Hard work got D. John Nichols through tough times.

UAM’s 46th Distinguished Alumnus
98 and counting . . . As UAM moves toward its Centennial Celebration in 2009, we look back with pride on a rich history of accomplishments and forward to the exciting challenges and opportunities of our second century.

The 2006-07 school year brought some very visible changes to the campus, highlighted by the completion of a renovation and restoration project at Weevil Pond and the completion of Weevil Walk. As this issue of UAM Magazine goes to press, we are about to begin a major restoration and renovation of two of the oldest buildings on campus – Wells Hall and Sorrells Hall. The Division of Nursing has moved out of Wells Hall and into the Red Barn for the duration of the project.

The Campaign for Athletics is moving forward under the direction of Hugh Helfin and we are gratified by the support we are receiving as we begin a major construction project for intercollegiate athletics. Phase I of the project calls for the renovation and expansion of the press box at Convoy Leslie-Cotton Boll Stadium, to be followed by the construction of a new athletic facility, including an indoor practice area for athletics and band, coaches offices and meeting rooms.

The recently completed legislative session brought the highest level of funding for higher education in state history. I commend Governor Mike Beebe and the legislature for their efforts on behalf of Arkansans’ colleges and universities. A special thanks goes out to the southeast Arkansas legislative delegation and UAM alumni in the legislature for their hard work and support in securing the funds to help build a forest resources annex that will expand the research and teaching capacity for the School of Forest Resources and the Arkansas Forest Resources Center. State funding will pay for part – but not all – of the construction costs so we will be seeking funding from private sources before we begin construction.

As part of our plans for UAM’s Centennial, the Foundation Fund has created the Centennial Circle. We are asking 100 donors to contribute $10,000 each to create a $1 million endowment to meet priority needs of the university. These priorities will be determined by a joint committee of administration, faculty, and students. As part of our 100th anniversary, the university will construct a Centennial Clock Tower at the center of campus. Members of the Centennial Circle will have their names engraved around the base of the tower.

As we move toward the completion of our first century, I was reminded at graduation – as I am every year – of this institution’s unique mission. Our policy of open admissions does not always translate to high graduation and retention rates. Instead, this institution has always believed in opportunity. A large percentage of our graduates are the first in their family to attain a higher education. For many of them, UAM provided an opportunity, nothing more. It’s a simple idea that I hope we never forget.

Best Wishes,

H. Jack Lassiter
Chancellor
On Campus

D. John Nichols learned the value of hard work at an early age. It got him through tough times and is the secret to his success.

Sports

Greg Pearson was a punter and tight end for the Boll Weevils, but now he performs on a much different stage as a soloist with the Utah Opera.

Technology

When Robert Carter lost his 1956 class ring, he never expected to see it again. Now, ring and owner are reunited, thanks to a Good Samaritan named Ray Knowles.

Foundation News

Weevil Pond has taken on a whole new look in the last year with the completion of a restoration and renovation project to improve water quality and make the pond a pristine showplace for the campus. The renovations include Weevil Walk, a paved walking trail that encircles the pond, containing engraved bricks and larger paver stones provided by friends and alumni. There are also benches, lighting and the centerpiece of the project, the William E. Morgan Fountain, in memory of the late Arkansas A&M president. If you would like your name on Weevil Walk, there's still time. Just contact the Office of Advancement at (870) 460-1028 or go online to www.uamont.edu/alumni.
Alpha Chi Honored

A collegiate honor society at the University of Arkansas at Monticello was honored for excellence at the organization’s national convention March 15-17 in San Antonio, Texas.

The Zeta Chapter of Alpha Chi was selected as one of 34 chapters nationwide to receive a Star Chapter Award honoring chapter activities during the 2005-06 school year.

Star Chapter Award winners must have a sponsor and student at the national or regional convention, have at least one student presentation at the convention, have a Benedict Fellowship or a Nolle Scholarship nominee, sponsor one scholarly program on campus, induct and register members, and file an annual chapter report. The Benedict Fellowship is a $2,500 award for graduate study while the Nolle Scholarship is a $1,500 award for undergraduates.

Last year, UAM Alpha Chi members Christine Bryant, Amanda Haught and Rhiannon Cabinass attended the Alpha Chi regional convention in Dallas with faculty sponsors Kate Stewart and Marsha Clayton. Haught and Cabinass presented papers at the convention.

The UAM chapter also sponsors an annual Academic Olympics in a quiz bowl format. This year’s event was held March 20 and 22.

“The Star Chapter Award is a prestigious honor and recognizes the work of an outstanding group of students,” said Stewart, a professor of English and Zeta chapter sponsor. “It puts our chapter in good company with chapters at outstanding colleges and universities throughout the country.”

Alpha Chi is a coeducational academic honor society. Since 1922, its purpose has been to promote academic excellence and exemplary character among college and university students and to honor those who achieve such distinction.

Alumni Director

Pine Bluff native Carrie Ashcraft has returned to the University of Arkansas at Monticello to become director of alumni affairs, according to Linda Yeiser, vice chancellor for advancement.

A 1991 UAM graduate, Ashcraft is a former customer service and sales advisor for TDS Telecom in Rison. She is a 1987 graduate of Woodlawn High School and holds a bachelor of science degree in marketing from UAM.

“Carrie will be an excellent addition to our staff,” said Yeiser. “As we step up our efforts in alumni relations, it was imperative that we add a staff member who knows and understands the unique mission of the institution and who can connect with our alumni.”

Ashcraft began her career with the Pine Bluff accounting firm Baird, Kurtz and Dobson, CPA’s. She went to work for TDS Telecom in 1993, where she served as a customer sales and service representative, supervisor of customer sales and service, and lead customer sales and service advisor.

“This was a great opportunity to come back and work for my alma mater,” said Ashcraft. “I have so many wonderful memories from my days as a student at UAM. I’m looking forward to working with the Office of Advancement to help the university meet its goals, and I’m particularly looking forward to working with our alumni.”

COMING HOME ’91 graduate Carrie Ashcraft (below) has come home to UAM to serve as the new director of alumni affairs.
Nation’s Best

The University of Arkansas at Monticello’s varsity debate team was named best in the nation by the International Public Debate Association at the IPDA’s annual convention in Shreveport, La., March 29 through April 1.

The convention was held in conjunction with the LSU-Shreveport Debate Tournament, where UAM received 19 awards, including third place in the team sweepstakes.

In overall debate, UAM was rated second by the IPDA. UAM placed first in varsity competition, winning the Mahatma Ghandi Award, first in novice debate, winning the Martin Luther King Award, and fourth in open debate.

Individual IPDA awards in the varsity division went to Chris Halley, who placed first, taking home the Edmund Burke Award. Joel Brown placed fourth while Brian Rauls placed fifth.

IPDA novice division awards went to Colt Roan, who placed first, taking home the Susan B. Anthony Award. Nicci Norton placed third while Shainn Ryals placed ninth.

Foresters Second

UAM forestry students placed second at the Association of Southern Forestry Clubs Conclave competition held March 15-17 at Crossville, Tenn.

UAM finished second in physical events and third in technical events to finish second to Stephen F. Austin State University. UAM has dominated the Conclave competition, winning 28 times in 50 tries. Stephen F. Austin and the University of Georgia are a distant second with five Conclave titles each.

North Carolina State followed UAM in third place, followed by Auburn, Florida, Virginia Tech, Mississippi State, Louisiana Tech, Tennessee, Georgia, Oklahoma State, Kentucky, Alabama A&M, Clemson, and Texas A&M.

Online Exhibits

UAM’s Taylor Library is offering exhibits on two of the university’s most famous landmarks – Weevil Pond, and the Big Oak.

The Big Oak, which died of old age in 1983, was known to generations of Arkansas A&M and UAM students. You can learn about the state’s largest and oldest cherryback oak tree by going to UAM’s website at www.uamont.edu and clicking on the word “library.” When you access the library site, go to “library services” and you’ll be able to learn about both the Big Oak and the changing face of Weevil Pond, which is over 100 years old.

Centennial Slogan

In 2009, UAM will celebrate its 100th birthday, and we need your help. The UAM Alumni Association is inviting all dues-paying alumni as well as emeriti, full-time faculty, staff and students to submit their suggestions for the university’s centennial slogan.

Prizes include recognition in news releases and a future issue of UAM Magazine. If the winning slogan is submitted by a student, that student will receive a one-year tuition scholarship.

If the winning slogan comes from an alumnus, faculty or staff member, the winner will receive a permanent marker on campus.

The winning slogan will be selected by a committee appointed by the Chancellor. The slogan will become the property of the university and will be used in news releases, banners, functions and publications promoting the centennial celebration.

UAM was created in 1909 by the Arkansas General Assembly and opened its doors for classes on September 14, 1910. Known originally as the Fourth District Agricultural School, UAM became Arkansas A&M in 1928 and merged with the University of Arkansas in 1971. For more information about the history of the university, log on to our website at www.uamont.edu, click on Administration and Staff, and scroll to the History of UAM.

