



LSTC *Technique*

A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF LINN STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

LINN STATE CELEBRATES GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY



The Foundation for

LINN STATE

TECHNICAL COLLEGE

www.linnstate.edu

Features



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Linn State's drug screening program comes under scrutiny

In the fall semester of 2011, Linn State Technical College began a drug screening program for all new students and those returning after one or more semesters of non-enrollment.

"The drug screening was implemented in the spirit of what is best for our students," said Dr. Donald Claycomb, president of Linn State. "It is based on our mission and the environment students are in from the standpoint of safety and preparation for employment."

Since the infancy of the program, Linn State has worked closely with legal counsel to design and administer a responsible drug screening program that protects both students and their rights.

On September 14, 2011, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a federal class action lawsuit charging Linn State with violating the constitutional rights of its students by forcing them to submit to mandatory drug screening.

Immediately following the filing, U.S. District Judge Nanette Laughrey granted a temporary restraining order blocking any further drug testing or analysis of urine samples already taken from students. Most recently, Laughrey extended the temporary restraining order against the college and set a May 2012 hearing on whether to issue a permanent injunction.

Since the filing of ACLU's lawsuit, Linn State has received overwhelming support of the drug screening program from business and industry.

"We appreciate the number of people wanting to support us," says Claycomb. "Our industry advisors have guided us and supported us through this process and recognize that we're a small institution that's been brought into an expensive legal battle."

Linn State has set up a legal defense fund with Central Bank in Jefferson City, Missouri to which any person can donate any amount of money they choose to give.

Checks can be made payable to the *LSTC Legal Defense Fund*. Donations can be dropped off at any Central Bank location in Jefferson City or mailed to the attention of *LSTC Legal Defense Fund*, Central Bank, P.O. Box 779, Jefferson City, MO 65101. Donations can also be made online at www.linnstate.edu/about/drugscreening.php.



2012 Upcoming Events

- February 8 LSTC Job Fair
- February 15 Scholarship Deadlines
- February 23 LSTC Job Fair at ATC
- March 2 Advisory Council Meeting
- March 29-31 State SkillsUSA Competition
- May 5 Commencement

For a detailed list, visit www.linnstate.edu.



For the first time in recent history, the college was closed for four days in February due to the excessive snowfall in the Central Missouri area.

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Aviation graduate actively involved Volunteer leadership keeps him connected

way since the days he attended classes in a quonset hut behind the high school. "I'm amazed," said Wilbers. "The leadership has done well."

Graduating in 1982 from the Aviation Maintenance program, Wilbers has remained connected and has played a significant role in growth of the college and program.

For many years, Wilbers has actively participated as an advisory committee member for the Aviation Maintenance program. As the Director of Maintenance

for Jefferson City Flying Service, Wilbers has hired graduates and has continually encouraged the company to help the college out in any way possible.

"We've helped with fly-ins sponsored by the college and provided airplane flights for open houses at the college," said Wilbers. "We're always eager to promote the program in any way we can."

"We need well trained technicians," he said. "I may be biased, but students from Linn Tech are well prepared for a career as aviation mechanics."

Wilbers stated there is still a demand for mechanics and the demand is growing. For that reason, as well as others, he's willing to stay actively involved with the college.

Wilbers became interested in airplanes when he was a teenager. A neighbor owned an airplane and his own airstrip. "At first, I didn't give much consideration to a career as an aviation mechanic because I was more interested in cars," commented Wilbers. "It was my neighbor who said if I wanted to be a mechanic maybe I should consider becoming an aviation mechanic."

Wilbers believes a career as an aviation mechanic is one which more young men and women should consider. "As an aviation mechanic you are a licensed professional by the federal government and you are treated as such," commented Wilbers. "It's a degree and a career that has opened many doors and served me well."

CAT Dealer Service Tech pleased with the outcome

When Adam Harman first heard of Linn State Technical College he wasn't exactly sure where it was located. "I was thinking it was in Linn County, but there were no cities by that name in the county," said Harman laughing.

According to Harman, '02 Heavy Equipment Technology CAT Option, his first challenge was trying to find Linn on a map.

In 2000, Harman was one of a few students to enroll in a new program being offered at the college in partnership with Caterpillar, Inc. In addition to being one of the first students in the CAT program, Harman was one of the first students to live on campus in the newly constructed residence halls.

Although Harman was living in a new facility and enrolled in a new program, he was severely homesick. "I thought about dropping out several times," commented Harman. "I didn't want to be there."

Many times Harman would tell his instructors he was going to drop out of the program and many times the instructors would tell him to give it some time.

Harman heeded their advice. "I stuck it out," said Harman. "Looking back now, it was the best advice my instructors could give me."

Since being employed with Dean Machinery Company, Harman has steadily moved up through the ranks. Harman started in the shop as most technicians do and then worked nights out in the field servicing Caterpillar equipment on job sites. Eventually he worked his way up to shop foreman on the night shift.

Today, Harman is a technical communicator. In his current role, his main job function is to provide support to the other Dean Machinery technicians. "If the technician can't fix it and I can't fix it, then we get on the phone to the Caterpillar service technicians at the corporate office," said Harman.

"Those classes at Linn State, the communication classes, they make more sense to me now that I'm in this role," said Harman. "All those classes that I didn't think I needed, I now need."

Harman contributes his success to the college for making the program as close to what a technician will experience in the real world. "The instructors such as Roger Haslag and Mitch Distler treated the program like a job and not a classroom and because of that I believe I was more prepared for the workplace," said Harman. "The outcome has been good."



New view of agriculture from the Down Under

Having participated in Rotary International's Group Study Exchange (GSE) earlier this year, Commercial Turf & Grounds Management Instructor, Nick Rackers, is always finding ways to include stories and photographs of his trip into his classes.

"The stories and the visuals are simply amazing," said Rackers. "New perspectives are always a great thing to show students."

In March 2011, Rackers, along with four other individuals, participated in an agriculturally themed exchange in Australia.



Rackers thought that when he traveled halfway around the world he would find a much different horticulture industry. Instead, he was amazed to find the industry issues in Australia, such as labor, green initiatives, the economy and competition from "big box" retailers, to be much the same as they are in the United States. "The world isn't as big as we think it is," stated Rackers.

While in Australia, Rackers made some great contacts in Ag Education. "I have shared those contacts with colleagues at other Missouri colleges," commented Rackers. "I hope it leads to some opportunities for collaboration for other students in many different fields of agriculture."

Rackers is especially excited about the possibility of one of his students traveling to Australia in the future for an internship. Having made contact with a superintendent who was eager to start an international internship program, he is hoping maybe one of these days the program will work out.

According to Rackers the four week exchange was very intense. Although family and co-workers saw the trip as a vacation, Rackers in no way felt as if he was a tourist. "We stayed with eight different hosts during our four week stay," said Rackers. "We would switch hosts every three or four days."

During each stop, Rackers and his team members would visit sites related to their vocations. Rackers visited with management at Boyd's Bay Garden Center, a superintendent at Sanctuary Cove, a golf development on the Gold Coast, and met with faculty members at the North Coast TAFE college who teach horticulture at the technical level.

Additionally, Rackers experienced a variety of locations related to the agriculture industry including unique sites such as a lavender farm, a bush food nursery and a sugar cane operation. "One morning I got up early to help make a milk delivery," commented Rackers. "On two occasions I got my hands dirty and planted some native Australian plants."

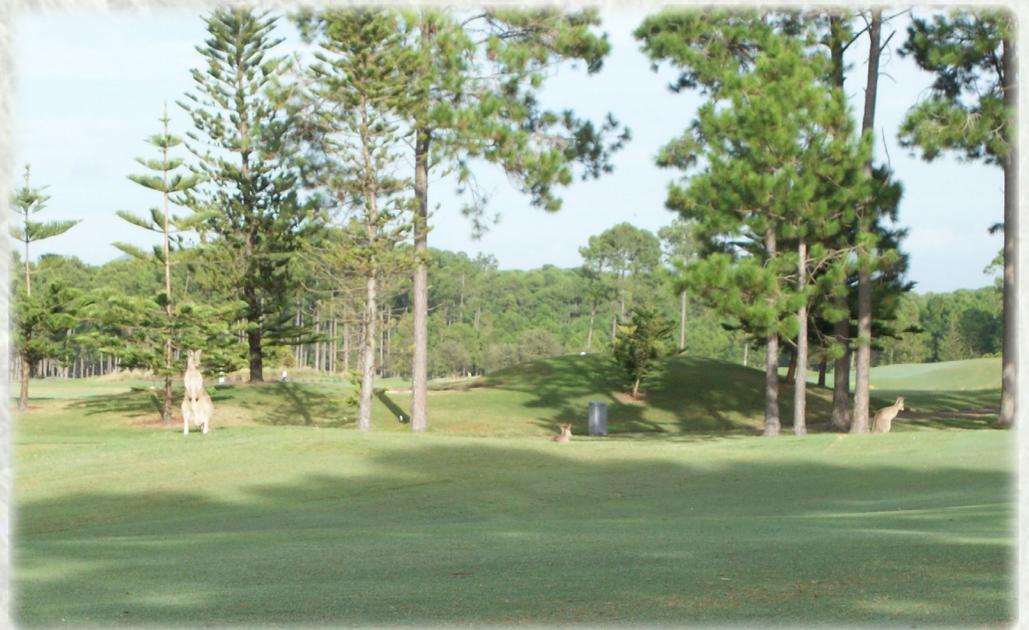
Rackers had never traveled overseas until his trip to Australia. Although Australia is an English speaking country, there were some differences in language. "On the street, Australians would greet us with G'Dayhowareyougoingmate, alright," said Rackers. "That translated to 'Hi, how are ya, good?'"

