Budget passes

BY DALE BARROUR
The Bulletin

The University of Manitoba’s 2008-09 Operating Budget met with unanimous support when it was passed at the Board of Governors’ meeting on May 20. There were no new student fees in the budget and discussion at the meeting ran smoothly.

“I think it’s the first time in the seven years I’ve been on the board that the budget has passed unanimously,” Board chair Terry Sargeant said at the meeting.

However, while it was accepted by everyone at the table, putting together the $460,404,179 operating budget was not without challenges. The budget includes a 7.4 per cent increase in funding from the provincial government – a figure that vice-president (administration) Debbie McCallum called a significant increase in funding. It’s also much higher than the university has received from the province in each of the last 20 years.

However, that does not mean the university’s overall operating budget can increase by 7.4 per cent because the provincial operating grant only covers 56 per cent of the total operating budget. In addition, the university is predicting that enrolment will decline by one per cent in 2008-09 – a decline similar to what the university experienced last year. For each one per cent of enrolment decline the university loses approximately $950,000 in revenue. The inflationary cost of salaries and the enrolment decline will eat up most of the province’s increase.

Given that, the university had been looking for a 10.7 per cent funding increase from the province, to counterbalance lost revenue from enrolment, help the university recover from funding shortfalls in previous years and maintain its operations at the same level as 2007-08. The difference between what the university had asked for from the province and what it received amounts to about $7.9 million.

That shortfall, combined with the tuition freeze and provincial laws which state that the university cannot run a deficit, means the university won’t be able to hit all of the priority areas it would have liked.

See FUNDING/P. 2

A fond farewell

Campus events will celebrate president’s tenure

The community came out to say farewell to University of Manitoba president Emőke Szathmáry on Wednesday, May 21 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. Over 1,000 friends, colleagues, and community members attended the gala event hosted by Gail Asper and Harlley Richardson and completed with a speech from Szathmáry focused on what coming to Manitoba has meant for her. In fact, Szathmáry and her husband, George Reilly, intend to remain in Winnipeg.

Szathmáry has served the University of Manitoba since July 1, 1996 and will be succeeded on July 1, 2008 by David Barnard.

University of Manitoba community members will have their own chance to bid the president farewell at events being held on both campuses.

The Bannatyne campus event will take place in the Bannatyne Centre 12 p.m., Monday, June 23. The Fort Garry campus event will take place 12 p.m., Tuesday, June 24 in the Duckworth Quadrangle, with the Manitoba Room, University Centre serving as the rain location.

The Bulletin talks with Szathmáry and looks back on the past 12 years in a special feature found on Pages 5 to 8 of this issue.

Photo by Jeremy Brooks
In The News

University of Manitoba members are always making news – demonstrating the university's impact on the community. Here's a look at the stories and headlines that don't bore U of M faculty and staff impact the world around them.

Not-So Golden Years
May 25, 2008
Winnipeg Free Press

An article in the Winnipeg Free Press about the looming retirement of baby boomers and the potential challenges for them in their retirement years cites Verena Menec, director of the Centre on Aging at the University of Manitoba. Menec commented on the rising cost of health care and housing.

LRT on the Prairies
May 24, 2008
Saskatoon Star-Phoenix

Winnipeg isn't the only prairie city where development of a Light Rapid Transit (LRT) system is the subject of discussion. Saskatoon is considering implementing LRT, which Barry Prentice, a professor at University of Manitoba's Transport Institute, says is a good idea. “It's very positive to build these things prior to your city expanding,” said Prentice.

Grad Pow Wow Grows
May 21, 2008
Grassroots News

A recent article in Grassroots News focused on the growth of the University of Manitoba’s Graduation Pow Wow due to the increase in First Nations and Métis students at the university. The piece quoted Kali Storm, the current director of the Aboriginal Student Centre, and the original organizer of the event.

Gas prices too much?
May 27, 2008
Winnipeg Free Press

Like most North Americans, Winnipeggers aren't happy with the money they’re forking over at the pumps. But a recent Winnipeg Free Press article showed that compared to other western countries, Canada is on the low end of the scale.

Headline News

Where else has the U of M been making news?
Here's a look at just a few of our headlines over the past few weeks.

• “For many aboriginal children, residential schools were a positive experience.” National Post, May 30, was a controversial op-ed written by Rodney A. Clifton, a professor of education at the University of Manitoba.

Correction

In the May 22, 2008 edition of the Bulletin, the heading of the third paragraph of the Research Grant Competition Winners announcement should have read: UM/SSHRC INTERNATIONAL GRANT COMPETITION (TGP) – FUNDING FOR CRITICAL PRIORITIES.

Funding for critical priorities

From Page 1.

That said, the university is directing nearly $4.2 million to fund critical priorities which include: reducing the reliance on sessional instructors by providing funds for full-time instructors to stabilize programs and enhance academic integrity; funds to ensure the competitive recruitment of Canada Research Chairs (CRC) and to ensure that support for the chair-holder’s salary is in place once the CRC award expires; additional student support, including graduate student funding and entrance scholarships; continuing funds to support staff who have been on budget-only funding for many years; along with similar priorities aimed at enhancing research, sustainability and security.

As in past years, the university will be dipping into its Strategic Initiatives Program (SIP) Salary Savings fund to the tune of about $2.1 million to help balance the budget. That funding accrues when higher paid staff members at the university retire or resign, with any salary savings that result directed to the SIP fund. Ideally the fund is intended to go towards strategic areas where the university wants to target its growth. However, in tight fiscal years the money is used to balance the budget.

