Even though it was almost 50 years ago, Louise Summers remembers well her first days as a teacher at School 4 in her native Buffalo. Having received her teaching degree from the State University College at Buffalo, she applied for a teaching position in the city’s school system. Any elementary school would be fine, she thought, except for two.

While in high school and college, Louise had worked as a cashier at the Loblaw supermarket in the First Ward, an old Irish/Polish neighborhood that was in transition. Because she knew a lot of the people there, she thought it would be difficult for her to maintain discipline in the classroom if she were sent either to schools 4 or 28.

Opening her letter of appointment that summer in 1959, Louise was disappointed to learn that she would be beginning her more than 30-year teaching career at School 4.

“I cried for four days,” she said.

What she thought would be a liability, however, turned into an asset when one day a parent came to school extremely annoyed that her child had been disciplined. Encountering Louise, she said, “I know you.”

Remembering the woman from Louise’s days as a cashier, she greeted the parent by name. The anger vanished instantly, the woman’s tone changed, and she asked, “Honey, what did he do?”

From that point on, everything improved for the young teacher. “The parents knew me, and they gave me a break,” Louise recalls. “Once I gained their trust, we became friends forever.”

Louise taught in the Perry Project area for 17 years before moving on to the Waterfront School behind City Hall. She remained there until retiring in 1995, raising two children during the course of her career with her husband, Tom.

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Louise’s vast experience teaching children in inner-city schools was much on the mind of her family this summer, when they surprised her with a wonderful 70th birthday present. Her son, Dr. Thomas A. Summers of the Class of 1984, and his wife, Jennifer, committed $30,000 to establish the Louise Summers Award. The award will be made annually to a graduate student in the College of Education who also earned an undergraduate degree at NU, and who has demonstrated a commitment to inner-city and high-needs school districts.

“That’s where the need is greatest,” says Louise. She added that a graduate student was designated for the award because, “By that time, you know where you want to be.”

Dr. Tom Summers, a partner in Windsong Radiology Group of Williamsville, N.Y., said several factors inspired him and his wife to fund the award at this time. “We wanted to do something for my mother while she could see it being done, participate in it, and enjoy the opportunity to see those who benefit from it,” he said. He added that without his mother’s commitment to his own education, “I would not be in a position to give back at this time.”

After graduating from Niagara, Tom attended Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, earning his medical degree in 1988. He spent six more years in training before beginning practice in 1994.

A member of Niagara University’s Board of Advisors since 2004, Tom said that in addition to honoring his mother, he hopes the award might serve as an example for other alumni. “Ideally,” he says, “it will motivate others to step forward and do more for the university.”
**Dr. Tom Chambers**, associate professor of history, hosted the program committee in August for the upcoming Seven Years War conference to be held at Niagara University and Brock University, Oct. 22 – 24, 2009. Present were scholars from The College of William and Mary, University of Akron, and Brock University. For more information, go to: [http://oieahc.wm.edu/conferences/contest/preview.html](http://oieahc.wm.edu/conferences/contest/preview.html).

**Dr. William Cliff**, associate professor of biology, was invited by the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition at UB School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences to lead the gastroenterology grand rounds on Sept. 11. His talk was entitled, “Case-Based Learning. What Is Best Practice?”

**Dr. Janet Gane**, adjunct professor in the College of Arts and Sciences, has joined the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. Gane worked for Orion, Warner Brothers, Twentieth Century Fox, and network television for several years in addition to writing and developing children’s programming for PBS affiliates KCET and WNED. She has also worked with media industry pioneers Harvey Weinstein and Aaron Spelling, and with companies like Edgar J. Scherick & Associates, the Gary Group, and the Scotti Brothers. Gane is currently developing an extensive animation series with toy, book and merchandise components. This project has already received the Film Advisory Board Award of Excellence and the American Federation of Pen Women award.

**Dr. Bernadette Peters**, assistant director/psychologist in counseling services, and **Monica Romeo**, LMHC, counselor in counseling services, participated in QPR facilitator training on Sept. 5. The pair took part in a daylong training to become certified gatekeeper instructors for the QPR Institute.

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QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer, three simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide.

Just as people trained in CPR help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone for help. NU counseling services is now offering this training to the university’s faculty, staff and students, as well as to members of the surrounding community. If you are interested in receiving the gatekeeper training, or would like further information regarding QPR, please contact counseling services at ext. 8536.

**Sharon Green**, reading coordinator in the learning center, had a “My View” published in the Buffalo News on Aug. 10, 2008. Titled “Making a Difference in the Lives of Others,” it read in part: “Rural Uganda’s many problems tugged at my heart, but as a parent, Zakalia’s and Teopista’s smiles spoke most loudly to me.

“My own children had parents to shepherd them into adulthood. When they wanted water, they turned on a faucet. When they got sick, we drove them to a doctor. When they needed glasses, we bought them. When we worked, they enjoyed well-staffed child care centers full of toys. As they attended free public schools, they did their homework in a heated house with lights.”

To read the complete column, log on to: [www.buffalonews.com/opinion/myview/story/411436.html](http://www.buffalonews.com/opinion/myview/story/411436.html).

**Mark R. Marino**, senior lecturer of mathematics, published and presented a research paper at the sixth International Conference on Education and Information Systems, Technologies and Applications in Orlando, Fla. His paper was published in the second International Multi-Conference on Society, Cybernetics and Informatics Proceedings.

Marino was also co-chair of the conference track on applications of information and communication technologies in education and training. In this role, he worked with colleagues from countries around the world including Finland, France, Germany, Japan and the United States.