Please submit slogans in writing to the Office of Advancement, UAM Box 3520, Monticello, AR 71656 or online at www.uamont.edu/alumni. Deadline for submission is November 1, 2007.
A Century Plus 1

UAM is losing more than a century of teaching experience with the retirement of three long-time faculty members from the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences.

Dr. John T. Annulis, dean of the school and professor of mathematics, Dr. Ed Bacon, professor of biology, and Dr. Walter Godwin, professor of chemistry, recently announced their retirement.

Together, they represent 101 years service on the UAM faculty.

“It’s going to be a tall order to replace three faculty members with their expertise, their experience, and their background in higher education,” said UAM Chancellor Jack Lassiter. “John, Ed and Walt have touched the lives of so many students. They’ve taught fathers and sons, mothers and daughters. It’s going to be hard to imagine this institution without them.”

Annulis has the longest tenure at 35 years. He came to UAM in 1972, became head of the Department of Mathematics in 1979, dean of the College of General Studies in 1993, served as associate vice chancellor for academic affairs from 1994-97, and was named dean of the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences in 1998. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Grand Valley State University in Michigan as well as a master’s degree and Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico.

Bacon came to UAM in 1974 and recently completed his 33rd year on the faculty. He holds a bachelor’s degree from Southern Arkansas University, a master’s degree from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville,

Southern Hospitality

One of Monticello’s most historic structures is receiving a facelift thanks to the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

UAM recently purchased the 111-year-old Trotter House, a Victorian era mansion located in the heart of the North Main historic district. The house has served as a bed and breakfast since 1988 and will be used by the University as both a bed and breakfast for visiting guests and a classroom for a new certificate program in hospitality services to be offered by the UAM Colleges of Technology at Crossett and McGehee. The one-year program will result in a certificate of proficiency.

Current repairs include replacing and reinforcing the front porch and footings. “The house is in pretty good condition,” said UAM Chancellor Jack Lassiter. “We hope to have the work done soon.

“The hospitality program is an exciting new opportunity for our Colleges of Technology,” Lassiter continued. “This opens up a whole new field for our graduates.”

Built in 1896 by Monticello businessman V.J. Trotter, the Trotter House has six guest bedrooms, nicknamed Magnolia, Cypress, Sycamore, Dogwood, Pecan, and White Oak, each with an individual bathroom.

The house will continue as a commercial enterprise operated by UAM and will still be available for special functions and wedding receptions. Lassiter also hopes to use the house as a place to stay for university guests, including guest speakers and visiting lecturers, as well a place for alumni returning to the campus for events such as homecoming.

“The Trotter House will continue to be open to anyone who wishes to visit our community,” said Lassiter. “We’re excited about the opportunity to do what other schools are doing in offering a comfortable setting for visiting guests, and we’re also pleased to be able to provide interns in our hospitality services program the opportunity to work in a real bed and breakfast.”

CALLING IT QUILTS Long-time faculty members (from left) Dr. Walter Godwin, Dr. John Annulis, and Dr. Ed Bacon announced their retirement in May.
On Campus

Nursing Leader

Pam Gouner, a member of the nursing faculty, has been named chair of the Division of Nursing.

“We are pleased to have someone of Pam Gouner’s expertise and experience already on our faculty who is able to step in and take a leadership role in what has historically been one of the top nursing programs in Arkansas,” said UAM Chancellor Jack Lassiter.

Gouner received her B.S.N. from the Louisiana State University School of Nursing in New Orleans. She holds two master’s degrees – a master’s of education in wellness and health promotion from Northwestern State (La.) and an M.S.N. from the University of Phoenix Online with a focus in Nursing Education. She also holds a teaching certificate in middle school education in the areas of math and science. Her clinical area at UAM is medical/surgical nursing and she coordinates a course in Healthy Aging.

Alumni Directory

The UAM Alumni Association has contracted with Harris Connect to publish a new UAM Alumni Directory – Centennial Edition. Harris Connect will be sending a questionnaire to alumni in mid-August asking for updated information to be included in the directory.

“I want to assure our alumni that this is something very worthwhile and I would encourage everyone to participate,” said Linda Yeiser, vice chancellor for advancement. “I know in a world of junk mail, telemarketers and spam, it’s easy to write off something like this as just another intrusion on your personal time, but this directory will be a wonderful resource for all our alumni.”

The new UAM Alumni Directory will be published in 2008.

Bronze Statue

The UAM School of Education hosted an open house April 29, dedicating a bronze statue and garden located outside the west entrance to the building. The statue was donated by UAM faculty member Dr. Sue Martin in memory of her parents, Dr. and Mrs. J.P. Swearingen. The statue depicts two mothers holding children while sitting on a park bench. Pictured from left are Chancellor Jack Lassiter, Dr. Peggy Doss, dean of the School of Education, and Dr. Sue Martin.

Holley Retires

Noted historian and long-time faculty member Dr. Donald Holley announced his retirement in December after 40 years service on the UAM faculty.

A graduate of Louisiana Tech with a master’s and Ph.D. from Louisiana State University and a second master’s from the University of Texas, Holley taught history to several generations of Arkansas A&M and UAM students.

Holley has done extensive scholarly research and is an expert on both Arkansas history and the history of UAM. His latest book, The Second Great Emancipation, details the role of mechanization in changing the face of agriculture in the South.

Homecoming October 13

The university is already making plans for Homecoming 2007, which is scheduled for the weekend of October 13. The celebration will kickoff on Thursday, October 11 with a book signing. Jimmy “Red” Parker will sign copies of Red – Beyond Football: The Legacy of Coach Jimmy “Red” Parker on Thursday afternoon. The annual UAM Sports Hall of Fame reception and induction banquet will be held Thursday night. On Friday, October 12, we’ll host the 44th annual Dr. Scott Boyd Memorial Golf Tournament at the Monticello Country Club. The university will also hold a dedication of Weevil Walk and the William E. Morgan Fountain as well as a reception and dinner for alumni. Saturday, October 13 will include the 50th reunion of the Class of 1957, the 40th anniversary of the African-American Alumni, a reunion of All-Americans in all sports, and the annual football game between UAM and the University of North Alabama. Go to www.uamont.edu/alumni for details.
Work Ethic

Hard work got D. John Nichols through tough times. Now the CEO of Mississippi Marine is UAM’s 46th Distinguished Alumnus.
The details are a little sketchy, but D. John Nichols still remembers the day his father gave him the only money he ever received from his family for college.

“I was on my way back to (Arkansas) A&M,” Nichols remembers. “Most of the time I hitchhiked back and forth from home, but this time Dad was carrying me down Highway 35, which was a gravel road at that time, in his ’47 Chevy pick-up. I don’t remember exactly when it was, but I know I was in my first year of college. Somewhere along the way, he reached in his pocket and gave me $20. He said ‘I want you to take this money. I wish I had more, but I don’t.’”

John Fred Nichols was a subsistence farmer, scratching out a living in the Saline River bottoms in northeast Bradley County. The Nichols home and 40-acre farm was one of a few that formed the tiny community of Ignorant Bend, or as pronounced by the locals, “Ign’rt Bend,” so named by folks up the road who thought themselves a little higher on the social ladder than their neighbors by the river.

Rural electrification hadn’t reached Ignorant Bend in the 1940’s, nor much of anything else. D. John attended a one-room school until the seventh grade when the county schools consolidated with nearby Warren. When the weather was warm enough, he walked to school barefoot.

When Nichols wasn’t in school, he was laboring alongside his father, learning the lessons of hard work that carried him out of Ignorant Bend and up the corporate ladder. It was hard work that got Nichols through Arkansas A&M (now the University of Arkansas at Monticello), hard work that saw him through tough economic times in the 1980’s. Now, at a youthful looking 70 years old, D. John Nichols is on top of the world.

Nichols is chairman and chief executive officer of Mississippi Marine Corporation of Greenville, Miss., a 37-acre shipyard that covers more than 3,600 feet of shoreline along Lake Ferguson, a backwater lake that opens into the Mississippi River. Mississippi Marine includes warehouses and dry docks that service, repair and clean the barges and tugs that work the...
Mississippi. Nichols also owns Nichols Marine, LLC, a holding company that manages timber and marine equipment in Bradley County as well as Greenville Marine, a real estate business.

For his success in business, Nichols has been named the 46th Distinguished Alumnus at the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Nichols was honored at UAM’s commencement exercises on May 11 at Convoy Leslie-Cotton Boll Stadium.

The honor caught Nichols by surprise, to say the least. “You can’t print what I first thought when they called to tell me,” he says, laughing. “My first thought was ‘I’m going to have to give a speech.’ Honestly, I was very surprised. It just didn’t seem appropriate to me for a fella with my background to be given an honor of that magnitude. It’s a nice tribute to my life of work. I can’t think of a better honor to receive.”

Nichols’ rise from barefoot farm boy to corporate CEO is a classic American success story with one recurring theme – an unwavering belief in the value of hard work.

“Dad would be up before daylight,” remembers Nichols. “He worked hard all his life. I learned to work hard because I had to.”

Nichols graduated from Warren High School in 1955 and took a job as a welder at Blankinship Machine Shop for 75 cents an hour. He hadn’t given college much thought until a recruiter from Arkansas A&M stopped by. Nichols had no money for college, but the recruiter convinced him he could work his way through school with a job on campus or by joining the National Guard.

