By the year 2020, enrollment is projected to reach 25,000.

How Georgia Southern University is preparing for the growth to come.
YOUR GIFT. OUR PROMISE.

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Your gift will make a difference. We Promise.
18 Blueprint for the Future

As Georgia Southern prepares for an expected 25,000 student enrollment within 12 years, campus planners are laying cable, identifying sites for new structures, and refurbishing the old. Meeting the needs of the future scholars is paramount in their thinking.

14 Coming Home
Senior Aaron Eubanks successfully juggles his roles as father, student and starting pitcher for Georgia Southern's baseball team.

26 Still Wild After 10 Great Years
For a decade, the Wildlife Education Center and Lamar Q Ball, Jr. Raptor Center have brought a deeper understanding of our surroundings, a richer appreciation for creatures of the wild, and some good old fashioned fun, too.

28 Wild Game Supper
Friends and alumni gather in Atlanta's Railroad Depot to celebrate Georgia Southern's successes and bright future.

3 Campus News
Nursing doctorate • Meeting the teacher shortage • Braz tours the world • COBA reaccredited • Sales experience • Re-branding a company • CHHS's award-winning Web site • Teachers from England visit • Eagle Executive Society

10 Research News
Georgia Southern's herpetology collection is a heavily used resource

12 Foundation News
Willingway partnership • Gulfstream Aerospace gift • Backhoe donation beautifies campus • New endowments

14 Sports Scene
Walter Payton Award winner • Blue-White Game • Football study nears • Southern Booster parking

30 Chronicles
Ace in the Hole • A passion for pottery • Happy as a Blue Jay • Virtually ready • Royal Treatment – Remembering Jack Averitt
A blueprint is more than a sketch. It is a carefully designed plan that represents the result of an idea.

In this same publication more than five years ago, Georgia Southern University presented a new Campus Master Plan that would position the institution to continue to grow and provide a clear outline for future expansion. The timing could not have been better.

As we quickly approach 17,000 students, the plan that was put in place back then has served us well. However, we are now setting a course for our next stage of growth. The University System of Georgia has set a goal for Georgia Southern University to plan for an enrollment increase to 25,000 students by the year 2020. What does this mean? How do we manage this increase? What does it mean for everyday life on campus? The University has been working hard to answer all of those questions.

Our goal is for Georgia Southern University to not only grow, but to grow in the right way. One of our main challenges is how to expand our infrastructure to meet the needs of 8,000 more students.

As we move forward, we must continue to adjust the “blueprint” of our campus in order to meet the needs of future generations of students. We already see signs of this growth as we expect another record-setting class of freshmen next fall.

If you have not been to campus lately, get ready to be amazed. From the new Zach S. Henderson Library, more than doubling the size of the original facility, to the brand-new residential complexes featuring the most desirable modern conveniences, we have put a great deal of effort into upgrading our facilities to make them some of the best any university in the country has to offer.

As you read this issue, you will see a lot of familiar places, but I hope you are just as excited about all of the new additions to campus. Go Eagles!

Bruce Grube
President
Georgia Southern will begin offering the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree next fall, one of only two such programs in the state.

Approval for the degree came from the Board of Regents at its January meeting.

The DNP, the University’s fifth doctorate program, will be offered online in addition to campus classes through the University’s School of Nursing.

The University’s graduate nursing programs have been ranked no. 11 in the country by U.S. News and World Report for the past three years. The Family Nurse Practitioner program, which provides the foundation for the DNP, is recognized as a model graduate program by the National Organization for Nurse Practitioner Facilities.

The new degree represents another step taken by Georgia Southern to address the statewide nursing shortage.

“This is a major milestone not only for the School of Nursing and Georgia Southern University, but for the profession within the state and region,” said Fred Whitt, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences. “By delivering the program online, students will have access to one of the nation’s top nursing programs at any location with an Internet connection.”

The DNP will prepare graduates to provide the most advanced level of nursing care for individuals and communities, including direct care of individual patients, management of care for individuals and populations, administration of nursing systems, and the development and implementation of health policy. With additional coursework in education, the DNP will also prepare graduates to serve as nurse educators in schools of nursing.

Interest in Georgia Southern’s DNP program is already high, with more than 70 prospective students on a waiting list for admission. Prospective students include nurses who currently hold a master’s degree and work as nurse executives, nurse educators, nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists and nurse practitioners.

“With the approval of this program, Georgia Southern takes a leadership role in moving graduate nursing education to a new standard,” said Jean Bartels, director of the University’s School of Nursing. “Georgia faces an unprecedented and critical shortage of doctoral-prepared nurses, and the approval of this new degree program could not have come at a better time.”

In addition to a general statewide and regional shortage of nurses, universities are facing shortages in nursing faculty and advanced nurse practitioners. The shortage has a negative impact on nursing education and on the healthcare industry in general.

Since being classified a doctoral research university by the Carnegie Foundation for Teaching in 2006, the University has added doctoral degrees in psychology (PsyD) and public health (DrPH), and now in nursing practice (DNP). Two doctor of education degrees (EdD) were first offered in 1995.
University program meeting teacher shortage

A recent University System of Georgia report demonstrates that Georgia Southern is doing its part to achieve the goals set under a plan to double the number and diversity of teachers it prepares by 2010.

“Georgia Southern is meeting its ‘double-double’ goal (double the number, double the diversity) through both traditional and non-traditional delivery of programs,” said Cindi Chance, dean of the College of Education. “Through classes offered on-campus, classes offered at off-campus sites such as Augusta, Savannah, and Brunswick, through online classes, our faculty has stepped up to meet the teacher preparation needs of Georgia’s schools.”

According to the Regents’ report, the number of new teachers prepared across the System has increased 21.1 percent since 2004. At Georgia Southern, the number of new teachers prepared rose from 237 in 2004-05 to 306 in 2005-06, an increase of 29 percent.

The Regents’ report indicates that the number of new minority teachers prepared by the System since 2004 rose by 13.3 percent. At Georgia Southern, the number of new minority teachers rose from 30 in 2004-05 to 50 in 2005-2006, an increase of 66.6 percent.

“One important highlight of the Regents’ report is that 95.3 percent of all teachers prepared by the USG system remained in the public education workforce for at least one year,” said Chance. “Keeping both new teachers and experienced teachers in the classroom has become an important part of our role as a college of education.”

The College of Education reduces teacher attrition through a variety of partnerships and school improvement initiatives. In addition to partner schools, where clinical associates oversee field placement of pre-service teachers in nearly 60 schools, the College is home to the Georgia Center for Educational Renewal. The Center addresses challenges encountered by leaders and teachers across the U.S. and world.

COBA earns reaccreditation among top international business colleges

The College of Business Administration (COBA) has received a glowing report from its accrediting agency, the American Association of Colleges of Schools of Business International (AACSB), granting renewed accreditation for undergraduate and graduate programs in the College for a period of six years.

“The AACSB has identified about 10,000 schools and colleges of business all around the world, and there are only about 550 of those schools that are AACSB-accredited,” said COBA Dean Ron Shiffler.

“We’re looking at being in that top five percent that has this stamp of approval. “We are given a set of minimum standards and are expected to adhere to those standards,” said Shiffler. “We feel the major difference in what we deliver versus what some other schools deliver is the quality of the faculty that is put in front of the students.”

Shiffler expressed his appreciation for preceding deans and faculty on whose work today’s college is built. “It speaks to the rich history and tradition of those who came before me,” he said.

In a separate affirmation, the agency accredited the School of Accountancy.

“Only about 160 of the 550 schools around the world have separate accounting accreditations,” Shiffler said. “Because accounting is such an important function of any business, there are very rigid standards. This says that our accounting program is in even rarer company.”

AACSB found that the School’s programs “are on the cutting edge of developments in the field” and “improves students’ ability to think critically about accounting-related issues and their ability to apply accounting concepts to real-world problems.”

The number of new minority teachers trained by the University rose by 66 percent in 2005-06.
World tour
Braz starts sabbatical by teaching in Britain, then completes spring semester in Asia

After two decades of service in Georgia Southern’s Department of Music, Michael Braz decided to try a change of scenery. Braz spent the fall semester teaching music at one of Georgia Southern’s partner schools, St. Benedict’s Catholic School and Performing Arts College in Derby, England.

“I met students from St. Benedict’s when they came to the U.S. last summer, and I was very impressed, so it was an easy decision to choose the school for the first part of my sabbatical year,” said Braz.

Braz spent three months at St. Benedict’s, a school that emphasizes the performing arts across the curriculum, but especially in the sixth form, which is similar to America’s high school. In addition to work in the classroom and occasional recital and concert performances, Braz worked with Marion Chester, musical director for St. Benedict’s, to produce the school’s annual show, “Dracula Spectacula,” a musical take-off on the vampire legend.

“The show had music written just for piano, but we wanted to use an orchestra,” said Braz. “So I wrote the orchestral parts and played piano for the show, which involved 150 students.”

While he was there, two students from Georgia Southern visited St. Benedict’s as part of the College of Education’s International Studies opportunity. Braz served as the Georgia Southern supervisor and mentor for student teachers Megan McMahon and Katie Jones. Through its College of Education, Georgia Southern is part of the International Learning Community and has developed a partnership with St. Benedict’s School.

“The people at St. Benedict’s made sure my time was filled,” said Braz. He visited Scotland, London and many sites near Derby. He even took part in an evening of music at a local pub, joining a local group named “Please Yourself” for a half-dozen tunes.

“The people at St. Benedict’s in Derby couldn’t have been nicer to me,” said Braz, who is continuing his year-long sabbatical teaching piano to young people in Nepal.

Music professor Michael Braz welcomed 2008 in Nepal, where he worked with music students of all ages in the capital city of Kathmandu.

Braz taught young Nepalese scholars at Nepal Sangeet Vidhyalaya (Nepal Music Center), a community school serving 250 students.

“Two years ago, the school existed only on paper,” said Braz, “and in the mind of its founder, who runs Nepal’s largest nongovernmental recording studio. While I thought I was coming over here primarily to teach piano, my entire job description changed the moment I landed.”

– Michael Braz

“Now, I am running courses for the teaching staff, which includes some of the country’s finest performing artists, as well as assisting them with their individual interests and projects,” Braz said.

Braz is helping to develop Nepal’s first primary music curriculum, and has done two studio sessions laying down background musical tracks for several tunes on a Nepali rock album and what he termed “a Kenny-G-type saxophone album focusing on new interpretations of folk tunes.”

He returned to Statesboro in February before departing for the China leg of his ongoing global sabbatical.

Speaking the universal language...
Sales experience teaches and boosts athletics

Given the increasing costs of operating professional sports franchises and university athletic departments, learning how to sell effectively has become a vital part of a sport management education. Recognizing his students’ need for “real world” sales experience, Tony Lachowetz, associate professor of sport management in the College of Health and Human Sciences, found a way to help his students while boosting the University’s basketball and baseball teams.

“In 2001, I began teaching a class that sells, in collaboration with the Georgia Southern athletics department, tickets for both the basketball and baseball seasons,” said Lachowetz. “In 2007, our sales campaign reached total sales of $22,901, and our grand total of sales since 2001 has been $126,739.”

The fall semester class sells full season tickets, 10-game and 20-game flex plans for baseball, memberships to the baseball boosters’ organization, Eagle Dugout Club, and Luxury Suite rentals. The most popular products are BallPark Bound and Courtside Bound, season ticket packages for individuals and businesses which are then distributed to underprivileged children.

Before they start their campaign, Lachowetz makes sure the class is steeped in sales tactics and marketing strategies. One assignment calls for students to collectively generate a list of the attributes and benefits of their products, helping them to develop a sales pitch. Once students establish the pitch, they participate in mock telemarketing under the critical eyes of other students and faculty. The class also got a visit from Keith Bradshaw, manager of inside sales for the Atlanta Hawks, who shared some of the tactics used by his staff.

Lachowetz has gotten positive feedback from colleagues around the nation. "I have found talented and motivated sales and service people through the sport management program at Georgia Southern," said Bradshaw. “The front office of any sports organization typically has an eye out for nothing but the best.” “The most recent hires out of the program have verified that Georgia Southern prepares their students extremely well. Word has spread and it is quickly becoming a ‘first look’ throughout the industry.”

CHHS Web site drawing national honors

College of Health and Human Sciences Dean Fred Whitt has been getting a few more e-mails and phone calls ever since his college’s new Web site went online. Whitt, Assistant Dean Alan Woodrum, and health and kinesiology professor Dan Czech began developing ideas for the new interactive site more than a year and a half ago.

They wanted a visual, student-centered site that would resonate with “echo boomers,” the genetic offspring and demographic echo of their parents, the baby boomers.

