

ROCKY NOW

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Rocky Now: Keeping our friends and supporters informed about what's new and exciting at Rocky Mountain College



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC

Youngsters give an enthusiastic cheer during the first futebol program at the Orchard Lane Boys & Girls Club. RMC Professor Paul Roper plans to continue the Futebol de Salao program this summer, and he also plans to hold a soccer camp July 5-8, at Rocky Mountain College. The cost is \$85. For information on the summer program or the camp, or to offer financial aid, contact Roper at 406-672-7262 or, email him at roperp@rocky.edu.

Rocky Shows Southside It Cares About Kids

When Dr. Paul Roper decided to launch a sports program for children in less advantaged neighborhoods (see *Focus on Faculty inside*), he knew he could count on help from RMC students. Two who volunteered their time to work with kids in the new futebol program are Nick Heffernan and Daniel Clitnovici.

Rocky Mountain College has brought many significant changes into the lives of these two student athletes, and they are not wasting any time making good use of their new found abilities to reach out and show others they, too, can begin that same path, a long way off though it may be. Nick Heffernan has been a powerful player

All About Our Students

on the Battlin' Bears soccer team, and now is an energetic volunteer to bring a special game to underprivileged kids on the south side of Billings.

Nick "Heffers" Heffernan is from Hove, England, not too far from the white cliffs of Dover. When he came to Rocky Mountain College in Billings, of course the first thing that struck him was the Rims. But that's where any similarity between his environment back home and his new abode for the next four years ended.

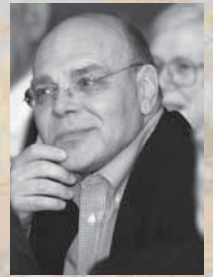
Nick played soccer all day and every day back home; he was a free spirit, sometimes playing for two teams in a day made up of school mates or other loose affiliations in pick-up games. But now he was to play for only one team, had to practice, not just play, and, in pre-season, sometimes practiced twice or three times a day. To Nick, the team seemed to be together 24/7. The adjustment to this new soccer regime, and beginning a degree program which also demanded some adjustments, caught Nick by surprise. Also, he found that long road trips are not

(Please see **Rocky Shows It Cares** inside)



Insider

BY MICHAEL R. MACE, PRESIDENT



The Importance of Providing Shelter

I don't have to tell you that graduation is a momentous occasion that deserves a congratulatory message that fits the occasion. It is always part of my job during Commencement to issue the "Charge to Graduates" which comes near the close of the ceremony. The "Charge to Graduates" is kind of the farewell and "go-get-them!" final instruction. I've heard some of these delivered at other colleges that lasted a half hour or more. I heard one that was really short: "Go on. Get Out of Here!"

This year, I had a tiny mustard seed in a plastic envelope placed on each graduate's chair. I wanted to share with them a parable we all know so well from the Bible, that is from small things bigger things develop. Whether it's a mustard seed or Chaucer's "Mighty oaks from little acorns grow," it is a theme we are familiar with. You only plant the eye from a potato to grow an entire potato plant. Wheat springs from small grains. These are instances where many are nourished from tiny beginnings.

But, I wanted to reference the New Testament parable because there is more to it than is commonly considered: "When planted, a mustard seed grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants,

with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

The parable is not only about how from a tiny seed a larger plant grows. It is not just about a seed becoming a plant, but what the plant could do for others. The parable tells us it is so birds may perch in its shade, which also means shelter, a safe haven, a place of comfort.

So I asked the graduates to consider that aspect of the parable. While we admired their growth here at Rocky, and shared in their successes, it's not enough to fulfill their goals unless they also help others.

"You are our mustard seeds," I told this year's class. "Go. Grow. Flourish. But also make branches where others may perch in shade and shelter and safety. Create places where others may also grow."

Many of you, our alumni and friends, have demonstrated that lesson with your generosity. You have provided room in the branches of Rocky Mountain College for these students so that they could fulfill their dreams and aspirations.

