

alumni at macomb

Summer 2008

New president intends to keep alumni proud

When Jim Jacobs accepted an invitation from his friend, Susan Calkins, a Macomb professor who has since retired, to speak to her summer semester social science class, the Princeton graduate found himself in front of students his age or older with a wide range of life experiences. Some had just returned from Vietnam, even more were working and attending college at the same time, a few depended on childcare to make it to class and all were concerned about the riots that had just erupted in Detroit.

As impressions go, this one would be indelible.

“These were interesting people with interesting things to say, and the idea of working here and with them became very appealing,” remembers the New York native who was taking summer classes at the University of Michigan’s Institute of Social Research and living in Ann Arbor at the time. “About a month later, I received an offer to teach (at Macomb), and I have never regretted accepting it.”

That was 41 years ago. In July, Jacobs became the college’s fifth president after a career that has included 16 years of teaching political science and economics before spearheading efforts to establish both the Tech Prep and Machinist Training institutes as the college’s manager of Education, Training and Public Policy. His work has included developing a school-to-work curriculum, writing grants and forging partnerships with both industry and K–12 school districts with a



Dr. Jim Jacobs, who officially began his duties as president of Macomb on July 1, visits with Victoria Julson, center, a student at Lutheran High School North in Macomb Township. She was participating in the Culinary Arts Career Academy program at Macomb.

side vocation forecasting economic trends. At the time of his selection as president in April, Jacobs had been dividing his time serving as director of Macomb’s Center for Workforce Development and Policy, and the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, serving as associate director for Community College Operations since 2000.

“This helped me develop a national perspective of community colleges and the

significant role they play in society,” relates Jacobs of his work at Columbia. “It also allowed me to develop working relationships with community college educators from across the country and deepened my conviction of the exemplary job community colleges do in terms of education.”

Holding master’s and doctorate degrees in politics from Princeton University, Jacobs acknowledges that his career may seem somewhat “unconventional” at first glance. But he believes it’s the diversity of his experience that will benefit him in leading the college through a time when a downsized manufacturing sector and the transitioning, as Jacobs terms it, “from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy” are presenting Michigan and Macomb County with some of their greatest challenges ever.

“We must be a gateway of opportunity for our students, providing access to those for whom college may not otherwise be an option,” says Jacobs. “And, we need to emphasize not only a sound curriculum but sound support systems as well. The college experience has to be more than just what you do inside the classroom.”

As president, Jacobs also plans to involve the college even more closely in the economic

development of the region and broker more partnerships with both business and industry and other educational providers. “No one institution,” offers Jacobs, “has the ability or resources to do everything.” He also hopes to interest alumni in returning to Macomb as

continued on page 5

Electronic games popularity prompts new IT degree

It may sound like fun and games, but Macomb Community College is serious enough about electronic games to offer three courses that can lead to an associate of applied science degree in Information Technology with a major in Programming for Electronic Games.

The new courses are: Introduction to Game Development, Game Programming in Direct X with C++ and Advanced Game Development. The new degree focuses on the development of game control software and in the development of game graphics.

“The gaming curriculum was developed to teach programming skills in an environment that has strong appeal to many students,” said Bob Kansa, associate dean, Information Technology.

Macomb joins more than 200 U.S. colleges and technical schools that offer gaming-related programs. ◀

Alumna shares silver-plated memories of international culinary competition

Shannon Jekielek, an alumna of Macomb and its culinary institute, remembers hard work, a guttural language she couldn't understand, missing her six-month-old baby and 10 of the most rewarding days of her college education. Oh, yes, and there was also that silver medal when it was all over.

Jekielek's reminisces about her experiences as a member of 2004 Team Macomb, which competed in the International Kochkunst Ausstellung, also include standing on a fellow student's shoulders to enter through a window when they were accidentally locked out of a practice kitchen and meeting people from all over the world. More commonly known as the International Culinary Olympics, the competition is held every four years in Erfurt, Germany, and tests the skills of chefs and cooks from around the world in much the same way as the Olympic Games test the prowess of athletes.

"There were times I could have just given up but Chef (Scott) O'Farrell kept pushing me," says Jekielek, now executive chef at the Vintage House in Fraser. "And I'm glad he did."

