



2013 ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

NDSU NORTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY

alumni news

Bizon vs. Bison: what's right?

What a difference one little sound can make.

Take, for example, the word “bison.” NDSU’s sports teams have been known as the Bison since 1922, and the beloved mascot fittingly honors the massive, powerful animal that once dominated the Northern Plains.

We proudly pronounce the word with a “Z.” However, nearly everyone else says it with an “S” sound.

And, therein, lies the rub.

“Sportscasters from across the country use ‘S,’ and people around here get upset,” explained NDSU senior Kellam Barta, a double major in English and psychology from Fargo. “We have a strong allegiance and a sense of local pride in our mascot, and the pronunciation also identifies who we are as people. When you hear someone say bison with an ‘S,’ you know they are someone other than us.”

Barta was a member of a team of students that conducted an investigative study for an upper-level sociolinguistics course in English under the direction of professor Bruce Maylath. Other research team participants included graduate student Tatjana Schell and undergraduate students Teresa BlackCloud and Maia Randklev.

“There really is no such thing as a correct way to say the word. But, this phenomenon is part of encoding the identity of ‘us’ or ‘them,’ ” Barta said. “Our pronunciation here is quite exceptional. Most of the rest of the country would consider it strange to hear the word ‘bison’ with a ‘Z’ in it.”

The study team found the American footprint of “bison with a Z” is fairly localized. The region is primarily eastern North Dakota, generally ending near the Missouri River. To the south, the pronunciation is found to the Sisseton, S.D., area and it extends to about Alexandria, Minn., to the east.

“The center of the ‘Z’ influence is Fargo-Moorhead,” Barta said. “We found radio signals seem to be a factor and that the ‘Z’ influence actually travels a little farther along the Interstate highways than it does off the main roadways.”

According to Barta, there may be a historical factor in all this. Bison is a French word pronounced “Bee-zohn,” and our pronunciation may have its roots there, going back generations to the area’s early fur traders and explorers.

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“Perhaps we got our pronunciation from our friends to the north. Winnipeg has a significant French influence, so it’s very possible we borrowed this from them. That would also explain why hardly anyone else in the U.S. says it that way,” Barta said.

He also points out Bison fans aren’t shy about letting others know which way is truly accurate, at least from our perspective.

“Locals feel strongly about what they perceive is the ‘correct’ pronunciation,” Barta said. “We usually tell people from other parts of the country to ‘Say it right.’ ”

Barta has expanded this initial research on the Bison mascot to write an award-winning paper on the Coyote mascot for the University of South Dakota, and whether the word is pronounced “ky-yoht” or “ky-yoh-tee.”

GIFT HELPS BRING CHORAL MUSIC OF THE AMERICAS TO NDSU

Music is clearly NDSU alumna Karen (Watland) Morrison’s passion. A longtime music teacher at West Fargo’s Cheney Middle School, she has dedicated her career to sharing the art form with her students.

Morrison, BS ’79, music, MM ’12, music education, recently discovered another way to leave a lasting mark on the arts community. At the same time, she generously gave back to her alma mater.

In May, the NDSU School of Music and the American Choral Directors Association hosted an international choral symposium titled “Choral Music of the Americas,” an event that attracted invited choirs and guest conductors from across North, Central and South America.

The symposium piqued the interest of Morrison, a member of the board of the Fossum Foundation, a gifting organization under the umbrella of the NDSU Development Foundation that was organized in the late 1970s by Morrison’s mother, Geraldine, and her siblings. During the past three decades, the Fossum Foundation has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to National Merit Scholarships and other scholarship funds, and it was looking to make a contribution for a one-time NDSU campus event or program. The symposium, according to Morrison, was the perfect fit.

“As a foundation, we were thrilled to help fund the symposium. We certainly hope choir members and musicians got a better understanding of what types of music others are performing, and were able to share talent, skill and ability with people of various cultures to provide opportunity with everyone,” said Morrison, who earned the first master’s degree conferred by the new NDSU School of Music.



“Certainly over my years, NDSU was very integral in my development as a teacher.”

— KAREN MORRISON

“Karen’s work on behalf of the NDSU School of Music involves many of the roles we appreciate so much – she is a graduate of our music program, a teacher in the West Fargo schools and a family representative on the board of the Fossum Foundation, a donor to Fine Arts,” said John Miller, director of the NDSU Division of Fine Arts. “Her sponsorship of initiatives such as the Choral Music of the Americas allowed unique and life-changing experiences for our students who will follow in her footsteps.”