"One of my most memorable experiences while I was in Australia was riding in Troopy," said Rackers.



According to Rackers, Troopy was an aptly named six wheel drive, custom built vehicle that was used to tour the entire team plus the Rotary club member around the small town of Kyogle. "It could haul anything and go anywhere from mountain tops to water crossings and miles of pavement in-between," commented Rackers. "Troopy was an adventure in itself."

Rackers considers the exchange to be one of the best experiences of his life and he is very grateful that Linn State President Dr. Donald Claycomb presented the opportunity to him. At first, Rackers was a little apprehensive about applying for the exchange since he had never traveled overseas. "There were a few reasons I could have said no, but I didn't," said Rackers. "Probably the biggest lesson I can teach my students is that you never know when an opportunity will present itself and you can't dismiss it so quickly."



A different view of the World Series

When the World Series returned to St. Louis on October 27, 2011 for Game 6, Nick Straatman didn't have tickets but he did have a plan to capture a glimpse of the game from the street outside Busch Stadium.

Straatman, Communications Instructor, went to Wal-Mart where he asked for old cardboard boxes and bought duct tape and two small mirrors which he used to construct a periscope.

Straatman stood on Clark Street outside of Busch Stadium with his cardboard periscope. From the street a passerby might be able to peak into the stadium, but the views of the field are blocked by bleachers. However,

with his periscope, Straatman could see the pitcher, the batter and all the bases.

Straatman said he didn't mind his limited view of the game. The periscope worked and it cost him less than \$10.

For Game 7, Straatman's view of the game didn't require his cardboard periscope. His girlfriend, Andrea Unnerstall, surprised him with tickets to Game 7 in which the Cardinals beat the Rangers 6-2 to win the World Series Championship.



Telecommunications grad works on a "Extreme Makeover" home

When Glenn Mertens started at Linn State Technical College he didn't even know how

to turn on a computer. Now, he owns his own business installing smart technology that turns on computer systems that are activated by the sound of one's voice.

"It's really amazing how far I've come," said Mertens. "I was 29 when I went back to school. I was the oldest guy in the class and I had to ask how to turn the computer on."

Mertens, '02 Telecommunications, started Smart Solutions, Inc. in 2003. Based in Jefferson City, his company provides services such as voice, data, video, audio, security, home theater and home automation. His customers are predominately in central Missouri although he does have clients around the country.

The invitation to participate in ABC-TV's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" was extended to Mertens because of home automation work he and his employees had done for a man with disabilities in North Carolina.

"I got a call from the TV show on June 10 and within seven days I was driving the company van filled with equipment to Pennsylvania to participate in the extreme home makeover," said Mertens. "It was unbelievable to build a house in a week. It was really, really intense."

Mertens donated time and equipment to install technology in the home of Brian Keefer. Keefer was paralyzed from the neck down due to a gymnastics accident. Mertens integrated technology in the home to provide Keefer with some independence so that he wouldn't have to rely on others to do everything for him.

For Mertens, it's all about thinking outside the box. "It may be something such as a drink fountain that dispenses whiskey, but what else can it be used for," said Mertens. "Perhaps, it can be used to dispense Gatorade or other drinks."

"Of course, I'm always taking that a step further wondering how I can automate the use of the equipment with smart technology."

Since the episode aired in October, Mertens and his team

have been asked back to work on another home in Iowa. "The home in Iowa is for a blind woman," commented Mertens. "It's very rewarding to help people improve their lives with technology, especially those with disabilities."

According to Mertens, he uses every single skill he learned at Linn State on the extreme makeovers and in the building of his company. "I learned the basics at Linn State," said Mertens. "I took those basics and then I applied them. That's really what success is all about."



Glenn Mertens (standing, second from right), owner of Jefferson City-based Smart Solutions, was part of the technology team that worked on a home makeover for Brian Keefer (in wheelchair) for ABC-TV's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."

HVAC SKILLS PROVIDE STEADY CAREER SUCCESS IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

When Steve Osborn graduated from the Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning program in 1977, he expected to return to his hometown of Mack's Creek, Missouri, put his new skills to good use and possibly open his own business. Little did he know that when he went to work for Marriott's Tan-Tar-A Resort as a HVAC mechanic, his career would take him far beyond the boundaries of his hometown as well as his own dreams for himself and his family.

In the early 80's, Osborn quickly moved up the ladder accepting supervisory positions. In 1984, he was part of the opening team of engineers for the New York Marriott Marquee. Shortly thereafter, Osborn accepted a transfer to a management position as the chief engineer of an 1100 room Marriott high rise hotel in downtown Boston, Massachusetts. By the close of the decade, Osborn and his family relocated once again to Point Clear, Alabama where he accepted the position of chief engineer of the Grand Hotel and Resort.

In 1996, Osborn and his family had the opportunity to return to the Lake of the Ozarks. It was a full circle moment for Osborn. Marriot's Tan-Tar-A Resort, where Osborn started as a mechanic,

was hiring for the Director of Engineering. "My family and I were interested in returning to the area," said Osborn. "It was an opportunity that I couldn't pass up."

In 2001, Columbia Sussex Corporation who owns and operates Marriotts, Hiltons, Crowne Plazas, Westins and several resorts and casinos, purchased Tan-Tar-A Resort. Shortly after, Osborn was promoted to Region Director of Engineering helping to oversee the mechanical systems and maintenance departments of 12 resorts and hotels from Florida to Las Vegas.

Today, Osborn holds the title of Corporate Director of Engineering. He oversees the mechanical and maintenance departments for over 50 hotels and resorts from as far away as Anchorage, Alaska to resorts in the Caribbean Islands. In particular, Osborn is overseeing energy conservation and energy efficiency projects at most of the hotels and resorts. "Energy conservation and efficiency seems to be the latest trend in the HVAC industry," said Osborn. "Making existing buildings more energy efficient or LEED certified is in high demand and it certainly impacts the bottom dollar."



With over 30 years of working in the hotel engineering field, Osborn believes none of it would be possible without Linn State. "The college was a small school when I attended," said Osborn. "Although it may have been small, it had very well trained and professional instructors with real world experience. Without the skills that Linn Tech provided to me in my early years, none of my success would be possible."

Osborn states that he has never stopped learning. "Hardly a year has gone by that I have not attended additional college classes or certification courses," commented Osborn. "It's true of any field you work in. You need to keep expanding your knowledge to stay current. Otherwise, you risk falling behind the younger, brighter and better trained graduates working their way up the ladder."

GEIGER RECEIVES GOVERNOR'S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

In 2011, Vince Geiger was awarded the Governor's Award for Excellence in Education. Geiger received the award on April 6 at the Excellence in Education ceremony held in Jefferson City, Missouri. Geiger, chair and instructor for the Electronics Engineering Technology

(EET) program, was recognized for his innovative course design and unique delivery of the Biomedical Engineering Technology Option which he was responsible for designing and implementing. According to his colleagues who nominated Geiger, the implementation of the program has more than doubled the enrollment for the EET program.

Geiger's industry contacts have resulted in donations estimated at \$300,000 worth of state-of-the-art biomedical equipment. In addition, he has established successful internships with five hospitals throughout Missouri.

Geiger has been teaching electronics at the college for more than 15 years. "I turned down the job the first time because I couldn't imagine how they could get any students," he said referring to the poor conditions of the old campus.

Geiger said he eventually accepted the job and soon realized that the program could do so much with nothing. "I have a picture that I keep on my desk that shows me sitting at my old desk in the old building," he said. "I keep it there to remind myself how far we have come. It is remarkable where we are today as a state technical college."



NEW NAME, SAME GOAL

LIFETIME CAREER SERVICES AVAILABLE ONLINE



Earlier this year, the Office of Career Services introduced HireLSTCEagles as the new name of the career services online system.

Although the name and logo of the online system has changed, the goal of the system remains the same. Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the system allows an alumnus to set up and manage a personal account for free. Accessible by the internet, the system allows users to search jobs by major and to receive notifications when new job opportunities are posted.

Recent graduates looking for their first job, as well as experienced

technicians with many years in the workforce, are encouraged to set up an account and access HireLSTCEagles on a regular basis.

