Also:
Noted Poet
Claudia Keelan

Plus:
First Lady
Sandy Miller

Not Your Average Cowpoke

UNLV Sociology Professor Fred Preston
Exchange Taxes For A Smile.

“We’re providing ourselves with an income for life, and UNLV receives a big gift of stock after we’re both gone.”

Battista and Rio Locatelli believe in sharing their success with future UNLV hotel college students. They recently created and funded a charitable trust. By doing so, they guaranteed themselves a lifetime income, avoided the capital gains tax, received an income tax deduction, and made a substantial charitable gift to UNLV. “With a charitable remainder trust, our good fortune in the stock market is working for us — Not the IRS,” said Rio and Battista. “We’re providing ourselves with an income for life, and UNLV receives a big gift after we’re both gone.”

Charitable remainder trusts allow you or your heirs to receive a lifetime income, realize charitable tax deductions, and make a deferred gift to UNLV. If you’re thinking of selling highly appreciated real estate or stocks that you own outright, or if you have a large retirement plan, you should consider this option.

For more information about this mutually beneficial opportunity, call Russ Kost at the UNLV Foundation at (702) 895-3641.
A Capital Sense of Humor

With a greater-than-average capacity for flexibility, a commitment to family, and — most importantly — a quick wit, UNLV alumnus Sandy Miller has taken on her role as Nevada’s first lady with a refreshing attitude.

BY SUZAN DIBELLA

Poetic Transition

UNLV English professor and noted poet Claudia Keelan discovered her niche when she began writing poetry. Now she wonders how her newfound happiness will affect her work.

BY DIANE RUSSELL

Ridin’, Ropin’, and Researchin’

One day UNLV sociologist Fred Preston began wondering what makes rodeo cowboys tick. The next thing he knew, he was wrestling a 700-pound steer to the ground. Now, with more than 60 years’ worth of experience and hundreds of interviews with cowboys under his belt buckle, he offers some insights into one of the toughest sports around.

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

Yielding Results

UNLV’s Transportation Research Center studies the many traffic problems posed by the rapid growth of Southern Nevada, often suggesting solutions that will make area roadways safer.

BY BARBARA CLOUD
UNLV School of Architecture Accredited; Building Dedicated

UNLV's School of Architecture is on a roll. It recently dedicated its new, 75,000-square-foot building and shortly thereafter received notice that it had been granted accreditation for five years by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB).

"We are thrilled with this recognition of the quality of architecture education at UNLV," President Carol C. Harter said of the accreditation. "This means a great deal to all of us, but especially to our architecture faculty and, above all, our undergraduate and graduate students."

"Also, the dedication of this fine facility is the culmination of more than a decade of hard work by many supportive members of the Las Vegas architecture community and the UNLV faculty and staff," she added. "It is also a special tribute to the late Paul R. Sogg, a Las Vegas real estate developer, who contributed a significant portion of the $8.25 million cost of this building. We are also extremely grateful for the contributions made by Johnny Ribeiro and J.A. Tiberti. Their continued involvement is typical of the outstanding community support that has built UNLV over the past 40 years."

Johnny Ribeiro, Jr., Chairman of the Ribeiro Corp., contributed nearly $500,000 to support the landscape architecture program. J.A. Tiberti, chairman of Tiberti Construction Co., donated $600,000 for architecture program support.

"The Nevada State Legislature approved funding for the Sogg Building in 1990. Designed by Swisher & Hall AIA Ltd. and built by Tibesar Construction, the building is located on the south side of the UNLV campus at the intersection of Tropicana Avenue and Brussels Road."

According to Michael Alcorn, director of the School of Architecture, the new building provides the classrooms, studios, library, and office space that are essential for accredited programs in architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, and urban planning.

Only three schools of about 108 accredited programs have received five-year accreditation on their first try, according to Alcorn, who added that it is more common to receive three-year accreditation.

The accreditation is retroactive for two years, meaning that graduates back to 1995 will benefit, Alcorn said. "Accreditation by the NAAB provides graduates the ability to be certified by the National Council of the Architectural Registration Board," Alcorn said, explaining that it is virtually impossible to become licensed as an architect without the NCARB registration.

Alcorn said the high quality of the new architecture building, and especially its library, played a large role in the accreditation process. The School of Architecture offers a master of architecture degree, as well as bachelor of science degrees in architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning. Some 408 undergraduate majors and 30 graduate students are currently enrolled in the program.

Fulton Building Construction Underway

Construction is underway on the Stan Fulton Building, the new home of the UNLV International Gaming Institute. The 30,000-square-foot facility, to be located on the southeast corner of Flamingo Road and Swenson Street, will be the venue for educational programs for gaming executives, managers, and regulators from across the United States and around the world. The $5 million structure, scheduled to be completed by early 1999, is being funded by a donation from Stan Fulton, chairman and CEO of Anchor Gaming.

UNLV Alumni Association Donates 40 Trees to Campus

UNLV is a bit greener these days, thanks to a donation from the UNLV Alumni Association. In honor of UNLV's 40th anniversary, the alumni group has donated 40 trees to the university.

Most of the trees will be heritage oaks and will be planted along the sidewalk to the west of the Rebel softball diamond. This area will be named the "Alumni Walk." Eventually, the trees will form a hedge with oak trees, some smaller-leaved oak trees, and some small plants—a combination selected by Donna Swartzell, UNLV's director of landscape, grounds, and arboretums. Kiosks, benches, and cables will be added to the area also.

"This is another example of the Alumni Association's continuing efforts to enhance the campus and university community," said Carl Cook, assistant director of alumni relations. "The cooperation of Dennis Swartzell and his staff in this endeavor was outstanding. Together, the UNLV Alumni Association and the university community are demonstrating the unlimited achievements that can be accomplished when working together with a common goal."

Phillips Appointed Assistant Director of Alumni Relations

UNLV alumna Donna Phillips joined the university staff recently as an assistant director of alumni relations.

Phillips, who earned a bachelor's degree in recreation from UNLV in 1995, has worked for the Henderson Parks and Recreation Senior Center and the Valley View Recreation Center for the past two years. During her college years at UNLV, she served as organizations board director for student government and was a member of the Student Alumni Association.

She was selected for her new post by a search committee composed of UNLV Alumni Association board members, faculty, staff, administrators, and students. She will work alongside Carl Cook, who was previously the sole assistant director of alumni relations.

Her duties will include guiding a number of groups and programs, including the Student Alumni Association, the Student Ambassador Program, and the Home-Away-From-Home Program. She will oversee and expand many of the association's annual and special events and will assist alumni office staff members in their day-to-day activities.

Former University Regent Juanita Greer White Dies

Former university regent and state legislator Juanita Greer White died in September.

White, for whom UNLV's Juanita Greer White Life Sciences Building is named, was a great supporter of higher education in Nevada. She served on the Board of Regents from 1966 to 1971 and was a charter member of the Nevada Southern University Land Foundation, which obtained land for the university campus at a relatively low cost.

When she ran for the Board of Regents in 1962, White campaigned for the state's first life sciences building. She wanted a building to attract top teachers and contributed to the development of both traditional academic and special interest programs.

White also supported higher education when she served in the state assembly in 1971 and 1972. In recent years, she remained a friend of UNLV, funding the White Distinguished Lecturer Series through the biological sciences department.
Rawson, Chapman Receive Top Alumni Association Awards

The UNLV Alumni Association has presented in highest awards to two UNLV alumni — state Sen. Ray Rawson and university supporter Bruce Chapman. Rawson was chosen as the UNLV Alumni Association's 1997 Alumnus of the Year, the highest award the association can bestow. Chapman, a dentist, was a member of UNLV's first graduating class in 1964, earning a bachelor's degree in zoology. He later returned to UNLV to earn a master's degree in anthropology in 1978 and went on to send his children to his alma mater as well. During the most recent legislative session, he was instrumental in efforts to increase funding for UNLV.

