Ramsey, Bess honored at Raider Reunion

Hundreds of Three Rivers’ alumni returned to cheer on the Raiders, reconnect to classmates, and honor two of Three Rivers’ most impactful coaches at the first Raider Reunion.

Posthumous award for Ramsey

The late Cheri Ramsey, a longtime cheer coach and instructor, was honored with Three Rivers’ first Alumni Award. Ramsey coached the Three Rivers cheer team for 29 years while also teaching humanities, speech, and theater at the college.

"Cheri was mom to a lot of people," said current Cheer Coach Brad Piercy. "She loved her cheerleaders like they were her kids."

"This award means a lot," said Ramsey’s son, James, who accepted the award in his mother’s memory. "The running joke was that every year she had 12 to 18 new children."

Ramsey was chosen for the inaugural Alumni Award because of her longtime and selfless service to the college and its students.

"Cheri impacted thousands of Three Rivers’ alumni. By honoring her, it gives us a chance to honor the service that one person can give to an institution to really change thousands and thousands of lives," Piercy said.

Bess honored for 1200 wins

Raiders head coach Gene Bess was recognized at a ceremony not only for being the winningest coach in college basketball with 1200 wins, but also for touching the lives of hundreds of players.

"I would not be where I am today if not for Coach Bess," said Ben Ressell, who played basketball for Three Rivers from 1995 to 1997, went on to earn a degree in Business Administration from Columbia College, is now employed at First Midwest Bank, and has served on the Three Rivers Board of Trustees since 2012. “For me, as for so many others, Coach Bess was one of the most influential people in my life.”

Resolutions were presented by state Senator Doug Libla, state Representative Steve Cookson (who also played under Bess), and Butler County Commissioner Butch Anderson. Bess was praised by former players, fans and family, received plaques and trophies, and the City of Poplar Bluff declared Feb. 7 Gene Bess Day.

Coach Gene Bess praises his former players at a celebration of his 1200th win held during Raider Reunion.

“This is a momentous occasion for those who have supported the Raiders through the years, but know that I’m a figurehead,” said Bess, whose 1200th win came Jan. 8 against State Fair Community College. “I have been blessed with a wonderful family, talented players, dedicated fans, and a great college.”

Eric Schweain, 1992 National Championship team member and current teacher and coach at Marquette High School in Chesterfield, said Bess created a family atmosphere. “Coach Bess was tough, but he knew how important it was to build a strong foundation to turn boys into men,” Schweain said.

“He loves the game, he lives the game, and he puts everything he has into every game,” said former board member Wilbur Thornton, who was the Voice of the Raiders for 23 years.

Raider Reunion

Raider Reunion will be an annual homecoming event. This year’s event featured a commemorative pin, free game admission, a hospitality room, photo booth, discounts, and prizes. It was organized by Three Rivers staff members Hillary Speer, Brad Piercy, and Tracy King, with assistance from all areas of the college.

The event promoted the Three Rivers Alumni and Friends organization, which is open to all who have attended, worked for, or supported the college. Membership is free. For information on joining, email alumni@trcc.edu or call 573-840-9077.
FY16 planning priorities outlined at Planning Retreat

Three Rivers’ annual Planning Retreat brought together the college’s unit managers to prepare them for the task of planning and budgeting for Fiscal Year 2016.

Each year, unit managers use Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) to develop their continuous improvement plans and budgets for their departments. The Planning Retreat provides guidance on our planning process, information on annual institutional planning priorities and outlines our initial budget predictions.

Chief Financial Officer Charlotte Eubank showed revenue predictions as flat for both tuition and fees and state funding.

President Wesley Payne outlined the college’s planning priorities for FY16. With a flat budget projection and growing needs, he said it’s more important than ever for the institution to have unified priorities to promote cross-functional collaboration and use data to inform our decisions.

Planning priorities for FY16 are:

- Assess and improve policies, regulations, processes, and procedures.
- Create opportunities to provide a team atmosphere.
- Develop assessment and data analysis processes.
- Develop strategies to enhance student learning outcomes.
- Enhance web presence.
- Increase professional development opportunities.
- Improve student persistence.
- Maintain enrollment above the national trend.
- Maximize fiscal efficiency.
- Seek funding opportunities.
- Maintain physical infrastructure.
- Identify needed learning resources.

Unit managers are now finalizing their plans and budgets for the review and revision process. The goal is to have our initial plans complete and a balanced budget ready to present to the Board of Trustees at its May 20 meeting to review and approve at the June board meeting.

Master Planners recognized at retreat

Three unit managers were recognized for their exemplary planning practices during the Three Rivers annual Planning Retreat. Ben Gordon, Jason Alford, and Diane Patterson received Three Rivers Master Planner awards for their active engagement in the planning and assessment process.