**Jamie Pimlott**, assistant professor of political science, has been named director of the prelaw program. According to Pimlott, there are several forums in the works for students this fall, including one on social networking and the law with Niagara’s legal counsel, Stephanie Cole, and another that looks at the Supreme Court docket with John DelMonte, a practicing attorney and adjunct professor in the department of political science. Pimlott is also planning to take a group of students from the prelaw student association to the Law School Council Forum in Chicago this month.

**Dr. Joseph Little**, assistant professor of English, and **Lisa Kabasin**, an English major, co-authored a paper that has been selected for publication in the referred collection, *The Responsibilities of Rhetoric*, forthcoming from Waveland Press. The article contrasts the function of analogy in Sigmund Freud’s 1909 Clark University lectures with the theoretical work of physicists Hantaro Nagaoka and George Gamow to illustrate the value of approaching analogical reasoning by way of two new concepts: generativity and constraint.

**Dr. Thomas J. Sheeran**, professor of education and Lewiston Town Justice, has been appointed to a five-year term on the New York State Unified Court System’s Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics. He has also been named to the senior faculty of the state’s Judicial Institute, teaching courses on judicial ethics.

Sheeran, currently in his fifth term as town justice, is the first nonlawyer appointed to the group. He is also the only town or village justice on the committee. Other members of the committee are drawn from city courts, county-level courts, Supreme Court, the Court of Claims and appellate courts across New York state.

Formed in 1987, the advisory committee is a 26-member panel that responds to written inquiries from more than 3,000 full- and part-time judges and justices in the state, as well as quasi-judicial officials such as judicial hearing officers, support magistrates, and court attorney-referees.

The state’s judicial institute was created in 2003 to provide a forum for judicial scholarship that includes continuing education seminars and conferences, as well as cooperative education programs with other state and federal judicial systems and related activities.
Employee of the month: Jack Wrobel

Jack Wrobel, technical director in the department of theater and fine arts, has been named employee of the month for September 2008. A native of Niagara Falls, Wrobel has been an NU employee since February 1996 when he was hired as the theater’s technician. In August 2001, he was promoted to the full-time position of technical director.

The theater could not produce its season without Wrobel’s efforts, according to a nomination. “He runs our student-staffed scene shop,” it said, “supervising and teaching the students all aspects of theater construction and technical practice, from carpentry to welding to rigging.”

Another nomination commented on Wrobel’s interpersonal skills, saying that he personifies grace and focus under pressure. “As technical director for the Niagara University Theatre, he is the backbone of our scene shop,” the nomination stated. “Productions open on time because of Jack’s precision, organization and skill.”

Wrobel was also lauded as being a genuine, down-to-earth person “who always demonstrates kindness and respect toward others.”

Wrobel resides in Niagara Falls, and has three children.

Sister Nora leaves
Monteagle Ridge
Fathers Maher and Krause
with new duties

Niagara University has come to know Sister Nora Gatto’s passionate leadership and dedication over the last five years. Now, she will be taking those very qualities to Albany, where she has been appointed one of four councillors of the Northeast Province of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. Councillors serve in an advisory capacity to the provincial superior for the community’s ministries in social work, education, health care and formation.

“I know that she will be deeply missed by the students, faculty, staff and administration,” said the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., Niagara University president. “Our sadness is tempered by the fact that Niagara’s loss will be a great benefit to the Northeast Province of the Daughters of Charity.”

Sister Nora’s departure has implemented some changes in campus ministry, as well. The positions of university chaplain and director of campus ministry are now combined, with Father John Maher, C.M., assuming the new role. Father Maher has been NU’s chaplain and a campus minister for the past three years.

Father Bruce Krause, C.M., who joined the campus ministry staff in August, will assume responsibility for programs and activities related to university mission, in addition to his role as campus minister. Father Krause has an extensive background in working with mission and programs for the Vincentian family.

A position for an additional campus minister will be posted in the near future.

Varsity Village elects Prinzing as mayor in landslide

While the United States is a few weeks away from deciding on a new president, Niagara University students who reside in Varsity Village have made their decision on the person that will lead them on campus. Jessica Prinzing, a junior from Webster, was elected mayor of the village on the Lewiston campus Sept. 23.

Voting was open to residents who live in the six houses that comprise Varsity Village. Of the 90 students that reside there, 56 voted. Prinzing faced competition from four others: Adam Harris, Kevin Jennings, Natalie Titerence, and Franklin Moore.

The election is a return of an old tradition at NU, according to Sheila Hausrath, vice president of student life. The last time Varsity Village had a mayoral election was in the 1960s.

Also on hand for the festivities were the Rev. Joseph Levesque, C.M., Niagara University president; Sister Nora Gatto, D.C., executive director of mission and ministry; and Paul Dyster, mayor of the City of Niagara Falls. Dyster’s father, Niagara Falls physician Dr. Melvin Dyster, a 1948 graduate of Niagara University, lived in the village as a student.

The resurrection of the mayoral election event was a joint effort by the residence life staff in the village. They are residential coordinator Justine Rawding and resident assistants Michael Sahadi, Nicole Hacic, Michael Daloia, Ashley Bantelman, and Scott Page.

Varsity Village mayor Jessica Prinzing with Sheila Hausrath, vice president of student life; Paul Dyster, mayor of the City of Niagara Falls; and the Rev. Joseph Levesque, C.M., NU president.
Niagara University students saw a strange site on campus one day this past spring. Empty beverage bottles, their labels reversed and inscribed with the instructions “Recycle This,” were strewn across campus. It was part of a clever promotion (which also included posters and Facebook messages) for a new student organization called NUHOPE (Niagara University Helping Our Planet Earth).

The brainchild of then-freshmen Erin McKenney and Sally McGill, the group was organized to help enhance Niagara University’s recycling and environmental efforts. The two enterprising environmentalists had been working with Karin Crumb Kosmala, the university’s facility designer, to research the state of the university’s current recycling efforts and those of other schools so that they could make recommendations to improve Niagara’s program. The idea of launching a student environmental group evolved from this project.

