

FUELED BY FAMILY

Wooden toy maker shares his
passion, reason for creating

CENTRAL MICHIGAN
LIFE

FEB. 24, 2022 || MOUNT PLEASANT, MI





CONGRATULATIONS TO IM TEAM OF THE WEEK WINNERS!



LEGENDARY WORM RIOT

This team actually started 4 years ago, in Fall of 2018. 3 other freshman students and I all met each other while living on north campus and decided to make a coed volleyball team. The guys used a random word generator for the name, which is how "Legendary Worm Riot" came about. Having the ability to play my favorite sport and meet new people was (and still is) one of the best things about IM volleyball, especially that first semester when I didn't know anyone else on campus. Ever since that fall, we've made a volleyball team every IM season with the name "Legendary Worm Riot" to keep the name going and compete against our friends. While I'm still close with most of the people from that first team, we've added a lot of new players throughout the last four years. This semester, the team consists of myself and my roommate, my brother, and another good friend. Some of my favorite memories from my time here at CMU are from playing IM sports and it will be a huge part of what I will miss when I graduate in May.



SCARED HITLESS

How did your team come together? (friends before, live together, same major, anything like that)
 We originally all met because we are all classmates at CMED! We are all currently medical students who love playing volleyball. We formed an IM team last year and ended up winning the championship! We all enjoyed our experience and couldn't wait for the season to start this year!

What do you enjoy about playing IMs at CMU?

It's something we all look forward to every week since normally all we do is study.

Will you all continue to hang out together after the season is over?

Yes! Not only are we teammates but we are also classmates and great friends!

What does this experience mean to you and your team?

We all enjoy being able to come together and work as a team on something not medically related. We have gotten to learn more about each other and have fun playing a game we all love.

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TO CLOSE 3/30 AT 12AM

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PHOTO HIGHLIGHT

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Layla Blahnik-Thoune | Photo Editor

Students protest to save commuter parking lot 22 from being redeveloped to the Washington Commons residential housing community Feb. 17 outside the Board of Trustees meeting in the Bovee UC.

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KREEPY KULTURE
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Nate Pappas | Staff Photographer
A group of wooden trains built by Carroll Snyder sit on the shelf,
Jan. 28 in Allendale, MI. Snyder also makes a variety of fully
functional vehicles including trucks, cars, and construction vehicles.

WOODEN WONDERS

Family of craftsman inspires him to create joy for members of the community through toys

By Alexis Seeley
Staff reporter

A single overhead bulb hangs over a wooden bench with a worn-down stool. Dusty Mini-Wheats boxes sit on the floor filled with different-sized wood scraps instead of cereal.

This is where Carroll Snyder spends hours a day crafting detailed wooden toys. His creations range from trucks to trains to checkerboards – all of which are moveable and mostly held together by glue.

Snyder has spent 15 years creating these toys. Over those years, he's had to build more shelves in his basement workshop to store dozens of his creations. The ones in the workshop are only a fraction of the total number of toys he's created. Many of the rest have been sold at the monthly Mount Pleasant Markets.

His hobby turned passion all started with help from his family. To this day, it continues to be supported and shared with others in the community with their help.

"If I can help someone, that's what it's all about," Snyder said.

While Snyder has always been a craftsman in his own right, woodworking didn't come into the picture until he was introduced to it through his son-in-law, Stephen Mowat - who has been a woodworking fanatic since his high school shop class.

Years ago, Stephen passed along "The Great All-American Wooden Toy Book" to Snyder. The guidebook contains diagrams, photos, material lists and detailed step-by-step instructions for constructing classical wooden toys.

Snyder was inspired to begin after seeing Stephen create toys for his new grandson.

"He started making toys because I was making toys when my son was a toddler," Stephen said. "I made my son some train sets and my father-in-law saw them and was interested in so he asked to borrow the book."

Overtime Snyder became hooked on creating simple but timeless wooden toys.

Although he resides in Grand Rapids, he makes it a point to come and support his daughter, Michelle Mowat, who runs a monthly festival for artists in Mount Pleasant. Mount Pleasant Markets allows individuals like Snyder to sell local, handmade items to residents within the community.

Michelle said she had tried to convince Snyder to sell his toys for years. Finally, the opportunity arose when she created the event. Now, Snyder gets to share his carvings with

parents and their children.

"When I was coming up with the idea to start these markets, I thought this would be the perfect location for my dad," Michelle said. "It's a safe place, It's like me inviting him so if he could stay with me he's not having to find something on his own."

Snyder's visits to Mount Pleasant gives him an opportunity to sell his toys and visit with his family.

One of Snyder's favorite things to do when he visits Michelle is to help Stephen work on tractors or in his woodshop.

Stephen said the difference between their working styles is what makes them mesh so well together. Snyder tends to stick to the pattern while Stephen is more non-traditional.

"My dad's obviously an important part of my life and so is my husband," Michelle said. "To see them enjoying doing something together - it just means a lot to me because it's two people I love so much."

Snyder used to be a machinist at Gardner Denver for about 20 years and worked with steel and aluminum. He made air pneumatic tools like drills, wrenches, and nailing and stapling guns.

From changing his own oil to doing his own brakes, Snyder was a handyman that did it all.