The Bulletin
University of Manitoba

The Bulletin is the newspaper of record of the University of Manitoba. It is published by the Public Affairs department every second Thursday from September to 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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Events
The Bulletin publishes notifications on events taking place at the University of Manitoba or events that are of particular interest to the university community. There is no charge for running notices in the events column. Send event notices to: barbourd@ms.umanitoba.ca

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The Bulletin can be viewed online at umanitoba.ca/bulletin.
Students get eastern exposure
Husky Energy Medical Exchange Program opens eyes

BY ILANA SIMON
For The Bulletin

What Magda Drewniak (MD '08) will remember most about her remarkable exchange program with Shantou University in China last March is how East meets West in the practice of medicine.

“We visited a community hospital and saw how traditional medicine was integrated in the hospital and patients are treated with both traditional and modern medicines. It was eye opening,” said Drewniak, one of four dentists of Manitoba medical students who participated in this year’s Husky Energy Medical Exchange Program. The global exchange program gives four Manibotan and four Chinese students an opportunity to spend three-to-eight weeks experiencing each other’s country and learning hands-on about medical and patient care.

Drewniak visited a traditional Chinese medical pharmacy and sat in on a traditional Chinese medical clinic where they performed cupping, moxibustion (burning of an herb on specific acupuncture points) and massage,” she said.

Drewniak, Sarah Freedman (MD '08), Greg Reimer (MD '08) and Jolene Fisher (MD '08) completed one of the fourth-year electives for Shantou University Medical College located in the city of Shantou, Guangdong province, China.

For Freedman, about to start her residency program in pediatrics at the University of British Columbia, the experience was invaluable. “I gained greater cultural awareness of traditional Chinese medicine and respect for where different immigrant groups are coming from,” she said, adding, she was also exposed to different ways to treat children. “I was able to see how the Chinese medical centre, they used acupuncture and massage for children with cerebral palsy and autism. It was incredible.”

Both Freedman and Drewniak acknowledge that the experience broadened their perspectives on healthcare delivery and on their own medical education.

“The way we are taught medicine is not universal – evidence-based medicine is very North American and many developing countries have different medical belief systems,” explains Drewniak. “It forces you to think outside the Western box. Chinese traditional medicine is one alternative medicine; there’s also homeopathic, naturopathic and ayurvedic medicine.”

Freedman, who cites a visit to a Chinese hospice as one of the highlights of her experience in China, says it’s important to recognize the many different ways to approach and view health care delivery and to learn from the Chinese system.

“In China, medical care operates from a more holistic approach that is patient-centred,” Drewniak notes. “You look at all parts and the interaction between the patient and his or her environment. There is no formula for treating a patient – it’s personalized, individualized and the patient’s belief systems guide the medical treatment.”

In addition to student exchanges, the Husky Energy Medical Exchange Program also supports faculty and researcher exchanges between University of Manitoba and Chinese universities. Last December, John C.S. Lau, president and CEO of Husky Energy announced a $1-million endowed gift, doubling the size of the university’s medical student and faculty exchange program with partnering Chinese universities which was originally supported by a $1 million gift from the Li Ka Shing Foundation.

Patrick Choy, associate dean research, Faculty of Medicine lauded Husky and its president for their generosity and foresight. “We are building important cross-cultural connections between Canada and China. The Husky Energy Medical Exchange Program is already reaping many academic and research benefits as our students and faculty members gain exceptional global experience in medical education and patient care in China,” he said.

Drewniak, about to embark on her residency program in internal medicine in Dalhousie University, values that she took away from the exchange program: “It’s important to grasp these opportunities and experience things you’ve never heard about; different cultures and different ways of medicine so you keep an open mind when you go off on different directions in your medical career. It was a tremendous honour to represent our school and our university and I am very grateful for the support from Husky—it’s immeasurable.”

While students had a chance during their visit to the Great Wall of China and Hong Kong, living in Shantou provided an invaluable opportunity to live in a part of China off the tourist track.

“It was an amazing experience and all of us are very appreciative of it and thank Husky for the opportunity. We will take our experiences with us as we go off on different directions in our medical careers,” Freedman noted.

“Everyone asked what we saw and learned in China,” said Freedman.

Peter Munk

Peter Munk is regarded as a top Canadian businessman at home and abroad. He and his management team created Barrick Gold Corp. in 1983. Today it has more than 20,000 employees, mines and development projects in Canada, United States, Australia, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Tanzania, South Africa, Papua New Guinea, and the Dominican Republic; and it is the only gold producer in the world with an A credit rating. Munk was engaged in the U.S. real estate business through its interest in Trizec Properties. Munk is also co-founder and director of Trizec Development Corporation in Budapest, one of the leading property developers in Central Europe. He is currently engaged in the development of one of the largest yacht marinas in the Adriatic in Tivat, Montenegro.

In addition to his long list of professional successes and charitable causes, Munk has been honoured several times for excellence. He received the Woodrow Wilson Award for Corporate Citizenship in 2002, the Canadian International Executive of the Year Award from Canadian Council for International Business in 2000, a Lifetime Achievement in Mining Finance by Toronto Stock Exchange, Works for Canada in 1999, and was inducted into the Canadian Business Hall of Fame in 1998. He is a member of the Canadian Mining Hall of Fame in 2002.

