



# Westmar University Alumni and Friends Association

Volume 10, Issue 4

November, 2008

## Two Reunions Planned for 2009

Two reunions are in the works for the summer of 2009.

The first reunion will be held on the weekend of July 10, 11, and 12 when the Decades of the 1960s will reunite in Le Mars along with those involved in football through the decades.

The other reunion involves the 50-year reunion of the class of 1959. They will be inviting everyone from the classes of 1957 through 1961. This reunion, held on August 14-16, 2009, will also be held in Le Mars.

A letter will go out soon with the details of the reunions. If you have an email address and we don't already have it, please

consider letting us know what it is so we can email the letter to you and save the cost of postage, paper and ink.

Also, if we have your email address we will keep you posted monthly as to who has registered to attend the reunion.

With the letter, there will be a registration form. A form will also be posted on the Westmar website and PayPal will be offered as a form of payment. Otherwise, the form can be printed and a check mailed to the office.

As always, all former Westmar (Western Union) students, faculty, staff, and administration are welcome to attend these reunion along with spouses or interested

friends.

We try to keep our database as up-to-date as we can, but we don't always get notice when somebody moves. On our website ([www.westmarcollege.org](http://www.westmarcollege.org)) we have a list of people for whom we no longer have an address. Please take a look at the list and see if you know where these people have gone. The list is under the "Links" tab on the home page.

The Alumni Office is here to help if anyone else wants to have a reunion, such as a reunion of a college club or organization. Or even a get-together of all of the Westmar people in your area. We can get those names and addresses for you.

## Notice: New E-Mail Address

Due to some repeated technical problems, we have changed internet providers here in the office. Our new e-mail address is

**WAF@WestmarCollege.org**

Our website has remained the same: [www.westmarcollege.org](http://www.westmarcollege.org).

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.



Still receiving your newsletter by mail? If you have an email address, please consider helping us cut costs by allowing us to send a link to the newsletter file on the internet. We will email the link to you and you will be able to read the newsletter as long as you have the free Adobe Reader program. You will also be able to print a copy if you choose.

### Westmar Alumni and Friends Association Board of Directors

Paul Coffin '75 (president)  
Leon Scott '66-'97 faculty  
Rosemary Radloff '93 & staff  
Milt Martin '53 & fac. '63-'97  
Jeff Neary '81  
Denise Kolker '75  
Gregory Mc Innis '92

The board meetings for 2009 will be held on Jan. 20, April 21, July 21, and Oct. 20 at 7 p.m. in the Plymouth County Historical Museum's Welcome Room. All members are encouraged to participate in whatever way they can.

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# Bricks and Mortar and More

## Industrial Arts Building by Dr. Wayne G. Marty

The Industrial Arts Department first appears in the Western Union catalog in 1934 but for many years the wood and metal shop activities were located in the basement of Thoren Hall. During the Western Union “building boom” of 1946, following the end of WW II, the department was finally able to occupy a building of its own. Four government surplus wood frame barracks buildings were moved to the campus from the Sioux City Air base. Two of these four were assembled into a T-shaped building located south of the Heating Plant, with the drawing classroom occupying the short branch of the T and the long branch providing the space for the Wood and Metal shop activities. The entire assembly was brick veneered to make a nice looking campus building.

Professor Eldon Danne was the only instructor for the department at this time. The drawing tools were the sloped drafting table, T-square, 30-60 and 45 triangles, pencil, pen, and scaled ruler. Hand tools were common in the shop with a limited number of power tools – table saw, band saw, jig saw, lathes, and sander. Many beautiful pieces of furniture and works of art were created in that shop and an annual Open House reception to show off the student work was commonplace in the 70’s.