In addition to the online system, Career Services also has a new Facebook page with regular posts about new job opportunities that are of interest to Linn State graduates.

To access HireLSTCEagles, visit www.linnstate.edu/careerservices.

HireLSTCEagles Facebook page, is found at: www.facebook.com/HireLSTCEagles.

CMU TO OFFER DEGREE PROGRAMS AT LINN STATE

Starting in January, Central Methodist University (CMU) will offer two degree programs at Linn State Technical College's main campus in Linn, MO with classes being held in the evening.

Through a formal agreement with Linn State, students who have earned an Associate of Applied Science degree at Linn State have the opportunity to complete a Bachelor of Applied Science in Management or a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies – Entrepreneurship Emphasis from CMU.

Programs are also being offered to all area residents already holding an associates degree and wanting to pursue their bachelors in business or for bachelors degree holders who may want to earn a business degree.

For more information, contact Aimee Sage at 660.248.6651 or email her at asage@centralmethodist.edu.

INDEBTED TO LINN STATE FOR NEW CAREER

An employee of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Ken Hebb works at the Spirit of St. Louis Airport in Chesterfield, Missouri as an Airway Transportation Systems Specialist.



"You can't have a short title and work for government," Hebb joked. According

to Hebb, his work includes a variety of electrical work including the care of runway lighting and backup power supplies for communication.

"I'm in the career I love and I owe it all to Linn State Technical College," said Hebb.

"It is very rewarding to do work that benefits the flying public," said Hebb. "It's a pleasure to work with people that are professional and have an incredible amount of integrity."

Working at an airport, in the company of many individuals who have served in the military, Hebb appreciates the rigidity and the structure of the Electronics Engineering Technology (EET) program that he graduated from in

2001. "Being taught by ex-military individuals such as Mr. Phillips, Mr. Geiger and the Franchini's prepared me for my employment with the FAA," commented Hebb. "It's made all the difference in my career."

Hebb's appreciation for Linn State goes beyond the classroom and his instructors. "If it weren't for Career Services and Glenda Whitney, I wouldn't be where I am today," said Hebb. "She turned my life around."

Hebb stated that after graduating from Linn State, he was in a job that wasn't exactly the right fit for him or for the company. Hebb contacted Glenda Whitney, director of Career Services, hoping she might be able to help.

"It just so happened, Glenda knew of a job opening at the FAA," said Hebb. "With her help, she prepared me for what the employer was looking for in an employee. If it weren't for her help I don't think I would have this job today."

Since graduating, Hebb has returned to campus on numerous occasions. He's served as an advisory member for the EET program and helped with Missouri SkillsUSA contests.

Hebb usually doesn't need a reason to come back to Linn State. He enjoys stopping by to visit with the faculty and staff. "These people have changed my life," said Hebb. "Where I come from you don't blow that off. I want to honor those who helped me."

Electronics degree launches a career with NASA's space program



Rodney Luebbert, '78 Electronics Engineering, on a tour of campus with his wife Sheila.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Linn State Technical College and the start of the Electronics Engineering Technology program, the LSTC Alumni Association took the opportunity to honor the graduates of the first program at the 3rd Annual Alumni Association Dinner Reception. As a keynote speaker of the event, the alumni advisory board selected alumnus Rodney Luebbert, '78 Electronics Engineering.

Luebbert started his speech by telling everyone that he really didn't have a clue what he wanted to do with his life when he graduated from high school. "I was working two and sometimes three part-time jobs," he said. "I was living at home with Dad and Mom. Life was great."

After being out of high school for a year, Luebbert realized something had to change. When one of his work buddies graduated from Linn Tech with an electronics degree, Luebbert took notice. "Somehow the light came on,"

commented Luebbert. He approached his parents, asking them to help him pay for college and signed up for the Electronics program.

"Every day for two years, I would drive to and from Linn Tech and Jefferson City," stated Luebbert. "Back then that wasn't easy since most of Highway 50 was a narrow two lane highway."

Within two years, that narrow highway would take Luebbert beyond his wildest dreams. Prior to graduation, Luebbert and four other classmates were offered a job at NL Baroid, an industrial drilling company in Houston, Texas.

Not long after, Luebbert accepted a position with Ford Aerospace that launched a lifelong career in the space program. For Luebbert it was exciting times. "I worked in the Mission Control Center for the first four flights of the Space Shuttle program," said Luebbert.

For many years, Luebbert worked as an electronic technician on the Shuttle

Mission Simulator (SMS). The SMS consisted of two simulators in Building 5 and one simulator in Building 35 of the Johnson Space Center. "I was a technician on the astronaut crew trainers and eventually moved into hardware and software engineering for the trainers," said Luebbert.

With the announcement that the Space Shuttle program would retire, Luebbert looked for other space initiatives. Today, Luebbert works for United Space Alliance on the Orion Program – a program hoping to provide NASA with an affordable solution to meet the future needs of the nation's space program.



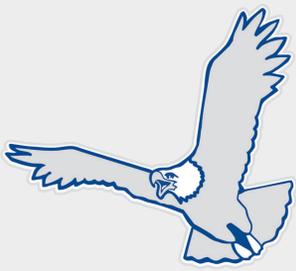
"So now instead of training astronauts, I am testing Real-Flight simulator hardware and software," said Luebbert.

Throughout his career, Luebbert has received many accolades and won many awards for his technical expertise. "Linn Tech has made a big difference in my life," said Luebbert. "I am thankful to all my teachers and the staff at Linn Tech for

helping me successfully achieve over thirty years of experience with NASA on the space program."



The LSTC Alumni Association hosted their 3rd Annual Alumni Association Dinner Reception on June 3, 2011. The association honored graduates, faculty and staff of the Electronics Engineering Technology program in recognition of its 50 years.



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Linn State Technical College

alumni.linnstate.edu



Rex Mitchener and Tom Graves, both '80 Electronics Engineering, pose for a photo prior to participating in the May commencement ceremonies. Graves was the keynote speaker and Mitchener presented graduates with alumni pins during the ceremony.



The LSTC Alumni Association Annual Dinner Reception provided an opportunity to bring alumni back together. Pictured are, from left, Karen Beyer, '81 Automotive Technology; Shirley Vantreece, '82 Automotive Technology; and Vickie Stockton, '82 Automotive Technology.



A record number of students attended the President's Ringing of the Bell on the first day of classes. The annual bell ringing starts the academic year and commemorates the college's status as Missouri's only state technical college.



Four graduates of the first Electronics class were recognized along with other graduates at the 50th anniversary Founders Day Ceremony. Pictured standing, from left, John Lewis, Ed Tremain, Anton Libbert and Gary Lock.



In October 2011, the college participated in the Linn Centennial with a float in the Linn Centennial Parade. Alumni from the 1960's riding on the float included: Front Row, from the left: Robert Turner, '68 Electronics Engineering; John Lewis, '63 Electronics Engineering; James Tripp, '63 Electronics Engineering; James Riegel, '65 Electronics Engineering; Joe Copeland, '63 Electronics Engineering; Anton Libbert, '63 Electronics Engineering; Marvin Leimkiller, '65 Automotive Technology. Back Row, from left: Ken Balkenbush, '68 Electronics Engineering; Robert Scheulen, '66 Electronics Engineering; George Scheulen, '68 Electronics Engineering; James Heidbrink, '63 Electronics Engineering; John Branstetter, '64 Design Drafting; James Jett, '69 Automotive Technology; Ken Franken, '67 Design Drafting.

Linn State Technical College Selected Milestones

1961

Linn Technical Junior College is founded by Osage County R-II School District with the leadership of Superintendent Thurman Willett, offering its first program in Electronics in the fall of 1961.

1962

Ralph "Duke" Livingston becomes first Director of Linn Technical Junior College. Construction of the George Sohns Building, first permanent college campus structure, is completed.

1963

First Electronics class of 13 graduate from Linn Technical Junior College.

1972

1,000th student graduates from Linn Technical College.

1976

The Osage County R-II School District separates the operations of the college by establishing the post of college president.

1977

DeWayne Rakes is appointed Linn Tech's first president.

1982

The Osage County R-II School Board votes in favor of constructing an airport and the college applies for inclusion in the National Airport System Plan.

1983

Linn Tech purchases 100 acres of land from the Amy Jett farm to be used for construction of an airport—the land will become the future site of Linn State's current campus.

1985

Construction of the Automotive Collision Repair facility is completed. This is the first building constructed on the college's current campus site.

Continued on page 12

Linn State celebrates golden anniversary



On August 31, 2011, Linn State Technical College kicked off a year-long celebration of the college's 50th anniversary with a Founders Day Ceremony.

The rotunda of the Information Technology Center was standing room only with over 200 members of the community, political leaders, college supporters, as well as college retirees, faculty, staff, students and alumni of the college.



"I can't overemphasize enough my thanks to all who attended the event and for their ongoing support of the college," said John A. Klebba, Linn State Board of Regents President. "Their advocacy on behalf of the college virtually guarantees that our next 50 years will be at least as bright as the first 50 years."

