ROY GRAHAM
THE END OF AN ERA
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Dear Alumni and Friends,

One of my favorite things about working at a college is the perpetual change. We just said farewell to the outstanding Class of 2014 and look forward to welcoming the Class of 2018. The new class will be the first to benefit from learning outcomes in every job in the Work Program and a Work Transcript, all of which should help them impress employers in the future.

This summer also brings major renovation projects in Bothwell Auditorium, Lumpkin Library (soon to be Lumpkin Learning Commons), and a start to the conversion of Anderson to the Claire Jaenke Alumni Center. Four of our most senior faculty members, Roy Graham, Sam Meredith, Jake Miller, and Greg Meyer, have retired and we are welcoming five new tenure-track faculty in the fall. It seems everywhere you look on campus there is change.

Yet, what makes Blackburn strong is what does not change. The names may change, the carpet may be replaced, and the technology may improve, but the heart of the institution does not. Blackburn has offered a second-to-none liberal arts education paired with a Work Program to build career skills in a caring campus community. It has been that way for over a hundred years and it will be for a hundred more.

And students want a place like Blackburn. We give students a chance at a world-class education that is affordable and accessible. Too few colleges are doing that, so more students are turning to Blackburn. Interest in the Class of 2018 has been up significantly and we expect a large class in August.

These are exciting times at Blackburn College. Much is changing, but our core is only getting stronger.

Sincerely,

John Comerford, Ph.D.
President
Today students have a wide range of options for getting a college education. In Illinois there are more than 60 private colleges and universities, 50 community colleges, 12 public universities, and 30 for-profit institutions recognized by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. That gives the average new Illinois high school graduate about 150 obvious options and since Illinois is a net exporter of college students, we are in competition with the hundreds of institutions in neighboring states and online. This competition is compounded by the fact that the numbers of high school graduates in the Midwest will decline by about 6.5% by 2020.

In this environment it is not sufficient to be good; we must be the best at what we do. Our aim is to make the most of our distinctive programs and tie together work, academic, and co-curricular experience in ways that will prepare students extremely well for life beyond college. We have the foundation for all of this in place, but there is much more to do. Here is an overview of some major projects we're undertaking now to secure the college for the long term.

We're working on revising our general education program. That's the common learning to be gained by all students, regardless of their specific majors. Last year we completed a review of our general education program, including input from experienced colleagues from other liberal arts colleges in our region. This spring a faculty committee is working diligently on a plan that will help us even more effectively address and assess student achievement of the goals stated in the Blackburn mission statement and our Statement of Educational Objectives (both published every year in our Catalog). We've also been reviewing materials from the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the foremost proponent of liberal arts and life beyond college in the U.S. today. In February we sent two faculty members to their annual conference on general education, and they have brought back a lot of great ideas. We have a lot to do, but as in so many areas, we are already doing a lot of things right.

We're also at work on strengthening the ways in which we can help students get the most out of their Work Program experience. Our goal is to make the most of the Work Program as an educational and developmental program that distinguishes the college from other institutions. The work experience has to be strengthened, measured, and documented in ways that make the advantages of a Blackburn education very clear. We've looked closely at what the other Work Colleges have done and have built on the substantial work of Roger Fenton, Sam Meredith, and Kristi Nelms in creating instruments and setting goals for learning and development that characterize each job on campus. This work is particularly important in clarifying and substantiating Blackburn's competitive advantage in the higher education marketplace. We have a lot to offer and want to be sure we are as clear and direct in showing that as we can possibly be.

We are also continuing to prepare students for life and work beyond college. Blackburn is a member of a national organization called the Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education. NetVUE was created to support and strengthen institutional efforts to help students explore their own purposes and directions as matters of personal vocation. This year we received a NetVUE grant to make training available to first year students to help them become effective team members, to improve the scope of education and services available through our Career Services Office, and expand training and support for those involved in student advising.

This is a very short summary of some very big projects. We have our work cut out for us, but we know that in partnership with our alums and friends of the College our future can be very bright. If we can persevere through the challenges we face today, we have the chance to further develop and demonstrate a powerful and influential model for undergraduate education. It's a remarkable opportunity, and as the saying goes, nobody said it would be easy.
The Claire Jaenke Alumni Center
A Dream That Will Become Reality

For the last 12 years, CHC Anderson (the building commonly referred to as “The Den”) has stood vacant. Apart from sporadic use for development office phon-a-thons and as an exhibit center during Homecoming Week of 2012, there has been very little going on in the building that served as the student center for 55 years. This space will be transformed into the Claire Jaenke Alumni Center, thanks in large part to the lead gift made by alumnus Edwin A. Jaenke ’50.

The former student hub of activity will become a great place for alumni and friends to gather since it will have large, open event space. Also, the building will house the development and alumni offices along with additional conference and meeting space. Both the outside patio area and the exterior and the inside of the building will go through significant renovation to make “the Den” a functional and attractive space for meetings and alumni events.

Ed Jaenke’s monumental gift will memorialize his wife and Blackburn alumna, Claire (Schmidt) ’49. Claire and Ed’s interest in Blackburn’s alumni affairs and activities had long been a personal priority. Claire was very involved in the Girl Scout movement and held various leadership positions in Missouri, San Diego, and in Virginia. While Ed Jaenke was the Governor of the Farm Credit Association, she was its “first lady.” For many years, she served as Ed’s right hand in E.A. Jaenke & Associates, Ed’s consulting and lobbying firm in Washington D.C.

Edwin Jaenke had a tremendous career in business and politics. A Korean War veteran, he served on the staff of Missouri Senator Stuart Symington in his 20s. At the young age of 29, Ed was appointed to the position of U.S. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. In 1979, the Jaenkes purchased a 400-acre farm in Virginia and restored it to a successful beef cattle operation. In addition to an A.A. in Agriculture at Blackburn, he received his B.S. from the University of Illinois and his M.A. at the University of Missouri. In 1981, Ed Jaenke was honored with Blackburn’s Distinguished Alumni Award.

The lead gift of the Jaenke Alumni Center was announced recently. Mr. Jaenke’s gift has been complemented by the Class of 1962’s 50th reunion gift and a gift by the Blackburn Alumni Association. At this time, there are a number of naming opportunities available at various gift levels.

Glen Krupica
Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Glen Krupica is the Vice President for Institutional Advancement. To reach Glen, email glen.krupica@blackburn.edu

Several architectural renderings were created to show the building’s transformation into the new Alumni Center.
Mary Hunter Austin

Sculpture Dedicated in Honor of Blackburn Alumna

If you were to ask the average Carlinville native or Blackburn student, “Have you heard of Mary Hunter Austin?” you might get some blank stares. A rather celebrated author in the New Mexico and California areas, Austin rarely gets recognition in her hometown of Carlinville, IL. Austin also is one of the more notable alumni of Blackburn College, and yet on campus she is not a particularly recognized figure. Two years ago, however, a project was started to bring Mary Hunter Austin and her accomplishments to new light in both the community of Carlinville and Blackburn College.

Austin was born in Carlinville on September 9, 1868 in a small house at 511 East First South Street. She attended Carlinville High School where she began to develop her writing skills. She graduated from Blackburn College in 1888 with a degree in Science, focusing on Environmental Science and a year later moved to California’s San Joaquin Valley. Austin loved the environment and fought in many ways to preserve it. This is significant considering at that time environmental conservation and women’s rights were not on the forefront of many minds.

In 1903 she published her first book, The Land of Little Rain. Her text described the American southwest and the nuances of nature. One of her most famous works is called Taos Pueblo, originally published in 1930. Austin wrote the captions in the book describing the Ansel Adams photographs that illustrate its pages. In 1930, a copy of Taos Pueblo cost $75. While that price was high for the time, in 2011 an original copy sold for a staggering $85,000. Her work in writing and conservation were forerunners to the modern environmentalist movements. Austin died in 1934 while living in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Professor Bob Huber’s bust of Mary Hunter Austin was dedicated on May 5, 2014.
Mount Mary Austin, located in the Sierra Nevada, stands as one of the many monuments to her work in the Southwest. Unfortunately, there is nothing in her home town of Carlinville that stands as a proper homage. This has changed in the past few months.