"My wife and I have marveled at the growth of UNLV, from our experience in the first graduating class to the graduation of our children," Rawson said. "It is an institution to be proud of. It is at UNLV that my eyes were opened to the world of possibilities. You have no idea how much this award means to me."

"Ray's heartfelt appreciation of his alma mater is demonstrated continually," said Carl Cook, UNLV's assistant director of alumni relations. "He has always taken action to assist his university in every way he can.

Bruce Chapman, director of new business development with Shonkwiler/ Marcus advertising agency, was selected to receive the UNLV Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award recently.

Another longtime supporter of UNLV, Chapman attended the university from 1968 to 1971 and has contributed to many university programs, including the Valerie Pña Memorial Cheerleading Scholarship. He is also a contributor to the Candlelighters, an organization that assists children who are terminally ill with cancer.

"Bruce's efforts are a testament to the great contributions that individuals can make to society," Cook said. "His time and energies devoted to charity — as well as his genuine concern for his alma mater — earned him the award."

Chapman was the first UNLV athlete selected in a professional draft; he was drafted by the American Basketball Association and the National Basketball Association. His wife, optometrist Pam Moore, is a UNLV alumna and a former member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Water History Documentary Wins Emmy

A documentary on the history of water in Southern Nevada that was a collaborative effort of UNLV's environmental studies department, the Clark County Conservation District, and television station KLXV, was recently honored with an Emmy award. The Water Rater: A History of Water in the Las Vegas Valley received a Southeastern Area Emmy from the San Diego chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences recently.

The award came in the category of historical/bibliographical program.

Producers Dan Garrison of KLXV and Allie Smith, UNLV's campus public relations coordinator, were honored for the documentary at the National Education Television Association's annual convention with an Award for the Advancement of Learning through Broadcasting.

The Water Rater was created for use in high schools and to educate the community about past water supply and usage patterns and how they have led to current supply and use.

Finance Professor Don Hardigree Dies

Don Hardigree, an associate professor in the College of Business and the director of the Institute for Insurance and Risk Management, died suddenly in December after suffering an aneurysm. He was 49.

A three-time graduate of the University of Georgia, Hardigree earned his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in risk management and insurance.

He joined the UNLV finance department faculty in 1990 and went on to serve as the chair of insurance of the Nevada Insurance Education Foundation and as the director of the Institute for Insurance and Risk Management. Known throughout the United States for his expertise and professional contributions in the areas of insurance and risk management, Hardigree enlisted the support and participation of the Nevada insurance industry to establish a strong insurance-education program in the College of Business.

He also advised the state of Nevada on insurance issues, served as co-editor of the Journal of Insurance Issues, and was much sought-after as a consultant.

Morgan Named Law School Dean; Marks Dean of Libraries

UNLV has appointed the founding dean of the new William S. Boyd School of Law and a new dean of libraries.

Richard J. Morgan, the former dean of the Arizona State University College of Law, assumed his duties as dean of the law school Sept. 1. Kenneth Marks, the former director of academic library services at East Carolina University, was hired to lead the library faculty and staff.

Morgan has served as dean and professor at ASU's law college since 1990 and held the same position at the University of Wyoming College of Law from 1987 to 1989. Under Morgan's leadership, the university is preparing its law program to accept its first class this fall. The university plans to obtain American Bar Association accreditation for the law school at the earliest possible date, in time to allow the first class to sit for the Nevada bar exam.

Plans call for the program initially to occupy the existing Paradise Elementary School building on Tropicana Avenue near the university until UNLV's new campus library is completed in 2000. The law school will then move into the existing campus library building, which will be remodeled for that purpose.

Morgan, who was associate professor of law at ASU from 1988 to 1990 and as associate dean and professor from 1983 to 1987, practiced law in California from 1971 to 1980. He received his law degree from the UCLA School of Law in 1971. Morgan has been active in both the American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools, as well as other professional and law education organizations.

Before joining UNLV, Marks had served since 1980 as director of academic library services at East Carolina University, where he directed library faculty and student participation in the program planning, construction, and operation of a 160,000-square-foot library addition and the renovation of the library's existing 160,000-square-foot facility.

In previous positions, Marks served as university librarian and executive director of the Merrill Library and the learning resources program at Utah State University; associate director for public service at University Librarian, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; and head of the reference department and reference librarian at the University of Tennessee.

Marks, who has published extensively in library journals, has written two books, Local Area Networks in Libraries and Using Windows for Libraries Administration. He received a Ph.D. in educational administration from Iowa State University in 1978, a master's degree in library science from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1971, and a bachelor's degree in history and political science from Iowa State University in 1960.

Construction of the new library will begin this spring; the building will be open by 2000.

Albrecht Appointed Vice President

Fred Albrecht, formerly UNLV's athletic director, community relations, has been named vice president for university and community relations.

"Fred has served the university well since 1970 and has been a valued member of the staff for many years," said UNLV President Carol C. Harter. "He oversaw UNLV's athletic fund-raising efforts from 1983 to 1988 and raised the funds to build the Richard Tam Alumni Center in 1989 and 1990. He served as interim athletic director for several months in 1995, and in September 1995 he was named executive director of alumni and community relations."
A CAPITAL Sense of Humor

Armed with a greater-than-average capacity for flexibility, her commitment to family, and — most importantly — a quick wit, UNLV alumna Sandy Miller has approached her role as Nevada’s first lady with a refreshing attitude.

BY SUZAN DIBELLA

WHEN YOU Meet NEVADA’S first lady Sandy Miller, you are immediately struck by what a regular person she is. No airs, no formality; just the real thing. Gracious, kind, down-to-earth. Someone you’d like to have over for dinner.

The next thing you notice is that she tells hilarious stories — which is another reason to invite her over for dinner.

Take, for instance, the story she tells about the governor’s pajamas. Shortly after the Millers moved into the governor’s mansion, they were getting ready for bed one night when the governor turned to his wife and asked, “Honey, would you feel my pajamas? They feel really nice. Why do they feel that way?”

As she ran a fold of the pajama material between her fingers, she realized the horror of it all.

“‘It’s because they’re ironed,’” she reported pleasantly, hiding her dismay. But she knew deep in her heart that the next day she must speak to the mansion staff.

“I told them, ‘Do not iron his pajamas again because he’s going to think this is how he lives all the time. And someday I won’t live here, and there’s no way I’m going to see myself standing there ironing his pajamas,’” she says with a straight face that Erma Bombeck would’ve respected. “I mean I always took good care of him, but there were days when he got dressed out of the dryer just because I didn’t get everything done that day.”

The story is naturally followed by plenty of laughter from the first lady, whose keen sense of humor has obviously enabled her to observe the lighter side of life along the campaign trail and in the governor’s mansion.

Her observations woven together tell the real-life tale of a shy UNLV alumna, who woke up one day to find herself sharing the biggest political spotlight in the state of Nevada with her husband, Gov. Bob Miller — and stepping into a job for which there is no training manual.

Add to that one small but interesting twist: She was pregnant at 40 years old with two adolescents already at home when she assumed the role of Nevada’s first lady.

“So I would say that first year, it was kind of nice to hide behind my belly,” she laughs. “There were so many things that were new and different. And, you know, the reality of it was that when I was in college, I never said, ‘I want to grow up to be a first lady.’ That wasn’t my goal.”