The site is so effective at reaching prospective students, faculty, staff, and current students, it earned the Outstanding Achievement Award in the National Interactive Media Awards competition.

The site is loaded with elaborate graphics content and contains some interactive features to entertain and inform users.

“One of the real highlights of the site, and one that seems to catch everyone’s attention, is the CHHS Challenge Game,” said Whitt. “It’s a great way to get prospective students to check out the site. It provides important facts about our College, and it engages them while we tell the CHHS story.”

Learn more about the site at www.georgiasouthernhealthscience.com.
Marketing students at Georgia Southern have re-branded an established Georgia company, changing its name, look and Web site to reflect the company’s growing list of clients and offerings.

At the start of 2008, the former South Georgia Computer Solutions (SGCS) became known as Georgia Technologies Inc.

“When SGCS contacted the Center for Retail Studies, they explained that they were no longer serving only South Georgia, but had developed a national client database, including NASA,” said Kathleen Gruben, associate professor of marketing and director of the Center for Retail Studies in the College of Business Administration. “They were looking for help in developing a new face for the company. I asked three hard-working and capable students to take this project and run with it, and the result has been phenomenal.”

Three students who took the lead: Ashley Ferguson and Amy Kirkland of Savannah and Kandayce Lee of Augusta.

“We began by planning what we needed to do – market research, what research methods we’d use, and meetings with clients,” said Lee.

“Dr. Gruben allowed us to assign part of our project to her advertising class,” she explained. “They helped us out by brainstorming brands, slogans and logos, to help us out with a new look. With their help, we took the company to a more modern look in its Web and advertising presences.”

“The marketing students surveyed our clients, gave us fresh ideas and really opened our eyes to the need for a new look,” said Joseph Eason, Georgia Technologies’ vice president of customer relations. “They gave us lots of concepts to work on, and we think the changes they created will be beneficial. When we saw their presentation, we knew they had done a great job.”

The Eagle Executive Society serves as a means to build communication between COBA and its larger community of alumni. Annual memberships are being extended to alumni and friends who invest $50 in the students and faculty, the programs, and the future success of COBA. Members receive a non-negotiable stock certificate verifying that they have “taken stock” in COBA, a subscription to COBA’s newsletter, The Eagle Executive, and personal invitations to special receptions and seminars sponsored by COBA.

“COBA is preparing the next generation’s business leaders by providing today’s students with the best faculty, technology, facilities, and learning opportunities available,” said Dean Ronald Shiffler, “but we’ve reached a point where increased alumni support is essential to keep us moving toward our goal of national recognition. The Eagle Executive Society is designed to encourage annual giving to COBA that will close the gap between tuition and the total cost to educate a student.”

For more information about the Society, visit http://coba.georgiasouthern.edu or e-mail to jlane@georgiasouthern.edu.
Visiting international teachers hone skills

A select group of English teachers from nine nations are honing their skills on campus this semester through a U.S. Department of State program.

The College of Education is hosting the 18 teachers on an International Leadership in Education Program (ILEP) grant. The visitors are from Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco and Tunisia.

“During their time in Statesboro, the ILEP Fellows participate weekly in school-based internships, and attend classes at Georgia Southern,” said Cordelia Zinskie, head of the Department of Curriculum, Foundations and Reading. Zinskie and colleagues Jennie Rakestraw, associate dean of the College of Education, and Judi Repman, professor in the Department of Leadership, Technology, and Human Development, serve as co-coordinators of the ILEP.

Initiated in 2005, the ILEP brings outstanding secondary teachers from the Near East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia to the United States to further develop expertise in their subject areas, enhance their teaching skills, and increase their knowledge about the United States.

ILEP is a program of the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

“Last year was our first funded ILEP grant, and we are delighted that this year’s grant was also funded,” said Cindi Chance, dean of the College of Education. “Georgia Southern has strong international ties, and each group of ILEP Fellows we host strengthens those connections.”

Dean Cindi Chance

University welcomes six student-teachers from England

Six students from Sheffield-Hallam University in Sheffield, England, have come to Georgia Southern for an extended field experience in Bulloch and Effingham County this spring.

Georgia Southern's College of Education welcomed them with an orientation session, a campus tour and lunch at Statesboro's Beaver House Restaurant.

Following a welcome from Dean Cindi Chance, the orientation included COE faculty presentations about public education in Georgia; learners with special needs; media centers and instructional technology; and early childhood teacher preparation.

The British students received their school assignments from Patricia Parsons, who directs undergraduate teacher field placements.

Sheffield-Hallam students Lisa Poole and Danielle Hilton are assigned to fifth grade at Bulloch County's Brooklet Elementary School. Kirsty Blazquez and Gabrielle Stanley are assigned to Effingham County's Springfield Elementary; Siobhan Wilkinson and Amie Dickinson are assigned to first grade at Sallie Zetterower Elementary in Statesboro.

The first thing the visitors noticed after only a day is the difference in prices. Items in the U.S. are much less expensive than in England.

Buildings seem larger, they said, and everything is newer. But, after listening to a discussion on Georgia Professional Standards for teachers, they saw many similarities to the standards that are also required of teachers in the U.K.

Georgia Southern also welcomed elementary education faculty member Tricia Young from Sheffield-Hallam this spring semester. She is observing the visiting student teachers in their schools and reviewing the students’ teaching portfolios.
Students visit New York for winter break

About 180 Georgia Southern students kicked off their 2007 winter break by seeing the sights and sounds of New York City.

The trip was sponsored by Southern Travel, one of Student Activities’ Eagle Entertainment teams.

The group left on a chartered bus, arriving in New York City Dec. 9. They stayed close to Manhattan, heading in by bus each morning to take in sights such as the Statue of Liberty, Times Square, museums and local eateries.

While some members of the group chose to attend a New York Knicks game, others chose Broadway shows such as “Stomp!” and “The Color Purple.”

On Dec. 11, some early-rising members of the group hopped on the bus at 5:30 a.m. to be part of NBC’s “Today” show.

“We saw the day’s show being set up and got to meet Al Roker and Matt Lauer,” said Activities Coordinator Sriravong Sriratanakoul, one of the staff members who traveled with the students. “We also met singer-songwriter John Ondrasik, better known as Five for Fighting, who collected Toys for Tots gifts on the show that morning.

“It was cold, but it didn’t really snow until our last day, Dec. 13,” said Sriratanakoul. “We got out just in time – right before the nor’easter came through.”

The group arrived home on Dec. 14, with most of them happy to be back where it was a little warmer.

Students hear oral arguments at U.S. Supreme Court

Georgia Southern students from a College of Business Administration tax research class recently attended oral arguments for a tax case at the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

Accounting professors Cheryl Metrejean and Jill Lockwood accompanied the group and provided instruction.

Students who participated, all of whom were accounting majors, included Marquia Barnes of Sandersville, Ga., Diane Roberts of Statesboro, and Warren (Trae) Marchant of Tifton, Ga.

The group heard arguments in Knight v. Commissioner, a case that involved how trusts should deduct investment advice fees. The taxpayer argued these expenses should be fully deductible, while the Internal Revenue Service argued they are only partially deductible. A decision is expected sometime in the spring 2008.

In addition to exploring the Supreme Court Building, a member of Georgia Sen. Johnny Isakson’s staff gave the group a guided tour of the Capitol. They also visited the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the World War II Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery.

Metrejean expressed gratitude for the generous support of the trip’s sponsors, who are members of the School of Accountancy Advisory Council.
Snakes, and lizards, and frogs, oh my:  
Georgia Southern’s herpetology collection contains thousands of specimens

By Mark Holland

Lance McBrayer’s job description requires him to spend part of his day surrounded by thousands of dead snakes, lizards and frogs.

Such a working environment may seem like a nightmare for most people, but for a biologist who has devoted his career to studying these kinds of animals, it’s a dream job.

McBrayer is the curator of the scientifically renowned herpetology collection at Georgia Southern.

Herpetology is the branch of zoology that deals with amphibians and reptiles, and the collection managed by McBrayer includes approximately 38,000 specimens that were gathered over the course of four decades.

Some 160 different species are part of the collection, which is the second-largest such menagerie in all of Georgia. A few of the specimens came from other parts of the country, but the overwhelming majority of them are native to this state.

In fact, approximately 95 percent of the herpetological species that live in Georgia are represented in the collection.

“The collection gives us a record of what herpetological diversity was like in this region over the last 40 years,” said McBrayer, an assistant professor in the Department of Biology at Georgia Southern. “We can look at how species’ distributions have changed over that time, and how development has affected the distribution of different species.”

Georgia is one of the best places in the entire U.S. for herpetological research. According to McBrayer, when it comes to number of species, only a few states like Florida and Texas rival Georgia in the total number of amphibian and reptile species.

“Georgia is located in kind of a transition zone, so we have ‘herps’ from several different regions,” McBrayer said. “We have Appalachian fauna in the mountains of North Georgia, which means a lot of salamanders and snakes and frogs. In addition, Georgia is the eastern-most point in the distribution of many central and western species, like the alligator snapping turtle and the bird-voiced treefrog, as well as the southern-most point for many northern species, such as hellbenders and the Ocoee dusky salamander.

“When you move into the Coastal Plain, you have animals like the gopher tortoise and indigo snakes. And as you move from South Georgia into Florida, you find species that are typical of sub-tropical climates, such as the mole skink and the island glass lizard.”

The state’s remarkable diversity was recognized by Gerald Williamson and Robert Moulis, the two southeast Georgia men whose labor of love resulted in the herpetology collection that now resides at Georgia Southern.

Williamson and Moulis started the collection around 1960. For the next four decades, they spent untold hours walking through countless acres of forests, fields and yards, searching for salamanders and turtles as well as snakes, lizards and frogs. They focused most of their time and effort on the area that ranges from the Low Country of South Carolina, to the Fort Stewart military reservation, to the Okefenokee Swamp on the Georgia-Florida border.

The Williamson and Moulis collection eventually became a part of the Savannah Science Museum. Numbering approximately 36,000 specimens, the collection was transferred to Georgia Southern when the museum closed its doors in 1999. Since then, Williamson has donated about 2,000 additional specimens from the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Museum and Nature Center to the University.

“The real benefit to Georgia Southern is that, for the most part, this is a Coastal Plain collection,” McBrayer said. “Since we’re located in the Coastal Plain, I think it’s appropriate that the collection is here, too. We are very fortunate to have it.”

The herpetology collection is housed in a room on the second floor of the Herty Building. Depending on their size, the specimens are kept in containers that range from a four-ounce jar to a 30-gallon vat. Most of the containers are filled with a 70 percent ethyl alcohol solution that preserves the specimens.

“Specimens used to be kept indefinitely in formalin or formaldehyde,” McBrayer said. “But scientists learned that if you leave a specimen in formalin, the minerals will leach out of the bones and the skeleton will soften over time.

“With ethyl alcohol, which is essentially rubbing alcohol, the specimens tend to lose a little bit of the color they had in life, but the benefit is that it’s more stable, it lasts a longer period of time, and it doesn’t destroy the bones.”

Of course, all of the specimens won’t be spending the rest of eternity in a jar. The primary purpose of such collections is to let people examine or, in certain circumstances, dissect the specimens.

“Scientists and students make use of our specimens on a regular basis,” McBrayer said.
Biologist Lance McBrayer curates more than 38,000 specimens residing in the Georgia Southern herpetology collection.

saying, "Occasionally, we allow someone to dissect a specimen, or extract DNA so that it can be compared to other species.

"For the most part, though, the people who use the specimens are taking measurements of the head and limbs, or studying the shape of the animal, or conducting scale counts for systematic analysis.”

Within their containers, the specimens are stored on specially designed, electronically controlled mobile shelves that can slide apart to provide easy access to the specimens.

Arranged according to family, and then genus and species, most of the specimens have a unique identification number, but some are grouped together in a "lot" with a single number. For about 90 percent of the specimens, the ID number can be used to reference pertinent information, such as the date, time and location of the specimen’s capture.

"Williamson and Moulis were very thorough," McBrayer said.

In addition to fully formed specimens of different species, the herpetology collection contains a variety of odds and ends: snake skins, turtle shells, frog eggs and salamander larvae. The collection also includes a number of photographs of amphibians and reptiles that were taken by people who encountered the animals in the wild.

Since taking charge of the collection in 2005, McBrayer has spent most of his time organizing and conducting an inventory of its contents. All of the information about each specimen was originally written on paper, which makes data storage and access cumbersome.

"If you wanted to know what kinds of specimens we have from here in Bulloch County, for example, you might have to search through thousands of pieces of paper," McBrayer said.