"He was constantly finding ways to fix something or use something," Michelle said.

Working as a machinist allowed him to understand the importance of patience because, "if you don't do things right, they don't work at all," Snyder said.

He puts that patience and care into each of his wooden creations.

When starting a new project Snyder must first envision the toy he wants to make, then assess how much wood is needed. The next step, Snyder said, is when accurate dimensions are most important because one small error could lead to disaster.

Snyder doesn't consider himself a perfectionist but every toy must meet his standards.

"Making the toys is my joy," Snyder said. "I take pride in what I do because I want it to look nice. When all is said and done I want to say, 'Boy that looks good.'"

Snyder's workshop is filled with different tools but the one that means the most is his uncle's table saw. It's between 70-80 years old and had to get its blade shaft redone because it wouldn't cut straight. Nevertheless, Snyder still uses it to make the toys.

It's a reminder of the importance of his family - of his son-in-law who got him started



Nate Pappas | Staff Photographer

Carroll Snyder shows a young boy one of his handmade wooden toys during the Mount Pleasant Craft Market, Saturday Feb. 12, in Cornerstone Church, Mount Pleasant.

with woodworking and of his daughter who convinced him to offer his creations to others.

"Having my family's support means a lot, I think all the kids have been supportive even though they're all spread around the country," Snyder said.

Even though he doesn't see all of his kids as much as he likes, he still appreciates their constant support for more than just his passion for creating art.

Every day Snyder goes to visit his wife, Jan, who is battling Alzheimer's in a care facility and have lunch together. They have been together for 56 years.

Stephen says that she still remembers him

and that proves they are the love of each other's lives. Woodworking has also become that reminder.

"It keeps my mind off things when I'm here alone a lot so the hobby has been a real blessing to me," Snyder said. "Woodworking has been a real help to me that I was able to do something and not have to sit here and do nothing."

Snyder will be at the next Mount Pleasant Markets craft show on March 12. The proceeds from vendors who purchase a booth are donated to a different local nonprofit each month. This month's organization is the Potter's House Food Pantry.



Carroll Snyder talks to a mom and her son about one of the toys he is selling Feb. 12, in Cornerstone Church in Mount Pleasant.



A young child puts one of Carroll Snyder's handmade toys back on the table Feb. 12, in Cornerstone Church in Mount Pleasant.



Carroll Snyder shows a young boy how one of his toys operates Feb. 12, in Cornerstone Church, Mount Pleasant. The boy would continuously return to Snyder's table, prompting his parents to secretly buy him a train set for his birthday

CMU Student Food Pantry demand continues to increase since Fall 2021

By Jill Harington
Staff Reporter

Visitors at the Central Michigan University Student Food Pantry have doubled since last semester.

“Last semester, we were anywhere from 50 to 80 people per week, for all three of our distributions,” said Abbey Claes, graduate assistant and employee at the food pantry. “This week was about 120 students, and our highest week was just over 180.”

The food pantry reopened in Fall 2020 after closing in the spring due to COVID-19. Claes began working with the food pantry around the same time but said she has noticed the recent increase in visitors since last semester.

“When we first opened for this semester, we really weren’t expecting such a huge increase,” she said. “We’ve done a lot the last (six weeks) to fix those issues and get students into the pantry much quicker, and make that experience much more streamlined.”

To expedite the shopping process, employees now hands out items to students in

line and limit shopping time to 15 minutes.

She said there is not usually a line at the food pantry, but there is sometimes a 30-45 minute wait after opening on busier days like Tuesdays and Fridays.

Claes said spreading awareness might be contributing to the increase in visitors at the pantry.

“Word of mouth is huge for us,” she said. “I think we’ve just been doing a great job with educating campus about food insecurities and the Student Food Pantry, and how to use it.”

The Student Government Association is working to implement “A Legislative Bill to Relocate the Student Food Pantry to a Larger and More Accessible Space.” Claes supports the legislation and said a different location will help the pantry reach more students on campus.

The food pantry is currently located underneath the Robinson Residential Restaurant near the North Campus Success Center.

The food pantry is open Tuesday 5 - 7 p.m., Wednesday 3 - 5 p.m. and Friday 12 - 3 p.m. Students can register for a time to visit the pantry through Engage Central.

Creation Coffee opens second brick and mortar location in Mount Pleasant

By Zipporah Abarca
Staff Reporter

Creation Coffee has expanded from the Midland area to Mount Pleasant – opening its second location at 914 E Pickard St.

The shop opened at the end of January and has experienced an influx of customers craving a new coffee spot.

The coffee used by Creation Coffee is imported from farms all over the world, primarily in South America and Africa.

“We’re sourcing coffee from some of the best farms and producers around the world,” Ben Marsh, one of the founders of Creation Coffee, said. “We’re starting with excellent, exceptional coffee and then serving it in a space and in a way that is inviting... and welcoming to people.”

Besides coffee, Jacob Spence, one of the founders, said that the company is developing a menu that would include breakfast sandwiches, pastries, bagels and fresh fruit.

While constructing this menu, Creation Coffee is keeping in mind dietary restric-

tions — offering keto and gluten-free options. It is expected that the official menu should be available within the next month.

A drive-thru is also expected to be officially up and running in the early summer.