Share with me in their successful graduation, and thank you for your support along the way.

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Neighbor to Neighbor

Let's Continue to Help Our Kids

BY BARB SKELTON,
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

This will be my last column coinciding with the end of my term as Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Rocky Mountain College on June 30. If you've followed Rocky Now, you know my columns always addressed the importance of being good neighbors. That is at the heart of being a Montanan, where good neighbors rely on each other, help one another, and overcome differences to achieve common goals for the benefit of the community. Essentially, it's about relationships and how important they are.

Now, let me tell you a story of one of mine. My friendship with Hershey dates back more than two decades. She saved my life several times, working on the ranch, as she stepped between me and an angry cow, or made sure I didn't get trampled by a stampede of cows and calves. She was my best friend and confidante. When I talked to her, I knew she took in every word, and together, we roamed open range contentedly. I liked the little things she did, such as the way she twitched her lips when I gave her a carrot, and she always insisted on the whole carrot, not pieces.

You probably guess by now, I'm talking about my favorite mare, Hershey, who died this spring. I was devastated and depressed. Sounds silly, maybe to those who don't understand how deep a relationship one can form with a horse. Others - those who ride and ranch - will know. They cherish those relationships. Those relationships last a long time, really forever, and they are forged with prayer and sweat and tears and mutual respect.

We overcome the grief of loss by recognizing the depth

■ We overcome the grief of loss by recognizing the depth and value of the relationship. If mine with Hershey was special, imagine how extraordinary mine with many of you is.



Barb and Hershey

and value of the relationship. If mine with Hershey was special, imagine how extraordinary mine with many of you is. Believe me, despite the difficulties at times, and despite the obstacles, I am a better person for having served with some great friends and wonderful neighbors in the Rocky community. Together we have achieved significant, long-lasting, and essential successes for the good of our students for the good of the community and our world.

I've had to say good-bye to Hershey, but not to you. Let's continue to build relationships. Let's continue to be good neighbors. Let's continue to help our kids. Let's support this grand old College!



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
 Nick Heffernan has been a powerful player on the Battlin' Bears soccer team, and now is an energetic volunteer to bring a special game to underprivileged kids on the south side of Billings.

Team Rocky

Professor Roper enlisted RMC students and colleagues to help with his program. Jim Baken, RMC art professor, designed this logo for the futbol program. Margia Pretlow, who is admissions counselor for the Physician Assistant program, used her graphic skills to design a brochure, and RMC soccer players helped Roper organize play with the youngsters. Even the reporter for the Billings Outpost had an RMC connection - Joel Harris is a recent grad working for the weekly newspaper.



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
 Daniel Clitnovici, an RMC soccer player, helped organize a futbol program for less advantaged kids under the guidance of RMC Professor Paul Roper.

Rocky Shows It Cares

(Continued from front)

the exception but the rule, whereas back home, long trips were almost unheard of because of the preponderance of nearby competitors.

While Nick shone on the soccer field and soon found himself the focus of much attention from other teams, in the classroom things were not going so well. The demands were catching up with him and, by the time his first season finished, he was well behind with his school work and spent the remaining week of that semester and the holidays doing his best to catch-up. Nick's first year was one of extremes: lots of success in soccer, not so much success in class.

Disappointed in himself for being caught short by the new regime, demands of college soccer, and those of a different educational system, he resolved that in his second year, he would do a lot better academically, yet still do equally as well in soccer as the previous season. He wanted to be a leader, and knew to do so he had to do better in things off the field, not least of which was class.

Nick also found his feet around the community, not just because he is naturally gregarious, but because he has a 'cute' accent, an impish smile, and killer sense of humor. His soccer prowess soon got him involved with a local soccer club, and he was enjoying success as coach of a youth team of young boys, all of whom thought, because of his mesmerizing runs with the ball at his feet during practice, he was their very own Lionel Messi, the international soccer star who plays for Barcelona.

