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The King's Speech Hits Home with Carl Marlinga '64

Plus...

Paul Clemens '91

Dave Coulier '77

Alumni Basketball
Tournamnt Info

Anthony Morrocco '63

Scott Kuefler
(Father of Richard Kuefler '07)

John Motyka '85

Alumni Business
Directory



In 'Punching Out' Paul Clemens '91 Captures Last Days of Budd Plant and an American Way of Life

Paul Clemens '91 had been kicking around the idea of a book about the decline of the American working class. A hugely broad topic, to be sure, and Clemens figured the best approach was to find a symbolic event, a single example of a blue-collar community laid low by the prevailing economic forces that had been decimating the U.S. industrial sector for the last few decades. He found it on May 16, 2006, when newspaper headlines announced the closing of the Budd automotive plant on Detroit's east side.

Known to generations of Detroiters as "Budd Wheel," as well as the place where craftsmen proudly produced the components and assembled the body of the iconic Ford Thunderbird, Budd Detroit was at one time the oldest active auto plant in Detroit and the employer of more than 10,000 workers.

Clemens spent a year inside the shuttered factory documenting what actually occurs between a plant's announced closing date and the day that its last major bit of machinery is hauled away.

The result is "Punching Out: One Year in a Closing Auto Plant," released last month by Doubleday. On one level, it's the story of how an auto plant, a city and a country go about dismantling a century's worth of industrial heritage and then sell it to companies in Mexico, Brazil and India. " 'Punching Out' isn't just a story about the Budd plant, or just about the auto industry, or just about Detroit. Roughly 1,000 plants close each year in towns across this country. 'Punching Out' is about closing time for an American way of life," Clemens says "

As he puts it: "The pitch line for the book, which made its way into the book itself, was that the story of the Budd dismantling would be the story of the working class mopping up after itself."

What happens next?

Clemens is the author of "Made in Detroit," the 2005 memoir of growing up white on Detroit's east side in the 1970s when white flight pushed the city's black population into the majority, Coleman Young rose to power and race relations were a tangled ball of tension, confusion and hypocrisy.

The book was named to the New York Times' 100 Notable Books of the Year list. "Punching Out" is also receiving national attention: It just landed a favorable Times review, and Clemens was a guest on "The Daily Show," - Comedy Central's comedy news show.

Now 37, Clemens lives in Grosse Pointe and works in a non-academic position at Wayne State University. A 2008 Guggenheim Fellowship allowed him to take time off work to write "Punching Out."

In the book's prologue Clemens writes, "The headline appears daily in some American city: 'Plant to close.' I wondered – what then? I was born and raised in Detroit, the world capital of closed auto plants, and I hadn't a clue. I knew what plant closings meant – more lost jobs, another abandoned building – but no clear sense of what they actually entailed."

"There's a natural attraction for Detroiters in the question, 'What happens after?' What happens after the jobs go, after the population declines, after the economy bottoms out? What then?," Clemens said in a recent interview over breakfast at an east side Coney Island.

Beginning in late 2006, Clemens hung around the Budd plant, notebook and tape recorder in hand, watching and getting to know the crew of General Rigging, the contractor employed to dismantle the stamping plant's six, million-pound presses for shipment overseas. All of the utilities in the plant had been shut off, making it unbearably hot in summer and dangerously cold in winter. Clemens and the riggers often huddled around fire barrels to ward off frostbite.

"It was eerie," Clemens says. "You're in this hulking, 2-million-square-foot structure that's mostly dark except for where it's lit here and there by floodlights. There are organic ice sculptures, tons of steel ... it would've made a great movie set, like a sequel to 'Blade Runner,' " he said.



Paul Clemens '91 outside the now closed Budd Automotive Plant.

Clemens Continued from page 2...

Clemens devotes several passages to the fact that some of the men employed in the dismantling of the plant had worked at Budd. In what was once the capital of the industrial world, a worker can now make more money "working at Budd taking it apart than being newly hired at Jefferson North and assembling a Jeep Cherokee." A graceful and literary writer, Clemens is also a keen observer of his hometown. He writes, "The working class is to Detroit what immigrants are to New York, prospectors to California, prisoners to Australia: the people who put the place on the map, and who continue to populate its psychic space. There are few in Detroit who would describe themselves as anything but."

Memories of Budd

While "Punching Out" is receiving national attention as a timely sociological treatise, its extensive historical look at the culture and tradition of the Budd Co. will bring back bittersweet memories for legions of Michigan residents who once worked there.

Paul Flancbaum, 60, of Orchard Lake retired from Budd in 2007 after 30 years in the corporate office's public affairs department. He was the first person Clemens contacted after deciding to write the book. "It was another time," Flancbaum says of his years at Budd. "There was a genuine family atmosphere and real camaraderie. The company took care of its employees and was proud of that. I had 30 years, tons of people had 20. People nowadays spend five years at a company, then move on. It certainly was a different time, a different world," he concluded.

