



May 5

**Five questions for Jim Colbert**

Why does Jim Colbert's wife call him a deranged elf? Find out more about "admiral" Colbert and his Skunk River Navy in the latest "Five Questions" feature.

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**Senate closes the books on 2010-11**

The Faculty Senate closed out the academic year at its May 3 meeting, which included reports on promotion and tenure and ISU student-athletes' academic performance.

May 5

**Take cover: Severe weather reminders**

It's that time of year again. Learn how to protect yourself from tornadoes, lightning and flooding on campus and at home.

May 5

**It's graduation weekend**

An estimated 3,367 students will complete an ISU degree this week, and many of them will participate in commencement events Friday and Saturday.

May 5

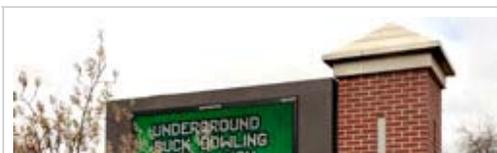
**Mileage reimbursement default rate adjusted**

Last week the state Board of Regents also approved a new mileage reimbursement rate when employees use a personal vehicle for work-related trips (100 miles or more), even if a university vehicle is available.

May 5

**Where's Bob?**

Do you know where university photographer Bob Elbert spotted this university gateway?

**Announcements**

- Sustainability is the topic of P&S Council's May 11 open forum
- Faculty asked to select texts ASAP
- Mixed paper recycling to be offered this month
- MBA informational lunch is May 12
- May schedule set for rec facilities
- Phased plus retirement program deadline extension approved
- A new *Investigator Handbook* is available online
- Volunteer now for Special Olympics, held May 26-28 in Ames

**Receptions & open houses**

## Reception

- Post-commencement, May 7

## Retirements

- Walter Trahanovsky, May 5
- John Mayfield, May 12
- Richard Larock, May 13-14

**Arts & events**

Reiman Gardens

**Big bugs swarm Reiman Gardens**

Larger-than-life bug sculptures by artist David Rogers will be on display at Reiman Gardens May 7 through Sept. 4. The exhibition is part of the gardens' yearlong tribute to insects.

**Around campus**

- Sustainable landscape design may be easier than you think
- LeBaron Hilton chair will speak at symposium on obesity
- Fast may not equal good



Weather awareness

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## Regents wrap-up: Day two

Troxel Hall and the outdoor sports complex received final approval, faculty P&T awards were accepted, and executive search firms made their pitch to assist with the ISU presidential search during the state Board of Regents meeting April 28 in Ames.



Where's Bob?

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## Inside tools

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May 5, 2011



Skunk River Navy founder and "admiral" Jim Colbert gives directions to his troops. Hundreds of students and volunteers have participated in the cleanup efforts. *Photos by Rashah McChesney.*

## Five questions for Jim Colbert

by Erin Rosacker

Jim Colbert launched the Skunk River Navy in the fall of 1998, as a service project for the BEST freshman learning community (Biology Education Success Teams). Since then, his squadrons of students and volunteers have hauled an estimated 60 tons of trash out of area waterways.

### What are the biggest, craziest or oddest pieces of junk that were hauled out of the river?

The heaviest piece that sticks in my mind is the tire from a front-end loader, with the rim. It was estimated in the 500-pound range. It probably took 10-12 people just to dig it out and balance it on two canoes. I'm sure it took probably 20 people pulling on a chain to drag it up the hill.

The craziest things we've seen all fall into the port-a-potty category, including a fully intact one. It's everything you can imagine, and even some things you don't want to imagine. It's bicycles, grocery carts, refrigerators and La-Z-Boys. Perhaps the oddest thing we've found was what appeared to be an (open) home safe.

### The Basics

**Name:** Jim Colbert

**Position:** Associate professor in ecology, evolution and organismal biology

**Years at ISU:** 23

**Education:** Iowa State University (B.S., 1978), University of Wisconsin (M.S., 1981; Ph.D., 1985)

## Is there a recommended uniform for members of the Skunk River Navy?

I think there is, but not everyone agrees with me. My wife calls it my demented elf outfit. I wear a thin pair of long underwear (synthetic, not cotton), a pair of nylon shorts over that, and a work shirt that will dry quickly. Add a Skunk River Navy cap and a pair of leather gloves and you are a well-accoutered SRN volunteer. What you want are things that are lightweight and will dry quickly. Bad ideas would include sweat pants, flip-flops and jeans.