Peter Munk

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We are thrilled to honour Peter Munk this evening,” said Arni Thorsteinson, chair of the I.D.E.A. award committee for the Associates and president of Shelter Canadian Properties Limited. “Mr. Munk has dedicated his life to entrepreneurship, business and giving back generously and thoughtfully.”

University of Manitoba president Emöke Szathmáry described Munk as the epitome of the I.D.E.A.

“Early in his career, Peter Munk set out for success, and he created it,” Szathmáry said. “Since those days, his entrepreneurial and philanthropic spirit has made the name Peter Munk a legend across Canada and abroad.”

Munk has also been chairman of the board and controlling shareholder of Trizec Properties, Inc., a real estate investment trust (REIT) and one of the largest owners and operators of commercial office properties in the U.S. prior to its sale in 2006 for $585.4 billion. He was chairman and chief executive officer of Trizec Canada Inc., a Canadian corporation primarily funded by the University of Manitoba and its hospitals, and was awarded a $1 million gift from the Li Ka Shing Foundation.

The dinner’s master of ceremonies was Donald K. Johnson, C.M., senior advisor to BMO Capital Markets and former vice-chair, BMO Nesbitt Burns.

I.D.E.A. is bestowed on Munk

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A common market for university degrees?

The Board of Governors voted to rescind the university’s HIV/AIDS policy at its May 20 regular meeting. The policy was originally passed in 1992. Since then provincial policy has been enacted to ensure both respectful workplaces and privacy for health and personal information. The university has also enacted policies since 1992 which ensure a respectful workplace and, with its focus on one particular health concern, has been unwritten policy at the university already.

The Board of Governors also enacted a policy at its May 20 regular meeting covering the lay-off or resignation of term and contingent academic staff or entering the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly. The policy was originally passed in 1992. It is a reminder, she said, that the Board of Governors also makes the move into new academic programs or enter the design workforce directly.
On Being President
Emőke Szathmáry reflects on her time in office

At the end of this month Emőke Szathmáry will step down after 12 years as president of the University of Manitoba (1996-2008). In this issue, the Bulletin reflects on that period, talks with Szathmáry about her time as president and asks what the future might hold for her.

Tell me about coming to Winnipeg.

I had personal and professional enthusiasms back then. The personal relates to family, so I still recall the first time my husband George and I had come to Winnipeg together, after my appointment had been announced, but before I took office. Our plane came in after dark on a cold winter night, circling over miles of snow-covered rooftops and twinkling lights. For me it was a magical moment, and I felt as excited as a child does the night before Christmas. I joked at the Community Farewell Banquet on May 21, that my husband’s recollections of that night focused more on how well insulated the houses were. But that’s not surprising, because Winnipeg was not unfamiliar terrain to him. George’s great-grandfather homesteaded in this province in 1871, and while his father left to find work after the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919, George still has extended family in Manitoba and it was a chance for both of us to connect with them. I joke a bit when I go out to the agriculture events in Brandon, Carman and other places, saying that I contributed genes to the Reilly gene pool, so I’m entitled to look for relatives. People laugh, but they remember to mention my comments to friends who had not attended, and that sort of communication has led to some real thrills with some more distant kin calling us, great people who have helped us feel part of the community around us.

How about the university? You knew its research track record. What was it like compared to what you had expected?

On the professional side, it is an understatement to say that I was excited about coming here. I had known about the University of Manitoba since my undergraduate days, thanks to my human genetics professor, who walked into class one day to announce ground-breaking news – scientists at the University of Manitoba were a strong research institution. The idea that I might actually work here at a different level, to strengthen the university and to further its role locally and globally was almost intoxicating. Looking back from today’s vantage, however, I think I did not really appreciate the strengths of this university overall. I knew little about its contributions to advancement of knowledge in other areas than in my own fields of interest, let alone the principles that drove it on the education side. I knew it was essential for me to become as familiar as one can be about research and scholarly achievements here, past and current. I realized too that if I did not know much about Manitoba’s strengths in other fields than human genetics and anthropology, then there was a good chance that the institution was not getting its stories out in ways that were picked up by academics elsewhere. If this was true, then I was determined to change it.

And you quickly received a crash course on the University of Manitoba.

The Task Force on Strategic Planning that functioned throughout 1997 was an eye-opener. Because its first set of hearings were closed and confidential, the members of the Task Force and I learned not only facts, but also about interpretations of facts, and matters that affected people’s lives, hopes and ambitions. The two sets of public hearings were enormously important both for the university community, the Task Force and me. Resistance to change is a fact of life everywhere, not just in universities. The suggestion that one could do anything more or anything differently is often resisted – but the fact is, universities cannot be static. People are more willing to embrace change when they realize that they can influence the direction and pace of change, and such influence is most likely when change is both to their disciplines’ and the university’s advantage. The public hearings helped me to develop a sense of tolerable limits here, and that was helpful to the Task Force too, because it led it to make alternate suggestions. We wanted academic, administrative and affiliated units to consider what they were doing, how they were doing it and align their actions with the identified ingredients for success. I could not have had a better introduction to the character of the university than I had in the year that the Task Force was active.

Clockwise from the top, president Emőke Szathmáry takes up her academic robes as president of the University of Manitoba; president emeritus Arnold Naimark (1981-1996), left, and president emeritus D. Ralph Campbell (1976-1981) pause for a picture with Szathmáry during her induction in July, 1996. Campbell passed away just a few months ago; Szathmáry has a meet and greet with the press and members of the university community in July, 1996.