NUHOPE officially started in the middle of the spring semester. Its first endeavor was to co-sponsor Niagara’s Earth Day events in April. Working with the campus activities office, student government, facility planning and engineering coordinator Dave Ederer, and Kosmala, who now moderates the club, the members held a “Where in the World Are the Recycling Bins?” contest to familiarize both students and staff with the location of the university’s receptacles. Participants were asked to complete surveys that were placed next to all the bins on campus, noting where they found the bin and the ease with which they found it.

Those who returned eight or more surveys were entered into a drawing to win a cash prize. The group also held a bottle and can drive, and “looted” the garbages on campus to remove the recyclable bottles and cans.

This year, NUHOPE members plan to work with the university to implement some of the recommendations McKenney and McGill made following their research. These include adding recycling bins in more accessible locations, participating in the Abitibi Paper Retriever® Community Recycling Program, and developing a recycling program for catered events held on campus. Already, additional bins have been purchased for O’Shea and Seton halls so that two can be placed on every floor. “We’re hoping to get the rest of the dorms done this year in a similar fashion,” Kosmala says.

The group also plans to compete in “RecycleMania,” a contest among some 400 colleges and universities to promote waste reduction activities to their campus communities. A campus composting program is also being considered. “Any waste from Gally, Clet or student kitchens could be put toward that,” says McKenney.

NUHOPE members also intend to collect the furniture, rugs, and other items students discard at the end of each semester. Because some of these objectives require funding, NUHOPE members are applying for grants. One member, Catherine Galletto, is writing a grant proposal as part of her grantwriting course. McKenney and McGill are also planning to join the university’s newly established “green” task force to bridge the work the students are doing with that planned by the larger university community.

The girls hope to carry their efforts beyond the campus as well. They’ve joined the Niagara County Environmental Municipalities Commission, an advisory group of the Niagara County legislature.

“Overall,” McKenney says, “we’d like to make the campus a green campus and then extend it into the community as well to help it become more green.”

McKenney and McGill have the following suggestions for those who want to “green” their homes and communities:

1. Buy reusable products. Most grocery stores have reusable canvas bags at the checkout counter. Investing in a good water filter will save you money and keep you from using hundreds of unnecessary plastic bottles.

2. Turn off your computer/television/ lights when you aren’t using them. Setting your computer to go to sleep after a set amount of time is a good idea if you don’t want to turn it completely off. Screen savers don’t save you money and energy; sleep mode does.

3. Think before you print. If you really, really have to print, use both sides of the paper and recycle all your paper afterward. Most counties take every sort of paper except gray cardboard. (As a matter of fact, once your printer runs out of ink, recycle the cartridges! And when the printer finally dies, recycle that too.)

4. Earth911.org is a wonderful Web site. Just type in anything you want to recycle and it will tell you how and where you can do it in your area.

5. Recycle your plastics and cans too! Keep in mind that plastic doesn’t mean just bottles. You can recycle your shampoo bottles, your milk jugs, laundry detergent bottles, yogurt containers ... basically any bottle with a recycling symbol on it. And cans also include those tin cans you get green beans in.

6. Most counties have a reuse or freecycle group where you can post your unwanted items so people who want them and are in the neighborhood can drop by and pick them up. This reduces landfill waste and generally just spreads the goodwill around. (Think craigslist.com, freecycle.org, etc.)
Niagara University’s Lambda Chi chapter awarded for tax assistance program

Niagara University’s Lambda Chi chapter of Beta Alpha Psi received the top award for preparing the most tax returns in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program at the national organization’s meeting in Anaheim, Calif.

The award, presented annually by the Internal Revenue Service, was one of only eight awards given nationally this year.

The presentation marked the second time Niagara University students have been recognized for their participation in the VITA program, having received two awards in 2006 — one for the most tax returns prepared and another for the largest amount of money refunded to taxpayers in the local community.

“The VITA award exemplifies Niagara University’s commitment to community service in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul,” said Al Oddo, professor of accounting at Niagara. “Our students prepared more than 700 tax returns and provided over $500,000 in federal tax refunds to low-income and elderly taxpayers in our community.”

Beta Alpha Psi, founded in 1919, is an honorary organization for accounting, finance and information systems students and professionals. Its primary objective is to encourage and give recognition to scholastic and professional excellence in the financial information field.

Avery to lead NU’s new young entrepreneur program

Niagara University has launched the Young Entrepreneurs Academy, a yearlong program that teaches middle and high school students how to start and run their own businesses. The program will run from October to June.

Craig E. Avery, a Niagara Falls businessman who has been involved in starting a number of area businesses in the environmental, tourism and real estate industries, will serve as program instructor for the YEA! program at NU.

Students in the program are taught by one instructor, but are exposed to guest lecturers, successful entrepreneurs and business mentors. There are also field trips to various local businesses. Finally, the students participate in three major events throughout the year: the investor panel, a trade show, and a formal graduation ceremony.

YEA! was originally developed at the University of Rochester in 2004 with the support of a grant from the Kauffman Foundation. The foundation works with partners to advance entrepreneurship in America and improve the education of children and young people.

For more information, contact the Office of Continuing Education at ext. 8181.

Lewiston hair studio added to preferred merchant list

Marcella’s Hair Studio, 424 Center Street, has been added to NU’s Preferred Merchant Program, and will offer NU students and employees $20 women’s cut and style ($12 off), and $15 dollars men’s cut and style ($5 off). Call 716-754-0057 for appointments; walk-ins are welcome.