Now that Spence and Marsh have expanded to Mount Pleasant, they are excited for the many opportunities to come.

“We’ve always loved Mount Pleasant as a community,” Marsh said. “Just a lot of great energy with (CMU) here. It has always been a target for where we would love to be. We’re super excited to be here serving great coffee.”

Within the next few years, one of Spence and Marsh’s major goals is to increase the charity of their company to be able to give back to the people that produce the coffee as well as the communities that their coffee shops are located in.

“Our mission is to create exceptional, life changing coffees like what we had, to create meaningful connections and relationships with our customers and partners and to create a better world,” Spence said.

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RETURN

Chippewa softball uses plenty of home runs to close out the season

By Megan Youngblood & Ashley Birkenes
Staff reporters

The start of a new season came with highs and lows for the Central Michigan softball team.

The Chippewas secured two wins but suffered three losses in their first weekend, playing in the Hilltopper Classic hosted by Western Kentucky. CMU defeated Bellarmine twice but was dealt two defeats by Southeast Missouri and a third by the hosting Hilltoppers.

“I am very happy with the weekend and obviously leaving the weekend 2-3 every day we got a little better and were seeing progression from game to game as you start off any year,” said head coach McCall Salmon.

“Any season that’s where you want to be, and we built our non-conference schedule to test us in certain areas.”

Game one

It was a struggle out of the gate. Off to a rough start, the Chippewas were no-hit in their first game. Southeast Missouri would

come out with a 6-0 win.

Sophomore pitcher Grace Letho got the opening day start. She threw 122 pitches through six innings and gave up four earned runs on nine hits, two base on balls and one homerun. Letho kept the Redhawks off the board for three straight innings (third, fourth and fifth), but would allow three runs in the sixth and final inning for the Redhawks.

Redshirt junior catcher Sammi Mills gunned a Redhawks runner down stealing.

It was all Southeast Missouri as it took a lead early with a single to right from sophomore Karsyn Davis which knocked in freshman Aubrie Shore and sophomore Kat Sackett to make the score 2-0 after the first inning. The scoring continued in the bottom of the second for Southeast Missouri to bring the score to 3-0.

Letho kept the Redhawks off the board in the third, fourth and fifth innings, giving the Chippewas hope. Hope fell short as the Chippewas couldn’t find their bats and were held without a hit. The Redhawks added onto their score with three more runs in the sixth to make the final score 6-0.

Game two

Despite taking the lead early in game two against Western Kentucky, CMU would fall to the Hilltoppers 10-2.

An early 2-0 lead wasn’t enough, as Western Kentucky scored four in the first to retake the lead. Redshirt junior Kaitlyn Bean would hold the Hilltoppers scoreless for the next several innings, but the floodgates opened late.

WKU’s Taylor Sanders sent a pitch into the seats, and Madison Bowlds made it 7-2 with an RBI single against freshman Maddie Wallace, who was making her CMU debut.

Abbie Tolmie would go 2-for-3 on the day, including a lead off hit

to start the game and the first inning. Caitlin her first inning double

Game three

A two-run homer Shannon Stein ended giving them their first Bellarmine on Saturday

Bean led CMU, though with seven strikeouts her offense to start a 2-0 lead. The Knights fly, but CMU remained

Stein hit an RBI single by Britton’s two-run to make it 5-1.

In what would be the final inning of the Chippewas double their lead with back-home runs from sophomore Michaleigh Vallimor junior Emily Bracam

Once again, the Chippewas got the bats going two outs as freshman Springer smacked a center field bringing Stein would go on to the fence to end the 10-1.

Game four

Despite two home runs would fall to the Southeast in five innings.

Letho started in the quickly pulled, being recording just two outs runs and six hits. It was after the first frame.

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TO ACTION

Claim two wins in season opening tournament at Western Kentucky

get the Chippewas fired up in
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was 9-0 RedHawks

The Chippewas finally got their bats fired up in the fourth with a three-run homer from freshman Alyssa Hollo in her first collegiate at bat. Senior Haley John took the circle for the first time in 709 days for the Chippewas in the fourth inning. She managed to keep the Redhawks hitless.

Senior Shannon Stein would keep the scoring going for the Chippewas with a single shot to left center in the fifth and bring the score to 11-4.

Freshman Maddy Wallace took the mound in the fifth for the Chippewas and gave up one run.

Game five

An early spurt put the Chippewas up first, giving them a lead. They would prevail 3-1 over the Bel-

larmine Knights in the final game of the weekend on Sunday.

Sophomore Grace Lehto got the start in the circle for the Chippewas. Lehto threw 99 pitches on the day and seven strikeouts, giving up one earned run on four hits.

The Chippewas defense was on top of their game, stranding two base runners in the first. The Chippewas started the bats early, as Caitlyn Britton took a two-run shot to left center to bring in Stein to put the Chippewas up 2-0.

The Knights started a two-out rally in the top of the fourth. With Hannah Webb in scoring position,

freshman Chloe Collins ripped one up the middle to send Webb home to cut the Chippewas lead in half.

CMU added its final run on Hollo's second pinch-hit knock of the weekend and Lehto recorded the final three outs to secure the win.

The Chippewas will head to the Coastal Carolina tournament on Friday when they take on Maryland at 9 a.m. and Coastal Carolina at 4:30 p.m.