Ray Dishman, 58, is the first Budd employee to appear in "Punching Out." He started as a die setter, then worked as UAW Local 306 benefits representative for 14 years before he retired in 2007. His dad, too, worked at Budd. "So many hundreds of people had fathers and grandfathers who worked there and led the way to make it easier for us," Dishman said by phone. "It's so sad to see it go like that. A way of life – something that provided for me and my family – has gone away."

When asked what "Punching Out" implies for Detroit's future, Clemens' response is blunt: "I don't know. Clearly there are positive signs for Detroit," he says. "Restaurants opening, people moving back. Does that outweigh the losses in jobs, in population? It's a matter of perspective. To a 20-year-old, Detroit probably looks good. To others, who have lost a job or have family members that are out of work due to plant closings, Detroit doesn't look good. Kwame Kilpatrick's not the only story in Detroit. The Chevy Volt's not the only story in Detroit. There are many Detroiters. It's a huge place," Clemens said.

"Punching Out" isn't about solutions. "Descriptive, not prescriptive. I just wanted to describe a scenario – about a kind of work that's disappearing and a way of life that seems to be going away – and make it come alive on the page," Clemens says of his writing talent.

When he began researching the book, he had no idea that Chrysler and GM would get federal bailouts, that the Great Recession would begin, and that its aftereffects would linger for as long as they have.

"I didn't know – I couldn't predict – that any of these specific things would happen, but you could sense that some severely bad news might well be on its way. And the closed Budd plant seemed like a good perch from which to view that oncoming bad news, whatever it might be," Clemens concluded.

Source: The Detroit Free Press

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Clemens '91 Pens New Book About What Happens After an Auto Plant Closes

A Washington Post Book Review

How do you tell the story of what is no longer there?

For many Americans, the decimation of the nation's manufacturing workforce over the last three decades is sensed only through statistics: millions of jobs lost, factories closed and a vague unease that some working families are being rolled over. But in Detroit, the economic destruction is palpable in the ruins of the old plants that have been emptied and left to rot, serving as giant roadside tombstones for a more prosperous era. In "Punching Out: One Year in a Closing Auto Plant," Paul Clemens, a native of Detroit, has set for himself the task of describing in depth the shuttering of one behemoth, as a kind of farewell.

The idea that a major American city could be in the process of turning into a ruin is both horrifying and alluring. The ruins of Detroit is becoming the subject of numerous trendy photography exhibits. But Clemens wants to do more than muse about another empty factory. "The arty delectation of Detroit's destruction - 'ruin porn,' as it's called - it sometimes seems to take up half the Internet," he writes. "I understand the fascination completely, and I don't get it at all," Clemens says in the book.

His case study, the Budd Automotive plant in Detroit, which in its heyday constituted a small city in itself, encompassing about 2 million square feet and employing 10,000 workers. Among other things, it stamped out the pieces of Ford Explorers.

Beginning after production has ceased at the plant, Clemens's story centers on the grim work of wreckers and movers of equipment, of the security guards warding off vandals and of corporate scavengers from plants in Mexico and elsewhere who buy the Budd plant's equipment for use in countries where labor is much cheaper.

The tale unfolds in a series of vignettes that Clemens captured while hanging out during the months-long dismantling of the plant. The woes of Detroit provoke both desperation and philosophizing. Standing around 50-gallon oil drums with fires inside to keep warm, workers reflect somberly, sometimes colorfully, about the exodus of manufacturing and about their homesickness.

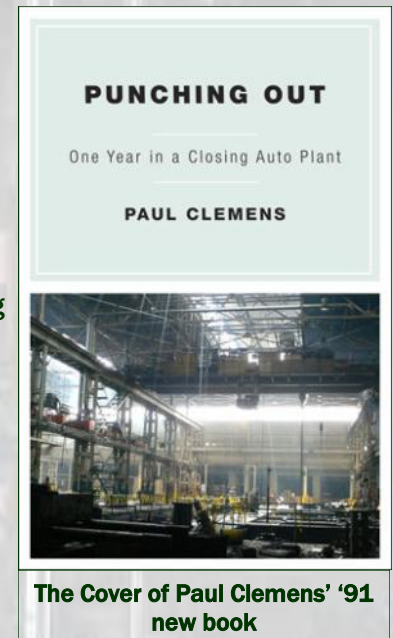
A scrap thief, caught by the security guards, is forced to kneel with his hands behind his head, but then asks for a job. A trucker named Rafael shows off his tattoos of an American eagle and a phoenix and then complains about Detroit, "It's cold, it's miserable. I want to go home and ride my motorcycle and my old lady," Rafael says.