Visit www.niagara.edu/pmp for an updated list of preferred merchant program members.
Neil A. Casey plays 33 roles in holiday classic at Leary Theatre

By Ann Heuer, ’78

Out of his mind. That’s exactly what NU Theatre alumnus Neil A. Casey, ’91, thought he would be if he turned down the opportunity to play every man, woman and child in “This Wonderful Life” at Boston’s Lyric Stage Company last December. The production is playwright Steve Murray’s faithful retelling of the beloved 1946 Frank Capra film, “It’s a Wonderful Life.” For Casey, the chance to play George Bailey (portrayed in the film by Jimmy Stewart), Mary Hatch Bailey (Donna Reed), Old Man Potter (Lionel Barrymore) and the 29 other characters from the classic movie — plus a narrator — was irresistible. To top it off, the Boston critics and audiences loved him.

This December, Niagara University Theatre audiences will also have the opportunity to experience this holiday treat since Casey has graciously offered to perform “This Wonderful Life” as a fundraiser for a new theater on campus. The play will be on stage at the Leary Theatre in Clet Hall at 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 8 and Tuesday, Dec. 9. “It’s my way of giving back and getting to see everybody at NU,” Casey recently said during a phone interview.

“This Wonderful Life” is a slightly abbreviated retelling of “It’s a Wonderful Life” which playwright Murray describes as “a beautifully written movie that goes to dark places and earns its happy ending.” When The Lyric Stage Co. decided to present “This Wonderful Life,” producing artistic director Spiro Veloudos thought of casting Neil A. Casey and no one else. Directed by Jack Neary, last year’s New England premiere of “This Wonderful Life” was critically acclaimed by The Boston Globe, the Boston Herald, and Boston’s NPR news radio station, WBUR 90.9 FM.

“I’d never done a one-man show before,” Casey said, “and when Spiro called me to ask if I’d be interested, I thought I’d be crazy not to do it.” To prepare, Casey had to memorize a 60-page script and he watched the movie about 200 times so he could get every scene, voice and mannerism exactly right. “Jack Neary and I agreed we needed to re-create the movie as closely as we could,” Casey explained. “If a character was looking in a certain direction in the film, we’d stage it the same way. We knew people would notice if the scene looked completely different.”

Memorizing the script and rehearsing for four or five hours a day for two weeks did the trick. “I recall I may have skipped a line during opening night,” Casey noted, “but since then, I’ve never forgotten any dialogue in the show.” Nearly as long as the film, the play excludes only one major scene — the one with George speaking to Violet Bick about running through the grass on the mountain. Everything else is there — from George and Mary dancing the Charleston and tumbling into the swimming pool in the high school gym (just imagine Casey dancing with himself!) to Clarence the angel getting his wings when George finally realizes his life is worth living.

“The show is exhilarating and great fun,” Casey continued, “but it’s not effortless, it’s exhausting. It’s 80 minutes long with no intermission and I talk the entire time. When I did the curtain call in Boston I took several bows, the lights went down, and when they came up again, I pretended I was dead, face down on the desk. The show had killed me. And the crowd roared with laughter.”

Casey has always been fond of “It’s a Wonderful Life” and is especially delighted to portray not just the main characters, but all the supporting characters, from Ma Bailey (Beulah Bondi) to Nick the bartender (Sheldon Leonard), Mr. Martini, the owner of the bar (William Edmunds), to flirty Violet Bick (Gloria Grahame). He accomplishes so much with an expressive roll of his doe-brown eyes, a wide smile, the tip of a hat, a bit of stuttering, or a key mannerism, such as Mary Bailey’s hand over her heart. “It’s lucky for me that several of the film’s actors have very distinctive mannerisms that give me something to work with,” Casey said.

In a Nov. 28, 2007, review in the Boston Globe, correspondent Louise Kennedy wrote, “What’s most enjoyable about watching this show, as opposed to pulling out the video, is the chance to see Casey at work. He’s light on his feet, he’s charming, he’s a delightful mimic, and he radiates an intelligent sweetness that seems exactly suited to the Capra spirit.”

A native of Waltham, Mass., Casey started his college career at Framingham State. A year later he transferred to Niagara University’s theater department at the recommendation of a friend, NU alumnus Patrick Riviere, ’88, whom Casey had worked with while doing summer stock in Maine. From his sophomore through senior year, Casey was cast in 18 productions at NU Theatre. His time at NU, he said, was transforming. “I learned discipline and technique from Brother Augustine Towey, C.M., Tim Ward, Renee Baillargeon, Steve Vaughan, Miss Bev (Beverly Fletcher), Mildred Paella and all the faculty and adjuncts,” he said, adding, “I could always sort of do it — but I learned how to act at NU, and learned about myself and how to be an adult.”

When asked if he was a “class clown” in grade school and high school, Casey laughed and explained that he was “shy, but had a couple of good one-liners.” Interestingly, Casey considered becoming a doctor or architect, yet he always enjoyed being in plays during junior high and he was in a few summer stock musicals and senior-year productions during high school. “I wasn’t a sports guy or a bookworm, but I knew how to get a laugh and enjoyed the theater,” Casey explained.

During high school, though, his parents reminded him that in order to pursue a career in theater, a person needed to be “gifted.” Since his mom was battling cancer throughout Casey’s grade school and high school years, she was unable to attend a number of his performances, including “A Glass Menagerie”
During his senior year of high school, however, his dad and one of his brothers came to see that production on opening night. No words were exchanged about the show during the drive home, but the first thing Casey’s dad exuberantly exclaimed to his wife as he and his sons walked through the door was, “He’s gifted!” Two simple, life-altering words. At that moment, Casey knew he had his parents’ blessing, and it made all the difference. Sadly, though, his mom passed away shortly after his high school graduation, but her love, courage and wonderful sense of humor still inspire him, his dad and his brothers and sister.