Nick finished his second year at Rocky with a very respectable GPA, just shy of 3.00, and starred in what is now considered a very competitive men's soccer program in only its second year.

And, while Nick still misses the hustle and bustle of his local town, Brighton, once the 'playground' of London's wealthy, he has warmed to the kindness of Billings families, just as much as they have been

taken by his terrific soccer performances these last two seasons on the soccer field. All are looking forward to two more very successful years for the Rocky Men's Soccer team with Nick Heffernan at its core.

* * *

You have to be a bit, if not a lot, different to earn that nickname, but Daniel "Dan the Man" Clitnovici has done that in just 18 months of being around campus, and one season playing soccer. Everyone who has met and spent time with him will tell you that Daniel is focused. He seems to waste no time getting on with things, letting folks know what needs to be done, all the while pushing himself to get involved in new endeavors.

About Our Students

He and Nick thrive and bounce off each other on and off the field; both have a passion for soccer, but also a passion for life. Daniel is on a mission here at Rocky Mountain College, not just to be a great player on the team, but to get himself a degree which will open the doors for a career in a profession other than soccer.

Daniel is a leader on the field and off, perhaps because he is a few years older than others, but more so, perhaps, because he has travelled widely before arriving at Rocky, and is, in his own words, finally settling down to "being somebody for my next 40 years."

Daniel is on a short leash time-wise, and he expects to graduate in two years, having brought in many credits. But at the same time, he wants to savor his final soccer playing days at a competitive level while transitioning to that of a professional in athletic training or occupational therapy.

Daniel continues to do well in class (GPA 3.5) even though he has found the rigors and demands of being a student athlete with a heavy academic load exhausting at times. However, this in no way stopped him in his endeavor to reach out into

the Billings community and find ways of giving back via that which has bought him so much joy and opportunity. He has been coaching a competitive youth soccer team for two years, and has become a firm favorite amongst players and others in the club.

Daniel plans on graduate school to earn a master's degree in athletic training or occupational therapy, but has decided now is his time to begin helping and making opportunities available to those for whom such chances may be rare. It was natural that this should involve an area where Daniel is not only competent, but above average, and that is coaching soccer to younger children.

It's no coincidence that "Dan the Man" is now extending his influence and making his unique approach to life available to some who are perhaps struggling a little to even get out of bed each day, and don't see too much opportunity to be different. Here he is, someone with a different way of talking (Australian), and clearly so full of enthusiasm for what he is doing, showing less advantaged youngsters he cares for them.

Rocky Opens Third Se



Focus on Faculty & Staff

Helping Kids Like Himself

You might say the idea was kicked around for over a year. Paul Roper, professor of physical education and health at Rocky Mountain College, and “an admitted soccer fanatic,” wants to bring soccer to children in Billings who have little to no resources. He knew he needed something unique if he were to achieve his goal.

Roper thinks he’s found the answer in the “tried and tested game of Futebol de Salao,” he said.

Futebol uses a mini-ball with little bounce, compared to a soccer ball. Practice and playing requires more foot skills, greater dexterity, and concentration, he said.

Raised in a poor neighborhood in the industrial heartland of England, Roper knew the joy that soccer brought to inner city kids, and the escape from a life “of no hope and lack of opportunity.”

Like basketball in the inner cities of the U.S., soccer-filled lives for many kids around the world -- in countries such as Brazil, England, and Ghana -- “is a retreat from the bad things they face in their daily lives,” he said. “It offers hope of being somebody, gaining status, and a way out. I know, because I’ve been there.”

Roper found his own way out of poverty, eventually earning his bachelor’s degree at West Midlands College, in England, and then his master’s and Ph.D. at the University of Connecticut. Currently, he is known for coaching sports where being nimble and flexible is more important than brute strength: think pickle ball and handball, racquetball and badminton.

“They’re great cardio sports that require speed, agility, and endurance,” he noted.