Jeff and Jodie Padgett, who ran a bed and breakfast out of Austin’s childhood home in Carlinville, found a few artifacts that piqued their interest in Austin’s life and work. They joined the College’s Mary Hunter Austin Society and shared their enthusiasm with other members, including former English faculty member, Ann Bernard. The society was active for about 10 years but unfortunately waned after Ann’s death. With some of the society’s remaining funds, the Padgetts wanted to create a physical memorial for Austin.

Huber used several photographs of Mary Hunter Austin to construct the bust. He wanted to use an image of her at a younger age, reflecting what Austin most likely looked like during her time at Blackburn. Huber also believes that a young age represents a time when Austin would have been more filled with dreams and that the students of the college are dreamers and will be able to relate with the image.

On May 5, the bust was unveiled during a ceremony in Snyder Atrium, where it will be housed as an inspiration to aspiring environmentalists. Of course Mary Hunter Austin’s work can stand for much more than just the environment—her work represents that no matter where you come from, working hard and reaching for the stars will achieve excellence and success.

After meeting with Tom Turpin, Development Officer, and Bob Huber, Pegram Chair of the Art Department, they determined that a portrait bust should be made in Austin’s likeness.

Huber, who has worked at the College since January 2003, ran with the idea of a portrait bust and soon began constructing it. Huber created the bust out of clay to maintain some of the its natural nuances, and is stained to resemble a metallic bronze-like material. He has made a point of using the bust as a teaching tool, slowing the process, but providing an important educational lesson.
“Let’s put on a show!” Although these words sound like the lines from a Mickey Rooney/Judy Garland musical, they also capture the enthusiasm of Blackburn graduate Ian Aebel ’97 (History major, Literature minor) when he phoned me during the summer of 2013. Dr. Aebel, now an Assistant Professor at Texas A&M Kingsville, had heard about Roy Graham’s plan to retire at the close of the 2013-2014 academic year. Remarkably, that would mean a 50-year career teaching literature, composition and linguistics to Blackburn students; heading up various college committees; and, for the past twenty-two years, serving as College Marshal.

Ian and I agreed: something special was needed—something both scholarly and personal, something that would reflect and honor Roy’s contributions to the college. We decided on a day-long event called the Graham Letters and Culture Symposium, with a focus on the theme of “Creating American Identities.”

With the blessing of Blackburn’s administration and the Department of English & Communications, a call for papers went out. Roy was consulted; clearly thrilled with the plan, he chose April 5th as the date. Ann Allen coordinated the formal dinner honoring Roy, which took place the evening before. Ian and I took turns hosting and introducing. The six presentations proved a perfect range of topics, all offering interesting ways to think about American identities.

The actual Symposium was all we had hoped for and more. The event was held in the Woodson Center and attracted a sizeable audience of Blackburn folk and members of the local community. Ian and I were the co-hosts and introducers. The six presentations ranged from the perfect range of topics, all offering interesting ways to think about American identities.

The day started with Dr. Melba Buxbaum’s observations about Spanish novelist and traveler to the United States Carmen Martín Gaite. Dr. Gregory Singleton, Professor of History Emeritus of Northeastern Illinois University, then spoke about the American Ishmael; Ryan Magalong finished up the morning papers with a discussion of Toni Morrison.

Our panel about the joys and woes of teaching included 1997 graduate Courtney Murphy, 2011 graduate Emily Jo Johnston, 2012 graduate Kelsey Nunes, and retired middle school teacher Charlene Genta. Audience members hurled questions at the panel members, with a number of lively comments about the uses of technology in the classroom.

After lunch, we encouraged people to offer “pop-up tributes,” anecdotes and recollections about Roy Graham. Emily Jo Johnston read a poem she composed. One of its stanzas reads, “Much like Virgil you’ve illuminated the dark passageways of literature, and you’ve taken us through hell, so that we could eventually find heaven. You have shown us the best of all possible worlds.”

The closing three presentations began with Dr. Will Macintosh’s talk on 19th century travelers to America. Brad Hinkle and Jennifer Jackson, both 2008 graduates who double majored in Literature and Political Science, focused on media portrayals, Brad with clips and analysis from “Blade Runner,” and Jenny with a provocative discussion of women’s characterization in current television programming.

In all, the “show” that began with a phone call from Ian was a stimulating, warm-hearted event. And, it was abundantly obvious that Roy has made a lasting, positive impression on many Blackburn students over the years.
Blackburn has had many notable and well-loved faculty and staff over the years, and while the sterling reputation of these former faculty and staff members can be well-recounted by their colleagues, there is no one better to tell their stories than their former students and mentees.

Volumes could be written on the stories the alumni have to tell about all the professors and staff that have walked the halls of Blackburn, but presented here is a tribute to just a few of the great names that have made the College what it is today.

One of the most well-remembered staff members ever to work at the College was Mary Cosner. Known affectionately by most on campus as "Cos," Cosner worked hard in the Admissions Office from 1953-1994, and made friends with most of the students. One of those students, Frances Mitchell ’71 and former Dean of Students, remembered Cosner fondly. Mitchell recalled that Cosner was "an indomitable force."

"When Cos wanted something to get done, it got done." Cosner was described across the board as a very strong and able woman. Mitchell’s most fond memory of Cosner is her laugh, and had much to say about the impact Cosner had on her life after college.

Mitchell, who married Ivan Liss, former chair of the Chemistry Department, will never forget the major role Cosner played on her wedding day. “She made my wedding dress and hosted the reception in her own home after the ceremony in Clegg Chapel. She didn’t waste anything and even made me another dress out of a table cloth she used for the reception,” she said.

Another alumus who shared stories about Cosner was sociology major Richard Samonte ’62. He will always remember “going to Cos’s office to raid her candy jar.” Samonte confessed that wasn’t the only reason he went to her office. “My future wife worked for her as one of her secretaries in the Admissions Office, so I was mainly there to see her and get some candy as an excuse.” Samonte also remembers that “Cos introduced me to gin and tonic and Shakespeare.”

After his graduation Samonte continued to visit Cosner well into her retirement. “When I was on the Alumni Board I stayed at her house whenever the Board met; oftentimes my wife and two daughters accompanied me, and they stayed with her while I was at my meeting,” he said. Cosner had a profound effect on so many lives and has definitely made an impact on the College forever.

Roger Hatlestad, choir director from 1971 to 1995, was another notable Blackburn instructor. In addition to leading the Blackburn College choir, Hatlestad led the Carlinville community choir.

Music major Paul Kirby ’86 applied the principles Hatlestad taught him to become an accomplished singer. “Roger sort of flew in the room and found me and his words were ‘Welcome!’” Kirby said, describing his first encounter with Hatlestad, who he credits with having had a profound positive impact on his life.

Kirby walked away with one particular lesson in mind: “Never waste time when there is music to be made.” When asked to describe Hatlestad in one sentence Kirby replied: “Roger Hatlestad, father, husband, teacher, musician, has worked his entire life using his talent, dedication, sense
of humor, and brilliant communication skills to bring meaningful and beautiful music to people in a variety of musical contexts.”

Linda Christian ’94 had quite a bit to say about Hatlestad’s impact on her life. Christian, a music major who affectionately referred to him as “Doc” said, “I will always be amazed in a campus of Doctors there was only one Doc.” She attributes Hatlestad as her primary reason for coming to Blackburn. “I had visited the College and met him as an interested music major. Afterward, he contacted me and was unbelievably convincing when he basically told me, ‘You are coming to Blackburn. We look forward to seeing you.’”

Christian remembered that “The Madrigal Dinners were grand and the Christmas party at the Hatlestad house was something out of a fairy tale.”

According to Christian, Hatlestad had quite the profound effect on her life after college. “Following Blackburn the continued friendship and constant support over the years is a true testament to the permanency of our connection.” Christian made mention that “if you talk about Doc, you are also referring to the love of his life Nita.”

She made a recollection which exemplified Hatlestad’s character as a husband when she described his recent interaction with his wife, Nita, who passed after a long battle with Alzheimer’s. “His love, devotion and cherished affection toward Nita when she could no longer communicate is really one of the best love stories ever,” she said.

According to Christian, the greatest lesson she learned from Doc came from his own example. “[He] exemplifies being the best one can be while serving one another in the spirit of Christ.” Christian summed up her description of Hatlestad saying, “Dr. Roger Hatlestad is quite simply a living treasure.” Her words are a touching tribute to one of the great former faculty members who will never be forgotten at Blackburn College.