And the author of an industry newsletter known as Plant Closing News, a kind of almanac of economic destruction, sees in the exodus a reflection of moral decline, comparing the upheaval first to the fall of Rome and then to the wayward people of the Bible, with scriptural citations to Chronicles. "You know what? It's that desperate. We've lost our horizon. We don't know whether we're flying right side up or upside down," he says.

The equipment being salvaged from the Budd plant will end up in India, Brazil and Mexico, sometimes to make parts for the same auto companies, but with much lower labor costs. At the Mexican plant, the only other one that Clemens visits in the book, he notes that workers make about \$3,500 a year, only a small fraction of what the unionized workers at the U.S. plant once made. Remember, Clemens instructs, that "this city once **was** a Cadillac, before becoming a Buick, then an Oldsmobile and a Pontiac (both defunct), and finally, a Chevy, a high mileage hauler that has done honest work but can sometimes seem closer and closer to coming to a halt."

Clemens displays a fascination with equipment, although often its use and significance will be a mystery to readers. Absent from the book is what the Budd plant was like in its heyday and what has happened to those who once populated the vast complex.

At one point, Clemens is left to imagine, as if in a movie, the manager looking out over the factory floor from his office as he realizes that they are heading for trouble. It is just the kind of scene that, if documented, might best describe the loss implicit in all those vacant factories.



Father of Kuefler '07 Creates Art From Tree Stumps

In what many may see as an inconvenience — a dead tree stump — a local artist sees a blank canvas and an opportunity. **Scott Kuefler, father of Richard Kuefler '07**, of Chesterfield Township, has been working for nearly a decade as what he calls “a chain saw artist.”

Kuefler has competed around the world. However, the self-taught artist maintains his roots and services in Michigan. “This is pretty much my job,” Kuefler said. “It was a hobby starting out, but then it kind of created a life of its own. I didn’t do it for the money — that just seemed to come along,” He added.



Scott Kuefler by a table and bench he carved from a tree stump.

Through his website and word of mouth, Kuefler has worked in several states throughout the country. “This enabled me to continue to carve and to do what I want,” he said.

Kuefler took art classes through high school, always having an eye for it, and says he has operated a chain saw all his adult life. In the early 2000s, the two skills came together. “The first carving I ever did was for my wife — she likes pig statues,” Kuefler said. He had a stump in his yard that had a knot sticking out of it, like a pig snout. He started up his saw and added eyes and ears, rounding out the stump until the pig face was completed. “And she came in and said, “Holy cow, it’s a pig head,” he said. “So I figured I was doing it right since she knew what it was,” he added.

Kuefler has honed his skills to the point where he placed fifth out of 58 chain saw carvers from around the world during a competition in Japan. He performs in various competitions around the state and throughout the country, including January’s Tip-Up Town competition in Houghton Lake. A full display of his work and services is available through his website. He is going on his fifth

year in private, for-hire chain saw carvings — a venture that allows him to just keep carving. Kuefler does not have set prices, nor set designs in mind when a new project is presented to him. He takes everything on as a case-by-case basis, with price being determined by a number of factors — such as wood type and designs. To Kuefler, however, it’s just another opportunity to bring about a blank canvas. “It’s not just a job or a hobby anymore, it’s a passion,” he concluded. To reach Carvings by Scott, call 586-212-7268 or visit www.CarvingsByScott.com.

Source: The Macomb Daily

Marrocco '66 Says Give Bing a Chance

Macomb County Public Works Commissioner, **Anthony Marrocco '66**, expressed opposition to an attempt by Oakland County officials to gain suburban control of the Detroit water system. Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner John McCulloch filed a motion in federal court Wednesday seeking the formation of a regional management committee, with majority suburban representation, to control the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. McCulloch’s motion, presented to Judge Sean Cox, said more than 30 years of suburb-city court fights and court oversight of the DWSD has not prevented mismanagement, fraud corruption and violations of federal pollution laws at the water department.

But Marrocco, McCulloch’s Macomb County counterpart, said the timing of the motion is all wrong. Marrocco said he agrees that changes in DWSD governance will eventually be needed, but not now. “Mayor Bing, as the new (Detroit) mayor, deserves a chance to address the problems in concert with the suburbs, without the intercession of the federal court. Mayor Bing recently reached out to the suburbs to begin the process of working together toward a common goal and I’m concerned that the Oakland County motion will bring that effort to a halt,” said Marrocco, first elected as the county drain chief in 1992. “Litigation has a chilling effect on interagency cooperation” he concluded.

“The McCulloch motion may be the catalyst to bring people to the table,” said Mark Hackel, Macomb County Commissioner.

But Marrocco is standing firm and does not leave out the possibility of publicly opposing the motion. “Judge Cox is new to the case and needs time to become familiar with the multitude of issues that are involved in the DWSD matter,” said the Clinton Township Democrat. “I don’t know at this time whether I will support or oppose the Oakland County motion or submit an alternative for the court’s consideration. I just recently received a copy of the motion and need time to review it in detail with my staff and legal counsel,” Marrocco added.