Nichols enrolled at A&M in the fall of 1955 and took his first campus job – picking up cow chips. “Some of ‘em hadn’t turned into chips yet,” he says, chuckling at the memory.

Nichols earned $40 a month, the maximum allowed for students, but it wasn’t enough to pay the bills. Nichols took a second job and got a buddy to claim it. At the end of the month, his buddy signed the check over to Nichols. “I was making $80 a month on campus,” Nichols says, “and I had a full-time job at a lawnmower shop in Monticello. I stayed busy.”

During the summer after his freshman year, Nichols went to Greenville to look for work. Rumor had it there was good money for welders in the Greenville shipyards. It was there he met John Henry Cox, president of American River Lines and a man who would have a lasting influence on his life. Nichols went to work for Cox and spent the next two summers living in a Greenville boarding house while working in the shipyards.

After his sophomore year, Cox asked the 19-year-old Nichols to quit school and work full time. Nichols accepted the offer, gave his car to his brother, Autry, and paid his tuition for a year.

It didn’t take Nichols long to decide he wanted to go back to school, but he didn’t have the money. To get it, he began a grueling work schedule that included an eight-hour shift at LeMay Towing, two hours working for Cox and another five hours welding at another shipyard. He started work at 5 a.m. and finished at 10 p.m.

Nichols eventually went back to school and completed his degree in industrial education in 1960. With degree in hand, he headed back to the
shipyards, but didn’t stay long. He accepted an offer to teach math and science at Pine Bluff Vocational-Technical School, working from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and earning $500 a month. “That seemed like a vacation,” says Nichols.

Within a month, he had a second job at Ben Pearson Archery Company. He eventually became plant manager at Ben Pearson before Brunswick Corporation bought out the company in 1970 and left Nichols without a job.

Nichols went back to Greenville to see his old boss, John Cox. “I went there to ask for advice and he was pretty discouraging,” says Nichols. “But before I left, he said he was getting up in years and asked if I’d be interested in working with him.”

Cox, who had two partners, made Nichols an offer to purchase 25 percent of the shipyard for $28,000. Nichols paid $5,000 in cash, financed the rest and was named president of the company, a deceptive title if ever there was one. “I was really Mr. Cox’s ‘hey-boy,’” says Nichols. “You know, ‘Hey boy, do this,’ or ‘Hey boy, do that.’ He was training me and paid me $10,000 a year, which was $15,000 less than I was making at Ben Pearson.”

Nichols bought Cox’s share of the company in 1977, then bought out a second partner in 1982.

The 1970’s were good to Nichols, but the ‘80’s were tough. Most of the inland shipyards went broke, including four in Greenville. Somehow, Nichols persevered. Rather than panic, he dug in for the long haul and used the work ethic he learned from his father. “We were two and a half million dollars in debt,” he remembers. “I had payrolls to meet and was thinking, ‘What have I done?’ But hard work got me through it. Instead of backing up, we went further in debt and eventually turned it around.”

Now, Mississippi Marine is so busy Nichols can’t hire enough labor to meet the demand for its services. He currently employs 175 people and needs 250. “We’re working shifts 10 hours a day, six days a week,” he says. “Often we’re bringing in a special crew on Sundays.”

At an age when most men are retired or thinking about it seriously, Nichols is too busy enjoying the fruits of his labor to slow down much. He and his wife, Melinda, have three children – daughters Amanda Lee, 15, and Lucy Elizabeth, 13, and a son, John Fred Nichols, II, who will be seven in June. Nichols loves to show off photos of his children and tell embarrassed visitors that they aren’t his grandchildren. “I kind of enjoy doing that,” he says with a grin.

Nichols has one piece of advice for UAM graduates. “My success stems from a lot of hard work,” he says. “I’ve had a significant amount of luck, too, but hard work is essential.”

“The presentation Chancellor Jack Lassiter (right) presented Nichols with the Distinguished Alumnus citation during commencement exercises May 11.”
Greg Pearson owes his career as an opera singer to his former football coach and an Army officer whose name he can’t remember.

Pearson was a freshman football player at the University of Arkansas at Monticello in August 1987, fresh out of the military, where he had been a combat medic, and entertaining thoughts of a career in medicine. When he went to see Tommy Barnes, the Boll Weevil head coach had a suggestion. “I hear you can sing,” said Barnes. “Why don’t you go see the choir director about a scholarship.”

Pearson was awarded a choir scholarship and spent the next three years in the disparate roles of punter and tight end for the football team while becoming a soloist and performer in numerous campus music theater productions.

“Coach Barnes and Coach (Carl) Preston called me the ‘Singing Boll Weevil,’” says Pearson.

Pearson was the punter on what was arguably the best football team in UAM history, the 1988 outfit that went 10-2 and reached the second round of the national playoffs. Pearson’s 33.7-yard punting average was nothing to write home about, but he insists his statistics were hurt by the Boll Weevils’ prolific offense. “Our offense was so good, I was always punting on a short field,” says Pearson, laughing. “That’s my story, and I’m sticking to it.”

Pearson lettered three years in football but had not completed a degree when his National Guard unit was called up in 1990 and sent to

Pearson averaged 33.7 yards a punt. “Our offense was so good, I was always punting on a short field,” he says, laughing. “That’s my story, and I’m sticking to it.”
TEVYA ON STAGE Former UAM football player turned opera star, Greg Pearson, returned to Monticello in March to play the lead in the UAM Music Theatre Workshop’s production of “Fiddler on the Roof.”

“It’s big time. There’s lots of pressure, but it’s live entertainment and there’s a sheer rush in doing it. It’s the most exciting thing you could ever do.”
Iraq as part of Operation Desert Storm. Pearson was in Iraq from December 31, 1990 to August 17, 1991.

While in Iraq, Pearson received three days of “R and R” aboard a cruise ship docked in the Persian Gulf off the coast of Bahrain. Pearson was sitting in the ship’s bar chatting with a female officer when she dared him to sing karaoke. His rich baritone voice wowed his fellow soldiers.

“For several days after I sang, I had people come up to me and say ‘Man, you’re really good. You ought to pursue this as a career,’” Pearson says.

While finishing his tour of duty in Iraq, Pearson wrote his music instructors at UAM and told them he wanted to major in music when he returned.

“When I got back to UAM, I wasn’t sure what direction I wanted to go in music,” Pearson says. “Fortunately for me, the music department at UAM teaches you to sing classical music. My grandmother is still mad at me for not singing country.”

Pearson received a bachelor’s degree in music from UAM in 1993 and took his classically trained voice to the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, where he studied under renowned voice teacher Dr. Paul Krieder. Pearson spent four years in Las Vegas, earning a master’s degree, teaching as a part-time member of the UNLV faculty, and performing back-up vocals in every major casino on the Strip. Pearson sang back-up for Kenny Loggins and Cybill Shepherd and performed the national anthem at UNLV basketball games.

With a background as a stage actor and a classically trained voice, Pearson gravitated toward opera. He was performing “Carmen” in Cedar City, Utah in 1997 when a friend who sang in the Utah Opera recommended him for the Opera’s Young Artist Program.

“It’s really basic training for opera singers,” Pearson explains. “They teach you everything, from how to rehearse, to singing and acting.”

Pearson has been with the Utah Opera for the past 10 years, singing supporting roles in operas such as “Romeo and Juliet,” “Tosca,” and “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” He’s also an adjunct faculty member at Salt Lake City...
Community College, where he teaches voice, and is a regular performer at the Wildwood Opera Festival in Little Rock. He has sung with the Anchorage Opera, the Jerusalem Symphony, and performed before 40,000 people at the Utah Symphony and Opera’s annual Fourth of July celebration. He recently appeared in “The Grapes of Wrath” with the Minnesota Opera and returned to Monticello in March to begin rehearsals for his appearance as Tevya in the UAM Music Theater Workshop’s performance of “Fiddler on the Roof” in April.

Pearson says performing at UAM is good preparation for eventually singing starring roles with the Utah Opera. “It’s been fun,” he says. “The students have reacted well. They have a lot of questions about music careers.”

At 6-6 and 250 pounds, Pearson still looks like a football player and cuts an imposing figure on stage. He says there’s more similarity between football and opera than meets the eye. “There’s a certain amount of athleticism required in both,” he says. “They’re both very physical and they both require mental discipline. While I was preparing for “Grapes of Wrath,” I discovered I had to sing on stage wrapped in nothing but a towel. I knew I had to get in shape in a hurry. I thought about Coach (Larry) Standley having our butts in the weight room at six o’clock in the morning, so I found a gym and was there every morning at 6.”

Pearson says performing at UAM is good preparation for eventually singing starring roles with the Utah Opera. “It’s been fun,” he says. “The students have reacted well. They have a lot of questions about music careers.”

Pearson and his wife of two years, Lesa, live in Salt Lake City, but he still enjoys coming home to Lake Village, where he spends time crappie fishing on Lake Chicot. And his voice still carries a hint of the Delta. “That’s how I got the role in ‘Grapes of Wrath,’” Pearson says. “They needed someone with a Southern accent.”