Larry Samuels ’55, biology major, also contributed his recollections of Werner. Samuels was a senior when he first met Werner and at the time he was a math and chemistry major. Samuels worked closely with Werner as a laboratory assistant.

One of Samuels’ favorite memories of Werner involves the professor’s use of an alarm clock to awaken Samuels during his afternoon lecture. Samuels said, “I was prone to dozing off.” He credits Werner with teaching him to have “patience and persistence” in his research and work. He remembered fondly that, “Bill Werner was a dedicated teacher with a genuine passion for his students.”

The biology department at Blackburn College would not be what it is today had it not been for professors like Bill Werner. Werner was a Biology professor from 1954 to 1989 who left a lasting mark on the College. Biology major, John Jellies ’79, spoke of Werner quite fondly. “Dr. Werner was quite a stabilizing force. He had a subtle wit and quick mind,” Jellies said.

Jellies’ most fond memory of Werner was an Ecology field trip. “Bill seemed in his natural habitat in the field with students.” Jellies broke down his description of Werner into a single sentence. “Bill Werner is a professional amongst professionals who understands how to communicate effectively and evoke the best in others.” With such a testament to his character there is no wondering how Werner has made himself a fixture in the history of the College.

Bill Werner helped to shape the future of the biology department at Blackburn and has most definitely made a deep impact on the students he taught.

Faculty and staff alike have changed the lives of students at Blackburn College. There is simply not enough time and room on these pages to do proper justice to the impression left by these members of the faculty and staff.

Every alumnus and alumna who contributed their recollection of the professors could spend hours upon hours speaking about how their life would be very different had they not had the privilege to meet these fantastic educators. Every student should strive to share a relationship with a mentor who reflects the ones remembered here. A mentor can teach more than just what is in a book. They can also teach about life.

Written by Patrick Benedict ’17 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program
The End of an Era:
Roy Graham Retires After 50 Years at Blackburn College

Deep in the annals of Blackburn history lie some giants of the institution—Reverend Gideon Blackburn, William Hudson, Robert Ludlum, Harriet Stoddard, Glen McConagha, Ann Barnard. In May, Roy Graham, College Marshal and Professor of English, joined their ranks, forever cemented in its history after celebrating 50 years of service to the College.

While many professors have come and gone, Graham has stayed dedicated to educating thousands of Blackburn students spanning five decades, working under six presidents and with countless colleagues. For Graham the Blackburn experience has always been about connecting—connecting to students, connecting to fellow faculty and staff, connecting to his passion for literature and education.

The Blackburn experience is a unique one, and Graham has lived almost every facet of that experience. “There’s been very little that I haven’t been connected with,” Graham said. “I may not have been the innovator, but I have been a part of it.”

Born and raised in Granite City, Graham joined the Blackburn faculty in 1964, fresh out of a Master of English program at Southern Illinois University–Carbondale, which he earned using scholarships gained after serving for seven years in the Army Reserves. “I knew something about the school. I knew it was a work school and knew that it had a pretty good reputation,” Graham said of his knowledge of Blackburn.

Graham’s first years at the College are fondly remembered as a time when students, faculty and staff banded together for a common goal, for not only the work-learning mission, but in camaraderie and enjoyment. “It’s kind of an investment you make. At least in those early years, this was a contained campus. You worked here six days a week. We still had classes until noon on Saturday,” he said. “The idea was that the students, the faculty, and the staff all pulled together.”

Graham remembers Thanksgiving dinners cooked and eaten with students, Wednesday night formal dinners, speakers, musicians, and a full line-up of entertainment and activities.

Graham and other faculty and staff members banded together with students during moving, renovation and building projects, including the moving of the library from Hudson Hall to Lumpkin, the building of Renner and during one summer, building a large number of grain bins with a mathematics professor.

For Graham, becoming a part of the environment wasn’t a choice, but the campus culture. “We didn’t have a lot of money, but we had a lot of intelligent and caring individuals. It wasn’t a difficult feat to become a part of it all,” he said. “Once you have that formative experience, then the rest of it kind of falls into place.”

Five decades can bring much change, and Graham has been witness to it all. “There’s always, in every decade, something there,” Graham said. “In every decade there are several things that stand out, new people coming in, changes being made.” Some of those changes included the beginnings of the computer science program, the anti-war and civil rights movements of the ’60s, and designing and teaching the College’s first African American literature course.

To Graham though, the true core of the College is its students. “The students always determine the quality of the institution at the moment,” he said. “You can hire quality professors, but you’ve got to have students who really want to learn. Through the years, there’s been a good, solid core of students.”

Graham plans to spend time relaxing, gardening, and enjoying life. For those who remember him barreling quickly across campus—a staple for 50 years—it is doubtful that he will slow down.

From five decades of students, faculty, and staff: thank you for your service.
Mark Kaiser
Utilities Supervisor

As Blackburn’s Utilities Supervisor, Mark Kaiser was “in charge of anything with pipes or wires coming out of it” from April 1980 until his retirement at the end of the Spring 2014 semester. He took pride in his work even though it wasn’t always visible—it’s easy to forget how much work goes into providing the campus with running water and electricity.

Kaiser was born in Cleveland, Ohio, but he moved to Lombard, IL at age 5. In 1969, Blackburn was “by far the friendliest” of the four colleges he toured as a high school senior. His decision was simple: “Before I came here, I had a dream of standing under a tree and shaking hands with a man,” he says. “That dream realized itself on my first day here. As a student, I knew this was where I was supposed to be.”

Living in Graham 008 and working in Campus Maintenance, Kaiser earned a degree in biology with the equivalent of a math minor. He claims to have really majored in the Work Program, though. “I loved working,” he says. “It was a break from studying.”

After graduating, Kaiser operated OK Electronics with classmate Steve Oberman ’71. He worked there until he was invited to lead Campus Maintenance’s electrical and plumbing crews in early 1980. He later merged the two groups into one all-encompassing utilities crew.

While leading this crew, Kaiser completed an impressive number of major jobs over the years. He updated campus heating systems, re-piped Jones Hall, rewired Stodsdall Hall, installed fire alarms in the residence halls, installed the first layer of fiber optics in all campus buildings, installed an energy management system and oversaw countless miles of wiring and natural gas lines. Kaiser was a good fit thanks to his skill-set. “When I signed on to work, I knew I would stay here until I retired,” he says. He considers imparting these skills a rewarding experience—at the end of the day, “all we’ve got to give is knowledge.”

Kaiser considers himself a teacher—one of his job’s greatest challenges was “teaching Electronics 101 one minute and Plumbing 400 the next”—but not a professor. He’s a proponent of self-directed education and learning by doing. In his experience, formal education doesn’t always mesh with natural learning: memorization and recitation “robs students of a chance to truly grow up and become part of a community.”

Practical experience, he says, trumps theoretical knowledge. Mark challenges students to leave their residence halls and connect with the real world.

After more than 34 years of involvement in the Work Program, Kaiser has only one big post-retirement goal: “sleep for two months and figure it out from there.” After that, he intends to finish a long list of household tasks and spend time with his family.

If you flip a light switch or turn a faucet handle at Blackburn and everything works as intended, you can be sure that Mark Kaiser did his job. As his student workers will attest, Kaiser is a “wizard” who leaves behind an invisible but vitally important legacy.

Written by Clayt Scheller ’15 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program
Dr. Greg Meyer
Professor of Philosophy & Religion

Following 33 years of service to Blackburn, Philosophy and Religion Department Chair Greg Meyer retired after the Spring 2014 semester.

Meyer was born in Milwaukee, WI in 1949. After earning his B.A. in History and Secondary Education from Carroll College (now Carroll University) in 1971, he moved south to Louisville, KY. Meyer earned his master’s and doctorate degrees from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. After earning the former, he moved back to Wisconsin, working as a pastor in Fon du Lac for two years and in Green Bay for five. His Blackburn experience began after he decided to find work outside of the parish ministry in 1981.

Looking for chaplaincy jobs led Meyer to choose between two schools: Blackburn and Muskingum College in Ohio. Blackburn’s Work Program played a major role in his decision. “My wife and I decided to move here for two years just to see how it went,” Meyer says, “and 33 years later, here we are.”

Meyer worked as the College’s first full-time chaplain after moving into Jewell Hall’s infirmary in 1981. He taught his first classes a year later; he taught full-time by 1990 and was tenured in 1995.