Following his graduation from NU’s theater department in 1991, Casey spent five years in New York City and then he returned to Boston to work with the Reagle Players and the Publick Theatre. He later honed his comedic timing as a company member of “Shear Madness” in Washington, D.C., Boston, and Pittsburgh — a production he has now been involved in for eight years. He has also worked in numerous other productions throughout the northeast, from “Take Me Out” to “Love’s Labour’s Lost,” “Enchanted April” to his current role in “The Mystery of Irma Vep” at Boston’s Lyric Stage Co. from Nov. 28 – Dec. 21.

Throughout his career, he has devoted over four years to teaching acting classes at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, which he hopes to do again next spring. He also taught acting as an interim professor at Niagara University during academic year 2006-2007. “I love teaching,” Casey said, “it’s a great feeling to impart knowledge to students and you can see the light bulb go off when they’ve got it — it’s fun.

“Acting is just something I have to do, I don’t know why,” Casey added. His advice for NU theater students is this: “Keep plugging away, don’t give up, continue your studies after you graduate, see as much theater as you can, talk to people in the industry, and don’t burn bridges.”

Having talent and a superb work ethic has enabled Casey to soar in a competitive industry, but so, too, has his warm Irish Catholic upbringing. “Our family is very close and we share a wacky sense of humor,” he said. “We understand that life is short and we believe in the golden rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

No wonder Casey is perfect in “This Wonderful Life.” He knows what matters most.

For tickets and information about NU Theatre’s special holiday season presentation of “This Wonderful Life,” call our box office voicemail box at 716-286-8685.

Best building — Niagara University’s Academic Complex/Bisgrove Hall was honored in September with Business First of Buffalo’s “Brick by Brick” for the best educational building for 2008.

Here, Dr. Bonnie Rose, executive vice president/vice president for academic affairs, proudly displays the award — a brick, of course — as Dr. Mark Wilson, dean of the College of Business Administration; Dr. Debra Colley, dean of the College of Education; and Dr. Judy Willard, assistant to the president for planning, look on. The brick is on display in the glass case in the atrium. The award came in the same month the building celebrated its first anniversary. A party was held on Sept. 24 to mark the occasion.

On Campus 7

STATLER FOUNDATION HONORS NU STUDENT — Mima Rackov, a junior in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, was awarded a Statler Foundation scholarship of excellence award at its annual luncheon on Sept. 22. Rackov, a native of Lansing, N.Y., was congratulated by Robert M. Bennett, chair of the Statler Scholarship of Excellence, and Arthur V. Sabia, a Statler trustee.

Noted learning expert to speak at conference

Dr. Jane Vella, one of the world’s leading experts in adult learning theory and the founder of Global Learning Partners, will be the guest speaker at NU’s eighth annual International Conference on Teaching and Learning, Jan. 8 and 9, 2009. The university’s College Committee on Teaching and Learning and The Center for Instructional Support are hosting the conference, which will explore practical ways that faculty and academic leaders can build integrative skills into their courses and discuss curricula and programs that encourage integrative learning within and across the fields of study.

Vella gained her insights on adult education through a more than 40-year teaching career in Africa, Asia and North America. The author of five books on adult education, Vella has also taught at the Institute of Education at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. Vella’s book “Taking Learning to Task” will be highlighted at a fall book club meeting organized by the CCTL.

The conference is free for all NU faculty and staff. For more information about registering or presenting at one of the conference sessions, please visit www.niagara.edu/cctl/Annual_Conference_Information.htm.
Benefit enrollment time approaching

By R. E. Pfeil, HR director

We are quickly approaching our annual open enrollment period. This affords all benefited employees an opportunity to modify their benefit elections. As we did last year, the human resources office will have benefit meetings to present any changes in the benefit package and answer any employee questions. In a previous edition of On Campus, I explained that the university is now a participant in an “experience rated” medical plan. This means that the medical claims of university families will determine the future medical insurance premiums. If experience is controlled, then we all will enjoy a lower premium or at least a premium that does not escalate as much as it does for other employers. We will discuss simple things that each of us can do to have a positive impact on our medical claim experience without diminishing the level of care we have come to expect.

We are also inviting spouses to attend the open enrollment meetings. The university offers medical insurance to university families, and it makes sense to include spouses. Benefit selection is an important decision, and we wish to provide enough information to all who are interested and who make medical-related decisions.

This summer we all enjoyed the camaraderie and food at the university picnic. It was decided that this would be an excellent opportunity to provide free health screening to employees that could be important to their health, but also work to control our medical claim experience. Some of you participated in the health screening provided through Independent Health. A total of 72 participated (53 females and 19 males). Fifteen participants were found to have borderline cholesterol levels and four had high cholesterol levels. On a positive note, 53, or 74 percent, had cholesterol levels under 200, which is a desirable level. Thirty participants had normal blood pressure, 29 had borderline hypertension and 13 had high blood pressure. It is a concern that 58 percent of the participants had prehypertension or high blood pressure levels. I encourage everyone with high cholesterol or blood pressure to please consult your physician. Be assured that individual results of all tests remain confidential and were not shared with the university.

Ribbon cut on new retail dining facility

The Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, NU’s president, cut the ribbon at the official opening of the Gallagher Center’s new retail dining facility on Sept. 8. The renovation project, which began in mid-May, was put into effect to offer a wider array of foods, quicker service and expanded seating area.

Patrons can now enjoy many of their favorite foods at “WNY Classics,” which includes Buffalo wings and pizza from La Nova Pizzeria and Wing Co. in Buffalo, and freshly-cooked beef on weck. Also included in the facility are a sub shop, grill, the Freshens Smoothie Company, and a convenience store.

Bill Baker, general manager for hospitality services, gives details on why the renovations were done and what patrons can expect from the new facility at www.niagara.edu/news/printnews.php?id=080909103217.