Fundraising

Tracking the changes

Since 1996 the University of Manitoba has raised just under $400 million through nearly 175,000 individual gifts. But the grand total doesn’t tell the full story. In 1996-97 the university raised $8,559,127. In 2007-08 the university raised $36,669,851.

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

The Capital Campaign ran from 1999 to 2004 and raised more than $237 million with the help of over 36,000 donors in the most successful campaign ever.
Building on Strengths exceeding expectations

Capital campaign raised over $237 for the university and set the bar for future efforts.

What was it like settling into this position, having already been a vice-president and having held various positions at other universities?

I don’t see that much of a difference in most ways, though there are a few enormous differences. The accountability is different because the proverbial buck literally stops at your desk. If you do not maintain an active oversight of people who report to you and issues that concern you, then should problems arise you share responsibility for them – and that is in addition to being accountable. So I’ve made my mistakes too over the past 12 years, not anticipating problems when I might have anticipated them and therefore, headed them off before they arose.

I had not anticipated the actual workload of a president, though I had done a lot of “subbing” for one of McMaster’s presidents when I was provost there. I think the workload is different when a province’s only research university is located in the city that houses the seat of government. I had a good understanding of the day-to-day matters, committees to chair, for example, as well as a president’s supervisory role, and I was not far off anticipating a Board’s concerns. However, I seriously underestimated how much time one would have to spend addressing the external communities’ concerns – be they focused on problems, or be just a desire to be regarded as important to the fulfillment of the university’s mission. An invitation to speak, for example, has always to be carefully considered. If accepted, then one has also accepted an implicit obligation to speak in a way that matters to the group – and that means spending time learning about the group, and what might matter to it regarding its own purpose and the university’s role and mission. Fortunately I learned early that care and concern can include speaking to groups within the university too, not just to groups outside.

Whatever I anticipated and did not, there is one basic truth about being a president, and that is that one has to be well grounded to do a reasonable job. Further, if one is not well grounded, then one will have a hard time when the presidency is over. Your job is to make your institution as strong as you can, so it can do what it needs to do to effectively for the longest period of time. That means that presidents come and go, each doing the best he or she can to build strength in the universities. A president needs to remind oneself what one’s function is. You’re there to help somebody else: the user. And who is the user of a university? Students who get educated and therefore are the users. Students who get educated and produce professional people who serve the needs of the people who live here. We produce research that in part can serve the province of the direct interest. And when one starts thinking along these lines, inevitably, one’s feet become well grounded. A president has a limited amount of time to get things done and to strengthen the place. What it all boils down to is that, the president’s job is to provide resources to the faculty and staff. Nothing is more important than that. Resources obviously have two dimensions, resources are dollars, and resources are the voiced support of the general community.

The Building on Strengths campaign is probably going to be remembered as the biggest moment of your tenure. The university raised over $237 million, the largest capital campaign ever held in Manitoba. Was it like getting it rolling? And what are your fondest memories of it?

The real strategic planner in all of this was Elaine Goldie, vice-president (external). So I think it is very useful for a president to remember a remark that’s attributed to Newton. He was speaking about academic and intellectual achievements, but I think it applies to any endeavor. “We’re giants because we stand on the shoulders of those who come before us.” And in my case, I had such tremendous people to work with. I felt like Elaine Goldie had delivered a benediction when soon after my arrival she told me that, she felt she could work with me!

What did I take away from it personally? Two things really. The incredible generosity of people. I had never seen that before. We all donate to causes, if we can. But sometimes one feels like it is an obligation rather than that one wants to contribute. But I have met all kinds of people who really wanted to give to something that they believed in. Seeing that is a transformative experience. Some of the major donor gifts were almost unbelievable in their magnitude. But the thing that has reached me emotionally are the reactions of our oldest grads, those from 60 or 70 years ago, whom I invite to lunch at homecoming. Many of these alumni will write, exhibiting the penmanship that was prized in their day. They write these marvelous letters expressing regret that they cannot attend my lunch, and sometimes they attach a cheque to their letters. I know that many have done well materially over the years, but nevertheless, retirees tend to live on fixed incomes. Still, they remember what it was like when they were students, they feel honoured to have been invited back to the university, and some send a cheque expressing their appreciation for what the university has given to them. That’s the sort of thing that makes you sit back and think about the generosity of people. So that was one thing. The other was the sheer numbers – we had more than 36,000 individual donors. The number is really quite overwhelming. People give to what they believe in. I saw that played out during the capital campaign over and over again, with alumni and others giving what they could afford to give. It was an amazing thing.
Steel, Smartpark takes flight bar for future efforts, Smartpark gives researchers a home

Growth
Tracking the changes

The University of Manitoba has been transformed over the last 12 years with $500 million in construction and renovation, and 1.4 million square feet in new space. Some of the new facilities that have been built or are underway include:

• Arthur Mauro Student Residence
• Centre for Architectural Structures and Technology (C.A.S.T.)
• Engineering and Information Technology Complex
• Richardson Centre for Functional Foods and Nutraceuticals
• Helen Glass Centre for Nursing
• Apotex Centre
• Investors Group Athletic Centre
• Canadian Wheat Board Grain Research Centre
• The Robert B. Schultz Lecture Theatre at St John’s College
• Aboriginal House
• Glenlea Farm Education Centre
• National Centre for Livestock and the Environment
• Delta Marsh Field Station Residence
• William Norrie Centre
• University of Manitoba Downtown: Aboriginal Education Centre
• Winnipeg Indoor Soccer complex
• Welcome Centre

SMARTPARK

Smartpark Research and Technology Park was launched in 1999. Since then it has expanded to cover 100 acres with 20 companies, 7 buildings and 760 employees.