Pearson is pursuing a doctorate and someday hopes to move from supporting to starring roles. “The Utah Opera is an ‘A’ house,” he says. “By that I mean it’s like the Met in New York. It’s big time. There’s lots of pressure, but it’s live entertainment and there’s a sheer rush in doing it. It’s the most exciting thing you could ever do.”

BACK ON CAMPUS Pearson (left) enjoyed his experience acting and singing with UAM students in two performances of “Fiddler on the Roof.” The production played to standing-room-only crowds both nights. He hopes to use the experience to gain starring roles with the Utah Opera.
Softball Team Reaches NCAA Regionals

Throughout the 2007 season, it seemed every time Meredith Heckel swung her bat, the UAM softball team broke another record.

Heckel was the offensive leader on a Cotton Blossoms team that broke the UAM single-season home run record (previously 40) in early March, and by April the Cotton Blossoms were closing in on the Gulf South Conference record of 78 set by Delta State in 2006. While the Lady Statesmen set their record in a 72-game season, the Cotton Blossoms broke that record in their 51st game when Kate Brady hit a two-run homer in the Blossoms’ upset win over No. 5 Valdosta State at the GSC crossover.

As the Blossoms’ offense kept rolling, the team kept racking up wins, closing out the regular season on a nine-game winning streak to capture their sixth GSC West Division title in eight years.

The Blossoms won their first two games at the GSC Tournament and drew national attention when leftfielder Jenny Dunn slammed UAM’s 98th home run of the year in a loss to Valdosta State, matching the NCAA Division II national record for home runs in a season.

The Cotton Blossoms advanced to the NCAA Division II South Regional Tournament and picked up the first NCAA softball tournament victory in school history before losing to eventual tournament champion Florida Southern and Rollins.

Several Cotton Blossoms were recognized for their outstanding individual performances. Dunn became UAM’s first First Team All-American and was named to the All-South Region and All-GSC teams as well.

Heckel was a Second Team All-America selection from Daktronics and a Third Team All-American from the NFCA after making both organizations’ All-Region first team. Heckel was also selected as First Team All-GSC in addition to being named GSC West Player of the Year.

Kate Brady was named Second Team All-Region by Daktronics and First Team All-GSC, while Becca Tipton earned Second Team All-Region honors from both Daktronics and the NFCA in addition to being named Second Team All-GSC, and GSC West Freshman of the Year.

Several Blossoms earned off-field honors as well, as Heckel and Lauren Brooks were named First Team Academic All-District by the College Sports Information Directors of America and ESPN The Magazine, while Dunn and Reed both picked up second team honors.

2007 Volleyball Schedule

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<td>Jackson State @ PB</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Oct. 9</td>
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<td>ARKANSAS TECH*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 3</td>
<td>@ Christian Brothers*</td>
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<td>Nov. 9-10</td>
<td>GSC Tournament</td>
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* Gulf South Conference Matches

Player of the Year
First baseman Meredith Heckel was the GSC West Division Player of the Year and a Second Team All-American.

2007 Volleyball Schedule

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* Gulf South Conference Matches
Weevils Hoping For Break-out Year

C oaches hate losing and no one hates it more than Gwaine Mathews.

After enduring consecutive 1-10 seasons, UAM's third-year head football coach is more than ready to see two years of foundation building translate to wins on the field.

With a revamped offensive scheme that spreads the field and an experienced defense, Mathews may have reason to believe his program is about to turn a very big corner.

"We're bigger, stronger, and faster than we've been," says Mathews. "I like how we look right now."

Senior tailback John L. Williams is the offensive headline, but he has much to prove after an injury-plagued junior season.

"You'll see a rejuvenated John L.," says Mathews. "He has worked harder than anyone I can remember to get ready for this season. He's leaner, he's faster, and is ready to go."

Elijah McDonald returns at quarterback. The junior from Morton, Miss., had an up-and-down year in 2006 while playing with a foot injury, completing 73 of 173 passes for 774 yards with six touchdowns and seven interceptions.

"People are going to see Elijah in a completely different light," says Mathews. "Last year we asked him to do some things that he just couldn't do. But this spring, he and John L. really excelled."

McDonald's targets were limited almost immediately in 2006 when wide receivers Tim Harris and Jaleel Harris (no relation), both went down with season-ending injuries during the third quarter of the season opener at Southern Arkansas. Both return this fall, and according to Mathews, are ready to play.

"We really had a healthy competition during the spring and Jywin Ceasar passed Jaleel for his starting spot," says Mathews. "It'll be interesting to see how that plays out when we come back for summer drills."

The Weevils' offensive line has tured over the past two years and comes into the 2007 season with the chemistry that only playing together can bring. "We lost a very good offensive lineman in Odell Brown, but everyone else we had is back," says Mathews. "Joe Wilson didn't practice with us during the spring but will be ready to go this fall. Justin Waltz is going to be our anchor and LaQuinton Peterson has really emerged as one of our best."

UAM's defensive front, inconsistent a year ago, will be among the biggest in Division II. "With the exception of Moe Parson-Cade (5-9, 190), we're putting a bunch of Goliaths on that defensive line," says Mathews. "We'll go 6-5, 355; 6-5, 315; and 6-4, 285 across the front."

The linebackers are fast and athletic. Jeremy Brown and Wes Aables are returning starters. They are joined by redshirt freshman Vincent Jackson and sophomore Larry White. Brown and Aables were standouts defensively in 2006, combining for 54 tackles, while Jackson showed his athleticism and versatility as a member of the Boll Weevils basketball team last spring.

The Weevils return several experienced players in the defensive secondary, led by free safety Solomon Edwards and cornerback Lavar Wyatt. Edwards made 52 tackles and a team-leading four interceptions in 2006. He is joined at safety by Louisiana Tech transfer Brett Naquin, who Mathews feels could be the leader of the secondary by the end of the season.

Wyatt returns to lead a corners unit that features two of the top athletes on the squad – Calvin Sojourney and Scooter White. "Both Calvin and Scooter are phenomenal athletes," says Mathews. "And Lavar is one of those guys who is always in the right place at the right time and really steps it up on third down."

The Weevils open the season against old rival SAU at home on September 1. A difficult road schedule awaits trips to Division I-AA Sam Houston State and Division II Missouri-Rolla as well as the usual murderer's row in the Gulf South Conference. UAM has the league's top three powers – North Alabama, Valdosta State, and Delta State – at home.

"I know that if we take care of business, work hard, catch some breaks or make some of our own, we could make a run into October and November. Confidence is an unbelievable thing. We haven't had it as a team since I've been here. The key is to get off to a good start and win games early. That's the bottom line."

2007 Schedule

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<td>SAU</td>
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<td>S 8</td>
<td>at Sam Houston</td>
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<td>S 15</td>
<td>at OBU</td>
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<td>S 22</td>
<td>HARDING</td>
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<td>at HSU</td>
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<td>N 10</td>
<td>DELTA ST.</td>
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Future Schedules

Future UAM football schedules through 2013 are available on the athletic website: www.uamsports.com

OFFENSIVE LEADER Senior tailback John L. Williams will lead a new-look UAM offense in 2007.
Automotive technology students at the UAM College of Technology-McGehee will have two new vehicles to study, probe and take apart, thanks to a donation from the Ryburn Automotive Superstore of Monticello.

Bennie Ryburn, III, president and chief executive officer of Ryburn Automotive, recently presented a 2007 four-wheel drive Dodge Nitro and a 2005 Toyota Camry to the automotive department at UAM's McGehee campus. UAM COT-McGehee students will use the vehicles to study all components of automotive technology, including transmission power train, electrical systems, brakes, air conditioning and heating, engine performance, suspension, and steering.

“This is a wonderful donation and I want to thank Bennie Ryburn for his generosity to our automotive technology program,” said Bob Ware, vice chancellor for the UAM COT-McGehee, "We will be able to put these vehicles to good use. Automotive technology requires hands-on experience and donations like this are invaluable to our program.”

Ryburn, who serves on the UAM board of visitors, said the cars are "an investment in the future. Skilled, highly trained automotive mechanics are hard to come by and this program provides excellent training," said Ryburn.

Powell On Staff

Little Rock native Mitch Powell was recently appointed to the position of student services coordinator at the UAM College of Technology-Crossett.

Powell will be responsible for directing student services, increasing student retention, assisting with job placement for graduates, new student recruitment, and promoting technical programs within the business and industrial communities in southeast Arkansas.

Powell is a graduate of Little Rock McClellan High School and holds a bachelor's degree from Dallas Baptist University.

The "Real" Weevil

Forestry Professor Lynne Thompson (right) is an entomologist (that's a bug scientist for most of us) who got tired of seeing UAM's mascot depicted inaccurately. So with the help of Donnie Dobose, a welding instructor at the UAM College of Technology-McGehee, Thompson constructed an anatomically correct Boll Weevil out of scrap stainless steel pipe and flat sheets of steel. Thompson presented the sculpture to Chancellor Jack Lassiter (left) and plans to make more weevils with the help of welding students at the McGehee campus.
**Foundation News**

**Majors Scholarship Gets $200,000 Pledge**

Trinity Foundation of Pine Bluff has pledged another $200,000 to the Gerald and Sue Majors Endowed Scholarship. The first of two $100,000 installments was recently made to the UAM Foundation Fund with the second installment to come next year.

