

## PYLE CENTER GRAND OPENING DEDICATION EDITION

### UW-Extension to host February Board of Regents meeting

For only the second time in its history, the University of Wisconsin-Extension will host a UW System Board of Regents meeting, February 4-5, in conjunction with the dedication and grand opening of The Pyle Center.

UW Regents will tour The Pyle Center on Thursday, February 4, just prior to hearing from PBS President Ervin Duggan, who will speak to the Regents during lunch about reforging the links between the University and public broadcasting. Immediately following Duggan's presentation, The Pyle Center dedication ceremony will be held at 1 p.m. in the main lobby.

During the Board's Thursday committee meetings, Regents will see some of the distance learning capabilities of The Pyle Center as they hear from UW-Extension leaders about the design features needed in future educational facilities; Extension's new impact indicators for accountability; and Small Business Development Center (SBDC) initiatives to help small business owners with international trade. That evening, Wisconsin Public Radio's Bill Lutes and spouse Martha Fischer of the UW-Madison School of Music will perform piano and vocal duets as entertainment for the Regents' Thursday night dinner at The Lowell Center.

The full Board meeting on Friday morning, February 5, will feature a UW-Extension presentation on the educational potential of digital datacasting. Tours of Wisconsin Public Radio and Television will also be available for spouses of Regents and UW Chancellors.

"This is a great opportunity to show Regents some of the bells and whistles of The Pyle Center, as well as to showcase UW-Extension faculty staff and the potential of technology for learning," says Interim Chancellor Al Beaver.



### The Pyle Center dedication set for February 4

After years of planning, design and construction, the formal dedication and grand opening of The Pyle Center, UW-Extension's flagship conference and distance learning facility at 702 Langdon Street in Madison, is set for February 4.

UW-Extension Interim Chancellor Al Beaver will emcee the event. On hand to speak will be UW System President Katharine Lyall, UW Board of Regents President San Orr, Governor Tommy Thompson (invited), the building's chief benefactors, Thomas and Judith Pyle, Madison Mayor Susan Bauman, and a continuing education student, Jack Mitchell. Several hundred programmers, donors, Regents and staff are expected to attend the ceremony,

which begins at 1 p.m. in The Pyle Center's main lobby. A reception will follow and tours of the facility will be available from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

The Pyle Center's \$15.3 million addition and renovation features 11 state-of-the-art distance education classrooms equipped with two-way audio and video teleconferencing systems. In addition, the Center houses a teleconference operations center and control room, audio projection space, computer research and development labs, and a computer video distribution area.

The project also renovated 17 existing conference rooms, the auditorium, dining rooms, lounges,

and other common-use areas, as well as providing 58 upgraded office and work spaces for distance education staff formerly located in dispersed and out-moded facilities. The building's size expanded from 85,000 square feet in the former Wisconsin Center to 140,000 square feet.

Along with \$2.4 million from the Pyles, an endowment fund established to keep The Pyle Center's technology up to date into the future is supported by Dr. Gale VandeBerg, the Firststar Milwaukee Foundation, GTE, Nelson Industries, Inc., and Urso and Associates. AT&T and Ameritech are also providing support for programs and services emanating from the center.

### Ameritech gives naming gift for Pyle Center lounge

The gas fireplace in The Pyle Center's Ameritech Lounge offers a welcoming atmosphere for conferees to take a break between continuing education sessions.

Ameritech is contributing free Badgernet video interconnect services to connect distance education classrooms in The Pyle Center with the 4-Lakes Distance Education Network and other DS-3 networks throughout the state. Ameritech also will provide maintenance, service and upgrades to the systems.





## Celebrating a Great Civic Building

The Pyle Center could aptly be described as one of Wisconsin's great civic buildings. That's because UW-Extension's new, state-of-the-art distance education and conference facility is built upon one of this century's

greatest concepts — **the Wisconsin Idea**. What better way to celebrate the beginning of a new century than by breathing new life into a tradition that is committed to providing access to University knowledge to all Wisconsin citizens.

The Pyle Center is also a great civic building in the purest definition of the term "civic," meaning "public" and "community." It is very much a "public" place — it is an integral part of a remarkable public higher education system; it is nestled in one of America's great cities; it resides in the capital of one of the nation's most innovative states; and it is publicly supported by its citizens, as well as by the private sector.

Finally, The Pyle Center is a vital part of our Extension community, adding value as an intellectual and public resource. It best exemplifies a learning community where students and teachers can gather either on-site, or at a distance, to share their insights, innovations and ideas.

