



Westmar University Alumni and Friends Association

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Oldest Alumnus Dies at 102



From: *Le Mars Daily Sentinel*, January 18, 2010

Alice M. Kruse, 102, of Blair, Neb., and formerly of Le Mars, died Friday, Jan. 15, 2010, at Crowell Memorial Home in Blair, Neb. Alice was born March 2, 1907, on the family farm near Clay Center, Neb., the daughter of John and Martha Kruse. She began her education in a one room rural school and graduated from Clay Center High School in 1924. She graduated from Western Union College (later Westmar College) in Le Mars, in 1929.

In July 1930, Alice arrived by train

in Pineville, Ky. She was directed to put her suitcase and bundle of personal items in two gunny sacks. The two sacks were fastened together with two large nails and thrown over the back of a mule to ride with her for the 14 miles into a valley of the Cumberland Mountains of Kentucky. Red Bird Mission, a church project only 10 years old when she arrived, would be her working place for 16 years. She was given a room in the girl's dormitory with no indoor plumbing and no fans for reducing July heat discomfort. Alice taught English and Speech to under-prepared mountain children and saw them become part of winning debate teams and successful college students.

She completed her masters degree at the University of Kentucky in 1943 and in 1946 joined the faculty of Western Union College (later Westmar College) in Le Mars, where she served for 27 years until retiring in 1973.

At Westmar, she continued her commitment to students by establishing the Alice Kruse Scholarship Fund. She insisted that "the recipient must always be a true student. The person should be first a scholar and then a person who's very alert to other opportunities on campus." She valued her acquaintance with all students and was a faithful

attendee at most athletic and music events.

Alice became head of the English Department, Director of the Humanities Division and was a member of Sigma Tau Delta - a National English Society; Pi Kappa Delta - a National Forensic (speech) Fraternity, and Alpha Chi - a National Academic Fraternity.

In 1987, she was selected as a Distinguished Westmar Alumni Fellow.

After retirement in 1973 she remained in Le Mars, living in her own home and continuing her active involvement in the life of Westmar College by doing regular volunteer work and encouraging students in any way that she could.

In 1999, at age 92, she moved to the Crowell home.

The church was always important to Alice and she learned how to live simply. In addition to aiding needy students, she found ways to provide significant aid to new churches, particularly in the Nebraska Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Family survivors include eight nieces and nephews residing in five different states.

Her brother and four sisters preceded Alice in death.

Reunion Dates
July 16, 17: 70s Decade, Madrigal, and Women Athletes
July 23, 24: 20-Year reunion of the Class of 1990
Aug. 13, 14: 50-Year reunion of the Class of 1960
July 15, 16, 2011: 80s Decade
See our website for more information and registration.

Westmar Alumni and Friends Association Board of Directors		Inside this issue:
Paul Coffin '75 (president)	Board meetings for the rest of 2010 will be held on July 20, and Oct. 19 at 7 p.m. in the Plymouth County Historical Museum's Welcome Room.	<i>Bricks & Mortar & More</i> 2
Leon Scott '66-'97 faculty		<i>Alumni News & Deaths</i> 3
Rosemary Radloff '93 & staff		<i>Reunion Registration Form</i> 5
Milt Martin '53 & fac. '63-'97		<i>Westmar Park Donations</i> 5
Cory Isebrand '88	All members are encouraged to participate in whatever way they can.	<i>Contact Information</i> 6
Jan Wagner '76		
Phyllis Mitchell '90		



Bricks and Mortar and More

Charles A. Mock Library-Administration Building
By Dr. Wayne G. Marty

When I came to Westmar as a freshman in the fall of 1949, the New Library was under construction. My first specific memory of activity in the building was my participation as a volunteer guard for the Friday night vigil to protect the building from vandalism prior to the Saturday football game with Buena Vista College. The rivalry was intense in those years and pre-game pranks included the frequent painting of the Westmar Eagle. Fear of destructive vandalism may have been justified because a group from Westmar at one time used gasoline and fire to burn a big W on the BV football field. (Maybe someone can tell me if this really happened or if it is one of my old age embellished memories.)

At this time the Library was still located on the third floor of the Dubs classroom building and all of the Administration offices were also in Dubs. The building was completed and the major moving activity was during Christmas break of December of 1949 when all the books and the administrative offices were moved to the new location. Special wooden boxes with good handles were constructed for the purpose and students who stayed through the break provided the labor. Maybe there are some alumni who were involved in that move and can share some of their memories and provide more details.