Again, laughter follows.

It all started innocently enough, she muses. She grew up in Las Vegas in the 1960s, attending public schools.

Her original career goal became clear when she assumed the role of Nevada’s first lady.

“My mom and dad had always been good volunteers. When I was in high school, my mom had volunteered to teach handicapped kids how to swim at the YMCA on Bonanza (Road). So she said to me, ‘In our family, you’re really a more proficient swimmer than I am, so maybe this is something you should think about doing.’”

“I said I’d do it, so I went down after school and worked with mostly hands-upped kids from Helen J. Stewart School, but there were some deaf kids also from Baby Thomas Elementary School. It turned out that my area of interest was with the deaf kids. I thought they were so charming, and they had such cute senses of humor. And I
realized that working with deaf children was something I wanted to do.

After attending UNR for a year, she enrolled in the special education program at UNLV in 1968. Happy to return to her hometown campus, she enjoyed college life and the small classes at UNLV.

"At that time, all the depart-
ments were pretty small, so there was a lot of individualized instruction," she recalls. "In my department there were only three professors, and they helped me design a program. Their idea was that it would be a good strategy to get a strong background in general special education and educational principles, and then focus from there."

She was able to focus on deaf education by attending two other institutions — California State University, Los Angeles, on a government fellowship, and later, the Lexington School for the Deaf in New York City on a summer internship.

"We had just passed a rubella epidemic in the United States, and there were many children who had been left deaf and blind, so the federal government had a strong program to try to encourage young people to go into special education," she says.

"I wanted to teach in the oral philosophy, emphasizing speech and lip reading instead of sign language, and I knew that was the philosophy being used to teach deaf children here in Southern Nevada. And since I wanted to return to Las Vegas to teach, I was glad to learn that the professors found programs that enabled me to do so."

She performed her student teaching at Ruby Thomas Elementary School, where she would take a teaching position after she graduated from UNLV in 1971. It was during that period of her life she met the future governor of the state of Nevada.

"I met Bob on a blind date. He was a deputy district attorney at the time. We met in April and got married in November. Now, that seems so fast. Doesn't that seem fast? Of course, it didn't at the time. We both thought we were old and mature and had been around the block a few times. I was 24 and Bob was 28."

Set on a new course by their mutual commitment to family, familyiqu point teaching soon afterward to stay at home with their first child, Ross. "I got married in 1974 ... I think. Let's see, I want to make Ross legitimate," she jokes. "And, it takes nine months to cook a baby. So, yes, Bob and I got married in 1974." Gales of laughter punctuate the recollection.

Within the year, Bob was appointed justice of the peace, then ran for the same office in the next election.

"It was a low-profile race, although we didn't know it at the time," she says, recalling her enjoyment of those early campaign days when she could work behind the scenes. "The things that I did very well were ironing decals on T-shirts, working on floats, and building yard signs and then delivering them in the car with Ross in his little infant car seat."

But soon her husband was running for district attorney, and the size of his campaign grew. Suddenly, her role didn't involve the use of an iron or a hammer anymore.

"It turned out that I wasn't a very good campaigner," she says matter-of-factly. "Bob wanted me to go to all of these banquets and formal functions, and I was really kind of shy, so it was very hard for me to walk into a room full of people I didn't know."

And campaigning is a time-consuming business, she notes. For instance, often there were two picnics to attend on a Saturday, and then a banquet that evening. At that point in their lives, their daughter Corrine had been born, so the pressures of juggling a campaign and a young family mounted. The support of her mom, dad, and sisters, all of whom helped out by babysitting the kids, was a lifesaver, she says. And she held fast to her dream of learning more about life in politics.

"I remember thinking that it was so goofy that sometimes people would evaluate you on whether or not your kids were clean at a picnic," she says chuckling. "What are you going to say, 'No, Ross, you can't have a cherry popsicle because it will all go over the front of your shoe, and then somebody won't vote for Daddy'? Or, 'Have a lemon one instead — it's not so viable! Some of these things are beyond belief.'"

Soon, Bob was elected — and then re-elected four years later — as district attorney.

"During that time, our children were growing, and we were living in our home in Las Vegas," she says, noting that she was more than happy to just support her husband and raise their two kids. "My role as the spouse of the D.A. was pretty limited, which was fine for me. I think my suggesting that I go to the office and have any kind of role then wouldn't have been very logical anyway. In fact almost anyone there probably would have been very surprised to see me show up," she laughs, imagining a conversation with the D.A.'s staff. "'I'd like to help. I have no law degree, but I'd like to help.' So, I just attended banquets and other functions with him."

But shyness was still a bit of an obstacle when Bob ran for lieutenant governor in 1986.

"It was his first statewide race, and it was a real challenge for me. The funny part was that Bonnie Bryan [who was at the time helping her husband, then-Gov. Richard Bryan, campaign for re-election] must have thought I had velcro on her side because everywhere we went, she stuck to her. She knew a lot of people, and I didn't know anyone. Bob was very good about walking into a crowd and introducing myself, and he wouldn't have been successful at this job if he weren't. But that meant I was left by myself at times, and I was supposed to look independent. So I looked independent standing right next to Bonnie Bryan."

Appearing in parades was also a part of the campaign trail, and, oddly enough, timidity was not an issue for her under those circumstances. But there were other small problems that could crop up on the parade route, she notes.

"One year we were riding in the Nevada Day Parade in Carson City. At the time the kids must have been 10 and 11 years old, and we were riding in a little horse-drawn buggy. Bob and I were in the front, and they were behind us. All of a sudden, the buggy starts to shake a little bit, and the kids are having a full-blown fistfight in the back. Then Bob turns around and yells — not in a polite tone — 'Knock it off!' I'm surprised he got elected," she says, laughing uproariously, then adding that, as parents, they should have known better. "You stick a brother and sister together at ages 10 and 11 within a proximity of one foot of each other, and they're going to hit each other. You can count on it."

It was the next big step for the Miller family when Bob won the office of lieutenant governor. For the six months he presided over the Nevada Senate, the Millers moved to Carson City, rented a house, and relocated the kids to new schools.

"We did that because Bob needed to be in Carson City, and we recognized that in our family, it would have been very difficult for us all not to be together. I think they remember it as a really wonderful time because everything was new. I mean they were from Las Vegas, so having a snowstorm was one of the most exciting things in the world. That was terrific. And we lived in a great neighborhood with a lot of children their age."

"For me, it was kind of like living in Beaver Cleaver's neighborhood. For instance, one Saturday morning the father of one of Ross' friends knocked on our door to see if Ross would like to go fishing with him and his son. 'Yes, he would,' I said without even asking him. It was kind of unbelievable to me. It was a wonderful time, and we really built a lot of family memories."

After the legislative session ended, they came home to Las Vegas; the post of lieutenant governor is only part-time, so Bob also practiced law in a private firm. Life returned to normal — that is, until then-Gov. Richard Bryan ran a U.S. Senate seat, making Bob acting governor.

Once again the family pulled up stakes and headed north. Bob planned to run for governor in the next election, so things were a bit of a buzz in the air. But it was an exciting time, according to the first lady-to-be. There were many new and different developments in store for the family. However, none was quite so unexpected as the one that presented itself on the day of another parade, days before Bob's first gubernatorial election.

"I remember it was the morning of the Nevada Day Parade. My sister was in town, and we went and bought one of those home pregnancy tests. And, son of a gun, it said I was going to have a baby. And that was the year I went through the continued on page 25
UNLV English professor and noted poet Claudia Keelan found her niche when she discovered her talent for writing poetry. Now, she wonders how her newfound happiness will affect her work.

