

ROCKY NOW

Vol. 4 Issue 6

Fresh news every day at www.rocky.edu

June 2009



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

All about our students



Photo by Dave M. Shumway, RMC '07

Olivia Johnson, one of the first graduates of the RMC Master of Educational Leadership program, receives her diploma.

A year ago, Rocky Mountain College launched a unique master's degree program, approved by the Montana Board of Education and the Montana Office of Public Instruction, which was designed to rectify a severe shortage in the state of school administrators.

Headed up by Dr. Stevie Schmitz, RMC director of distance education and degree completion, the Master of Educational Leadership program graduated its first class during the 127th RMC Commencement, May 9.

Already six of those who received their degrees have found administrative jobs. One of those outstanding graduates, Olivia Johnson, is featured here.

Olivia is a graduate of the RMC Elementary Education Department and of the RMC Master of Educational Leadership program. She recently accepted the position of principal of the Brockton Elementary School.

"Olivia has been a great student at Rocky, a great teacher at Brockton and she will be a great leader in her new role as principal. We are very proud of her accomplishments and know that she will serve her community, her school, and her students well as she takes on this new responsibility," said Dr. Schmitz.



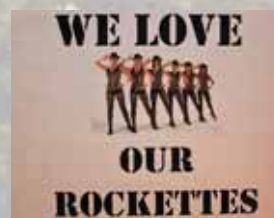
Photo by Dave M. Shumway, RMC '07

Joyce Taylor, Margaret Johnson, Bev Billingsly and Holly Furber were enjoying each other's company and helping Rocky with its Campus Beautification project. Nicknamed the "Rockettes," they are part of a group of eight volunteers who offered to help with special efforts.

Lemonade *on the* Lawn

The campus of Rocky Mountain College is a treasure we like to share with the community. One of the College's goals is to connect with our neighbors. That may include hosting public events, like the annual Festival of Cultures, or the summer camps for basketball and football, or simply allowing the campus to be used by those who are taking their dogs for early morning walks.

The College has appreciated community help with keeping the campus beautiful for all to enjoy. Under the RMC Campus Beautification program, Rocky has been able to plant new trees, dig new wells, improve signage, and continue to upgrade buildings and grounds.



A "We Love Our Rockettes" sign greeted RMC's new volunteer group.

This year that effort is getting an extra boost from a new campus affiliate group, the "Rocky Rockettes," and from the Billings Central Girls Soccer Team, this year's Montana Class A Champs, which selected RMC's program as their civic project.

The "Rockettes" are a group of women who sought volunteer opportunities, and "we have plenty of those," said Shari VanDelinder, RMC director of development.

Shari soon had the "Rockettes" helping with the Campus Beautification program, by organizing the neighborhood door hangers

(Please see Lemonade on back page)



Insider

Important Relationships Developing in Virginia City

One of the genuinely enjoyable parts of my job is the associations I have with all kinds of interesting people. Whether it's getting acquainted with students over a cup of coffee or lunching with a staff or faculty member or chatting with alumni at one of our College events, the shared experience is enlightening and entertaining.

That is also true when it comes to meeting new people, who might not be familiar with Rocky Mountain College. Sometimes those encounters are more pleasurable and rewarding because I get to talk about a subject I feel passionately about - Rocky Mountain College. I love explaining who we are, what we do and what matters at Rocky. Almost always I make new friends and good associations when this happens.

A case in point is what has resulted from our venture with the Illustrious Virginia City Players and our operation of the historic opera house. We took on this management responsibility with an interest in providing paid internships and scholarships for our fine theatre arts department. We also welcomed the opportunity to expand knowledge about Rocky in the southwestern part of the state, and to the visitors who come to that historic area from all over the world.



Enjoying the RMC Grand Opening at the Virginia City Opera House are (l-r): Bob FitzGerald, RMC senior development officer; Mary Oliver, senior vice president for First Madison Valley Bank, and Jesse Murphy, RMC community outreach liaison.

Student Alumni; director of the Madison County Economic Development; chair of the Ennis Big Brothers/Sisters; chair of the Ennis Parade Committee for the Ennis Chamber; director of the Madison Valley Cultural Corporation; director/officer of the Virginia City Preservation Alliance; and board member for the Madison Valley Hospital Foundation.

You can see this is an impressive ally and one who has actively assisted our every effort, introducing us to new friends in southwest Montana, making important suggestions, and taking our RMC staff and students under her wing. She has not only recruited the support of her employer, Tim Combs (whose family owns the banks) for our scholarship sponsorship programs, but she has personally bought a sponsorship package and pitched in for the adopt-an-actor program.