The additions to the existing endowment will bring the total to more than $325,000.

Income from the endowment is used to award scholarships to outstanding graduates of Star City High School who attend UAM. “We are thrilled with these additional gifts. We anticipate that UAM will have a freshman, sophomore, junior and senior student receiving this scholarship at any one time,” said Linda Yeiser, vice chancellor for advancement.

Trinity Foundation is supported primarily by Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel Company and McGeorge Contracting Co., Inc. of Pine Bluff, and Granite Mountain Quarries of Little Rock.

Gerald Majors graduated from Arkansas A&M in 1961, and has been employed by these companies for many years. He is currently a board member of the UAM Foundation Fund and The University of Arkansas Foundation, Inc.

**Gilleland Scholarship**

Dr. Diane Suiett Gilleland has made an additional gift of $8,000 to the Wayne Gilleland Golf Scholarship. The endowment was established in 2004 by Dr. Gilleland and friends.

The scholarship recipient must be a full-time student who is a member of the UAM men’s golf team and has a grade point average of 3.0 or better. Income from the Wayne Gilleland Golf Scholarship is used toward the cost of tuition and fees for at least one recipient.

**Two Scholarships Reach Endowed Level**

Scholarships honoring the late K. Michael Baker and Faye and the late Dr. Tony Chandler have reached endowed status, according to Linda Yeiser, vice chancellor for advancement.

In addition, each endowment fund will begin generating scholarships beginning with the 2007 fall semester.

The K. Michael Baker Memorial Scholarship honors the long-time faculty member who taught history at Arkansas A&M/UAM beginning in 1965.

The Anthony T. and Faye Chandler Scholarship honors Professor Tony Chandler and his wife, Faye. Dr. Chandler taught at UAM from 1966 to 2000.

**Forestry Scholarship**

Mr. George H. Clippert of Camden has made a gift of $20,000 to the UAM Foundation Fund to endow a scholarship in memory of her father, Mr. Henry G. Hearnsberger, Sr. Mr. Hearnsberger was a student at the Fourth District Agricultural School in 1914. The Henry G. Hearnsberger, Sr. Forest Resources Scholarship will pay toward the cost of tuition and fees of at least one full-time student enrolled in any of the forest resources degree programs at UAM. Recipients must have a strong academic background, a strong work ethic, good personality traits, and display excellent professional potential. The UAM School of Forest Resources Scholarship Committee will recommend recipients for the scholarship.
Endowed Scholarship Honors Ernestine Coker

Dr. Jesse Coker of Rogers has had two great loves in his life. The first and most important was his late wife, Ernestine.

The second was, and still is, the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

Coker recently made a $15,000 donation to the UAM Foundation Fund to create the Ernestine Coker Endowed Music Scholarship. The gift represents the seventh endowed scholarship fund created by Coker at a school both he and his late wife attended when the institution was known as Arkansas A&M College.

“I’m not sure I can put into words how much Jesse Coker means to this institution and to me personally,” said UAM Chancellor Jack Lassiter. “He has selflessly given of his time and resources to create a lasting legacy. This endowment, and the other six before it, will provide opportunities for deserving students for generations to come.”

The Ernestine Coker Endowed Music Scholarship memorializes the late Margaret Ernestine Wills Coker, a Drew County native with a life-long love of music who died January 18, 2007. The Cokers were married for over 64 years.

Recipients of the Ernestine Coker Endowed Music Scholarship must be full-time music majors with a grade point average of 3.0 or above. The scholarship will be presented based on both merit and need to recipients recommended by the Scholarship Committee of the Division of Music.

Scholarship Honors James And Molly Ross

Mr. and Mrs. James A. Ross, Jr., of Monticello and Mr. and Mrs. Don H. Ross of Fort Smith recently presented a gift of $15,000 to the UAM Foundation Fund to create an endowed scholarship honoring their parents.

The James A. and Mabel “Molly” H. Ross Endowed Scholarship will be presented annually to a pre-law student at UAM who has completed at least 30 academic credit hours with a grade point average of 3.0 or above. The recipient must be an Arkansas resident with preference given to high school graduates from southeast Arkansas.

“On behalf of the UAM Foundation Fund I am pleased to accept this generous gift from the Ross family,” said UAM Chancellor Jack Lassiter. “This scholarship will provide wonderful opportunities for students interested in attending law school and pursuing careers in law. “Income from the scholarship will be used to pay the cost of tuition.

Stevens Scholarship

The Bradley County Medical Center has donated $25,000 to the UAM Foundation Fund to create an endowed scholarship in nursing.

The scholarship will honor the late Harry H. Stevens, long-time administrator of the Bradley County Medical Center. Income from the endowment will fund scholarships for full-time students from Bradley County who have been accepted into the BSN, AASN or LPN nursing programs at any of the UAM campuses in Monticello, Crossett or McGehee.

The scholarship will pay the cost of tuition, fees and books.

“T"his is a most generous gift and I am pleased to accept it on behalf of the UAM Foundation Fund,” said Chancellor Jack Lassiter.

Preference will be given to students who intend to pursue nursing careers in Bradley County.
New Law Permits Charitable Giving Through IRA’s

Congress has recently changed the rules for charitable gifts made from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). The revised law permits donors over age 70 1/2 to rollover amounts from their IRAs to charity without claiming any increased income or paying any additional tax. These tax-free rollover gifts can be up to $100,000. But, this law is only effective through 2007. Interested donors should contact their IRA custodian and request that funds be transferred to the UA Foundation, Inc. for the benefit of the University of Arkansas at Monticello. For additional information about this and other ways to give, contact Linda Yeiser, UAM vice chancellor for advancement, at 870-460-1028 or Yeiser@uamont.edu. And, as always, seek advice from your tax advisor.

Margaret Horsfall Portrait Restored

The portrait of Margaret Horsfall (left), wife of long-time Arkansas A&M President Frank Horsfall, has been restored by Dr. and Mrs. Gordon Gates of Monroe, Louisiana and presented to the University. Gordon Gates is the grandson of Frank and Margaret Horsfall. The portrait hangs in the lobby of the building that bears Mrs. Horsfall’s name, Horsfall Hall, a women’s residence hall.
Foundation Fund Endowments