BY DIANE RUSSELL

SHE COULD SCAT A LA Ella Fitzgerald. Solos on her clarinet were a breeze, whether she was playing with a jazz band or in her university's woodwind ensemble.

But music wasn't quite it for Claudia Keelan. Though many people consider music the ultimate form of self-expression, somehow she needed more.

Then, as she was entering her third year of college at California's Humboldt State University without a declared major, Keelan took a poetry class from poet Jorie Graham. Her life hasn't been the same since.

What became an almost instant, overwhelming passion during that class with Graham turned into a lifelong passion and profession for Keelan, who is now an award-winning poet and assistant professor of English at UNLV. Her second book, The Secularist, has been nominated for the Los Angeles Times Book Award.

Keelan says that class with Graham, who went on to win the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for poetry, was a revelation.

"She was the first teacher I had who spoke with authority about the human condition. Her approach to it seemed so genuine and seemed so absolutely true that I never turned back," Keelan says.

"She was certainl y my first influence, my mentor. She stood — to me as a young woman — as an example of everything that I admired most. She was honest. She was beautiful. She cared about people. She thought that we could change the world through writing. It was largely through her presence and her knowledge that I found my voice in the beginning."

Life changed nearly overnight for Keelan. The junior with lackluster grades in all classes except those in music and English declared a major in the latter subject; in one semester she became a straight-A student.

"I started to live like a writer," she recalls. "I started to realise that I was writing to live. I went everywhere with a notebook. I still do. I carried poems in my pocket. I still do. I thought the world seemed immensely exciting in a way that it hadn't before, because it was so possible that at any moment there could be a revelation about air or light or people that would change the way I felt. I came alive, actually became engaged with where I was, who I was, and with my language."

"Coming alive in that way let me take my enthusiasm and attach it to work. Because to be really great at anything, you have to work really hard, no matter how enthusiastic and full of talent you are," she says. "I mean, I was a great scat singer, but I didn't practice for hours. I didn't like it. It seemed too silly to go around just going 'boo-dop-boo-bop boo-dop-boo' for the rest of my life. It wasn't my spirit. My nature was more serious."

So she poured her spirit into her poetry. In 1982 she saw her first work in print. "Highway 299," which dealt with the transience and loneliness of life, appeared in Humboldt's then-new literary magazine. Getting it published wasn't much of a trick; Keelan was the poetry editor.

Though she was pleased to see the poem published, Keelan found it a bit embarrassing — a feeling that stays with her even today.

"I thought when I got a book published, it was going to be so important. Every time I walked into bookstores I'd look after Keats, where Keelan should be, and I thought that having a book published would mean everything."

But as glad as she is to have two published books of poems, first Refinery and now The Secularist, Keelan has discovered that it's the writing of the poetry that's essential for her rather than seeing the published book on the shelf.

"I love my books. But once you write one and put it out there, it's there, and there you are. There's a little bit of shyness I always feel when I publish something. I think, 'Well, now they're really going to know.'"

What "they" will know if they read
Refinery, which won the Cleveland State University Poetry Prize in 1993, is that Keelan spent some time exploring the connection between myths and our everyday lives. She wondered, for instance, how Icarus’ disastrous quest to reach his goal was like the attempts we all make to achieve our aspirations, or whether believing in the God represented by Christ and trying to make a caring community here on Earth. And so, while at first the book begins angrily, thinking that there’s something to blame, it realizes that it’s us and we who are to blame. The resolution comes on the idea that what we need to do is to be kinder to each other, to create conditions and systems that are better to people.

Social issues are also usually the topic of Keelan’s secondary form of written expression — the essay. She recently won an award for the best essay published in the *Diverse Quarterly* in 1997.

“It’s an essay on civil rights. It begins with a personal memory of marching in a civil rights parade when I was a little girl with my family and being knocked down by water from a fire hydrant,” Keelan says. “It’s about a civil rights parade. It’s about anger. It’s about class guilt — the kind of guilt that I have at being able to travel, past the idea of travel; into the air of some other place, she says. “It’s about anger. It’s about class guilt — the kind of guilt that I have at being able to travel, past the idea of travel; into the air of some other place, she says.

Keelan’s job also involves teaching poetry appreciation to undergraduate students, many of whom are more than a little daunted by the subject matter. “I can teach anybody how to read a poem,” she says. “I really stress just reading the words. I really stress just reading the words.”

Another tip she gives her students is that they can read the words. “I write a lot in notebooks. I mean my whole first book was written on the Boston subways,” she says. “I write whenever an idea comes to me.”

She applied to several universities and ordered sushi from her, Keelan says. “I wanted to be part of that book. I’d run into whatever college I was teaching in — Northeastern or Boston College — and type it up on the computer. As a matter of fact, Keelan says she doesn’t think her poetry can be classified as belonging to any particular “school.”

“My poetry is language-driven,” she says. “I’m not going to write in a proscribed form. I’m going to summon the words. I’m going to try to find the words I need to say at a given time. Obviously, because circumstances change, because I change, they’re going to be different words.”

“I write what I need to and I write, in a way to save my life. I write to see what’s necessary in a given moment, and I ask that the words come from that feeling and define what’s absolutely necessary. To me a metaphor: If you knew you only had a day to live, would you choose to live it, with whom, and with what? “As a subject, the past isn’t in it. I write from a prospective position. I ask that the words come from that feeling and define what’s absolutely necessary.”

Keelan says she no longer writes on the subway, but she does write whenever an idea strikes her. “I have a notebook on the table. It’s usually the color red. It’s a red and pepper composition notebook. And it looks at me, and I know that I have to write. And do. And this is just, I know, but I never revise. If I write a poem and it’s not there, I don’t go back and try to refine the experience because that wouldn’t be true to time. You can’t go back.”

Keelan says that other than writing poetry, working with young, talented writers is the only job that interests her. She applied to several universities and colleges in the western United States in order to be near her husband, poet Donald Revell, who teaches at the University of Utah.

Although she was offered jobs everywhere she applied, she says UNLV stood out both because of the people in the English department and because of its new master of fine arts degree in creative writing. “I wanted to be part of the MFA program, and I loved the fact that it was just beginning and that we could create and define it.”

Past Travel

Past Locust Grove Baptist Church, one mile, the hay springing and cailed in a yellow field; past the church itself, the holy sitting stumped as evening falls inside. coins filling the straw bale, beyond the grave —yard, plastic roses smelling sweet; over the ridges and rough shoulders; past a man burning refuse on the boundary of his lands, his boy walking slower toward him in the sweet gray smoke; the burning refuse the burning man the burning boy their shimmer receding ever so slowly in my rear-view mirror, rising past travel, past the idea of travel; into the air some other distant and confined changing colored thing; past the four-way stop and through reality you’ve gone the wrong way —from The Seculalist by Claudia Keelan, published 1997. The University of Georgia Press

Keelan needs to her 3-year-old son, Benjamin.
One day, UNLV sociologist Fred Preston began wondering what makes rodeo cowboys tick. The next thing he knew, he was wrestling a 700-pound steer to the ground. Now, with more than 60 steers’ worth of experience and hundreds of interviews with cowboys under his belt buckle, he offers some insights into one of the toughest sports around.

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

T hey were slowly moving down the steps of the Thomas & Mack Center one cool December morning during the 1994 National Finals Rodeo when UNLV sociology professor Fred Preston first noticed them.

Several dozen older cowboys, all rugged-looking men, were limping as they left the arena; one was dragging his leg. They were just showering the breeze as they hobbled along. They took one step at a time.