Bing’s office has not commented on the matter but legislation introduced in Lansing to assert suburban control over the water system has, as in the past, drawn sharp opposition from Detroit lawmakers.

Source: The Macomb Daily

Motyka's '85 Elite Ink Offers Solution For Military Candidates Who Might be Held Back Because of Skin Art

Tattoo popularity is at an all-time high. Besides the pain of getting them, there are other drawbacks to consider. Recipients may one day decide they no longer like the design or it is no longer practical to sport it. **John Motyka '85**, owner of Elite Ink in Center Line, became interested in the tattoo removal process a few years ago.

"More and more people are getting tattoos these days," he said. "It only makes sense that more people would then rethink those tattoos at some point in their life and either want to change them or have them removed entirely," Motyka said. Such is the case with one of the largest groups of individuals hoping to have their tattoos removed — military personnel. Those who want to join the armed forces are not able to if they have skin art that is visible below the wrist and above the collar.

Motyka said he became aware of the problem several months ago when he was contacted by Staff Sgt. Michael Harris, a U.S. Air Force recruiter, who asked if he had the capability to remove tattoos. Motyka said the Air Force is very strict regarding applicants and skin art, with the division banning all recruits from having tattoos that are obscene or do not fit the military image that covers more than 25 percent of a body part.

Anyone having those types of tattoos, or any tattoo visible above the collar or below the wrist, must have them removed before joining the Air Force. "Just recently I had a customer who had gone through boot camp, but he had a tattoo on his neck and he couldn't report for duty until it was completely eradicated," Motyka said.

Laser is considered the most effective tool for tattoo erasure. The process works best when stretched over an extended period, giving the skin a chance to heal before subsequent sessions. The laser breaks the ink into small particles by way of a safe, pulsating light. The body then flushes the ink fragments through the lymph system.

Motyka reveals that despite advancements in technology, he has discovered that greens and yellows are the hardest colors to eradicate, while black is the easiest. "Like anything else, it depends on the tattoo, how deep the pigment is and how big the tattoo is," he said. "There's no set time frame for the work to get done," he added.

Motyka urges most people to come in for a consultation so a plan of action can be decided as for the desired method of removing the tattoo. "It's different for everyone," he said. Not everyone who comes in wants complete removal of the tattoo. Half the time they merely fade the old tattoo and then apply a new design over it. "We see that a lot of the time," he said. "People just want a new tattoo in place of the one they had before that they might not like anymore," Motyka said.

For military personnel, the U.S. Department of Defense used to help fund tattoo removal but recent changes have prohibited that and candidates now must fund the removal of their own art. At Elite Ink, the cost of tattoo removal starts at \$75 per session, but discounted packages are offered to military personnel. A session generally lasts a minute or two and Motyka said the pain is generally minimal. "If you could stand to have the tattoo then you can definitely tolerate the laser procedure," he said.

Brandon McCall, a Warren resident, has had two tattoos removed over the past few years. "One of them was on my neck," he said. "I decided I didn't want it anymore and I went for laser removal and it was a lot easier than I thought. I ended up spending about \$300 to get them removed, but it was definitely worth it to me," he concluded. Elite Ink is at 25543 Van Dyke (at 10-1/2 Mile). The business can be reached by calling (586) 759-8446.



John Motyka demonstrating the art of tattoo removal at Elite Ink in Centerline.

Source: The Macomb Daily



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Dave Coulier '77 to Perform Michigan Dates

Fans of actor-comedian **Dave Coulier '77** will have plenty of opportunities to check out his 2011 show as the St. Clair Shores native has three Macomb County performances lined up in the next few months.

The baby-faced Coulier - who is 51 but looks 10 years younger, probably due to clean living - will entertain crowds March 25-26 at Younger's Irish Tavern in Romeo and a special fundraiser at Lakeview High School for the St. Clair Shores Memorial Day Parade on April 2.

"The dates are purely coincidental and just worked out that way with scheduling," Coulier said in an e-mail interview. "I will say this though: I love Michigan audiences," he added.

Coulier got his start in the entertainment industry by doing imitations of teachers and principals at Notre Dame High School, where he graduated in 1977. It wasn't long before he was appearing at comedy clubs.

His gift for vocal sound effects made him a natural for cartoons and voiceovers. Along with Bob Saget and John Stamos, he starred in the ABC-TV sitcom "Full House" from 1987 through 1995, which has been named by screenjunkies.com as one of the 10 best TV sitcoms of the 1980s.

