Funding cancer research

The University of Manitoba was front and centre when nearly $3 million in new cancer research funding was announced on Aug. 24.

Two Manitoba teams — both with an interest in population-based cancer research — met with success in the Access to Quality Cancer Care New Emerging Team Grants program supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), CancerCare Manitoba and Nova Scotia. The funding will have a direct impact on people in Manitoba.

“This research is going to improve cancer services across the spectrum from prevention and screening to treatment and follow-up,” said Donna Turner, epidemiologist at CancerCare Manitoba and associate professor of community health sciences at the University of Manitoba. “Our data will enable us to better understand issues and result in evidence-driven decision making. This is an exciting opportunity in which we are connecting research to practice.”

Turner, a co-principal investigator on two Manitoba-based teams as well as a co-applicant on another $1.4 million project funded by CIHR based in Alberta, is working with University of Manitoba principal investigators Brenda Elias, community health sciences, and Alan Katz, a family physician and associate professor of family medicine and community health sciences.

Elias and Turner head a multidisciplinary team, which will receive a total of $1.5 million over the next five years, to investigate access to quality cancer care and control for Manitoba’s First Nations. The research involves working with the province’s First Nations population to identify issues, reduce risk and ensure equitable access.

“Currently, there is no effective system for disseminating cancer-related information that addresses the specific needs of First Nations communities,” Elias said. “This project is designed to improve knowledge translation related to cancer prevention, screening, treatment and care, and to develop best practices that can inform decision-making at the community, provincial and national levels.”

Katz is leading another multidisciplinary team that has come together to understand the role of primary care providers in improving outcomes and quality of care for patients with colorectal cancer.

See FOCUS/P 2
Province supports research

More than $2.9 million will be provided to the University of Manitoba to support research projects in the areas of areas of environment, health and agriculture, Science, Technology, Energy and Mines Minister Jim Rondeau announced last month.

“From researching the health of our environment to providing high performance computing and networking capabilities for research institutions, Manitoba scientists are contributing to a better future for people living in this province,” said Rondeau. “The funding we are providing shows this government’s commitment to science and research, innovation and technology.”

“The researchers whose projects are receiving this new funding are among the very best in the country,” said Emile Szathmáry, University of Manitoba president. “The continued support of the Province of Manitoba is vital to ensuring that these scientists and scholars have the tools and equipment they need to carry out their innovative research programs.”

Manitoba’s investment leverages matching funding from the federal government, universities and international research granting agencies.

Part of the funding will go to the University of Manitoba’s Frank Hawthorne for research into the safe storage of nuclear waste and analysis of pollutants in rock formations. Hawthorne noted that Hawthorne, recently named by Thomson Scientific as the world’s most-cited geoscientist, has dedicated his life to understanding more about the health of the earth’s environment.

The Manitoba Research and Innovation Fund was created to help the province’s universities, colleges, hospitals and other institutions to carry out important, world-class research and development.

Since program inception in 2003-04 the MRIF has provided funding of some $50 million for research and development projects and research infrastructure and innovative support activities in areas such as health and agriculture, technology and aerospace, cultural and new media industries, and alternative energy developments.

Focus on prevention and survival

From Page 1:

The team will receive a total of $1.4 million over the next five years.

"Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in Canada, and this project is ultimately aimed at improving patient survival," Katz said. “Our team is made up of family physicians, nurses, cancer specialists, epidemiologists, cancer survivors and others, and we will be focusing on a number of aspects of this disease related to primary care, including screening and diagnosis, as well as follow-up care. Early diagnosis of colorectal cancer is critical to good outcomes, and our team will be studying how to build new relationships between the cancer care community and primary care providers that support screening and early diagnosis.”

"CancerCare Manitoba is proud to support these teams of multiple experts right across the country, including teams from Manitoba. Together, they are in a unique position to tackle complex questions very germane to the delivery of care in Manitoba,” said Dhal DhalIWAL, president & CEO, CancerCare Manitoba.

“Only seven projects in Canada were chosen for funding under this program, and the fact that two are being led by researchers from the University of Manitoba says a great deal about the quality of their work,” said university president Emile Szathmáry and associate vice-president (research) Peter Cattini.

The Bulletin

University of Manitoba

The Bulletin is the newspaper of record for the University of Manitoba. It is published by the Public Affairs department every second Thursday from September to June and monthly in December, July and August. The Bulletin welcomes submissions from members of the university community. Submissions can include letters to the editor, columns, news briefs and story and photo suggestions.

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In The News

University of Manitoba members are always making news – demonstrating the university’s impact on the community – check out the stories and headlines that show why U of M faculty and staff impact the world around them.

Our waterways whet Lisbon

June, 2007

Canadian Architect

Herbert Enns, professor and director of Experimental Media Centre in the Faculty of Architecture, was the subject of a large feature for his recent multimedia installation at the Lisbon Architecture Triennale, a two-month festival celebrating architecture in Portugal. The article, written by University of Manitoba graduate Rodney LaTourre, who now lives in Berlin, details how video footage, soundscapes and aerial photos commissioned and curated by Enns explore five of Canada’s urban waterways. The installation was entitled Alien Spaces/Strange Spaces: Canada’s Urban Rivers.

Bamboo is cool

Aug. 6, 2007

BharatTextile.com, Canada.com

Professor Wen Zong of the department of textile sciences was quoted in two online stories on new synthetic-natural fibre blends. Zong was quoted saying sheets made from bamboo and beech wood fibres could offer a cooler option for hot weather.

Naimark chairs national panel

Aug. 14, 2007

The Ottawa Citizen

The University of Manitoba’s ninth president, Arnold Naimark, was named chair of a newly-created independent expert panel on federal laboratories. The Ottawa Citizen covered the government announcement. The panel, comprised of national experts in science and technology, will set out to strengthen collaboration and advance research. Considering different arrangements for managing laboratories will bring the views of government, academia and the private sector together to find innovative ways to further advance our common research goals, said Naimark.

A cuppa research

Aug. 25, 2007

The Winnipeg Free Press

Assistant professor Sonia Bookman, sociology, and research assistant Seryl Peters were featured in a story and colour photograph for their research on how Canada’s coffee shops are becoming platforms for social activity.

Headline News

Where else has the U of M been making news?

