillery and soldiers' letters.

Dean named AAAS fellow

HOUGHTON — The dean of engineering at Michigan Tech University has been named a Fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Robert Warrington earned the honor for promoting and developing the field of micromachining, establishing the Institute of Micromachining and starting the first Commercialization of Microsystems Conference in 1994.

A total of 348 members are being elevated to the rank of fellow because their efforts to advance science or applications are deemed scientifically or socially distinguished.

New fellows will be honored Feb. 14 at the Fellows Forum during the 2004 AAAS Annual Meeting in Seattle.

MTU senate OKs engineering minor

HOUGHTON — Michigan Tech University's Senate approved a minor in municipal engineering Nov. 5.

While the minor is available to students on campus, it was developed to complement the bachelor's in engineering degree being offered via distance learning.

Students are enrolled in the bachelor's program at Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City in partnership with Tech.

Minor requirements can be met through existing courses, according to Bill Bulleit, associate chair of civil and environmental engineering. Marty Banks-Sikarskie, director of Extended University Programs, said sufficient distance-learning classroom time is available.

Graduate Dean Bruce Rafert noted additional facilities will open up when the new Center for Integrated Learning and Information Technology is completed, which should accommodate growth in the program.

LEARN AT LUNCH

Hancock High uses dinner setting as teaching tool

By ERIN ALBERTY
Gazette Writer

HANCOCK — Hancock High School is at the center of dinner conversations across town.

The school's annual report — mission statement, curriculum, even MEAP scores — now appears on goldenrod placemats in several Hancock restaurants.

"Every year we put together the annual report, and every year it sits on my shelf in hopes that someone might come along and read it," principal John Sanregret said. "I thought this would let people sit down and read a bit about what we do while they wait for their food."

The plus-sized placemat appears in the Kaleva Cafe, Jim's Pizza, Gemignani's Italian Restaurant, Upper Deck, Gino's Restaurant and Nutini's Supper Club and Cocktail Lounge.

"We've always received tremendous support from local businesses," Sanregret said.

He hopes the placemats will keep the school in sight and in mind.

"You always hear the idea that the school is the center of the community, but at times we lose focus," Sanregret said. "Schools are a topic of conversation when things aren't going so hot, but this can be a reminder that a lot of positive things go on in our school."

The placemat also lists Hancock High's extra-curricular activities and retention.

School board president Dean Woodbeck praised the public relations initiative.

"It's a great idea," he said.



Sergio Buoniconti/Daily Mining Gazette
Nicole Larson, 17, of Atlantic Mine, sets a table at Jim's Pizza in Hancock with the new placemats that are printed with the Hancock High School's annual report Oct. 23. The report now appears on placemats in several area restaurants in an effort to increase awareness of the school's performance.

Program brings team, life-skills class together

Weekly effort forges new bonds

HAMILTON, Mich. (AP) — Three years ago, Carin Von Ins' special education class started washing the Hamilton High School football team's uniforms as part of a life skills curriculum.

The weekly effort is much more than work — it has become a daily, social interaction between players and students.

"It's a friendship, a relationship, a bond," Von Ins told The Holland Sentinel for a Friday story.

One of the students, Zach Aalderink, has become the team's student manager and many of the football players visit Von Ins' classroom each day.

"It's important for our players to see how everything works in our school," Hamilton football coach Chris Myers said. "At some places, the football team puts itself up on a pedestal."

"We don't want to do that here. We want everyone to be equal. We're no better than anybody else."

The successes of the football team on the field and the relationships with students off the field have reached new heights. The Division 4 Hawkeyes (10-0) play their second home playoff game Friday night against Three Rivers (9-1).

Aalderink, a junior who has Down syndrome, earned a varsity letter for his work.

"Zach's a pretty special kid not only for our team but the Hamilton school system," said Myers, who presented Aalderink with the letter in front of the student body at a homecoming assembly. "He serves as a motivation for a lot of people."

Matt Mokma, a running back, has become a regular visitor to Von Ins' class-



AP Photo/The Holland Sentinel, Brian Forde
Matt Mokma, 17, left, and Zach Aalderink, 17, put Hamilton High School football jerseys onto hangers Nov. 4 at the school in Hamilton, Mich. Three years ago, Carin Von Ins' special education class started washing the football team's uniforms as part of a life skills curriculum. The weekly effort is much more than work — it has become a daily, social interaction between players and students. Aalderink, one of the students, has become the team's student manager and many of the football players visit Von Ins' classroom each day.

room. He often talks with special education students during breaks in his class schedule and recently went on a field trip with the class to Hope College.

"He's a great role model," said Von Ins, who didn't know Mokma until he came into her room early this school year. "My students respect him and look up to him."

Mokma said the players appreciate the work the students do for the team. In addition to washing uniforms,

the class bakes 12 to 15 dozen cookies for the players every Friday during the season.

Still, it is the interaction between players and students that has been the most beneficial.

"On Fridays, Zach's out there in the hall getting high fives and guys saying, 'Hey Zach, hey buddy,'" Von Ins said. They mean it. Chris isn't out there saying, 'Guys, be nice.' These kids know Zach's part of the team."

Schools switch to 4-day week to save money

Potential savings from bus service, utilities, substitutes

By KIMBERLY HEFLING
Associated Press Writer

DIXON, Ky. — Webster County High senior Zach Cato spends his Mondays mowing lawns and watching football game films. He is not cutting class — he is taking advantage of his school district's move to a four-day week.

"The only ones who are complaining are the ones who don't want to be here at all," the 17-year-old Cato says.

By using the shortened schedule, the district of 1,900 students in this western Kentucky farming and coal mining region hopes to save about 2 percent of its annual spending — or \$200,000 — on bus service, substitute teachers and utilities. It is the first district in Kentucky to go to four days.

Mostly rural school systems in at least 10 other states have made the switch to save money: Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Arkansas, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming, according to a 2002 survey by the National School Boards Association.

"It's the easiest way to cut to get a quick result fast, to get more money," said Linda Embrey, a spokeswoman for the association.

The verdict is still out on whether students perform as well, and whether schools save enough money to justify the switch. But Webster County Assistant Superintendent Rachel Yarbrough said it appears to be

a success here so far in its first year.

Students are encouraged to make dentist's and doctor's appointments on their Mondays off, so that they miss fewer classes. Another benefit to having no school on Monday is that teachers have more time for planning and faculty meetings, said Webster County High Principal Carolyn Sholar.

And the students "really feel like they're not as burned out," Sholar said.

To meet state guidelines, the school day was extended by 30 minutes. In addition, schools will be in session on Mondays in eight weeks of the year — the last four weeks of each

semester — to help student prepare for Kentucky's end-of-the-year assessment exams.

Tabitha Daniel, an education professor at Western Kentucky University,

said many parents might not be able to afford additional child care if their children are off on Mondays. She questioned whether the money saved is worth the additional stress to families.

"I just think there are going to be a lot of children that are unfortunately going to be alone on Monday," Daniel said. "I just think that's very, very sad."

To help parents find day care on Mondays, the Webster school system put together a pool of babysitters who could be called — some of them high school students. The sitters were given training in first aid and CPR. Churches are also offering programs to watch youngsters.

Around the country, school systems are being squeezed simultaneously by budget cuts and by more stringent federal education standards.

'It's the easiest way to cut to get a quick result fast, to get more money.'

— Linda Embrey
National School Boards Association