To bring the herpetology collection into the 21st century, McBrayer and his student assistants are transferring all of the data onto computer files. At some point, they hope to have individual photos of each specimen, too.

The collection will eventually be online and available to people all over the world.

“This is a great representation of Georgia’s tremendous herpetological diversity,” McBrayer said. “Because it is such a valuable resource, our ultimate goal is to make sure that it is accessible to any scientists and students who are interested in it, no matter where they are. We hope to achieve this – or at least get close – in the next one to three years.”
Partnership founds campus Addiction Recovery Center

Georgia Southern and the Willingway Foundation are teaming up to better the future of current and potential college students who are battling the diseases of alcoholism and drug addiction.

The Foundation, the non-profit affiliate of Statesboro’s Willingway Hospital, has donated an initial gift of $25,000 per year for three years as start-up funding to develop The Center for Addiction Recovery on the Georgia Southern campus. The new center, housed within The Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH), will primarily serve as the hub for a collegiate recovery community and will provide students recovering from alcohol, drug and related addictions the opportunity to take advantage of the full collegiate experience while minimizing the risk of relapse. The Center will also work to develop student and faculty research and educational resources as well as community-wide outreach partnerships.

“Many of the patients treated at Willingway Hospital choose to remain in Statesboro, and many of those people end up pursuing higher education,” said Robert W. Mooney, MD, medical director of the hospital and a board member of the Willingway Foundation. “With this gift, the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health can take steps to develop a cutting-edge program that will support those in addiction recovery in the Georgia Southern community.”

Gift of new backhoe boosts campus progress

Tim Evans, founder and president of Evans General Contractors with offices in Roswell and Savannah, has provided a new 2007 backhoe from Atlanta JCB to the University’s Physical Plant division.

Evans, a long-time supporter of the University Foundation who has established multiple scholarships, purchased the backhoe and made it a gift to the University.

“When I did not attend Georgia Southern University, I have recognized both the need and importance that this college plays in the State of Georgia as well as the entire country,” said Evans. “There has been a long-standing need for another academically strong alternative for the kids of this state and region, and it has now been filled by GSU.

“The school and faculty have done their part to raise the academic level of GSU, and now it is time for both individuals and corporations to join hands and support this effort financially,” he said. “I truly see my involvement as a privilege, and appreciate Michelle Pittman and Billy Griffis of the University Foundation providing this opportunity for our company to participate.”

“The JCB backhoe is a wonderful addition to the equipment of our division,” said Ron Dennis, director of physical plant. “Our entire division will benefit for many years to come from this tremendous gift which was so badly needed. Their generosity has made an immediate impact on our ability to maintain the beauty of the Georgia Southern campus.”

The backhoe has already been used to install irrigation line, to clean up at the RAC, install water valves, construct a retaining wall, excavate for concrete footers, install erosion control, plant large hollies at Sweetheart Circle, shape a slope at Kennedy Hall, and dredge Beautiful Eagle Creek, Dennis said.

Evans General Contractors provides contracting and design and build services to corporate and institutional clients and developers. Their lengthy list of clients has included Gulfstream Aerospace, IDI, Northpoint Real Estate and Cummins.

Atlanta JCB is a Kennesaw, Ga., -based dealer handling sales and rentals of JCB construction equipment, including rough terrain forklifts, backhoes, telescopic handlers, mini and standard excavators, and loaders.
Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation has made an in-kind donation to the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Technology.

Gulfstream presented the department with VME rack-mounted instrumentation equipment that is designed to measure and monitor a multitude of physical quantities which relate to the operation of electronic and industrial equipment.

Comprised of more than 250 data interface modules, the equipment will be used for instruction and research by faculty and students in the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Technology, which is part of the Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology (COST).

“The faculty in the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Technology are reaching out to regional industry to establish research partnerships. The equipment donated by Gulfstream is an excellent example of such a partnership,” said Bret Danilowicz, the dean of COST.

“With this donation, several projects involving our students and faculty can be initiated to address research needs at Gulfstream, which also increases the ability of our graduates to thrive in the highly skilled engineering workforce of our region.”

The equipment donated to Georgia Southern has been used by Gulfstream on test aircraft, simultaneously monitoring thousands of points of in-flight data in real time. The University’s Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering will use the equipment to measure and monitor industrial equipment.

“Besides being capable of 500,000 samples per second, the VME rack-mounted instrumentation equipment meets military standard environmental criteria,” said Mohammad S. Davoud, the chair of the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. “It is also mechanically rugged and electrically noise-hardened.”

Gulfstream designs, develops, manufactures, markets, services and supports the world’s most technologically advanced business-jet aircraft. A wholly owned subsidiary of General Dynamics, Gulfstream has produced some 1,600 aircraft for customers around the world since 1958.

COST is named in honor of the late Allen E. Paulson, the former president and CEO of Gulfstream as well as a longtime supporter of Georgia Southern.

Davoud and professor Frank Goforth, observed the equipment during an August 2007 visit to Gulfstream’s facility in Savannah.

“Upon evaluation of the equipment, we decided that it could be used for both instruction and research at Georgia Southern,” Davoud said.

Following the installation of additional interface components, the equipment will be operational in its new home on the University campus in Fall 2008. The equipment is expected to be used by faculty and students in a variety of engineering courses, including Control Systems, Mechatronics, Programmable Logic Controllers, Industrial Electronics, and Rotating Machinery.

“Writing the words took minutes. It gives me pleasure knowing that today’s preparation will help the future students of Southern’s tomorrow.”

With a few simple steps, and careful planning, I added the Georgia Southern University Foundation, Inc. as part of my estate planning. It gives me great joy knowing that a portion of my estate will provide educational opportunities for Georgia Southern students of the future. For more information on the different ways to leave a legacy, call 1-888-GSU-1906.

“ON THE WEB: Find out more about your giving options at http://welcome.georgiasouthern.edu/foundation/givingoptions/plannedgifts.shtml

“MET Department Chair Mohammad Davoud, left, and professor Frank Goforth examine instrumentation equipment.”
Aaron Eubanks doesn’t get nearly as much sleep as he used to.
That’s what happens when a full-time college student and varsity athlete accepts the additional responsibilities of being a husband and father.
But you won’t hear Eubanks complaining during his senior season with Georgia Southern’s baseball team.
In fact, the righthanded pitcher from Moultrie, Ga., seems to relish every aspect of his hectic life.
“I don’t have a lot of time to go and hang out with the boys and do the kind of stuff that typical college students do,” Eubanks said. “But that’s never been a big priority of mine, anyway.
“I’ve got everything I need at home.”
Eubanks and his wife, Katheryn, who is also a student at the University, will celebrate their third wedding anniversary this summer. Their son, Gabriel, is 18 months old.
Despite the demands of his young family, Eubanks is thriving as both a student and an athlete. A secondary education major, he made the Southern Conference all-academic team in spring 2007, and the University Dean’s List in fall 2007.
Meanwhile, after a promising junior season, Eubanks is expected to anchor the Eagle pitching staff this spring.
“Aaron really came into his own in the middle of last season,” Eagles head coach Rodney Hennon said. “He gained a lot of confidence in himself, and his teammates gained a lot of confidence in him.
“We think he’ll be one of our leaders this season.”
The son of a pastor who graduated from Georgia Southern, Eubanks signed with Clemson University after leading Colquitt County High School to the Class AAAAA state championship in 2003.
Accompanied by his high school sweetheart and future wife, Eubanks spent two
years at Clemson. He excelled in the classroom, making the academic honor roll three times, but neither he nor his fiancee were content.

“Katheryn and I were paying out-of-state tuition and feeling a little homesick, so we started thinking about Georgia Southern,” Eubanks said. “A lot of my relatives had graduated from there, and it had been one of my top choices coming out of high school.

“So I said, ‘Why don’t we get married and move to Statesboro?’ Our wedding was Aug. 13, 2005, and I enrolled on Aug. 15.”

With three seasons of eligibility remaining, Eubanks earned a spot on the Eagles’ roster as a preferred walk-on. In the spring of 2006, he started one game and made 15 appearances out of the bullpen.

A few months later, in the fall of 2006, Gabriel Eubanks made his first appearance anywhere.

“We had been thinking, ‘we’ll wait until we get out of college to start a family,’” Eubanks recalled, “but the Lord said, ‘how about we do it my way?’

“I’ve lost some sleep, but our son has been a true blessing to my wife and me. We wouldn’t change a thing.”

The new father pitched in 17 games last season, including 11 starts. He posted a modest 3-5 record, but his earned run average of 4.32 represented the best ERA of any starting pitcher on the team.

“I’m a parent myself, so I know the challenges you’re faced with when you have a young child, but Aaron never used it as a crutch or an excuse,” Hennon said. “He’s always where he’s supposed to be, when he’s supposed to be there, and you know he’s going to give you everything he has.

“As a coach, that kind of dependability gives you a great feeling.”

Eubanks is quick to give Katheryn, an early childhood education major, a lot of the credit for his success in the classroom and on the field.

“I’ve learned so much from her,” he said. “She really knows how to take care of kids.

I just know how to love them.”

His wife and child are a big part of what motivates Eubanks to succeed academically.

“There’s something inside you that gives you a drive to do well,” he said. “With me, it’s being a husband and father. My focus actually got better after I got married.”

Eubanks is set to graduate this spring. He wants to remain in Georgia as a history teacher and high school baseball coach.

“Some of my greatest role models were teachers,” he said. “They were bold individuals who stood for something. They didn’t ride the fence.

“I’ve always had a heart to help kids. Sometimes it feels like our society is crashing down around us, but by being a teacher and coach, I hope I can make things a little better.”

“Aaron really came into his own in the middle of last season,” “He gained a lot of confidence in himself, and his teammates gained a lot of confidence in him. “We think he’ll be one of our leaders this season.”

– Head Coach Rodney Hennon
Independent study to define football options

It is a debate that has consumed a significant portion of the Eagle Nation:
Should Georgia Southern remain in the NCAA Football Championship Subdivision (FCS, formerly known as Division I-AA), where the Eagles have won more national championships than any program in the country? Or does the University possess the resources to make the move up to the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS, formerly known as Division I-A)?

Georgia Southern administrators and supporters expect the answers to these questions to be provided by a feasibility study that will be conducted during the course of the next several months.

“Over the past several years, we’ve done some internal calculations,” Georgia Southern Athletic Director Sam Baker said. “But when you’re looking at a decision of this magnitude, it’s good to have as much data as you can get.”

The feasibility study coincides with an NCAA moratorium that prohibits any current Division I institutions from moving from the FCS to the FBS. Created in August 2007 and set to run through August 2011, the moratorium also prohibits any institutions from moving up to Division I.

“From the NCAA’s perspective, the moratorium is really more of a basketball issue than a football issue,” Baker said. “The equity conferences have become concerned about some of the institutions that have moved to Division I are playing with a limited financial commitment.

“The moratorium gives the NCAA and its members time to re-assess what should be expected from institutions that want to compete in Division I. Of course, the moratorium has a spin-off effect of all sports, with football being the one that we’re interested in.”

As Georgia Southern magazine went to press, the University had filed a call with the State of Georgia purchasing officials for bids from interested companies to conduct the study. Baker indicated that a successful bidder should be identified in a matter of weeks.

Once the company is hired, Baker expects the study to begin this spring and take anywhere from three to six months to complete.

According to Baker, the study will feature a comprehensive and detailed assessment of the University’s state of readiness for FBS football.

The study will also serve as a fact-finding mission that determines the overall costs and programmatic implications of such a move, including:

• Title IX requirements
• Financial projections of revenue and expense
• Conference affiliation
• NCAA legislation
• Scheduling

Georgia Southern’s loyal fan base will have a voice in the process, thanks to a market assessment that will accompany the feasibility study.

The University will analyze the potential level of financial support for FBS football in crucial population markets that include season ticket holders, major gift donors, corporate sponsors, media partners, annual fund contributors and key constituent groups.

Blue-White Game, baseball Eagles share April 12 ‘doubleheader’

Georgia Southern sports fans are invited to enjoy a rare football/baseball doubleheader on April 12.

The day will begin at Paulson Stadium with the annual Blue-White spring football game, which is scheduled to kick off at 1 p.m.

After bouncing back from a rare losing season to post a 7-4 record in their first campaign under head coach Chris Hatcher, the revitalized Eagles are hoping to build upon that momentum in 2008.

The Eagles will also be coming off the largest spring signing class in Georgia Southern football history, as Hatcher and his staff inked 32 freshmen and transfers to letters of intent for the coming year.

The Eagles will open their 2008 season at the University of Georgia in Sanford Stadium on Aug. 30.