Bill Law, assistant director of the Division of Fine Arts, was a classmate of Morrison. He remembers she played oboe for the Gold Star Band under the direction of Orv Eidem, and he is not at all surprised by her philanthropic efforts.

“Karen truly demonstrated the power of one individual to make a difference.

Through her family fund, she helped make a significant international event possible,” said Law.

For Morrison, the symposium gift was also a chance to give back to the university that prepared her for her life’s work. “NDSU has an excellent program and it helped me become a better teacher. It gave me the opportunity to explore as a musician and see what else I could attain,” said Morrison, who grew up in West Fargo. “Certainly over my years, NDSU was very integral in my development as a teacher.”

Morrison and her husband, Pat, have two grown daughters and two grandsons. The couple lives in Fargo.

TOMORROW'S LEADERS LEARN THROUGH SERVICE

When you hear the phrase “Pay It Forward,” tip your hat to NDSU alumnus Josh Reimnitz. A firm believer in the concept of leadership through service, he is playing an important role in the development of our nation’s future leaders.

Reimnitz, BS '08, mass communication, BA '08, speech communication, is a co-executive director and director of development for Students Today Leaders Forever, a Minneapolis-based organization dedicated to providing unforgettable experiences for college, high school and middle school students.

A main focus of the group is the highly regarded Pay It Forward tours, where busloads of students spend spring break traveling to various parts of the country on missions of volunteer service. One student at a time, one service trip at a time, Reimnitz’s organization is helping to build a better, stronger America.

“We are growing. We had our biggest year ever, sending out 46 buses mostly from Midwest schools,” Reimnitz said. A total of 1,739 college students participated this year, with stops in about 230 communities.

As Reimnitz explains it, everybody wins with the Pay It Forward tours. Students engage in service projects, experience meaningful relationships and practice leadership skills. Communities and non-profit agencies receive energetic volunteer workers. And people in need benefit from their labors.



Josh Reimnitz, BS '08, (center) shares a laugh with participants of a recent Students Today Leaders Forever service tour.

The projects sweep the spectrum. From volunteer work at retirement centers to building bike trails to an oyster bed reclamation project near Charleston, S.C., the students’ enthusiastic volunteer spirit comes through.

“You name the type of service, we probably participate in it,” Reimnitz said, noting the tours are organized by chapter student leaders themselves. “We try to keep the service activities really diverse. We want each trip to be different.”

One of his favorite major projects is work in conjunction with the Earth Conservation Corps of Washington, D.C. “We clean up a tributary of the Anacostia River,” he explained. “The water is a mess — it’s one of the dirtiest in America. It’s great to see 300 college students along the banks cleaning things up. You end up with tons of garbage afterward.”

Reimnitz, a native of Bismarck, N.D., was introduced to Students Today Leaders Forever as an NDSU freshman. At the urging of friend Courtney Smith, he went on the second set of Pay It Forward tours, leaving with the University of Minnesota chapter. It was a powerful, inspiring experience, and Reimnitz returned to campus and helped organize an NDSU chapter — only the third in the country.

Leadership and service go hand in hand for Reimnitz. He served as NDSU student body president, and after graduation, he took part in the Teach For America program, teaching fourth graders in the Atlanta public schools. In 2010, he joined the executive team of Students Today Leaders Forever.

The organization celebrates its 10th anniversary in September, and chapters have been established from Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Wisconsin. Through the years, more than 19,000 students have participated in the group’s volunteer activities.

“I personally feel an immense sense of hope,” said Reimnitz. “When I come back from a Pay It Forward trip, I have a tremendous sense of optimism. I see hundreds, thousands, of young people who want to be involved and make a difference. They are wonderful individuals with incredible skill sets.

“These are people who will take on leadership positions in government, business and higher education,” he said. “We have a lot to look forward to because I have seen the people who will be taking these roles.”

Reimnitz, who lives in Minneapolis, recently took on another leadership role. In November 2012, he was elected to represent district four on the Minneapolis Public Schools Board of Education.

FROM 'CHEERS' TO MYSTERY NOVELS, ALUMNUS KNOWS HOLLYWOOD

NDSU alumnus Clive Rosengren is shifting gears in his creative enterprise. After a memorable acting career, he is now trying his hand as a mystery writer.

Rosengren, MA '68, drama, has penned "Murder Unscripted," a novel set in Hollywood featuring a lead character named Eddie Collins, a part-time actor who moonlights as a private eye. The setting fits perfectly with Rosengren's personal experience.