Klebba opened the ceremony by welcoming guests and transporting

the audience back to 1942, when Linn State's founding father, Thurman Willett, first drew inspiration for a postsecondary school for those high school graduates who could not or would not go on to a four year college.

"That concept, that dream percolated in his mind for the next 19 years, during which I suspect the vast majority of those with whom he communicated his dream either politely smiled at his madness or told him forthright that the concept would never fly," stated Klebba. "I dare say that very few, if any, of us here today would have held on to that dream against those kinds of odds for 19 long years."

In 1961, almost 20 years later, Willett's dream became a reality. With the support of the Osage County R-II School District and the leadership of Willett as the superintendent, Linn State began as Linn Technical Junior College. With a \$7,500 grant to the Osage County R-II School District from the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and strong support from the Missouri Department of Education, the college offered its first program in Electronics in the fall of 1961.

Only a couple dozen men were enrolled in the first Electronics program held in a basement storage room under the high school band room. "Willett's early recruiting materials could certainly boast of small classes and free live music," commented Klebba.



"It is truly remarkable that in a mere 50 years we have seen a \$7,500 grant transformed not only into the campus that surrounds us here today, but most importantly into an institution that has enhanced the lives of over 10,000 graduates," said Klebba.

Willett passed away in 1991, leaving a legacy in technical education.

During the ceremony, Linn State President Dr. Donald Claycomb said to Willett's widow, Hazel Willett, "We hope the men and women who have graduated from Linn State have done justice to his dream. We will continue to enhance what Mr. Willett has entrusted to us."

Claycomb honored several special guests including past presidents, members of the Osage County R-II School Board from 1960-61 and 1961-1962, the school's first advisory council and the first graduates of the college.

Elected officials, Sen. Dan Brown, R-Rolla and Rep. Tom Loehner, R-Koeltztown, presented Claycomb with official resolutions to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the college. Ms. Mary Tinsley, representative of U.S. Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer, 9th Congressional District of Missouri, read a letter of congratulations from the congressman.

Claycomb recognized the leadership of Sen. Mike Lybyer, Rep. Gracia Backer and Rep. Joe Clay Crum and Missouri's 88th General Assembly for designating Linn Tech as a state technical college in 1995. In 1996, the college's name was

officially changed to Linn State Technical College and the first Board of Regents was appointed by then-governor Mel Carnahan.

"Throughout the entire 50 year history, Linn Tech has maintained its focus on preparing individuals for profitable employment," said Claycomb. "That in itself is a fact to be proud of."



Thurman Willett: Founding Father

By Nancy Vessell



For nearly two decades, Thurman Willett shaped and nurtured the idea of a public, two-year technical school to give high school graduates new skills to get good jobs.

The idea first sprouted in his mind in 1942, when Willett, a young school administrator in southeast Missouri, was sitting in an auditorium watching a class of high school seniors walk across the stage to receive their diplomas. He realized that not one in the class was going on to college.

He fretted over the waste of talent, knowing that some, if given the opportunity to learn a skill, could substantially improve their chance for success. That's when the idea of a public technical school was born.

He had trouble getting the novel idea off the ground until Congress passed the National Defense Education Act in 1958

to fund technical education programs. Willett became superintendent at Osage County R-II Schools in 1955. As superintendent, he acquired a \$7,500 grant to start Linn Technical Junior College's first program in Electronics in September 1961.

"There would be no Linn State Technical College without Thurman Willett. He was the genesis," long-time teacher and administrator James Symmonds said.

Willett was the first in his family to earn a college degree. He grew up in the southeast Missouri town of Perkins, where his parents owned a general store. He graduated from what is now Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau and earned a master's degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

After launching Linn Tech, Willett personally recruited many of the students. Although the financially strapped college lacked many amenities, he made sure it had up-to-date equipment to teach necessary skills.

Prior to his passing in 2005, Ralph "Duke" Livingston, the school's first director, stated that everyday Mr. Willett would

count the nickels in the Coke machine. "That was part of the school budget," said Livingston.

Symmonds recalled that some paydays arrived without paychecks. "But, no one left. There was a feeling of evangelization, and that was due to Thurman Willett."

His wife, Hazel Willett, said he was a great admirer of President Harry Truman because "he was down-to-earth and became president against great odds."

"Trumanesque" describes Willett, Symmonds said. "He was blunt-speaking and a no-nonsense person, but tempered with the dream of what he could do for the college."

A local newspaper editorial gave Willett credit for single-handedly starting the college, calling it "an audacious move."

Bold moves are often controversial, and in 1975 Willett left the school district. He later was school superintendent in Lewis County, then retired back to Linn, where he and Mrs. Willett had raised three sons. Thurman Willett died in 1991, leaving a legacy in technical education.

Linn State dedicates eagle monument

On August 31, 2011, a bronze eagle monument was dedicated. The eagle monument, made possible by the generous contributions of alumni, friends and supporters of the college, is a symbolic landmark honoring graduates of the college, commemorating the college's history and renewing the college's commitment to the eagle as the official college mascot.

The monument, sculpted by Sabra Tull Meyer, is located in the roundabout of the main campus featuring an eagle leaving the nest and taking flight. The eagle statue is a reminder of the many students who have and will continue to graduate

from the college and venture into the world of profitable employment and a life of learning.

During the dedication, donors were recognized and those providing cash and in-kind donations of \$1,000 or more were honored with a bronze replica of the eagle monument. Donors receiving the replicas were Midwest Block and Brick, Jefferson City, Missouri; Tom & Patti Dinkins, Saint Louis, Missouri; Clarke & Arlene Thomas, Saint Louis, Missouri; Donald and Linda Claycomb, Linn, Missouri; and Michael and Carla McDaniel, Bonnots Mill, Missouri.



LSTC Foundation honors first president

During the Founders Day Ceremony, the Foundation for Linn State Technical College presented the Thurman L. Willett Leadership Award to DeWayne Rakes, the first individual to carry the title president, rather than director.

Rakes served in many capacities in the early days of the college. He was the college's first basketball coach and housing director. In 1969, he was named Dean of Students, and to his earlier responsibilities were added recruiting, job placement and financial aid. In 1977, Rakes was named president of Linn Technical College.

In his role as president, the financial responsibilities fell firmly on Rakes' shoulders. Faced with a large debt, he immediately set to work making budget cuts and delivering the bad news that there would be no pay raises that year.

In an interview conducted during the 40th anniversary of the college, Rakes stated that people were dedicated to stay. "I will always be grateful to them for that," he said.

During Rakes' tenure, the college acquired over 100 acres east of Linn. Rakes and his staff began planning new buildings and new programs, laying the groundwork for more growth. "We went from a collection



of tin buildings to a dream of having a new campus," he said.

Linn State Foundation Chair and Linn State alumnus, Clarke Thomas, recalls Rakes being a capable and kind leader. While employed as an automotive repairman, Thomas returned to Linn Tech to seek a second degree in Aviation Maintenance after being laid off due to the lack of business at the repair shop where he was employed. He applied for a work study position but was denied because his parents were financially stable. After being turned down, Thomas went to Rakes to explain his position that he was on his own and his parent's money was not at his disposal.

Rakes approved his application and Thomas began cleaning the quonset hut where his aviation classes were being held. "I will never forget his kindness and how successfully he operated the school," said Thomas.



Linn State Technical College Selected Milestones

Continued from page 9

1993

Dr. Donald M. Claycomb, Ph.D., is named as the President of Linn Technical College and remains as the college's current president.

1995

With the leadership of Sen. Mike Lybyer, Rep. Gracia Backer and Rep. Joe Clay Crum, Missouri's 88th General Assembly designates Linn Tech as a state technical college, making it the only college of its kind in Missouri higher education.

1996

College name is officially changed to Linn State Technical College and the first Board of Regents is appointed by then-governor Mel Carnahan.

2000

First on-campus housing units are completed, which are capable of housing 96 students.

2001

Construction of the Information Technology Center is completed. The 93,000 square foot building was the first brick building to be built on campus.

2008

Activity Center opens its doors to students and the community. It is the first recreational facility of its size in Osage County.

2009

10,000th student graduates from Linn State Technical College.

2010

Construction of the Vehicle and Power Center was completed and becomes home to many of the college's transportation division programs.

Wait there's more... 50th anniversary online

View the 50th anniversary video. Read the profiles of previous Linn State presidents.

In August, Linn State Technical College began a year-long celebration of the college's 50th anniversary. To commemorate this milestone, we've expanded this edition of the LSTC TECHnique magazine. Although we've added several pages, it does not begin to capture all of the history, the stories or the memories that have been shared with us during this 50th anniversary year.

In addition to the pages that have been prepared for this publication, there is a web page on the college's website dedicated entirely to the 50th anniversary. The web page includes:

- **50th Anniversary Video**
View a 14-minute video about the history of the college.
- **Decade articles**
Read Nancy Vessell's articles which capture Linn State's history through each decade.
- **Leadership profiles**
Read profiles of Linn State's Founding Father, Thurman Willett including those who served as directors or presidents of the college.
- **Alumni 'Remember When'**
Read personal memories and experiences of Linn State alumni.
- **Honors Class Oral History Presentations**
Read students' oral history assignments of previous and current Linn State faculty, staff and administrators.