Between 1989 and 1990, Meyer filled in as the Interim Dean of Students. He also acted as the College Counselor during times when the school did not have one on staff. As Director of Church Relations, he led a traveling musical group called “The Joyful Noise” in which student musicians earned work hours for practice and performance.

Three decades at the College have left Meyer with some interesting memories. When he first moved to Blackburn, students brought trays from the cafeteria and sledded with his sons during the winter. He participated in Blackburn’s Midwinter Folk Festival—an unplugged music fest in Woodson’s dining hall—for about a decade. He also estimates having married around 100 couples in Clegg Chapel over the years.

Meyer considered himself a facilitator. He described his work as “trying to help students to be successful in their transition into mature adults and trying to help them find purpose in their lives.” He found Blackburn’s students very genuine; he enjoyed challenging them to think.

Meyer plans to stay busy after retiring. His post-retirement docket includes reading, running, being an attentive grandfather, traveling with his wife, revising the text he wrote for his Psychology of Religion course, spending time with his music and volunteering.

It’s not easy to condense 33 years into a few words, but Meyer’s time at Blackburn has certainly been a learning experience. “I came here as a young man,” he says. “Since then, I have grown personally and in my understanding of the field.”

Meyer has left an indelible mark on the institution. “I have a deep sense of gratitude for Blackburn,” he says. “[It] has offered me the opportunity to do a variety of things—chaplaincy, teaching, counseling—and it’s been a nice place to work. I’m appreciative that my adult life and identity are tied to this college.”

Written by Clayt Scheller ’15 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program

Update Magazine // Summer 2014
Political Science Department Chair Dr. Sam Meredith retired at the end of the spring 2014 semester, leaving behind a nearly 35-year legacy.

Originally from Dayton, Ohio, Meredith graduated from the University of the Ozarks in 1966. After earning his master's degree in history from Emory University in 1967, he taught for three years at Bishop State Community College. He entered Indiana University in 1970, eventually completing his Political Science Ph.D. eight years later. Meredith began teaching at Blackburn during the fall of 1979 and was tenured in 1986.

Blackburn’s Work Program originally drew Meredith to the College. After working at Hanover College, he noticed a significant increase in student maturity when he came here.

That maturity played a major role in his decision to stay here. Meredith claims that Blackburn offered him a unique opportunity to develop leadership studies; he attributes this to the fact that “students here are given responsibilities that other colleges wouldn’t give.”

His wife, Math/Computer Science Department Chair Dr. Marsha Meredith, was also tenured at Blackburn. “Such a combination is hard to find,” he says.

From Political Science to Climbing and Rappelling, Meredith taught a wide variety of courses over the years. But he did more than just teach—Meredith held many titles, including Interim Director for Institutional Research, Social Science Division Chair and Dean of Faculty.

“During my time here, I’ve tried to balance several things: the Political Science major, the Pre-Law track and leadership development.” After 34 years, he says, “you get a sense of perspective.”

Having spent a third of a century at Blackburn, Meredith considers himself a good judge of student potential. “I’m able to look at freshmen and tell what they’ll be like as seniors,” he says. “Education is a journey that doesn’t always go in the right direction. However, I’ve seen so many students go from freshmen to seniors that I’m reassured for our future.”

Meredith looks forward to retirement, but he doesn’t intend to rest on his laurels. He plans to keep busy by visiting his grandchildren across the country and teaching leadership courses part-time at Blackburn. “Retiring is a liberating experience, but I want to stay intellectually involved,” he says. “Sometimes I ask myself if I really want someone else to teach these classes.”

Now that he’s retired, Meredith urges the Blackburn community to keep demonstrating what sets the college apart. “Blackburn is a special place,” he says; he thinks it’s revealing that Blackburn students often lead group projects at Work College Consortium gatherings. “We need to continue developing that potential.”

Written by Clayt Scheller ’15 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program
Dr. Victor (Jake) Miller, Professor of Psychology, retired this spring after 25 years of teaching at Blackburn College. Since starting in the fall of 1989, Miller, commonly known as Dr. Jake, has left a tremendous impact on the students and the college itself.

Miller graduated with a B.A. from Knox College in 1985 and went on to Texas Tech University to earn his Ph.D. He graduated there with what is called an ABD or “all but dissertation”. He then began working at Blackburn for a year and received his Ph.D. shortly afterward.

When asked why he chose to work at Blackburn College, Miller jokingly replied, “They offered me a job.” He went on to explain that he had family who lived in the area. Hailing from a small town like Matherville, IL, Miller had no problem adjusting to Carlinville.

There are many great reasons why people come to Blackburn but there are even better reasons why people stay at Blackburn. Miller’s main reason for staying at Blackburn was the Work Program. “Initially I liked the Work Program for different reasons. I liked that it made the College more affordable for the students,” he said.

Over his 25 years his respect of the Work Program grew. “I began to see how much of an impact the Work Program had on the students and it was truly something I wanted to be a part of,” Miller said. The Work Program has made an impact on not just students but professors as well.

One of his fondest memories while at Blackburn is when he went with some student delegates to a meeting of the Work College Consortium. “I had spoken with different members of the faculty who had gone to these meetings. All of them said that various professionals from the other colleges had come up to them and gave great compliments to the Blackburn student workers.”

Miller said that this trip was no exception and that he had been told by several of the other professionals there that Blackburn was a cut above the rest. He also recounted an interesting story from that meeting that really speaks to the character of the student workers here at Blackburn. “We were eating lunch with the rest of the student delegates and we all had quite a lot of paper plates to throw away. Towards the end of the lunch the trash can had become full and so people were beginning to stack plates off to the side. One of the students from Blackburn walked up and looked at it for a second. He then disappeared for a few seconds and returned with three garbage bags. He then proceeded to remove the full trash bag and replace it with a new one and then went to clean up the plates off to the side.” Miller said that the other students and faculty just looked on with amazement because no one had told the student to do it.

Miller says he will miss the people at Blackburn the most. He has developed a great working relationship with his colleagues and students. But he plans to remain here in town to be near his wife who is in a local nursing home. Other than that Miller says his only plan for after retirement is to do a lot of fishing.
The newest department in Blackburn’s Work Program, Community Services is one of the most diverse and departments. Student workers in the Community Services department work at various job sites around Carlinville, as well as some on Blackburn’s campus.

Job sites include positions working in Carlinville’s school system, the public library, the food pantry, the Macoupin Center for the Developmentally Disabled, and the Locust Street Resource Center, which provides mental and behavioral health services.

On campus, students run Leave it to Beaver, a trading post of sorts where students can drop off their gently used items that they no longer have use for or browse the stock for free items that they need or want. Community Services Manager Chelsea McMillian ’15 says she likes that the department is focused on helping people, and that they are looking toward expanding in coming years.

Recent graduate and communications major Miranda Clark ’14 worked at the Macoupin County Center for the Developmentally Disabled through the Community Services department. “I really have a heart for non-profits,” said Clark, mentioning leading students in crafts, exercises and serving as a positive role model as some of her favorite parts of the job.

She also said that the job has afforded her opportunities to learn to run fundraisers and promote MCDD through social media. “I’ve learned a lot of patience in working with different types of people,” said Clark. “If a freshman was interested in working in Community Services I would definitely encourage him or her to try it out.”

Written by Larra Brogdon ’16 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program.
Dr. Edward Zalisko Meets Jane Goodall

Contributed by Dr. Ed Zalisko, Professor of Biology

When I was a child, I watched several National Geographic specials on Dr. Jane Goodall’s pioneering work with chimpanzees in East Africa. She taught us that in many ways, chimps are like humans. She learned that chimps use tools, eat meat, dance in the rain, console and amuse each other, and mourn the loss of family. She entered their world for years, and patiently watched, carefully. She sparked a passion for understanding the lives of other animals, and so I chose to become a zoologist.

On Monday, March 10, 2014, I met Dr. Goodall and let her know how she inspired me to be a zoologist. That evening, a crowd of about 5,000 people packed into a stadium to hear her stories. Such an audience is not unusual. For most of the past 30 years, Dr. Goodall has traveled the world to promote empathy and understanding of other species and encourage good stewardship of our natural systems. She still has so much to teach us all.

To learn more about Dr. Goodall and her work, visit her website at www.janegoodall.org.

Beaver Banks

Get your Beaver banks today!

Your Beaver bank can make a BIG difference at Blackburn. With your purchase you will receive this limited edition piece of memorabilia and BC will receive a $25 deductible gift from you toward the Annual Fund!