Preston couldn’t help but wonder what injuries had wreaked such havoc on their bodies. Sure, he’d seen enough rodeos to know cowboys get thrown from their homes. But don’t they usually just get up and walk away? How bad could it be? And if it is that bad — as their limps would indicate — why would rodeo competitors be willing to participate in a sport that was sure to leave them with permanent disabilities?

Preston knew there was more to the story. As a veteran sociologist who had previously studied the nature of sports in society, he sensed a research opportunity and began toying with the notion of a project; the research team next designed a questionnaire that they planned to use to interview more than 250 rodeo competitors. They made arrangements to interview their subjects during the next National Finals Rodeo, and their research began taking form.

Preston, who had always been interested in gender issues, quickly became fascinated with the rodeo subculture and how it supports certain values regarding men and toughness.

"This subject deals with the cultural expectation that men have to be physically tough and deal with pain. It struck me when I watched these cowboys walk around that these guys must compete in my tough sport. And that thought was followed by these questions: 'What motivates them to do it, and how are their actions supported by the subculture?'"

He also hoped he could begin to address the issue of which sport produces the toughest athletes. His plan was to compare the findings of his study on rodeo cowboys with those on athletes participating in other sports. Additionally, he hoped to find out more about female rodeo athletes and the issues they face in the subculture — though he acknowledges that his study focuses primarily on cowboys rather than cowgirls.

As Preston began delving into his research, he became more intrigued by the rodeo subculture. Soon he was serving as an academic adviser to the UNLV rodeo team. And it wasn’t long afterward that one of the UNLV team members convinced him to try steer wrestling.

Preston, who had played college football, already knew a little about the dangers of high-risk sports. But he felt his understanding of the sport of rodeo would be enhanced by his participation. So, he decided to give it a try.

"It sounded like fun to me," Preston says. "Clay Nani [one UNLV cowboy] told me if I liked football, I would like steer wrestling. What a thrill it was. What a thrill! The first day I got a big gasp on my hand from the steer’s horns, and I came back to the office showing it off to everybody.”

Although he hasn’t yet competed in a rodeo, Preston estimates he has "thrown some steer" about 60 times.

"I have always liked to compete, and I have always appreciated people’s toughness," Preston says. "I like to push limits to the extent that I can. It’s a way of checking my pulse to make sure that I’m alive.”

His desire to test his limits led him to try calf roping as well. According to Preston, calling roping is considered by many to be the most athletic event, and one that he is determined to perfect this year.

"It is not the most difficult event, nor...
is the roughest one," Preston says. "But it does require a cowboy to be able to throw a rope and be quick, agile, and strong in coming off the horse and wrapping up the calf. I haven't put it all together yet, but I am getting good at wrapping up the calf without slicing my finger open. Accomplishing this is of necessity to me."

Preston's physical involvement in the sport has helped him better appreciate what rodeo competitors endure and what motivates them; it has also helped him decide what issues were important to explore in his study.

"When we started the research, we developed three fundamental questions that we needed to have answered," Preston says. "First, what are the characteristics of self are held by rodeo athletes that motivate them to compete in such a high-risk sport? Second, what are the values of the rodeo subculture, and how are they related to traditional values of the American ethos and the American West? And third, what impact has had increased commercialization of rodeo had on the subculture and its values?"

The first indication of what issues rodeo participants are comes when Preston and his assistant first approached them to answer his interview questions.

"Most of the cowboys are very nice, approachable guys," he says. "Zane [Davis] is well known in the rodeo subculture, as is his dad, who was a three-time world champion saddle bronc rider and is now the rodeo coach at the College of Southern Idaho. So they helped us make contacts within each of the events."

Once Preston had the contacts, he found it rather easy to get the research information he needed.

"Without exception, all of the cowboys, both old and new, seemed pleased that we were studying their sport. They seemed pleased to talk about it in the same context as, say, football or basketball."

All of his subjects answered questions aimed at identifying how they view themselves, what their core values are, and what their thoughts are about competing while injured. They also answered questions about their fears of further complicating their injuries, continuing to participate in the sport, their financial and family backgrounds, and how they got started in rodeo.

When it comes to their conceptions of self, Preston was not surprised by some of the findings of his study.

"These are guys who view themselves as highly competitive, absolutely passionate for the sport, and hooked on adrenaline," he says. "And they have a disregard for the body." Given that they possess such characteristics, Preston had speculated that they would also exhibit a macho attitude. However, that couldn’t be further from the truth, he says.

"They are traditional-value guys who are willing to acknowledge that they have characteristics that are considered more feminine, such as sensitiv," Preston says. "While many football players wouldn’t describe themselves as sensitive, many of the cowboys said that they are." His findings on the values of the rodeo subculture confirmed much of what Preston had previously believed: that they are consistent with certain values associated with the American West.

Preston has found rodeo competitors to be people of integrity who possess a strong work ethic and believe in perseverance. They also possess a strong sense of community that may arise, at least in part, from family ties in the sport, he says.

He discovered that most rodeo athletes come from a family of rodeo participants. Whether it’s a father, brother, mother, aunt, or uncle, a rodeo cowboy usually has some other family connection to the sport. By contrast, Preston notes, athletes participating in sports such as football, basketball, and baseball are often the first in their families to play at the collegiate or professional level.

People from the rodeo subculture are also quite willing to help each other. Preston says, despite the fact that they are competing for their livelihoods. They often offer each other tips on the livestock and riding conditions and help in other ways, such as preparing equipment or opening gates at the start of a ride.

Preston believes that the value of willingness to help comes not only from their cultural background, but also from their view that the competition is between man and beast, not man and fellow competitor.

"The values and traditions that are associated with the West are present in the sport because the overwhelming majority of these guys come from rural western backgrounds," he says. "They’ve grown up in small rural towns. They’ve grown up ranching. There are very few who don’t come from ranching backgrounds."

And it is from ranching, Preston believes, that one of the central values of the subculture springs: toughness.

It is perhaps the foremost defining characteristic of the most revered value of the rodeo subculture, Preston says. It is often measured in terms of the broken limbs—and sometimes in the broken necks—of rodeo athletes.

Through his research, Preston has heard some remarkable anecdotes illustrating the subculture’s value of this trait—and its commitment to immortalizing the riders who possess it.

"One of Preston’s favorite stories involves UNLV rodeo coach Danny Brady who was one of the top bareback riders in the world during the 1980s. He was a veteran of the NFR and leading all competitors in the event as he headed into a rodeo in Mesquite several weeks before the NFR.

"At the rodeo, Brady’s hand got hung up in the grip as he was trying to dismount. He was twisted around in the air while trying to free himself and suffered a severe spiral fracture of his wrist."

When Preston heard about the injury from another cowboy, he asked Brady about it.

"I told Danny that I had heard about his wreck up in Mesquite," Preston says. "He responded, ‘You know, the bad part about that was that it was only a couple of weeks before the National Finals, and I was leading the world at that point.’"

"Feeling sorry for him and not sure how to respond, I told him that it was too bad. Then he says, ‘But, of course, I rode at the NFR.’"

"Wish my mouth gaping, I said, ‘You did what?’ He says, ‘Yeah, but, I didn’t win. I won a couple go-arounds, and it was pretty painful. I couldn’t hold on very well.’"

"I was amazed. Here is a guy with a spiral fracture of his arm all taped up, and he’s riding all 10 events. No one in his right mind would think that as a possibility. I was just sitting there in disbelief when he added nonchalantly, ‘Oh, but, you know, with the week, I couldn’t get the title.’"