Mary also forged new relationships with RMC members involved in other efforts. Before long she made sure the Midlife Chryslers, featuring RMC Prof. Mark Moak on the drums, were booked to play in Ennis. She also discussed a concert featuring the Montana Logging and Ballet Company -- comprised of RMC alumnus, including Bob FitzGerald, our senior development officer -- for an event in Virginia City.

She set up an important meeting with John and Mickey Benedict, two more important allies for our new venture. John, a builder, once managed the opera house and has generously offered all his financial records for us to see how it was done successfully when he was in charge.

"I see my role as connecting people who can do good things," she said, explaining her active career and involved lifestyle.

I see my role at the College that way, too.

I hope many of you will have the opportunity to get to know Mary Oliver, a great new friend for our College. I also hope many of you will take a trip to Virginia City to see and support our performances.

Best regards,

Michael Mace, RMC President



Coming Attractions



A long line of carts awaited alumni for last year's annual RMC Alumni Association Golf Scramble.

FRI., JUNE 19

RMC 2009 Alumni Golf Tournament

Peter Yegen Golf Course

1 p.m.

To register, call 406-657-1005



Rocky Mountain College has assumed management of the historic Virginia City Opera House.

FRI., JULY 17 & SAT., JULY 18

VIRGINIA CITY BECKONS ROCKY FRIENDS AND ALUMNI

To celebrate a new partnership between Rocky Mountain College and the historic Virginia City Opera House, the RMC Alumni Office has prepared a special family vacation weekend July 17 & 18.

At the same time as the annual Virginia City Micro-Brew Festival, RMC is inviting alumni and friends to join the festivities, which will include four different shows at the Virginia City Opera House, now operated by Rocky, under the direction of Gerry Roe, RMC professor of theatre arts.

Professor Roe will direct the Illustrious Virginia City Players, which includes RMC students and alumni, for the performances Friday, July 17 and Saturday, July 18. The Illustrious Virginia City Players will present musical comedies, "Watch Your Bustle," "Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street," and "Aggie, the Mail Order Bride."

(Please see Upcoming Events on back page)

Focus on Faculty & Staff

Admissions Director is 'Servant Leader'

There is a solid sense of servant leadership on the campus of Rocky Mountain College. We have Peace Corps alumni, medical and service project missionaries, and people who have spent their time serving at homeless shelters and food pantries. Some work above and beyond the regular call of duty on the campus and then go home to coach their children's basketball, baseball, or flag football team. They are examples of RMC's "servant leaders."

"Servant Leadership" may evoke a broad range of ideas, but generally the name refers to somebody who leads an effort or group of people through their hard work and sacrifice; a leader whose goal is the greater good, not the greater paycheck or bigger name.

Kelly Edwards fits the bill for what we mean by "servant leadership." As the recently appointed director of admissions and the head cheerleading coach at Rocky Mountain College, Kelly has brought a passion for hard work with her enthusiasm for the past three years to help the College reach its recruiting goals. Before Kelly came to RMC she had a very different work place.

Originally from Illinois and a graduate from the University of Montana, Kelly followed graduation with travel to the Central American country of Belize. Kelly volunteered for two years in an existing orphanage meant to house 35 children, regularly serving 60-75 children at any given time. The conditions were so harsh that "in the entire orphanage, only one toilet worked."

The rest were unusable because of the backed up sewage, she explained. With her passion for early childhood education, Kelly worked to dramatically enhance the education of the children. From very basic ideas such as "fundraising to buy backpacks so [the kids'] homework didn't fly out of their hand as they walked home from school" to more demanding efforts of working with the children one-on-one and curriculum development, Kelly worked toward providing quality education.

As a true servant leader, Kelly spent over three years and her own resources helping the orphanage. She donated materials and supplies for a complete cleaning (including the plumbing) of the facilities, and purchasing

new uniforms for the children. Still overwhelmed by the plight of the children and the inadequate facilities, Kelly teamed up with a friend and began the development of a new children's home, The Liberty Children's Home, which currently provides housing and education to abandoned and abused children of Belize.

Shortly after the completion of the Liberty Children's Home, Kelly returned to Montana, this time to Billings where she took a position with Rocky and married her husband, Chris Edwards.

Her ideal job: "A volunteer working in the non-profit world, making a difference in the lives of others."



Kelly Edwards, RMC director of admissions.

--By JESSE MURPHY, RMC OUTREACH LIAISON

Focus on Alumni & Friends

'Alumni Mom' Finds Unique Way to Help

One woman's loathing of housework is a major gain for Rocky Mountain College.