Gametime against the Bulldogs, who are expected to be ranked in the Top 5 nationally in FCS competition, has not yet been announced.

On April 12, once the spring football game is over, Georgia Southern supporters can make the short drive over to J.I. Clements Stadium for the baseball team’s contest against Southern Conference rival Appalachian State.

The first pitch is set for 6 p.m., but the fans are encouraged to arrive early for the annual Clements Crazies tailgate party.

The tailgate party is scheduled to start in the stadium parking lot at 4 p.m.

Sponsored by Southern Boosters and the Talon Club, the tailgate party will feature free hot dogs, hamburgers and soft drinks.

There is no admission fee for the spring football game.

Single-game tickets for the baseball game range from $8 for reserved and adult general admission to $4 for youth general admission.

For more information, visit the Georgia Southern athletics Web site at www.georgiasoutherneagles.com.
Eagles’ Foster captures 2007 Payton Award

Georgia Southern quarterback Jayson Foster is the 2007 winner of the Walter Payton Award, which is given to the top NCAA Football Championship Series (FCS) player in the country.

The Canton, Ga., senior was presented with the honor on Dec. 13 during The Sports Network’s annual awards dinner at the Chattanooga Marriott.

Foster is the first Eagle to earn the Payton Award since running back Adrian Peterson captured the honor in 1999. The winner is determined by a national vote of FCS sports information directors and selected members of the media.

The voters recognized Foster for helping Georgia Southern’s team stage one of the most impressive turnarounds in the country. The Eagles were 3-8 in 2006, but Foster led them to a 7-4 record last season.

In the process, he set an NCAA Division I single-season record for quarterbacks by rushing for 1,844 yards. It was the second-highest single-season rushing total in school history, and the third-best in Southern Conference history.

At 5-foot-9 and 164 pounds, Foster led the SoCon with 24 rushing touchdowns. He also completed 109-of-170 passes for 1,203 yards and six touchdowns.

Selected as the SoCon Offensive Player of the Year by the league’s head coaches, Foster finished the season with 3,047 yards of total offense. That was just one of several school records he set during the 2007 campaign.

The Sports Network announced on Nov. 26 that Foster was one of three finalists for the Payton Award. San Diego quarterback Josh Johnson and Northern Iowa quarterback Eric Sanders were the other finalists. In the Payton Award balloting, Foster received 24 first-place votes and 224 points. Sanders was second with 21 first-place votes and 184 points, and Johnson was third with 10 first-place votes and 166 points.

The Payton Award was the biggest highlight of several national honors bestowed upon Foster following his final season as an Eagle. He was selected as the College Sporting News FCS National Offensive Player of the Year; he made The Sports Network FCS All-American team as a quarterback; he earned a spot on the American Football Coaches Association FCS All-America team as an all-purpose player; and he made the Associated Press FCS All-America team as a running back.

In February, Foster was honored by the Georgia General Assembly at a Capitol ceremony, where he was given a proclamation recognizing his accomplishments on and off the field.

Southern Boosters implements new game day parking plan

Just like Beautiful Eagle Creek and the yellow school buses, the tailgating scene in the Paulson Stadium parking lot has become a treasured part of Georgia Southern’s glorious football tradition.

In an effort to make the convenience and atmosphere of the parking lot even more enjoyable, Southern Boosters has unveiled a new parking plan to take effect in 2008.

Members may purchase a season parking pass guaranteeing them the same parking space for every home game.

The new system is a response to there being more members of Boosters than there are parking spaces at Paulson Stadium.

“Obviously, 100 percent of our members don’t attend our games,” said John Mulherin, executive director of Southern Boosters, “but we want to make sure that everybody who does come has a place to park.”

For $50 above their annual contribution to Southern Boosters, a member can purchase a single parking space that is 10 feet wide and 15 feet deep. A member who drives an RV to the game, or who simply wants more room for socializing with his fellow fans, can pay $300 for a large parking space that measures 30 feet by 30 feet.

“The fee is simply a way to identify those people who are committed to using the parking lot every game,” said Mulherin.

Order forms for season and single-game parking passes were mailed to members of Boosters in March. Members will be able to request a specific parking space, if they so desire, and have until May 31 to return their order forms for season and single-game parking passes. At that time, priority points for each member will be calculated based on their contributions to Southern Boosters, and the season parking passes will be allocated accordingly.

“In the majority of instances, the priority points system should closely resemble the old system and allow individuals to park in the same general area they’ve been parking,” Mulherin said.
"I WOULD SAY THIS IS PROBABLY THE MOST TRANSFORMATIVE MASTER PLAN WE HAVE EVER HAD."

HAROUN HOMAYUN, CAMPUS ARCHITECT

The new Center For Art & Theater, opened Spring Semester 2008
A combination of births and in-migration made Georgia the third fastest-growing state in the U.S. last year behind Texas and California, a trend that is expected to continue. The University System believes statewide student enrollment will increase by more than 100,000 in the next 12 years. Georgia Southern's share of that growth is being factored into every decision University planners are making about the future.

“We are taking a very strategic and thoughtful look at what we want Georgia Southern University to look like both today and tomorrow,” said President Bruce Grube. “When you step on our campus, you know you are somewhere special, and our goal as we expand is to capture that feeling in everything that we do. The plans that we are setting in place will serve as the foundation for future generations of Georgia Southern University students, faculty and staff.”

About 40 percent of Georgia Southern’s freshmen hail from metro Atlanta. At least that many will come from Atlanta in future years, while increasing numbers will also come from fast-growing coastal...
Georgia and the neighboring states of Florida and South Carolina. Florida is contemplating capping enrollment at its state universities, creating a group of potential students who are looking for affordable out-of-state colleges.

Add to that an expected jump in graduate enrollment as additional programs come online and efforts to market master’s and doctoral programs increase. Factor in the recent Carnegie Doctoral-Research designation, and the University is rethinking everything — academics, administration and facilities.

With enrollment growth comes added pressure for more classrooms, housing, additional faculty members, parking, student services and infrastructure.

Taking their cue from University leadership, Georgia Southern’s facility planners are laying the groundwork for meeting the demands of a larger campus.

**THE MASTER PLAN**

Effective planning is essential to meeting the challenges to come for a University that is just catching its breath after the enrollment boom of the 1980s and 1990s.

Georgia Southern’s campus master plan is extensively revisited every five years — tweaking here and adjusting there — as programs and enrollment patterns shift. The latest update is almost complete, and addresses expected growth, but also keeps an emphasis on maintaining the attributes that draw students to Georgia Southern.

“I have often heard students say, ‘I came to visit and the place was beautiful. I just like the way it felt.’ We can’t go away from that,” said Joe Franklin, vice president for business and finance. “That is about maintaining our architectural standards, the placement of buildings, and the development and maintenance of our landscaping.

“We’re trying to maintain lower-height buildings, and that means instead of going up, you spread out,” Franklin said. “You have to balance that with walking distances. Also, we want to have flexibility in the plan, so it’s not absolute that we decide today where buildings are going to go 10 years from now. We want to consider walking distances and we want to keep our architectural standards that have given us an identity,” he said.

Some new considerations for the plan, said Franklin, are structured parking, an expanded transit system, refurbishing older buildings, careful placement of large new buildings, and balancing the use of inner campus space along the Pedestrium with some smaller new structures.

“I would say this is probably the most transformative master plan we have ever had,” said campus architect Haroun Homayun. “All segments of the Georgia Southern community have had a voice in it.” And, he added, “It’s not just Georgia Southern, but the city of Statesboro, also.”

The new plan moves the campus away
A new purpose

Renovating buildings smarter than starting from scratch

It’s smarter to re-use than rebuild. That might sum up the philosophy of University planners who are turning to renovating older campus buildings for new uses rather than tearing them down and placing new construction on the site.

“Philosophically we are more sensitive to keeping buildings,” said campus architect Haroun Homayun. “Cost has a lot do to with it. But also, giving a building a chance to survive rather than demolish it is a good mindset. A lot of campuses are not doing that.”

Several campus buildings have benefited from that philosophy in recent years, including Veazey Hall, now headquarters for the Department of Communication Arts, Cone Hall, which houses the College of Public Health, and Lewis Hall, home to the Office of Admissions.

Up for renovation this year is Hendrick Hall, which will be converted to faculty offices and meeting space. “The year after will be either Sanford or Brannen depending on the needs at that moment,” said Michael Dipple, associate director of Physical Plant.

“I don’t know if Sanford or Brannen will go first, but it will be one and then the next. The whole Circle will end up being office buildings, from Hendricks and Veazey on Forest Drive, all the away around to Sanford, Brannen and Cone.”

Converting 50- to 70-year-old buildings for today’s office use is not a simple process, given the need for dedicated computer and electrical cabling and meeting state building codes and energy efficiency requirements. Yet, it’s more cost effective than tearing them down and replacing them with new construction on the site.

“One of the renovation projects on the horizon is converting the Biology Building to general classroom use, a $10 million project scheduled to begin when the new $36 million Biology Building is completed within the next five years.”

from a “vehicular” campus and toward one relying more on mass transit to move students, faculty and staff to buildings. “This plan is suggesting a much more pedestrian-oriented university,” said Homayun.

“We are trying to put vehicular traffic to the outside of the campus to create a core in the middle of the campus that is pedestrian.

“We can achieve that by providing some structured parking on the outskirts and taking out most of the surface parking,” said Homayun.

“I think that it’s inevitable. That’s just what it’s going to take,” said Michael Dipple, associate director of Physical Plant, the University department that oversees the campus master plan. “Today, there are parking lots on some of the prime building sites.”

As the plan de-emphasizes campus parking, it supports mass transit. “Right now, what we have is a shuttle system,” said Homayun. “What we need in the future is a mass transit system.” It would be utilized by everyone – not just students.

“Everybody would park in select areas and you’d catch the bus to your building or desired location,” he said. “It’s going to be a change for everyone.”

“We’ve visited bigger institutions during this process and every one of them has parking pushed to the perimeter,” Dipple said. Years ago, universities like Georgia Tech and Emory, he said, “were forced into what we’re going to face in the next five to seven years. We should learn from good models and we should learn from bad models, and we’re trying to accomplish both.”

Once on the core campus, students must be able to access their classrooms in a timely manner.

Landscape architect Chuck Taylor echoed Dipple and Homayun on the desirability of a pedestrian-friendly campus. Taylor prepares landscape ideas for new construction from the early stages of planning. “We look at how we can use the space around the building for walkways or gatherings,” he said. “How the space relates to the surrounding landscape is important as well.”

In deciding how to use the space, Taylor takes into account what existing features are present. “We consider what we have to work with in the way of space or trees and make sure there is adequate drainage at the site. We ask, ‘What is its desired function, and is it maintainable?’”

Taylor is well aware that the beauty and function of the campus are among the keys to student recruitment and retention. “There have been studies demonstrating that landscaping is important in attracting and retaining students,” he said.

“We’ve done some walking studies that show it takes about 10 minutes from one end of the Pedestrium to the other,” said Dipple. “That’s getting to be about the maximum that you can expect someone to walk when they’re changing class. We are looking at every aspect of our campus as we develop this plan so we are prepared for the future.”

“The student housing is pretty well set
now on the eastern side of the campus, and I think you will see most of the remainder of that growth is going to be in the Chandler Road corridor," Homayun said.

"Academic buildings are not going to be scattered like some other universities," said Homayun. "Housing is going to be on one side, academic buildings in the core, and services will be pushed to the edge of campus."

Planning for the infrastructure – roads, electrical, water, sewer and communications lines – is essential to managing growth. "We predict building sites and then once you’ve established the sites and what their needs are, then that starts to drive your utilities," said Dipple.

FOOTPRINTS, LARGE AND SMALL

“We have about three or four really good building sites left, and I’m talking about sites that can house good-sized buildings,” said Dipple. “There’s a lot of potential for infill with smaller buildings.”

The list of recent major construction projects Georgia Southern has enjoyed has gone far to catch up with past growth and lay groundwork for future needs: the Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education Building addition and Performing Arts Center in 2002; the College of Education Building in 2000; the Nursing/Chemistry Building in 2003; and the College of Information Technology in 2003.

Last year’s Recreation Activity Center expansion brought the student-oriented facility to 215,000 square feet with basketball/volleyball courts, an 11-lane competition swimming pool and diving well, a 42-foot high climbing wall, group fitness rooms, multipurpose rooms, indoor soccer courts, outdoor leisure pool and racquetball courts.

Two major state-funded construction projects loom on the horizon in the next half-decade: a $36 million biology building and a $40 million multipurpose classroom building. Those are “large footprint buildings,” Dipple said.