Over 40 years ago, when this building was dedicated as the Wisconsin Center, UW President E. B. Fred described the facility as "a roof over the Wisconsin Idea." Now, while we celebrate the opening of The Pyle Center, I believe we are taking the roof off the Wisconsin Idea, as this great civic building represents our commitment to finding new ways to take Wisconsin education to the boundaries of the globe.

Albert J. Beaver  
Interim Chancellor

## ESP Board votes to seek funds for The Pyle Center

The Board of Directors of Cooperative Extension's professional fraternity, Epsilon Sigma Phi, Wisconsin Chapter, has pledged to seek funding from its membership to name the second floor Board Room in The Pyle Center.

The Board will appoint a committee to solicit \$200,000 in funding over the next two years to help support The Pyle Center Technology Endowment Fund, designed to

help keep the technological aspects of the facility on the cutting edge into the future.

The entrance to the Epsilon Sigma Phi Board Room will be marked as such. In addition, all individual donors who make contributions of \$5000 or more will be recognized on The Pyle Center Entry Recognition Wall and in the ESP Board Room itself. Smaller donations will also be welcomed.

## Teachers, learners like their new space

While some of the distance learning technologies are still being connected in The Pyle Center, a number of faculty have resumed programming there. Here's what a few of them have to say:

*"The faculty development labs are amazing. The facility has space for both individuals and groups of faculty working in teams to apply technology to their courses. How ideal it is to be able to come here with written material, slides, videos, sound tracks and put all of these instructional aids together into a multimedia presentation with the assistance of knowledgeable staff and cutting edge software!"*



*"As a faculty member who teaches in the Nursing Collaborative Degree Program, I need assistance in both design and multimedia instruction. The Pyle Center staff assist me in how best to display the information I want to present, based on the form of multimedia and distance education methods I am using. Many times, my presentations require a mix of technologies: computer graphics, compressed video, and WEB access, to name a few. The resources and staff make these presentation elements appear seamless to the student."*

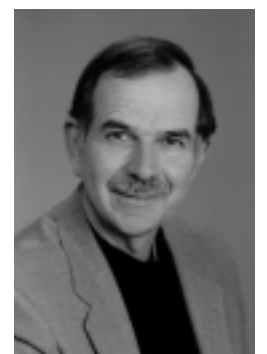
— Pam Scheibel, Clinical Associate Professor  
UW-Madison School of Nursing

*"This totally updated, remodeled facility will appeal to the business audiences a bit more than the old Wisconsin Center. Speaking as an instructor, the space is much more conducive to teaching because of the greater capability of audio-visual, plus the positive acoustics in all the rooms — and the location of course. You cannot beat the location of The Pyle Center. It's got the best location on campus for adult education. I'm not a heavy user of distance education at this particular stage, but I probably will be using more and more of that capability as time goes on."*



— Harold "Buck" Joseph, Management Institute  
UW-Madison/Extension

*"The facilities and telecommunications capabilities of the Pyle Center will greatly enhance my programming. I look forward to being able to reach out to remote audiences through videoconferencing and audiographics and to use the same technologies to bring guest speakers and case study presenters into my Madison programs."*



*"As in the past, however, it is not just the technology that is important, but the people behind it. The support staff from Instructional Communications Systems and the Pyle Center make all the difference. I am comfortable and confident about using the technology, and because it is well supported, I can concentrate on the educational objectives of my programs without worrying about whether or not things will work."*

— Thomas W. Smith, Director, Engineering Telecommunications Programming  
UW-Madison/Extension Department of Engineering Professional Development

Jack Mitchell is a continuing education student who participated in many workshops and seminars in the former Wisconsin Center and is now completing the UW-Madison/Extension Certified Public Managers program, which held its latest session in The Pyle Center:



*"Aesthetically, it's a different learning environment than the old Wisconsin Center, even in the traditional style classrooms. It's just very conducive to learning — no hard chairs and cold walls. The colors and design are both very comfortable."*

— Jack Mitchell, Director, Division of Buildings and Police Services, Wisconsin Department of Administration



The McInerney Room is one of four tiered distance education classrooms in The Pyle Center. The room is named for the parents of Judith Pyle, Edward and Geraldine McInerney.

## The Pyle Center Staff Move In

By David Park

UW-Extension staff are excited about their move into their new spaces in The Pyle Center.

One of the main objectives in planning the Center was to create a synergy among support staff who had previously been housed in outdated and widely dispersed locations. Relocating and uniting these staff in The Pyle Center addition promises more efficient, coordinated, technical, conference and computer support services for distance learning and conference programs.

The support staff of The Pyle Center now includes the staff of Instructional Communication Systems (ICS), formerly housed in the antiquated Old Radio Hall, Cooperative Extension Computer Services (WisPlan) staff from Hiram Smith Hall, the Cooperative Extension Video Production unit from the basement at 45 North Charter, and the Extension Conference Centers Instructional Media support staff from the former Wisconsin Center.