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FACULTY FRUSTRATION RISING

Failed survey of faulty opinions highlights tension among professors, administrators

By Patrick Bouman
Staff Reporter

One year ago, Central Michigan University failed to successfully conduct a faculty job satisfaction survey because of a prevailing lack of trust between a faculty union and some of its administrators.

This year, university leaders are looking back at what went wrong, how to move forward and what it would take to conduct a successful survey of faculty.

In 2019, CMU received the National Science Foundation's ADVANCE Catalyst grant, to be used to identify issues with faculty gender equity in STEM fields through methods like focus groups and surveys. The university received about \$295,000 for the award, which was used to pay for a variety of expenses during data collection, said Katrina Piatek-Jimenez, a mathematics professor and chair of the academic senate.

A job satisfaction survey created by Harvard University was chosen for the project because it is used by other universities for similar purposes. The survey is called the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE).

Former Faculty Association Vice President Frim Ampaw was on the team of faculty leading the COACHE survey.

"A lot of policies and procedures look OK on the surface," Ampaw said. "If you look at them from a different lens, they create inequity."

COACHE cost more than \$40,000 to implement and was paid for through the provost office's budget. The COACHE survey was sent to faculty in February 2021.

The survey should have made it easier to identify diversity, equity and inclusion problems on campus, Ampaw said. After months of disagreement between faculty and administrators, response rates were so low that CMU was unable to get any meaningful data.

Why the Survey Failed:

CMU has not conducted a comprehensive faculty satisfaction survey in 15 years. Former Provost Mary Schutten chose to use

MEASURE OF MORALE

These stories are part of a series of articles that gather the opinions of the campus community during the 2021-22 academic year. If you have an opinion to share, send it to editor@cm-life.com.

the COACHE survey. The survey's failure was a missed opportunity to gain a better understanding of faculty issues, Ampaw said.

"Some years ago, I was very motivated and I wanted to do all of this, but this has all been very discouraging," Ampaw said.

Frustrated with CMU for various reasons, Ampaw left the university after the Fall 2021 semester.

FA union leaders were concerned about how the survey results would be used by administrators. Educational Leadership faculty member Matt Johnson said the union's contract with CMU contains subjects like satisfaction with family leave and health insurance.

If the university has more information about the union than the union itself, Johnson, who was FA president at the time, said it creates an unfair advantage when negotiating the union contract. When the survey launched, Johnson asked administrators for a list of survey questions so he could ensure he and his members could participate.

The union submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request in June. The request asked CMU to provide emails connected to several issues, including COACHE.

Current FA President Amanda Garrison said the union was charged \$7,628.40 for the request.

In the emails, Executive Director of Faculty Personnel Services Dennis Armistead said neither CMU

nor the union could view the survey questions in advance. Johnson said he was led to believe faculty would be able to read the questions in advance. Armistead later denied that.

Armistead was contacted for a comment but has not responded as of Feb. 11.

When the survey began, Johnson sent an email to union members advising them not to take the survey. In his email, he explained that his efforts to protect faculty from having the survey results used against them had failed. Johnson later said he felt his efforts were mischaracterized - by former Vice Provost Julia Johnson - as the union being uncooperative.

Julia left CMU as of Feb. 1. Former Provost Mary Schutten left her position and accepted a faculty position Dec. 31.

The FA proposed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to be discussed at a planned March 2021 meeting. MOUs are a common practice for other universities surveying unionized faculty, Johnson said. Protections listed in the MOU included:

CMU would not be allowed to use the survey information to develop bargaining strategies and use them against the union.

The union would get to see the survey questions and discard any that could affect their contract with CMU.

CMU would not be able to use the

survey results to discourage union membership.

CMU would be required to share any survey analyses on their COACHE webpage.

According to Ampaw, the COACHE program recommends using an MOU as a solution. A provost's report from Purdue University after its COACHE survey is one example.

"Be careful not to let faculty get caught unaware, unsuspecting or unprepared for shifts in priorities... commitments (e.g. in a memorandum of understanding) should be honored," the report said.

Armistead asked for the MOU to be sent to his office. Johnson sent it. The March meeting was abruptly cancelled by Julia Johnson.

Emails between Armistead and Julia Johnson, identified in the FOIA request, show that administrators saw the MOU meeting as a way for the union to reopen contract bargaining. Johnson denies that was the purpose of the MOU. He said he was disappointed the FA could not reach an agreement with the university. Ampaw said the assumption from administrators was a "conspiracy theory."

According to CMU's COACHE report, only 212 faculty responded to the survey out of 734 who were invited to participate.

"I know everybody on the faculty side wished it went differently," Johnson said. "There's none of us who are cheering it on and saying, 'we got them; we showed them not to mess with us.' I've said all along that I've sincerely hoped that (COACHE) would've gone differently."

The survey's failure, Garrison said, was a hard blow to faculty morale.

"That was so much work that faculty put into (ADVANCE) and that survey," Garrison said. "That was time taken from those people. They wanted to serve and to find out how to make campus better for marginalized people.

"All that time, all that energy, just to be undone."

Problems Left Unsolved
Inequality has created "very low

morale" among faculty, Ampaw said. Faculty hoped that COACHE could have helped identify problems at CMU.