The leading sites for those structures are the corner of Akins Boulevard and Forest Drive for the Biology Building, and on the Pedestrium across from the Newton Building for the multipurpose classroom building.

As soon as Spring Semester ends, the demolition of Winburn, Olliff and Johnson Halls will clear the way for the construction of Centennial Place, a four-building mix of traditional rooms and apartment-style housing. It will include computer rooms, classroom and meeting spaces, and retail areas on the ground floor. Centennial Place is a “payback” project financed by student user fees.

Design is ongoing for the Alumni and Welcome Center on Akins Boulevard near the Recreation Activity Center. It will house the University’s Alumni Relations and University Advancement staff.

While relatively small, the building will be highly visible. “That’s going to be just a gorgeous building,” said Dipple. “As you come in Akins Boulevard from the bypass, it will be the first building on campus that you see.”

The Henderson Library addition and renovation is scheduled to be complete this summer, providing a 103,481 square foot addition and bringing the total area
Pump up the volume

University, city collaborate on water project

When you need more water, but can’t drill a well, where do you look for relief?

Georgia Southern is turning to its old friend, Statesboro.

The University and City of Statesboro are cooperating on a plan to pump treated wastewater to campus from Bird’s Pond, a reservoir south of town. Water that would eventually flow downstream and into the Ogeechee River will be used to irrigate Georgia Southern’s outdoor playing fields and landscaping.

“Depending on the season, probably about a third to 50 percent of our water bill goes for irrigation,” said Michael Dipple, associate director of Physical Plant. “We’re on a well, and regulations make it difficult to drill any more wells.

“Reuse is important, because it will offset the water we’re going to need for campus growth. So everything ties together.”

“The plan as it’s taking shape right now,” said Dipple, “is for the city to build a pumping treatment chemical injection system that includes an ornithological center, group study rooms and staff offices. The original building was gutted and revamped inside and out, including a red brick facade.

The Center for Art and Theatre opened in February with 29,850 square feet housing art galleries, an experimental Black Box theatre, administrative offices and support spaces. Located adjacent to the Fine Arts Building, it occupies the space of the former Marvin Pittman Gym.

Just after celebrating its 10th anniversary, the popular Center for Wildlife Education is preparing to open an eight-acre expansion that includes an ornithological center, model wetlands system, passerine aviary, herpetarium, camp ground and restrooms, and a food storage and preparation building.

“That’s a highly used area,” said Dipple. “It really adds something to the campus.”

The Foy Building, now dedicated to the Department of Music, is undergoing extensive renovations. In 2009, it will reopen with a renovated Carter Auditorium and new lobby. The building’s mechanical and electrical infrastructure is being totally replaced.

Since the University’s accelerated growth of the mid-1980s, modular buildings have been a fact of life on the campus. As permanent facilities have caught up with the demand for more classroom and office space, those temporary buildings have begun to be removed.

Both the South Building and Building 806 were removed last year. Dipple said that the fervent hope is that the remaining modular buildings, including Building 807 (former Nursing Building) and those remaining along the Pedestrium, will be gone within one to two years.

THE SPORTING LIFE

“Other items of interest to the campus will be the future of the sports arenas,” said Homayun.

“Most important will be Paulson Stadium and Hanner Fieldhouse. Both of them are challenging projects,” he said, “but the basketball arena is much more challenging as to how we can create a modern facility offering all of the gameday experiences, from the seats to the concession stands.”

The difficulty comes because replacement costs make Hanner Fieldhouse likely to remain the home to basketball. The ability to expand the arena is limited because of the size of its current site.

An independent study is determining the feasibility of moving to the Football Bowl Subdivision (formerly I-A) level in football. One of the requirements of moving up would be a major upgrade of Paulson Stadium.

“At Paulson, the issue of expansion is really not a problem,” Dipple said. “It’s going to take some work, but it’s simpler than Hanner. There are three or four ideas. Where do you put those seats? What would the press box look like? How tall will the stadium be? That is a concern for us.”

The estimate of an expansion for Bowl Subdivision football would be a facility of 30,000-35,000 seats, he said. Paulson currently seats 18,000.

The many recent sports facility upgrades have positioned the University well for the future, said Dipple. He cited the Cowart Building in 2006; the Parrish Building in 2000; the soccer and track stadium in 2005; the Bishop Fieldhouse in 2006; the Bennett-Ramsey Golf Center in 2007; renovations to J.J. Clements Stadium in 2005, and ongoing softball facility improvements.

One thing Dipple said he has learned in discussions with University officials is how pivotal good sports facilities are to athletics success. “Facilities are incredibly important when you’re trying to attract top talent,” he said.
As the last students exit the three traditional residence halls opposite Landrum Center, a new era enters.

Construction on the massive 377,000 square-foot 1,001-bed Centennial Place residence hall project gets underway this summer with the demolition of Olliff, Winburn and Johnson Halls. The project has a projected completion date of July 2009.

"In May, we will be salvaging all the furniture and equipment," said Director of Housing Vickie Hawkins. "On June 2, we actually start demolition."

All classifications of students – from freshmen through grad students – will be welcomed to the new facility, Hawkins said.

"We wanted to ensure that the students who live in Centennial Place will be from all socio-economic levels," she said. "We will have rooms for two students all the way up to two-bedroom apartments for two students.

The hope is also that having more mature students living among the first-year residents will provide a positive academic influence, said Hawkins.

"We also have some super-suites, similar to those in Eagle Village and Southern Pines. Each student has his or her own bedroom, a shared living space, and a kitchen.

It all works out to two students per bathroom – no community baths.

The complex includes academic classrooms, a computer lab, tutorial center, multipurpose room with a kitchen, and recreational areas with flat screen TV, couches and chairs, computer games, pool tables, and ping pong tables. "We're trying to give them some amenities that will pull them out of their rooms," said Hawkins.

"We're hoping that the building will be both wireless and hardwired," Hawkins said. "Hopefully, it will stream out to the courtyard so students can use their laptops there, too."

About 600 of the residents will be first-year students, she said.

"Going along with the opening of Centennial Place will be the reinstatement of the freshman residency requirement," said Hawkins. "We're looking at 2,750 to 2,800 first-year students living on campus, and that's about 95 percent of the first-year class. Right now we only house 70 to 75 percent."

Most other universities in Georgia are requiring first-year students to be residents, too, she said. "Students are not going to find it earth-shattering that they have to live on campus, because if they attend college anywhere else in Georgia they
are going to have to live on campus their first year.

Hand-in-hand with the residency requirement is providing academic support for first-year students, said Hawkins. Centennial Place will have tutors living on-site and will house two full-time staff members and 33 resident assistants.

As in other residence halls, Centennial Place will be host to living/learning communities – students grouped by major or interest.

“We wanted to make sure that we have housing that is modern, up to date and full of amenities, which is what students are expecting,” Hawkins said.

The four-building brick and stucco complex will match other new campus buildings.

When complete, Centennial Place will be Georgia Southern’s largest residence hall. Eagle Village is currently the largest with 796 students.

The building will be equipped with elevators, but that doesn’t mean students will miss out on staying fit.

“We have a basketball court and sand pit volleyball court that will be shared by Centennial Place and Watson Hall,” said Hawkins. “The park-like area between Watson and the existing residence halls will be saved and will become part of “Centennial Mall,” a green space between buildings from Watson to Georgia Avenue.

And, there’s more.

Two of the buildings will have retail shops on the ground floor. In one building there will be two food service units. Plans call for a clothing store and a convenience store in the other building.

“We want to have a food court area where you could walk up, order your food, and then have a central location where everybody can sit down,” Hawkins said.

The campus print shop will also be moving to Centennial Place from the Williams Center.

“These retail spaces will be for everybody, not just the students living in the complex,” said Hawkins. “Facing Georgia Avenue, the thinking is that the street will become a retail corridor featuring the shops of Centennial Place, restaurants of Landrum, the University Store, and the shops of the Russell Union.”

A planned remodeling of the Landrum Center will make it more like Centennial Place. “That will make that whole area very nice,” Hawkins said, “and Georgia Avenue will become a pedestrian with one lane for buses.”

Alumni can place their order for a commemorative brick on line at http://www.gsuhousing.com/housingbricks or by calling the Department of Housing at (912)681-5406.

Grab a little nostalgia…

Long gone are meeting your date in the lobby, trekking down the hall to use the telephone, and shouts of “Man on the hall!”

Looking back, it seems more adventure than inconvenience.

Alumni who still have a little bit of Winburn, Olliff or Johnson living in their hearts can now hold a piece of their old dorm in their hands.

Bricks from the three residence halls slated for demolition this summer are on sale for $50, each featuring a plate with lettering with the Georgia Southern logo. “We will start mailing bricks out in June and we’ll probably go through October or November,” said Director of University Housing Vickie Hawkins. “Alumni can send in their advance orders and we’ll mail the bricks out as soon as the demolition process is complete.”

“In addition to having a keepsake, their purchase will help us provide training and development activities for staff and additional furniture and equipment for Centennial Place,” said Hawkins.

Current students living in those buildings can buy one for $25 that reads, “Last resident of…”

“We want alumni and other interested individuals to have a little piece of Georgia Southern history – to be a little nostalgic about these three buildings,” said Hawkins. “Think how many people have lived in these three residence halls, going back as early as 1966. I began working at Georgia Southern in 1979 as a hall director in Johnson, so seeing those buildings being demolished is going to be really bittersweet for me.”
It all started with a case of mistaken identity.

Some local fans were dismayed to hear a TV sports announcer mistake a turkey vulture for an eagle as the bird circled Paulson Stadium during the 1991 NCAA Division I-AA Championship Game.

That got the ball rolling for what would become the Center for Wildlife Education and Lamar Q Ball Jr. Raptor Center.

“After the game, I was approached by local alumnus and businessman Harry Mathews to investigate the possibility of acquiring an eagle at Georgia Southern,” explained Steve Hein, director of the Center. “As a licensed falconer, I made a few phone calls, and found that state agencies could obtain one of the many injured eagles needing a home.”

A donation from the Mathews family and the Statesboro Telephone Company provided the seed money to fund a feasibility study, and a joint Georgia Southern and community committee was formed.

The group was charged with ensuring that the presence of an eagle on campus would be rooted in education.

“We wanted to make sure that this noble creature, our national symbol and icon of the University, would be displayed with dignity,” Hein said. “With an eye on education, the University signed off on the notion of building a raptor center.”

Hein’s kitchen table served as the drawing board as the Center for Wildlife Education began to take form. With help from internationally known naturalist and “Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom” host Jim Fowler, Harry Mathews’ dream took flight.

“Jim and I actually designed much of the present-day Center on my kitchen table during his many visits to Georgia Southern,” Hein said. “We literally worked late into the night, sharing a common vision for the Center and fueled by a passion for wildlife.”

Family and friends of the late Lamar Q Ball Jr. donated the initial major gift to launch the Center’s construction. “The
Center would not have become reality without that first major gift,” Hein said. Ball’s son, David, was a founding member of the first advisory board and today serves as its chairperson.

The doors opened in October 1997, and the handful of birds and snakes Hein had been keeping at his home became the first permanent residents. “I delivered over 500 programs before the Center ever opened its doors,” he said. “There was already an awareness of the Center, so when it opened it was standing room only!”

And the crowds are still flocking to get close to creatures normally only viewed from a distance. About 15,000 schoolchildren visit the Center each year and thousands of other individuals and civic and church groups come to witness the flighted raptor demonstrations, reptile shows, or just to gaze at an eagle, hawk, falcon or owl. Another 180,000 witness shows the Center’s staff takes on the road each year, from regional alumni gatherings to wildlife and environmental events from New York to Florida.

“It quickly gets around if you deliver a quality product,” said Hein. “Certainly, within Georgia and the Southeast, we’ve developed a very good reputation for delivering quality environmental education. We really don’t do a lot of advertising. Our success is based on filling a need, word of mouth and repeat visitors.”

Hein, like all Georgia Southern alumni, is an admirer of the late coach Erk Russell, and remembers Russell’s admonition that, “You’re either moving forward or falling back – getting better or worse. You never stay the same.” Taking that philosophy to heart, Hein and the Center are moving forward.

The Center’s expansion, the wetland preserve, is a new 12-acre tract focusing on hydrology, the natural flow and function of water, and is scheduled to open this spring. Given the statewide focus on water shortages, the project is timely.

The expansion includes Army Corp of Engineers-delineated wetlands and showcases three water features: a babbling brook, waterfowl pond and a seasonal wetland.

“We are fortunate to have a natural corridor made up of very mature hardwoods and pine trees that have been sampled to be over 80 years old. These trees separate the existing center from the Wetland Preserve,” Hein said.