• “Four months of holidays? Not Quiet!” by Raymond Lee, business administration professor, InsideHerbiglia.com, Aug. 9, 2007
• “Canadians make splash at Bangkok Universiade,” Canada.com, Aug. 12, 2007

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Funding enhances value of high-protein by-product of ethanol production

The University of Manitoba will receive funding for further research to enhance the value of livestock feed uses for distiller’s dried grain, a high protein by-product of ethanol production. The Canada-Manitoba Economic Partnership Agreement is contributing $202,820 towards the project.

The announcement was made today by Rod Bruinooge, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South, and Marilyn Brick, Member of the Legislative Assembly for St. Norbert.

“Canada’s New Government is working in partnership with the Province of Manitoba to ensure a prosperous future for Manitobans by fostering growth in the ethanol and grain industries,” said Bruinooge.

“This joint funding investment of over $200,000, through the Canada-Manitoba Economic Partnership Agreement, will enable the University of Manitoba to conduct research that will help place Manitoba at the forefront of developing practical and economic uses for wheat derived distillers dried grain.”

“The iClicker is an audience response system that allows students to electronically answer questions in the classroom. It’s the academic equivalent of the ask the audience option in the game Who Wants to be a Millionaire,” with the answers being tallied up and displayed for the professor at the front of the room.

The upside of the system is that it allows students to answer questions without fear of criticism. Come this fall, some 2,500 students will be using them as part of their required coursework, with others tapping out their answers on a voluntary basis.

And every one of those clicks will tell the professor at the front of the class how the game is going.

When you have a class of 300 students they can be shy about putting up their hands for a vote, physics and astronomy professor Kumar Sharma said. Or everyone waits to see how the vote is going to go and then tries to hop on the bandwagon. “These systems allow you to test their responses to a question without them having to worry about their classmates knowing their answers.”

What the class does see is a histogram of the various answers. Ideally, the correct answer will be the most popular one, but there’s no guarantee the vote will go that way and indeed that’s part of the point of the system. It helps the professor understand instantly how the work is being understood by the students. If they’re not getting the right answer, then the professor knows that he or she has to come at the material from a different approach.

“An audience response system can get the students to respond in the class it tells me where they are with the material and that makes it an important tool when I’m teaching,” Sharma said.

But the question Sharma helped the university tackle this fall, was which audience response system it should go with.

“There are many systems that have been appearing in North America to assess student responses,” Sharma said. The University of Manitoba has tried the systems in the past, but with the growing popularity them it made sense to pick one design that could service the entire university, rather than having students juggle different designs depending on what class they were in.

“I thought it would be a good idea if the university endorsed one system,” Sharma said. To that end, he headed up an informal committee to investigate some of the audience response brands on the market. They looked over five systems, considering everything from how easy they were to use to how well they could take a fall.

The iClicker’s are economical, they have a simple design with little room for confusion and they’re easy to use from a technical standpoint – you don’t have to load any software, it’s all included in the controller,” Sharma said. “Plus they have a good recording response so you can track how the students have been voting.”

The iClickers are being sold at the University Bookstore for textbooks requiring the iClickers include a coupon for a discount on the audience response systems themselves. Add to that the cost of selling the system back to the Bookstore at the end of the year and Sharma said students might even come out financially ahead.

Meanwhile the information services and technology unit has been gearing up, putting the students in the faculties of Arts and Science to be iClicker combatable. Training sessions are also set this fall to cover the use of the iClickers.

Now you can ask the audience iClickers give professors instant feedback from students

BY DALE BARBOUR

The Bulletin

We’re about to become an iClicker kind of campus.

The iClicker is an audience response system that allows students to electronically answer questions in the classroom. It’s the academic equivalent of the ask the audience option in the game Who Wants to be a Millionaire” with the answers being tallied up and displayed for the professor at the front of the room.

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Ethanol production just got greener

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“This joint funding investment of over $200,000, through the Canada-Manitoba Economic Partnership Agreement, will enable the University of Manitoba to conduct research that will help place Manitoba at the forefront of developing practical and economic uses for wheat derived distillers dried grain.”

“Our government is committed to investing in new economic opportunities for Manitoba’s rural communities,” said Brick. “Research into adding value to ethanol by-products follows Manitoba’s strong commitment to investment in biofuel production.”

The Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences will research different processing technologies and techniques to determine the impact on the yield of ethanol as well as the quality of the by-products. Increasing the value of the by-product will contribute to the long-term success of both the ethanol industry and the livestock feed industry in Manitoba. The emerging ethanol industry also provides an alternative market opportunity for Manitoba grain producers.

“This project builds on a foundation of outstanding research at the University of Manitoba, related to new wheat cultivars, efficient fermentation strategies, and value-added co-product development,” said University of Manitoba president Emile Szathmáry.

“The support announced today is great news, not just for the researchers involved, but also for the Manitoba grain producers, livestock producers and biofuels industries that will directly benefit from their innovative work.”

Previous funding of $134,000 was also provided for this project through the Canada-Manitoba Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the governments of Canada and Manitoba are working together and in partnership with community stakeholders to build a stronger economy and strengthen communities. These priorities promote economic growth and diversification in the province. For more information on this and other projects funded under EPA, visit: www.epa.gov.mb.ca.
The onset of September is accompanied by orientation sessions at the University of Manitoba, among them those for new professors and students. I speak at these sessions, including those for support staff, and I have been told that my messages fit the interests of each group. This year, however, my thoughts kept returning to one theme – the importance of knowing the character of one’s own university. At one time I was unaware that every university has its own culture and character. As a new student of knowing the character of one’s own university. 

Perspectives may vary, but in my view, the cultural orientation of this city was deeply shaped by the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. To this day, nothing divides the community more quickly than labour issues, and they retain their potent ability to divide colleagues within the university as well. The largest, in association with language and religion, has also shaped the nature of Winnipeg, Manitoba’s settlement history, for example, is rife with conflicted attitudes, encompassing indigenous, francophone and anglophone divides as well as later-arriving settlers, and

The Bull atitudes, encompassing indigenous, francophone and culture of the city in which it is embedded. What are cultural, and that each institution reflected the culture of the city in which it is embedded. By the time I came to Manitoba I was convinced that the differences among the research universities I knew were cultural, and that each institution reflected the culture of the city in which it is embedded.