Rosengren spent 18 years as an actor in Hollywood, appearing in such movies as "Ed Wood," "Cobb," "Soapdish" and "That Thing You Do." On television, he had roles in "Home Improvement," "Seinfeld," "Ellen" and "thirtysomething."

His clear favorite was a memorable episode of "Cheers," the TV series that starred Ted Danson as Boston bar owner Sam Malone, a former Red Sox pitcher.

"I'm the only actor to have thrown Sam Malone out of his bar," Rosengren said with a hearty laugh in a telephone interview from his home in Ashland, Ore. "I played an American League baseball umpire. My character dropped in the bar one day and we recognized each other from his days as a pitcher. Sam Malone started to argue about a call I had given him a few years back. Well, the argument finally gets to the point where I say, 'All right, that's enough. You're out of here.' I threw him out of his bar and he stomped out. That was a lot of fun."

A South Dakota native, Rosengren began his acting career at NDSU's Little Country Theatre and FM Community Theatre. At NDSU, he appeared in such productions as "The Glass Menagerie," "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "Endgame." It was an experience he remembers with fondness.



"NDSU had a very good faculty," he recalled. "I learned a lot under Frederick Walsh, who at that time was head of NDSU's Little Country Theatre. I did a lot of stuff; I immersed myself in building sets and the whole thing. It played a definite role in my decision to pursue acting as a career."

"NDSU and FMCT were a good training ground and sort of a springboard for me," he said. "There are good memories."

After leaving Fargo, Rosengren had acting stops in Minneapolis, Cleveland and Santa Maria, Calif., before his nearly two decades in Hollywood. His latest project, "Murder Unscripted," was actually started when he lived in L.A., but because of his work schedule, he put it on the back burner.

With his retirement, Rosengren found some time on his hands, so he reworked the novel, which was published by Perfect Crime Books. He's already drafted a second novel, and Rosengren hopes the project will develop into an Eddie Collins series. He'll base many of the storylines in and around the movie business, relying on his firsthand dealings with casting agents, producers and directors.

"It's been a smooth transition and a good one because I feel writing has supplanted the acting creative impulse. I find it very enjoyable," Rosengren said. "I've got a lot of ideas. But, the challenge now is to glue oneself to the seat and get them written."

If you'd like more information on Rosengren's career and about "Murder Unscripted," visit www.cliverosengren.com.

class notes

Monica C. (Savageau) Flynn, BS '57, English, drama, wrote the handbook, "What About Our Children," a guide for parents considering separation or divorce. Available at Amazon.com, the publication is intended for separated or divorcing parents who want to preserve and enhance their relationship with their children. She lives in Edina, Minn.

Al "Butch" Ressler, BS '69, MA '71, political science and sociology, was promoted to senior director for field operations at the National Older Worker Career Center, Arlington, Va. He joined the center in June 2011

after 40 years in the federal human resources profession. He retired from the government's Senior Executive Service after serving as the personnel director, U.S. Federal Court System, Director of Corporate Administration in the Department of Defense, Defense Logistics Agency and Human Resources Officer-NAF Activities, Fort Belvoir, Va. He also teaches human capital management courses and serves on several advisory boards and committees.

Carol Bradley-Bursack, BA '75, English, was recently featured in an interview with Assisted Living Today. She is a columnist, blogger, forum moderator and author of "Minding Our Elders: Caregivers Share their Personal Stories." She also runs MindingOurElders.com, a care giving support organization. The interview can be found at <http://assistedlivingtoday.com/2012/10/interview-with-carol-bradley-bursack>.

Lee Hoedl, BA 85, sociology, MEd 89, counseling and guidance, and his national climbing team reached the summit of Mt. McKinley July 1. He notes he brought an NDSU flag to display atop the

EDUCATION HONOREE TEACHES 'BECAUSE OF THE STUDENTS'

Challenges, along with a few encouraging nudges, are often the keys to the educational process. That's how NDSU alumnus Aaron Knodel goes about his business of teaching young people.

Clearly, Knodel is excellent at what he does. He has been named West Fargo Teacher of the Year for 2013-14.

"It's humbling and flattering, mostly because I know so many great teachers in this building," said Knodel, BS '01, English education, who teaches English, literature and debate at West Fargo High School. "Just to be considered is quite an honor."



"I've tried to stay connected to the university; I feel indebted to them for the preparation they provided me."