"Even beyond a consensus of low morale within the faculty, it feels like there are different groups that are even more marginalized that might not be the most vocal," Ampaw said.

Work-life balance at CMU is an issue Ampaw said she would have liked to see addressed by ADVANCE. She cited programs at Michigan State University and Oakland University as good examples of providing faculty with what they need to balance their lives and enjoy their work.

"You don't just want faculty doing the job - you want faculty who are motivated to want to do their job," she said.

Interim Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs David Patton said having something in writing, like an MOU, would have been a good solution to get FA members to participate in the survey.

"If we do (COACHE) again, we need to make sure that we have worked appropriately with the faculty unions to make sure it's a successful survey," Patton said. "We would need to start communicating much earlier. I think the time frame was a little condensed and that always makes the conversations more difficult."

Piatek-Jimenez, who is part of the COACHE and ADVANCE teams, said CMU plans to apply for the next grant, called Adaptation. She said focus group interviews provided good information for the team to apply for the Adaptation grant in the near future. The grant would help implement some of the ideas found during CMU's data collection.

She hopes COACHE is used again at CMU.

"It really could help the university better understand faculty experiences," Piatek-Jimenez said. "It makes us more competitive in the workforce. If we have unhappy, dissatisfied faculty and are not working to fix those issues, then faculty will leave. They will go to universities that have things in place to address such issues."

Working through the winter blues

Students opinions mixed on COVID-19 protocol, lack of campus events, bad food in dining halls

By Zach Kortge
Staff Reporter

While students walk down the halls of Central Michigan University, their faces are hidden behind masks and the concerns they may have during their days at CMU have gone unseen.

The list of issues students are working through this year includes the continuing disruption of COVID-19, signs of dwindling enrollment apparent throughout the empty campus, the constant churn of administrators coming and going, and ongoing dining hall quality issues.

Students are trying to make the best out of their time at college, but the anxiety around campus is apparent.

“Most student opinions right now are pretty negative, I feel like as a university, we’ve got to work to somehow increase morale amongst the campus,” director of external affairs for the Student Government Organization, Sarah Gum, said.

As the list of issues grows, students at CMU have taken a stance of passive adaptation.

“I feel like everything just seems dull, just because everyone is just going through the same motions all the time,” Fraser junior Emily Dickerson said. “I definitely feel like there’s a better atmosphere compared to last year when everything was online and super restricted.”

COVID-19 protocol gets positive reactions

Sterling Heights freshman John Schultz was positive about his experience at CMU so far. He was satisfied with the way the administration had handled its COVID-19 response.

“I would say that most of the time people are going where they please and it seems like a really nice vibe,” Schultz, said. “I never feel like I’m in danger, people are usually good about wearing their mask.”

COVID-19 had an impact on the way students experienced college. The methods of learning were changed dramatically as the university changed into an online format.

Although there are still some options for online classes, learning has primarily moved back into the classroom. According to students on campus, for the better.

“I prefer to be in person because I do better when I’m in person, but whatever happens, happens,” said Warren freshman Juliet Wagner.

Others had some concerns about how the university was operating with the ongoing pandemic.

MEASURE OF MORALE

Jackson senior Lindsey Steffey prefers to have class in person. As an art student, her classes primarily rely on hands-on work. However, that isn’t to say she hasn’t thought about alternatives.

“I’m wondering if they’re sacrificing our health and safety for being in person,” Steffey said.

While students on campus are generally satisfied with the COVID-19 protocols, Gum said that legislation being put forward in Student Government Association would urge administration and faculty to allow students in quarantine to access classes in a Hyflex format.

Groups on campus stay busy, others are left without

With CMU implementing its COVID-19 protocols to create a safe return to the university, also comes a return of in-person activities. Although, this has not been universal.

“If you’re part of a group, then there’s always something going on,” Port Huron freshman Ace McClelland said. “If you’re not a part of a group then it’s really hard to find something unless you see people out and about promoting.”

Graduate student Mori Ogundipe, from Nigeria, said that while he was an undergrad, you would be more likely to see things going on around campus - but things have changed.

“Before COVID it was definitely more lively, more people were everywhere,” Ogundipe said.

Students were mixed on how their experiences were within residence halls. Where in years past, open dorm doors and talking in the halls have given way to quiet.

Schultz said that in Larzelere Hall his experience has largely been closed doors, despite him knowing the majority of the students in the hall.

Others, like Tampa, Florida freshman Ari Light, have had starkly different experiences. Light lives in Celani Hall, a dorm with primarily athletes, which she said contributes to the liveliness of the floor.

“People are always in the halls and always hang out,” she said.

The food is still bad

An almost general consensus among students is the lack of quality food and lack of service from new food service provider



Nate Pappas | Staff Photographer

Carroll Snyder shows a young boy one of his handmade wooden toys during the Mount Pleasant Craft Market, Saturday Feb. 12, in Cornerstone Church, Mount Pleasant.

Chartwells.

“I would say the food is my least favorite thing here,” said Muskegon freshman Mia Phan.

Concerns about food in the dining halls have increased since CMU has signed a contract with Chartwells. With students and university parent groups alike complaining about the dining halls on social media.

As a part of the contract, CMU requested that there be an increase of options in dining halls. Primarily, limiting processed food and increasing fresh foods and healthy options.