The expectations of newcomers often clashed with the expectations of the native-born. Perhaps in reaction to this history, one now finds an ever-increasing human dignity and equity throughout the city and the university as well. It is within the cultural context of Winnipeg that the University of Manitoba has always had a special place – it was named for a creation to do, namely to preserve, to advance and to disseminate knowledge, and thus facilitate the cultural, social and economic well-being of the people of this province, our nation and the world. It is fair to say that the university has executed its mission extraordinarily well over the years, and its achievements have inspired many.

I was among those inspired, though I was educated in another province: I first entered the University of Manitoba in a 4th year class in human genetics, where our professor told us that the Globe & Mail had just carried a report that scientists had demonstrated that they could prevent Rh disease of the newborn. The news was electrifying! In those days, human geneticists knew a lot about disease causation, but they could do little to prevent it. Rh disease of the newborn, in particular, was a case of maternal-foetal blood group incompatibility, was responsible for approximately 10 per cent of neonatal deaths in Canada in the 1960s, and the story seemed too good to be true. That it was true, gave hope not only to couples who wanted to become parents, but it also inspired an entire generation of undergraduates – including me – to believe that advancement of knowledge within universities makes a real difference.

It is a fact that the University of Manitoba is indispensable to its province culturally, scientifically and economically. Its culture reflects Winnipeg, but its presence also influences the character of the city, because the university changes attitudes inexcusorably.

Consider, for example what I have sometimes described as the guiding compass of the University of Manitoba. It upholds the gift of Alexander Gordon Metis in ancestry. Isbister never studied here because his father sent him to the “old country” to earn his degree. In the University of Edinburgh, he attended a university more than 15 years before the advent of the 20th century.

A fundamental faith that intellectual ability abides in all peoples of the world is also characteristic of the university. The concept of the individual has long defined its character, and set it apart from others. I hope that the new professors, the new students and new support staff who have joined a great university whose culture differs from the rest. Everyone’s actions matter here because each is like a thrown stone, generating ripples on our society’s pond, spreading to shoreline and changing what was there.

The University of Manitoba Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, September 18, 2007, at 10:30 a.m. in Room E3-262, Engineering and Information Technology Complex 75 Chancellors Circle, Fort Garry Campus

The meeting will be preceded by refreshments in the Engineering and Information Technology Complex (EITC) atrium beginning at 10:00 a.m. Public parking is available in the University Parkade, adjacent to the Helen Glass Centre for Nursing.

For those unable to attend the meeting in person, it will be webcast live on the University of Manitoba’s website at

Summer Universiade success

As the 2007 Summer Universiade (World University Games) in Bangkok, Thailand (Aug. 8 to 18) wrapped up, three Manitoba Bison athletes came home to Canada as medal winners. Bison Josh Klassen, Toon van Lankvelt and Nathan Toews competed for Team Canada men’s volleyball, which earned a silver medal on the last day of competition.

On Aug. 18, Turkey captured the gold after posting a 3-1 (25-23, 25-11, 25-25, 25-16) win against Canada with Toews tying for team lead in blocks with 39 and teaming with fellow Bisons Omran Al Mosawi and Trevor Toews for an overall total of 56.

Toews competed for Team Canada men’s volleyball at the World University Games (2005) within FISU (International University Sports Federation) as a member of the Team Canada Men’s Best ever finish at the World University Games was a silver medal at the 1986 Universiade in Edmonton, Alberta. When he died, his 1883 will specified the gift of his books, his university, his library and his income to the university or higher education. Speeches related to issues of interest to the university community are also welcome. E-mail submissions to barbourd@ms.umanitoba.ca. The editor reserves the right to reject any submission that does not comply with policy. Opinions expressed are those of the writer.

Letters Policy

The University of Manitoba Bulletin welcomes submissions for Viewpoint from members of the university community. Unless otherwise discussed in advance with the editor, articles should range between 600 and 700 words and should address issues related to the university or higher education. Speeches related to issues of interest to the university community are also welcome. E-mail submissions to barbourd@ms.umanitoba.ca. The editor reserves the right to reject any submission that does not comply with policy. Opinions expressed are those of the writer.
Hawthorne is most-cited geoscientist in the world

The Bulletin, a leading information company, has analyzed data from 224 journals and 150,000 scientific papers published during the last decade and found that Frank C. Hawthorne, Canada Research Chair in crystallography and mineralogy, is the most-cited geoscientist in the world with 2,204 citations.

“I hadn’t realized it was so high,” he says.

Out of the 25 most-cited geologists in the world, the Clayton H. Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources mineralogist took top honors, Thomson Scientific annual citation review press release. The company also noted that one particular Hawthorne paper had been cited more than 260 times. Hawthorne is and is of researcher to have been ranked in Science Watch’s previous report in 2001 and in this current report. Science Watch is the online version of Thomson Scientific.

Thomson Scientific also included its top 10 list of institutions ranked according to number of citations. During the same time period, from 1996 to 2007, the U.S. Geological Survey had 23,172, NASA had 20,503, and the University of Colorado 15,565. Comparatively, Hawthorne had about one-tenth the total citations of the first place institution.

Hawthorne and his wife, Elena Sokolova both teach and conduct research in the geological science department of the University of Manitoba.

As if that wasn’t remarkable enough, they both share another distinction: they both have had minerals named after them by the International Mineralogical Association. Sokolovite is a rare mineral found in remote regions of Tajikistan, and Frank hawthorneite is a greenish crystal found in lab.

“We’re not the only husband and wife team with minerals named after us,” Hawthorne notes. “Marie Curie and her husband Pierre also had minerals named after them, honouring them for their research.”

In 2006, Hawthorne was elected as a Foreign Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences in recognition of his outstanding research contributions and named as an Officer of the Order of Canada. Moreover, Hawthorne and Sokolova are currently working with Russian scientists examining rocks recovered from the Kola Superdeep Borehole in northwest Russia, the world’s deepest drill hole, extending down 12.2 kilometres.

Frank Hawthorne

On the ground in Haiti

Haiti is currently experiencing its most challenging and dangerous period since the 2010 earthquake.

“I never thought my peace and development PhD would be so quickly needed in practice,” she says.

She also has a background as a chartered accountant and former tax specialist, and she served as director of finance and gift planning at The Winnipeg Foundation from 1998 to 2004.

Emery also has wide professional experience with the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), through which she has helped raise the professional standards of fundraisers across North America.