“Starting at the Center’s entrance is a simulated beaver pond, a small impoundment that will capture run-off water from the surrounding pavement. The water will course from that location, sweeping around the existing amphitheater through the wetlands and feed into the waterfowl pond,” Hein explained. “The waterfowl pond will showcase some 25 different species of waterfowl that are endemic to Georgia, either as full-time residents or migrants.

“The wading bird cypress swamp, located on the other side of the Wetland Preserve, will showcase a shallow ecosystem. One exhibit will be wading birds, such as the heron, egrets and spoon bills.

“The theme of the expansion is water – a resource critical to Georgia’s environmental and economic future,” Hein said. “The waterfowl pond, cypress swamp and simulated stream are educational tools. We want to educate future generations of Georgians on the wise use of our water resources.

“Our objective is to emphasize the benefits of healthy ecosystems to both wildlife and man. To assist in this goal, future plans may include a songbird aviary and a herpetarium to house reptiles and amphibians. Success starts with a dream and Georgia Southern University is a place where dreams can come true,” said Hein.

As a young boy who grew up watching “Wild Kingdom” and having adventures in his own back yard, the creation and evolution of the Center for Wildlife Education is the realization of a dream for Hein. It is the only center of its type in the nation, and is a priceless resource for the region.

“Contrary to what many might believe, the Statesboro-Bulloch County area has not experienced an influx of raptors,” Hein said. “Rather it is a testimony to the raised awareness by the community of our native and migratory raptor populations. This shows that we are having an impact, people are more aware. Their sense to their surroundings has been heightened to the point they’re seeing these avian predators, including eagles.”

Ten years after the Center’s first visitors strode the winding boardwalk among the birds of prey, many fewer are mistaking eagles for turkey vultures.
More than 700 University alumni, friends and state officials attended the 2008 edition of Georgia Southern’s Wild Game Supper, co-hosted by the Statesboro-Bulloch County Chamber of Commerce, the City of Statesboro and Bulloch County.

Guests included Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle and members of the Georgia General Assembly who met and mingled at the old Railroad Depot at Underground Atlanta.
2008 marked the 23rd year friends and supporters have gathered for the Wild Game Supper.
1930s

Verna Lassetter Beard ('37) lives in Hawaii with her daughter, Barbara. Barbara writes that Verna is 92 and is in great shape. “Verna quit water aerobics about four years ago, and started walking about 1.5 miles four times a week. She also plays bridge twice a week and wins a lot of the time.” She moved to Hawaii about five years ago. Her son and grandchildren also live nearby.

1960s

Tom Martin ('63) has been inducted into the Georgia Recreation and Park Association Hall of Fame. Tom began his career in recreation 50 years ago as a part-time recreation leader in Statesboro. His career has taken him to jobs with the State of Georgia, Georgia Southern, the National Recreation and Park Association, and the Georgia Recreation and Park Association. He was a member of the University faculty from 1968-72. From 1978 to 2000, he was the Southeast Regional Director for the National Recreation and Park Association. The past seven years, he has served as executive director of GRPA. He and his wife, Marcia, live in Conyers, Ga.

Bobby Green ('64) is a retired minister who has written four books. His latest, In God’s Crosshairs, was released in August 2006. His wife, Martha (McBride ’66), is a retired teacher. The couple lives in Register, Ga.

Jeri Prince Stapleton ('66) is an instructor at Middle Georgia College. She recently published her first book, Taylor Visits the Farm, an inspirational book for young children. For more information on her book, visit www.taylorstories.com. Her husband, Robert ('67) is a basketball coach with the Telfair County Board of Education. The couple resides in Alamo, Ga., and can be reached at jeristapleton@hotmail.com.

Jim Dooley ('68) plans to retire from the U.S. Air Force in October. He holds the rank of colonel. Jim and his wife, Deneal, will relocate to Utah this summer, where he will begin a new career as a teacher. Upon his retirement, Jim will have over 28 years of service in the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Air Force. The couple currently resides in Yorktown, Va. He would enjoy hearing from friends at dooleyjw@cox.net.

Lounelle Merritt Beecher ('69) is social studies and foreign language curriculum coordinator for the Richmond County, Ga., Department of Education. Over the last nine years, she has become known as the

Georgia Southern vs. Georgia Bulldogs

Aug. 30, 2008
Kickoff time: TBA

Pre-game events

Friday, Aug. 29
Alumni & Friends Social
Mellow Mushroom
320 East Clayton St., Athens
Time: 7-10 p.m.
Admission: Free

Saturday, Aug. 30
BBQ and Pep Rally
Classic Center
300 North Thomas St., Athens
Time: TBA
Admission: $10 at the door

Eagles Fans Don't forget!
Georgia Southern vs. UGA gameday T-shirts
Available at the University Store or at www.gsustore.com
Two styles, $14.99 each

For the latest information call 912-478-ALUM
For football tickets call 1-800-GSU-WINS
Lokey Lytjen (’75) serves as executive director of the Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum.

Ace in the Hole

Lytjen’s passion for history finds a voice in the Old West

Lokey Lytjen earned her education degree in 1975, and the rest really is history.

Lytjen, executive director of Wyoming’s Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum, always wanted to be an educator, and is, in the broadest sense of the word. Her interest in understanding and imparting the who, what, when, where and, most importantly, why, of historical events led her to posts at historical sites and museums in North Carolina, New Hampshire and now the Big Sky country of Wyoming.

When her husband accepted a position as a city planner in Jackson, she gladly took the leap, but needed her own job. “We knew that there was a little art museum down on the town square and that it was going to be significantly expanded. I went there to see what was going on, visited the historic museum and met with the then-director. The art museum offered me a new position they had started,” she said.

Three years later, the directorship of the historic museum opened. “I applied and got that position,” said Lytjen. “I’ll have been here 11 years in May.

“I work really closely with our board and staff so we can accomplish our goals, our vision and our mission – where we want to go and what we think we need to do as museum professionals.

“It’s an incredibly stunning place,” she said. “I look out of my window and I can see part of this wonderful mountain on the east side of the valley that’s called ‘Sleeping Indian.’ I have a friend who has a ranch right under the nose of that particular mountain feature. Jackson Hole is a really beautiful place and there’s a lot of history and culture here as well.”

The valley is bounded on the west by the 14,000-foot Tetons and the east by the Gros Ventre range. It was named Jackson Hole (originally Jackson’s Hole) by locals because it was the trapping grounds of mountain man Davey Jackson. In American West homesteading terms, it was settled relatively late – after the turn of the 20th century. Because of that, it offers unique opportunities to study its historical contexts.

“I actually get to interact with the children of the families who homesteaded the area,” said Lytjen. “And that’s very, very interesting to hear the stories of what their lives were like.”

Most of the museum’s visitors come from the more than three million people who visit the area every year for skiing and sightseeing, she said. “We also have a research center where our photographic archives are located, and we have a wide variety of people who come to use that facility. Filmmakers, professional writers and scholars come in,” as well as amateur researchers whose families lived or passed through there. School and youth groups visit the museum, she said, and it offers curriculum-based units for teachers about the history of the valley. “We can involve students in learning about history in a fun way and hope that that will transfer to maybe a larger interest in American history,” said Lytjen.

A native of Savannah, she and her husband, Bill, enjoy hiking and skiing and have ample opportunity see the abundant wildlife in the area: bear, bison, moose, elk, deer, mountain lion, coyote and wolves.

“Becoming a non-traditional educator – I kind of fell into that – but I really enjoyed it and made a conscious choice to stay in the museum field working through education rather than going back into the classroom,” said Lytjen. “The fact that I was able to find a position that fulfilled my desire to be an educator in a setting that allowed me to enjoy the other aspects of my life was a real gift.”

To learn more about the Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum, visit www.jacksonholehistory.org.
There are people who love soccer, and then there’s Ben Freakley.

“I definitely remember my first day of soccer more than I remember my first day in any other sport,” said Freakley (’00), head coach of the Virginia Military Institute Keydets. “I played basketball, I played baseball and I played tennis. But nothing ever gave me the feeling of being alive or just having so much fun as being out on the field.

“I guess because I stuck with soccer so long, my experiences along the way led me to love it more and more and more,” he said.

“In the last five or six years, soccer has taken me all over the world,” said Freakley. “It’s the world’s game and you really don’t see that until you get out of the U.S. and see what it means to other people as well.”

Freakley has taken youth players from his area to Mexico and Trinidad, trips focused on letting youngsters see soccer on a bigger stage. “They see kids from a less privileged background that are much better soccer players than they are,” said Freakley. “Those kids’ abilities are their best ticket to a better life. You can see it in the way that they train with one another and against one another and the way they compete. They really want to be there.”

His passion led him to work with 30 to 50 youth players each week. “It’s so much fun to get out there and work with a different set of players,” he said.

Freakley and his wife, Melissa (’03) like to travel when their schedules allow, and Melissa is completing a bachelor’s degree in nursing. But the big news is that they are expecting their first child. “That’s what we’re excited about the most,” Freakley said.

As much as he is focused on his coaching and service to his sport, Freakley is always mindful of those who helped him get where he is today – like former Georgia Southern head coach Kevin Chambers, who gave him his first coaching experience at the collegiate level. “Without the opportunity that Kevin gave me, I never would be sitting here at VMI. I owe a lot to that man.”

His days of competing as a player at the national level are done, but Freakley’s competitive drive goes on. “I guess that’s the thing that ties me to any sport. I love to compete,” said Freakley. “I like to have the opportunity to go against somebody, and I think that’s what I like about coaching, too. I try and improve my players, get them all on the same page, and when we win, nothing replaces that feeling. Nothing.”

Former Eagle Freakley leads VMI’s soccer program

“Grant Lady of Richmond County.” She estimates that she earned close to $5 million through grants for Richmond County, its social studies and foreign languages teachers, and the social studies and foreign language program.

Harper C. Daniell (’69) lives in Colorado Springs, Colo.

1970s

Bill Terrell (’71) is a senior director of business development with Aramark Uniform Services. He and his wife, Debbie, live in LaGrange, Ga., and can be reached at bterrell312@bellsouth.net.

1980s

Charlie Nutt (’82) has been named executive director of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Nutt, who has been with the Executive Office since 2002 as associate director, was actively involved in a variety of association leadership roles prior to assuming the associate director position. Prior to coming to the NACADA Executive Office and Kansas State University, Nutt served in various capacities for 17 years at Coastal Georgia Community College, including vice president for student development, director of advisement/orientation, registrar, and assistant professor of English.

Sandra T. Dominy (’84) was named Affiliated Georgia School Leaders Assistant Principal of the Year for 2006. She represented Georgia at the NASSP Assistant Principal of the Year competition in Washington, D.C. Dominy is assistant principal at Appling County High School in Baxley, Ga. She and her husband, Andy, have a daughter, Taylor.

Bonita Pitts Jenkins (’86) is the director of marketing and college communications for Piedmont Technical College in Greenwood, S.C. She and her husband, Jay, live in Martinez, Ga., with their two children, Jaida and Jayden. They can be reached at bonitapj@yahoo.com.

Leslie Thompson Taunton (’86) writes, “After living our entire lives in the South, we moved to southern Alaska due to a career move. Please visit us
in Homer, Alaska, the Halibut Capital of the World.” She and her husband, Eddie, have a daughter, Lauren. They would enjoy hearing from friends at lgtanton@yahoo.com.

Stephen James ('87) and his wife, Tina (Archer ’88), recently adopted a daughter, Justine Jennifer Marie. She joins siblings Christopher, Nicholas and Rebecca. The family lives in Statesboro.

Lisa Wiggins Wilson ('87) was recently presented the Health Care Heroes Award from the Georgia Medical Society for her work as school nurse at White Bluff Elementary in Savannah. She joined the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System as the school’s nurse in 1999. She organizes dozens of educational activities at the school each year for its students and staff, and spends her spare time speaking at school functions, serving on health care committees and serving as mentor to senior RN students at Armstrong Atlantic State University.

1990s

John Benton is a commercial advisor with Mopper-Stapen Realtors in Savannah.

Bradley Chapple ('92) was recently promoted to general manager of Racing Milestones magazine, a division of AutoTrader.com. He and his wife, Amy (Fisher '94), are the parents of quadruplets, Alaina, Kirsten, Tyler and Jake. The family makes its home in Chesapeake, Va. They would enjoy hearing from friends at thechapples6@cox.net.

Tod Morgan ('92) is the head basketball coach at Goldsboro High School. He lives in New Bern, N.C., and can be reached at todmorgan@hotmail.com.