Quantities are limited, so order yours today by calling Jodi Rowe, Director of Annual Giving, at (217) 854-5787

Visa, Mastercard & Discover are accepted.
On a sunny and cool May 18th day, 105 seniors received their diplomas at Blackburn's 145th Commencement ceremony. The morning included a champagne brunch at McKinley House hosted by John and Rachel Comerford and an address to seniors from Edwin Jaenke '50 entitled “A Fork in the Road.”

The previous evening’s Baccalaureate program featured performances by the Blackburn College Choir, a heartfelt prayer by College Chaplain Rev. Erica Brown, and an address to the graduates entitled “The Journey Continues” by former trustee Rev. Lonnie Lee.
1. The 145th Commencement took place on the South Quad, directly outside Hudson Hall.
2. Masey Blasa ’14 and Dr. Laura Zucca-Scott share a moment immediately following the Commencement recessional.
3. Thumbs up from Reggie Guyton ’14 and Kenny James ’14.
5. Marissa Watson ’14 receives The Humanities Prize.
7. Ed Jaenke ’50 addressed the Class of 2014 with his speech, “A Fork in the Road.”
8. Class President Morgan McMeen ’14 offered helpful advice to the graduates during her speech.
There have been some renovations made in the athletics department during the past few semesters, particularly in the lobby of Dawes Gymnasium and the Woodward Athletic Center, including new furniture and new flat screen televisions. Athletic Director Angie Morenz said that “the update is long overdue.”

One of Morenz’s main concerns was the absence of a conference room where coaches could take prospective students to speak with them. She said the updated lobby fulfills that purpose and also creates a nice comfortable space for anyone who comes in. In addition to the lobby renovations, there is now a new outfield fence for the baseball field. According to Morenz, the coming semesters will see the addition of a painted fence outside Dawes displaying the athletic emblem.

Morenz also stated that these are not the last renovations she hopes to make. “We have three major things on our wish list,” she said. In the next few years Morenz hopes to fill in the pool area and turn it into a more spacious public workout area for the whole campus community.

Another addition in the works for the athletics department is a lighting system for the soccer and baseball areas. “This will give us a wider range of times that we can have games and practices. That way students can have more open schedules for classes during the day and plenty of time for practice at night,” Morenz said.

The third piece that should be expected over the next few years is an auxiliary multi-purpose building somewhere on campus. The purpose of this building will be to house more practices in multiple spaces. “The extra building will also be useful for practicing indoors when the weather is bad,” said Morenz.

All of these renovations will hopefully be possible with help from an upcoming campus-wide capital campaign, a portion of which will be allotted to the athletics department.
Actor Jim Beaver to Visit BC

Next fall Blackburn College will play host to a well-known face in television. Actor Jim Beaver, made famous for shows like the CW’s *Supernatural*, HBO’s *Deadwood*, and FX’s *Justified*, will be on campus as the Department of Performing Arts stages Beaver’s play, *Verdigris*.

Directed by Professor of Theatre, Dr. Kate Roark, *Verdigris* will be performed October 23-25 at 7:30 p.m. and on October 26 at 2 p.m. in the newly renovated Bothwell Auditorium. *Verdigris* is $10 for the general public.

While visiting campus, Beaver will also meet with students and the general public.

“I wanted the first theatre production in the newly renovated Bothwell Auditorium this fall to be truly special. So I jumped at the chance to bring the renowned actor and writer, Jim Beaver, to Blackburn for our production of his play *Verdigris*,” said Roark.

*Verdigris* is a semi-autobiographical comic drama and has been performed since 1985, winning numerous playwriting, acting, and directing awards and subsequently advancing Beaver’s career as an actor and screenwriter. The leading role in *Verdigris* has been played by Maureen Stapleton during a workshop production at the famed Berkshire Theatre Festival.

Roark is extremely excited about Beaver’s visit to campus. “This is an incredible opportunity for students to work directly with the playwright, to ask him questions and get feedback on their interpretation and performances. Blackburn students will have the rare opportunity to really sit down with a successful working actor to learn more about the business and craft of being a professional actor,” she said.

Tickets will be available online by September 1, on the Blackburn Website. Please check the website for more details about Mr. Beaver’s visit as they become available, or the Blackburn College Performing Arts Department Facebook page, where photos of the renovation progress are also being posted regularly.
House Mothers
A little Bit of Home Away from Home

There was a time not too long ago when Blackburn’s residence halls were a very different place. Curfews were in place, opposite sex visitation was not allowed, and house mothers or head residents watched over the halls, keeping track of residents and making sure that everyone stayed in line.

Mary Beasley ’71 recalls her time as a head resident from the fall of 1970 to the spring of 1971 as well as the house mothers of her student years at Blackburn fondly. “The best part of the experience really was being able to nurture the people who I really cared about,” said Beasley, who credits Jones and Stoddard house mothers, Mrs. Mock and Mrs. Voorhees, with teaching her how to work as a head resident.

Nate Rush ’73 caused some trouble for his head resident, Bill Kocher ’70, during his first year at Blackburn. While living in a room directly above the head resident’s apartment he decided to practice his bass guitar with the volume turned up. “I had the stereo and bass volumes cranked up pretty high and was rocking out when I heard banging on my door.” Rush opened his door to find his head resident outside “madder than a wet hen. He’d been banging on the door for several minutes, and I didn’t hear him at first.” Rush came to find out that his playing had knocked loose a chunk of plaster from Kocher’s ceiling which had subsequently fallen on his head in the living room below. “That was the end of my bass-playing days in my room” recalls Rush.

One house mother who is remembered fondly by many is Pauline Zimmerman, house mother of Graham Hall, who became a house mother after answering an ad in The New Yorker. “She was such a wonderful, elegant woman and a really great House Mother to a dorm full of boys,” recalls Beasley.

Although house mothers and head residents are terms of the past, the tradition continues with both student and professional Resident Directors, charged with ensuring the safety and health of resident students.

Written by Larra Brogdon ’15 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program

Pauline W. Zimmermann (“Mama Z”) pictured above with the 1969 Graham house council, including Bob Solita ’70, Bob Galbraith ’69, Carl Bergauer ’72, and Bill Kocher ’70.
I have stepped down as Provost at Blackburn to assume the role of Provost at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois.

My dozen years as Provost at Blackburn have been very meaningful in many ways. I’ve had the chance to work with wonderful faculty and staff colleagues and have seen more than a thousand new faces join the ranks of Blackburn alumni. I am truly grateful for all of them and for the kindness and support so many alumni have shown me during my tenure as Provost.

I look forward to new challenges and opportunities in my new position, but will always care deeply for Blackburn and support its place and success in the world in what ways I can. I know that many of you reading this share my commitment to Blackburn and will also continue to support the very important work of this remarkable and truly special college. It takes all of us pulling together to move toward realizing ever more fully the promise of the ideals that have shaped the college over many generations—integrity, hard work, and authentic community.

All the very best to each of you in the days and years ahead.

Jeff Aper ’78

Bothwell Auditorium seating was torn out in May during an extensive building renovation.

A Departing Note...
For the third year in a row Blackburn students have access to a plethora of academic resources to assist them in everything from writing papers to gaining study skills through the Academic Resource Center (ARC). Most students are familiar with the Writer’s Block, which offers tutors who help students with writing essays for classes, but many don’t know that the ARC comprises much more than just the Writer’s Block.

In the words of Barbara Clark, Academic Resource Center Coordinator and English and Communications adjunct professor, “We seek to be a center for academic excellence.” That means that within the ARC is the Student Success Program, a conglomeration of academic resources such as a study skills course, mandatory tutoring for some students, as well as intensive advising, and use of other campus resources which may speak to a student’s specific learning challenges. Additionally, new Head Librarian Spencer Brayton has taken a more involved role with the freshmen writing students to assist them with learning to use library resources. Also new to the ARC is an accommodations testing space to further help tailor students’ learning experience and help them succeed.