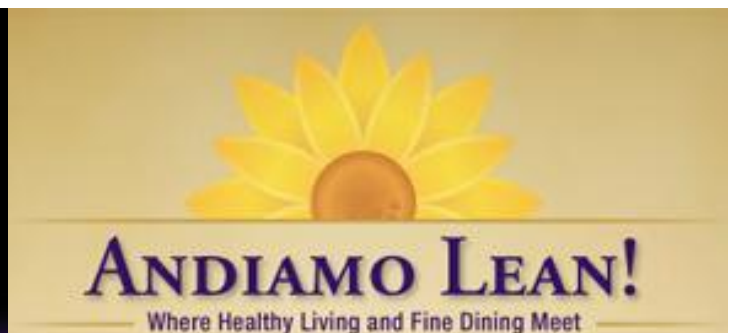
He also had a stint hosting "America's Funniest Videos." In between, he's acted in movies and continued a successful standup routine at colleges and comedy clubs around the country.

Through the magic of e-mail, Coulier shared his thoughts on a number of topics:

- ♣ On the recent closure of Chaplin's Comedy and the state of comedy clubs: "I played there a couple times. It was fun. In my experience, comedy clubs are alive and well. The good clubs remain in business and others fail. Sometimes it's a bad location. Sometimes the economics don't add up for a particular club. Sometimes it's just a bad club all together. The successful clubs (like Mark Ridley's) always nurture the nucleus — what happens in the showroom and on the stage. Some clubs only care about selling tickets, drinks and food. And yes, that's important, but comedy audiences come to laugh and see a great show in a great setting for comedy."
- ♣ On the business of joke telling in nightclubs:
"I still play clubs because it's really the only place where you can hone your jokes and get an honest and intimate response. The travel can be a bit of a grind, but I still love doing it. I'm sure one day I'll walk off the stage and say to myself: 'That's it. That's the last show.' And then I'll go play golf."
- ♣ On why he agreed to perform a fundraiser at the request of St. Clair Shores City Councilman Dave Rubello for the city's annual Memorial Day Parade:
"I'm just happy to give something back to a great community. When I was a kid I would sit and watch the parade at the end of my street every year. The parade means a lot to families in St. Clair Shores so I'm happy to do whatever I can do to help keep that alive."
- ♣ On living in St. Clair Shores and the Detroit area:
"I loved growing up in Michigan, and more specifically, St. Clair Shores. I loved hockey, boating, fishing ... all of it. I've quietly brought a lot of celebrities back to Detroit who've never been here. They can't believe it's the same city that they read about."
- ♣ On what fans can expect at the upcoming shows:
"My show is funny and family friendly without the 'F Bomb' after-taste. It's an eclectic show with voices, music, stories, impressions and some other goodies thrown in. You'll laugh... and I hear there are still seats left."

Source: *The Macomb Daily*

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The King's Speech Hits Home For Marlinga '64

Speaking Was Never Easy For Former Prosecutor

Defendants are often told to clam up before a grand jury. But **Carl Marlinga '64** who was facing potential federal corruption charges, not only wanted to talk, he told the panel to bear with him if he suddenly went silent. Such verbal starts and stops were not a tongue-tied guilty conscience, he told them, but a lifelong speech problem.

As an attorney and former Macomb County prosecutor, Marlinga has built a life on swaying and persuading others through argument. He's also a man with a stutter who went cold with clammy recognition recently while watching the Oscar-nominated film "The King's Speech," much like the future King George VI of England went silent trying to make a worldwide radio broadcast before thousands of people in the movie. "The most painful thing is a complete blockage - not being able to get a word out at all," Marlinga said. "My stomach was in knots watching the movie. It was spot-on," he added.

Marlinga said he hopes the film brings greater understanding of those who stutter. As for Marlinga, he testified and was acquitted of the charges in 2006.

Stuttering won't silence him for good

The voice and diction class was supposed to be a couple of easy, breezy credits, "a silly elective" for Carl Marlinga, then a University of Detroit senior with plans for law school. "I was in the debate club, and it looked like a fun class," Marlinga recalled about his experience more than 40 years ago.

But rising to speak, he found the words piling up inside of him. The more he fought to free them, the more they tumbled over each other. "I took this class and it did me in," Marlinga said.

After a dozen years of remission, Marlinga was stuttering again. The condition that initially appeared in first grade had grabbed him anew and it has continued to strike periodically since. Twice, he said, it has struck with especially devastating and humiliating force, leaving him nearly mute.

As one of the 1% of adult Americans who stutter, Marlinga remains alert and wary of the words, construction of sentences or situations that could trigger another bout.

The dysfunction is now center stage – or center screen – as "The King's Speech" fills movie houses and is an Oscar contender in 12 categories, including best picture. It's an unlikely hit, telling the struggles and triumphs of England's King George VI in dealing with a debilitating stutter.

The courage of the cinematic King George VI has rallied adults in Detroit and elsewhere to explore therapy.