Another incident thus reveals the subculture’s view of toughness involves a cowboy who got hung up in the chute and suffered a compound fracture of his ankle. He went on to complete his ride with a bone jutting out of his skin; he dismounted and was walking out of the ring, dragging his leg, when he said, ‘Well, boys, I think I messed up my leg.’"

According to Preston, whenever the story is recounted, all the cowboys roar with laughter.

"I’m still amazed that no one brought up the point that he could’ve done

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Readin’, Wrin’l, and Wranglin’

The UNLV rodeo team is currently ranked number one in the nation after winning the regional championship, according to UNLV sociology professor Fred Preston, who serves as the team’s academic advisor.

Since its start in 1993 with only three members, the team has consistently ranked best in the nation. Preston says, adding that it has captured the Grand Canyon Regional title every year it has existed.

The team has grown to include 26 members—a mix of cowboys and girls—who compete in UNLV rodeo from Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Texas, Nebraska, and throughout the state of Nevada. Several are former students.

Two former professional rodeo competitors coach the team—steer wrestler Ric Griffith and former NFR bareback rider Danny Brady.

The team’s home facility is the arena at the Rocking K Ranch, where the Grand Canyon Regional Championship is held each year.

For more information about the UNLV rodeo team, call Preston at 895-0260.

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Preston pulls off the shelf one of several sociology textbooks he has coauthored. His plans to write a book about his rodeo research as well.
additional damage to himself just by walking on a leg with a bone sticking out of it. But, no, they don’t think of that. They just think it’s a great story. These are very tough guys.”

Athletes from several other sports, particularly football, have a reputation for playing while injured, but, Preston says, they do it less frequently and their injuries are usually much less severe.

“In football you see guys playing with broken fingers and sprained ankles. In rodeo you’ll see a guy who just had his face bashed in out riding a bull again immediately afterward,” Preston says.

Another indication of how toughness is measured in the sport of rodeo is the way the subculture values some events over others.

The professional rodeo women’s event of barrel racing, which is so-titled in the NFR, is considered the least serious in the sport, as are the amateur women’s events of breakaway roping and goat tying. But there are class distinctions in the men’s events as well, Preston says. “The cowboys regard the men’s rough stock events — bull riding, saddle bronc riding, and bareback riding — with greater esteem than the timed events of calf roping and team roping.”

“Team ropers are often older cowboys who are nearing retirement,” Preston says. “They are seen as not competing in ‘real’ rodeo. They’re viewed as skilled competitors, but the subculture doesn’t seem to take them very seriously.”

At the other end of the scale are the bull riders, according to Preston. They are viewed as the toughest of the tough; their sport has grown so much in popularity that two bull-riding-only circuits have developed recently.

“The bull riders are, of course, at the top of the food chain,” Preston says. “And this translates into money. But most of the other guys, including non-bullriding, rough stock guys, look at bull riders as, basically, crazy.”

But the word “crazy” appears to be a relative term in this sport, and money is money, after all, Preston points out. And in a bull sport like rodeo, he adds, willingness to take crazy risks is what makes the cash flow. The more dangerous the event, the more earning potential there is.

Preston notes that earning potential is also closely linked to the cowboys competing while injured. Unlike athletes in other sports, cowboys earn their purses strictly based on their performance, according to Preston. There is no guaranteed money in rodeo.

“It helps answer the question as to why they compete while injured. It’s simple: If the cowboy doesn’t compete, then he doesn’t get paid.”

But as the sport continues to become more popular, the likelihood of commercial sponsorships increases, Preston says. And with sponsorships might come guaranteed money.

“And that will probably translate into the cowboys taking fewer risks,” Preston says, adding that he will continue to closely observe the variable of commercialization in evaluating its impact on the sport. “It could have a major effect on the sport and its subculture.”

There are other changes Preston is witnessing as he continues his study. For one, the women in professional rodeo are starting to become more assertive about several issues — primarily how much they’re paid and how they’re treated. In the past, Preston says, they have been relegated to almost visitor status.

“It’s been sort of like, ‘We’re letting you participate, so just be quiet about it all,’” Preston says, pointing to one concrete example — offered to him by one of the professional barrel racers he interviewed — of an inequality in the way the women are treated.

“For the NFR men’s events, when the ground gets beat up in a certain area, as it does in bull riding, for instance, it’s raked. But during the women’s barrel racing event, where 15 horses are all cutting into the dirt in about the same place and the riding surface is getting pretty beat up, the ground doesn’t get raked. So, the UNLV’s Transportation Research Center studies the many traffic problems posed by the tremendous growth of Southern Nevada, often recommending practical solutions that will make area roadways safer and less congested.

BY BARBARA CLOUD

YOU’VE BEEN SITTING IN A line of cars through three changes of traffic signals, and you can finally see the intersection. You’re late, you’re annoyed, and you’re wishing you had taken advantage of that yellow light instead of hesitating. Now, you’re inching to be off like a rocket when that light changes.

You also know that in your current state of mind, you’re a prime candidate for some kind of automobile mishap.

But with a little care — and some help from UNLV’s Transportation Research Center — you might just make it through the day without being involved in one.

The UNLV Transportation Research Center (TRC) is working to find ways to improve the quality of life on Southern Nevada’s roadways. It is the base for several multifaceted research projects aimed at exploring the traffic problems of the valley and recommending practical solutions to them.

The Transportation Research Center was originally funded in the late 1980s with a grant from the Nuclear Weapons Project Office in Carson City to conduct studies on transportation issues related to the proposed nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain.

It has since been given a broader mission, and in the last five years the center has received more than $325,000 from the Nevada Office of Traffic Safety to assist in meeting the many traffic challenges posed by the valley’s tremendous growth.

The center now uses state-of-the-art technology to research various factors in the traffic picture and has developed community outreach programs to enhance communication among interested agencies.

“We’ve looked at the real, immediate problems in the valley’s traffic situation and have contributed ideas and possible solutions to those problems,” says Edward Neumann, TRC director and chair of UNLV’s Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

An example of the types of research the center conducts is its investigation into ways of making the safety markings on pavement, such as lane dividers, last longer; TRC researchers are examining different materials to determine which...
Transportation Research Center Director Edward Neumann, left, and Safe Communities Partnership Director Erin Breen look over one of the center's many maps; this one helps parents identify the safest routes their children can take to school.

The partnership has pioneered a community program to reach youthful drivers that could become a model for other countries. The adolescent driver project targets 16- to 20-year-olds who end up before a judge because they've caused crashes or have been charged with reckless driving or driving under the influence.

These drivers are sentenced to a special program, run by Clark County Family Court Services, that meets three nights a week for six weeks and involves the youths in activities such as visiting the University Medical Center's Trauma Center, listening to victims of crashes, and visiting a lot full of cars that have been "totaled" in accidents.

"It's one of the most sobering things you'll ever see," says Breen.

Ker to the program is what Breen calls the "decompression chamber," a seminar at which participants meet to discuss their reactions and feelings after they've witnessed "the realities of reckless driving behavior."

"This will help them draw the right conclusions," she says, "and not just decide they need a faster car to outrun the police next time."

"No one else in the country is doing a program like this," Breen says of the plan that was developed by the partnership members and is funded through the Office of Traffic Safety. "We hope it will be a spotlight program for the whole nation."

In the meantime, both the TRC and the partnership continue to identify problem areas to study further.

So the next time you're fuming at a particularly long traffic signal, stop, take a deep breath, and try to relax. You can take solace in knowing that somebody might be finding a way to make that particular intersection handle traffic more efficiently.
March 1998

1 Music Department: Cool Fun Tune. 2pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

2 Charles Vanda Master Series: BBC Symphony Orchestra. 8pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

2-7 Basketball: Men’s and Women’s Western Athletic Conference Championships. Call for times. Thomas & Mack Center. 895-3900.