Weldon B. Abbott Endowed Scholarship / Betty S. Abbott, Dr. and Mrs. Weldon S. Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. H. Lavon Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. Howard P. Taylor, and Ms. Mary Ross Taylor
Alumni Achievement andMerit Scholarship / Recipients of the Alumni Achievement
Award
Alumni Association Scholarship / Alumni Association Board of Directors
Hoyt and Susan Andrews Endowed Scholarship / Hoyt and Susan Andrews
William R. and Katie B. Austin Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. William R. Austin, Jr.
Dr. Claude H. Babin Scholarship / Social of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Former Students, Family and Friends
K. Michael Baker Memorial Scholarship / School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Former Students, Family and Friends
Marvin and Edna Moseley Bankston Scholarship / Bob and Louise Selman Leech
Robert Drum and Fernande’ Vicknair Barrett Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Errol Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. John K. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Barrett, Jr., and Dr. T. Y. Harp, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Charles J. Pasqua, Judge and Mrs. Fred E. Pickett, Mr. and Mrs. John L. Roebeck and Mr. and Mrs. Ermett Tornian
Earl and Kathleen Baxter Memorial Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Earl Baxter
Beauregard Nursing Scholarship / Arthur R. and Bettie Beale Pate
Leslie and Faye Beard Scholarship / Paul and June Webb Carter
Major Thomas E. Bell, Jr. Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Jesse M. Coker and Coker Book Account
Fred K. Bellott Music Gift Fund / Dr. and Mrs. Fred K. Bellott
Fred and Doris Bellott Music Endowed Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Fred K. Bellott
*Henry (Mike) Berg / Mrs. Helen Berg
Dr. Van C. Binn’s Scholarship / Mrs. Evelyn Hogue Bins
Birch-Johnson Endowed Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Chester Johnson
John Falls Bowen Scholarship / Family and Friends and Battery B 206th Coast Artillery (AAA) Association
Ruth G. Boyd Professorship / Dr. Scot Boyd
C. Alton Boyd Jr. Memorial Scholarship / Barbara Boyd
Dr. Scott Boyd Scholarship / UAM Dept. of Health & R. E., Family and Friends
Fay Brann Accounting Scholarship / Mr. Fay Brann
B. R. “Bobby” Brown Scholarship / Mr. B. R. “Bobby” Brown and Consol. Inc.
George R. Brown Professorship / The Brown Foundation
Joe Brown Memorial Scholarship / Family and Friends
Mary Claire Randolph Buffalo Scholarship / Mr. Harvey Buffalo
Jimmy Lee Buford Memorial Scholarship / Agriculture Technology Department Advisory Committee, UAM College of Technology - McGregor
Jeff Busby Memorial Scholarship / Family and Friends
Verna Hobson Cahoon, Elizabeth Coleman Cochran and Cornelie Coleman Wright Scholarship / Tom and Julia Coleman Family
William and Verna Hobson Cahoon Scholarship / Tom and Julia Coleman Family
Alvin and Raye Carter Education Scholarship / Mr. Dale W. Carter and Mr. Robert W. Carter
Paul R. and June Webb Carter Scholarship / Paul R. and June Webb Carter
Chamberlin Wildlife Scholarship / Mr. H. H. Chamberlin
Marjorie Lamb Chamberlin Music Scholarship / Family and Friends
Anthony T. and Faye Chandler Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Anthony T. Chandler, Family and Friends
George H. Clipper Endowed Chair / Mr. and Mrs. George H. Clipper, Mr. David H. Clipper; and Mrs. Nancy Clipper Broach
George H. Clipper Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. George H. Clipper
Coker Alumni Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Jesse M. Coker and Coker Book Account
Ernestine Coker Endowed Music Scholarship / Dr. Jesse M. Coker
Jesse and Ernestine Coker Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Jesse M. Coker
Dr. Jesse M. Coker Distinguished Service Scholarship / UAM Foundation Fund Board of Directors
Thomas and Julia Hobson Coleman Scholarship / Tom and Julia Coleman Family
Suzanne Cooke Memorial Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cooke
Stephen T. Crowley Forestry Scholarship / Mr. James H. Hamlen
Van and Eula Mae Cruse Scholarship / Mr. & Mrs. Dan Hornaday
James Gordon Culpepper Scholarship / School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Former Students and Friends
O. H. (Doogie) and Patsy Darling Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. O. H. Darling
Gregory Alan Devine Memorial Scholarship / Marion and Fern Devine
Division of Agriculture - Agriculture Scholarship - John Rust Foundation
Division of Agriculture - Forest Resources Scholarship / John Rust Foundation
Vance W. Edmondson Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Vance W. Edmondson
Dr. Albert L. Etheridge Scholarship / School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Former Students and Friends
Hampton and Minnie Etheridge Scholarship / James and Mary Sawyer, Stacey and Helen Toole, T. D. and Joy Howell, R. M. and Rose Etheridge, Hampton and Marie Etheridge
Wayne Gilleland Golf Scholarship / Dr. Diane Sullit Gilleland and Friends
Harold J. Green Scholarship / Harold J. Green
Bill Groce, Jr. Memorial Scholarship / Family and Friends
Willie Katherine Coody Groce Scholarship / Estate of Willie Katherine Coody Groce
Joseph Martin Guenter Memorial Scholarship-Sigma Tau Gamma Scholarship / Sigma Tau Gamma Alumni
E. Shermance Gullagee Non-traditional Scholarship / Dr. Dexter E. and Mrs. E. Shermance Gullagee
Izella Ruth Gullagee Scholarship / Dr. Dexter E. and Mrs. E. Shermance Gullagee
Barry Hall Endowed Scholarship / Mrs. Annette Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Cleatous J. Hall and Mrs. Audrey Blasingame
Arthur A. Harris Vocal Endowed Scholarship / Mrs. Annette Hall, Family and Friends
Helen Harris Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Harris, Division of Music, and Friends
Hani and Debra Hashem Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Hani Hashem
Dr. Ann Haywood Scholarship / Dr. Cecil Haywood, Former colleagues, Friends and Students of the School of Education
Dr. Cecil Haywood Scholarship / Dr. Ann Haywood, Friends and Former Students of the School of Education
Henry G. Hearnberger, Sr. Forest Resources Scholarship / Mrs. George H. Clippert
Paul G. and Leone Hendrickson Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Paul G. Hendrickson, Sr.
Frank D. Hickingbotham Scholarship / Frank D. Hickingbotham
William and Anna Hill Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. William T. Hill
Iris Sullivan Hhpp Nursing Scholarship / Sally Hpp Austin, Sheila Nichole Austin, and Hank E. Austin
Robert L. Hixson Memorial Scholarship / Family and Friends
Wilburn C. Hobgood Scholarship / School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Former Students and Friends
Benjamin and Jerri Whitten Hobson Scholarship / Tom and Julia Coleman Family
Johnny Hooks Award / Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Hooks
Charlotte Curoe Hornaday Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hornday
Dan and Charlotte Hornaday Agriculture Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hornday
Dan and Charlotte Hornaday Computer Information Systems Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hornday
Dan and Charlotte Hornaday Endowed Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hornday
Dan and Charlotte Hornaday Music Excellence Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hornday
Dan and Charlotte Hornaday Residency Life Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Dan Hornday
James A. Hudson Scholarship / James A. Hudson Memorial Foundation
Jim Huey Scholarship / Family, Friends and Colleagues
Henry B. Humphrey Memorial Scholarship / Family and Friends
Lamar Hunter Scholarship / The Brown Foundation
Lamar Hunter Veterans and National Guard Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Jesse M. Coker and Coker Book Account
Dean and Mrs. James H. Hutchinson Endowed Scholarship / Mr. and Mrs. Charles Jackson
James H. and Elva B. Hutchinson Scholarship / Estate of Dr. James H. Hutchinson, Jr.
Brigadier General Wesley V. Jacobs Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Jesse M. Coker and Coker Book Account
Veneta E. and Louis Richard James Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. Louis J. James
Lorn Johnson Scholarship / Mississippi Marine Corporation and other individuals as “Lorn’s Boys”
Virginia M. Ryan Jones Memorial Nursing Scholarship / Dr. and Mrs. William R. Jones and Family and Friends
Kingwood Forestry Scholarship / Proceeds from sale of Lake Monticello maps
Grady and Myrtle Burks Knowles Scholarship / Mrs. Myrtle Burks Knowles
Timothy Ku Scholarship / Lawrence A. Ku and Albert Ku
Victoria Ku Scholarship / School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Former Students, Friends and Family
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Campaign for Athletics Launches New Website
UAM’s ambitious new fundraising effort, “The Campaign for Athletics,” has launched a new website. “The Campaign for Athletics” site may be accessed by logging onto the University’s main website at www.uamont.edu and clicking on “Give to UAM” or by going to UAM’s official site for Boll Weevil and Cotton Blossom sports, www.uamsports.com.

For more information about “The Campaign for Athletics,” contact Hugh Heflin, Campaign chairperson, at (870) 460-1028.

Remembering UAM In Wills and Trusts
If you would like to make UAM the beneficiary of your will or trust, contact the Office of Advancement at (870) 460-1028 or go to our website at www.uamont.edu/alumni/wills.htm for detailed information.

What is The Campaign for Athletics?
The Campaign for Athletics is a capital campaign to finance the construction of new facilities and renovate existing ones for the programs in intercollegiate athletics at the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

UAM has a long and proud history in athletics, but we need your help. As a member of the Gulf South Conference, the toughest, most competitive athletic league in NCAA Division II, UAM’s coaches and student-athletes are at a competitive disadvantage.

UAM has fallen behind in the quality of its athletic facilities and has made a commitment to Boll Weevils and Cotton Blossoms, past, present and future, to even the playing field in athletic facilities.

The Campaign for Athletics includes three main components – construction of an indoor practice facility, renovation of the pressbox and west grandstands of Convoy Leslie-Cotton Boll Stadium, and renovation of Steelman Fieldhouse.

The Practice Facility
The Stadium & Pressbox
Box Seats & Chairback Seating
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Robert Carter never expected to see his college class ring again. A 1956 graduate of Arkansas A&M College (now the University of Arkansas at Monticello), Carter lost the ring in either 1963 or 1964 (he’s not sure which year). Carter was the youth pastor of First Baptist Church in Brenham, Tex., and each summer took a group of young people from his church to a youth camp at Highland Lakes Baptist Encampment on Lake Travis west of Austin.

Let Carter tell it from here: “During recreation time in the afternoon, some of us were swimming in the lake,” Carter remembers. “With the hot July weather, the ring was a bit uncomfortable so I moved it to my little finger and forgot it would be loose there. Afterwards, I missed the ring and knew I had lost it in the lake. The water was high, and there was mud on the bottom, so I couldn’t find it.”

Fast-forward 43 (or 44) years. Ray Knowles was walking the shores of Lake Travis on January 5 with his ever-present metal detector. A member of the Austin Metal Detector Club, Knowles was “dirt fishing” some 25 to 30 feet from the shoreline.

Like Carter, Knowles is a minister, the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Oak Hill, Tex., in the Austin suburbs. He had taken a group of young people from his church to the same camp Carter attended in the early ’60s. As Knowles worked his metal detector back and forth along a slope, he noted a small metal object buried six inches beneath the surface in the shape of a ring – or more likely, a pull-tab from a soft drink can. When Knowles dug the object out of the sandy loam, he discovered a dirt-encrusted 1956 class ring from Arkansas A&M College.

Knowles first took the ring to a local jeweler to be cleaned. The finished product looked brand new and revealed the initials “R.C.” on the inside of the ring.

Knowles wasn’t sure where to look first, so he contacted the alumni office at Arkansas Tech and was told Arkansas A&M is now the University of Arkansas at Monticello. He then contacted the UAM alumni office about his find. Linda Yeiser, vice chancellor for advancement and head of alumni affairs, had her staff scour alumni records for 1956 graduates whose names matched the initials “RC”. They found one match – Robert Carter, who now lives in Houston where he too pastors a Southern Baptist church.