“Each award recipient faced unique challenges and used Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) for planning that made things better for our students,” said Dr. Maribeth Payne, Three Rivers’ Dean of Institutional Effectiveness.

Gordon is Coordinator of Distance Learning. He not only has a thorough grasp of how to use SPOL for his own area, he also provides assistance to others across the institution.

Alford, who is Director of Student Accounts & Billing Services, uses data to improve processes and services in the Student Financial Services Department.

Diane Patterson, who is Coordinator of Testing & Assessment, used SPOL to develop plans that helped her pursue national certification for the Three Rivers Testing Center while expanding and relocating our testing services to better serve students.

Ribon cutting for Three Rivers-Sikeston to be March 20

A ribbon cutting for the new location of Three Rivers-Sikeston will be held at 10 a.m. Friday, March 20, at the new facility at 1400 S. Main.

"We are extremely proud of the new facility," said Three Rivers-Sikeston Director Missy Marshall. "It is expanding the opportunities for the college to serve the region. It will allow us to educate more students; offer more classes, programs, and degrees; increase workforce training; and provide more services to the community."

Following the ribbon cutting, an open house will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. We invite everyone to tour the 36,000-square-foot facility, which features 17 classrooms, including three ITV rooms, four computer labs, and two science labs, plus a Learning Resource Center and LPN-to-RN Bridge Program facilities with a state-of-the-art simulation lab. There is also an auditorium/community meeting room that doubles as a 770-person storm shelter.

For more information about Three Rivers-Sikeston, including information on enrolling, workforce training, or use of the community room, call 573-472-5223.
Three Rivers College Navigator

DRA grant to purchase nursing simulators

High-tech patient simulator mannequins are incredibly beneficial for nursing students as they allow them to experience real life interactions in a controlled environment.

More of these simulators will be available to Three Rivers nursing students through a $100,000 grant from the Delta Regional Authority (DRA).

"The funds will be used to purchase equipment, including simulator mannequins, for our nursing education classes in Sikeston and Kennett," said Three Rivers President Dr. Wesley Payne.

The mannequins give students hands-on experience with a wide range of conditions and complications they might not see during clinical instruction.

Three Rivers' Nursing programs offer students the opportunity for a rewarding career in healthcare and help area communities fill the growing demand for healthcare professionals.

Three Rivers appreciates the work of the Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission, which worked with the college in applying for the DRA grant.
Students attend economic conference

The college thanks First Midwest Bank for giving more than a dozen Three Rivers students the opportunity to attend its 12th Annual Business and Economic Conference held Feb. 12 at the Black River Coliseum.

Students from Business Instructor Jeff Kropp’s Economics classes heard nationally known speakers, including Generational Consult Amy Lynch, Economic Analyst Steve Cortes, and Robert O’Neill, a Navy SEAL on the team that killed Osama bin Laden.

Wesley McCollum of Poplar Bluff said he especially liked Lynch’s presentation on marketing to different age groups. McCollum, who is attending Three Rivers using Missouri A+, plans to be a certified public accountant and said attending the conference was beneficial to him.

Business Administration major Campbell Keele said the presentations expanded his business knowledge beyond what he’s learning from textbooks.

Three Rivers hosts regional spelling bee

River Blount, a sixth-grader from Annapolis, won the sixth annual Three Rivers College Southeast Missouri Regional Spelling Bee held Feb. 28.

Blount correctly spelled “adjudicate” in the 12th round of the event to earn a trip to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C., May 24-29.

“The spelling bee is a unique way we reach out to our extended Southeast Missouri community,” said Mark Sanders, chair of the Languages Department at Three Rivers and coordinator of the event. The College raises funds to send the winner and a family member to the national contest.

Fifty six contestants representing 20 schools qualified for the Regional Spelling Bee.

To follow River Blount’s progress at the National Spelling Bee, visit the Three Rivers College Facebook Page at facebook.com/threeriverscollege.

February Employee Spotlight: We Are In This Together

David Fielding
Instructor of Art
Years at Three Rivers: 20
Favorite thing about working here: Seeing the creativity of our students.
Most proud of: Helping students develop their talents and creativity in the arts.
David teaches all the art classes at Three Rivers, and he painted most of the art work that decorates the Tinnin Fine Arts Center.

Amanda Hicks
College Store Off-Campus & Online Coordinator
Years at Three Rivers: 1
Favorite thing about working here: The opportunity to help students succeed.
Most proud of: The growth and expansion of The College Store.
Amanda’s job making sure all off-campus centers get the right books at the right time is very important to student success.

Rose Maxwell
Controller
Years at Three Rivers: 2
Favorite thing about working here: Being part of an amazing, community-impacting organization.
Most proud of: The great strides forward we made in the last two years.
Rose’s job as chief accountant is to make sure all the financial pieces fit together and work the way they should.