Volunteers interested in getting involved can find out more about the [Skunk River Navy](#) online or by [email](#).

I always tell the students to shower within 48 hours afterward and to NOT put their clothes into a plastic bag and leave them in the back of the closet. Believe it or not, it's been done in the past. Apparently, that will grow some interesting things.

## How many miles of river have you covered since 1998?

We have worked from the Story City park down nearly to where the South Skunk River goes under Interstate 35 -- about 25 miles. We only do 2-3 miles per day and we've done a number of those sections multiple times. Those are places that have lots of legacy trash -- stuff that has been there a long time. We have yet to do a stretch of river and not find any trash. I'd love to work ourselves out of a job.

## What is the origin of the Skunk River Navy name?

Obviously, since it's called the South Skunk River, the Skunk River part was easy. The navy part is a direct result of the fact that we use boats -- but they are canoes, not aircraft carriers. We have admirals and captains. We refer to our first-year student volunteers as "river persons, first class." There also is the rank of "rear admiral;" myself and my co-leader (Jim Holtz) ask one of the other admirals to stay at the end of the group to make sure no one is left behind or needs help.

## How do you choose what stretch of river to cover?

The first criterion is safety and feasibility (including flow level). The second criterion ... I spend some parts of the summer scouting for the navy -- some people would call it fishing. What I'm looking for is trophy trash. If we can find something that takes a group effort to do, when you talk to people, that's what they remember. The third criterion would be how recently we've been in that stretch.

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## Senate closes the books on 2010-11

by Erin Rosacker

The Faculty Senate swiftly worked through a lengthy agenda on May 3, its final meeting of the academic year.

Senators approved a number of items, including:

- The spring graduation list
- Updates to senate by-laws, adding the new university outcomes assessment committee
- A proposed minor in world film studies, based in the department of world languages and cultures
- A department switch for the College of Human Sciences' family and consumer sciences education and studies program -- to the department of human development and family studies from the department of apparel, educational studies and hospitality management
- A post-baccalaureate undergraduate certificate in studio arts -- a 25-credit program that requires a bachelor's degree and completion within two years. The program is aimed at students who wish to compile a body of work for graduate school admission or professional practice.

A proposed sustainability minor, introduced at the April 5 senate meeting, was pulled from the docket for continued work. Outgoing senate president Micheal Owen said it will return to the floor next fall.

### Student-athletes in the classroom

Tim Day, professor in biomedical sciences and ISU's faculty athletics representative, filled in senators on the academic progress of Cyclone student-athletes. In the 2010 spring and fall semesters, student-athletes logged grade point averages of 2.90 and 2.87, respectively, with 28 and 24 percent of them landing on the dean's list. More than 50 percent of ISU student-athletes posted 3.0 GPAs or better both semesters.

"These are slightly, but not significantly, higher than the overall student population," Day said.

Graduation rates for student-athletes dropped slightly below the general student numbers at 64 percent in the fall of 2010. However, Day said that 92 percent of student-athletes who exhaust their athletic eligibility at ISU graduate.

Special admits -- students-athletes who academically qualify under NCAA standards, but do not meet ISU's requirements -- continue to make progress. Their cumulative GPA climbed above 2.0 for the first time since 2004.

For the first time since the NCAA instituted its academic progress rate (APR), the men's basketball team cleared the minimum benchmark with a 936. The APR rankings calculate retention and

academic eligibility numbers, with a cutoff at 925 to avoid penalties. A perfect score is 1,000. Five women's teams -- basketball, golf, gymnastics, swimming and volleyball -- posted APR numbers greater than 990.

"The academic performance amongst our student-athletes this year was as good as it has been, and it's very good compared to our peer institutions," Day said.

## **P&T report**

In her annual presentation on promotion and tenure, executive vice president and provost Elizabeth Hoffman said **72 cases** were considered and all of them moved forward. There were 29 promotions to professor (already tenured), 40 promotions to associate professor with tenure and one promotion to professor (adjunct) without tenure. Two additional faculty members -- one professor and one associate professor -- also were awarded tenure.

In a breakdown by gender and ethnicity, 44 males and 28 females were approved. There were 16 nonwhite candidates -- 13 males (12 Asian, 1 African-American), and three females (all Asian).

"In the five years that I have read promotion and tenure reviews, this was without question the best set of portfolios I have seen," Hoffman said.

She attributed some of the success to more rigorous third-year reviews, more flexible policies (such as tenure clock extensions) and clearer position responsibility statements.

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Photo courtesy NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL).