— AARON KNODEL

Dedicated to education and teacher advocacy, Knodel is president-elect of the North Dakota Council of Teachers of English. He also has earned a master's degree and completed his national board certification.

A loyal alumnus, Knodel has maintained close ties to NDSU. He has welcomed teaching students to observe in his classroom, helped NDSU faculty in Bush Foundation grant projects to evaluate curriculum and served as an adjunct faculty member. "I've tried to stay connected to the university; I feel indebted to them for the preparation they provided me. Once a Bison, always a Bison," he said.

Knodel teaches several levels of students in grades 10-12, ranging from courses for at-risk students to Advanced Placement coursework. His philosophy is similar in each class – the focus is to get the students to do their very best.

My job is to push the kids in their education. My expectation is to make students do something they've never done before. I tell them that it's going to be a challenge and maybe a new experience," Knodel explained. "I teach because of the students, not because of content. I love teaching literature, and I really enjoy my debate class, but there's much more to teaching than the content."

With his West Fargo Teacher of the Year Award, Knodel now is in the running for the state's Teacher of the Year. That honor will be announced this fall at the annual instructional conference of the North Dakota Education Association.

"I'm not sure what my next professional step is. I see myself staying in the classroom because I have no ambition to go into administration," Knodel said. "I see myself working at the grassroots level, where educational changes can occur."

Knodel and his wife, Marie, BS '01, sociology, live in Fargo. They have three children – Aiden, Kristian and Hadley.

Alaskan peak, which is the highest mountain in North America. Hoedl participates in a high-altitude climb every two years. His wife, **Diann (Clarens) Hoedl**, BS '89, pharmacy, is also an NDSU graduate.

Anastasia (Fritel) Martin, BA '97, political science, is a social studies teacher at Minnesota Online High School, a public charter school. She lives in Buffalo, Minn.

Jason "Ike" Isaacson, BS '98, political science, MS '11, speech communication, was elected to serve in the Minnesota House of Representatives. He was elected by his colleagues to serve as an Assistant Majority Leader for the DFL. Isaacson

represents District 42B, which includes parts of Roseville, Shoreview and all of Little Canada, Vadnais Heights and Gem Lake. He and his wife, Cynthia, live in Shoreview.

Sara Stolt, BS '99, mass communication, was promoted to manager of human resources and planning in the Human Resources and Development Division of Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota.

Kari Anne Bitz, BS '04, mass communication, was named by Business Watch magazine as one of the top 40 professionals in North Dakota under the age of 40. Previously an admissions counselor at Bismarck State

College, she has accepted a position as the Graduate School recruitment specialist at NDSU.

Andrea Marie Quenette, BS '04, MS '07, mass communication, joined the University of Kansas Department of Communication Studies as an assistant professor and basic course director.

Carissa Suter, BS '12, public relations and advertising, joined Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota as a marketing representative in the Dickinson, N.D., office. She focuses on service and retention.

A CHANCE TO READ, SHARE AND LEARN

Here's a wonderful example of learning through sharing. Members of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Learning Community participated in a heartfelt service project during fall semester that involved books, buddies and bonding.

For the project, 20 members of the Learning Community made three special trips to teacher Erika Peterson's first grade class at Madison Elementary School in Fargo. The outreach project's goal was to encourage young people to read; its actual result was a connection that will be remembered for a lifetime.

At the project's beginning, the NDSU students recalled their favorite books from their days in first grade, and those books were purchased. During the first visit, the NDSU students each read their personal favorite to a buddy and then gave the book to the youngster. Friendships developed almost immediately.

"The first-graders absolutely loved it. Their eyes just lit up," said senior journalism student Abbi Armstrong, noting the book she shared with her reading buddy was "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs" by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith, a parody of the classic children's tale told from the wolf's perspective.

"Our buddies got very excited about reading, and it felt really good to be a role model for them. We kind of adopted the classroom and tried to give back to the first-graders as best we could," Armstrong said. "It was great to hear them get excited that the college kids were coming – there was a strong bond between us."

On their second visit, the NDSU students collected information from their buddies about their favorite books and plenty of photographs were taken. The result was a booklet called "We Are Readers and Writers 2012," which was presented to each buddy when the NDSU students visited Madison School for the third time. The funding for the booklet was provided by NDSU Residence Life.

"It was a great learning experience for the college students as well," Armstrong explained. "We were able to connect with the first-graders at their level, and learn to adapt to different situations."



"We were able to connect with the first-graders at their level, and learn to adapt to different situations."