But those are not the kinds of sports easily accessed by kids with limited financial resources.

“Unless you have enough money to join an athletic club, you’re not going to get to handball or racquetball courts,” he said.

He needed something active, but also cheap. It had to be something kids could practice alone, probably for hours on end, and did not need a lot of open space.

“Suitable for playground or a school gym,” he noted.

While visiting family in northern England one year, he came across the Brazilian Soccer School’s (BSS) summer camp, and enrolled his son. Their approach was a brand of soccer played on a basketball-sized court with a small ball that has no bounce.

“It was ideal for both indoors and outdoors,” he said.

He discovered it was from Brazil -- introduced by an Englishman, he adds proudly -- and is called Futebol de Salao, which translates to “football in a closet.”

“When looking for a special approach that would appeal to kids who do not have many resources, this seemed just the ticket,” he said.



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
Paul Roper responds to questions from Billings Outpost reporters during a session of the futebol program he introduced to the Orchard Lane Boys & Girls Club.

No one had started that kind of program here, and it had all the ingredients he sought: it was a healthy and affordable activity.

Roper went to Orchard Lane Boys & Girls Club to offer this brand of soccer. He discovered an ally in Dirk Vandenberg, an RMC graduate from the PE program. Vandenberg liked the idea, and the Futebol Skills Soccer Academy was launched.

Roper recruited Rocky students and soccer players Dan Clitnovici and Nick Heffernan to help begin the program, which held its first event on May 7. RMC soccer players, with the encouragement of soccer coach Richard Duffy, have volunteered their playing and coaching skills to help other programs, like the Yellowstone Soccer Club and Magic City Soccer Club. But this is the first outreach program organized and run by Roper to assist less advantaged neighborhoods to play a soccer-style game.

“We had about 15-20 kids, just the right number, and it went really well,” he said.

Classes will continue throughout the summer.

The new club could use a financial boost, and Roper, who has used his own money so far, hopes sponsors may see a benefit to helping young kids with slim opportunities.

For more information or to help sponsor, contact Paul Roper, Rocky Mountain College Professor, Physical Education and Health. Cell (406) 672 -7262 / email: roperp@rocky.edu.

Season at Historic Virginia City; Alumni Event Scheduled for Aug. 6

Rocky Mountain College opened its third season May 27, 2011, as operator of the historic Virginia City Opera House. This is the 62nd season for the Virginia City Players, the acting troupe that performs repertory theatre at the Opera House.

A special presentation for alumni and friends -- with reduced ticket prices -- is scheduled for Saturday, August 6. For details, contact Kristin Mullaney, RMC coordinator of alumni and parents relations, (406) 657-1007 or email Kristin.mullaney@rocky.edu.

That same weekend -- at Virginia City and Nevada City -- is Living History Weekend, with a variety of events for visitors, including historical demonstrations and an open air concert featuring Montana Rose.

In nearby Ennis, there will a farmers market and the annual Madison Valley Arts Festival. But the main event will be the 7:00 p.m. play, “The Test of a True Heart”.

Under the direction of Gerald Roe, RMC professor of theatre arts, the cast will present three vaudeville-melodramas this summer. Performances begin at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday – Saturday, with a 2:00 p.m. show on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

The presentations this summer include “Double Trouble on the Prairie,” through June 26; “The Three Billys in Love,” June 28 – July 31; and “The Test of a True Heart,” August 2 – September 4.

Eight RMC students are participating in this season’s productions.



Focus on Alumni & Friends

Lingers: Legacy in Life

Death, by definition, may be a life ending, but not when the driving force of that life has been channeled to help others in perpetuity. Creating a legacy that will fulfill the dreams and aspirations of others is what Sharon and Neal Linger crafted when they created a scholarship endowment that will be funded by a life insurance policy. The policy will establish a \$420,000 scholarship fund at Sharon's death.