## Take cover: Severe weather reminders

by Paula Van Brocklin

This spring's severe weather has brought death and destruction to a large swath of the United States with nearly 1,000 tornadoes reported in April alone. In central Iowa, we've escaped Mother Nature's wrath so far but there's a lot of spring and summer left.

Here's a quick reminder from ISU's environmental health and safety department and the National Weather Service about how to stay safe from tornadoes, lightning and flooding.

### For all severe weather

- Be aware of weather conditions at all times, especially if threatening weather is predicted.
- Sign up for an email or text alert from local television stations.
- If you receive a severe weather message, spread the word to your co-workers and family members, especially those who work outside.

### For tornadoes

- If you hear a tornado siren while inside a building, go to a windowless interior room on the lowest level; bathrooms often are best. Avoid buildings with large expansive roof structures, like the Armory. Many campus buildings have **designated storm shelters**.
- If you are walking across campus and hear the tornado siren, get to the nearest building and follow the same procedures.
- If you are driving a car and debris begins flying around you, pull over and park. Your next two options are:
  - Stay in the car and buckle your seatbelt. Keep your head below the windows and cover it with your hands or a blanket.
  - If you can safely get to a ditch or area lower than the road, exit the car and lie down in that

area with your hands over your head.

## **For lightning**

- All thunderstorms produce lightning. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to harm you.
- If you are planning outdoor activities, know where to go for safety and how long it will take to get there.
- Consider postponing outdoor activities if thunderstorms are predicted.
- If you hear thunder, even in the distance, move to a safe place. Fully enclosed buildings are safest. Sheds, picnic tables, tents and covered porches do not protect from lightning. If no safe buildings are nearby, jump in a car (with a hard metal top) and close all the windows. Stay put for at least 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.
- Don't use a corded phone while it's thundering and lightning, unless it's an emergency. Cordless and cell phones are OK.
- Don't take a bath or shower (or use any plumbing fixtures) during a thunderstorm since water pipes conduct electricity.

## **For flooding**

- Head to higher ground if a flash flood warning is issued for your area.
- Don't walk through floodwaters. As little as 6 inches of rushing water can sweep you off your feet.
- Don't drive through floodwaters. Most cars can be swept away in less than 2 feet of moving water.
- If you live or work in a flood-prone area, consider gathering emergency supplies, such as:
  - A three-day nonperishable food and water supply
  - Flashlight
  - Seven-day supply of medications
  - Copies of personal documents (insurance policies, birth certificates, deed/lease to home, etc.)
  - Cell phone with charger
  - Tools for securing your home
  - Insect repellent and sunscreen
  - Extra sets of car and house keys
  - Camera to shoot photos of damage to your property

For additional severe weather safety information, go online to [EH&S](#) or the [National Weather Service](#) websites.

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## Commencement events will fill Friday, Saturday

by Anne Krapfl

An estimated 3,367 students -- the most in the last decade -- will receive degrees from Iowa State at the conclusion of spring semester, and many of them will participate in commencement events this weekend.

An estimated 130 doctoral and 392 master's students will be honored at the graduate commencement Friday, May 6. It begins at 7:30 p.m. in Stephens Auditorium. Sharron Quisenberry, vice president for research and economic development, will address the graduates. Quisenberry is recognized internationally for her research in the area of host plant resistance to insects and insect-plant interactions.

At noon Saturday, May 7, in the same location, an anticipated 142 students will receive their doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM) degrees, including the first graduates in Iowa State's cooperative program with the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

Dr. Michael Cates, a veterinarian who directs the interdisciplinary Master of Public Health program at Kansas State University, Manhattan, will address the graduates. Cates is a member of the board of directors of the One Health Commission, a collaborative multidisciplinary effort to improve the health of humans, animals and the environment. This winter, the commission moved its home to Iowa State's Nutrition and Wellness Research Center.

And an estimated 2,703 students will receive their bachelor's degrees during the undergraduate ceremony at 1:30 p.m. Saturday in Hilton Coliseum. This event will include a short performance by the 30-member choir from Simon Estes Music High School, Cape Town, South Africa, which is touring Iowa this month.

Tickets are not needed for any of the ceremonies. A [live video stream of each ceremony](#) will be available on the registrar's commencement website.

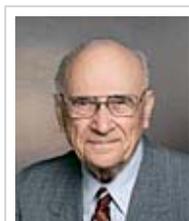
### Honorary degrees

Iowa State will confer two honorary degrees at the undergraduate ceremony.