According to Bill Lawrence, distance education specialist, "The consolidation of the various staff with whom



we work has proven to be beneficial in that we are able to communicate 'in person,' which provides more effective working relationships that serve our clientele more efficiently."

The Pyle Center's Director Bill Mann says, "Bottom line is that it will not only improve efficiency, since we now all work together in the same place, but it will also provide improved services to our customers."

Besides improving communication among UW-Extension units, The Pyle Center also provides a welcoming and open working environment. Comfortable group work spaces, abundant natural light, warm lounges and connected offices enhance the work atmosphere.

Bill Mann added "The original Wisconsin Center was built on the principle of the 'Wisconsin Idea.' The Pyle Center provides us with the opportunity to expand on this concept and take it worldwide. We have a beautiful facility with tremendous flexibility, unlimited technological support, staff and faculty expertise, and world class service."

How do other staff like their new digs? Just ask –



◀ "For a couple of years now, all we've seen are lines on paper. It's exciting to see the results. Our mission and focus, as I see it, is quite simple. It is to provide the very best teaching and learning experience for our program participants, coordinators and instructors, both in the classroom and at a distance, whether they're in Madison, across the State, or throughout the world."

– Denny Gilbertson, associate director, Instructional Communications Systems



▲ "Our new work environment and office spaces are just wonderful. Everybody is raving about them"

– Gail Garczynski, manager, The Pyle Center's scheduling department



▲ "I like being close to the other units that we work with. It's much easier to ask someone a question when they're on the other side of the room rather than on the other side of campus."

– Donna Anderson, Cooperative Extension Video Production graphic designer



◀ "It is very exciting to be working in such a futuristic distance education center. The potential for growth for this technology is great and this facility is equipped to handle it."

– Carol Hillman, ICS WisView audiographics coordinator



◀ "The technology is wonderful. It gives us a better ability to reach people in the state and around the world."

– Milly Jones, ICS manager of Program and Site Coordination



## The Pyle Center created interesting challenge for architect

"In architecture, you come across a whole array of situations. The Pyle Center ranks among the most interesting of the projects I've worked on."

That's how Eric Rhodehamel of Performa, Inc. describes his experience with UW-Extension's enlarged conference and distance education center formerly known as the Wisconsin Center. Performa is the architectural engineering firm that designed the Pyle Center.

"What distinguishes this project is the integrated focus on the professional learning environment," adds Performa's Michael McMahon, Pyle Center designer.

Rhodehamel said the sophistication of UW-Extension's distance education staff made The Pyle Center plan "both challenging and fun to work with." He said there were many requirements to integrate — the limitations of the 1950s-era Wisconsin Center and the site on which it stands — as well as the wide range of instructional technologies the new center needed to incorporate.

Noting the evolution of the instructional process, Rhodehamel said, "Back then, the technology constituted an overhead projector, and the instructor ruled in the classroom. Today's learner-centered environment includes requirements for things like break-out space and access to data jacks for learners' laptops."

"People expect to be able to tap into the guts of the building and capture the notes from the last hour's lecture, or initiate an electronic communication with anybody, anywhere in the world."

The architects noted that, although the Wisconsin Center was originally designed to expand upwards by two additional stories, the

requirements of The Pyle Center were better served by expanding the original building to the east, and maintaining three floors above ground.

Distance education classrooms and operations centers are located primarily in the center of the building because they do not require ambient light.

Corridors were designed to have participant-friendly points of light at their ends.

Performa, Inc., is headquartered in De Pere, Wis. The company has a staff of 45 architects, engineers and planners, and serves a number of clients in institutions of higher education.

— Joel Bradtke



*extension News & Ideas* is a publication of the University of Wisconsin–Extension (UWEX). It features articles and information about UW-Extension and extension activities carried out through the 26 UW System campuses and 72 Wisconsin counties. An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, UWEX provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements. If you would like this material in another format, please contact the editor.

Comments should be sent to:  
*extension News & Ideas*  
531 Extension Building  
432 North Lake Street  
Madison, WI 53706-1498  
or: [mulcahy@admin.uwex.edu](mailto:mulcahy@admin.uwex.edu)

Editor: Sheila Mulcahy  
Design: Vicki Pierce

Contributors: Joel Bradtke, David Park,  
Doug Bradley, Sheila Mulcahy

Photos: Jim Gill and Joel Bradtke

*extension News & Ideas* on-line:  
<http://www.uwex.edu/ni/ni.html>



University of Wisconsin–Extension  
Office of the Chancellor  
432 North Lake Street  
Madison, WI 53706-1498

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Madison, WI  
Permit No. 658