Knowles contacted Carter and the two agreed to meet at Knowles’ daughter’s house in northwest Houston on February 23, where Knowles returned Carter’s long-lost class ring. “It was a one-in-a-million chance of recovery,” says Carter, “and I’m still a little dazed.”

“He couldn’t believe it when I called him,” says Knowles. “He was ecstatic. His mother had bought the ring for him and he didn’t have the heart to tell her he had lost it. The greatest joy out of all this wasn’t finding the ring, but finding the owner.”

Somewhere, there’s a lesson in this, says Yeiser. “It’s important to keep your alumni records updated,” she notes. “You never know when someone may be trying to find you.”
Former President Among Risher’s Clients

Randy Risher has provided fitness training and advice for countless clients since founding Randy Risher Fitness, Incorporated in Houston, Tex., in 1994. But it’s not often you get to train a former President of the United States.

Risher met President George H.W. Bush while training some of the former president’s friends, including Hugh Liedtke, the founder of Pennzoil and a former Bush business associate.

When Liedtke died, Risher saw Bush at the funeral. Later, he discovered Bush needed a new trainer, and sent him a note and a complimentary membership to one of his fitness clubs.

Risher and the former president soon struck up a friendship and Risher became Bush’s personal trainer. Risher sees Bush one to two times a week from mid-October to early May before the former President leaves Texas for his summer home in Maine.

“President Bush is an unbelievable person,” says Risher. “He’s been very kind to me and my family and done things to help me that he didn’t have to do. He’s the real deal.”

And apparently in excellent shape for an octogenarian. “I think he’s going to parachute again,” says Risher. “No way would I do that.”

Meeting interesting and famous people is one of the perks of Risher’s rapidly expanding business, which began with Risher going to people’s homes to provide one-on-one physical training. Risher still personally trains a hand full of clients, but with 65 employees, including 40 personal trainers, he spends most of his time managing his enterprise.

A 1989 UAM graduate who also holds a master’s degree in exercise science from Northeast Louisiana University, Risher’s business interests include fitness center management and design, personal training, industrial rehabilitation, and corporate wellness.

Randy Risher Fitness, Inc., promotes total wellness through cardiovascular exercise, strength, flexibility training, and nutritional counseling. Risher’s company has developed sports-specific exercise programs for golf and tennis players. Risher Fitness also caters to child athletes, post-rehabilitation patients, people looking to improve their overall health, and corporate fitness programs.

Risher established Risher Fitness Management, Inc., in 2005. His new company specializes in designing and managing workout facilities ranging from in-home fitness studios to private, public, and corporate fitness centers.

Risher’s management team includes a pair of business partners who also happen to be former UAM athletes – Jamie Lynn, who was a catcher for the baseball team, and Steven Lynn (no relation), a two-time All-AIC third baseman for the Boll Weevils.

At Risher Fitness, business is a UAM family affair.
Dr. Tony Thurman (B.S. ’93, M.S. ’98), principal of Cabot High School, is the new superintendent of Cabot Public Schools. Thurman’s three-year contract begins July 1 when he takes administrative control of the 9,000-student school district. Thurman took over as principal of CHS in 2003. He is a past Cabot middle school principal (2000-2003) and was an elementary school principal for McGehee schools from 1998-2000. From 1993 through 1998 he was a P.E. and health teacher and girls’ basketball coach at Crossett. His wife, Tara Jackson Thurman (B.A. ’94, M.Ed. ’98), is an elementary school teacher in the district and they have two children, Ryane Elizabeth, 7, and Rhett Jackson, 5. Thurman received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from UAM and a doctorate in education from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 2003.

Audrea Nixon (B.A. ’98) has been promoted to public relations specialist for Metropolitan National Bank in Little Rock. In her position with Metropolitan, Nixon focuses on managing corporate communications, media relations and coordinating community events. A native of Monticello, Nixon earned a bachelor of arts degree in speech communication with an emphasis in marketing from UAM. She earned a master of arts in journalism from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Nixon has served as branch manager of several of Metropolitan’s west Little Rock locations. Most recently, she managed the Financial Centre branch. Nixon has five years of banking experience and background working in the media. She is the daughter of James and Glynda Nixon of Monticello.

Kenneth D. Mann (B.S. ’81), controller for Deltic Timber Corporation of El Dorado, was elected vice president, treasurer, and chief financial officer of the corporation effective May 1. Mann, 48, has been with Deltic since 1991 as assistant controller, manager of corporate governance and investor relations and, since 2004, controller. Mann holds a bachelor of science degree in accounting from UAM and an M.B.A. from Louisiana Tech University. He is a member of the UAM Foundation Fund’s board of directors as well as a UAM representative to The UA Foundation, Inc., board. Deltic Timber Corporation is a natural resources company focused on the efficient and environmentally responsible management of its land holdings. The Company owns over 438,000 acres of timberland, operates two sawmills, and is engaged in real estate development in Little Rock and Hot Springs. Headquartered in El Dorado, Deltic is publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol DEL.

Jim McClain (B.S. ’72), currently vice president and general counsel of Tetra Pak USA, has been named legal counsel of commercial operations for Tetra Pak International. In this position, McClain will be responsible for delivery of legal services to the Tetra Pak commercial operations located around the world. McClain joined Tetra Pak in 1992 and has served in various capacities including an assignment at the headquarters in Switzerland in 1996 and 1997 as director of legal and tax matters. Prior to joining Tetra Pak, McClain was a partner in the international accounting and consulting firm, Deloitte & Touche. He has also practiced law with firms in Little Rock and Dallas, Texas. A native of Monticello, McClain received his undergraduate degree from UAM in 1972. He earned a master’s of business administration from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville in 1974 and a law degree from Southern Methodist University in 1977. He later earned a master’s of law in taxation from the New York University School of Law. He is licensed as an attorney and as a certified public accountant. McClain and his wife Pat have two daughters, two sons-in-law and two grandchildren. He is the son of Martha Sue McClain of Monticello.

Dr. Sean Rochelle (B.S.’89) joined the University of Arkansas Women’s Athletics Department as the director of development in February 2007. Rochelle, the former associate director for corporate and foundation relations at the University, takes over the day-to-day activities for the Lady Razorback Foundation, the primary fundraising element for the Women’s Athletics Department. Prior to returning to Arkansas, Rochelle spent the past five years at Azusa Pacific University. Among his work at Azusa Pacific, he was the chair of the department of exercise and sport science. A two-time academic All-America football player at UAM, Rochelle quarterbacked the Boll Weevils to their only 10-win season in school history. Named the co-offensive player of the year of the Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference in 1988, he set a single season record with 98 points scored. Before shifting to an academic and administrative career, Rochelle served as a graduate assistant football coach at Arkansas and Clemson. He also served as an assistant coach at UAM before traveling west to Azusa Pacific. He earned his bachelor’s degree from UAM, then received his masters in 1989 and his Ed.D. in 1999 from Arkansas. Rochelle and his wife, Caroline, have a 10-month-old daughter, Abigail.

Amelia Boney (B.S. ’85), of Dumas was recently inducted into the Arkansas Small Business Hall of Fame at a banquet at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. Boney is a certified public accountant and owner of an H&R Block franchise. Boney recently opened a new office in Dumas thanks in part to her collaboration with the Small Business Development Center at the UAM College of Technology-McGehee and Simmons First Bank of South Arkansas. The Hall of Fame is a mechanism to showcase contributions of Arkansas small businesses. The inductees were selected from nominations received during the fall. The finalists were chosen based on four elements -- staying power, impact in dollars and/or jobs, a strong relationship with the Arkansas Small Business Development Center, and an inspirational story about their business.
Coker, Johnson, Newman Share Lasting Legacy

The University community is saddened by the loss of three individuals who meant much to our history, legacy and tradition – Ernestine Coker of Rogers, Loran Johnson of Warren, and Bob Newman of Monticello.

UAM has never had better friends than Dr. Jesse Coker and his late wife, Ernestine. Together, the couple has endowed seven scholarships with the UAM Foundation Fund, touching lives and providing educational opportunities for future generations of young people. Margaret Ernestine Wills Coker was a Drew County native who died January 18, 2007. She was 84. The Cokers were married for over 64 years.

Loran L. Johnson, 85, of Warren died April 6, 2007. He was a long-time supporter of the education and agriculture programs at UAM. Memorials may be made to the Loran L. Johnson Endowed Scholarship by contacting the UAM Office of Advancement at (870) 460-1028. The Loran L. Johnson Endowed Scholarship, established by Mississippi Marine Corporation and “Loran’s Boys” before Johnson’s death, awards a scholarship each year to an early childhood education major. Mr. Johnson was born January 8, 1922. He served in the U. S. Navy during World War II before receiving a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from the University of Arkansas.

He founded the Bradley County Pink Tomato Festival in 1956 while serving as the manager of the Warren Chamber of Commerce. He was a retired school teacher who sponsored the Future Farmers of America. He was also retired from the Southeast Arkansas Economic Development district and was instrumental in the development of the Bradley County Industrial Development Corporation.