For more information, visit us online at www.linnstate.edu/anniversary.



Honors class captures Linn State history

In an effort to capture detailed history and personal accounts regarding the 50 years of Linn State Technical College's existence, last fall Tracy Wilfong, Communications Instructor, assigned

her Honors Composition students the task of capturing stories from previous and current Linn State faculty, staff and administrators.

Although the students were slightly apprehensive about the oral history assignment, Wilfong believes the students gained a deeper appreciation for the college.

After conducting the interviews, Wilfong heard several students comment on the "old days" of the college. "They were amazed at the



progress Linn State has made in the campus, the facilities and the equipment," said Wilfong.

"Without a doubt, students gained a greater appreciation for the history of Linn Tech," said Dr. Donald Claycomb, Linn State President. "It was exciting to hear the presentations by the students based on their interviews of people who have had a long time involvement with the college. What the students reported indicates a strong dedication on the part of those individuals who were interviewed."

The following pages include two articles selected by Wilfong for inclusion in the 50th anniversary edition of the LSTC TECHnique.

LSTC's "Little Prince"

By Jason Whitworth & Dewayne Basnett



For first time writers of an "Oral History," Rodney Mulvania is both an excellent and difficult subject. He is excellent because

he answers questions at length, with a warm, engaging manner. His answers are sometimes circuitous, but with Rodney the journey is half the fun. He is difficult for the same reasons. His style is so warm and engaging that you find yourself mesmerized by his stories and before you know it, the story is over and you have no notes. It is easy to imagine that being a student in one of his classes is an education of subject and life.

Rodney repeatedly made a point of telling us something he often told his students. The important things in life are family, friends, and having fun in your chosen profession. Possessions and money are not near the top of Rodney's list of important things, though he did remark that having money was better than not having it. In Rodney's own way, he was giving us the same advice that the fox gave the little prince: "And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."

The first impression of Rodney is neatly disheveled, and friendly; all rolled up in energy and enthusiasm for whatever task is at hand. If you have seen pictures of Dr. Einstein, you know the look. When you shake his hand, you know that this man is familiar with tools, and his eyes twinkle with the wisdom of age. When



he is asked a question, his eyes will slowly close as he responds, almost as if the memory is a movie that he is narrating. His humor is subtle, though ever present.

By the fall of 1964, Rodney and his wife Paula had obtained teaching jobs in St. Louis, MO. They taught there for several years before coming to the realization that big city life was not for them. I knew the tech school was here in fledgling condition he said. Rodney had a friend in the Linn area, and, when visiting, he looked for a place in his price range. Over Easter of 1970 he met Mr. Thurman Willett, and Rodney remarked, "He was a wonderful person." Mr. Willett gave him a job as biology teacher and school bus driver at Linn High School.

In 1976 Rodney had a visit from Jack Light, head of the math department at the college. "I don't know how he knew about me; he just came over there one day, in my room, and he asked me if I would like a job (as Physics instructor)." Rodney's acceptance was the start of a long and varied career at Linn State Technical College (LSTC).

Rodney taught at LSTC from 1976 – 1994 and 1996 – 2005. He taught various subjects including physics, math, Aviation Maintenance, and HVAC. Rodney said, "My undergraduate major was in math, and biology, a double major actually, and a minor in education." In 1965 he received his Masters in Education. When asked how he became involved with the aviation and HVAC programs he said, "I

had theory and experience, and that's all I'd need." Rodney told us that he had on-the-job training for HVAC working part-time at the local Sears store as an appliance repairman. While working there, he also took correspondence courses from Whirlpool. We also learned that in 1965 he received his Pilot License, and in 1969 received his Airframe and Power Plant License. Rodney's knowledge is both broad and deep. He made the point that, "There are common threads in all technical courses." When asked when he knew that teaching was what he wanted to do, he said, "There really was no ah-ha moment. I did it by default at the start." It was almost as if teaching had selected Rodney.

Rodney said the mission of LSTC was different than that of a four year school. "You know it's different teaching a related as opposed to a major. It's just different teaching the major you know. You're really trying to give them the training

they're going to need to get along in their chosen field. They've made a choice, and they want to leave with the information it takes to complete those tasks. We emphasized doing, get with the program, and don't waste your time."

Rodney commented on student behavior in the classroom. "I had a student one time that you know,

for almost 2 years I wouldn't have given you the powder to blow him up. He came in red-eyed all the time for one reason or another that I wouldn't speculate on what he had been doing. He worked diligently at avoiding doing anything. He looked like anything but an aviation mechanic. You know, you never lose hope." Near the end of the second year the student starts coming to the class clean shaven,

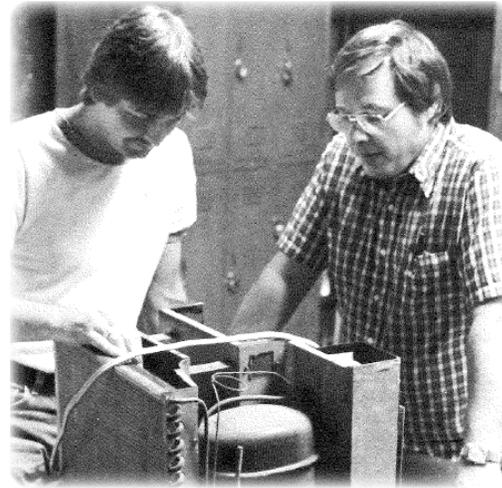
neatly dressed and attentive. Rodney continues saying, "They all go down to Georgia to interview with Delta (airlines). By golly, when they come back, he is the only one with a job and was very successful in his career with Delta." When asked if he was surprised, Rodney replies, "He didn't really surprise me

because I always knew he could do it. I wasn't sure that he would but he did."

In 1994 Rodney retired after teaching for 34 years. For the next couple of years he and Paula traveled, and in 1996 he responded to an ad in the paper for a physics teaching position at LSTC. In 2005 he retired once more. He says he doesn't miss it now, but you can't help but believe that if LSTC really needed him he would answer the call to the best of his ability.

It seems fitting that the reader's last impression of Rodney Mulvania is with the important things in his life. Rodney and Paula have three children: Peggy, Kerry, and Andrew. Peggy, the oldest, is a teacher at Linn High School in Linn, Missouri. Kerry, the middle child, is a successful lawyer (Family Law) in Columbia, MO; though at heart she is a starving artist. Andrew, the youngest, is a Professor at Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, PA and published writer of poetry.

Who knew that our first "Oral History" would result in meeting such a character, so full of insight about the truly important things in life? He was undoubtedly a great instructor, but his greatest achievement is his "Life 101" class that he taught daily to his students, and is still teaching to anyone willing to listen.



The Stars Were Aligned

By Marsha Gloe and Erik Brodin



Pat Oidtman's involvement in Linn State Technical College (LSTC) spans several decades. Because of her long association with LSTC, Pat witnessed and was part

of many key events in the transformation of the college into the state educational institution it is today.

When Linn native, Pat Oidtman, graduated from Linn High School in 1959 little did she know that she would have a unique perspective on the evolution of LSTC. In 1961, when Thurman Willett, Superintendent of Osage County R-II Schools, conceived the idea for a technical school, Pat was a young college student at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg working towards a degree in Business Education. Following the adoption of their two children in the early '70s, Pat and her husband, John, eventually found themselves back in Linn on the family farm.

In 1974, Pat and John opened a Sears Catalog Store in Linn, MO. To keep up with evolving technology at the Sears Store, Pat took a night class at LSTC to learn WordPerfect. Pat stated that the male instructor at the time proclaimed to the class, 'Women over 50 shouldn't even try to use these computers.' "That statement motivated me to keep up with technology," said Pat.

Pat's determination to try new experiences would extend into public service. From 1982-1988, Pat served as a member of the Osage County R-II



School Board. "At that time there were two school board meetings per month," said Pat. "One meeting was for the actual R-II Schools and the other meeting was to conduct the business of LSTC."

The decision to purchase the 100 acres of land that now is home to LSTC was made during Pat's tenure on the R-II Board. All major decisions in a small town are bound to be greeted with some skepticism and this was no different. "It was unfortunate that there was some misunderstanding regarding the purchase of the acreage for the College," said Pat. "I remember one individual called and railed against the construction. It was just so unfortunate that there were local misconceptions about what we were trying to achieve for the community."

Serving on the R-II School Board provided a unique vantage point for Pat. "Serving on the School Board peaked my interest in working at LSTC," Pat stated. "I admired the work they were doing at the College. Knowing how the College started and evolved made me want to work there."