"Rocky Mountain College is grateful for the fantastic legacy gift created by Neal and Sharon," said RMC President Michael Mace. "We know it will give them great satisfaction to know their generosity will positively affect the future of countless students pursuing career and life dreams, and to do so while they are both alive and well."

The legacy gift is an example of "powerful philanthropy," said Obert Udem, RMC director of planned giving.

"Wishing to express their appreciation for the role that Rocky has played in their lives, and thousands of others who benefitted from Rocky educational experiences, Neal and Sharon have the great joy and satisfaction of assuring that their experiences can be replicated by future students much as they knew them 50 years ago," Udem said.

According to the Liningers, their motive was simple: "We love the college," Neal affirmed.

The Liningers met at Rocky in 1958 when they were freshman students. He was from Polson, but took all his high school music courses at Kalispell; she was raised in Sidney, but graduated from Richey High School. They were from opposite corners of the State, but they found paths to their shared futures at Rocky.

"We actually got engaged in December of our freshman year," Karen said.

They stayed committed even when Neal transferred to Eastern Montana College when Rocky no longer offered the music major he sought.



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
The legacy gift of Sharon and Neal Linger was celebrated during the annual RMC President's Dinner. Pictured with the Liningers, right, are Obert and Ginny Udem, with this year's Commencement speaker, actor and educator, Bill Bowers, RMC'81. Udem, director of planned giving, worked with the Liningers to create their endowment.

"I remember taking a sociology course on dating and marriage from a chaplain at Rocky, and we were the example of a relationship that would never work," Karen laughed.

The Liningers celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in June.

Karen graduated in 1961 from Rocky, while Neal graduated the same year from Eastern. Both earned master's degrees (Karen earned two, one in English and a second in Library Media) and Neal also earned his Ph.D in music.

They enjoyed a lifetime of teaching. Karen taught English, French, and drama before specializing in library media. Neal

*(Please see **Lingers: Legacy in Life** on back page)*

Committed to RMC Education

John R. and Helen Hamilton Bross, who both taught at Rocky Mountain College, never forgot what was important in educating students for successful and satisfying lives. They lived modestly, saving and investing wisely, to fulfill future dreams of helping others, according to Obert Udem, RMC director of planned giving. Their legacy is now realized through a gift of nearly \$500,000, with approximately \$350,000 endowing student scholarships and about \$140,000 for the Bross Peace Seminar, a program of The Institute for Peace Studies at Rocky.

"This legacy will profoundly impact career choices of many students, and greatly strengthen this institution's future," Udem said. "The Bross gift establishes a major family legacy at Rocky that was long-planned by these generous friends, and is a gift of which they and their family are all justifiably proud."

Approximately \$140,000 will permanently endow the Institute for Peace Studies at Rocky, with income ranging from \$5,600 to \$7,000. This will continue the John and Helen Bross Peace Seminar, a one semester, one credit course which was initiated largely in response to their lifelong interest with the struggle to establish higher levels of peace and respect for cultural differences, not just internationally, but within the ever more culturally diverse citizenship of the United States, and at every level, whether statewide, regional, national, or even in smaller urban locations like those of Montana's towns and cities.

The balance, approximately \$350,000, will be added to the John and Helen Bross Scholarship Endowment to produce between \$14,000 and \$17,500 annually. This fund was established over the years by the couple with gifts qualifying for the 40% Montana tax credit incentive to build such endowment resources to provide permanent funding sources for nonprofit entities like Rocky. Its goal has always been to provide scholarships to students selected by Rocky who would, without this support, probably not be able to receive college educations.

"This will be a tremendous advantage in Rocky's student recruitment and retention efforts, and will affect many very promising young lives," Udem said.

Helen Bross died peacefully at her home in Moses Lake, Wash., last July. She grew up in Philadelphia, where she graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1939. She was a physics major who then earned a Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale. Subsequently, she earned a master's degree in mathematics from Columbia University. She knew the importance of a college education as a core belief, and



Photo courtesy of Georgia (Bross) Ruebsamen
John and Helen Bross, cross-country skiing in their 80s, enjoyed active lives with a profound interest in education and a devotion to Rocky Mountain College, where they both taught.