“My previous experience as chair and treasurers with the AFP have included board membership and treasurer for International Asociation of AFP, national chair and chair of the Leadership Society for AFP Foundation for Philanthropy Canada.

Audrey Bickford

Making a Difference

Our University Students

Studentគ

BY DALE BARBOUR

TheBulletin

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

It’s a familiar quote by anthropologist Margaret Mead, and it’s one that masters of education student Rose Woodard has taken to heart.

During August she spent a week volunteering at the Grade 6 to 12 Louverture Cleary School in Port au Prince, Haiti and for the fall she’s busy helping plan the Winnipeg Run for Darfur for Oct. 7 in Assiniboine Park.

“I really believe that it’s up to individuals to make a difference,” Woodard said. “I felt that when I went to Haiti, the Louverture Cleary School was a natural fit to test out that theory. Her husband, Randy Woodard, also a MEd student at the U of M, volunteered in Haiti a few years earlier and the two are contemplating an extended trip there after they graduate. For Rose Woodard this was an ideal opportunity to get her feet wet in the country, do some good and see just how applicable the material she was learning at the U of M could be.

The Louverture Cleary School is a unique experience in Haiti. Generally, the cost of education in Haiti, including the cost of books and school uniforms, can be a barrier for many students looking to attend school.

The Louverture Cleary School draws its students from among the brightest but most impoverished in Haiti and gives them a leg up when it comes to their education. In exchange, the students are expected to volunteer both in the school and in their community and spend at least some of their free time tutoring elementary school children.

“The motto of the school is, ‘What you receive as a gift, you must give as a gift,’” Woodard said. “And the students take that lesson to heart, Woodard said.

Woodard worked directly with the Louverture Cleary School teachers during her stay at the school. The students don’t have textbooks for every class, so teachers – deliver their lessons by writing notes on the board, which the students typically memorize for the tests.

“This type of exposure to learning leaves students on a basic level of understanding,” Woodard said. “The goal of the workshop this year on classroom discussion and questioning techniques was to move students beyond the basic level of memorizing facts to applying, synthesizing, and evaluating the information.”

Woodard and Casey Melanson, a volunteer from Bishop Ireton High School in Virginia, were working on explaining different learning techniques to the Haitian faculty, focusing on the idea of creating a shared language between student and teacher.

“It’s a skill that’s transferable from her own graduate students at the University of Manitoba where she’s focusing on conflict and a fundraising effort to help people displaced and now living in refugee camps. Funds raised from the run will go towards Save Darfur Canada and Oxfam.

“I choose a run because it’s something I love to do and because we needed to have something we could be excited about,” Woodard said.

Of course, all of this has been a new experience for Woodard.

“It has not been easy putting together all the details but it’s been a great experience learning about all the different facets that go into making an event like this run smoothly.”

For more information about the run, go online to www.walk4darfur.ca.

MARETTA EMERY

The department of development is pleased to welcome University of Manitoba alumna as its new director. MarettEmery, BA’75, CA’77, CFRE, was appointed to the position of director of development effective Aug. 13.

Emery recently returned to Canada from Singapore where she was head of philanthropy services for Fortis Private Bank Asia from October 2004 to April 2007. Her career includes a strong financial background as a chartered accountant and former tax specialist, and she served as director of finance and gift planning at The Winnipeg Foundation from 1998 to 2004.

Emery also has widespread professional experience with the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), through which she has helped raise the professional standards of fundraisers across North America.

“My previous experience as chair and treasurers with the AFP have included board membership and treasurer for International Association of AFP, national chair and chair of the Leadership Society for AFP Foundation for Philanthropy Canada.

AUBREY KEHLER

The security services department has hired Aubrey Keehler as its new assistant director. He replaces Linda Lavallee who filled the position of director after the retirement of Jim Raftis.

Keehler brings with him over 30 years of experience as a member of the Winnipeg Police Service. He has experience in areas such as criminal investigations, general patrol operations, training, human resources and emergency response. This experience will be an asset not only to the security services department but also to the university as a whole.

His police assignments have included work in the Fort Garry and downtown areas where he became familiar with the University of Manitoba campus and the unique issues and challenges facing a university environment. In addition to his extensive police training, his member knowledge and related education has been supplemented through the Canadian Police College, Dalhousie University and Red River College.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any security matters on campus, feel free to contact Keehler at 474 9105 or by email: Aubrey KEHLER@umanitoba.ca.

APPOINTMENTS

Master of education student Rose Woodard spent time in Haiti this summer at the Louverture Cleary School where she met Brianna. This fall she’s helping organize the Oct. 7 Winnipeg Run for Darfur.

Because of the “I’ve taken here, I was able to help,” Woodard said. “But of course, we were doing all this through an interpreter. I was speaking English and it was being interpreted into Haitian Creole.” Woodard said. But despite that challenged the teachers picked up on the lessons and were engaged in the process.

“arrested language is actually very transferable, even into a language that I didn’t speak,” Woodard said. Woodard and Melanson also covered adolescent sexuality and intervention strategies.

Now back in Canada, she is focusing on her studies and her next project – the Winnipeg Run for Darfur set for Oct. 7 in Assiniboine Park.

Conflict in the Darfur region of western Sudan has killed thousands – and perhaps hundreds of thousands – of people and displaced millions. Woodard said she wants the run to be both a political statement against the conflict and a fundraising effort to help people displaced and now living in refugee camps.

Funds from the run will go towards Save Darfur Canada and Oxfam.

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Marks of Achievement

Earned some recognition or an award? The Bulletin wants to celebrate with you. Please e-mail info@bulletin.ca or send us Marks of Achievement to barbord@ms.umanitoba.ca. Feel free to include a picture of yourself. We’ll need a 200 dpi jpeg image. If you would like to chat about the details or picture, please call 474 8111.
The defending CIS football champion Laval Rouge et Or are ranked number one with Canada West champion UBC second, Saskatchewan 3rd, Guelph 4th and rounding out the top five is the Ottawa Gee-Gees (Mitchell Bowl finalist) in 5th. The Manitoba Bisons ranked second, Ottawa number one with Canada West champion Laval Rouge et Or are ranked second. The Manitoba Bisons football team has been ranked starting a season since 2000 (ranked second). This is the highest the Bisons have been ranked throughout the year.

