MICHAEL ELAM TAPPED TO BE NEW COM PRESIDENT

College of the Mainland trustees selected Dr. Michael Elam as the next president of the College following a competitive six-month national search. Dr. Elam currently serves as vice president for student development at Daytona State, the seventh largest community college in Florida with more than 40,000 students.

Dr. Elam and his wife, Maxine, have two children: Mikaela, a senior at Dartmouth College, and Matthew, a sophomore at Daytona State College. No announcement has been made as to when Dr. Elam will assume his presidency at COM, but the campus welcomes our new CEO.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Julie Masters, mayor of Dickinson, completed the first two years of her bachelor’s degree at COM and still recalls her time at COM as golden.

“The quality of instruction that I received at COM was phenomenal,” Masters recalled. “I had several memorable teachers at COM—Jean Piske, Suzanne Storey, Jerry Bryant, Emmeline Dodd and Alex Pratt.”

While at COM, Masters and Suzanne Storey formed COM’s first competitive volleyball team. When COM was considering ending its competitive sports program in 1975, Masters went before the Board of Trustees to state the case for the athletes.

“Few people probably remember that COM had a great basketball team, even baseball, track and volleyball for a short period of time. Although I lost my case to the Board, I felt empowered by speaking out on something that I believed in so fervently. COM helped me prepare for public service by reaffirming that one should get involved and speak up.

In addition to her passion for public service, Mayor Masters has been involved in the CHAMPS reading and mentoring program.

“Helping kids read is so self gratifying, I encourage anyone who has time to read to, or listen to kids read, do so. Not only are you helping those that need a little extra attention, you are helping to cultivate their life learning experience.

“There is no doubt in my mind that attending College of the Mainland those first two years out of high school was the right choice for me. Thirty-five years later, I still feel at home when I walk the jogging path or attend a meeting or event on campus. I have a great life and I attribute a large part of that to the full learning experience that I received at COM.”

GET SMART

Employees using Parking Lot B have noticed a funny car parked there Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. Not the funny car you see at the circus, but a Smart Car. And the owner of this peculiar vehicle is our own adjunct developmental math instructor, John Mitchell. John, a retired chemical engineer, has been teaching adjunct at COM for four years. He has been driving Smart since September.

“I saw one last June in Catskill New York, and decided at that moment that I wanted one,” he says.

The Smart Car is not an electric car as some assume but rather a gas sipping two-seater that gets over 40 miles to the gallon. John drives the 15 miles each way from his home in Santa Fe to COM, three mornings each week on a little over two gallons a week.

“If I had bought a Smart Car for the looks, I would already have my money’s worth,” John says. “People flag me down to ask questions. Some people, especially teenagers hang out the side window going down I-45 and yell. One day a highway patrolman followed me into the parking lot with his lights flashing. He just wanted to know more about the car.”

John was on an 18-month waiting list for the car built by Mercedes-Benz when Hurricane Ike hit. But Ike bumped him to the top of the list when others on the list could not be located or had their priorities changed by Ike. John had his Smart car within three months of ordering it.

John has spotted three other Smart Cars in the area, one in Dickinson, one in Texas City and one parked in front of The Olive Garden (Word is it belongs to one of the managers). John admits to sensing the wind beneath his wings in the small car as he hits the speed limit on I-45. And though the car can hit 90 mph, John stays in the zone.

But what bothers him most are tailgaters.

“Since there is no back seat, a tailgater seems like they are in my back seat. It is worse when the tailgater is a truck.”

So, if you see John Mitchell and his Smart Car on I-45 steer clear of the rear but you can give him a shout out for driving smartly. Somehow, you knew an engineer would figure a way to squeeze 40 miles out of a gallon of gas.
CONGRATULATIONS, GRAD

Jennifer Williams, administrative assistant with the PACT program, completed her Bachelor of Science degree from Portland State University with a major in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

ADVISING TEA

Frank Barbuto, program assistant in the Adult Education Department, was selected by the Texas Education Agency to serve on the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS) Technical Work Group in Austin. This committee provides guidance and technical consulting to the developers who support the statewide adult education data management system, TEAMS. Frank is the adult education department’s lead data entry and management personnel with more than a decade of experience in educational database management. This year, the TEAMS Technical Work Group will be advising the Texas Education Agency on system improvements, enhanced features, and bug fixes as the adult education system in Texas prepares for the 2009-10 school year.

