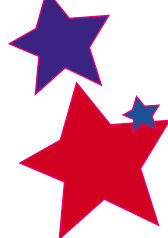


A Star Spangled Homecoming goes off with a **BANG!**



CLASS OF 1953—Seven members of the Class of 1953 attended the Homecoming Dinner in celebration of the 50th anniversary of their graduations. They are, from left, Bill Kelly (ME) of Walden, NY.; Marvin Harris (AC) of Springfield, IL; William Schultz (BAd) of Mansfield, OH; John Alexander (BAd) of Fort Wayne, IN; Dr. Jose Antonio Gomez (CE) of Caracas, Venezuela; and William Pett (ME) of Chesterfield, MO.



Tri-State celebrated *A Star Spangled Homecoming* Sept. 26-27. The patriotic theme honored alumni who were also armed services veterans. "Everyone knows the brave men and women who served in war profoundly changed our country," said Earl D. Brooks, II, Ph.D., president. "What they may not know is that veterans had a great influence on Tri-State, and now as supporters of the University, they continue to guide its course."



WORLD TRAVELERS—Jose Antonio Gomez, CE/53 traveled to homecoming from Caracas, Venezuela.

The main event of the weekend, the annual Alumni Dinner, was held Friday in the World War II Victory Museum in Auburn. Dean V. Kruse, a TSU trustee and owner of the museum, couldn't attend the dinner, but sent a videotaped message.

In keeping with the theme, loud booms of thunder shook the building. But a heavy rainstorm outside didn't dampen the goodwill inside.

"I've now been involved in nine alumni dinners and this year's was one of the best," said Melanie Harmon, director of alumni relations and one of the main organizers of the weekend. "The museum was the perfect place to hold this event, and when the Tri-State Royale Chorus sang songs from the 1940s, you could feel the toes tapping."

Awards were given to four outstanding alumni. (See story on page 6.) In addition, four former athletes were inducted into the TSU Athletic Hall of Fame. (See story on page 25.)

Although he didn't receive an award, Jose Antonio Gomez, a 1953 civil engineering graduate, could have. He traveled to homecoming from his home in Caracas, Venezuela. "Tri-State was a very modest college then," said Gomez of his school days. "The professors who were here were nice people. They worked hard."

Noted for their senior status were two members of the

class of 1937: Dr. John McKetta of Austin, TX, and Charles Skove of Angola.

On Saturday, a full schedule of events kept visiting alumni busy.

In the morning, donors who have funded endowed scholarships met with the students currently benefiting from their generosity at the Scholarship Breakfast, held in Witmer Clubhouse. "If I hadn't gotten that scholarship, I probably wouldn't be here," said Jason Blume, a senior

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A woman engineer's story

When Esther Sundstrom graduated with a civil engineering degree in 1967, she was the only woman in an engineering class of about 1,100. Times were very different. At her first job interview, the man behind the desk looked at her and said, "You're a woman. No dice." That first rejection didn't stop her. She finally landed a job designing transmission line structures for the Commonwealth Association of Jackson, MI. In 1980, the native Canadian moved with her family



Esther Sundstrom, CE '67

to California and went to work for San Bernardino County. Now a resident of Apple Valley, CA, she made the long trip from the West Coast to attend Homecoming. "This is my first reunion, and believe me, I am happy to be here," she said. "I hope to make this a yearly thing."

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mechanical engineering major from Kendallville, IN, and president of TSU's Student Senate. "I'd like to thank the donors for giving us the opportunity of a lifetime."

Alumni soccer and softball games were held on the playing fields on the south side of campus.

Tailgaters began filling TSU parking lots in the morning in anticipation of the 1:30 PM football game. The Thunder struggled mightily, but fell to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater 38-0.

At halftime, Tri-State crowned its homecoming king and queen: Andre Ebron, a senior criminal justice/psychology major from Fort Wayne, IN, and Kristen Rink, a junior elementary education major from Goshen, IN. Also at halftime, several notable athletic teams were honored: the 1995 WHAC baseball champions, the 1978-79 men's basketball team with most wins in a season (31-4), the first

Picture This



Pinky and Dr. John J. McKetta, ChE '37

A covered easel stood off to the side during most of the Touchstone ceremony. Then Mark Dillman, an Indianapolis artist, stepped forward and unveiled his latest work: an oil painting portrait of Dr. John McKetta, ChE '37.