Professor Rod Scholten recalls the very successful January Interim program during the 70’s when the involved college students worked hard in the wood shop to make preliminary material preparations and appropriate assembly jigs so that simple projects, such as rubber band power boats could be assembled and completed by kindergarten classes in the Le Mars area. Also, joyfully remembered by many, are the popular Industrial Arts Club “Top Hat” entries in the various local annual parades (see photo). A huge black top hat covered the head, shoulders, and arms of the male parade volunteer and a big face was painted on the bare chest and abdomen. It was a fun time to watch this “midget with a big face and a big top hat” walking along between the bands and vehicles of the parade.

The Industrial Arts building saw its first major change in the early 80’s when the wooden floor of the drawing classroom

was removed and replaced with concrete to make space for a specific metals shop with appropriate safety and venting equipment. The engineering drawing activities were moved to Dubs. After just a few years, in 1984, the metal shop was also moved to Dubs so the short branch of the T building could be demolished to make room for the construction of the new Life Sports Center.



*From: The 1971 Eagle yearbook*

Professor Don Buryanek remembers teaching in the remaining wood shop for most of a year with only a plastic wall covering the east end during the Life Sports building construction. The shops continued in these locations until 1987 when the basement of

the Life Sports building was completed and the metals shop, under the guidance of Professor Robert Pettit, with newly acquired robotic machinery training equipment could be moved into the new space designed for that use. Finally a dust collection system was also added to the remaining original wood shop. By this time computerized CAD/CAM drawing equipment was acquired and the drawing and design portion of what now had become an Industrial Technology department, was moved into space available in Kime Science Hall.

Because of the difficulty of “keeping up” with rapidly advancing technology, the Industrial Education program was terminated at Westmar in 1991. At about this same time, Tarkio College in Tarkio, MO closed and the entire Drama and Dance departments moved to Westmar. The wood shop took on a new life. The historic shop equipment was removed, the concrete floor was covered with a newly refinished wood floor, mirrors were installed on the “Shop” walls and ballet bars were added to make the building a very suitable dance studio. When the dance program was discontinued in 1994, the studio was used for cheerleader practice and miscellaneous storage. After the college closed in 1997, the City of Le Mars became the owner of all campus buildings. The Le Mars Recreation Department and the YMCA combined to make full use of the “Old Gym” and the new Life Sports Center as the Community Wellness Center. The “remains” of the WW II Sioux City Air Base barracks that was used for many years as the Industrial Arts department educational Wood Shop, is now a part of the Wellness Center and is known as the CWC Fitness Annex. At least 20 exercise and fitness classes use the space every week. When constructed in the 1940’s during WW II who could have predicted the life of this building and its usefulness is not over yet. Death-time for this building has not yet arrived.

In the next issue we will discuss the Memorial-Koehler Complex. Your remembrances are invited as are your comments about the Industrial Arts Department.



# Alumni News

## News

**1947-Robert Bletscher** has been retired for almost 20 years and lives in Oregon. He still enjoys conducting weddings, funerals and Bible studies.

**1950-Bob Taber** is doing well after kidney surgery last spring. He and Lois (1949) celebrated their 59th anniversary in June.

**1954-Darline (Miller) Balm-Demmel** is a part time development associate for Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary in northern Iowa since August of this year.

**1960-Larry Rosenow** of Grinnell, Iowa is a retired art teacher who has shown paintings in exhibits of the Iowa Artists, the Iowa Watercolor Society and the Iowa State Fair during the past year.

**1961-Twila (Miller) Rosenow** retired from ESL teaching in the Grinnell schools in June and is taking a job teaching ESL to adults at Iowa Valley Community College in Grinnell, Iowa.

**1972-Carl F. Carlson** has been married to Rita Sukut for 32 years. They have two sons, Jonathan and Philip and live in Illinois.

**1984-Wayne Brown** currently works as

an insurance agent in Sioux Falls. He married Rogene McGuire on June 17, 2006. She is a choral teacher in Sioux Falls.