4 Student Organizations: Unity Fest. 10am. Alumni Amphitheater. 895-3221.

4-7 University Theatre: Ten-Minute Play Festival. March 7, 2pm; March 4-6 & 8, 8pm. Paul Harris Theatre, Alta Hall Fine Arts Building. 895-3801.

5-8 Baseball: UNL vs Desert Classic. Call for times.


13-14 Men’s Tennis: Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.


17 Music Department: UNLV Wind Orchestra Concert. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

17-18 Baseball: UNLV vs Arizona. March 17, 7:00pm; March 18, 5:05pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.


18 Pedal Ham: University of Texas vs. UNLV. 1:30pm. Richard Tam Alumni Center. 895-3621.

20 Men’s Tennis: UNLV vs. Indiana. 1:30pm. Ferritta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.


22 Music Department: UNLV Symphony Orchestra Concert. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

24-26 Women’s Tennis: UNLV vs Kansas State. March 24, Oklahoma State. March 25, Maryland. March 26, All at 1:30pm. Ferritta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.


27 Expressions Series: Robert McDonald, pianist. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

27-28 Dance Department: Dance Arts Company Concert. March 27 & 28, 8pm; March 28, 2pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.


28 Women’s Tennis: UNLV vs Wichita State. 1:30pm. Ferritta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.

April 1998

1 Expressions Series: Georgian State Dance Company. 8pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

Men’s Tennis: UNLV vs Central Florida. 1:30pm. Ferritta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.

2 Music Department: UNLV Community Concert Band. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.

2-5 Nevada Dance Theatre: Romeo and Juliet. April 4 & 5, 2pm; April 5, 7pm; April 24-26, 8pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.


3-5 Baseball: UNLV vs New Mexico. April 3 & 4, 7:05pm; April 5, 7:05pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.


13-30 Art Department: Juried Student Exhibit. Runs through May 1. Weekdays 9am-5pm; Saturdays 10am-2pm. Donna Beam Fine Arts Gallery. 895-3801.

15 Music Department: Jazz Combo Concert. 7:30pm. Black Box Theatre. 895-3739.

17 Music Department: Mariposa Trio Recital. 7:30pm. Black Box Theatre. 895-3801.


19 Music Department: UNLV Symphony Orchestra Concert. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3332.

Website Master Calendar Launched

UNLV has launched its Master Calendar Homepage, which will allow anyone with Internet access to search for information on virtually all events at the university, from arts to sports, meetings to seminars, workshops to lectures. The UNLV Master Calendar Homepage may be accessed directly from the UNLV Homepage at http://www.unlv.edu, where users will see a black notebook titled “Events” in the upper left-hand corner of the page. Clicking on the notebook will take users to the Master Calendar Homepage.

The calendar’s pages contain times, dates, places, contact information, presenting organizations, prices, program information, and more. Users can search for events by key words, location, event type, date, or name of presenting organization.
**June 1998**

- **1-4 Seminar:** Pan American Current Research on Paid Inclusions. 8am, Barrick Museum Auditorium. 895-3394.
- **17 Alumni Event:** Board Meeting. 6pm, Richard Tam Alumni Center. 895-3621.
- **22-30 Art Department:** Selections from the Collection. Runs through July 26. Weekdays, 9am-5pm; Saturdays, 10am-2pm. Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery. 895-3649.

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**May 1998**

- **1-3 Baseball:** UNLV vs. TCU. May 1 & 2, 7:05pm; May 3, 1:05pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
- **5 Performing Arts Center:** Mark Morris Dance Group. 8pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
- **Baseball:** UNLV vs. Arizona State. 7:05pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
- **7-29 Art Department:** Bachelor of Arts Exhibit. Runs through June 12. Weekdays, 9am-5pm. Mercantile Gallery, Richard Tam Alumni Center. 895-3649.

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**Sense of Humor**

continued from page 9

Nevada Day Parade with a very dazed look on my face...

I kept saying to Bob, "What are we going to do?" And he would say, "We're going to have a baby!" And I'd say, "Wait, you don't understand! I've got these teenagers at home. No, it can't be." she says, laughing again. "I was unbelievably shocked."

As unexpected as the pregnancy was, she was devastated when she had a miscarriage six weeks later.

"I thought it might have been stress, but the doctor said that if it were stress, there wouldn't be many abortions. He said he didn't believe stress had anything to do with it; sometimes these things just happen. It turned out I was devastated."

And in February, I got pregnant again. We didn't actively work on it, but this time I wasn't as surprised or quite as apprehensive. But I did go through periods where I would say, "I'm 40 years old!" You'd see these T-shirts that said, "I'd rather be 40 than pregnant." I kept saying, "What if you're both? What kind of shirt do they have for that?"

in the meantime, her husband had won the election, and there was the somewhat daunting task of moving into the governor's mansion and assuming the role of first lady.

"We moved in around the second of January, and then when the Legislature began, we were supposed to give a party for 300 people to open the session." she says. "Well, when you move into a new house, I don't know anybody who would have a party for 300 people within two weeks. I mean you don't know where your underwear are or where the light switches are."'

To boot, much of the mansion staff left with the Bryans.

"There was the mansion coordinator who had made a commitment to stay at the mansion just until the election, but here I was, this weeping pregnant lady saying, 'Please don't leave me.' Well, I guess I got to her, because she agreed to stay for the transition — three months. So that was some help, but the reality of it was that I was kind of on my own. She was very kind in saying, 'You get to set your own agenda; you get to set up the house the way you want it.' But I kept thinking, 'I don't care. How are we supposed to do this?'"

Oddly enough, she says, being pregnant was the best thing in the world for her under the circumstances.

"It really gave me breathing room," she recalls. "My strong focus had always been on my own children, so I gave the opportunity to stay at home. So being pregnant and hiding behind my belly was a real positive."

The excitement over the baby spread throughout the family; Ross and Corrine were thrilled at the prospect of having a baby sister, who had been named Megan early in the pregnancy. They read her Green Eggs and Ham every night while she was in utero and talked to her in the grocery store, telling her about all the wonderful foods she would enjoy after she was born.

Megan was born the following November into a household that offered more than a little attention, Sandy says.

"I don't know that there's ever been a baby born who was more nurtured and loved than her, because it was not only Bob and myself doting on her, but my other children, my extended family, and all the mansion staff. So everybody loved this baby," she says gleefully. "One of my biggest concerns was that she wouldn't learn how to walk because someone was always holding her.

And Megan wasn't the only one getting used to all of that pampering.

"As fast as I didn't know how to have a chef," she laughs. "I remember thinking, 'I don't want you to cook dinner, because if you cook dinner, am I supposed to do?' We had five people taking care of the house, so if they made the beds, what was I supposed to do? But I have to tell you, that's kind of an easy thing to fall into," she says. "I remember thinking at one point, 'Oh, you've going to make the bed? OK that's pretty easy. OK, you're going to clean the bathrooms? OK, I can handle this.'"

S she says it to her withe while her sister at first glance, but over time she learned to balance the needs of her family with the demands of her new role — and was also able to overcome her shyness. Since then she has received the opportunity her position has afforded her. She has endorsed and/or helped build numerous programs for the education, health, and protection of children.

"It took me awhile to figure out that if being first lady allowed me to establish programs and to raise funds for children, then great, it works for me," she says. She has initiated and is chair of "Nevada's GOALS 2010," a statewide supportive plays of educational reform, and was instrumental in bringing the "Baby Your Baby Program" to Nevada. She also built a coalition to launch the immunization program "Every Child by 2" and designed a new program titled "Take Time To Teach," which encourages parents and the community to become involved in the education of children.