Kathy Tolliver, who has had two daughters and one son-in-law graduate from Rocky, laughs when she explains her devotion to artistic pursuits springs from her hatred of dusting and vacuuming.

"What a waste of time when there are so many fun things to do," she says of traditional womens' work around the house.

Among those pleasures she prefers to housework are photography, painting, writing, illustrating, batiking, printmaking, and calligraphy.

The mother of eight children has lived a life in service to others, making her art her gift.

"As my kids grew up and became better at painting (than myself), I started doing calligraphy," she says.

Whether that is the whole of the story, two things are certain: Her children are wonderful artists and Kathy is an amazing calligrapher.

"Growing up, the kids were always encouraged to do art wherever they were. I didn't make them sit in one quiet spot and neatly paint within the lines," she explains.

Helen and Nicole ("Nicki"), two of Kathy's children, attended Rocky to continue their love and training in art.

"When Nicki went to apply for an art scholarship" Kathy explains, "she hung over 50 paintings in the gallery" for

Professor Jim Baken, who walked in and exclaimed "this could be a senior art show." It cinched her being accepted.

Nicki's sister, Helen, triple majored in chemistry, art, and music, and won the RMC President's Cup in 2000.

Kathy's calligraphy is a gift she loves sharing

with people. She regularly displays her work anonymously around town, and at places of worship. Seven huge framed calligraphy works are exhibited in the entryway to St. Patrick's Catholic Church.

Rocky has been the grateful recipient of Kathy's calligraphy various times. Kathy volunteered to address special invitations for an RMC event. She prepared a beautiful calligraphy poem to be used as a gift to one of Rocky's benefactors. For RMC President Michael Mace, she made a framed calligraphy wall hanging, with quotations from theologian Reinhold Neibuhr.

Kathy refused to accept payment for her work.

"I appreciate what a great education my daughters received at Rocky and this is one way I can thank the College for that," she said.



Kathy Tolliver is a noted artist in Billings who had two daughters and one son-in-law graduate from Rocky. She donated many hours doing calligraphy to help with special projects for RMC.

--By JESSE MURPHY, RMC OUTREACH LIAISON

Upcoming Events

(Continued from inside)

There will also be a program "Movie Magic" -- presented by Dave Calendine, one of only a few qualified musicians who can operate the rare Cremona Photoplayer, which accompanies silent movies.

There are plenty of other events and attractions to entertain and educate, from nearby Nevada City, via the "old 12" train, to listening to one of the many bands playing during the Dog & Grog Micro-Brew Festival.

Find out how your family can enjoy a great RMC-related vacation without leaving Montana by calling Vicki Davison at 406-657-1005, or learn more by visiting Vacation.rocky.edu.



Mandie Jensen, Cathy Daem and Patrick Wilson delighted the full house at the RMC Grand Opening as they danced and sang an exuberant patriotic tune.

Lemonade

(Continued from front page)

which solicit donations from the neighborhoods near RMC.

"We do not have work study students this time of year, so their help was really huge," she said.

The Billings Central Girls Soccer Team always undertakes a civic project, and this year, Shari invited them to help with the beautification program. The members of the state championship team will help distribute those door hangers the "Rockettes" prepared.

One of the newest parts of the campus improvement is a "tiny tots" soccer field, located on the western end of campus near Fortin Education Center, south of Rimrock Road. The field needs fencing to make it safe for the littlest soccer players, as well as soccer goals, benches and other improvements.

"The Central girls really liked the idea of helping with that soccer field for the little guys," Shari said.

Among other campus projects will be reseeding lawns torn up during construction of the Morledge-Kimball Hall, and paving new parking lots for faculty, staff and guests near Prescott and Morledge-Kimball halls.

"We also hope to finish our campus sign project," Shari said. "We receive so many compliments for the new signs we've put in, we're anxious to finish those so people will be able to easily find their way around campus."

To thank the community for its support of the campus beautification program, Rocky will hold "Lemonade on the Lawn," a public event to celebrate with the community, July 11, from 2 - 4 p.m. The event will include music, refreshments, and an inflatable family maze from Fun for All Inflatables. There will also be campus tours.

"We want to share the success of making the campus even more beautiful and have a fun time at the peak of summer," Shari said.

For more information on how to help with the campus beautification program, contact Shari VanDelinder, RMC director of development, at vandelis@rocky.edu, or call 657-1173.



The Billings Central Girls Soccer Team, this year's Class A State Champions, made RMC's Campus Beautification program their civic project.

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