Smartpark. Was moving from sheep and agricultural test land to a high-tech park a tough sell?

No, that part was not hard. What was hard was obtaining the financing. Coming from another place helps because you’re really ignorant of local dynamics. You don’t know the history. Nothing. Then Premier Filmon invited me to speak to his Economic Innovation and Technology Council (EXITC). I had noticed that we didn’t have a research park at the university, though I thought we should have one. After all, we had the land, there were and are a lot of really good brains here, we were already doing things on the innovation side and the technology transfer side, but we lacked a research park regardless.

So I oriented my talk on the need to create a research park at the University of Manitoba. What I hadn’t known was that a couple of months before I addressed the council, it had voted for the establishment of a research park – which meant it would recommend that the Province invest some funds – but the executive committee had turned the recommendations down because it thought the recommendation was unrealistic. I had not known at the time of my presentation that some 18 years earlier, the university’s Board of Governors had approved the establishment of a research and technology park at the university - but it had insufficient funds to implement its establishment! I had made my presentation but EXTC’s executive remained reluctant, and we couldn’t do it on our own. We needed both federal and provincial money for the research park’s infrastructure.

In the end, Reg Alcock, who was our MP for Winnipeg South then, set up a meeting with EXTC chair, Bob Silver, Joanne Keselman and me. It was tense at first, but eventually we found that Bob and I wanted the same thing – we were just using different languages to talk about it. Once we passed that hurdle then the two governments were willing to put money in. The federal government put in $2.6 and the Province put in $2.6 million and then it was my job to work out matters with our own Board of Governors.

What have been some of the others signature moments, when you look back over 12 years?

There are some things, but they seem almost trivial in the grand scheme of things. When I presided at convocation one of the things that I see are the students who come on stage. Given their ages – most around 22 years old – it must be terrifying to stand facing an audience of some 4,000 people. They come up, every last one of them looking scared to death, and then they turn and walk toward the stage and their faces lighten up. All of a sudden this smile just breaks across their faces. Sometimes some of the young men seem almost determined not to smile, but even then there is this light that crosses their faces. Seeing their expressions is just wonderful. There are some tragic moments too, those rare instances when we’ve had parents come and receive the degree for a deceased son or daughter, and last fall we had a widow receive a degree for her husband, a fallen soldier. Such incidents are hard to deal with, not just on stage, but after, when one reflects on the day that has passed.

Other moments? I certainly remember trips to Nairobi and India, and coming to understand the importance to local people of the research and development work we were doing with CIDA or USAID support. The heartbreaking things one sees in such locations tend to be balanced with enormous local pride in their contributions to our research and development efforts. The people I have seen want to be real partners, and they come through in all the ways at their disposal.

Then there are local events too – for example, this past year when Marcel Desautels signed the agreement to create an endowment of $10 million for the Faculty of Music. Elaine Goldie and I went to Music faculty council and we told them that this gift was coming. I was watching the faces of the people and again, observed the look that crossed their faces. There was immediate recognition of the meaning of this gift for the faculty, in terms of helping its members achieve their goals. And there was visible joy – there is no other way to phrase it. Just joy. They realized that all of a sudden they will have the resources to do some of the things they want to do. And when we made the announcement of yet another $10 million dollars to help establish the new home for Music by renovating a wing of Tache Hall, along with the auditorium – well, the reaction was quite stupendous. As I told you earlier, it all comes back to resources. But there are other nice things too, for example, when somebody gets special recognition at the university. I am just glad for them – so pleased for them that their work or achievement has been recognized.

How did it feel getting outside today and, doing your part for Campus Beautification Day, which was created under your watch?

It’s good to see people – students, staff, and faculty – outside helping to make the campus attractive, and I am always grateful to the nurseries whose gifts of flowers and plants make everyone’s efforts worthwhile. It’s nice to see the groundskeepers leading the event, making sure people get the help they may need to do what they are to do, being directly involved with the rest of the university’s people on this special day. We just expect our campuses to look good, but that requires a lot of cleaning, pruning, and heavy lifting of which most of us are oblivious.
Looking towards the future

Did you ever consider serving another term?

The thought crossed my mind, of course, especially when I heard that several of my medical-doctoral president colleagues were appointed for third terms. However, the reality of such a thing soon followed the thought, because the pleasure of such an extra term would rest only on the good things a president deals with. Unfortunately, dealing with negative matters is also the reality of a president’s job. There are problems that most people cannot imagine, and these problems are not just financial. And quite frankly, institutions do need a new person appointed to office periodically. When you’ve been around for 12 years, people get used to you, and you to them. Universities are dynamic places – it is not in an institution’s interest to become too comfortable in any one president’s way of doing things.

I have wished sometimes that the university were not like a moveable feast, because one cannot complete all that ought to be completed during one’s term of office. It is hard to be satisfied with laying plans and not seeing them to completion, though their completion is inevitable. I’ve gone as far as I can go in the time allotted to me. But I don’t think I am leaving at a bad departure point. Now it will be David Barnard’s turn. I think his job, like mine after I took over from Arnold Naimark, will be focused on how to move on to the next plateau. And he has excellent people to work with. They’ll come with the ideas. He’ll just have to search among them, and augment them with good ideas of his own. Remember, he’s an experienced university president. I was naive.

Which leads us to the obvious question. What comes next for you?