The opportunity to join the faculty of LSTC came in 1989, the same year Pat and John sold the Sears Catalog Store. "I knew that Linn Tech had started an academic program geared towards business," said Pat. "I was eager to return to teaching and I was determined to become a part of that program." Pat started at LSTC in 1989 in the Administrative Office – Executive program teaching computer applications, business math and economics.

Pat worked in the Terrill Building, a building located behind the Linn High School and not originally built for the College. All business classes were in the building along with the Industrial Electricity

classes. "It was very cramped working in the space we had in the Terrill Building," commented Pat. "The offices were small and we had three people working in the same office space that also included a copy machine. That experience is a testimonial to the fact that it's not the buildings that make a great school; it's the people that run it."



Always interested and willing to keep up with the changing times, Pat noticed that there was a need for a Medical Office program. Pat proudly stated, "I promoted the idea and started the Medical Office program. I taught myself medical terminology and medical coding. I was learning as I was teaching. You don't ever learn something as well as when you have to be prepared to teach it."



As most of the LSTC classes moved to the new campus, all the business classes remained at the old campus or

West Campus as it was called. That period in Pat's employment at LSTC required some adjustment. "When most of the classes moved to the new campus, it changed the Business Department," said Pat. "The Department still functioned well but it wasn't cohesive and I missed the camaraderie with my fellow faculty members in other departments." The Business classes didn't move to the new campus until 2001 when the Information Technology Center was completed.

The new campus is a source of pride for Pat. "It's been a great joy to see how far we've come to where the school is now," Pat said. "I have a great swelling of pride when I see the new campus."

"I'm especially proud of the fact that I was a member of the Faculty Senate when the decision to hire Dr. Claycomb was made," said Pat. "He has done a fine job for Linn State Technical College."

"I have such a strong belief in our school and in our mission," commented Pat. "I see great potential for Linn State Technical College. When Linn Tech received designation as a state college it was almost a miracle. The stars were aligned to make it happen at the right time."



"I just see a bright future for Linn State," commented Pat. "Dr. Claycomb has a vision. The college is structured so that we can continue to offer new and emerging technologies. I really think we have a great reputation and that will continue into the future."



"Having been involved with LSTC for so many years, it was difficult to leave," said Pat. After twenty years of service, Pat retired from LSTC in May 2009. But for Pat,

retirement didn't mean willing away the hours in a rocking chair. Pat has already accepted her next challenge. Last year, after running for an empty seat on the Board of Directors for Three Rivers Electrical Cooperative, she won the election and is currently serving as the first woman ever elected to the Board.

Remember When...

1965 Electronics grad remembers the good ole days

In 1963, Ronald Douglas enrolled in the Electronics program at Linn Tech. According to Ronald, there weren't many places for students to live at that time. "So my parents secured a room for me at the hotel on the west end of Main Street," said Ronald. "It turned out, there were ten or more of us who roomed there. We all became close overnight."

On his first day of class, Ronald met John Baker, his instructor. "We quickly discovered his love of smoking a pipe," commented Ronald. "Oh yes, we could smoke in class. As a matter of fact, after the first week most of the students were smoking pipes too."



"Right off from the beginning we were issued slide rules and instructed on how to use it," stated Ronald. "We were to have it on our person at all times."

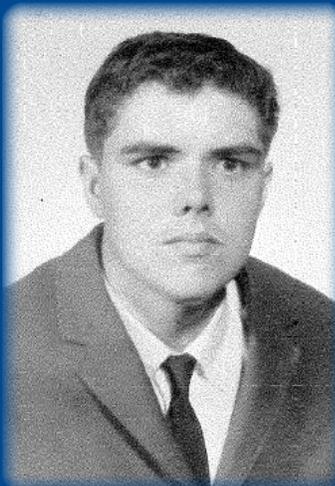
Ronald holds many fond memories of his time as a student at Linn Tech.

As many people living at that time do, Ronald remembers the day John F. Kennedy was shot. "We were going to English," said Ronald. "It was our last class of the day. The rest of the school and the high school were dismissed but our instructor, Bob Hopkins, made us come to class. He said there was nothing we could do for the President, but we could learn more for ourselves."

When Ronald and his friends weren't in class they engaged in sports which primarily consisted of a basketball team. "We did have basketball although the team was kind of thrown together," he said. "I played."

Ronald remembers one game in particular when the Linn Tech team played the Redheads. "It was a ladies Globetrotter type of team," he said. "You know I don't remember who won that game but I do remember at the end of the first half they came to our coach and asked that we not run fast breaks, so they could do their show." As for recreation, Ronald recalls spending time at the Dairy Queen across the street from the school where he and his classmates would play pool for hours. In addition to playing pool, Ronald stated that he and his friends would go to the Luystown slab outside of town. "We would go wading and gigging for snakes," commented Ronald.

In the days Ronald attended Linn Tech, the tuition was only \$200 which he considered a great price for a quality education.



Although Ronald completed the Electronics program in May of 1965, he didn't attend graduation. "Jim Davis, Cecil Stancil and I had already gotten jobs at McDonnell Aircraft and we were to start work on the Monday of graduation week," said Ronald. "Mr. Willett said, 'Go for it boys and good luck.'"

Ronald said attending Linn Tech was a great time in his early life. "There are things I will remember forever, even Dress Up Fridays" he stated. "That may have partly been the reason how we got our first jobs."

For additional alumni memories and college experiences, visit www.linnstate.edu/anniversary.



HOLDING TIGHT

ALUMNUS SHARES HIS PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF JOPLIN'S EF5 TORNADO

BY MICHAEL HAGAN, '82 AUTOMOTIVE COLLISION TECHNOLOGY

Michael Hagan wrote this to share with everyone what happened to him and his wife, Michelle before, during, and after the EF5 tornado in Joplin, Missouri on May 22, 2011. The following is Michael's account of how a beautiful spring Sunday turned into a day he will never forget.

It was just another Sunday. Early that morning Michelle and I had sorted through our clothing so that we could give away things we no longer used to charity. Later, I mowed the yard and then Michelle and I sat down in our back yard to drink a nice bottle of wine.

We had just returned from Napa wine country the Tuesday before and were drinking a wine that we had found while calling on wineries in Napa. Michelle and I opened a wine shop two years ago in Joplin. It was not damaged.

I was throwing a toy for our dogs to retrieve. We were laughing at our Australian Shepherd, Cooper, who would chase after the toy, but let his little girl friend, Souve, a Chihuahua-Brussels Griffon mix, carry it back. We thought he was such a gentleman. Or was he just letting her do the work? Unfortunately, Cooper would not survive the tornado.

When we heard the first siren, I went into the house to turn on the TV. The storm was going north of us, so I came back outside. It started to sprinkle and Michelle asked that I get the umbrella out of the garage and put it up so we could stay outside and stay dry.

I made a comment that the last time we put up the umbrella, the wind caught the umbrella and broke the glass out of the table. Little did I know what was going to happen in the next 20 minutes.

It started to rain harder and we decided to head into the house. No more than we got into the house, the siren went off again. I turned on the TV to see the weather and there were no channels. Immediately I heard this extraordinary noise and I told Michelle we needed to take cover. We gathered all the dogs and got them in the pantry. It was too small for Michelle and

me to get into, so we opened the door and sat between the pantry and with the refrigerator directly behind us. We thought this is a tight spot away from windows, so we will be okay.

In an instant the windows of the house started shattering and the whole house began to shake violently. We held each other tight and almost instantly the entire house blew away, nothing left but us sitting there on the wood floor, cleared of everything that once was our home. Not one wall, not one thing was left.

I felt us getting pelted with an enormous amount of debris. It was just a split second before we were blown from where we were in the house and landed about 10 feet away. We both laid there holding tight to each other, with the wind to my back. The wind was so violent and we were getting hit so hard with debris that I did not think there was going to be any hope to live through this. I thought to myself, "This must be God's plan to take us away and relieve us from all our worries."

I could feel Michelle move her face on my chest and I just held on to her as tightly as I could. After what seemed minutes, but in reality was only 30 to 45 seconds,

the winds stopped. Michelle and I sat up and the first thing she said was "I think we lost our puppies!" She moved a plant that had landed on her, and there was our little grump, our Maltese 'Murphy'!

I feared at first that we might be in the eye of the tornado and that we needed to get shelter. It was hailing quarter sized hail and we were soaked to the bone. Luckily we were only a few feet from the crawl space of the house. Somehow Michelle and I managed to get underneath the house with Murphy. I went back out to find something to cover Michelle with, as I got out looking for a blanket or anything, I touched my head and thought that I had been scalped. I grabbed a t-shirt off the ground and wrapped it around my head and crawled back under the house to cover Michelle up.

Michelle was so scared and she was hurt badly. The only thing I could do was hold her and try to make her feel safe, and try to clear my head and figure out what I needed to do next.

Michelle asked me why no one was coming to help. I told her that I was not sure if anyone survived, because as far as I could see in all directions, everything was obliterated, nothing was spared.





I sat under the house trying to wrap my mind around what just happened and tried to keep Michelle warm. All of a sudden it dawned on me that it would soon be dark and I needed to get Michelle to a hospital as soon as possible.