In the three years that the ARC has been serving students, student use of academic resources has increased, and the push toward getting freshman students more involved in the ARC ties in to Lumpkin Library’s impending overhaul to become the Lumpkin Learning Commons. Among other improvements, the overhaul will include updating library resources to be more student-friendly and up-to-date, as well as moving the Writer’s Block, the on-campus writing center, to a more central location, which will allow the Writer’s Block tutors and library workers to help students more collaboratively. The Commons will bring together all of the academic support resources to be a sort of one-stop shop for academic help and collaborative learning. This follows a national trend in college libraries becoming student-friendly central learning spaces. Head Librarian Spencer Brayton sums up the goal of the ARC and the Lumpkin Learning Commons when he says, “It’s about helping students realize that we are so much more than books.”
As national interest in computer science continues to rise, Blackburn’s computer science (CS) department makes way for an increase of declared CS majors and minors. The department is undergoing some changes to accommodate this growth and prepare for future developments.

Blackburn welcomed Dr. Kevin Coogan during the Fall 2013 semester. As a professor with a Ph.D. in Computer Science and an enthusiasm for teaching, he was an obvious choice for the department. Coogan specializes in information security, an increasingly important discipline and major focus of the updated CS curriculum.

Worldwide curriculum standards are determined by two international CS societies: the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). According to Computer Science Department Chair Dr. Marsha Meredith, the department is working to adapt to their recently updated standards.

Meredith said that summer research programs are on the upturn at Blackburn. In recent years, BC students have interned in New York, Washington, Texas, Wisconsin and New Mexico. Some of these interns have found work at national labs thanks to their experiences.

Taking a cue from the popular TED Talks speaker series, the department held three “TEK talks”—special lectures led by prominent Blackburn CS figures—during the Spring 2014 semester. The College is currently looking into adapting discussions like these for other departments.

Thanks to Provost Jeff Aper and Technology Services Director Jason Cloninger, Hudson’s computer lab now contains six top-of-the-line computers. These “CUDA (Compute Unified Device Architecture)-ready” machines are capable of parallel programming, or executing multiple calculations simultaneously rather than sequentially. The new computers are reserved for students enrolled in upper-division CS courses, but others may apply for access. Furthermore, those with access are free to install software to aid their research.

According to Meredith, computer science students can expect to see some major developments in the near future, including a web software development class and multiple Work Program jobs related to software services. The department also intends to give campus-wide access to Hudson’s currently restricted web server and host a content-managed WordPress system for student use.

Most CS graduates go into software development, engineering, or networking; some even find jobs within the NSA, FBI and CIA. Because job categories/definitions are in flux, the department looks to explore major/program combinations. After all, Computer Science is what Meredith calls “the quintessential liberal arts discipline” because it mixes with all other subjects.

Meredith noted that, to those outside the field, CS sometimes appears to be a difficult and lonely field of study. “There’s a misconception that Computer Science is a solitary discipline,” she says. “[It’s] not something you practice in isolation. It’s quite social and interactive—people share ideas freely and diagnose problems.”

Programming often seems daunting to the uninitiated, but Meredith urges everyone not to be afraid of Computer Science. The only scary thing about the discipline—apart from Boolean algebra, that is—is how quickly its horizons are expanding.

Written by Clayt Scheller ’15 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program
A Word from the Alumni Board President

Blackburn has had much to celebrate in the last couple of years. And, indeed, it has celebrated much. It’s a New Day!

New Faces. Nicole Burns is the new Coordinator of Alumni Affairs. She and I, too, are enjoying this New Day. Literally. We both came on board the first week in January (Nicole to her corner office, first floor southwest corner of Ludlum Hall—I say that so you’ll drop in and see her when you’re on campus), and both of us have hit the ground running.

A Review. A couple of years ago, Blackburn College observed its 175th birthday. The celebration of Dr. Hudson’s notable vision 100 years ago for “the only self-help college in Illinois” grew to be the robust Work Program we know and value today. Those two commemorations in 2012 and 2013, respectively, were followed directly by the inauguration of Dr. John L. Comerford as the College’s 16th president last November. As we reflect on the great history of Rev. Gideon Blackburn’s foresight, look to the second 100 years of the phenomenon we call the Work Program, and enjoy John Comerford’s dynamic in office, we know… it’s a New Day.

A Reminder. The Blackburn College history of 175 years suggests that it will be around for a long time. But that notion wasn’t always holding support in parts of the last century. In last fall’s Update, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Glen Krupica, mentioned six things that you can do as an Alumnus of Blackburn. The top two are always out there for any university, and they especially bear repeating, and often: (1) contribute regularly to the Annual Fund, and (2) take every opportunity to contribute during special capital campaigns. The CHC Anderson Student Center (a.k.a. “the Den”) renovation project enjoys continued and regular contributions for its funding, but its glass is only half full. Consider these designated giving opportunities, too: residence halls and facilities require constant improvements for them to weigh favorably with comparable institutions across Illinois, the Midwest and the country, especially when high school seniors are “college shopping.” Affording students the opportunity to make the most of their education in their classrooms, work places and living spaces—their homes away from home, if you will—requires perpetual technological and esthetic enhancements because… it’s a New Day.

Your Alumni Board: Ten new alumni—that’s a lot — were voted onto the Alumni Board of Directors by your Alumni Association at Homecoming 2013. By the way, if you’re keeping score—and I know there are many brilliant math minds out there—ten is fully half the “no more than” number of twenty alumni authorized by Article V, Section 2 of your Alumni Association Constitution. (Note, I didn’t say advanced math.) It’s a fresh experience and a New Day for our new Board Members, too.

Got Stuff? A time-honored and traditional fund-raiser from the Alumni Board of Directors includes a Gift Basket Program, whereby the Board provides “care packages” to students during the academic year. Students’ parents—and you may be one—sponsored enough funding for 225 boxes at last count. The gift boxes contain energy bars, candy, pretzels, hand sanitizer, and other sundries to enhance students’ lives. The gift boxes go out in the fall and around Valentine’s Day and are genuinely appreciated by the hard working students. It’s a popular program with parents and grandparents alike. If you are the parent of a current student,
check your mailbox throughout the year for care package giving opportunities.

What Are You Wearing? Homecoming 2013 saw the debut of the on-line Alumni Apparel Store. Visit www.blackburnalumni.com and browse for shirts, caps, totes, and the like. There are a variety of items and logos from which to choose, and all items have “BLACKBURN” or “BEAVERS” and “ALUMNI” on them in some fashion. History check: Online purchases for a lot of things (think E-bay, Amazon, etc.) go back to the late 1900s, but as I may have said, for us... it’s a New Day.

An Idea Whose Time Has Come. An initiative being coordinated by the Board of Directors and the College's Alumni Office is the establishment and building of “Affinity Groups” throughout the Alumni Association. With approximately 6,500 Blackburn Alumni across the fruited plain, this should be a no-brainer. Going forward, these loosely defined clusters will be connected by telephone (what a concept!) and social media and meet periodically with both Dr. Comerford and Nicole Burns as they travel. Further, working with Chicagoland’s Blackburn Development Officer Sarah (Pruitt) Koplinski ’95, Affinity Groups will assist the College and the Association to achieve the collective goal of reaching out to and networking with other alumni. We’ll be empowered to work developing programs for identifying the legacy of the Blackburn College story and what it represents to all of us. These Affinity Groups become de facto local Alumni chapters, and the Presidents of each of these chapters may become ex-officio members of the Board of Directors of the Alumni Association.

Congratulations From the Alumni Association.
To Professor Roy Graham on his retirement after 50 years (1964-2014) in the College’s Department of English & Communications, an achievement celebrated on campus April 4-5; and to Dean Charles O. Gordon on his being honored at Commencement this year as recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award. Charley Gordon ’50 was Registrar and Dean for over 20 years, and knew and worked with presidents from William M. Hudson to Mim Pride.

Both of these esteemed men were significant to so many of us during our years on campus as mentors, counselors, advisors, confidants and friends. A sincere thank you...

A Random Thought. I remember as if it were yesterday and have never forgotten the spiel which I memorized some time my sophomore year. Whenever I was away from campus, I frequently encountered people, young and old, who had never heard of Blackburn College. Sound familiar? My proud reply: “Blackburn College is a small, private, quality, four-year, Presbyterian-affiliated liberal arts college located in south-central Illinois, where students, both men and women, work 15 hours a week in an on-campus, structured, student-led Work Program in partial payment of fees and tuition.” The hours have been altered over time and there’s a community component to the Work Program now, but I still use that set phrase. One of Glen’s six points for Alumni speaks to getting the word out. If this works for you when you’re out and about, go ahead, park it in your gray matter, and use it because … it’s a New Day.