Sleep first. I’m very, very tired. I think a consequence of breaking my hip last summer and the subsequent surgery was the physical toll of my meeting the requirements of my demanding job. I’m tired, and one is less effective when one is tired. I do need physical rest and I do need to get some physical exercise, which sounds like a contradiction, but I do need to improve my own health so I can get back to functioning more normally.

And then I would like to do some work in my own field, biological anthropology. I think I’m good for one more scientific book in one of my research areas. I served as an associate editor for human biology in the Smithsonian Institution’s Handbook of North American Indians series, the volume entitled, Environment, Origins, and Population, which was published in December 2006. I was amused when I learned that they wanted me to be one of the four sub-editors because unlike the others, who are professional archaeologists and a skeletal biologist, they thought I knew something about the living! I was responsible for 12 chapters on the biology of living peoples, which meant that for several chapters I had to recruit the writers, ensure their articles were reviewed, review some other chapters myself, and then I had to write the overview chapter. Writing the latter almost killed me. We were leaving for India to visit our research sites supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the cab was in the driveway as I was sending the e-mail with the attachment of my chapter to the Smithsonian. One does not have time as president to write something as focussed as that. The irony is that in the preface the volume editor thanked the University of Manitoba for giving me release time! I didn’t have any release time. Presidents don’t. But the point is I kept my hand in the field though I need to spend some time thoroughly updating myself in the relevant literature that includes laboratory techniques and computational biology. Once that is done, I can start writing.

And then, after that, I would like to write about other things. Not necessarily in my research area at all, and possibly on topics inspired by my own family’s roots and all that is associated with that. Writing a book of this kind would take me far away from my area of specialization really, and lead me into history. The latter is not my field, but one entertains notions of things like that when one realizes one has gone as far as I can go in the time allotted to me. One will have time to ponder and communicate one’s thoughts. To have time to think and to write – it will be heaven on earth, for certain.
Events Listing
University of Manitoba

Swing a club for the Food Bank

The 8th Annual University of Manitoba All-Staff Golf Tournament & Fundraiser for the Student Food Bank will take place at Southwood Golf and Country Club on Monday, Aug. 25 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Entry fee is $300 per team of 4 ($75 per person). Cheques can be made payable to the University of Manitoba and dropped off at the Services Building, 97 Dafoe Road, attention: Chris Bolton.

The tournament will follow a Texas scramble, best ball format. There will be a $10,000 hole-in-one prize and prizes will be awarded for men’s and women’s longest drive and closest to the pin on a par 3. The beef sisdin buffet including vegetarian options and prize draw.

Golf carts can be reserved by contacting Southwood Golf and Country Club at 269-7515. Arrangements for carts must be made before Aug. 15. Note: Price of golf carts is not included in the tournament fee and cart payment is required at time of booking.

Arts & Entertainment

Celebrate with the president

CAMPUS EVENTS

Come celebrate the outstanding achievements of Émôke Sztathmáry during her term as president and vice-chancellor from 1996 to 2008. Two campus farewell events are planned:

• Monday, June 25, 12 p.m., Brodie Centre, Bannatyne Campus
• Tuesday, June 24, 12 p.m., Duckworth Quadrangle, Fort Garry Campus (rain location, Manitoba Room, University Centre)

All staff, faculty, retirees, students and alumni of the community are invited to attend. Refreshments will be served. For more information on the campus events contact Linda Chartier, Dentistry, 789 4900 or chartie@ms.umanitoba.ca or Julie Mikuska, alumni association, at 474-8198 or juli_mikuska@umanitoba.ca.

Faculty of Dentistry

FUN ON FRIDAY 5TH

Make Friday, June 13 a night of fun, food, dancing, prizes & live entertainment, all for a great cause! Plan to head down to the Pyramid Cabaret for the first annual Urban Smiles event, a fund-raising evening for the Centre for Community Oral Health. Door prizes, silent auctions and entertainment featuring the Fighting Hellbats and more. Tickets are only $10 in advance, $15 at the door.

For tickets call Roxanne at 789-3457. E-mail: bahsler@cc.umanitoba.ca.

Bannatyne Campus – St. Boniface General Hospital and Research Centre

Medical rounds are typically targeted at university staff and professionals directly involved in the medical field.

SUMMER SIZZLER SALE

U of M Bookstore
June 9 to 21

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

Dentistry @ the Downs. Bring the whole gang for an afternoon of affordable family fun at Assiniboia Downs. Tickets are $15 with children under 12 admitted free. Afternoon activities will run from 12:30 to 4 p.m., Sunday, June 8, and include a BBQ lunch, pony rides, face-painting and a petting zoo. Each ticket includes a BBQ lunch, pony rides, face-painting and a petting zoo. For tickets call Roxanne at 789-3457. E-mail: bahsler@cc.umanitoba.ca.

MONDAY, JUNE 9


FRIDAY, JUNE 12

Surgery MSc Oral Examination, Entitled Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopic Imaging Gamma-Knife Targeted Neoplasms. The SIGN Project Launch Suzanne D. Ronald, Lecture Theatre, CancerCare Manitoba, ON 204-675 McDermot Ave., 3:30 p.m., Friday, June 13.