In only a few minutes the sun came out and I crawled out from under the house. There was a Hispanic couple who offered me help. We got Michelle out from under the house and to a pickup truck.

Michelle had grabbed her purse before the tornado and was still holding it when we got under the house. So, I ran back to the crawl space to grab her purse and I saw our little girl puppy, Souve, about half way out in the yard laying on some carpet with the most pitiful look on her face. I called her name and she looked at me and turned away.

I ran through the rubble and grabbed her up and got the purse, and headed back to the truck. My 90-year-old neighbor, Steve, came over and I helped him in the back of the truck, and we headed down the street.

We saw police cars at our local grocery store and stopped there. They told us there was triage at Walgreen's up the street about ten blocks.

I saw a woman pull up in the grocery store parking lot. You could see the distress on her face. She was scared to death. She got out of her car, saw her husband across the parking lot, and they just ran to each other and embraced. We got back into the pickup and headed to Walgreen's. As we drove down 20th Street we had to dodge debris and downed power lines. I saw hundreds of

people walking down the street with zombie like looks on their faces, silent and confused.

When we pulled into the Walgreen's parking lot a young man came over, handed me a heavy shirt and gave his work coat to my neighbor. When they saw how badly Michelle was hurt they told

us to follow an ambulance to the hospital. We zigged and zagged through parking lots, alleys and streets and arrived at the hospital.

I could not believe the number of people that were already there. We were told that the other hospital, only a few blocks away was hit by the full force of the tornado and that the top floor was ripped off, and that they had brought all the patients to Freeman Hospital where we were.

I had the two puppies with me and I left them on a blanket outside of the hospital with a young man who was hugging his dog. As we went into the hospital with Michelle, I could not believe my eyes. The emergency room and waiting room were filled with so many injured people that it boggled the mind. It was too graphic to explain.

I pushed Michelle out into the waiting area and over to a corner. I went back out to bring the puppies near a window so we could keep an eye on them. A wonderful lady was watching over the puppies, and as I came out she asked me to put them in the back of her truck. She would later take them home with her and keep them until we were able to pick them up.

We sat for hours waiting to be seen by the doctors. Although Michelle was hurt badly there were hundreds of people hurt worse. Finally at 2 a.m., my head was cleaned and stapled. While they were cleaning my head, I remember Michelle saying, "That's gross!" I replied, "Don't say that!" We both laughed.

Michelle was pushed into the hall to wait in line for several hours to get X-rays. Finally at day break, a doctor stitched up Michelle's hand and said that she needed surgery on her legs. However, they did not have a bed available in the hospital.

Later, a group of EMTs came in, strapped Michelle to a straight board, and we took an hour ride to Springfield, Missouri to the Cox South Hospital. About noon on Monday, Michelle had surgery.

Michelle and I both received several wounds. I was lucky to have had only 18 staples in my head and bruising over my entire body from my feet to my head. I recovered within seven days. Michelle, on the other hand, received worse injuries. She received a large laceration on her right knee, head and left hand, and a baseball sized chunk out of her left calf. She spent a week in the hospital and is now recovering well. She had a wound vacuum on her calf for over a month, and it seems to be healing very well. She will need a skin graft after everything is healed.

Michelle and I survived the storm. However, the magnitude of it is just profound. Our home and autos, as well as the homes and autos of our friends and neighbors, weren't just damaged – they were obliterated. The devastation of the town we love and the loss of so many people weighs heavy on our hearts.

I am sure everyone has seen the photos of the devastation, but to pass through it everyday reminds us here in Joplin how short life is, and how in a few seconds your life can literally be spun into bits and pieces. When you stand up after being hit with 200 mph plus winds, and take a breath, you realize how little personal possessions really mean, and how much a smile and a comforting embrace does.

Linn State Technical College will award up to ten tuition waivers to students enrolling in the college during the 2012 academic year whose lives were impacted by the May 22, 2011 EF5 tornado. For more details, please contact the Office of Financial Aid at financialaid@linnstate.edu.

PTA students clear site, donate supplies in Joplin

In September 2011, students from the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program traveled to Joplin, Missouri for a service learning project.

PTA Instructor and alumnus, Katherine "KD" Berrey along with six PTA students and two of her friends participated in the project. Upon arriving in Joplin, the group worked through AmeriCorps and was assigned a job site. "It was our



objective to clear debris from the site," said Berrey. "We were to rake the yard down to dirt and demolish the wooden subfloor."

Berrey and her students found the experience to be very rewarding. "We were glad we could help," said Berrey.

According to Berrey the owner of the home did survive the tornado despite taking a direct hit to her home. In addition to the work done by the PTA students, the PTA Club voted to use \$1,500 of the club's funds to provide physical therapy supplies to St. John's Hospital for use and distribution as needed. Berrey and a friend delivered the supplies to Joplin in August.



Berrey was very pleased with the outpouring of support from the college and the community. "In addition to the money from the PTA Club, two young girls from Linn gave us \$250 from a garage sale," stated Berrey. "That was wonderful because that allowed us to purchase even more supplies for the hospital."

Medin's passion for teaching garners award

Marlene Medin, Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Chair and Instructor, was awarded the Missouri Physical Therapy Association's 2011 Outstanding Service Award in Education.

Medin was nominated by her peers for giving over and above in the area of physical therapy, most importantly in the area of educating students to be physical therapist assistants. "It's really cool to be nominated by your peers," said Medin.

Medin has been employed with the college since 1994. Medin was instrumental in the development of the initial curriculum for the PTA program at Linn State.

Over seven letters were written in support of Medin for the award. Judi Pastorino, PTA and a member of the advisory committee for Linn State's PTA program, stated that Medin has weathered many obstacles and roadblocks as she developed the program. "Each time she conquers a hurdle, the program benefits and is stronger," said Pastorino.

"She's legendary for never missing a teachable moment," said Robin Ward, PT and former PTA Instructor. "She designs interesting and thought provoking learning activities as well as balancing the use of technology and traditional techniques to capture all learning styles."

PTA alumnus, Sara Doty, recalled the stress of having to retain so much information. "Marlene always had an entertaining anecdote that would make the information more pleasing to remember," commented Doty. "She always presented herself in a professional manner while still making class an enjoyable and fun atmosphere for learning."

In addition to her work with the PTA program, Medin continues to practice in the home health setting. "She exhibits a passion for her patients' health and rehabilitation," said Elizabeth Bryan, PTA Instructor. "When she talks about her clinical experiences, she lights up and the love for her patients and her role as a physical therapist is obvious."



Most recently, Medin was instrumental in expanding the PTA program to increase access to the program for full-time, place bound students in rural Missouri. The expansion is part of the Missouri Health Professions Consortium which includes five Missouri community colleges and the School of Health Professions at the University of Missouri-Columbia. In addition to the Jefferson City location, classes are offered as a pilot in Trenton at North Central Missouri College and Poplar Bluff at Three Rivers College.

Linn State students win at national SkillsUSA championship

Linn State Technical College students, Chris Hillen and Seth Strobe, were medalists at the 47th Annual National SkillsUSA Leadership and Skills Conference held June 18-24, 2011 in Kansas City, Missouri.



Seth Strobe and Chris Hillen medal at National SkillsUSA Leadership and Skills Conference.

Hillen, Linn, Missouri, brought home a silver medal in Internetworking. Hillen graduated in May with a degree in Networking Systems Technology, Telecommunications Option.

"Chris was very confident in his work that he completed for his contest," said Aaron

Kliethermes, Linn State SkillsUSA Student Chapter Advisor. "He was very excited when his name was announced as the silver medalist winner in the post-secondary division."

Strobe, Linn, Missouri, brought home a bronze medal in Related Technical Math. Strobe is enrolled in the Nuclear Technology program.

Hillen and Strobe, along with 19 of their fellow Linn State classmates, competed in the championships. More than 12,500 people, including students, teachers and business partners, participated in the week-long event.

"I'm very proud of all of our Linn State competitors," commented Kliethermes. "They showed great pride in their education at Linn State and worked really hard to become National SkillsUSA participants."

During the National SkillsUSA Leadership and Skills Conference,

industry leaders representing over a thousand businesses, corporations, trade associations and unions recognized students from all around the country for their demonstrated excellence in more than 90 hands-on occupational and leadership contests.



Linn State student selected as State Officer

The Missouri SkillsUSA Association selected James Scurlock, Computer Programming student, as the Missouri State SkillsUSA Treasurer for the 2011-2012 school year. Scurlock was elected during the State Leadership and Skills Conference held in March at Linn State.



Kliethermes named SkillsUSA Advisor of the Year

Aaron Kliethermes, Design Drafting Technology Instructor and Chair at Linn State Technical College, was named the 2011 Missouri SkillsUSA Advisor of the Year.

Kliethermes received the award in recognition of his hard work and dedication serving as the SkillsUSA Advisor at Linn State and as the Senior Advisor for the SkillsUSA Central District.