The Bottom Line. I’m honored to be serving the Alumni Association as the President of the Alumni Board. I can’t imagine a better way to immerse myself in the health and well-being of Blackburn than to capitalize on this opportunity and work as your leader in this New Day.

Very sincerely,

Richard D. Russell, Ed.D.
Class of 1968
President, Alumni Association

Richard D. Russell, Ed.D.
Class of 1968
President, Alumni Association

...It's a New Day!

...It's a New Day!
Deborah Jeanblanc ‘77 graduated from Methodist Theological School in Delaware, OH on May 23, 2014. She will be serving a small church in Southeastern Ohio—close to the West Virginia border where she did her field education this year. They asked her back for another year.

Eugene “Gene” Tenner ’70 won the Good Neighbor award in the individual category in Chicago’s Uptown neighborhood. Tenner is a bike activist, CAPS Beat 1915 facilitator, board member for the Buena Park Neighbors, and artist.

for the Spring 2013 issue of the Blackburn Update. Contact him at dalewboyer@yahoo.com.

Jeff Hattan ’88 writes: “My wife Julie (Moody) ’89 and I will be married 25 years on June 10. We met on her first day at Blackburn. I have many fond memories of Blackburn and she is my favorite.”

1990s Jason Kramer ’93 and his wife, Melissa, welcomed twin girls in January.

2000s In April of 2013, Shawn Rennecker ’05 was elected Mayor of Barry, IL. On May 13, 2013 Shawn and Stefanie (Lowe) Rennecker ’06 welcomed their second daughter, Sloane, to the family.

Matt Savoie ’09 and Lauren Woelfel ’10 were married in Jerseyville, IL on September 14, 2013 and currently reside in Mansfield, MA. Matt recently accepted a position as the Product Manager of Baseball and Softball Uniforms and Headwear with Adidas in Canton, MA in June 2013. Lauren graduated from SIUC Law School in the class of 2013.

2010s Mariel Hildenbrand ’10 and her husband, Alex, were married on October 12, 2013 and were able to marry on the stage where they first met in 2009 while working on the Wizard of Oz at the Festival 56 Theatre in Princeton, IL. Quite a few Blackburn friends were able to make the trip! Mariel currently resides in Milwaukee, WI where both she and Alex work for the Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Alex is an actor and she works part time in their Dinner Theater as a server. Mariel also works full-time at Lutheran Social Services, a non-profit agency, as their Contract Administrator.

DJ Rudd ’13 and Lindsey Leach ’14 were engaged last summer. They shared their special moment with family and friends at the Springfield Muni during their production of Peter Pan. The wedding date is set for next summer.

Tom Emery ’93 won the Award of Superior Achievement from the Illinois State Historical Society for the Illinois State Library Heritage Project 1839-2013, a 220-page coffeetable history of the Illinois State Library. The project was the result of a Library Services and Technology Act grant that was hosted by Blackburn College. The book, which includes over 130 photos, covers the history of the Illinois State Library from its inception in 1839 until the present day, with emphasis on its impact on the lives of everyday Illinoisans.

Emery, as well as Blackburn President Dr. John Comerford, Provost Dr. Jeff Aper, and Lumpkin Library Director Spencer Brayton, the Project Director, were honored at a presentation in Secretary of State Jesse White’s office on May 15. The award is Emery’s seventh career award from the ISHS and the second time in three years that he has won the Award of Superior Achievement. His new book will be distributed to all libraries in the state of Illinois.
Alumni

News

Gordon Kayhart ’76, Mike Williams ’93 and Development Officer Sarah Koplinski ’95 enjoyed getting acquainted over lunch at the Bolingbrook Golf Club in January.

What’s the news in your world?

Let us know about any career, achievements, awards, activities or family news you want to share with Blackburn Alumni.

Please send your Alumni News submissions to Kyle Harrington
Marketing and Public Relations Assistant
700 College Ave., Carlinville IL 62626;
or kyle.harrington@blackburn.edu

We reserve the right to appropriately edit and print submissions as space allows.

Nicole Burns Named Alumni Relations Coordinator

Nicole Burns, Alumni Relations Coordinator, joined Blackburn’s Advancement team in January. Nicole attended Southern Illinois University—Edwardsville where she earned a B.S. in communications with a minor in business management.

Prior to Blackburn, Nicole worked for 10 years with Drury Hotels. She began in sales and worked her way up to Outside Sales Manager, where she worked with major corporations and the federal government. During her last five years with Drury, Nicole was the general manager for the 122-room Collinsville, IL location. Her responsibilities included management, employee relations, customer service, and budgeting.

“Blackburn offered me an opportunity to combine both my love for event planning and ability to work with Alumni in a personal way,” Nicole said of her reasons for coming to Blackburn.

Nicole hopes to continue to improve alumni relations and communications. “My main vision for Alumni Relations is to engage as many alums as we can, have better communication, and plan events that excite everyone within the community,” she said.

Nicole is currently in the midst of planning the 2014 Homecoming Celebration and continues to bring exciting ideas and a breadth of experience to the table. To contact Nicole, email nicole.burns@blackburn.edu or call 217-854-5799.
In Memoriam

1931
Frances (Fry) Bretthauer 2/4/2012

1933
Louise Griffin 9/18/2013

1936
Dr. C. Barber Mueller 2/13/2014
Irvin Pocklington 3/22/2014

1937
Lucille (Yowell) Jones 2/17/2014

1938
Yvonne F. Howell 5/10/2013

1939
John Seymour 2/13/2014

1941
Lois (Edwards) Lane 1/12/2014

1942
Beverly Bridges Yaeger 1/6/2014

1943
Stephen Tonsor 1/8/2014
Walter Trapp 3/7/2013

1946
Jeanne (Straublin) Deringer 12/28/2013

1948
Marilyn (Burke) Couch 11/25/2013
John J. Kaenel 3/7/2014
Natalie (Parke) Kolze 3/21/2014
June T. (Howarth) Murphy 3/16/2014

1949
John Eastman 1/28/2014

1952
Barbara (Allen) Klayum 2/11/2014

1956/1958
Margaret Nielsen 12/13/2013

1958
Edward J. McGuire 11/7/2013

1960
Sue Ellen (Koch) Johnson 1/20/2014

1965
Linda (Schalk) Morgenthau 3/14/2014

1968
Katherine (Baird) Stullken 2/4/2014

1977
Karen Hilarides 2/16/2014
Kenneth Van Wieren 12/16/2013
Dr. C. Barber Mueller

Dr. C. Barber Mueller, educator, surgeon, Blackburn alumnus, and distinguished Board of Trustees member, died February 13, 2014 after a brief illness. He graduated with an A.A. from Blackburn in 1936 as Student Marshal. He earned a B.A. from the University of Illinois and an M.D. at Washington University in St. Louis. In addition to his vast record as an accomplished surgeon and academic, Dr. Mueller was a highly decorated veteran of World War II.

Mueller became the inaugural chair of the Department of Surgery at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada and served in that capacity from 1967 till 1972. He was also a founder of the Friends of the Health Sciences Library. Always the generous person, Dr. Mueller gave $100,000 to start the Library Enrichment Fund at McMaster. Before his passing he was credited with donating more than $400,000 to the Health Sciences Library. It was said that Dr. Mueller’s philosophy of philanthropy is to support education. His generosity also stretched back to Blackburn. Dr. Mueller was for many years Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees for Blackburn. He served on several committees and brought many personal friends to help get involved at the College.

“Blackburn is a better place for all Barb Mueller’s contributions,” said President John Comerford of Dr. Mueller. “He loved this College and gave of himself to sustain and improve it. But, more than that, all of us that were lucky enough to know him are better people for it. I was proud to call him my friend and miss the opportunity to benefit from his wisdom, intellect, and humor.”

Written by Patrick Benedict ’17 as a part of the Blackburn College Work Program
Blackburn recently put on its spring musical *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* written by Joe DiPietro and directed by Dr. Kate Roark. The show is a satirical look at dating, relationships, marriage, and all the problems that go with them. The whole production is separated into several vignettes exploring the funny side of searching for that special someone.

The cast included: Patrick Benedict ’17, Alex Boles (community member), Sawyer Burton ’15, Rebecca Finke ’17, Lisa Knight (community member), Paul Kline ’14, Brendan Lersch ’16, James Maxson ’15, Jordyn Smith ’17, Tavi Wallace ’17 and Catherine Ward ’14.