TUESDAY, JUNE 17

Community Health Sciences. An Innovative Community-Based HIV/AIDS Program in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia by Simon Bikanka, director, Integrated AIDS Programme, Catholic Diocese of Ndola, Dr. Betty Havens Seminar Room, 8060 Medical Rehabilitation Building, 12 p.m., Tuesday, June 17.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

St. Boniface Research Centre Seminar Series. Neuregulin signaling in diabetic neuropathy by Rick Dobrowsky, professor, department of pharmacology & toxicology, University of Kansas, Samuel Cohen Auditorium, St. Boniface Research Centre, 12 p.m., Wednesday, June 18.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19

Mikuska@umanitoba.ca.

Fort Garry Campus

Burial service for research supporters

The 2008 Burial Service for individuals who so graciously donated their body to the University of Manitoba for anatomical studies will take place 10 a.m., Thursday, June 26 at Brookside Cemetery, 3001 Notre Dame Ave. West, past Red River College.

SUMMER SIZZLER SALE

U of M Bookstore
June 9 to 21

THURSDAY, JUNE 5

Book launch, Catholics and Slavery by John Perry, St. Paul’s College, McNally Robinson, Grant Park Shopping Centre, 5:30 p.m., Thursday, June 5.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10


Education: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning thesis proposal defense, Informing and Transforming My-Choral Teaching Practice: A Study of the Pedagogical Approaches of Six Master Teachers of Elementary Children’s Choirs by Bonnie Antel, 228 Education Building, 2 p.m., Wednesday, June 11.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19

Nursing Research Seminar Series, Using Mobile Devices in Nursing Practice Education by Caroline Park, adjunct professor, Faculty of Nursing, 370 Helen Glass Centre, 12 p.m., Thursday, June 19.

• The Bulletin publishes events involving the university community.
• E-mail events to barbourd@ms.umanitoba.ca or fax, 474 7631.
• The deadline for the June 19 Bulletin is June 11 at 4:30 p.m.
BY LINDSEY WIEBE
For The Bulletin

Considering the amount of political debate that has taken place on the issue, Smartpark’s forum on the BiPole III transmission line, held May 28, was a surprisingly sedate affair.

The location of where to build the new BiPole III transmission line – be it west of Lake Manitoba, a route the provincial government favours, or east of Lake Winnipeg, a route the Provincial Progressive Conservatives want on the table, has nearly devalued the Manitoba Legislature.

But there were no cat calls from the audience on May 28 and not a lot of pointed questions for the representative from the Province. All and all, audience members were mostly concerned about the environmental consequences of the three options up for discussion.

Invited speakers, Rob Altemeyer, MLA for Wolseley; James Blatz, associate professor of civil engineering at The University of Manitoba; John Ryan, senior scholar at the University of Winnipeg; and Gaile Whelan Enns, director of Manitoba Wildlands presented the facts of the west side versus east side versus underwater options.

Rob Altemeyer began the event by talking about the need for reliability, a known problem with the first two transmission lines. He referenced the thunderstorm of 1996, when 19 hydro transmission towers were blown down, threatening a Winnipeg blackout, and when Manitoba was forced to import power.

Taking into account social, economic and environment factors, the Province has chosen the west side route to avoid disturbing the boreal forest on the east side and maintain the possibility of an UNESCO world heritage designation.

Acknowledging that the west side route would be longer and more costly, Altemeyer stated the cost would work out to $2 per hydro bill per month and be covered not be Manitobans, but through export sales.

John Ryan, known after his series of Winnipeg Free Press articles earlier this year as the “underwater guy”, presented a chronology of his talks with Bob Brennan, president of Manitoba Hydro, and ABB, a cable manufacturer in Sweden, which supplied the cable that lies under the North Sea.

Ryan, on his own time and dollar, has become an unofficial consultant to Manitoba Hydro and CMG Consultants, the consulting firm Manitoba Hydro hired to investigate the underwater route through Lake Winnipeg. He has spent the better part of this year, writing reports and talking with staff at ABB to assess the feasibility of manufacturing the cable and then getting it from Sweden to Manitoba by a combination of ship and rail.

The cost of all this, according to Ryan’s figures, comes in at roughly the same as current west side figures.

Gaile Whalen Enns took a step back and talked about the process that Manitoba Hydro has used to plan its transmission projects. She called on the Province to activate its climate change plan and disclose more information to the public on its environmental investigations along the east side.

James Blatz rounded out the presentations, sharing his five concerns with the project. Those included: the significant additional cost of going down the west side ($410 million), wasted power through line loss, the impact on reliability and security, environmental concerns, and affected communities.

Blatz raised concerns about the electrical compatibility of the west side with the two existing BiPole lines. The extra length of the west side line would make it incompatible with existing lines and because of export sales targets would require an additional converter station at a cost of $1 billion. The east side line would be approximately the same length as existing lines and, therefore, compatible.

He claims that a transmission line down the east side would not ruin Manitoba’s chances for a UNESCO site, a statement Gaile Whelan Enns disagreed with.

Blatz also had concerns about the number of easement agreements needed for the west side, stating that while it has less First Nations communities than the east side to negotiate with, it has more private land owners and the process could end up costing more and taking longer.

While all in all it was a staid affair, audience members heard the facts as four presenters closed to the process made their cases. But as one presenter put it, the decision of where the BiPole III transmission line ultimately goes is a political decision and rests with the Province of Manitoba, no matter what the experts say.

This event was webcast and is still available for viewing on Smartpark’s website at www.smartpark.ca.
Studying what can kill but likely won’t

BY SEAN MOORE
Research Promotion

In recent years a new villain has found its way into campfire tales, but this one, unlike the murderous hitch-hiking fisherman, is not lurking in every dark wooded corner waiting to kill you. The villain du jour is Blastomyces dermatitidis, and many cottagers fear it. It is a fungus that lives in acidic soils found in parts of Manitoba, Northwestern Ontario, Quebec and the Ohio River Basin – to name a few locations – and if conditions are right this pathogen can infect a person or their pet and potentially cause serious illness.