"We are getting more calls from adults who stutter since the movie," said Jennifer Peacock, assistant director of speech sciences and disorders at Henry Ford Hospital.

"Some adults who stutter may choose a career path that limits the likelihood of difficulty; others may find their occupations chosen for them. In social situations, some may have others speak for them," Peacock said. "But there are ways that adults can control their stutters," she concluded.

When speaking isn't easy

It is unusual, she said, for someone with a stutter to have a high-profile, public position like Marlinga, a criminal defense lawyer who was the Macomb County prosecutor from 1984-2004.

Marlinga said his stutter first appeared in the first grade. "It was so frustrating just trying to speak," he said. "I wondered if it was going to get worse and worse. But in the third grade, it just stopped."

The condition stayed gone until his senior year in college. He graduated in 1968. He said the focus on listening to himself and the formation of each word in the speech class seemed to trigger it. It also flared while he was leading a prayer during a mass at U-D. He said he got through the reading, but "Boy, I don't want to go through that again," he said.

Three years later, his stutter was back with a vengeance when he was speaking to the Phi Alpha Delta law fraternity at the University of Michigan. "It was a complete meltdown in front of the whole fraternity," he said. "It was so humiliating. Here I was in front of a group where one of the minimal talents is the ability to speak," Marlinga said.

If stumbling over a word or getting stuck on a consonant is bad, Marlinga said total blockage is the worst. "The scene in the movie when the future king freezes before a microphone was pitch-perfect," he said. Marlinga said



Carl Marlinga '63 defending a case in Macomb County.

Marlinga '64 Continued from page 8...

he structured some of his life to avoid problems. His stutter was more likely to arise when reading a prepared script or doing a radio interview by telephone. "With a script," he said, "I'd be saying one word while scanning ahead for problems and resolutions," he said. For example, if words beginning with "M" were troublesome, "Michigan" would become "our great state." "Your brain is just very active," he said.

And as prosecutor, Marlinga avoided staged news conferences, but kept himself available to reporters: "I was noble by default," he said.

Phone interviews for radio triggered his fears, too, and the prospect of a broadcast stuttering episode in an early morning radio call-in often kept him awake with worry.

Yet, he finds a courtroom setting, even during a high-stakes criminal trial, to be liberating. "You're no longer listening to yourself," he explained. "You are so wound up in your subject, the words just fly," he added.

Hope for a recurring problem

In the early 1990s, Marlinga sought out Wayne State University speech professor William Leith, who told him the condition always had the ability to recur. Breathing and pacing were techniques used to counter it. There was a time, though, when breathing and pacing weren't enough.

In 2000, he made a bid for the Michigan Supreme Court and traveled to Kalamazoo to introduce himself to western Michigan with a speech before the Kalamazoo County Bar Association. But Marlinga found himself stymied. "I just couldn't get anything out," he said. After a few minutes of struggling, he told the lawyers that he'd faced this problem since he was a boy, and that he couldn't continue his talk.

With him was Kathleen Johnston-Calati, an aide from the state Democratic Party, who recalled the audience as being warm and nonjudgmental. But Marlinga soon withdrew from the race, with the Kalamazoo episode being one of the factors.

Today, Marlinga said the stuttering still surfaces unexpectedly. He got somewhat tangled on "Marlinga," while introducing himself in court a few weeks ago: "My own name can be the worst part of a trial," he began.

"The King's Speech," he said, is almost a gift for him and others who stutter. "I was surprised and quite pleased with it," he said. "It can give a sense of empathy and help people understand that this guy, the king of England, had something to overcome, and he did. "It's a good message," he concluded.

Source: The Detroit Free Press

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We Heard From...



Tom (Dick) Dale - Class of 1960

The latest alumni news looks great. Thanks for continuing to provide this service. As a 50th year reunion committee member, last year I should also thank you for your assistance in helping us locate classmates. After a half century that was something of a challenge. Keep up the good work.

Dave Bourgeois - Class of 1989

I really enjoyed the interview with Charlie Langton. He is quite a personality. Keep up the good work.

Anthony Morasso - Class of 2005

Thank you very much for the wall of fame framed certificate. I remember walking through the hall by the gym and looking at all those pictures including my brothers. I'd always hope to one day join him and all the other ND athletes up on the wall. When I opened up the package, it instantly took me back to those same hallways where I had spent not only my 4 years, but many years before with my 2 brothers. It now hangs proudly on my wall. Thanks again.

Jamey Embree - Class of 2002

Can't wait to see everybody at the basketball tournament and catch up! Thanks again for all you do to keep ND alive and coordinated!

Ron Mattel - Class of 1962

Thank you for all you have done to keep the spirit of the Fighting Irish alive, well, and sitting up taking liquids.

David Cerrini - Class of 1970

Thanks for all your work and the updates. I am sure you do not get enough responses, but I am sure most everyone appreciates all your efforts, this can not be easy. Good job!