The Macomb Culinary Institute is again taking a team of students to Germany to compete in October. And Jekielek, who earned a silver medal in 2004 as did fellow team mem-



Shannon Jekielek, executive chef at the Vintage House in Fraser, wears the silver medal that she won in the 2004 International Culinary Olympics, which are held every four years in Germany. The Macomb Culinary Institute is sending a team of students to compete this fall.

ber Robert Reynolds, offers them the following advice, "Stay together as a team, help each other out and enjoy the experience."

Macomb's culinary students have earned medals at each International Culinary Olympics since they began competing. In 1996, the team brought home four silver, one bronze

and the distinction of being the first all-woman team to ever place at the international competition. In 2000, a coed team took four silver and one gold. In addition to the two silvers Jekielek and Reynolds were awarded in 2004, faculty members David Schnieder and O'Farrell earned one bronze each in the professional division.

Help future chefs sharpen their skills

Shannon Jekielek, executive chef at the Vintage House in Fraser, credits her experiences competing in the International Culinary Olympics in 2004 for the sophistication of some of her signature dishes. You can help other chefs find their culinary calling, and someday reap the benefits as a customer, by helping send Team Macomb to Germany in October. Although the lapel pins team members were selling to raise money to help cover their expenses are currently sold out, you can still make a donation and send it with the form found below to the Macomb Foundation. Your palate may someday thank you.

And despite the stress and strain of competition, Jekielek promises the members of the 2008 Team Macomb an experience of a lifetime.

"I would do it all over again," offers Jekielek. "I learned so much, and I would love to go back. I would love to compete again." ◀

On the campaign trail



Macomb was again a stop on the campaign trail for one of the nation's presidential candidates. Here former President Albert Lorenzo welcomes Senator Barack Obama to South Campus, which the Democratic Party's presidential candidate visited on May 14. The senator from Illinois spoke to an invitation-only crowd of supporters in K Building in an event covered by national and local media alike. ◀

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Daughters are this designer's driving force

When Esther Martinez takes a vacation from her design job with General Motors Corp. and her responsibilities as a single mom to Alexis Northcross, 12, and Erika Northcross, 14, she heads straight to the top of a white mountain so that she may propel herself down its side with skis, poles and the moxie that is as central to her life as snow is to Alpine skiing.

"I've been doing it for seven years—it's my me time," says Martinez, of her once-a-year ski trips. "I've gone to Blue Mountain in Canada and Boyne City this year. I would like to make it to Colorado one of these days."

Judging by Martinez' track record, consider it a given that she will be taking on Snowmass sometime soon. It was just a little over 10 years ago, after all, that the Dallas, Texas, transplant set out to find a way to support herself and her two little girls after she found herself divorced and laid off from her job at the age of 25.

Designing her future

"I was in Focus Hope's machinist training program," relates Martinez, who, as one of the programs' top two graduates, was offered an internship at GM on the condition that she simultaneously attend Macomb and earn an associate degree in vehicle design. "I said 'sign me up.'"

Always strong in math and with a few attempts at drawing hidden in her closet, Martinez had still never considered a career that combined the two. In fact, she had never even had a drafting class before attending Macomb.



Alumna Esther Martinez, a studio design engineer for GM and part of the design team behind the North American International Auto Shows' Car of the Year, the 2008 Chevy Malibu, is teaching her two daughters the importance of education through both word and deed.

"I started the internship and Macomb within a week of each other," remembers Martinez. "I averaged three to four classes a semester plus the internship for two years. There were nights when my little girls were young that I was doing homework at 2 a.m. There were sacrifices, but it was absolutely worth it."

Today, Martinez is a studio design engineer at the General Motors Design Center in Warren and holds not only an associate degree but a bachelor's degree in vehicle design from Central Michigan University (CMU) as well. She is now working on a master's degree in engineering management from Lawrence Technological University and says a Ph.D. isn't out of the ques-

tion once her daughters are in college. Earlier this year, however, she reached her highest career pinnacle to date when the 2008 Chevy Malibu was named Car of the Year at the North American International Auto Show.

"There aren't even words to describe what a reward that was," relates Martinez, who was a member of the Malibu's design team. "I love what I do. When you see a car come to life from concept to production and ultimately it is what we envisioned, it's a great feeling."

Apples don't fall...

Remembering the struggle of balancing the immediate needs of her daughters with their future hopes and dreams, Martinez regularly invokes thanks to all who made the present possible for Erika, the high school tennis star, and Alexis, the aspiring vegetarian. There was a set of kind paternal grandparents who helped provide childcare, a forward-thinking automotive company who believed in her and two educational institutions flexible enough to accommodate a working mother's schedule thereby allaying her greatest fear.