Human resource management group hosts workshop

Niagara University’s chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management, advised by Dr. Craig Seal, assistant professor of commerce, held its first career workshop on Sept. 29. The workshop gave students an opportunity to update their resumes, work on interview skills, and learn how to network.

On Oct. 15, NU’s SHRM members will be attending the Buffalo Niagara Human Resources Association’s dinner meeting. The event will discuss the challenges to dealing with diversity. If you would like to attend the BNHRA dinner, log on to: http://bnhra.org/ems/regengine/event_page.php. For additional information, please contact NU’s SHRM president, Nick Moley, at nmoley@mail.niagara.edu or Seal at cseal@niagara.edu.

NU welcomes

Katie L. Kocsis, receptionist in the financial aid office; Bruce Jerome Krause, campus minister; Brendan T. Murphy, assistant men’s soccer coach; Daniel T. Dolan, assistant women’s soccer coach; Julie A. Moses, assistant marketing and promotions director in the athletics office; Karen E. Edmond, professional in residence/field practicum coordinator in the social work department; Colleen Ann Daly, accounts receivable coordinator in the student accounts office; Robin L. Makula, assistant to the MBA director; Jennifer L. Diez, Meade Hall cook/food service manager; Ann E. Magers, secretary for the departments of religious studies and communication studies; Susan M. Barber, financial aid counselor; Nani P. Bailey, secretary for the ROTC department; Anthony Nguyen, head men’s tennis coach; Lori Soos, director of health services; Donald Borsuk, equipment manager in the athletics department; Alicia Gizzi, assistant director of admissions; and Julie Mulero, secretary in the social work department.
Frozen Dinners;
Where Is the Love?

By Jennifer Diez, head chef,
Meade Hall

Where is the love anymore? I’m just not feeling it, and neither are the kids as they wolf down a Pop Tart and juicebag in the back seat of the van on the way to hockey practice. In today's “drive-thru” dinner society, we need to take a minute (or even two) to realize how a home-cooked meal can not only comfort you, but actually lift your spirits and boost your culinary confidence, making you actually want to cook more often!

Nothing says “I care” like a frozen Lean Cuisine, right? Wrong! If you have ever found yourself frantically digging through your freezer for your favorite Banquet Meal (an entrée that has more chemicals than the old Hooker building) it’s time to rethink dinner. Let’s get real. Of course not everyone has time or money for a gourmet, melt-in-your-mouth, mindblowing dinner every night, but here are some tips for those of us who know “thyme” is of the essence:

• **Always double-batch it:** When making your favorite pasta sauce, make a giant batch and freeze it in more manageable quantities so you can take advantage of it during a weeknight for dinner.

• **Dust off your crockpot and use it!** How awesome is it to come home from work to the smell of something warm and delicious? Throw everything in before you go to work, cover it and go! Trust me, the minimal effort at 7 a.m. will be worth it when you get home.

• **Use shortcuts; semi-homemade is better than nothing!** Biscuits are par baked, real mashed potatoes are in your grocer’s freezer, and Wegman’s has a great prepared foods section. Try a boxed dinner, and no, I’m not talking Hamburger Helper, but something like Campbell’s Chicken and Stuffing Bake. It is real food, real fast.

• **Utilize your oven timer!** Many ovens nowadays have timers so you can set them to turn on and off when you want. Make your lasagna at night (or on a weekend) and freeze it. Put the frozen lasagna in the oven in the morning and set the timer to bake for the hour before you come home. How easy is that?

Watch the upcoming newsletter for recipes, tricks and tips to make cooking and entertaining fun, fabulous and budget friendly! To contact me, just e-mail **NUchef@niagara.edu**.

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**B.A.S.I.C. SERVES IN LITTLE ROCK** — In August, NU students took a B.A.S.I.C. trip to the Vincentian Mission site in Little Rock, Ark. The group helped to rebuild areas damaged by the 54 tornadoes that occurred in Arkansas last year, and visited the Clinic and Wellness Center sponsored by the Daughters of Charity. Seen here at the “Big Dam Bridge,” from left, are Monica Saltarelli, NU campus minister; sophomores John Roessler and Dan Schasel; seniors Lauren Parkhurst and Stephanie Gowan; and juniors Nolan Guiffre, Mary Gillig, and Jesse Martin.

Mark your calendars for Jan. 4-12, 2009, when B.A.S.I.C. is scheduled to travel to another site. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Saltarelli at **ms@niagara.edu**.

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**On the Menu**

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**I’LL TAKE VINCENTIANS FOR $100, ALEX** — Members of the NU community took part in Vincentian Jeopardy on Sept. 25, held as part of Vincentian Heritage Week. The colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education, and the Office of Academic Affairs each provided three-person teams to test their knowledge on 23 questions related to St. Vincent de Paul and Niagara University history.

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**NU mourns**

Maureen Marie Mahoney Newton, mother of Bill Newton, assistant director of campus activities — Sept. 15.

Norma Koperski, mother of Kate Koperski, Castellani Art Museum director — Sept. 2.
Bilich balances school, sports

Some may say Lisa Bilich was destined to play volleyball for Niagara University; however, the Pittsburgh native won't tell you that.

It all started on her parents' honeymoon. Like a lot of newlyweds, the Bilichs visited spectacular Niagara Falls and purchased a few souvenirs. Your typical refrigerator magnet, a photo from the "Maid of the Mist" and a Niagara University volleyball t-shirt.

"When they told me that story last year, I couldn't believe it," the freshman defensive specialist said. "We don't know where (the shirt) is right now, but we are looking for it."

The truth is when Bilich was deciding on a college, three things were a must: volleyball, a good accounting program, and an ice rink. You see, Bilich has been a figure skater since she was 5 years old.