“Usually, the line is out the door for the fried foods because they don’t know how to cook the healthy food,” Light said. “The food is definitely not up to par for athletes.”

A lack of diversity in dining options was a problem for a few students. Often saying the food was hit or miss, with students thinking the food wasn’t good more than three days out of the week.

That is when they could get the food.

“It’s more of a problem being in the south community not having our dining hall open,” Wagner said.

Social House in the south community is only open Monday through Thursday, 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

SGA is working on legislation that would work to compensate students affected by low food quality, Gum said, and difficulty in obtaining meals with limited hours of service.

That legislation was most recently vetoed by

SGA President Kate King following SGA’s Feb. 7 meeting but will continue to receive edits in the coming weeks.

CMU Confessions offers an anonymous outlet for opinions

CMU Confessions is an account where users can anonymously send tweets that will get posted without identifying information. The account has become a place for people to openly discuss their issues with the university, without fear of consequence.

The account’s tweets are often much more critical of CMU administration and policy than students are willing to discuss in the open.

“Administration needs to be held accountable before CMU goes to hell in a handbasket,” one tweet reads.

Some tweets have said the food had made them sick. Photos on Twitter have shown moldy bread and undercooked chicken.

Other posts urged CMU to go online, even more, asked for more leniency when students contract COVID-19.

Concerns surrounding the administration and university policy can be directed to the board of trustees during formal meetings by completing a request to address the board. The next formal meeting will be taking place on Feb. 17 at 11 a.m.

Additionally, students can address the Student Government Association during its Monday forums, held in the UC Auditorium at 7 p.m.

Trustees call president's leadership 'outstanding,' offer \$75,000 bonus

By Courtney Pedersen
Investigative Editor

"Outstanding," "above average" and "very good" and are all words Central Michigan University Board of Trustees Chair Richard Studley used to describe the survey results that make up President Bob Davies' performance review.

The Presidential Assessment Committee, comprised of Studley and his fellow trustees Isaiah Oliver and Robert Wardrop, compiled a report to review Davies performance and shared it at the Feb. 17 Board of Trustees meeting.

As a part of the presidential assessment used to evaluate Davies' past three years on campus, a survey was

sent out to 387 "university stakeholders." Out of those who received the survey, 193 individuals filled out the assessment, making the response rate 49.9 percent.

Studley said that Davies' results were especially high in four key areas. These areas include his commitment to CMU, work to foster and strength a diverse community on campus, respect for and appreciation of input from stakeholders and, lastly, advocating for the university within our state and region.

"One area of concern acknowledged in the survey – one that we have discussed with the President and the cabinet and routinely at meetings over the past year – is the challenge we face in terms of declining enrollment,"

Studley said.

Due to the positive outcomes of the assessment, Studley announced that Davies is receiving a pay increase.

"The Presidential Assessment Committee and the Board of Trustees unanimously agreed that after three years of receiving no increase in base salary it was time to make an appropriate adjustment," Studley said. "We have approved an increase in President Davies' base salary of \$415,000 a year to \$450,000 a year."

Before the pay increase, Davies was one of the lowest paid university presidents in the region and Mid-American Conference. In addition to his 8.4 percent salary increase, Davies will be receiving a one-

time performance bonus of \$75,000. Performance-based bonuses are also available to him for the remainder of his contract.

"The president is eligible for an incentive bonus of up to \$100,000 this year," Studley said. "60 percent of it is for excellent work in traditional areas and 40 percent of that is for outstanding above average performance in areas of high priority."

Trustees did not discuss any of the campus controversies of the past year, including; student complaints about campus dining, faculty concerns about Davies' participation in shared governance, the failed website launch, the \$550,000 spent on the investigation of university employees that was based on unfounded reports from a

Lansing reporter, an investigation into problems in the Honors Program, the mistaken scholarship awards that gained national attention last month or the one-year, nearly 2,000 student enrollment decline announced this fall.

Faculty Association President Amanda Garrison shared her concerns regarding Davies' raise and bonus with Central Michigan Life.

"My question is how can we be sure the board measured this properly? \$75,000 is salaries for two fixed-term faculty with benefits," Garrison said. "When faculty get a promotion, we have to show the work we've produced and apply for it. Where can we see the achievements Davies has made to earn this raise?"

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Isaac Ritchey | File photo

President Bob Davies addresses journalists attending CM Life's 100th Anniversary Celebration Nov. 16 at Soaring Eagle Casino.

TELL US HOW YOU FEEL

You can participate in CM Life's assessment of President Davies

One of the words Board of Trustees Chair Richard Studley used to describe President Bob Davies job performance over the past three years was "outstanding."

That review was delivered in a meeting space that had students protesting outside it. Inside, other students and faculty spoke, directly criticizing the board and Davies for not listening to campus complaints.

That board of trustees meeting was two days after an Academic Senate meeting in which faculty brought up multiple issues from the past year - including a botched website launch, mistake scholarship emails, lack of shared governance and a new parking app nobody asked for - Studley described Davies as "above average."

No one at Central Michigan University right now would describe anything on this campus as "outstanding" - certainly not morale.

This fall, CMU experienced a 2,000-student enrollment decline compared to the previous academic year. That decline is certainly "above average" - it was one of the worst among Michigan public universities.