"It's very unusual for someone to like his own portrait, but that's like looking in the mirror," quipped McKetta. "I'm just so lucky that so many things touch my heart, and this is one of them."

Through funding by the Walter E. and Mary C. Beyer Fund, one Indiana university or college each year is allowed to pick someone to be the subject of an oil painting. TSU chose McKetta, who worked his way up from Pennsylvania coal mines to become a member of energy and environmental advisory boards of five U.S. presidents.

McKetta has been a Tri-State trustee since 1957 and is one of the University's most notable alums.

Football Fanatics



Polly and Richard Ryder

Richard and Polly Ryder could be called Tri-State Thunder Football Fanatics. The Richmond, IN, couple made a habit of tailgating and watching games during the four years that their grandson Adam Ryder punted for the team. Adam has graduated, but the Ryders still attend. "This was so much a part of our lives for four years, we missed it," said Richard. "This is a great school." To illustrate his point, Richard mentioned that as a lead engineer in Perfect Circle, a Division of Dana Corp., he hired several Tri-State graduates over the years. "They were far and above better than the other graduates," he said. And that includes his own alma mater—Purdue.

women's basketball team to go to the NAIA national tournament, the first Tri-State track team (1965), the football seniors of 1998 who were the first graduating class of the modern football program and who also led their team to the first national playoff game in TSU history, the 1997 NAIA women's national golf champs, the 1992 soccer men WHAC champs, the 1994 soccer women district and bi-district champs, the 1988 softball team with the record for most wins in a season (30-11), the 1975-76 men's MCC tennis champions, the first women's tennis team (1998), and the 1998 NAIA championship men's volleyball team.

"It was a very busy, but fulfilling weekend," said Harmon. "We hope to see everyone who attended back on campus next year for our **120th anniversary celebration Oct. 1-2, 2004.**"

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Homecoming Dinner



KRUSE CRUISER—The decor at the World War II Victory Museum for the Alumni Dinner featured some of TSU trustee Dean V. Kruse's classic car collection.



FULL OF SPIRIT—Gladys Hawryluk, wife of William Hawryluk, RE '49, shows plenty of spirit during the alumni dinner. Her favorite refrain: "Go Thunder!"



CHORUS CLOWNING—Kris Flory, left, and Jeremy Odell played to the Alumni Dinner crowd during the Royale Chorus's performance.

"A Star-Spangled Homecoming" Photo Album

Scholarship Breakfast



GROUP SHOT—Representatives of the Franklin-Fortner Scholarship, Mary Louise and Meredith Fry (front), pose with students representing several scholarships. The students are, from left, Jeremy Odell of White Pigeon, MI; Kendra Reamer of Edon, OH; Tiffany Tesch of Tekonsha, MI; and Andrew Rekeweg, of Spencerville, IN.

SCHOLARSHIP ROSE—Mildred Champion looks as pretty as a rose during the Scholarship Breakfast.



SAYING THANKS—Jason Blume, a senior mechanical engineering major from Kendallville, IN, expresses gratitude at the Scholarship Breakfast.



Touchstone Dinner



APPRECIATION—Earl D. Brooks, II, Ph.D. (right) shows his appreciation to Verne (CE '84) and Jody Miller for their contributions to the University.



COMPANY SUPPORT—Larry Graham accepts an award for NIPSCO from Dr. Brooks.



LAND GIFT—Dr. Vern Hornbacher, a retired Angola veterinarian (right), was honored by Ray Stuckey, director of development, for a donation of property.



GO THUNDER!—The dark sky during the football game doesn't deter the Thunder faithful.



reigning— Kristen Rink and Andre Ebron reign as the 2003 homecoming king and queen.



Winning Women—The 1988-89 NAIA basketball champs, one of the teams honored at halftime, include from left, Lisa Sweeney, Jill Reed, Jill Simon and coach Cindy DeRocher.



GAME PLAN—The Thunder work on their game plan.



Ready, Aim—Scott Meyers of Campus Operations gets ready to fire a TSU T-shirt into the football crowd.



BACK IN PLAY—Kevin Hefferman, a 1978 graduate and member of the TSU Athletic Hall of Fame, puts the ball in play during the alumni soccer game.



Cutting loose—Bob Bahr and Jeanette Webster cut dashing figures on the dance floor during the Fifth Quarter Reception.