**1995-Melanie (Miller) Garrett** and husband Patrick are parents to twin girls, Fiona and Jane, born on June 26.

**Please watch your local newspapers for news involving fellow Westmar alumni (including obituaries) and email or send it to us for publication.**

## Deaths

**1939-Wilma (Krull) Wilms** passed away on December 3, 2008 in Iowa City.

**1940-Irene (Reid) Farley** died on May 16, 2008.

**1942-Dorothy (Pratt) Rainboth** of Marcus, Iowa passed away on Nov. 30, 2008.

**1945-Lavonne (Criswell) Buss** passed away in Le Mars, Iowa on September 14, 2008.

**1947-(York)-Max Allen** passed away on September 10, 2008 at his home in Zumbrota, Minn.

**1949 Leo Flaherty** of Le Mars died on October 21, 2008.

**1951-Jim Munday** of Le Mars, Iowa died on June 4, 2008.

**1953-Curtis Wegner** died on February 29, 2008.

**1957-Paul Eagen** died September 27, 2008 in his home in Cherokee.

**1958-Bill Geiger** passed away on November 8, 2008 in Indianola, Iowa.

**1965-Virginia (Rakowicz) Suazo** passed away August 29, 2008 in Manitou Springs, Colo.

**1968-Lyllis Athens** of Humboldt, Iowa died on July 5, 2008.

**1968-Meriem (Scothorn) Erichsen** of Marcus died on January 25, 2008

**1969-Ronald Rankin** died on June 26, 2008 at Dubuque, Iowa.

**1975-Dale Cline** of Grinnell, Iowa passed away on August 6, 2008.

**1997-Jodie (Iverson) Schachelford** of Le Mars, Iowa passed away on September 7, 2008.

**Administration-Thomas Stone** of Maryville, Ill. died September 24, 2008

**Staff-Marsha Melnichak** of Fayetteville, Arkansas died on November 20, 2008.



### Westmar Alumni Meet Up At Conference

Left to right- David Martin (1967), Executive Director of the Georgia Council on Economic Education; Leland Gustafson (1964), Director of the Center for Economic Education at the University of West Georgia; and Devon Yoho (1964), Director of the Center for Economic Education at Ball State University.

### Wafa Dues Support These Activities:

- Work with the Iowa College Foundation to administer the Westmar Endowment Scholarship
- Help sponsor and organize Westmar reunions
- Publish Wafa newsletters
- Help maintain displays in the Westmar Room of the Plymouth County Historical Museum
- Maintain Westmar Alumni, Faculty, Staff, and Administration database
- Help maintain the Westmar Memorial Park on the former campus
- Maintain the Wafa web-site

## Alumni Membership Makes a Great Gift

**Need a gift idea? How about a membership in Wafa. Since the organization is called Westmar Alumni and Friends Association anyone can join.**

**Do you know someone who isn't a member? Give us their name and we will send them a complimentary issue of our newsletter.**



# Westmar Trust Scholarships

Application and required documentation must be postmarked by February 15th. Late or incomplete applications cannot be accepted by the Foundation so please follow all instructions carefully.

If you need assistance or have questions fill in the form found at <http://www.iumf.org/applicationinfo.asp>.

1. These scholarships are from a portion of the money that remained after the closing of Westmar College, which was affiliated with the Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. To honor the memory of those making gifts to Westmar College and the alumni, these funds will be used as an endowment to assist students with their educational needs at United Methodist colleges in Iowa.
2. **Amount of scholarship:** \$2,000 (The application can be found at <http://www.iumf.org/westmarscholar.asp>)
3. Selection criteria:
  - A. Must be attending or planning to enroll in a United

Methodist affiliated college in Iowa.

- B. Must show evidence that applicant is active in high school or college activities.
- C. Minimum grade point average for high school applicant is 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) and for college applicant 2.5. Transcripts must be provided. ACT/SAT scores must be provided by high school seniors.
- D. Two letters of recommendation are required. The letters should be from a teacher or school counselor, pastor, and community leader.
- E. Financial need may be considered; therefore, copies of all financial documents used to secure financial aid through the college should be attached to application.
- F. If all criteria are equal, preference will be given to students from the following northwest Iowa counties: Lyon, Sioux, Osceola, O'Brien, Plymouth, Cherokee, Woodbury and Ida.