President Kime, from his new office, now had a view of most of the campus and he shared the second floor space with the Academic Dean, G. O. Thompson, the Registrar's office with transcript storage, and a convenient conference room. I was personally involved, along with many others, in numerous meetings: hiring and firing discussions, curriculum planning and changes, budget and financial shortage struggles, building and campus development planning, etc. The results produced significant growth for the college through the 60's, creative curriculum design with a successful January (One Course Only) Interim but, unfortunately, also the final closing actions in 1997.

The new library space enabled significant growth to the library holdings which was an essential requirement for obtaining the important North Central accreditation in 1953. In contrast to the electronic information systems of today (Google, etc.) books and pe-



Charles A. Mock Library—Administration Building
From the 1952 Eagle Yearbook

riodicals were the storage systems of that era and the "search engine" was the Card Catalog. (That sounds like an ancient term now.) The Library was the information system. "Meet you at the Library" was common. It was a quiet study place. It was a dating place. The Library may not sound romantic but perhaps the walk home was.

My wife, June, attended the 1952 summer school session after staying out a semester earlier to earn money to continue school. Library use was encouraged by awarding an airplane ride for the one who spent the most time in the library each week. Students signed in and out each time they visited the library and June's diligent library use earned her the flight over and around Le Mars while seated beside President D. O. Kime as the pilot.

I recall the faculty orientation meetings in the main reading room of the library at the beginning of the school year. Faculty assembled with the men in their coats and ties. But culture and expectations change. In my latter years at Westmar in the 90's I seldom wore a tie.

The library basement had multi-uses. It was the location for Dr. Zuehl's old hand operated printing press where he cranked out posters for various occasions. The press is now in the Plymouth County Historical Museum along with many other Westmar memory items. For some years the Bookstore was in the basement and easily accessible following the course registration sessions that were held in the library main reading room upstairs. I bought my first tennis racket in that bookstore - my wooden "Bobby Riggs" racket

(Continued on page 4)



Alumni News

Michael Thompson (1967) is currently involved in several business ventures ranging from music

production to a very large buyout of a business operation. He is loving the Executive/Business

coaching and teaching at several universities in the Chicago area and has started to write a book.

Alumni Deaths

1940s

Lois Miller (York 1940) died December 11, 2009 in Central Point, Oregon. After graduating from College, Lois made a life-long career in service with the Evangelical United Brethren and United Methodist churches. She was a teacher in a mission school in Velarde, N.M. She lived in Dayton, Ohio and New York City where she retired from the position of General Secretary of the Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church in 1982. She then moved to Oregon.

Mary Jane (Crosley) Hartman (1945) died on October 5, 2009 leaving her husband of 64 years, Warren. She earned a music degree from Western Union College. When physical limitations made it difficult to travel, she directed her attention to writing books.

Helen (Maass) Bottjen (1946) died on April 11, 2010 in Le Mars. After receiving her teaching certificate from Western Union College, she taught at Remsen #5 country school. She married George Bottjen in 1947 and they farmed in the Remsen area. Helen had three children.

1950s

Larry Christopher (1950) died March 4, 2010 after a fall. He lived in Scottsdale, Arizona, for over 40 years and was a broker for Bromar, a wholesale grocer. He traveled several states and retired from that company. His wife preceded him in death and they had no children.

William Bradley (1957) passed away March 23, 2010 at Durham, N.C. He taught at Pennsylvania State University from 1969 to 1992 at which time he became a commercial artist. He has two sons.

James M. LeCount (1958) died September 6, 2009. Jim graduated from Westmar College with a degree in History and a minor in Business. He also received degrees in Social Science and Secondary Education from the University of Wisconsin at River Falls in 1965. Jim served from 1959-1961 in the US Army in the 48th Medical Battalion, 2nd Armored Division. He is survived by his wife Judy.

1960s

Carl Braunschweig (1960) died February 13, 2010 at Wall Lake, Iowa. He graduated from Aurelia High School in 1952. Then served in the US Air Force from 1953 to 1956. He then graduated from Westmar with a degree in Industrial Ed. He farmed with his brother until moving to Odebolt in 1977 and was in the construction business with another brother. In 1980 he married Beverly and in 1983 they owned CB's Drive-In in Odebolt. He also worked at the Sac County Golf and Country Club and then for Randy Aschinger on the farm. He has one step-daughter.