Chemist Harold Scheraga will receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree for his research contributions and his teaching and mentoring record. Scheraga, a member

### Reminder: No summer ceremony

This summer is the second year Iowa State will not hold a commencement ceremony at the end of summer term in early August. Students expecting to complete degrees this summer may participate in either the May or December graduation events.



of the Cornell University (Ithaca, N.Y.) faculty since 1947 (emeritus since 1992), is a pioneer in the field of protein conformation and helped develop the calculations that determine the structure and dynamics of proteins. Those calculations are essential to current research in drug design.



Sheraga

Physicist and former faculty member Robert Shelton also will receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree for his pioneering work in superconductivity and magnetism and for his leadership in higher education. Shelton currently serves as president of the University of Arizona, Tucson, and previously was provost at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He was an Iowa State faculty member from 1978 to 1987.



Shelton

Shelton will give the address at the undergraduate ceremony.

## College events

The colleges will honor their own graduates during separate receptions or convocations May 6-7. [A complete list of college events](#) is on the registrar's website.

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May 5, 2011



## Changes to mileage reimbursement rate took effect May 1

by Anne Krapfl

The "default" mileage reimbursement rate -- which covers use of a personal vehicle for work-related trips of at least 100 miles when a university fleet vehicle is available -- was raised from 19 cents per mile to 25.5 cents per mile, effective May 1. The state Board of Regents approved the change at its meeting last week. The new rate still is 3 cents per mile less than the reimbursement rate prior to Jan. 1.

The new default rate is equal to 50 percent of the business reimbursement rate allowed by the federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) -- currently 51 cents per mile.

Since 2005, Iowa State's reimbursement rates had been tied to the federal General Services Administration (GSA). In January, the GSA rate dropped to 19 cents per mile from 28.5 cents per mile.

The low GSA rate reflected only operation expenses, not considerations such as insurance or depreciation. This was considered inadequate for many university employees who must use their own vehicles for university business. A regent university task force studied the issue and proposed the solution the board approved, which ties reimbursement rates to IRS standards instead.

### Out-of-state airport commute could qualify

When the combined cost of airfare and mileage is less than mileage and airfare out of the Des Moines airport, the full IRS mileage reimbursement rate (51 cents/mile) now is allowed on travel to these international airports: Kansas City, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Omaha.

The other instances in which the full reimbursement rate applies remain unchanged. These are:

- The round trip is less than 100 miles
- The round trip is 100 miles or more, but the employee is unable to reserve a vehicle from ISU transportation services
- The employee is based off-campus permanently
- The traveler is neither an ISU student nor employee

Questions about the change may be directed to Bill Cahill, 4-5124, or Erin Johnson, 4-5180, in the accounting office. Employees who have submitted mileage reimbursement claims for travel on or after May 1 using the 19-cents rate may submit claims for the difference.

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## Where's Bob?

In this campus image, university photographer Bob Elbert shot the electronic message board on the south side of the Memorial Union.

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## Regents approve faculty promotions, Troxel Hall, outdoor sports complex

by Anne Krapfl

Meeting April 28 in Ames, the state Board of Regents approved faculty [promotion and tenure decisions](#) for the 2011-12 academic year. A total of 72 decisions were approved across the seven colleges and the library. The list includes 40 promotions to associate professor with tenure, 29 promotions to full professor and three other promotions.

The board also received an annual update on faculty tenure at the three universities, which used fall 2010 data. Iowa State had a total of [1,735 faculty](#) last semester, down from 1,744 in fall 2009. Numbers of tenured faculty (-10) and tenure-track faculty (-28) decreased; the number of non-tenure track faculty increased by 29. At Iowa State, 64 percent of all faculty are male; 36 percent are female.

### Troxel Hall

The board gave its final green light to Troxel Hall, a 400-seat teaching auditorium facility intended to help ease the demand on large classroom space. Construction is scheduled to begin east of Horticulture Hall this summer, and the building could be ready for use spring semester 2013.

Troxel Hall's \$11 million pricetag will be funded by a private gift (\$4.75 million), income from ISU treasurer's temporary investments (\$5 million), the facilities overhead use allowance (\$1 million) and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (\$250,000). It is named for ISU alumnus Douglas Troxel ('67) of Redwood City, Calif., who serves as president and chief executive officer of a family, nonprofit corporation, the Change Happens Foundation. The foundation made the private gift to the building project.