The fungus releases spores into the air and when they find a favorable environment, like mammalian lungs, they transform into yeast. This yeast can invade tissues and cause pneumo-nia-like symptoms, and if the pathogen enters the blood it can cause a cutaneous infection. If diagnosed it can be treated and cured.

Little is known about the epidemiology of this fungus, however, this is changing thanks to Health Sciences Centre physician and University of Manitoba Associate Professor John Embil and his colleagues at the Northern Ontario Health Unit operating from Kenora, Ontario.

Embil and his group are trying to better define the local epidemiology and risk factors for infection with “blasto” as it is also known.

“I don’t want to downplay the significance of it,” Embil said, “but the chance of someone catching this is only slightly higher than getting struck by lightning. Still, people get hit by lightning and when that happens it’s a significant event.”

Every year about 16 to 25 people in Manitoba and 90 to 60 people in Northwestern Ontario will get diagnosed with it, out of a population of about two million.

Embil and colleagues recently finished a study that tried to uncover which behaviors are risk factors for infection. In short, there are only two: being a middle-aged person with an outdoor occupation like forester, or having a compromised immune system.

After surveying 100 recovered blastomycosis patients and 200 people in a control group, Embil sifted through the data and found no particular behaviour correlated to an increased risk – even mushroom picking and gardening were of no consequence.

“There is a myth that if your dog gets it you’re going to get it. Well, our data didn’t confirm that at all,” Embil said.

“The more you’re exposed the more likely you’ll develop a complication,” he said. “Just like the more you drive on the highway the more likely you’ll end up in a ditch. There is a cumulative risk.”

In the future Embil hopes to examine what genes play a role in the infection’s pathology. But in the meantime there is still heaps of fundamental work that needs to be done.

Although B. dermatitidis was first described in 1894, little is known about it. No one knows, for example, how prevalent the fungus is in the wild. In the laboratory, however, Embil notes that blastomycosis is a nuisance to work with – it’s fickle and slow growing. The sheer frustration of trying to work with it repels many researchers from investigating it.

“I want to learn about it so that we can put to bed these fears and panics we have about it. I’m not a cottager, but I think the benefits of relaxing at your cabin far outweigh the risks of getting blasto. So I’d say you should relax and go have fun.”

Researcher designs the best bridge, again

BY SEAN MOORE
Research Promotion

As boys growing up in Pakistan, civil engineer Aftab Mufti and his brother spent their afternoons building and destroying bridges they made from mud and stone collected from their yard.

“They would pit their designs both against each other and the flood of water they let pour forth from the small reservoir they dug. Three or four prototypes a day would succumb to erosion and collapse, and Mufti would observe the results and learn from them.”

Aftab’s brother went on to be a physician, but Aftab retains a passionate affection for designing bridges and this year he again won the P.L. Prately Award for co-authoring the best paper on bridge design.

Mufti, who also directs the Intelligent Sensing for Innovative Structures Canada Research Network (ISIS Canada), has examined two solutions to this problem.

One remedy involves developing new design concepts. He did this in 1993 and won the Pratley Award then for a paper that suggested steel should be removed from the deck and used instead to connect the girders.

The second solution relies on new materials and it won him the 2009 P.L. Pratley Award. The material is a glass fiber reinforced polymer (GFRP), which is light (so easily and cheaply transported to remote locations like Canada’s North) and 10 times stronger than steel.

The new bridge deck consists of neither concrete nor steel but 200-millimeter tall triangular filament-wound tubes of GFRP bonded with epoxy resin. Laminates of GFRP then get adhered to the top and bottom. Mathematics suggests such a deck could last for 100 years, far beyond the current 10 to 40 years.

But if nothing corrodes, how do you know when a bridge is old? By using cionics, a term coined by Mufti, which means sensors placed in the bridge constantly provide data on its state.

Civionics is great for all bridges, but it won’t be in concrete-free bridges anytime soon because builders, rightly so, are reluctant to take a risks with new materials and methods.

So rather than get the building culture to adopt this new material and design overnight, Mufti prefers to gradually introduce it by, say, using GFRP rods in lieu of steel ones since they do not fatigue, corrode, or rigidly resist loads.

“We do paradigm shift research but implementation should be incremental.”

And this unharmonious marriage ultimately results in cracks, then corrosion, then costly repairs.
One beautiful university

Events put focus on campus

Campus Beautification Day on May 22 helped spruce up the University of Manitoba, just in time for people to drop in for Doors Open on May 24. Counter-clockwise from left, Tammy Loewen enjoys some ice cream at the end of her Doors Open tour; Bill, Beth, Luke and Sharon Heppner checked out Tache Hall as part of Doors Open. The spiral staircase they’re standing in is in one of the residence’s matching gymnasiums; Andrea Kailer, Graduate Studies, does some gardening in front of University Centre during Campus Beautification Day; and, from left, vice-presidents Joanne Keselman, Robert Kerr, Debbie McCallum, and Elaine Goldie, MLA Marilyn Brick, president Emőke Szathmáry, Winnipeg South MP Rod Bruneau and St. Norbert city councillor Justin Swandel pause for a picture during Campus Beautification Day.

Photos by Dale Barbou