"The programs at Macomb and CMU catered to my situation, which was, basically, to avoid poverty. I didn't want to see my daughters do without," relates Martinez. "I have been driven by the goal of helping them grow up to be competent, independent women." ◀

Lake St. Clair Water Festival teaches young crowd about waterways conservation

More than 800 fifth- and sixth-grade students from 13 Macomb County elementary schools and one Detroit charter school attended a half-day event at Macomb's Center Campus in May designed to help them better understand and appreciate the local waterways.

The Lake St. Clair Water Festival was a joint effort of the college and several partners and sponsors including the Macomb Intermediate School District, ensuring that the programming was tied to the schools' science curriculums. Other partners were Macomb County, Charter Township of Clinton and the Clinton River Watershed Council.

"I've taught at a lot of water festivals, so I have a base to compare, and this one was wonderful," said Barb Matthews, environmental educator with Macomb County Public Works and one of the festival's coordinators.

"Other than educating the students about water quality, I also think it was a great way

of introducing them to a college campus," said Matthews. "We plan to make this a yearly event." ◀



Bretton Joldersma of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality talks to Ann-Marie Transki's sixth-grade class from Wiley Elementary School in Utica about the connection between storm water drains and the health of local waterways.

Brazilian educators exchanged insights with counterparts at Macomb in June



Macomb hosted two Brazilian educators June 12–19 as part of an educational exchange program funded by The Higher Education for Development with a grant from the United States Agency for International Development. Visiting Macomb were Centro Federal de Educação Tecnológica professors João Lobo Peralta (middle), who teaches courses in metallurgy and materials engineering, and Vicente Ferreira de Lucena Jr. (far right), who teaches courses in electronics, informatics, and industrial automation

and processes. Traveling to Brazil on behalf of Macomb in August will be Kristin Stehouwer (second from the right), vice provost Arts and Sciences, and Sam Ricevuto (second from the left), workforce development faculty. Here the group poses with Don Ritzenhein (far left), Macomb's provost and chief learning officer, during a panel discussion on technical education held at the Macomb University Center. Macomb was one of five community colleges in the country invited to participate in the exchange program. ◀

Earning her degree allows alumna to give back

With hindsight, it was a variety of things that prompted Doreen Ostrolencki to enroll at Macomb Community College. While each held its place of importance, Ostrolencki notes that it was the realization that “no one was telling me no” that made the greatest impression.

“I didn’t have the opportunity when I was younger to attend college,” relates Ostrolencki. “As I got older, I realized how important a college education was, and I wanted to impress that upon my children.”

And, as an employee of Center Line Public Schools, she felt it just made sense to advance in her education if she was going to work in education.

Macomb provided the perfect segue from her working mom world into a working college student world.

“The counseling department helped me bridge into the college environment,” Ostrolencki said. “Macomb provided me with the flexibility I needed. It was convenient, plus its transfer plans to universities allows me to earn university credits close to home.”

Rewards for her efforts

Ostrolencki has worked in the business office for Center Line Public Schools for 20 years, steadily taking on increased responsibilities. She believes earning an associate degree in general studies with a concentration in accounting in 2003 facilitated her promotion from business office manager to director of business services.

And just last year, Ostrolencki was selected by her peers as the 2007 Macomb/St. Clair School Business Manager of the Year, an organization affiliated with the Michigan School Business Officials. Ostrolencki notes that she is pleased the reward reflects back on Center Line Schools.

“Working for Center Line is probably the best thing that happened to me,” Ostrolencki said. “They have allowed me to grow professionally. They have given me many opportunities, and I’m pleased to give back by meeting the needs of the community.”

Biding her time

Ostrolencki has been successful in impressing upon her children the importance of edu-



Alumna Doreen Ostrolencki is director of business services for Center Line Public Schools and was selected by her peers as the Macomb/St. Clair School Business Manager of the Year for 2007.

cation. Her daughter, Kimberly, is currently completing her internship before graduating from Central Michigan University, and son, Kenneth, attended college before enlisting in the military. With those financial concerns behind her, Ostrolencki plans to continue her pursuit of a bachelor’s degree from Walsh College through its partnership with Macomb.