### Outdoor sports complex

The athletics department received approval to proceed to the final design and construction phases for an outdoor athletics complex east of the Towers residence halls. Following the board's request at its March 23 meeting, regents reviewed the stormwater runoff/drainage plan for the complex when it was completed. The city of Ames regulates stormwater management and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources regulates stormwater quality.

Vice president for business and finance Warren Madden told the regents that design plans for stormwater release from the complex site is more stringent than current city requirements. Iowa State's existing permit with the DNR includes the proposed site and requires the university to adhere to six best practices to improve the quality of stormwater leaving ISU property, one of which

### More regents coverage

Meeting [Wednesday afternoon](#), the board approved a public policy institute that will be named for alumnus and U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin.

addresses the construction phase of the project.

Regent Robert Downer asked university leaders to be attentive to water runoff and other issues during construction. Having visited the site several times, he said he's empathetic to neighbors' concerns in the short term.

"Long term, I think this complex will benefit the area," he said.

## **Presidential search**

As part of their meeting in Ames, board members hosted a public forum Wednesday evening to gather input on important qualities to be sought in the next Iowa State president. President Gregory Geoffroy will leave his post by July 31, 2012.

The board also heard presentations from representatives of four executive search firms, Isaacson Miller, Boston; Greenwood/Asher and Associates, Miramar Beach, Fla.; R. William Funk and Associates, Dallas; and Parker Executive Search, Atlanta. Board president David Miles said the board will decide on a search process at its June 8 meeting, including whether it will include a search firm and if so, which one.

## **New room and board rates**

The board approved new room and board rates that take effect May 9. Iowa State will offer students about 30 room or suite rates and eight apartment options, reflecting variables such as building, number of roommates and air conditioning.

For purposes of year-to-year comparisons, Iowa State uses a double room in Richardson Court and a meal plan of 225 meals/semester and \$200 dining dollars. This package will increase \$224, or 3 percent, next year.

New residence hall rates vary from a 0.98 percent decrease to an increase of 5.19 percent. Campus apartment rates will rise between 1.9 percent and 3.8 percent. Following a review of its meal plans last summer, ISU Dining revised its meal plan options. It eliminated weekly plans (semester plans remain) and will offer five meal plan options, three of which are new. The two existing plans will go up 1.91 and 3.62 percent.

In other business, the board:

- Approved Iowa State's new [post-tenure review policy \(Faculty Senate PDF\)](#), which cleared the Faculty Senate on April 5. In his presentation to the board, senate president Micheal Owen said the new policy is notable for its tangible outcomes and consequences. He noted the policy contains new sections on timeline, outcomes and roles for department chairs, deans and provosts in the post-tenure review process.
- Agreed to reactivate its Economic Development Committee as a standing committee of the board. The committee last met in March 2007. Its role is to coordinate and advise on economic development activities involving any of the regent institutions or the full regent enterprise. The decision was prompted by proposals to replace the state Department of Economic Development with a public-private partnership, as well as budget proposals that, if passed, would significantly reduce funding for economic development at the three regent universities.
- Approved the sale of \$17.9 million in Dormitory Revenue Refunding Bonds to refund the outstanding amount on \$21.7 million in Dormitory Revenue Bonds sold in 2001 to build Eaton

Hall. Due to a lower interest rate (3.5075 percent) on the refunding bonds, the residence department will save approximately \$1.98 million.

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May 5, 2011



Artist David Rogers installs one his larger-than-life bugs at Reiman Gardens. The public can view the exhibition May 7 through Sept. 4. *Photos by Bob Elbert.*

## Big bugs swarm Reiman Gardens

by Paula Van Brocklin

Large bugs will infest Reiman Gardens beginning May 7, but there's no need to call an exterminator.

Long Island, N.Y., artist David Rogers will display 10 of his larger-than-life insect sculptures at the gardens through Sept. 4 as part of its yearlong tribute to insects. Among the sculptures are three ants, an assassin bug, a damselfly, a dragonfly, a grasshopper, a ladybug, a praying mantis and a spider (technically, an arachnid).

Rogers creates the sculptures from whole trees (either standing or fallen); cut, green saplings from willow trees; dry branches and other forest materials.

Another artist, Randy Schnebbe of Victor, will display his creative interpretation of insects as well. Schnebbe's sculptures are metallic and incorporate industrial and salvaged pieces along with large



rocks.

Rogers will be on hand May 7, the exhibit's opening day, from 10 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 3 p.m. to visit with attendees. **General admission rates** apply for all events.

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