— ABBI ARMSTRONG

Other members of the AHSS Learning Community who did not participate in the school trips collected several boxes of fruit snacks and other milk break snacks that were presented to Peterson to distribute to students as needed.

The connection between the NDSU and Madison School students did not end with the completion of the semester.

On March 5, the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Ambassadors held a bake sale to raise money to purchase appropriate snacks for the children during their milk breaks. The sale raised more than \$200.

"We found out some of the first-graders didn't have enough food on the weekends," Armstrong said of the reason for the bake sale effort. "We wanted them to know we didn't just leave them after the reading buddies program was done. We wanted them to know we are invested in their future. They are still in our thoughts."

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

We have had a remarkable year in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Our accomplishments have surpassed my highest ambitions. In addition to serving thousands of students, publishing more than 100 peer-reviewed publications and presenting more than 160 juried exhibits, performances and scholarly papers, the college faculty and staff engaged in an array of activities that enabled us to attain many crucial goals. These goals included clarifying our hiring priorities for the future, expanding our involvement in sponsored research, building stronger interdisciplinary collaborations, reaching out more proactively to our alumni, sustaining a high level of community engagement, maintaining our status as a campus leader in equity and diversity and enhancing the distinction of our academic programs.

One example of how we improved the academic distinction of the college

and its programs was the elevation of the Department of Music to its rightful place as the School of Music. Thanks to the support of Provost Bruce Rafert and President Dean L. Bresciani, the college had several opportunities to celebrate establishment of the NDSU School of Music. Two of the more notable celebratory events included the gala concert held at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul and the “Choral Music of the Americas” symposium held in NDSU’s Reineke Hall. The symposium featured prominent musical figures, including five world-class conductors from North, Central and South America.

The exceptional accomplishments of the college during the past year are best reflected in the nine prestigious university awards our faculty and staff received. You can read more about these award winners and our talented students and alumni in this newsletter.



The newsletter is characterized by a different approach this year. It is shorter in length, and features more news about students and alumni. We hope you like this new approach and that it will help you feel even more connected to the college. We want to share stories that resonate with your interests while also providing you with important updates. Most importantly, we hope the newsletter highlights what is best about the college – its talented and inspiring students, staff, faculty and alumni.

COLLEGE FACULTY RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS HONORS

This was an outstanding year of recognition for several faculty members in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. To honor them, a college awards reception was held April 25.

Elizabeth Birmingham

Associate dean and associate professor of English
NDSU’s Odney Award for outstanding faculty teaching

Andrew Mara

Associate professor of English
NDSU’s Peltier Award for innovation in teaching.

Jo Ann Miller

University Distinguished Professor of Music
NDSU’s 53rd Faculty Lectureship

Dennis Cooley

Professor of philosophy and ethics
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Outstanding Educator Award

Carol Archbold

Associate professor of criminal justice
NDSU Chamber of Commerce Faculty Service Award

Linda Fricker

Academic adviser for the college and senior lecturer of English
NDSU’s Outstanding Professional Adviser Award

Ross Collins

Professor of communication
Hogoboom Endowed Professorship Award

Linda Helstern

Associate professor of English
Green and Golden Globe Diversity Award

Carrie Platt

Assistant professor of communication
Green and Golden Globe Diversity Award

For detailed information about these high-profile honors, visit www.ndsu.edu/ahss/awardwinners.

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PORCELAIN ARTIST IS 2013 JAMES ROSENQUIST ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Porcelain artist Amy Smith from Lincoln, Neb., was the 2013 James Rosenquist Artist in Residence in the NDSU Department of Visual Arts. Smith worked spring semester interacting with students, holding public lectures and opening her studio to visitors.

"I am impressed with the tenacity, unique resolve and endurance exhibited in Fargo," Smith said. "My time at NDSU has proven abundant. The value of the residency is evident in the students – their willingness to engage and learn is clear. Faculty have been welcoming and helpful every step of the way and the facilities here are top notch."

Smith earned a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a bachelor's degree in fine arts from Ohio University, Athens, Ohio.

She said the residency offered her focused time for her work and a new teaching opportunity. "What I discovered, however, was a goldmine of exceptional individuals whom I have enjoyed working with immensely," Smith said.

The NDSU James Rosenquist Artist in Residency Program honors James Rosenquist, who was born in Grand Forks, N.D. Considered one of the greatest living artists of the Pop Art movement of North America, Rosenquist was awarded an honorary doctorate by NDSU in 2005.