“Going to school while raising a growing family impacts everybody,” Ostrolencki said. “My husband was very supportive, but I took a break after getting my associate degree to meet the demands of work and my family. I wanted to be able to devote the necessary time to school to do it right.”

While Ostrolencki has followed a nontraditional path as she strives to earn her bachelor’s degree, she maintains that the important thing is moving forward on that path, even if a few stops are made along the way.

“I’m going to pick up where I left off,” she said. “It was part revelation and part maturity on my part for me to realize, if you want to go school, no one is stopping you.” ◀

Remembering public service personnel who have died while on duty

The new addition at Macomb Community College’s East Campus features state-of-the-art crime and computer labs that prepare public service personnel for their future careers, but the site of the college’s Public Service Institute also features a tribute to the past.

Hanging on facing walls of the common area is a photographic memorial honoring law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical services personnel who died while on duty in Macomb County during the last two centuries.

Through a collaborative effort between the institute staff and the Macomb County Historical Society, photographs were gathered and hung along with the person’s name, department and cause of death. The phrases, “End of Watch,” which is used for police officers who died on duty, “Last Alarm” for firefighters and “Last Run” for emergency medical services personnel are listed where appropriate. Where

a photo was unavailable, the image of an American flag stands in its place.

“When we were doing the addition to East Campus, we thought it would be appropriate, especially after 9/11, to have some kind of memorial for officers who had died while on duty,” said Mike Metz, director of Macomb’s Public Service Institute. “We have one in A Building (at Center Campus) that is a memorial to all 13 former students who died

Edward Rea,
Warren Police Department
Leroy Imus, Sterling Heights
Police Department
Gilbert Stocker,
Detroit Police Department
Robert Ahrens, Mt. Clemens
Police Department

Martin Chivas,
Troy Police Department
Kenneth Pine, Grosse Pointe Farms
Department of Public Safety
Gerald Carpenter,
Pontiac Police Department
Giacomo Buffa,
Detroit Police Department

David Sutton, Fraser
Department of Public Safety
Christopher Wouters,
Warren Police Department
Richard Vauris, Clinton
Township Police Department
Jessica Nagle-Wilson, Hazel Park
Police Department
Kevin Marshall,
Michigan State Police

“We debated about having a sign that noted what the photos were of, but ultimately we decided ‘no,’” said Metz referring to the memorial at East Campus. “Everyone who walks in that room knows exactly what they are looking at.” ◀



while serving, but we were looking for a way to pay tribute to all the fallen officers in Macomb County, for as long as records were kept.”

Macomb students who died while on duty and are remembered each May 15, National Peace Officers Memorial Day, by staff and instructors at the institute include:

Macomb alumnus wins brewery contest



Alumnus Rodney Kibzey signs cartons containing the homebrewed beer that earned him the 2007 Samuel Adams LongShot Homebrew Contest.

What started as a curiosity has resulted in Macomb alumnus Rodney Kibzey winning the 2007 Samuel Adams LongShot Homebrew Contest.

“It’s a beer I make in my garage,” notes Kibzey. “I began brewing this recipe in 2003, and it took me four or five years to where I was happy with it. I still think I can make it better.”

Kibzey, who now resides in a Chicago suburb, said his interest in home brewing was piqued following a brewery tour in Milwaukee, where the breweries’ aroma “sparked an interest.”

His Weizenbock ale, a German dark wheat brew with fruity flavors, beat out more than 2,000 entries. Samuel Adams has sold his beer nationwide in a six-pack labeled “LongShot,” with the bottle label depicting a drawing of Kibzey. Since the February announcement of his winning, Kibzey has been flown to Denver where he was able to make beer at the brewery and to Boston where he served his beer to tourists visiting the Samuel Adams brewery.

“It’s been surreal,” he said. “I’m just glad people like my beer.” ◀

New president

continued from page 1

mentors or volunteers and intends to conserve the pride they have in their alma mater by maintaining its position as one of the leading community colleges in the nation.

“I am the beneficiary of all the good work that was done by Al Lorenzo (who served as the college’s president for 29 years before his retirement this year), says Jacobs. “My job is to reinforce what he has already done.”