Yet, with all the issues facing the university, Davies received a glowing review - and a \$35,000 pay increase with a \$75,000 bonus.

This is our Board of Trustees. This is what passes for oversight.

So what was this review process like? Last year, a group of about 385 "university

EDITORIAL

stakeholders" and community members were invited to complete a Presidential Assessment Survey. Studley reported about 50% of those who received the survey responded. The survey results were included in the "Presidential Assessment Committee Report" available on cmich.edu.

Those 335 stakeholders "represent a cross-section of the university and local communities" and have experience working with Davies. How those 335 people were chosen is unclear.

We know the survey includes responses from student and faculty leaders, other administrators; Alumni Board and Advancement Board members; senior leaders; community leaders (including members of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribal Council) state and area lawmakers; and current trustees as well as former Board of Trustees chairs.

The remaining 50 were randomly selected from students, faculty, staff and alumni.

The fact is, if the Board of Trustees wanted an accurate assessment of Davies' leadership and community morale, they should have just asked us for it. No one has been shy in

expressing their frustrations and concerns since the start of the Fall 2021 semester. A letter to the editor published Feb. 21 outlines many student concerns.

Anybody who is a student, professor, staff member or resident near CMU is a university stakeholder - end of story.

So, stakeholders, we like to know what you think.

Central Michigan Life has launched its own version of the survey used to evaluate President Davies. It contains all the same questions that were on the Presidential Assessment Committee's survey. The link to the survey is available on our social media pages until March 18 - the second to the last day of Sunshine Week.

Like the Board of Trustees survey, if you participate in CM Life's survey your identity will not be disclosed. However, you can only participate if you have an active cmich.edu email - something that all stakeholders have. If you are a community member, we encourage you to write a letter to the editor and sent it to editor@cm-life.com

Your opinions are valuable. Your voices deserve to be heard.

Use this QR code to take the survey.



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Central Michigan Life, the independent voice of Central Michigan University, is edited and published by students of Central Michigan University every Thursday during the fall and spring semesters. The newspaper's online edition, cm-life.com, contains all of the material published in print, and is updated on an as-needed basis.

Central Michigan Life serves the CMU and Mount Pleasant communities, and is under the jurisdiction of the independent Student Media Board of Directors. Dave Clark serves as Director of Student Media at CMU and is the adviser to the newspaper. Articles and opinions do not necessarily reflect the position or opinions of Central Michigan University. *Central Michigan Life* is a member of the Associated Press, the Michigan Press Association, the Michigan Collegiate Press Association, the Associated Collegiate Press, College Newspaper Business & Advertising Managers Association, the Mount Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce, Central Michigan Home Builders Association, Mount Pleasant Housing Association and the Mount Pleasant Downtown Business Association. The newspaper's online provider is SN Works.

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Central Michigan Life's editorial and business offices are located at 436 Moore Hall, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI 48859, telephone (989) 774-3493 or 774-LIFE.

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Target			UPON REQUEST
Music Bldg. - Lot#33	:42	:12	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Washington/Ojibway	:44	:14	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Anspach/Pearce	:45	:15	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Ronan/Grawn	:47	:17	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Main St./Gaylord	:48	:18	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
MMC/DOAN CENTER	:55	:25	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
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Larzalere	:06	:36	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Wightman	:07	:37	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
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Music Bldg. - Lot#33	:12	:42	EVERY 1/2 HOUR

GOLD

SAC/McGuirk	:13	:43	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Stadium Mall			UPON REQUEST
TJ Maxx			UPON REQUEST
Walmart			UPON REQUEST
Copper Beech	:26	:56	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
The Reserve	:28	:58	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Jamestown	:30	:00	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Yorkshire Commons	:33	:03	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Music Bldg. - Lot#33	:42	:12	EVERY 1/2 HOUR