#### 4. **Deadline: February 15**

*Taken from The Iowa United Methodist Foundation website*

## IS NOW A MASS OF RUINS!

*Reprinted from Le Mars Globe-Post, August 29, 1900*

**Western Union College Laid Low by Fierce Fire Caused by Lightning.**

**LOSS CAUSES GENERAL SORROW.**

**Comes with Crushing Force to Citizens and the United Evangelical Church People.**

Western Union College was struck by lightning at about 11:30 o'clock on Thursday night and in an extremely short period of time the usual light-heartedness of Le Mars was changed to sorrow for the college building and the grounds which was platted and built by their individual energies and efforts, at a cost of \$40,000, was in ruins.

The loss at this time comes with crushing weight for the college stood as a monument to the energy and thrift of our citizens, and all took an unusual pride in it and when it went into the hands of the United Evangelical church to become their denominational college, with their grand army of mem-

bers behind it to place it in the front rank of all of the colleges, the usual pride which Le Mars had held in the magnificent building was increased, for the town was beginning to realize, as the day for the opening of the first school year approached and the successful manner which the vast work leading up to the day of opening had been managed by President Thoren and his able assistants, that there was a force behind this college which would make it grow until the handsome college plat would be completely covered with buildings devoted to the outgiving of knowledge and standing on the high eminence it would extend a welcome to all to seek investment and homes in our midst. The smouldering ruins mock man's effort today for more was destroyed in an hour than could be rebuilt in months.

A vivid flash of lightning, a deafening crash that startled the people from their beds and the birds that had sought the shelter of the trees into cries of terror was soon followed by the dull red glow of destroying flame from the

basement of the college which was soon seen by Mr. Taylor, an employee of the Plymouth Roller Mill, and his cry of fire aroused F. M. Roseberry who sent in an alarm which reached the central station at the same time that other alarms had been sent in from different parts of the city and the fire companies were aroused, but a long time elapsed before they reached there owing to the great distance and the heavy condition of the streets. The Franklin street company was the first to reach the scene but others soon followed. But for location of the fire in the basement and near the stairway it soon had burned to the roof of the building and any effort that could have been exerted at that time would not have saved the structure.

The fire completely gutted the building in about an hour and only portions of the blackened walls stand as grim sentinels of disaster. The west wall was the first to fall for it was on this side that the building was struck and fired. The south wall fell a little later but the north and east walls were



standing on Friday and guards were stationed there to prevent loss of life or injury to the incautious sightseer that might go too near.

The loss on the building is about \$25, 000 with a loss of \$1,000 on furniture. One of the professors lost a fine library which was moved there, but a few days ago, but aside from this the individual losses were small.

The building was insured for \$10,000 to the corporation of the Normal School association and not by Western Union College. The term of the contract between the two associations were to the effect that after ten years the Western Union College was to receive a deed to the property or sooner if they make \$10,000 in improvements.

There is nothing in the agreement between the two associations making it incumbent upon the other to build and if the college is to be rebuilt the funds for that purpose will have to be raised from the citizens to cover the amount of difference between the value of the building and the insurance and salvage. An estimate made on Friday fixed the amount necessary to be raised at \$12,000 and this sum must be secured or in all probability the college will not be rebuilt.

Rev. Jonas, the presiding elder, who has been an incessant worker for the college said he believed that the church would not feel able to take up this additional burden for they were straining every effort at this time to accomplish the ends undertaken to secure the other necessary amounts and he feared that it was beyond their power to do more at present. Had the school been in operation for some time it would change the condition of things and make it not near so difficult to determine what could be done.

President Thoren at once issued the following address to the church people and made the necessary calls to the officers and directors and other immediately interested and when he goes to the Aurora camp meeting he will hold conference with as many of the church people as possible.