BY DALE BARBOUR
The Bulletin
Faculty of Medicine research associate Keith Lewis has worked for biotechnology companies and now the University of Manitoba attempting to understand cancer, what makes it work and what can be used to treat it. But with his new book Cancer?? What you need to know: Causes, Treatments and Concerns, Lewis isn’t offering synopsis of the latest research in the field; he’s helping people understand what cancer is.

“I’ve worked in cancer research for 12 years and I’ve had a lot of people ask various questions about cancer,” Lewis said. “I’ve come to realize that they didn’t have a fundamental understanding of the disease.”

Existing books didn’t help either because most of them tend to gloss over the biology behind the disease. The problem is if people can’t understand the biology behind the disease, then they can’t understand how the various treatments aimed at stopping it work either. And Lewis said that’s critical for people wanting to make informed decisions about their treatment options and for understanding what’s happening to them while they’re being treated.

“Once you do understand the biology then you can talk about the drugs that are used and how they work,” Lewis said.

Lewis helps patients know the enemy

Research Associate Keith Lewis’s new book Cancer?? What you need to know: Causes, Treatments and Concerns is something patients and people in the health care field can use.

It’s an ideal book for someone who is fighting cancer and wants to know everything they can about the enemy. Lewis also walks readers through the causes of cancer, prevention, how it spreads and the mechanics behind each method of treatment. Reading the book can help patients know what their physician is telling them and it could be of use to nurses fielding questions about the biology of cancer.

The book goes on to cover some of the myths and conspiracy theories around cancer such as the notion that a cure exists but is being covered up. Not even remotely possible, Lewis argues. From a pure commercial point of view, biotechnology companies would love to be on the ground floor of a cure for cancer. Even simpler, the researchers trying to find a cure for cancer have lost loved ones to the disease – in fact Lewis’s dedication at the start of the book is to friends and family of his own that have succumbed to the disease. There’s no incentive for them to withhold a cure for the disease.

Lewis’s own research involves looking at the impact of antibodies on cancer cells. He has contributed over 50 scientific articles to international journals, but this is the first time he’s sat down to write a book. More significantly, it’s the first time he’s written something intended for the general public.

“I’ve always had an interest in teaching,” Lewis said, and his background has included working as a lecturer. “And I realized there was a place for a book like this.”

While the subject matter is weighty, Lewis said he enjoyed being able to step outside academic writing. “This was much more enjoyable. I’ve written scientific papers and entries for textbooks but it’s not the same experience,” Lewis said.

The University of Manitoba’s 7th Annual All Staff Golf Tournament was held at the neighbouring Southwood Golf and Country Club on Aug. 20. The grand prize draw consisted of an i-pod shuffle, his and hers University of Manitoba matching watches and a radio carrying bag.

The tournament, which took place on Aug. 20, provided an opportunity for staff to get together and supported the fundraising initiative of the University of Manitoba Student Food Bank. The donations of dry goods and cash exceeded $500. Jane Lastra, director of the University of Manitoba’s 7th Annual All Staff Golf Tournament.

The tournament was endorsed and supported by vice-president (administration) Debbie McCallum and associate vice-president (administration) Alan Simms. The tournament provided an opportunity for staff to get together and supported the fundraising initiative of the University of Manitoba Student Food Bank. The donations of dry goods and cash exceeded $500. Jane Lastra, director of the University of Manitoba Student Food Bank.

Despite the cloudy skies, tournament participants managed to avoid the rain for the majority of the day. There were 112 people registered from many university departments at the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses. Due to the immediate popularity of the event, many teams had to be placed on a waiting list.

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We are one good looking university.

Don’t believe it? Consider this: the University of Manitoba took home first place in the 2007 Winnipeg in Bloom contest for best business/industrial flower display in southern Winnipeg (and 11th in the province). The Take Pride Winnipeg award recognizes the university’s spectacular display at the Chancellor Matheson Drive entrance to the university.

General services manager Michele Rogalsky says full credit for the award goes to the university’s groundskeeping staff.

“The staff have been doing an excellent job this year. We have five people that are trained greens keepers and arborists,” Rogalsky said. University staff divide the Fort Garry campus into sustainable zones that adds an additional challenge. But Lyle Morin, assistant manager of grounds and general services, says, “One of the initiatives we’ve committed to this year in order to minimize the environmental impact of grounds management is using a phosphorus-free fertilizer for all our turf areas,” said Morin.

Morin says he and the grounds staff understand the consequences of nutrient runoff and make eliminating the use of phosphorus containing fertilizer, in addition to using some of the compost produced on campus, a priority this year. He adds, “Our goal for next season is to be completely phosphorus free by switching our flower fertilizer to a no phosphorus blend.”

Morin said that the proximity to the Red River is also something that the department is especially mindful of when maintaining campus grounds. Of all the rivers entering Lake Winnipeg, the phosphorus content is restricted to no more than three percent.

Keeping 210 landscaped acres of land at the university in southern Canada is no easy undertaking. And, maintaining the grounds in line with the University of Manitoba’s environmental sustainability goals adds an additional challenge. But Lyle Morin, assistant manager of grounds and general services, says, “One of the initiatives we’ve committed to this year in order to minimize the environmental impact of grounds management is using a phosphorus-free fertilizer for all our turf areas,” said Morin.

Sustainability

“Phosphorus-based fertilizers are among the most common causes of eutrophication of Lake Winnipeg. Studies conducted over the past three decades have determined that over the past three decades, phosphorus loading to Lake Winnipeg has increased by about 10 percent significantly contributing to eutrophication of Lake Winnipeg. Some of that phosphorus comes from lawn and garden fertilizers where excess phosphorus can run off into the storm drains when not taken up by the grass and other plants. The result is increased frequency, intensity, and duration of algal blooms on Lake Winnipeg.

Restricting the use of cosmetic phosphorus-based fertilizers is among many of the recommendations from the Lake Winnipeg Board of Regional ministries final report, released in February of this year. Other jurisdictions, including St. Paul and Minneapolis, are also restricting the use of lawn fertilizers. Since 2004, fertilizers in the metropolitan area in Minnesota can no longer contain phosphorus, and in Greater Minneapolis, the phosphorus content is restricted to no more than three percent.