Lance Turpin ('92) has been a city executive at Coral Springs Charter School in Coral Springs, Fla., where he is with the casualty unit of Allstate Insurance. He and his wife, Kimberly, have a daughter, Ava Grace.

Paul Spohn ('95) is district manager of Family Dollar stores in the New Mexico-Colorado area.

Joan Warshauer ('95) is a reading teacher at Coral Springs Charter School in Coral Springs, Fla., where she lives with her husband, David.

Phillip Barnett ('96) co-owns a successful video, photography and DJ company with his wife, Cherie. His Web site is at www.atlastproductions.com. The couple lives in Hephzibah, Ga.

Kim Bivins Sconiers ('96) and her husband, John, celebrated the July birth of their daughter, Camryn. Kim is a victim advocate with the Cobb County, Ga., district attorney’s office. The family resides in Kennesaw, Ga., and would enjoy hearing from friends at kimbivins@bellsouth.net.

Time capsule to be buried to close out centennial observance

As a part of the celebration of Georgia Southern’s centennial celebration, a time capsule will be buried at the new Alumni and Welcome Center on Akins Boulevard.

Sealed until the year 2106, the time capsule contains significant artifacts familiar to today’s students and faculty but which might not be around 100 years from now.

“We make history every day,” said Dean of Students Georj Lewis, “It’s important to revisit the past and see Georgia Southern’s great tradition.”

To assemble the time capsule, the dean of students’ office worked hand-in-hand with the faculty, student body, alumni and the community. Lewis also praised Ann Hamilton of the Zach Henderson Library and Brent Tharp, director of the Georgia Southern Museum, for their contributions to the project.

Suggestions for items to be put in the time capsule were taken from school administrators, faculty, the Student Government Association, alumni, and the student body at large through a survey conducted on the WINGS student Web portal.

“It was a collaborative effort that was much more complicated than one might imagine,” said Lewis. “Every consideration was made to preserve our current history for the future.”

Items in the time capsule include a Class of 2006 tassel, an Eagle Entertainment Megaphone, a Starbucks coffee mug, the new Georgia Southern Centennial ID card, a 2006 parking citation form, and Erik Russell memorabilia.

“The campus map I’m sure will be an interesting find,” said Lewis, “considering how much Georgia Southern has grown and continues to grow.”

The time capsule will be buried when ground is broken for the new Alumni and Welcome Center.

WWW.GEORGIASOUTHERN.EDU 33
Former Eagle kicker Bironas sets NFL record, makes Pro Bowl

Rob Bironas was not a star football player at Georgia Southern.

In fact, he wasn’t even the Eagles’ primary kicker during his only season with the team.

However, Bironas emerged as one of the National Football League’s elite players at his position during the 2007 season.

Bironas was the kicker on the Associated Press All-Pro team, and he was selected as the kicker for the American Football Conference in the annual Pro Bowl.

Kicking for the AFC squad, Bironas was good on three point-after attempts and was three-for-three on field goals of 33, 48 and 28 yards.

Bironas scored 133 points during the recently completed NFL season, connecting on all 28 of his extra-point attempts and 35-of-39 field goal tries. Along the way, he set the league record for most field goals in a single game when he booted eight in a 38-36 win over the Houston Texans on Oct. 21.

Bironas began his college career at Auburn University, but he transferred to Georgia Southern in 2000 and lettered for the team that won the NCAA Division I-AA national championship that year. Sharing the kicking duties with Scott Shelton, he made all 18 of his extra-point attempts and 7-of-13 field goal tries.

In his first attempts to make it as an NFL player, Bironas was cut in training camp by the Green Bay Packers, Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Pittsburgh Steelers. He played in the Arena Football League and Af2 before finally winning a job in the NFL with the Titans in 2005.

Bironas has made 90-of-92 extra-point attempts and 80-of-96 field goal attempts in three seasons with the Titans. He has six game-winning field goals in his NFL career.

Glenn Bolden ('97) is a special education teacher at Heartland Academy. He and his wife, Teresa, have two children, and make their home in Dublin, Ga. They can be reached at glenn_bolden@yahoo.com.

Renea Colson ('97) completed her doctorate in educational administration in December. Colson is a teacher in the Hart County School System in Hartwell, Ga. She and husband, Greg, reside in Elberton, Ga.

Sven Tubovic ('97) is an assistant professor in Pacific Lutheran University School of Business in Tacoma, Wash. "I teach classes in services marketing, sales management, e-marketing and principles of marking," he writes. "Last November, I won a Best Paper Award at a conference in London."

Jenna Streett Durrence ('98) and her husband, Marty ('98), celebrated the November birth of their daughter, Carrolyn. She joins sisters Eastyn and Staclyn. Jenna is a stay-at-home mom. Marty is market vice president of Park Avenue Bank in Statesboro and owner of Durrence/Streett Properties. The family lives in Statesboro and welcomes e-mail at jennndurrence@gmail.com.

Dakhine Klosek Lee ('98) is a special education teacher with the Liberty County Board of Education. She and her husband, Milton, have four children, Logan, Autumn, Hannah and Anthony. The family makes its home in Hinesville, Ga.

Bobby Martin II ('98) and Kathryn McManus were married in October. In August, Bobby was promoted to facilities supervisor with the Augusta Recreation and Parks Department. The couple resides in Augusta, Ga.

William McLean ('98) is the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Delphi, Ind.

Jason Crenshaw ('99) and his wife, Elizabeth (Powell '99), live in Savannah.

Amanda Hendrick Dean ('99) is a compensation analyst with Global Industries.

She and her husband, Adam, reside in Lake Charles, La.

Marybel Laboy ('99) is a teacher with the Liberty County Board of Education. She and her daughter, Latasha, live in Hinesville, Ga.

Jennifer Templeton ('99) and Brice Jordan were married in November. The couple resides in Knoxville, Tenn.

2000s

Amara Minnicks Bennett ('00) is director of onsite content services for Bright Claim Inc. of Norcross, Ga. She and her husband, Sean, live in John's Creek. She may be reached at amara.bennett@brightclaim.com.

Jason M. Conner ('00) has become an associate in the Atlanta firm of Newcomb & Boyd, a multidiscipline consulting and engineering company providing solutions for facility design, construction and maintenance.
Coaxing a beautiful piece of pottery out of a lump of clay requires skill, creativity, patience and technical acumen.

Allen Gee's interest in pottery began when he took a ceramics course at Georgia Southern. "I was immediately drawn to clay as a medium because I could use artistic design in forming shapes, as well as the technical aspect involved in firing clay to complete the process," Gee ('77) said.

"Working with clay is a creative outlet for me. It is also a challenge in that there are problems to be solved in the production process that leads to a successful finished product," he said. Gee begins each work on his electric potter's wheel, the only "modern" tool he uses. It usually takes a piece about a week to dry before it is placed into a bisque-firing kiln.

"They are fired here first so they won't break as easily and so the clay will absorb water for the glaze," Gee explains. After being placed into a homemade liquid glaze mixture, the piece is air dried. Once dry, the pieces are placed into a kiln that reaches temperatures in excess of 2,380 degrees. "It takes about 18 to 19 hours to fire the pottery," said Gee. "Then it takes about three days for the kiln to cool down before I can remove the pieces. The time it takes to complete a piece of pottery from start to finish depends on its size. The average for me is about a month and I usually have several pots in various stages of completion at any one time."

Gee's time at Georgia Southern provided him with a chance to discover and develop his basic interests. "It allowed me the opportunity to explore a wide variety of courses in a search for what was most appealing to my interest," he said. "I discovered interest in both the fine arts and industrial technology, so I took as many classes in each of these areas as possible at the time. The skills I learned from my teachers provided me with the foundation with which to continue learning and improving on my own after graduation. I thank and credit my teachers with preparing me for the future and sparking my interest in discovery and creativity."

While pottery is his weekend obsession, during the week he works for the Georgia Department of Transportation. "I am part of a design team that produces construction plans for road improvement projects," Gee said. "Computer aided drafting is an integral part of the design process and I operate a workstation that uses civil engineering programs for earthwork and design computations."

Gee's pottery will be on display and sale at Perspectives 2008: Georgia Pottery Invitational in Watkinsville, Ga., Aug. 29-Sept. 17. His works are also on display at the Art Works Gallery in Pine Mountain, Ga.
Former Eagle Pevey happy as a Blue Jay

By Mark Holland

I’ve always enjoyed baseball. Even when I was in the minor leagues, not making a whole lot of money, I enjoyed it. To me, getting to work in the major leagues is just a bonus.

Marty Pevey, third base coach, Toronto Blue Jays

Most of the men who pursue a career in the highly competitive world of professional baseball find out very quickly that it’s a long, hard road to the bright lights of the major leagues.

Few understand this particular fact of life better than Marty Pevey, who spent portions of 24 seasons playing and managing in decidedly unglamorous locales such as Dunedin, Elizabethtown and Medicine Hat.

However, patience and persistence – not to mention a keen insight into the way the game is supposed to be played – have enabled the former Georgia Southern star to earn his place in “the show.”

Pevey is set to begin his third full season on the coaching staff of the Toronto Blue Jays. He is the team’s third base coach, and he is also responsible for coaching the outfielders.

“My dad once told me, ‘You’ve got to work your whole life, so you might as well do something you enjoy,’” Pevey said as he considered the circuitous route that took him from the depths of the minor leagues to the sport’s highest level.

“Well, I’ve always enjoyed baseball. Even when I was in the minor leagues, not making a whole lot of money, I enjoyed it. To me, getting to work in the major leagues is just a bonus.”

Pevey’s love of baseball began in Savannah, where he was a standout catcher at Windsor Forest High School. He received a scholarship to Georgia Southern and became a three-year starter behind the plate for the Eagles.

In 1982, at the conclusion of his junior season, Pevey was selected in the 19th round of the draft by the Minnesota Twins. Slowly but surely, he progressed through the minor leagues and finally made his major league debut in May 1989 with the Montreal Expos.

Pevey spent seven weeks with the Expos before returning to the minor leagues. He never made it back to the big leagues, but he kept chasing his dream for six more years.

“I never looked at it like, ‘I’m stuck in the minor leagues,’” Pevey said. “Instead, it was, ‘I’m playing baseball. I liked what I was doing, and it was paying my bills, so why not stick with it?’”

As a player in the Toronto Blue Jays organization, he attracted the attention of assistant general manager Gord Ash, who saw the makings of a manager in Pevey.

“Gord told me, ‘When you’re finished playing, give me a call and we’ll have a job for you,’” Pevey said.

After playing his last game in 1995, Pevey was hired as a manager in the Blue Jays farm system the following spring. He was promoted to Toronto’s bullpen coach in 1999, but the team made a managerial change before returning to the minor leagues the very next year.

Over the course of the next six seasons, Pevey managed four different teams in the Blue Jays farm system. Along the way, he helped to develop some of Toronto’s most talented players, including Cy Young Award-winning pitcher Roy Halladay, Gold Glove center fielder Vernon Wells and All-Star second baseman Alex Rios.

“Even more than winning, teaching is the name of the game in the minor leagues,” Pevey said. “Your young players must get better, or you’ll be out of a job.”

Pevey returned to the major leagues at the end of the 2005 season as the Blue Jays’ first base coach. He was named third base coach last September.

In the big leagues, Pevey gets to travel on airplanes instead of the buses that are synonymous with the minor league lifestyle, but the workdays are still very long. Unlike their wealthy rivals in Boston and New York, the Blue Jays don’t employ any advance scouts to provide detailed reports on their opponents.

Therefore, Toronto relies on video to analyze the offensive, defensive and pitching tendencies of the teams they are playing.

“Our coaching staff is looking at video every day,” Pevey said. “We get to the clubhouse early and leave late.”

Pevey and wife, Trini, a Georgia Southern grad, have been married for 17 years. They live in the Atlanta suburb of Alpharetta with their children, 10-year-old Tucker and 8-year-old Ashtin.
Royal treatment
Sauers’ business innovation finds a niche at outdoor events

You just never know where the next great idea might come from.

The inspiration for David Sauers’ (’97) company, Royal Restrooms, came after waiting in line outside a portable restroom with his young daughter at an outdoor event in Savannah. “When we finally got inside the porta-potty, my daughter just freaked out,” he said. “It was a horrifying experience. That’s when I thought, ‘there’s got to be something better’.”

Sauers, who earned his bachelor’s degree in political science, came up with the idea of a small but well-appointed and clean restroom on wheels. “They had the big trailers that were multistalled affairs, but I wanted something that was small for more intimate gatherings,” he said.

He shared his idea with friend and now business partner Robert Glisson. Glisson, an environmental engineer, locked on to the concept and saw the possibilities immediately, said Sauers. “He was really the catalyst. He just got behind it and pushed forward and saw the full potential.”