Part of that will include supporting multicultural and international activities. “I have always thought that one of the goals of a college is to open up the world to its students,” says Jacobs, who met his own wife, Gabriella, in her native country of Greece. “It was those kinds of experiences that were being provided by its teachers that attracted me to Macomb in the first place.” ◀

Alumni notes

Philip Gondek, 1972, worked in tool fixture and die design, and as a cost estimator before being hired by Ford Motor Company in 1975. He was laid off within a year and moved to Florida, where he has worked as a window layout designer, a tool fixture designer on Pratt Whitney jet engines for Spectrum Tool and Die, a steel designer with Westinghouse and currently as a sheet metal designer/CAD manager for a growing heat pump company in Fort Lauderdale.

Richard Zedan, 1975, moved to Hollywood, Calif., after college and performed stand-up comedy at the Improv, Comedy Store and other clubs in the Los Angeles area before combining his performance skills with those in the culinary arts. He was The Vaudeville-Gadget Chef on QVC from 2003–2006, including appearances on QVC—United Kingdom, and has been a regular at fairs and shows throughout the U.S. for 30 years.

Chris McCallister, 1980, is a clinical psychologist who works under contract for the Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority in the Easter Seals office in Pontiac. A quadriplegic following a diving accident in 1975, he has recently had his first novel, *Coming Full Circle: Munising to Munising*, published. The novel is set in a post-technological Michigan and focuses on an injured man who awakens in a cave with no memory but an urgent sense that there is a task he must complete. It is currently available as a print-on-demand paperback through Amazon.com.

Karen Palka, 1985, has worked as a graphic designer in the advertising departments of New York Carpet World and Art Van Furniture, and with Skip Printing and Duplication. She started her own graphic design company, Carousel Creations, in 1991, one month before having her first child. After working out of her home for 16 years, Palka moved her company to its own shop on Main Street in Romeo in 2007.

D. Reid Jelalian, 1985, died on March 8, 2008, after a brief battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife Sheri and son Matthew. He earned a bachelor’s degree in managerial economics and finance from the University of Michigan and worked for 18 years with Charter One Bank as vice president and regional mortgage sales manager, and for 18 months with Comerica Bank as a business development officer.

Celeste Eckman Himanek, 1998, earned a bachelor of science degree with a major in psychology from Wayne State University, a master’s degree in counseling from Oakland University and is pursuing a doctorate in counseling from Oakland as well. In November 2007, she opened Realizations Counseling Center in Shelby Township, where she specializes in infertility counseling. She is president of the Lenox Township Library Board, of which she has been a member since 1996, and lives on a farm in Lenox Township with her husband, Jim, and daughter, Ariel.

Cynthia Bechill, no date given, was named president of the Troy Campus of the International Academy of Design & Technology in January.

Bechill had served as the academy’s director of human resources from July 2005 until September 2007 when she was appointed interim president. She holds a bachelor of business administration degree with a concentration in management from Rochester College and human resources certification from the Human Resource Certification Institution and the Society for Human Resource Management.

Linda (Dean) Hayes received a bachelor of science degree in nursing from Wayne State

University and a master of science degree in nursing from the University of Texas at Arlington. She has managed over 40 long-term acute care hospitals in the country during her 20-year career, including developing corporate policies, procedures and pre-opening budgets. She is currently chief clinical/chief development officer for and a partner in Solara Healthcare, which operates long-term acute care facilities in Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. ◀

News about alumni

Send us a note, and let us know what you’ve been doing since you graduated from Macomb. Please include the year you graduated (or last year attended), advanced degrees earned, job history since leaving Macomb and any other items of professional or personal interest.

E-mail to: alumni@macomb.edu

Mail to:
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Macomb Community College Foundation
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Responses will be printed in an upcoming issue of *at Macomb*.

WHAT’S NEW WITH YOU

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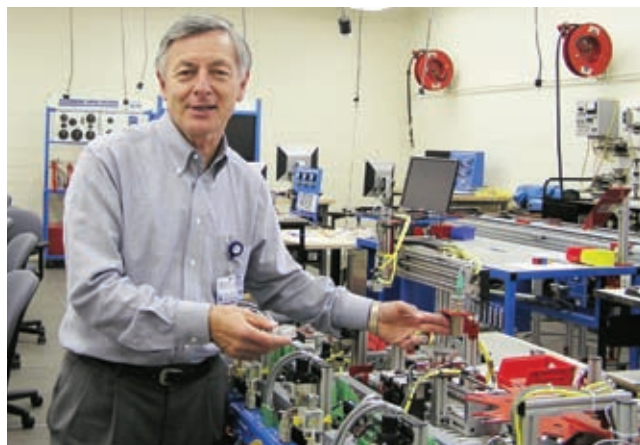
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Macomb opens Mechatronics Lab at college's South Campus

With today's manufacturing jobs requiring a skill set much broader than ever before, Macomb is introducing an Automated Systems Technology—Mechatronics Program in the fall to prepare individuals for the industrial workplace of the 21st century.