Charlie Langton - Class of 1979

This article is fantastic!! Thank-you so much. I am truly impressed and humbled by the story!!

John Pierce - Class of 1989

Thanks for doing what you do.

Obituaries

Van Dam, Paul - Former Coach

Van Dam Paul Age 89. Born April 8, 1921, died February 17, 2011. Husband of his beloved wife of 70 years Buena Perry Van Dam. Father of Karen (Bruce) Galbraith, Kristen (Paul) Schumacher, Michael (Janet) Van Dam, Martha (Thomas) Neumeyer, and Gretchen Van Dam, and grandfather of ten and great-grandfather of nineteen. Paul graduated from Southeastern High School in 1938 where he was a champion swimmer and played on a championship baseball team. He played baseball at Western University. From 1941-1945 he served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. In 1947 he graduated from the University of Michigan and in 1964 he received a Master's degree from Wayne State University. For the next 28 years he taught special education classes in the Detroit Public Schools. He coached football, basketball, and baseball at St. Philip Neri High School for 18 years. In 1966 he became the coach at **Notre Dame High School**. His teams won championships in all three sports. He was inducted into the Michigan High School Coaches Hall of Fame and the Catholic League Hall of Fame. He was a supervisor in the athletic office of the Detroit Department of Parks and Recreation for 25 years as director of the winter hockey program and the summer city-wide baseball program. He was a member of the Michigan Sports Sages. In 1975 he took a disability retirement because of Multiple Sclerosis. Memorial contributions to the Multiple Sclerosis Society or Mott Children's Hospital at U of M would be appreciated.



Perzyk, Edward "Skip" - Father of Paul

Age 57 of St. Clair Shores. Beloved husband of Joy nee Deprest; dearest father of Tressa, Paul, Mary, and Kera; dear son the late Edward and Mary Lou; loving brother of Teri Mark, Suzanne Duda, Patrick, Barb Wargo, and David; many nieces and nephews also survive.

Pencak, Eugene (Gene) - Father of Brian '82

January 21, 2011. Age 66. Loving husband of Rosemary. Dear father of Brian Scott (Christine) and Cynthia Joy (Limperis) Zervos. Proud grandfather of Brandon, Jacob, Kathleen, Maxwell, and Christopher. Dear brother of William (Barbara), Richard, and Christopher (Sylvia) Pencak. Gene was also survived by many other family members and friends.



Vitella, John Anthony - '75

Age 53. December 15, 1957 - January 14, 2011. Beloved husband of Gina. Loving father of Jason. Dear son of Doro and Anna Vitella. Brother of Kathy (Bob), Christine (Wade), and Lisa (Michael). Also survived by many loving nieces and nephews. John enjoyed the tranquility of nature and the company of family and friends. Thank you to those who celebrated his life. St. Anthony pray for us. Share a memory at www.bcfh.com.

Upcoming Events

2011 Alumni Basketball Tournament

March 4, 5, and 6, 2010

Double Elimination Format

At De La Salle and the DLS BRAC

\$30 per player



Roster Deadline is Sunday, February 27 at 11:59pm

To submit a roster, please send an email to jmandl@friendsofnotredame.com with graduating year and list of players' names.

You must have 5 players on your roster in order to avoid combining with other classes.

Winning team to face the winner of the DLS Alumni Tournament

On Sunday March 6, 2010

More Details:

Spectators are welcome at no charge

Adult beverages will be available for purchase via the DLS Dad's Club before and during games

Tournament is capped at 16 teams

Games will not start until all players have paid the entry fee

Teams with less than 5 players are subject to roster combining

Classes are not permitted to combine if roster has 7 or more players

Bracket will be posted to our website by Tuesday, March 1st at 11:00pm

Payment Options:

To **pre-pay** using a **credit card**, please visit the website and click on the "**Donate**" button

Be sure to include your name, class, and that you are prepaying for the alumni basketball tournament in the note section

CASH ONLY THE DAY OF THE TOURNAMENT

NO CHECKS AT ALL, EVER.

2011 Alumni Softball Tournament

September 17, 2011

Double Elimination Format

At Total Sports in Harrison Township, MI

\$30 per player

2011 Alumni Special Fall Event

Details to follow...

Cali '82 Leads Romeo to Regional Wrestling Crown

Romeo Beats Tars in Regional Final, Heads to State Quarterfinals

Romeo, led by **Jim Cali '82**, went undefeated Wednesday, February 16 at Anchor Bay High School to claim the MAC Red Division dual meet title. Romeo beat the host Tars 44-22 in the Division 1 regional final to advance to the state quarterfinals for a second straight year.