Additional grounds greening activities include leaving the grass clippings on the lawn after mowing and composting leaves. Grounds and General Services of Physical Plant are also developing an integrated pest management plan.

BY DALE BARBOUR
The Bulletin

Summer camps. Dance programs. Intramural sports. Athletic therapy. Recreation. Fitness. The diversity of programs available at the University of Manitoba Bison Sport and Active Living is offered by the Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, which is sporting a new name itself and encompasses five distinct groups: Bison Recreation Services, Bison Children’s Programs, Bison Sport, and Bison Athletic Therapy and Bison Athletic Facilities.

By bringing all the groups together under one name, Bison recreation services director Gary Thompson said they’re hoping to make it easier for people to pick and choose the activities that might be useful to them.

“We’re no longer thought of as a collective entity, put ourselves out there, but when you look at all the things we do there is no other group in the province that can do what we do. So we thought we’d try to find a unifying brand that would link everything together and be something everyone could relate too,” Thompson said.

Ultimately by creating one brand for all the programs, Thompson said they’re hoping that they can create more opportunities for cross pollination.

“One of the things we found was that people were coming here for their children’s programs and going elsewhere to work out or vice versa,” Thompson said. “They didn’t know everything we have to offer. This lets them know that there are all these other options.”

“If parents are dropping their teenager off for martial arts on Monday night, they can look at what else they might want to do while they’re here and contribute to their own wellness’ Thompson said. “They might be able to catch a Bison game or take part in some programs of their own.”

It’s a change that’s immediately apparent in the Bison Sport and Active Living guide, which brings together recreation and children’s programs.

“We’re dedicated in the future to continue to enhance people’s opportunity to be physically active for life,” Thompson said. “We’re really pumped about this. We’re hoping that people will open the new guide and say, ‘Hey, that’s new. I want to try that.’”

Of course there will be some growing pains. For people used to dealing with one wing of Bison Sport and Active Living, it will mean adjusting to finding that program under a new name.

“It’s a new logo but it’s still the same skilled, quality people you’re dealing with,” Ray said. The other challenge for Bison Sports and Active Living is ensuring people know that their programs aren’t just intended for athletes.

“We have something for everyone and when you go down to the Grotto (in the Fork Kennedy Centre) for your workout you see people of all kinds of different fitness levels,” Thompson said. “It’s a comfortable, relaxed environment. Plus we have facilities at the Bannatyne campus, so people have flexibility when it comes to where they want to work out or take in a program.”

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WOMEN AND WEIGHTS

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Events Listing
University of Manitoba

Homecoming excitement!
Bisons battle Calgary Dinos on Sept. 15

The Bison will play their home-opener against the University of Calgary Dinos.

In the 2006 Homecoming Game, Manitoba dumped Calgary 33-10 in front of 2,500 spectators as the Bison defence intercepted Calgary twice and sacked them five times.

The Dinos will be out to even the score this year.

The University Stadium Gates open at 11:30 a.m. with kick off at 1 p.m.

In keeping with the excitement of Homecoming Week there will be a BBQ, clowns, face painters, bouncers, music, contests and great give aways.

Individual game day tickets $10 each and are available at Frank Kennedy Customer Service Desk (Children 12 and under are free).

And of course there is plenty of other things to see and do during Homecoming, which runs Sept. 12 to 16.

The Faculty of Arts will host its annual Arts Celebrating Arts on Friday, Sept. 14 with an awards luncheon at 11:30 a.m. in the Great Hall, University College.

Arts alumni can also drop in on a classroom and see what today’s students are learning.

For more information about that program check out umanitoba.ca/arts/alumni and for more information about Homecoming head to umanitoba.ca/alumni.

Bison football back on UMFM

Bison Sports, in conjunction with Campus Radio 101.5 UMFM, is pleased to announce the return of Bison Football to the radio airwaves for the full 2007 season. UMFM will be the exclusive location to listen to Bison Football during the upcoming year.

This will be the eighth consecutive season for Bison Football on 101.5 FM. For the upcoming campaign, the radio broadcast team returns from last season with Derek Taylor handling play-by-play and former Bison Matt Rollason performing colour commentary for the second consecutive season.

“We are thrilled to have Bison Football return to UMFM for an eighth season. We are pleased to offer all games on the airwaves and through the Internet and will cover the team throughout their run to a Vanier Cup,” stated Jared Mckernan, UMFM Station Manager.

The 2007 Manitoba Bison Football season kicked off on Saturday, Sept. 1. For all road games, there will be a 15 minute pre-game show while there is a 30 minute pre-game show for all home games.

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A considered look at the Prairies

The Prairies in 3-D: Disorientations, Dispersals, Diversities is set to run at St. John’s College, Sept. 27 to 29.

The fourth multidisciplinary prairies conference brings together researchers from around the world and from many disciplines to discuss issues of importance to the Prairies. We are especially interested in work that reflects upon multiplicity, difference, flux and movement in the Prairies. The “3-D” Prairies might be approached through examinations of current cultural patterns, historical events, literature, fine art, natural processes, landscapes, business practices, science, politics, education and many other fields.

We encourage scholars and graduate students from all scholarly fields to contribute their expertise to this event that promises to expand our understanding of Prairie place.

Individual papers are welcome.

Len Findlay and Valerie Korinek, both of the University of Saskatchewan, will be keynote speakers at the conference.

Findlay is professor of English and director of the Humanities Research Unit at the University of Saskatchewan and he has worked for that province as a senior policy analyst on education. He is the author of countless articles on Victorian culture, critical theory, Canadian politics, Aboriginal cultures, and the role of the public intellectual. He published a new translation of The Communist Manifesto in 2004 and is now working on two books: a polemic entitled Intent for a Nation (with echoes of George Grant’s Lament for a Nation) and an intellectual biography of Alexander Morris. Findlay’s address is entitled “The Prairies in 3-D: Decolonizing, Diasporic, Dialectical.”

Valerie Korinek is professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan. She is the author of the book, Roughing It In The Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the 1950s and 60’s, and of the forthcoming book, Prairie Faitries. The History of Lesbian and Gay Communities in Western Canada, 1945-1990. Korinek’s address is entitled “RE-oriented, Diverse & Modern: Queering the Prairies.”