Additionally, she serves on a number of boards and councils geared toward higher education, and she is writing a children's book about the children who have lived in the governor's mansion.

It's amazing what you can do when you don't have to worry about housework, she reflects.

"Now, after 10 years, I'm thinking, 'Oh, you want to make the beds?' she says, laughingly uproariously again. "I'm sure it was easier in the direction of coming in than it will be going out."

Eight-year-old Megan, too, is a little reluctant to leave the mansion.

"I have, of course, cleaned up since the" continued on page 28
Gary Brown, '73

Larry Adams, '70 BS Hotel Administration, has been elected to the board of governors for the Institute of Certified Auditors. He has earned professional certifications as a certified fraud examiner, certified public accountant, certified internal auditor, certified information systems auditor, certified computer professional, certified systems analyst, and certified systems professional. He lives in Phoenix.

Gary W. Brown, '73 BS Hotel Administration, is general manager at the Rocky Gap Lodge & Golf Resort near Cumberland, Md. The resort, which includes an 18-hole Jack Nicklaus signature golf course, is being built within Rocky Gap State Park. Brown received the 1997 "follow" designation from the American Society of Association Executives—one of the highest honors that the association bestows upon its members. He is one of only 12 people to receive the honor since 1992. Before joining Rocky Gap, Brown served as the president of G.W. Brown Travel Sales & Marketing Services, a Virginia-based hotel consulting firm.

Carol J. Bontraguer Wgers, '77 BS Education, '81 MS Counseling and Educational Psychology, is a coun-

icer at Green Valley High School. An avid needlepoint stitcher, she was selected in 1996 to match a needlepoint stocking for the Christmas tree in the Blue Room of the White House. Three stitchers were selected from each state. She also is the key-

board player for the praise band at University United Methodist Church.

Keril Gerlach, '80

William C. Gallagher, '81 BS Busi-
ness Administration, who became a New York Life agent in Las Vegas three years ago, is a senior man-
aging partner in central Florida. He is responsible for all company sales operations in the region. He is married to Debra Wallace Gallagher, '81 BA Education, '90 MEd. They live in Orlando.

Mary L. Greene, '90 MEd Instructional and Curriculum Studies, is a GATE (Gifted and Talented Educa-
tion) specialist for the Clark County School District. She currently works at Klein Elementary School where she teaches gifted students in grades three through five and provides enrichment education for students in grades one and two. She is working on a doctoral degree in special education at UNLV.

Laura Faggen, '93 BS Hotel Administra-
tion, is the owner of Beyond Words, a resume, typing, and office support service.

Alexander K. Marquez, '92 BS Electrical Engineering, received an MBA from Purdue University in 1993. He now works as a senior financial analyst at Intel Corp. in Santa Clara, Calif.

Gloria D. Peterson, '92 MEd Educa-
tional Administration and Higher Education, is principal of Southport Elementary School in Kansas, Wis. She initiated an extended-day kindergarten program and a math, science, and reading enrichment team at the school. The enrichment team is the first of its kind in Kenosha. Previously, she served as principal of Kenosha’s Durkee Elementary School.

Sergio A. Velezcano, '92 BS Hotel Administration, is the executive chef of the Eagles Bar & Grill in Telize-

ado, Colo. He previously worked as the banquet chef at the Four Seasons Hotel in Mexico City. As the execu-
tive chef at the Beverly Hills Hotel in Com-

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the problem with the information.

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Class Notes

UNC MAGAZINE

SPRING 1998

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We would like to invite all UNLV alumni to submit information about themselves to UNLV Magazine for inclusion in the Class Notes section. Please fill out the form below completely, type or print legibly, and avoid abbreviations. Also, please supply home and office telephone numbers so we can reach you if there is a question about your entry. We encourage you to submit a black and white photograph of yourself to accompany your Class Notes entry. If you do not provide a photo, we will photograph you at UNLV.

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In: Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science

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Poetic Transition
continued from page 13

to their own existence and, to some extent, to their culture's existence.
"I certainly have a connection to my audience, to my constituency, to America, to Las Vegas. I'm not writing in a vacuum. I'm writing in a place where we all live, and my poetry always takes that into account. The imagery of the given place sneaks in and the particular kinds of problems of that place sneak in."

Does she, now that she is a published, award-winning poet, ever doubt her ability?
"Always. All the time," Keelan answers. "Every time I don't write for a while, I think, 'Oh my God, I've lost it. I'm not good enough. I'm not smart enough.' But the people I've always admired the most are the ones who know they're not smart enough and are constantly trying."

Though she does write often, Keelan, whose son, Benjamin, turned 3 recently, admits that the addition of a child to her life has made finding the time to write less than easy.

"When Benjamin was very young, it was really easy to write because he slept all the time. But this last year I've had to struggle with writing. My job is really demanding in this MFA program. I have a lot of students who need a lot of attention. And I have a 3-year-old son who says, 'Mommy,' and that's poetry, too."

Keelan says that for the most part she doesn't get upset when she doesn't produce as much as she'd like.
"I think a writer is always writing. You're living and taking in your experiences. My son's presence is making its way into my life in a way that will be in my poetry forever. And I don't feel really scared or like I have a block if I don't complete something every week because my life is going in all these directions now. The poems will come out of it."

But Keelan does worry about how one fairly recent development in her life — happiness — will affect her work. She wonders if suffering is a necessary component of the creative process.

"For so many years I lived by myself and was struggling, and I wrote my books then," she says. "I'm struggling in a different manner now that I have a son, a husband, a home, a dog, and a mortgage."

"My fortune cookie last weekend said, 'You don't need to look any further for happiness; it's right beside you.' And I thought, 'Oh my God, I'm through.'"

Still, Keelan, who believes that all of a poet's life experiences inevitably influence and benefit her work, thinks she soon will find her way again.

"I'm just getting used to being wife, mother, professor," she says. "What I'm thinking and I'm anticipating is that poetry can come out of the newer voice, the newer place, that I haven't found yet. But I will."

Ropin' and Researchin'
continued from page 18

women are starting to ask — for safety reasons — for it to be raked. It's really a pretty minor request; it's not like they're asking for the world."

Preston is not especially surprised by the difference in treatment. After all, rodeo is a very traditional sport from a different era; in many ways, it hasn't entirely caught up with the times.

But, for Preston, it is a fascinating point in time to study the sport from a sociological perspective. He has already presented his initial findings with Frey and Bernhard at a scholarly conference and has authored an article on the subject that has been submitted to a sociology journal. He also plans to write a book about his findings.

But, in the meantime he'd be the first to admit that he's having a heck of a good time researching the subject. Now, if only he could find more time to get back out there and wrestle another steer or two between classes....

Sense of Humor
continued from page 25

last election that we had four more years here. Then we're going to be gone, and there's no option. And that's a difficult thing for her to accept. She's grown up here; it's her home. So she's negotiating right now. She's asked, 'Could we buy

the house? What would happen if Mom would run for governor? What would happen if Ross would run for governor? How old do you have to be to run for governor?"

Her mother tries to help her daughter wax philosophical about the first family's future. There are still many possibilities, she says, there was talk of the governor being appointed as ambassador to Mexico, though he withdrew his name from the running in December.

"There are several options. Bob is considering consulting or joining a private law firm. Whatever he does, it's OK with me; if anything, I've learned to be flexible."

But you can count on one thing, she muses: Wherever he ends up, he'll be ironing his own pajamas. 

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