Savannah-based Royal Restrooms first expanded into north Florida, then San Francisco and points in between. “We’ve got about 40 offices operating right now,” said Sauers, with about 300 units in service. The company is about to expand again through an exclusive deal with Pace American, the established manufacturer of NASCAR trailers and “toter-homes.”

How well accepted has the concept been? Sauers recently provided restroom facilities for the wedding of Google co-founder Larry Page. He has also worked with events by Warren Buffett, Cameron Diaz and Justin Timberlake.

It’s not all glamour, though. Royal Restrooms also works with the federal government to provide units for tornado, flood and fire victims.

“We’re growing by leaps and bounds, and I hope that everything continues to move forward as it is,” said Sauers. “It’s exciting that you can still start something from the ground up that’s not based on the technology side. It’s truly a business that anybody can operate.”

“We never intended the business to really do this,” he said. “We just thought it would be something to make a little extra money on the side. We didn’t know it would actually become so lucrative.”

Like all successful business owners, Sauers is always looking to innovate. Royal Restrooms unveiled a new trailer for Super Bowl weekend with a flat screen TV on the outside so fans can watch while they wait.

Given the nature of his business, he’s heard his share of jokes. “Far and away the best one is that ‘I’m the No. 1 one man in the No. 2 business,’” he laughed.

With the coast-to-coast success of Royal Restrooms, Sauers is getting the last laugh.

Michael McAloon (’00) was recently published in the scientific journal *Acarologia*, describing a new species of mite collected during his master’s work at Georgia Southern with biology professor Daniel V. Hagan. The specimen was collected in Coffee County, Ga., with Hagan and Professor Emeritus George Rogers. McAloon is conducting his doctoral studies at the University of Connecticut.

Amanda Edenfield (’01) and Nicholas Kauffeld were married in December. Amanda is a special education teacher with the Lawton (Okla.) Public Schools. The couple lives in Lawton, Okla., and would enjoy hearing from friends at amandakauffeld@yahoo.com.

Rosalyn Cooper Smith (’01) and her husband, Anthony, celebrated the November birth of their daughter, Anna. Rosalyn is a teacher with the Barrow County Schools.

Jennifer Trimmell Davis (’01) is a special education teacher with the Rockingham Board of Education. She and her husband, Brent, reside in Lexington, Va.

Marcie Crosby (’02) has been named 2007-2008 Teacher of the Year for Guyton Elementary School. A first-grade teacher, Marcie serves on several different committees/councils for her school and the board of education. She was instrumental in creating the Guyton Gatorettes, a teacher dance group that performs at PTA meetings, school events and community functions throughout Southeast Georgia. She resides in Statesboro, and is also a part-time instructor with the Gail Hursey School of Dance.

Sandy Dostal Thornton (’02) and Rick Thornton were married in October. Sandy is the corporate special projects director for The Kessler Collection, a luxury boutique hotel chain. She writes, “We happily live in Orlando, Fla., and would enjoy hearing from any fellow Eagles at sandra.dostal@kesslercollection.com.”

Marcus Moody (’02) and his wife, Zakiyyah (Wiley ‘04), celebrated the July birth of their son, Kayden.

April Baggs (’04) is a production technician/newscast director with WSAV-TV in Savannah. She can be reached at missbaggs@hotmail.com.

Meghan Correia (’04) and Ralph Kirchen were married March 2007. The couple resides in Lutz, Fla.

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Alumna continues research work in native Hungary

Katalin Patonai has returned to her native Hungary to pursue a master’s degree in ecology, but the young scientist is still using the knowledge she acquired as a student at Georgia Southern.

Patonai recently won first place in her division at the International Life Sciences Students’ Conference hosted by the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia, the honor coming for research she conducted as an undergraduate assistant to Georgia Southern biology professor Sophie George.

Their project focused on Littoraria irrora, a snail found in Coastal Georgia and more commonly known as the salt marsh periwinkle. “Ecologically and economically, salt marshes are very important to Coastal Georgia,” said Patonai, who graduated from Georgia Southern in 2006. “Our research looked at the salt marsh periwinkle and its impact on these marshes.”

Patonai attended Georgia Southern on a Georgia Rotary Student Program scholarship, which provides assistance to international students. She was also the recipient of a Paulson Student Research Award, presented annually by the Office of Undergraduate Research in the Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology.

Patonai and George conducted their research at two locations: one at Tybee Island, near Savannah, and the other at Crooked River State Park, just north of St. Marys.

“The salt marshes are vital and beautiful areas in Coastal Georgia,” Patonai said. “From an ecological standpoint, they provide valuable shelter, breeding and feeding grounds for various species while functioning as a natural water filtering system. Economically speaking, their resources provide around $1.5 billion of income per year.

“However, these areas also experience massive die-offs, with complex reasons in the background. The herbivore salt marsh periwinkle can overgraze huge areas, turning previously dense vegetation into mud flats. In such cases, their numbers can increase dramatically, which suggests predators do not have the ability to control the periwinkles’ abundance.

“Therefore, the investigation of predator-prey interactions is an important approach to understanding and preventing these die-offs.”

“Our study sought to answer two questions,” Patonai said. “First, does shell size and shape differ between the two sites and over time? Secondly, if there are differences in shell morphology, can this be due to difference in predation risk at the two sites?”

“According to preliminary data, the sites differed significantly in vegetation cover,” Patonai said. “In comparison, Tybee Island was considered an exposed habitat, and Crooked River was a sheltered habitat. Because shelter gives prey a chance to seek refuge and escape predators, we expected to find differences in predation risk between the two sites.

“Our findings suggest that predators seem to exert strong selection on periwinkles at the exposed site, so they represent a potential control mechanism.”

Now a graduate student at Eotvos Lorand University in Budapest, Hungary, Patonai has fond memories of her experience at Georgia Southern.

“I was fortunate to participate in great classes, memorable field trips and research projects,” Patonai said. “I enjoyed the extensive facilities, which offered many more resources than had been available to me.”
Church of Statesboro, where he taught Sunday school for 43 years. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Barbara "Bab" Moore Lindsey; a daughter, Julie; three grandsons; a brother; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Paul E. Nessmith, 99, died March 12. Mr. Nessmith played a key role in supporting Georgia Southern’s mission of regional service and in the construction of the Southern Center for Continuing Education, later named the Nessmith-Lane Building. He served in the Georgia General Assembly as the 82nd District representative from 1963-1980. Prior to his election, Mr. Nessmith served on the state’s Agricultural Commodities Authority. He was president of the Statesboro Federal Land Bank Association from 1962-1979. Successful farmers and livestock producers, Mr. Nessmith and his wife, Eloise, were presented the Master Farm Family Award by The Progressive Farmer magazine in 1961. He was honored with the Georgia Farm Bureau’s Outstanding Service Award in 1969. Mr. Nesssmith served as chairman of the Southeastern Peanut Advisory Committee; supervisor of the Ogeechee River Soil and Water Conservation District; and was a member of the Georgia Surface Mine Land User Board and the State Advisory Committee for Vocational Agriculture. Mr. Nessmith received an Honorary Life Membership in the Bulloch County Young Farmers. A portion of U.S. Highway 25 is named the Paul E. Nessmith Parkway in his honor. He was preceded in death by a son, Paul Nessmith, Jr. Surviving are his wife of 71 years, Eloise Smith Nessmith; a son and daughter-in-law, Billy and Carol Nessmith; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Alumni
Thomas “Mel” Aimar III, (’79), Houston, Texas
Preston Blanchard, (’72), Grovetown, Ga.
Deidre Sue Clines, (’71), Douglasville, Ga.
Joe DeSandre, Meriden, Conn.
Winston Mathis, (’69), Gaffney, S.C.
Ann Beaver Mons, Statesboro
Estelle Burgess Parken, Decatur, Ga.
Robert E. Priestley, (’57), Savannah
George A. Roebuck, (’54), Brooklet, Ga.

Faculty
Jack N. Averitt, graduate studies
Sonny Butler, information technology
John Lindsey, education

Students
Melissa Eustice, Martinez, Ga.
Jessica Fulmer, Martinez, Ga.
Martin Obiajulu, Lagos, Nigeria

Virtually ready
Buchanan drives advances in computerized medical training

After devouring mathematics, then biochemistry, Judith A. Thomson Buchanan found something she could really sink her teeth into.

Buchanan (’70), associate dean of the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry, grew up in Akron, Ohio. Out of high school, she joined an older sister in Savannah, where she lived and worked full-time in an area hospital lab while attending Georgia Southern and earning her undergraduate degree in mathematics.

Also interested in science, Buchanan earned her master’s and doctoral degrees in biochemistry from the University of Texas, but her career direction shifted when she went to the University of Florida to conduct post-doctoral biomedical research. She became acquainted with scientists in the university’s dental program.

“I thought maybe I should go into dental research,” she said. “Then somebody advised me, ‘Well if you’re going to do that, you should get the degree. Then you’ve got all kinds of options.’ I had never really thought about being a dentist, but that’s a bit of my personality – I like new challenges.”

Graduating at the top of her class, Buchanan completed Florida’s four-year dental school program in three years, then took a job at the University of Mississippi. “I had a private practice, I kept 30 to 40 percent of my time for research, and then I taught,” she said.

She served there for 11 years until accepting a post as associate dean of academic affairs at the University of Pennsylvania, and then the University of Minnesota.

She has found a special niche researching virtual training methods for dental students. “It’s really cool,” said Buchanan. “Students can learn in a virtual world first. It’s safer when they treat patients, and that goes for dentistry or surgery. The field keeps growing and growing. It has proved to be an excellent way to in-
Georgia Southern University Dean Emeritus Jack Nelson Averitt ('44), 85, passed away on Nov. 11, 2007.

A higher education pioneer in South Georgia, Dr. Averitt served Georgia Southern for 35 years as a faculty member and dean and organized Georgia Southern’s first graduate programs with off-campus centers. He served as the first dean of graduate studies from 1969 until his retirement.

He was instrumental in establishing the University’s first stand-alone doctoral program – a doctorate in education – submitting the first proposal to the Board of Regents in 1970.

“Dr. Averitt left a vibrant legacy of leadership at Georgia Southern,” said Timothy Mack, dean of the College of Graduate Studies. “His vision and leadership as a faculty member and dean was instrumental in inaugurating graduate education in South Georgia. It is fitting that his name will always be remembered in perpetuity as part of the University’s Jack N. Averitt College of Graduate Studies.”

With his wife, Addie D. Averitt, he endowed an annual lecture series in history and English and a biennial award for alumni who demonstrate excellence and service.

He was a lifelong resident of Statesboro and a member of the Statesboro First Baptist Church for 66 years, where he served as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, organist, choir director and soloist. He was also an integral part of the Statesboro-Bulloch County business community, developing one of the city’s early subdivisions, Woodlawn.

“For me, and, I think, for all those who called Jack friend, his death created not a loss – how can the opportunity to have shared conversation and affection with a man like Jack ever be lost? – but rather an absence,” said longtime friend Kathy Bradley. “At any moment, his wit, his insight, his compassion may return in a memory or in an encounter with someone else who knew and loved him. And in that moment I have to smile at my incredible good fortune to have been among those who knew him well.”

Kirbylene Stephens knew Dr. Averitt when she was a student and, later, as a 37-year professional staff member.

“Jack Averitt was an outstanding citizen of his nation, state and community,” Stephens said. “He was also an outstanding contributor to his university as an alumnus, a faculty member, dean and supporter. Statesboro has lost a pillar of the community and a person without peer. I have lost a wonderful friend.”

Dr. Averitt was a committed member of Rotary International, serving as president of Statesboro Rotary Club and a term as district governor. He received the Distinguished Service Award for international service, one of five in the world at that time, and was named a Rotary Paul Harris Fellow and Rotary International Foundation Trustee. Dr. Averitt linked civic engagement with his career at Georgia Southern by directing of the campus’ Rotary Language Institute for international students.

Dr. Averitt earned his bachelor’s degree from Georgia Teacher’s College, a Master of Arts from the University of Georgia, and a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He was preceded in death by his wife. He is survived by his sister-in-law, Connie Averitt; three nieces, a nephew, and numerous great nieces and nephews.
While juggling class, study and work, student and funamblist Mike Doyle of Marietta, Ga., practices the art of tightrope – or more accurately, slackwire – walking between two trees on Sweetheart Circle. Just enjoying the show on a spring afternoon were Eric Dorner of Tacoma, Wash., Nikki Arcalas of Goose Creek, S.C., Amanda Stricklett of Omaha, Neb., and Penny the dog.