This team regional consisted of the top four teams in the MAC Red - Romeo, L'Anse Creuse, Anchor Bay and Ford. "It's almost like you don't want to see these guys again," said coach Cali, whose squad improved to 19-6 overall. "We know each other so well. We knew it was going to be tough with how our league went this year," Cali added.

The Bulldogs went undefeated in the MAC Red, while the Lancers finished second. The Tars and Ford finished tied for third in the MAC Red. "It's awesome, such a great feeling," said Romeo's Adam Bennett, who won both of his matches. "I can't wait to get back to Battle Creek," Bennett concluded.

"We knew it was going to be close with both teams," said Romeo's Kyle Witgen, who also went 2-0 on the night. "L'Anse Creuse had beaten teams that we lost to. This whole week we just put our minds to it in the wrestling room. And we went out and wrestled like we did last week," Witgen said.

Anchor Bay (26-12) coach Jim Morisette said his squad learned a lot about itself this season. "This was supposed to be a down year for us," said Morisette, whose team was looking to repeat as regional champs. "I'll take 26 wins in a rebuilding year. We wrestled nine sophomores tonight," Morisette added. "Seeing (Romeo) walk out with that trophy in our gym might be a blessing in disguise," he concluded.

The Bulldogs won't know who they are wrestling until the top four seeds are determined Sunday night. The next four teams are drawn into the bracket. Last season, Romeo faced No. 2 seeded Hartland and fell 47-21, while Anchor Bay got to face No. 1 seeded Detroit Catholic Central. The Tars fell to the eventual Division 1 state champs, 57-13.

"I don't think too many people thought we'd beat Rochester (at districts) and I don't think we were the favorites coming in here," Cali said. "L'Anse Creuse and Anchor Bay had really been wrestling well at the end of the season. I know no one on this team felt like we were the favorites by any means. I'm just really proud of these kids," Cali added. "No one knows what they've been going through. I just can't be any more proud of this group of kids," Cali concluded.

Trailing 11-9 after five matches, the Bulldogs started to pull away. Romeo got back-to-back pins from Witgen (145 pounds) and Zach Schafer (152) and there were a pair of decisions from Alex Christofis (160) and Shane Toreki (171) to take a 27-11 lead with five matches to go. Larry Rekar (189) increased the Bulldogs' lead to 22 with a third period in. Bennett sealed the victory with a 3-1 decision over Anchor Bay's Chad Helton.

"We wrestled a lot better against them the second time around," Bennett said. "We had a game plan and stuck to it," he added.

Romeo beat L'Anse Creuse 36-24 to advance to the final. The Bulldogs beat the Lancers by just three points earlier this season.

Romeo has yet to win a match at Battle Creek. "Getting there last year will help this year," Witgen said. "We were pretty young last year. We have a lot of seniors in our lineup this year," Witgen concluded.



Jim Cali's 2011 MAC Red Division and Regional Champions.

Upcoming Reunions

Reunions in 2011

The following classes are due to celebrate reunion years in 2011:



2006 - 5 Years
 2001 - 10 Years
 1996 - 15 Years
 1991 - 20 Years
 1986 - 25 Years



1981 - 30 Years
 1976 - 35 Years
 1971 - 40 Years
 1966 - 45 Years
 1961 - 50 Years



Interested in forming a reunion committee for your class?
 E-mail Jim Mandl '90 at jmandl@friendsofnotredame.com.

We are your *only* source for the most up-to-date alumni contact information!

Celebrating 25 Years Class of 1986

Please contact John Kaminski or Dan O'Brien at:

John Kaminski: jkaminski1700@yahoo.com

H:(612) 822-4759 C: (952) 261-5546

Dan O'Brien: dobrien734@comcast.net

(248) 840-8391

Celebrating 45 Years Class of 1965

Asking all classmates of '65 to plan ahead...
 will be here before we know it.

1. Please make sure you or classmates are still in contact with or get on the Friends of Notre Dame mailing list.
 2. Not too soon to be suggesting when, where and events.
- GO IRISH! Dennis Berger '65.
dennisaberger@aol.com
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Celebrating 20 Years - Class of 1991

Date: September 10, 2011

Location: Comerica Park Suite - Detroit vs. Minnesota

Time: 4 pm * Cost: \$100

Contacts: Ron Stempin 313-642-5267, Eric Woodhouse 248-925-4357, Rick Nowicki 586-295-1338

Details: Spouses/Sig Others Welcome. First 60 paid people are in.

Get money to one of the above contacts or send payments to:

Ron Stempin

27704 Cameron Court

Harrison Twp, MI 48045

Celebrating 50 Years - Class of 1961

Please contact Bob Domine at:

bddoesit@bellsouth.net

Notre Dame Class of 1971



40

1971-2011

Save the Date!

Class of 1971 40th Reunion
 Saturday, November 5, 2011
 Club Venetian, Madison Heights

Details to follow.
 We could use your help! Please contact
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notredame71@att.net

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