"That was a really big part of where I was going to go to college. I looked at Haverford and Franklin & Marshall, but they didn't have an ice rink. When I came to Niagara and saw that Dwyer Arena was right on campus, I knew this was the place for me."

She committed to head coach Susan Clements' second recruiting class early on and continued to work on her volleyball, school work and skating.

Despite entering her first semester on a college campus, Bilich has already earned 25 credits toward her degree, a huge leg up on her classmates.

"I took a few AP tests and did really well on them," the accounting major added, "and I earned six hours in my senior calculus class. I'm enrolled in the honors program and I'm in the five-year plan to get my MBA. With the head start I have, hopefully I can finish it in four years."

The ambitious freshman volleyball player is part of the youngest team in the nation, and she was brought to Niagara as part of a six-player class that is trying to rebuild the program. She was a key element in the team's first win against rival Buffalo on Sept. 16.

But the true twinkle in Bilich's eye comes when she is talking about her figure skating days. For the past 13 years, the second love in her life has been the ice. She can complete most doubles jumps, including the difficult double Lutz.

"I almost landed a triple once," she explained. "Do you know how cool that would have been?"

Growing up in the Pittsburgh area, Bilich's mother would take her to the rink right around the corner, and she just started skating. A few years later, her mother got her a coach, and she has been with the same one since she was 8 years old.

"Skating has taught me a lot of things. It taught me balance and time management. It helps me balance my school work, and it even gives me good balance in volleyball. It helps me when I'm diving for digs on the court."

As part of the Steel City Blades synchronized skating team, Bilich entered team and individual competition for freestyle with music, spins and jumps. She has more than 30 medals in these three events, including 14 gold medals. She also has worked in the three disciplines of dance, moves in the field and freestyle. To earn a gold medal in a discipline, you must complete eight levels, and Bilich has done that twice in just six years of competition.

However, when she got older, she had to cut back on skating a little bit and focus on volleyball.

"It's a good thing that she did, since it was part of her destiny."

Riggs participates in Canadian hockey camp

Hockey Canada selected senior forward Ashley Riggs to participate in its first National Women's Team Camp in Calgary from Sept. 17 – 21. Riggs, a native of Pickering, Ont., was one of 41 players to compete for a spot with the Canadian National Team.

"Riggs proves every year that she is one of the best in the nation," Niagara head coach Margot Page said. "She made the under-22 team before, but has yet to make the national team. I hope that she can make the team."

The camp was used to determine which athletes will be a part of the group that will work toward the 2009 International Ice Hockey Federation World Women's Championship and Olympic centralization. In February 2009, 22 players will be selected to play for Canada at the 2009 IIHF World Women's Championship. In the summer of 2009, up to 30 athletes will move to Calgary as part of centralization to train and work toward the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, B.C.

As a freshman in the 2004-05 season, Riggs set Niagara single season records in points (51) and goals (29) and placed second in assists (22). Riggs enters the 2008-09 season third in all-time goals (65), assists (51) and points (116).

"She is so talented," Page said. "When she is confident and plays the way I have seen her play every day, she is going to be a force to reckon with."

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"It's a good thing that she did, since it was part of her destiny."
Tour de France winner Greg LeMond has said that the one thing cycling taught him is if you can achieve something without a struggle, it’s not going to be satisfying. Ed Hutton would certainly agree with that sentiment. The director of NU’s financial services lab has enjoyed the thrill of getting on a bike and seeing the country; some of the rides are thousands of miles long.

“It is always amazing to me to look at a trip afterwards,” Ed said. “I’ve been able to go from Niagara Falls to Saratoga Springs without having to ride in a car or train.”

Despite taking about 20 years off — he raced in his early 20s — the love for pedaling was never lost. Ed was busy in his investment banking career with, among others, M&T Bank. He has been at NU since 2007 and the opportunity to go cycling again presented itself. “I love the idea of setting an outrageous goal and doing it,” Hutton said.

The long and winding road
Over the last year, Ed has traveled through four states. In March, he joined several hundred people to cycle across Arizona and New Mexico, riding anywhere from 80 to 120 miles a day. “On these types of trips, they load your gear onto a truck and take it to a camp site,” Ed explained. Part of the challenge is pedaling to get to your gear and a welcome rest.

And it isn’t unusual to get stuck in bad weather during these tours. During that March ride, he was caught in a blizzard. In June, Ed was one of 3,000 people to do the “Ride the Rockies” trip, which took cyclists across the spine of the Rocky Mountain range. Since several of the passes are over 10,000 feet above sea level, winter-type weather is still part of the equation.

“We weren’t sure we would be able to do this (ride) because earlier that week there was still 10 to 12 feet of snow blocking the passes,” Ed said. As they pedaled up the Rockies, he went through tunnels of snow that officials had cleared.

During the ride, the group cycled through Cottonwood Pass, Colo., an 18-mile climb that took over three hours. Going up was only was the decent steep; it is also a winding path. Ed was nervous because, as he joked, “I’m a chicken.” Downhill speeds on a bike can be upwards of 50 miles per hour. If you try to “ride the brakes,” the tires will overheat and burst.

Hutton’s ride is a light speed titanium bike, a unique one in many ways. Ed had the bike cut in half and added couplings so that it folds up into a backpack. “I took so many trips that it made it easier for me to travel with the bike as a piece of luggage,” he said. The bike, when folded, is the size of one of the wheels.

Next year, Ed will embark on the biggest trip in his cycling life; a 50-day, 3,600-mile journey from Oregon to New Hampshire. “I’ve wanted to do this for about 52 years,” he admits. Part of Ed’s preparation in cycling long distances is riding 200 to 300 miles per week.