Albert D. Lade (1965) died February 21, 2010 in Sioux City. After graduating from Hull High School, Albert joined the US Air Force and served until 1959 when he transferred to the Air Force Reserves

until 1963. After his discharge, he returned to Le Mars and graduated with a degree in business administration. He married Rosalie Brouillette in 1958 and they had five sons. Albert worked in California with electronics in the aviation industry, in Washington state as a territory manager for Standard Oil, and Mountain View, Calif., where he owned and operated a gas station in the late 1970s. He then became a district manager with Midas Muffler Company. At the time of his retirement, he was with RSS Marketing as a field representative. He and his wife returned to Le Mars in 2006

Lyle Stinton (1965) died on February 8, 2010. During his college years he drove a school bus for Le Mars Community School. He was an announcer for KLEM radio station for seven years. After completing his graduate work at Iowa State, University of Northern Iowa, Morningside, Western State College, and the University of Wyoming, he began a teaching career that lasted 41 years. He also coached wrestling, football, and track and retired in 2006. He received the District Assistant Coach of the Year Award nine times, State Assistant Coach of the Year Award three times, was recognized for his 30 years as a football coach, and for his 38 years as a wrestling official. Lyle played in the American Legion Drum and Bugle Corp Wasmers Post 241 for seven years. He is

(Continued on page 4)



Alumni Deaths Continued —

(Continued from page 3)

survived by his wife, Sheilah, and five children.

1970s

Dorcas (Franken) Donovan (1978) died on March 19, 2010. After graduating from Sioux Center High School, she earned an associate's degree from Western Iowa Tech in 1976. She then earned a bachelor's degree in psychology at Westmar College. She worked in psychiatric nursing in Des Moines. She and her husband, L.T., were married in 1980 and had three children. L.T. was in the US Army and they lived in Hawaii, Kentucky, Georgia, Washington D.C., and Texas before he was discharged and

they settled in Spirit Lake, Iowa. After the children were out of high school, Dorcas and L.T. moved to St. Paul, Minn. Dorcas was proud of her volunteer work at the local Veteran's Administration hospital.

1980s

Linae Hiemstra (1980) passed away in Sioux City, Iowa on April 19, 2010. She obtained a bachelor of arts degree in education and substitute taught school in the Kingsley area. At the time of her death she was teaching special needs children at Dakota Valley School in McCook Lake, S.D.

Kevin Reed (1982) died March 15, 2010. After graduating from Westmar he began a career as a his-

tory teacher in Goldfield, where he also coached volleyball and basketball. In 1985 he moved to the Des Moines area and taught social studies at Dallas Center-Grimes. He was assistant girls' basketball coach at Roosevelt High School in Des Moines for four years, during which time they were crowned state champions. He is survived by his wife, Dana, and their two children.

1990s

Stacie Gruber (1994) passed away on February 14, 2010. She received her law degree from Syracuse University and lived in Maryland for a few years. The last seven years she has been living in Des

(Continued on page 5)

Mock Library-Administration Building —

(Continued from page 2)

that still hangs loosely strung in my closet.

The major addition added to the building in 1970 provided additional shelving space, more variable use space (small group study rooms, typing rooms – noisy typewriters really were used in those days), and additional administrative office space.

One of the first concerns after the closing of the college in November 1997 was the question of "what to keep and what to destroy." The archive section of the library holdings suddenly seemed to be very important. With the support of a grant jointly funded by the State Historical Society of Iowa and the Siouxland Community Foundation Millie (Steiber) Mandernach (Westmar Class of 1967 and a library staff member when the college closed) was hired to work with and manage a group of volunteers charged with the task of putting the Westmar Archives in order. From

July to December 1999, this group did a magnificent job of appropriately protecting and organizing hundreds of individual items and over 50 boxes of historic paperwork. This was the last organized activity in the basement of the library building. Finally in September 2003, after some additional renovation work at the Plymouth County Historical Museum, all of these materials were moved to climate controlled space where they are now stored in orderly arranged archival boxes and available for our frequent search for information of the past.

In the fall of 1999 the entire library book collection, including shelving, was sold to Southern Virginia College which had recently changed (1996) from junior college status to a four year liberal arts college. They were in the process of seeking accreditation just as Westmar was in 1950 when the Charles A. Mock Library was built. So the books we used at Westmar may still

be available on the shelves of Southern Virginia University

The library building has been For Sale since the closing of the college and is still without a buyer. It was rented for use by the newly organized Rejoice Community Church for nearly three years (2000-2002) until they purchased their own building and also rented during a period in 2004 by the First United Methodist Church of Le Mars after their building was declared unsafe and until the union with Calvary United Methodist Church was arranged to become the new United Methodist Church of Le Mars. After 13 years since the college closed, there is now discussion of possible demolition of the building. Any buyers out there? The building may be destroyed but the intellectual progress and accomplishments that occurred within the walls will long remain. The Mock Library is much more than Bricks and Mortar.