Mechatronics combines such systems as mechanics, electronics, pneumatics and robotics into an integrated approach to manufacturing. It is used in a variety of industries where downsizing and cross-trade training have changed the size and nature of the workforce including automotive, aerospace and defense.

"There is no such thing as a millwright anymore," notes Peter Klein, associate dean of Engineering Technology at Macomb. "Multi-tasking is now the reality. In one facility, there used to be 28 disciplines; now there are as few as seven or eight."



Peter Klein, associate dean of Engineering Technology, demonstrates how one of the seven stations in Macomb's new Mechatronics Lab at South Campus works. Mechatronics is a combination of such systems as electronics, mechanics, pneumatics and robotics with applications in a wide variety of industries.

Macomb's new Mechatronics Lab on South Campus in Warren consists of seven stations that together create a small assembly line with computers and software simulating a variety of scenarios. A total of 10 new mechatronics courses are being introduced, complementing existing courses in electronic technology, mechanical technology and technical math.

"The program prepares students for one of two paths," explains Klein. "They can earn a certificate from Macomb and work in any one of several automated industries, or they can earn an associate degree and transfer to a 2 + 2 program and earn a bachelor's degree." ◀

Turn over a new leaf this fall

Whether your interests lie in the kitchen or courtroom, attic trunk or alternative energy, Macomb's Center for Continuing Education offers a variety of courses, many of which are new, that could help you transform this fall into a season of personal discovery.

A sampling of classes new this fall:

- Hybrids 101 (part of a new Living Green series)
- Hidden Treasures: Valuing Your Antiques
- Designer Skirts
- Computer Software Work Series
- Thai Basics for the American Cook
- Literacy in the Early Childhood Classroom (for educators)
- Colonial Williamsburg Christmas Design
- Landscape Design Certificate
- Certified Nurse Assistant
- Improv for Lawyers
- Conflict Resolution Specialist
- Music and Entertainment Industry Certificate (two classes)
- Manuscript Class

For more information, call 586.498.4000 or visit continuinged@macomb.edu. ◀

A Journey of Hope: Michigan's Immigrant Experience

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," reads the sonnet by Emma Lazarus made famous by its placement over the main entrance to the Statue of Liberty. A replica of that American icon symbolizing freedom and opportunity will grace the center of Discovery Hall at the Lorenzo Cultural Center as a backdrop to a series that explores the experiences and contributions of those who left their homeland to make new lives in Michigan.

From Sept. 27 through Nov. 22, the Cultural Center will offer a variety of exhibits, performances, activities and presentations focused on those who forged new lives here.

A special feature of the series is a computer lab open during normal exhibit hours (Wed.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and Sun. 1–4 p.m.) to "Trace Your Ancestry" and on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon and Saturdays from 2–4 p.m., local librarians with expertise in genealogy research will be available to help.

The Lorenzo Cultural Center is located adjacent to the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts on Macomb's Center Campus in Clinton Township. Unless otherwise noted, all events

and exhibits are free. For more information, including specific dates and event times, visit lorenzoculturalcenter.com. ◀

Laughter, gasps and sighs

Macomb Center for the Performing Arts' shows engage the emotions

Whether it's seeing Kenny Loggins in October, Nunsense in November, Christmas with the Lettermen in December, *Swan Lake* in January, Guitar

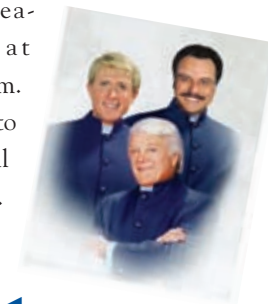


Blues in February,

Momix: Lunar Sea in March or the Smothers Brothers in April, the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts has a season filled with entertainment options.

Information about the more than 40 shows scheduled for this season is available at www.macombcenter.com.

Those who buy tickets to four different shows will save up to \$4 per ticket. Contact the ticket office at 586.286.2222 or go online for more details. ◀



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