“The thing for me is that you can (cycle) for a long time without hurting yourself,” Ed adds. On some of the tours, people in their 60s and 70s are actively participating. And the camaraderie amongst cyclists is unique. “You get to meet and become friends with people from all over the country.”

Family affair
One of the skills of riding is when cyclists ride in packs; the person in front of the pack makes it easier for the riders behind by cutting through the wind. It was during Roswell Park Cancer Institute’s annual “The Ride for Roswell” that Ed was glad he was in the pack with a certain someone.

“I was riding behind this woman and she was doing all the work,” Ed recalls. “She was doing a great job at it, too!” A few years later, he married Gayle, the one doing all the work. “I let her win,” Ed kids after 12 years of marriage.

Aside from cycling, Ed and Gayle do a fair amount of cross country skiing during the winter months. The pair will participate in marathons, or in cross country terms, “loppets,” which are 31 miles long.

Last year, they did two loppets, one of which was the Olympic course in Lake Placid. This winter, Ed and Gayle will go to Quebec to take part in the Canadian National Championship.

Whether it is cycling, or even cross country skiing, Ed makes sure to have fun. “Even though I am competing against other 50-year-olds,” he said. “It’s great to just get out there and ride!”

Popular dining events return
Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, in cooperation with the university’s Office of Continuing Education, will host a series of fine-dining events for the community from October through December.

This is the eighth year of the college’s interactive dining series, which showcases the culinary skills of guest chefs and student managers. The dinners will be held in the Statler Dining Room on the fourth floor of St. Vincent’s Hall, the university’s main classroom building.

The four-course dining events will be held beginning Oct. 28 – 30 and continuing Nov. 4 – 6, 11 – 13, and 18 – 20. The final three dinners will take place on Dec. 2 – 4. Tickets for the student-chef-themed buffet dinners are $16. All dinners have three seatings and begin at 6 p.m.

Reservations for each of the upcoming events can be made through the continuing education office at ext. 8181. Payment with credit card is required when reservations are made. Menu selections are not announced ahead of time and are prepared and planned by hospitality students.
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“Thus I Passe By” is organized into categories

that focus on Huntington’s major stylistic

periods from the previous three decades,

culminating with his most recent works on

canvas. He describes his artistic process as

“… an endless quest to reconcile my innate

awkwardness with the majestic harmony of

the great art of the world.” The exhibition

title comes from the poem “Upon His

Departure Hence,” by Robert Herrick.

The Castellani Art Museum and Richard

Huntington will also host an open house at

Huntington’s studio at 701 Seneca Street in

Buffalo on Sunday, Oct. 19, from 4–6 p.m.

Please contact Michael Beam at 716-286-

8286 or mjbeam@niagara.edu to RSVP

for the artist studio open house.

Through Dec. 14 — “Devotional

Displays: Personal and Community

Traditions.” Devotional displays are created

at the crossroads of folk and formal religious

belief. They exist in a wide variety of forms

in cultures worldwide — and in many

communities in the Greater Niagara region.

This exhibition draws on photographic

works from the museum’s permanent

collection as well as new documentation.

Hindu domestic prayer altars, Asian shrines

to ancestors, Polish American Easter altars

and Puerto Rican altars built in connection

with the annual spring celebration of the

“Rosario de la Cruz” will be among the

traditions represented.

Through Feb. 15, 2009 — TopSpin

Exhibition: “Homage to Picasso”

Through Jan. 18, 2009 — Richard

Huntington: “Retrospective.”

Mixers at the CAM

First Fridays have also undergone a

metamorphosis this year, and have been

transformed into “Mixers at the CAM.”

These seasonal, themed events will feature

live music, full cash bar, complementary

refreshments, raffles and prizes. Don’t miss

our first mixer on Friday, Oct. 17, from

5 – 8 p.m., which will feature “Beetle-mania!”

Dance with the big bug to live music by The

BBC Band, one of Western New York’s

premier Beatles tribute groups. Co-sponsored

by the NU Live Music Series. Admission is

free for Castellani Art Museum members

and NU students with ID, $5 for others.

To learn more about the Castellani Art

Museum’s classes, exhibitions and special

events, visit www.niagara.edu/cam/ or call

286-8200.

To view the calendar of events, visit

www.niagara.edu/cam/calendar/calendar.html.

Niagara University Athletics

Men’s hockey

Oct. 17  St. Lawrence at Dwyer Arena, 7 p.m.

Oct. 18 Bucknell at Dwyer Arena, 7 p.m.

Women’s hockey

Oct. 12 New Hampshire at Dwyer Arena,

2 p.m.

Women’s volleyball

Oct. 18 Rider at Gallagher Center, noon.

For information about the exciting athletic

events held on and off campus, visit


Niagara University Theatre

Oct. 23 – 26 — “Metamorphosis” at the

Castellani Art Museum. This readers’ theater

production of Franz Kafka’s classic story

centers on the chilling transformation of a

man who works all the time. He wakes one

morning in his family’s home to discover

that he has transformed into a dung beetle.

The production coincides with, and will be

performed in front of, the display of a

monumental inflated sculpture of a dung

beetle constructed from recycled billboard

vinyl, created by Max Streicher.

Oct. 9 – 19 — “The Cripple of

Inishmaan.” Part comedy, part drama,

Martin McDonagh’s Irish dramedy examines

the hopes and turmoil of a small isolated

community when, in 1934, Hollywood

arrives to use the rustic Irish setting as a film

location.

Oct. 17 & 18 — “It Is No Desert” at

the Church in Lewiston. Based on the real life

struggles of Dan Stroeh, a playwright and

actor who will perform this inspirational

one-man show. Both performances are

special fundraisers for Niagara University

Theatre and will feature postshow

discussions with the playwright after each

performance.

For NU Theatre ticket information, call the

new box office number at 286-8685 or go to

www.niagara.edu/theatre.