Conference website: umanitoba.ca/conferences/prairie/

Films focus on cultural experience

The department of anthropology invites you to a free screening of nine ethnographic films on Friday, Sept. 21, and Saturday, Sept. 22. These films include the traveling version of the American Museum of Natural History’s Margaret Mead Traveling Film and Video Festival, a showcase of cultural documentaries which give insight into other ways of life and important contemporary issues. Representatives of community organizations will also be present to highlight the connections between anthropological documentaries and local activism. For descriptions of the seven Margaret Mead films, please go to: www.amnh.org/programs/mead/mead2006/php/traveling_program_2007.php.

Two other films by anthropology students will also be shown. Mangrove Music and a film called Sinai Sun, which focuses on the tensions between demands on the nomadic Bedouin to maintain a tradition of timelessness, yet also work within a modern tourist industry in Egypt.

Admission is free and viewers are encouraged to come to whichever films interest them. Films will be screened at Cinematheque (at the corner of Arthur and Bannatyne).

Showtimes are as follows:
Friday, September 21
6:30 – Opening Reception
7:00 – China Blue
8:30 – Q & A about China Blue with Dr. Ellen Judd, specialist in the ethnography of China
9:20 – El Inmigrante
Saturday, September 22
2:00 – Mangrove Music
3:00 – Sinai Sun
5:40 – A Map with Gaps
4:15 – Today’s Man
5:20 – Flock of Dodos
7:00 – Sisters in Law
9:30 – Shooting Under Fire
Fort Garry Campus

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
Plant Science PhD Oral Examination, Development Of Molecular Markers For Marker Assisted Selection For Seed Quality Traits In Oilseed Rape by Makklesur Rahman, 218 Plant Science Building, 8:30 a.m., Friday, Sept. 7.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
Architecture, Ab Pre-Fab: Conserving Buckingham Fuller’s Dymaxion House, by James Ashby, conservation architect, Centre Space, John A. Russell Building, 7 p.m., Monday, Sept. 10.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

On Retirement, an event in honour of retiring landscape architecture professor Charlie Thomsen. The ticket sales will go towards the Charles H. Thomsen Scholarship. It is being set up to honour a student in Landscape Architecture or in the Environmental Design Landscape Option who has made a significant contribution to the greater community. For tickets call 474-9170 or edualumni@umanitoba.ca.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14
Smartpark’s INTERACTIVE Speaker Series, Building Better Bridges by Aftab Mukht, program leader and president, ISIS Canada, and Doug Stewart, vice-president and general manager, Wardrop, 15 Innovation Drive Lobby, 8 a.m., Friday, Sept. 14. Includes a continent breakfast catered by Salisbury House Free admission. Please e-mail wiebc7@cc.umanitoba.ca or call 480-1434 to reserve your seat.

Mathematics, Products & Co-Products in the Category of Topological Abelian Groups by Clint Enns, graduate student, 418 Machray Hall, 2:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 14.

Bannatyne Campus
AND St. Boniface Research Centre

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
Biochemistry and Medical Genetics Masters of Science Oral Defense, Histone deacetylase inhibitors: mode of inhibition and histone deacetylase phosphorylation by Anousheh Sekhavat, 341 Basic Medical Sciences Building, 2 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 6.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12
Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, Feedback: That Works by Joanne Hamilton, director faculty development, Faculty of Medicine, Theatre A Basic Medical Sciences Building, 7-4:30 a.m., Wednesday, Sept. 12. Available via webcast at umanitoba.ca/womens_health/
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA RESEARCH SUPPORT PROGRAMS

To encourage the development of research, the University offers a number of research support programs. These programs are administrated by the Office of the Vice-President (Research) on behalf of the University. For further information on these programs (e.g., program priorities and guidelines, application procedures, etc.), contact the appropriate
person listed below; or access the forms via the Web at http://umanitoba.ca/research/orf/internalfunding_deadlines_forms.html

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF PROGRAM</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>DEADLINES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Research Grants Program (URGP)</td>
<td>To support the growth of research at the University – highest priority is the provision of grants to new faculty members (those in the first 3 years of their appointment)</td>
<td>October 15, March 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM/SSHRC Research Grants Program (UM/SSHRC RGP)</td>
<td>To provide support for small-scale research projects in the social sciences and humanities – open to researchers in disciplines supported by SSHRC</td>
<td>October 15, March 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM/SSHRC International Conference Travel Grants Program (UM/SSHRC TGP)</td>
<td>To provide support for researchers to take part in international conferences of major scholarly significance – open to researchers in disciplines supported by SSHRC</td>
<td>October 15, March 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Creative Works Grants Program</td>
<td>To provide support for highly creative works at the University of Manitoba – highest priority is the provision of grants to new faculty members (those in the first 3 years of their appointment)</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave Research Grant Program</td>
<td>To designate part of applicant’s salary as a grant-in-aid of research conducted while on research/leave leave</td>
<td>2 months prior to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-funded Research Grant Program</td>
<td>To designate part of applicant’s salary as a grant-in-aid of research conducted when not on leave from the University (within one calendar year)</td>
<td>September 30, January 31, May 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dr. Paul E. T. Thompson Foundation Fund</td>
<td>To provide support for basic or applied research in the health sciences – highest priority is provision of support to new independent researchers who are full-time applicants to the Fund</td>
<td>April 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Weiner Distinguished Visitor Award</td>
<td>To bring distinguished scholars who are making outstanding contributions to their field(s) of research to the University for visits of up to one month</td>
<td>May 1</td>
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Researchers see the forest AND the trees

BY FRANK NOLAN
Research Promotion

Since the early 1990s, University of Manitoba researchers have been part of the Manitoba Model Forest, one of 11 in Canada focused on developing sustainable forest management practices. Located near Pine Falls, the one million hectare research site brought together scientists, industries, local communities and others to find better ways to manage forest resources.

The Model Forest Program was officially ended earlier this year, but the Pine Falls site is now part of a new program announced by the federal government in May 2007. The Forest Communities Program will provide funding to 11 organizations across the country for the next five years, including the one in Manitoba.

University of Manitoba researchers Rick Baydack and David Walker, environment and geography, were both involved in the Manitoba Model Forest, and they helped develop the successful application for the Forest Communities Program. Walker will represent the university on the new organization’s board of directors, with Baydack acting as his alternate.