Le Mars, Iowa, Aug. 24, 1900 Dear Brother: - Christian Greetings!

It is with heavy heart that I write this letter to convey the sad news that our college building

was totally destroyed by fire last night between 12 and 1:30 a.m. A heavy thunder storm prevailed at the time, and it is evidently the result of a strike of lightning as neighbors claim it is. This necessitates immediate action on the part of our board of trustees and by the people of Le Mars. The nearness of the time of opening our Western Union College makes the situation the more serious, though it may be that temporary quarters can be secured until a new college building can be erected, should that be decided upon.

Bro. Jonas and I will confer with the Le Mars Normal School Association this morning to ascertain their sentiment in the matter. I will inform you of the results of our deliberations.

The president of our board will call an early meeting to act and no doubt but that this very serious crisis in our educational work in the west will be overruled by a kind Providence to that victory will come out of seeming defeat. Trust in God! Pray much. Hold on to God for direction and let there be no discouragement in our undertaken work for higher education. Western Union College did not burn, only a building. We believe that the people of Le Mars will rally to our support extraordinary.

Your Brother in Christ,  
H. H. Thoren



Courtesy of Plymouth County Historical Museum

Pending the mass meeting which was held at the opera house on Friday evening President Thoren and Rev. Wm. Jonas busied themselves on Friday to secure some fairly good quarters that can be used for the opening of the school and the question of using the lecture rooms of four churches, all within a block of each other, the Senate hotel and one or two other places was looked over so that the college would be in readiness to act at once provided the result of the mass meeting was satisfactory.

The insurance carried were in the following companies: Royal Union of Liverpool, \$1000; London Assurance Association, \$1000; London, Liverpool & Globe, \$1333, all written by A. C. Colledge; Germania of New York \$1300; Farmers of York, \$1000; Farmers of Cedar Rapids, \$1000; Commercial Union Association of London, \$500, all written by R. J. Kochler; Connecticut of Hartford, \$1000, written by A. A. Alline; New Hampshire of Manchester, \$1000, Northwestern National of Milwaukee, \$1334, all written by A. M. Duus. The directors in the old Le Mars Normal School association are: P. F. Dalton, George E. Richardson, C. E. Haas, C. H. Kehrberg, E. D. Chassell, G.C. Maclagan, and M. A. Moore.

Volume 10, Issue 4

November, 2008

WESTMAR UNIVERSITY ALUMNI & FRIENDS  
ASSOCIATION  
335 FIRST AVENUE S.W.  
LE MARS, IOWA 51031



**Alumni Office Staff**

Janice (Dunbar) Kooiker '67: Executive Director  
Mary Holub: Communications Director and  
Newsletter Editor

**Show your Westmar spirit!**  
*Do you know classmates or other  
Westmar alums who are not yet  
WAFAs members? Ask them to send  
information and yearly dues to the  
office in Le Mars to be included in  
future mailings.*

**Contact us!**  
**WAFAs@WestmarCollege.org**

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Be sure to check out our new and improved, ever-changing website at:  
<http://www.WestmarCollege.org/>. We offer online shopping, membership,  
and reunion registration. Suggestions are always welcome.

**Current Members:** You will receive a postcard when it is time to renew  
your membership. Please pass the form below on to other Westmar Alum  
so they can be part of the momentum also.

**What's Happening with You? Tell Us!**

We are interested in knowing what has recently (or not so re-  
cently) happened in your life. Promotions? Marriage? Births  
or deaths? Honors or awards? Graduate degree? Semi- or  
full retirement? Pass on the information so we can print it and  
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Class year \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse also an alum \_\_\_\_\_

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News (attach a separate sheet if needed ) \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: WAFAs  
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Or e-mail to: **WAFAs@WestmarCollege.org**



**Westmar University Alumni & Friends Assoc.**

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Can we e-mail your newsletter?  Yes  No

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