In his role as the SkillsUSA Advisor for the Linn State SkillsUSA Student Chapter, Kliethermes has increased the chapter funds through various fundraisers and has also increased the

chapter membership in the few short years as the chapter advisor.



At the district level, Kliethermes was instrumental in transferring all written technical tests to an online format

allowing all chapters throughout the state of Missouri the ability to access the tests online. Kliethermes stated this has been a green initiative for the Missouri SkillsUSA Association.

Kliethermes also planned the District Fall Leadership Conference for the Missouri SkillsUSA Central District. Being the largest conference in the district's history, it was a proud accomplishment for Kliethermes.

"We appreciate everything Aaron does for SkillsUSA," said Vicki Schwinke, Linn State Dean of Academic and Student Affairs. "He's done a great job and this award reflects his accomplishments."

Dual degrees lead to new career

When meeting Davidson Le'Tang for the first time, you are instantly drawn in, not only by his friendliness, but by his overwhelming enthusiasm and passion for what he does.

"I love my job," he said. "Can you tell?"

In 2009, Le'Tang graduated from Linn State Technical College with a degree in Industrial Electricity and a degree in Electric Power Generation Technology. Within days of graduating, Le'Tang accepted an employment offer from Columbia Power and Light and was quickly learning everything he could about infrared thermography.

According to Le'Tang, infrared thermography is the use of infrared detection instruments to find problems with transformers, motor control centers, switchgears, switchyards or power lines. "Basically, I find problems before they happen," said Le'Tang.

While visiting with Le'Tang, he opened a black suitcase and pulled out a highly specialized camera he uses for his infrared inspections. "I had to do my research to find the right camera," he said. "I carry this with me everywhere I go."

Although Le'Tang has a spacious cubical with a view overlooking downtown Columbia, he is rarely in his office. "See these boots I have on," he commented. "These are new. I've already worn out a pair of these walking the streets of Columbia."

On the wall of his office is a map of the city of Columbia. Highlighted on the map are all the streets where Le'Tang has inspected transformers with his infrared camera.



One of the reasons Le'Tang loves his job so much is that he's outside every day no matter what the weather conditions are for the day. "I love being outdoors," he said.

On occasion Le'Tang has encountered some not-so-friendly dogs. "I've been chased a few times," said Le'Tang. "Now, I come prepared. I carry a little bacon in my pocket. Now the dogs are my friends."

It's obvious after a few minutes of speaking with Le'Tang that in addition to his new career choice, he also values and appreciates the technical education he acquired while attending Linn State.

"I never realized until now how much I would use everything I learned at Linn State," said Le'Tang.

When Le'Tang attended Linn State he was expecting to learn a trade, graduate and find a good job. "I wasn't prepared for all the general education courses I would have to take," he said. "In fact, I fought it every step of the way."

Le'Tang recalls giving his communications instructor, Ken Thompson, a hard time while he was a student. "I came to Linn State to learn about electricity," he stated. "For the life of me, I couldn't figure out why I would need to take a communications class."

Once Le'Tang started working at Columbia Power and Light he quickly realized how important everything Thompson had taught him was applicable to his job. "I really must apologize to Mr. Thompson," said Le'Tang. "I use the skills he taught me everyday."

"I've prepared flyers to explain the Infrared Thermography Program to our customers. I've prepared presentations to teach grade school students about energy conservation. I've even been to trade shows where I've had to set up a



booth and then talk to people about what I do."

"I never dreamed I would be in a career such as this one," said Le'Tang.

A native of the Caribbean island of Dominica, Le'Tang worked most of his life on a ship. He and his wife, Melody, lived in Florida. After one too many hurricanes, Le'Tang and his wife decided to relocate to the Midwest. "My wife had family in the area and wanted to be closer to them," said Le'Tang. "It seemed like the right move for us."

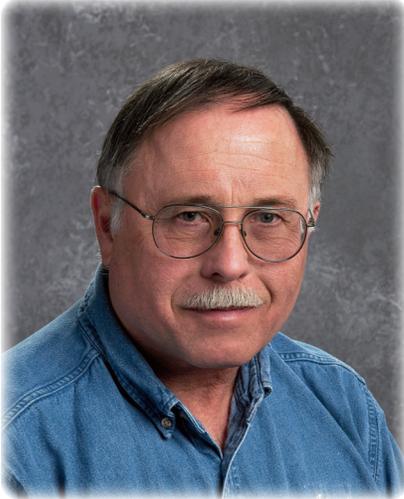
Le'Tang took a job with Cargill, a turkey processing plant in California, Missouri. Working the night shift, he quickly realized it was not the career path for him. Soon, Le'Tang enrolled at Linn State. He worked full-time, then went to school for eight hours and then slept for about three hours before he had to start the cycle all over again.

"I made a lot of sacrifices to get where I am today," said Le'Tang. "Every single one was worth it."

Le'Tang is continually proving to himself and to others that it is never too late to experience everything life has to offer an individual. For 27 years, Le'Tang has been living in the United States. Not until recently did he apply for United States Citizenship. "It wasn't really important to me until now," said Le'Tang. "I'm looking forward to becoming a citizen and voting in the next election."

On December 8, 2011 in Kansas City before a United States Judge, Davidson Le'Tang at age 52 became a United States Citizen.

Six announce retirement and bid farewell



Joe Soucie
Machine Tool and Welding
31 Years of Service

In 2011, six employees announced their retirement from Linn State Technical College. As each employee packed up their belongings and drove off the campus for the last time, each left with fond memories and a variety of plans for retirement.

After teaching more than 26 years at Linn State, Bill Matthews retired in August 2011. Thirteen of those years, Matthews served as the chair of the Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning Technology program.

"I plan to travel," said Matthews. "I'm also restoring a '57 Chevy that I bought in 1971 from a Chevy dealer in Linn for \$85."

"I have a '68 Chevy Camaro that I need to finish," said Joe Soucie, who retired in December 2011. "I have needed to fix it up for some time now."

Soucie has been an instructor at the college for more than 30 years. He started working at the college part-time while he was a student at Linn Tech. In 1980 he accepted a full-time position as an instructor in the Machine Tool Technology program. Soucie served as chair of the Machine Tool Technology program for many years and most recently started the Welding Technology program.

"I also plan to do some golfing and work for Habitat for Humanity," he said.

Also retiring in December was Leona Kurrelmeyer, who for 16 years worked in the Linn State cafeteria. Kurrelmeyer said she has been amazed by all the change that has occurred at the college. "It is hard to believe that a lot of what I see now wasn't here when I started working here," she said.

Connie Walk, Director of Tech Prep, agreed with Kurrelmeyer. "It has been a pleasure to be at the college watching it grow over the last few years."

Although each employee has left with their own personal memories, they all have one thing in common. Echoed, again and again, by each employee was how much they would miss the people - their students, their co-workers and their friends.

"It's always about the relationships," said Walk. "I feel so blessed to have had this opportunity. I have great memories and friends to last a lifetime."



Leona Kurrelmeyer
Cafeteria
16 Years of Service



Bill Matthews
Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning
26 Years of Service



Connie Walk
Tech Prep
5 Years of Service



Bill Thompson
Electrical Distribution Systems
5 Years of Service



Jerry Wolfe
Testing Center
1 Year of Service

We wish you well!

DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
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Education that Works
Since 1961

Golden OPPORTUNITIES...

Since opening its doors in 1961, Linn State Technical College has graduated over 10,000 individuals to meet the state of Missouri's workforce demands for highly skilled technicians. The College has built a reputation as a highly specialized, student friendly college with an exceptional reputation with business and industry.

In order for Linn State to maintain this excellence, we must continue to find ways to guarantee a quality, affordable education for promising technicians. The *Golden Opportunities, Giving That Works Campaign* offers all of us a great opportunity to ensure Linn State remains a premier two-year technical college capable of training tomorrow's skilled workforce.

In celebration of its 50 years, the Foundation for Linn State Technical College is asking alumni and friends like yourself to give your support to the *Golden Opportunities, Giving That Works Campaign*. The Foundation has three unique ways in which you can show your eagle pride:

1. **Forever an Eagle** – Donors contributing an unrestricted gift of \$1,000 or more to the Foundation for Linn State Technical College during the 50th anniversary year will receive a limited edition eagle replica.
2. **50 Dollars for 50 Years** – Celebrate Linn State Technical College's 50th anniversary of educating and training technicians by donating just \$50.00.
3. **Every Gift Counts** – We're asking all alumni and friends of the college to make a donation of any size to help Linn State students realize their dreams of becoming highly skilled technicians.

As a friend and supporter of Linn State Technical College, we are hoping you will consider this golden opportunity. Your contribution, no matter the amount, is deeply appreciated. Please make checks payable to the Foundation for Linn State Technical College and mail your contribution to the LSTC Foundation, One Technology Drive, NTC 210, Linn, Missouri 65051 or go to www.linnstate.edu/donate.php to make a secure online donation.

Giving that Works