“The focus is on communities, which is something Manitoba has been doing for a long time,” Walker said. “The model forest included the participation of local residents, particularly First Nations communities. That will be continued and expanded with the new project, which is really designed to include everyone who depends on forest resources, whether it’s wood from the trees, wildlife, or the area as a whole, which is important for things like recreation and tourism.”

As with the previous project, the forest communities program will include a significant research component.

“The goal is to establish a new Forest Communities Program.”

Mizuno puts focus on obesity hormones

BY SEAN MOORE
Research Promotion

Tackling the problems that come with obesity isn’t always as simple as eating less and moving more, although that’s a fine place to start.

Hormones, obesity researchers are learning, play vital roles in determining a person’s fat levels and his or her metabolic rates. This is why Tooru Mizuno, Canada Research Chair in molecular endocrinology of diabetes and metabolic control, is focusing on the relationship these chemicals have with waistlines and fatty livers.

He’s investigating ways the brain regulates metabolism, and a major focus of his research is Proopiomelanocortin (POMC), a gene produced by neurons of his research is Proopiomelanocortin (POMC), a gene produced by neurons.

POMC increases metabolic rates. POMC increased it, output – a good indirect indicator of metabolism partly through acting in the stomach or intestine also regulate metabolism through POMC system – it’s independent of it.”

Many hormones produced in the brain function,” Mizuno said. “A hypothesis of ours was that xenin regulates metabolism by acting through the POMC system. We found that wasn’t right. Xenin seems to work through the brain but clearly not through the POMC system – it’s independent of it.”

Mizuno recently found xenin, like some other hormones produced in the gut, reduces food intake by signaling the stomach to retard its food processing powers. This is important because the slower your stomach empties, the slower you are to get hungry again and eat again. But what surprised Mizuno was what xenin was doing.

His lab would inject some mice with certain levels of POMC and others with xenin. The subjects were then put into a special chamber that records oxygen intake and carbon dioxide output – a good indirect indicator of metabolic rates. POMC increased it, but xenin had no effect.

“We were kind of disappointed when we measured the metabolic parameters because there was no difference. But we looked a little deeper and saw what was going on and we felt great,” Mizuno said. Non-obese mice injected with xenin were burning more fat than usual. Rather than reach for the usual carbohydrate or protein to burn for energy, the mice were using fat as their primary fuel.

This holds implications for the fight against fatty liver disease, which, according to the Canadian Liver Foundation, 75 per cent of Canada’s 11 million obese people risk developing. What’s more, in studying obesity, Mizuno has noticed a previously overlooked relationship. His lab found that when they inhibited the POMC system they stimulated an enzyme in the liver that synthesizes lipids. And conversely, when they stimulated POMC in the brain they saw the opposite effect.

This is good news for the globe’s ever-plumping population especially when previously slim nations are joining the weight-watching ranks of the western world: half of all Brazilian households have at least one obese person inside, for Russia it’s three-quarters of all homes; and more than a fifth of urban Chinese children between the ages of seven and 17 are overweight.

Many of the ongoing research projects are focused on solving practical problems faced by forest-dependent communities. For example, one study is examining the effects of human activity on the woodland caribou. Another is investigating whether forests can be cut in ways that emulate forest fires, which are common, natural occurrences in boreal forests.

The forestry industry and the other stakeholder groups are very aware that both human needs and the needs of other species need to be taken into account,” Baydack said. “That’s what this program has done from the beginning, and that’s the philosophy that the Forest Communities Program will continue to bring forward.”
Back on the Avenue
Students design sculptures for downtown

BY DALE BARBOUR
The Bulletin

University of Manitoba art students are back for a return engagement on Portage Avenue.

The Downtown Winnipeg Biz project is following in the footsteps of last year’s Art on the Avenue installation, which saw 10 student-produced works go up on Portage Avenue between Memorial Boulevard and Main Street. This year nine new projects will be going up on the avenue, with some of last year’s favourites – such as The Right Stuff, a giant police man, and ELRT – Elephant Light Rail Transit, coming back for a return engagement. The projects will be on display next to the Ceramic Sculpture Building this week before heading up to their new homes on Portage Avenue.

“The goal is to bring people back downtown and to rediscover the downtown area,” School of Art professor Gordon Reeve said. Reeve has been guiding the project for the School of Art, picking the students from among the schools brightest and helping them shepherd their projects to reality.

“Normally they would never have a chance to do stuff like this until five years after they have graduated,” Reeve said. “I sure wish I had had an opportunity like this when I was a student.”

Downtown Biz is providing more than just a place for the statues to hang out. It’s also funding their construction and providing an $800 scholarship to each participating student. The project also counts as a six hour credit course for the students.

The students were told upfront where their sculptures would be going. Cullen Bingeman took his Graham Street and Portage Avenue location into account when he was designing the Hear Trumpet, which, as the name implies, funnels sound from one end of the sculpture to the other.

“It’s something that actually grew out of the space downtown. I wanted something that reflected the excitement of the area and that could interact with the public,” Bingeman said.

Jackie Traverse’s work Rez Dawg stemmed from a class project. Reeve loved the design so much that he wanted it to be part of the Art on the Avenue display.

“Traverse has always been afraid of dogs and the original project mirrored that fear with a snarl etched on the dog’s face. But for the follow up, Traverse took a different tact.”

“I wanted to find a way to represent who I am as a First Nation person and I wanted to make kind of fun of Rez dogs,” Traverse said. The result is a playful looking mutt. Dogs are a bit of staple in many First Nation communities. They’re generally an indistinct breed and often strays and often roaming in packs.

“They usually roam in packs and only go home to eat and sleep,” Traverse said. Ownership is often a fluid affair – the dogs really belong to the entire community.

“Someone can have a dog for a month and then he’s off to live with another family.” Traverse said.

All of the sculptures are meant to be used and abused by the public. Reeve said the students considered the public location of the sculptures when they were being built – that meant ensuring that all of them are built around a solid metal frame to ensure the sculpture is stable. It also meant taking into account that they might be climbed on and roughed up a little.

Last year Jon Armstead’s ELRT – Elephant Light Rail Transit took a bat to the trunk.

“It kind of sucks. You spend a good deal of time trying to design something that is strong and durable but then someone comes along and tries so hard to prove you wrong,” Armstead. But ELRT is getting patched up for a return engagement and the experience just adds to the lesson.

“You can’t take it personally. It’s just the sort of things that can happen when you put something up outside.”