The late Bob Newman was known to generations of Arkansas A&M students for his generosity and kindness. Mr. Newman fed countless hungry students at his restaurant just east of the downtown square and it didn’t really matter if the students could pay.

Mr. Newman, who died February 16, 2007, had a special connection with athletes and is remembered fondly by former Boll Weevils for providing meals for the football and basketball teams.

In a fitting tribute, Mr. Newman was presented the first Spirit of the Boll Weevil Award at last fall’s Sports Hall of Fame banquet.
CLASS NEWS

Dr. Tom T. Walker (BS/ Business Administration ’50) celebrated his 80th birthday on March 1, 2007. He retired from the Texas Education Agency in 2007. Mr. Walker and his wife have successfully shown the Finnish Spitz, a hunting dog from Finland and among many show wins, have won Best of Breed at Westminster ten times. In addition, he works with the Society for Preservation of Poultry Antiquities and the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy in an effort to claim from extinction some of the Heritage poultry that was prevalent on farms many years ago. He also works with turkeys and has developed a new multi-colored breed.

Carolyn Morrison (’73) returned to school and graduated from the University of Louisiana at Monroe in December 2006, Cum Laude, with a Bachelor’s degree in General Studies. She is employed as a Paraprofessional at Bastrop High School.

Robert D. Hughes (BS/Marketing ’79) was appointed Vice President of the Operations’ Video Division of Polycom in January 1998 as part of the Via Video acquisition. Mr. Hughes also received a master’s in business administration with an emphasis in finance from Louisiana Tech University.

Barbara Sue Glover (BS/Health P.E. and Rec. ’81) is a cancer survivor, twice. She is retired and now lives in Tennessee. She recently took up playing the Appalachian Mountain Dulcimer and enjoys playing music with a group in Decatur County, TN.

Patricia McKinstry Groves (AD/Business Admin. & Mgmt. ’83) has accepted numerous awards as CEO and President of Communication Development, Inc. on behalf of the advertising agency she founded. A recent announcement by Arkansas Business Publishing Group named CDI the third largest advertising agency in Arkansas. “This is a wonderful privilege and a dream come true for a girl from a small town in South Arkansas.”

Joel Eady (BS/Business Administration ’85) and his wife and two children live in Lawrenceville, Georgia. He is a Major in the US Army Reserve, and was deployed in May 2005 as part of the LOGCAP Support Unit at Fort Belvoir, Virginia in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Mr. Eady spent one year in Iraq and returned to the states in May 2006. He then went on Extended Active Duty and was deployed for six months to Daegu, South Korea. He was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for performance of duty during each period of service. He has one more year of active army reserve service to perform before being eligible to retire. Mr. Eady plans to return to his career in Risk Management with State Farm Insurance Companies in Duluth, Georgia in May 2007.

Lorene Lisenby Murray (ADN/Nursing ’87) has been married to William “B” for 15 years, and together they have 3 children and 3 grandchildren. Presently Mrs. Murray is working as an RN in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Presbyterian Hospital of Denton, TX where she specializes in neonatal and pediatrics.

Roger Wood (BS/Mathematics ’88) graduated in May 2007 with a Master’s Degree from UALR in Learning Systems Technology Education.

Lionel Maten (BS/Sports & Exercise ’92) has been hired as Director of University Housing at Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI.

Johnny Richardson (BS/Accounting ’92) was recently promoted to Assistant Controller, Financial Reporting for Murphy Oil Corporation.

Teresa Cundiff (BA/Speech ’94) welcomed the birth of her son Declan Wilson Cundiff, May 10, 2006.

Dr. Amy Parnell Reeves (BS/Biology ’97) finished her family medicine residency in Texarkana in June of 2005, and is now in private practice in Hot Springs, and also works part-time in the ER. Dr. Reeves married Mike Reeves on September 30, 2006. They both enjoy traveling when they get the chance.

M. Brooke-Williams Norsworthy (BA/Political Science ’01) was married on February 5, 2007.

Matthew Reaves (BS/Criminal Justice ’01) and wife Brandy welcomed their second child, Ethan Eli in October 2006. He joins big sister Abigail who is two years old.

Louis L. Vandevender III (BS/CIS ’03) is the programmer/analyst at Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company in Jackson, Mississippi.

He and his wife are currently in the process of moving into their new home in Madison.

Kathy Davis (BS/CIS ’04) taught a Computer Engineering class at the Monticello Occupational Education Center from 2004-2005. In January 2005, she joined the staff at the UAM Library as a serials and technical processing assistant. In August 2006, Ms. Davis enrolled at the University of North Texas-Denton School of Library and Information Sciences graduate program to get her MLIS degree with a concentration in information organization. In January 2007, she received a promotion to Assistant Reference Librarian at UAM. She said that all this would not have been possible without the wonderful CIS faculty, namely Mrs. Selby, Mrs. Hendrix and Mrs. Marsh.

FRIENDS WE’LL MISS

Weldon Barner Abbott ’41 of Pine Bluff, February 20, 2007
James Alsobrook ’51 of St. Augustine, FL, May 6, 2007
Brandon Boldon of Rison, April 8, 2007
Tommy Carman of Grady, March 9, 2007
Kermit Willard Carpenter of Monticello, February 24, 2007
Margaret Ann Carroll ’58 of Hot Springs, February 6, 2007
Dalton M. Colman, Sr. ’42 of El Dorado, January 31, 2007
Mark Andrew Couch of Pine Bluff, April 20, 2007
Carol Sue Hankins Douglas ’62 of Pine Bluff, April 20, 2007
Jewell Allmon Dowden of Little Rock, March 20, 2007
Alton Dale Franklin ’68 of Lake Village, March 8, 2007
Dr. Earl Gill of Bentonville, September 22, 2006
Malia Jane Davis Graves ’75 of Benton, May 24, 2007
James Kenneth Griggs, Jr. of Pine Bluff, January 3, 2007
Sherry Hinton of Grapevine, April 9, 2007
Doyne Steven Hubbard ’54 of Fordyce, February 20, 2007
Madeline J. Jackson ’77 of Wilmar, February 1, 2007
Yolanda Lavette Jones of Dermott, January 26, 2007
Earl Ray Kirtley ‘61 of Thompson, MO, May 16, 2007
Mary Margaret Leonard Leeper ’77 of Monticello, April 7, 2007
Drue Edison Lusinger of Houston, July 7, 2006
Daniel “Dan” Wright McKinstry ’47 of Little Rock, March 25, 2007
Muhammad “Moe” Najib ’57 of Ramallah, Palestine, February 15, 2006
Fred Embry Pickett ’51 of Texarkana, TX, February 7, 2007
Joyce Outlaw Riley ’74 of Sumpter, April 20, 2007
James Chester Smith, Jr. ’59 of Hardin community, May 21, 2007
Harriet Brown Ferguson Spragins ’62 of Warren, April 8, 2007
James Studdard ’64 of Fort Worth, TX, May 5, 2007
Lucy Frances Jackson Vaughan of Black Mountain, NC, February 21, 2007
Charlotte Reid Waller ’61 of Columbia, MS, March 26, 2007
William “Bill” Watson ’59 of Corpus Christi, TX, January 21, 2007
Show Your Weevil Spirit!

Hey, UAM graduates and Boll Weevil fans, you can display that Boll Weevil Spirit wherever you go with a UAM Collegiate License Plate, available as an official Arkansas Car Tag. The tag commemorates the 100th anniversary of UAM’s founding in 1909. For $35 above the cost of a standard Arkansas Tag, you can display a UAM Car Tag and help your university. The UAM Foundation Fund will receive $25 for each tag purchased. The UAM Car Tags are available at local revenue offices in southeast Arkansas and the State Revenue Office in Little Rock. For more information, contact the Office of Advancement at (800) 467-8148 or (870) 460-1028, or go online at www.uamont.edu/alumni

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Enclosed is my gift which qualifies for membership in (check one):

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  Unity & Movement Club

☐ $1,000 - $2,499
  Galaxy Club

☐ $500 - $999
  Emerald Club

☐ $200 - $499
  Loyalty Club

☐ $100 - $199
  Century Club

☐ Other
  $ ____________________

☐ Use my gift where needed most

☐ $25 Individual Alumni Membership

☐ $35 Couple Alumni Membership

☐ Restrict my gift to: ________________________________

Name ________________________________ Class Year __________________
Address ________________________________________________
City, State, Zip __________________________________________
(Area Code) Telephone ________________________________
E-Mail Address: ________________________________

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Make Foundation Fund gifts payable to: UAM Foundation Fund
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Take Me Out To The Ballgame . . .

UAM alumni and friends are invited to UAM Family Night With the Travs! Join us for a fun-filled evening at Dickey-Stephens Park.

Arkansas Travelers vs. Wichita • Sunday, August 5

Game starts at 6:00 • Picnic at 5:00 • Tickets $15.00 for Adults / $5.00 for children 12 and under • Price includes game ticket and all you can eat hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and unlimited soft drinks! Advance reservations required! Please call the UAM Office of Advancement at 870-460-1028 or toll free 1-800-467-8148 for more details, or go online at www.uamont.edu/alumni

Alumni Association
P.O. Box 3520
Monticello, AR 71656