*(Please see **Committed to RMC Education** on back page)*

Liners: Legacy in Life

(Continued from inside)

was a music director. Both retired from the public school system in Aurora, Colo., where they still live.

"What we did for Rocky seemed obvious to us because we believe so strongly in what Rocky does. When we were back in May (when they were honored at the RMC President's Dinner and attended her 50th RMC class reunion), we felt the same family spirit we knew when we were students," Sharon said.

"The students we met, while only a few, were really impressive. We had no doubt that we were doing the right thing," Neal continued.

The life insurance policy, issued on Sharon's life, also worked to the Lininger's advantage, Sharon and Neal noted. "We had IRAs from which we were required to make withdrawals and, needing nothing personally and not wanting to pay the

income taxes, it was without question a great time to set up a planned legacy gift at Rocky. We hope others will decide to do the same after learning of our satisfaction in having done so. It was simple, fun, and the cost was greatly reduced by avoiding substantial income taxes we would otherwise have had to pay this year."

Basically, the Lininger's \$420,000 policy will eventually fund an endowment that should provide \$16,880 per year to help students, Udem said. The first year's premium was \$45,000, and the following nine annual premiums will be \$15,000, after which there are no more premiums. Depending upon tax laws of those years, the premiums may be paid by non-taxable transfers from the IRA with such transfers not taxable to the Liningers, but metered against required IRA distributions, or may

be paid personally by the Liningers, in which case their payment will be income tax deductible. The insurance policy is owned by and payable to Rocky at Sharon's eventual death, which, of course, is hoped to be many years in the future.

The scholarships will be designated for students majoring in fine arts, which was the Lininger's preference.

The Liningers also hope their gift may motivate others to consider similar gifts to Rocky.

"It allows someone to do something really great for students down the road," Neal said.

The grimness and morbidity of death has been replaced by the creation of opportunities for future students.

"Rocky is a wonderful institution. It's that simple," Sharon said.

Committed to RMC Education

(Continued from inside)

committed her life to the effort of providing its benefits to others.

She met her husband, John Bross, at Yale. They were married 59 years. John died in January 2001.

Both taught at Talladega College, a black, private college in Alabama, until moving to Montana in 1964 where they were professors at Rocky. John taught psychology, religion, and philosophy; Helen taught physics, philosophy, and math. A Quaker since college, Helen also enjoyed affiliation with the Congregational Church, as did John, who was an ordained Congregational (UCC) minister, extremely involved in the Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference of the United Church of Christ, as well as many other human service and religious organizations. They were very involved in the early formative years of the Institute

for Peace Studies at Rocky Mountain College. John was a member of Mayflower Congregational Church (UCC), where he was occasionally in either the pulpit or playing the organ during services.

They were advocates for education and peacemaking. Civil and human rights issues were a motivating focus, as well. They belonged to the Friendship Force, which was a grassroots peace effort of President Jimmy Carter, enabling citizens of all countries to make exchange visits. John and Helen traveled widely internationally in support of that effort.

The couple loved music. Helen played the violin and viola, and performed with the Billings Symphony for 30 years. In the evenings, she and John would play duets: she played the viola; he played the piano. They are survived by three children: Carol A Patterson, John H. Bross, and Georgia K.

Ruebsamen, who attended Billings public schools before their college studies.

At death, their bodies were donated to the University of Washington Medical School for anatomical study pursuant to their request, furthering the evidence of their belief in education.

"We are immensely grateful for their caring generosity. They would want their example to motivate others in emulating the principles learned by living through the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the worldwide devastation of World War II," Udem noted. "After witnessing the deprivation and angst of that time, they were committed to doing what they could to prepare young people to take on the challenge of making a better, more peaceful and humane world for future humankind."