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TOWERS @7/11	:15	:45	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Westpoint Village	:18	:48	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
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Lexington Ridge	:25	:55	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
Theunissen Stadium Lot#70	:27	:57	EVERY 1/2 HOUR
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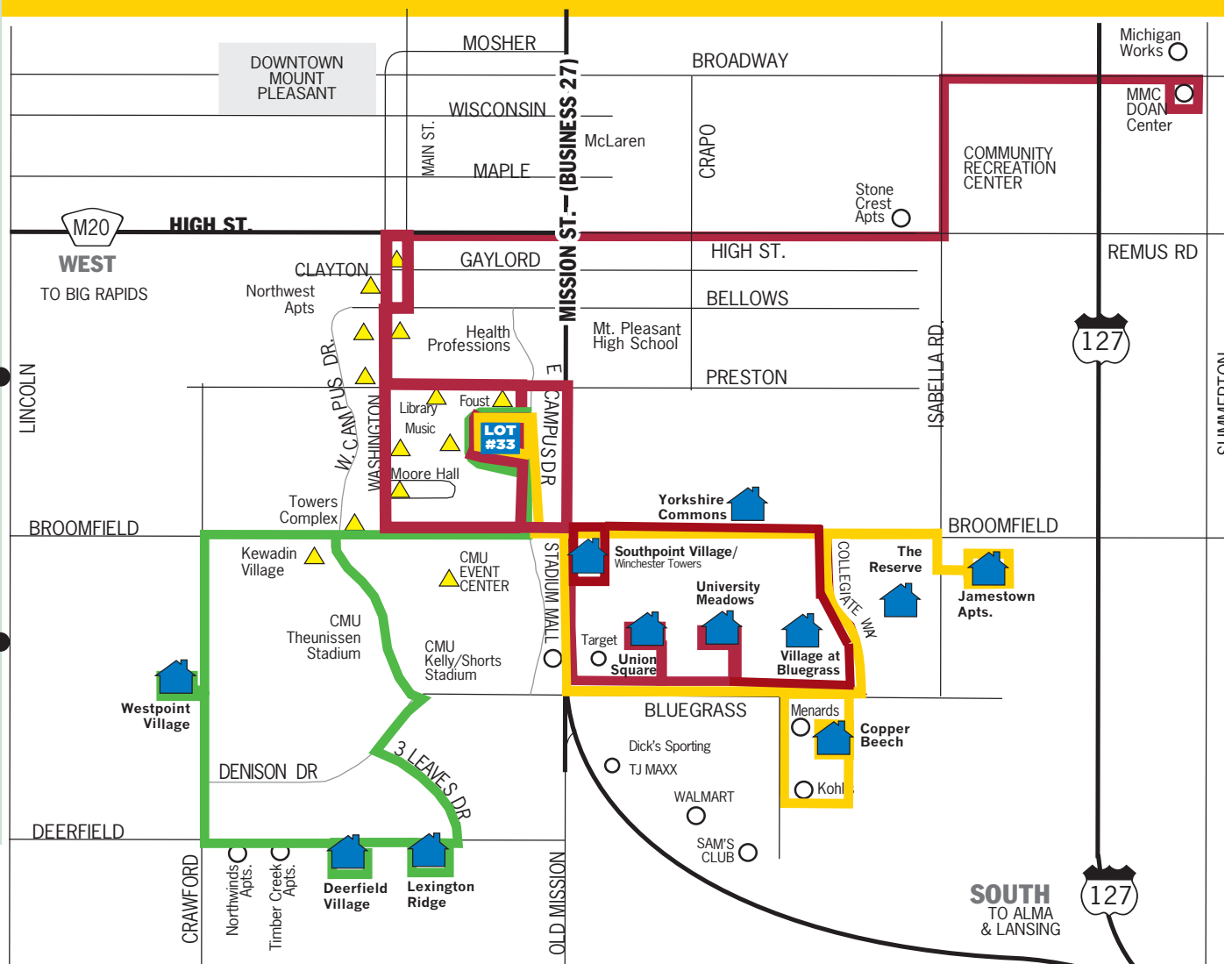
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We are discouraged, morale is low, it's time for change at CMU

TO THE EDITOR:

Thirteen dollars an hour is the maximum amount of money an on-campus student worker can make.

There are few jobs that even pay that high – and with the 20-hour workweek cap – the max a student can make is \$260 a week before taxes.

Room and board rates will be raised three percent next year for students who are required to live on campus for at least two years.

Residence hall restaurants are closed on weekends, face staffing issues, and serve inedible food after students paid thousands of dollars for otherwise.

Despite students tirelessly advocating for changes to Campus Dining, their struggles have repeatedly been ignored.

The Student Food Pantry, which serves on and off-campus students facing food insecurity, cannot keep food on the shelves because the demand for food is so high. Moreover, their space is inaccessible and can barely

store enough food as it is.

Faculty are being laid off. Departments are being cut, leaving a shell of what they once were. Our majors and minors are being eliminated and our programs are losing accreditation.

The university is going through the worst enrollment decline in the state - unlike anything CMU has ever seen.

We students are worried about whether this university will be around in the next 10 years.

Despite all of this, despite the struggles that students have made loud and clear, a man who already makes close to a half-million dollars per year was awarded a \$75,000 bonus and a \$35,000 raise to his base salary.

We don't know what else needs to be said. Something needs to change.

We are tired of miscommunication, lack of transparency, and limited shared governance.

We are frustrated and upset about the consistent tone-deaf responses we are receiving from our Board of Trustees and our

president.

Above all, we are tired of the fact that the Board of Trustees and top university officials will not acknowledge that students are not happy here.

More proactive steps need to be taken to address the wrongs of the past year and the struggles our campus community is facing.

The Board of Trustees needs to make this university a place where students are proud to attend.

For that to happen, the university's priorities need to be reevaluated.

Although new residence halls and added campus amenities might be assets to highlight to prospective students on campus tours, it feels like the university doesn't want to improve the real reason students go to college—to get an affordable, quality higher education.

The Board of Trustees is acting like nothing is wrong and this makes us feel unheard and unseen.

Although we acknowledge that a raise and

one-time bonus for Davies isn't enough money to fix all the troubles facing our campus, it feels wrong that while all these things are going on our leader is being rewarded for inefficiency.

To be clear, we love this campus. We want to fight to make it a place of learning, opportunity, excitement and happiness.

However, our hope is dwindling. CMU will not survive if we don't bring quality education back to the center of the conversation.

After all, just saying "we do student success," will not fix a campus culture where students are not set up to succeed.

**KATE ELLISON
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