Actors were accompanied by conductor Adrienne Stockley ’10, Dr. Pei Wang on piano, and violinist Debbie Haferkamp.

Students involved in the backstage part of the production were: Jonathan Edwards ’16, Ashley Eglehoff ’14, John Guillotte ’17, Jack Homan ’15, Owen Meredith ’15, Taylor Mayberry ’17, Carly Morin ’17 and Rebecca Wales ’16.

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**Performing Arts Schedule**

- **Verdigris**
  by Jim Beaver, Directed by Dr. Kate Roark
  October 23-25 at 7:30 p.m. &
  October 26 at 2:00 p.m.

- **Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**
  by Edward Albee, Directed by Alex Martin
  October 31 & November 1 at 7:30 p.m.

- **Student-Directed One Acts**
  November 7 at 7:30 p.m.

- **Madrigal Dinners**
  November 21-22 at 7:30 p.m.

- **Christmas Band Concert**
  December 8 at 7:30 p.m.

- **Christmas at Blackburn Choral Concert**
  December 8 at 8:00 p.m.
The education program at Blackburn has started offering new special endorsements for education majors and any licensed teacher in the state of Illinois over the summer. Dr. Kelly Chaney, current education department chair and interim provost for 2014-2015, explained the unique benefits that come with offering the endorsements.

The Illinois educational endorsements allow teachers who have acquired their initial Professional Educator License to gain credentials in a different field which makes them more appealing to employers. Blackburn will be offering five different endorsement programs (most of which take place over summer). “There is a definite need for the endorsements that make teachers more marketable. Offering these courses over the summer and online makes it more convenient for students and teachers who have little time,” Chaney explained.

Another contributing factor is the lower cost of summer programs at Blackburn as opposed to other colleges in the area. Many employed teachers are encouraged to further their education through professional development which could include full credit courses or approved workshops and these endorsements can fulfill this requirement in many cases.

The endorsements offered are: Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Health Education, Learning Behavior Specialist I, and Middle School. All of the endorsements come with a list of special requirements and prerequisites. A detailed chart of the endorsements can be found on the Blackburn website at www.blackburn.edu.
Homecoming like you’ve never experienced!
Join your classmates for a family-friendly, fun-filled Carnival on campus. Visit with faculty and staff, check out buildings built since your last visit, cheer on the soccer and alumni teams and enjoy reminiscing with your friends. Look for these exciting events:

1. Carnival
   Don’t miss the carnival rides provided by Connor Family Amusements on the Hudson Quad! Stop by for snacks, games and more in the Midway.

2. Casino Night
   The Alumni Association invites you to come out and roll the dice at our professional game tables! Try your luck and enter to win extravagant raffle prizes!

3. Celebration of Classes Dinner
   Step right up and join a delightful evening surrounded by classmates and friends. All reunion classes will be highlighted during the dinner in Marguerite F. Snyder Atrium.

4. Decorate with Me
   Get creative with the kids in Bothwell to decorate cookies and cupcakes. Meet Barney while tasting sweet treats!

5. Meet Me in the Tent
   Get your tickets ready! Reminisce with friends who you haven’t seen in years! Enjoy refreshments in the tent located on the Anderson patio by Ludlum.

6. Paint Run
   Get colorful with us at the Paint Run! A new twist to Blackburn’s annual Beaverthon 5K.

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**Friday, October 3rd**
- Athletics Golf Outing: $85/person
- Open Registration
- Carnival & Midway
- Blackburn Society Reception (By Invitation)
- Athletics Award Dinner: $12/person
- Nifty Fifties Dinner (RSVP req.)
- Casino Night: $20/person
- Sponsored by the Alumni Assoc. Board

**Saturday, October 4th**
- Beaverthon “Paint Run”: $25/person
- 40th Class Reunion Breakfast (RSVP req.)
- Open Registration
- Catch a Ride on the Beaver Bus
- Alumni Choir Rehearsal
- Alumni Vacations Presentation
- Carnival & Midway
- Alumni College
- Climate Change, Hosted by Ron Trimmer ’62
- Alumni Luncheon/Meeting
- Kids Luncheon
- Baseball Golf Outing
- Meet Me in the Tent
- Women’s Soccer vs. Fontbonne
- Decorate with Me
- Reunion Photos**
- Men’s Soccer vs. Fontbonne
- Campus Guided Tour
- Celebration of Classes Dinner
- Kids Dinner
- Blackburn’s Got Talent

**Sunday, October 5th**
- Heritage Society Breakfast (By Invitation)
- Alumni Choir Practice
- Ecumenical Worship Service
- Alumni Baseball Game

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**Reunion Photo Times**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class of 1939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class of 1944</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class of 1949</td>
<td>2:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class of 1954</td>
<td>2:15</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Class of 1979</td>
<td>3:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class of 1984</td>
<td>3:45</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Bring the entire family for a fun-filled weekend!

For more information or to register, visit [www.blackburn.edu/alumni](http://www.blackburn.edu/alumni) or call Nicole Burns, Coordinator of Alumni Relations at (217) 854-5799
The original building contained a snack bar, a large lounge area, and the College bookstore. In 1968, the building was renovated and more floor space added—increasing the size of the building by nearly two-thirds. The remodeled facility included an expanded snack bar, a much larger lounge area, a television room, game room and larger bookstore. The Den was also the site of special events such as fundraising auctions, concerts, mixers, dances and other activities.

Current plans call for the renovation of the Den and turning it into the Claire Jaenke Alumni Center, housing the alumni/development staff and providing space for receptions, both inside and on the outdoor patio.

All work and no play makes for a dull person, they say. And at Blackburn, finding time for a social life after scheduling academics, work, campus activities, and sports can be difficult.

Even so, generations of Blackburn students have found the time to come together for conversation around coffee, tea, and other snacks in a space of their own.

The central great room of the Demuzio Campus Center, with its Snack Bar, couches, chairs, tables, TV and pool table, provides today’s students with a place to congregate. Students can be found ordering burgers, fries and soft drinks, or simply coffee at the Snack Bar (run by students). Conversations about professors, homework, dates, politics or the sharing of stories are, perhaps, not very different than they were 50 years ago.

For those who graduated prior to 2000, memories of social times turn to the “Den,” located in the CHC Anderson building. Built in 1954, the Den was a favorite gathering place for conversations over coffee, listening to music, watching TV or playing pool or ping pong in the game room. Because students were constructing the F.W. Olin Science building at the time, the Anderson building was built by contractors. Funds for the building were donated by Crittenden H. C. Anderson, a graduate of the class of 1899, as a memorial to his parents.

The south side of the Stoddard basement, space was set aside for students to gather. Talking over coffee or a soda, relaxing between classes or during the evenings, were favorite ways to pass the time for many of Blackburn’s students during the early ’50s and before. The snack bar had a few items, the juke box contained favorite songs of the time, and it was not uncommon for a game of cards to be in process—bridge, pinochle, or some other amusement.

Times and the student culture have changed, but gathering to swap stories, gossip, argue (“debate”), play, or study remain an important part of life in the “Den.”

Written by Nate Rush ’73, Director of Development.
To contact Nate, email nathan.rush@blackburn.edu or call 217-854-5776.
Show Your Blackburn Pride!

We would like to know where Blackburn College Alumni make a difference in the world—at work, on your travels, or in your community. Take a snapshot of yourself with this Blackburn Pennant and send it back to us!

Please send all photos to:
Kyle Harrington,
Public Relations Asst.
Blackburn College
700 College Avenue
Carlinville, IL 62626
217-854-5775 or
kyle.harrington@blackburn.edu
UPCOMING EVENTS 2014

Sunday, August 17 • All Students Arrive on Campus
Wednesday, August 20 • All College Convocation
Friday-Sunday, October 3-5 • Homecoming Weekend
Monday, October 6 • Fall Band Concert
Friday, October 17 • Admissions Preview Days
Saturday, October 18 • Fall Choir Concert
Thursday-Sunday, October 23-26 • Fall Play: *Verdigris* by Jim Beaver
Sunday, November 2 • Alpha Chi Induction Ceremony
Monday, November 10 • Admissions Preview Days
Saturday, November 8 • Student-Directed Show Performances
Tuesday, November 11 • Veteran’s Day Convocation
Friday-Saturday, November 21-22 • Madrigal Dinner
Sunday, December 7 • Christmas at Blackburn Choir Concert
Monday, December 8 • Winter Band Concert