“We couldn’t be prouder of Frank,” notes Josh Hayes, director of adult education. “We’ve often felt guilty having his experience and expertise all to ourselves at COM. It’s nice to know that the whole state will be able to benefit from his insight.”

FUNDRAISING CONCERT

The COM Jazz Combo and Jazz Ensemble will present a concert on Tuesday, March 10, 2009 at 8 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building Recital Hall. Admission is free and open to the public. “We are using this concert as a fundraiser for the Jazz Combo” Sparky Koerner, director said. “The Jazz Combo was selected via audition to perform at the prestigious University of North Texas Jazz Festival to be held in Addison April 16-18, 2009.” This is a great opportunity to showcase the COM Jazz Combo along with other university, community colleges, high schools and middle school jazz programs from around the United States that have been invited to perform” Koerner added. This is the eighth year for the UNT Jazz Festival and the major artist this year will be Tierney Sutton Band.

BENCH FOR JOYCE DAZEY

The Classified Council is raising money to purchase an outside bench in memory of Joyce Dazey who was killed in a car accident in 2007. If you can help, please contact Lori Boyd in the Student Financial Services Office. Joyce was a beloved custodian at COM; she was retired but still working part time before her death.

The council is $500 short of meeting its goal.

COM SINGERS ATTEND FESTIVAL

James Heffel and the COM Vocal Arts Singers recently returned from a very successful Community College All-State Choir Festival, in conjunction with the Texas Music Educator’s Association Annual Convention. Five singers from the Vocal Arts area made the group. Our singers performed beautifully and were inspired by their participation.

ONLINE WORK ORDER SYSTEM IS MOVING TO WEBADVISOR

The online work system has moved to WebAdvisor. If you need a rental car, a room, something painted or fixed, it will have to be entered through an employee’s WebAdvisor account. If you need something to do with phones – it goes directly to the helpdesk.

There will be classes with paper copies of documentation available or documentation can be printed at your desk from the I drive – they don’t have to come to class. There is an E-Folio site with the latest and greatest information at http://facilityservices.com.efolioworld.com.

COM IS NOW ON FACEBOOK

Want to Become a Fan of COM on Facebook? Go to www.com.edu and click on the Facebook button. If you already have a Facebook account, use it to Login. If you are new to Facebook, simply follow the “Sign Up” process to set up your free account. After logging in, simply click on the “Become a Fan” link at the upper right of COM’s Facebook page.

Why become a fan? Show your COM pride by clicking on the “Share” button to send a link to COM with your friends or to post the link on your profile. Receive timely updates sent out to all fans. Connect with other fans through online discussions or sharing COM photos. Your participation as a fan will only help to make COM’s Facebook page better.

Why Facebook? Facebook is a social network web site designed to easily connect people to one another. Also, Facebook offers “Pages” as a way for an organization, group or business to connect with people. Facebook use has increased rapidly the past 12 months and has recently surpassed MySpace to become the most used social network web site. Although COM’s presence on Facebook is just starting out, it is seen as a way to reach not only faculty, staff and current students, but also high school students, alumni and former students, and the community.

If you currently use Facebook to supplement a class, student club or organization, contact Pete Lares, ext. 355.
SPRING BREAK FEVER

Patty England is heading to the slopes of New Mexico for some spring skiing and hopefully no mountain rescue from the alert ski patrol.

Maryann Urick and John are off to Colorado to tame the slopes and breathe fresh air for a change.

Steve Keller and family are off to Florida to see the Astros play the Yankees and Reds, visit Orlando theme parks, and wade into some Florida and Mississippi beaches.

And Shalice Mickens is getting married March 14 and honeymooming at Disney World. Maybe she will run into Steve Keller and family. It’s a small world after all.

The Carla Boone family is headed for Arkansas to visit family and stopping off along the way at historic Jefferson, Texas for a night’s sleep at the historic Excelsior House whose past guests have included Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes (Yes, this is going to be on the test.) and Oscar Wilde. Now they can also claim that Carla Boone (no kin to Daniel) slept here.

WATCHING OVER TOBY

Cissy Bodmer, Welcome Center extraordinaire, has been watching over Toby, the dolphin, since January taking the 4-8 a.m. shift at Moody Gardens where he is being kept for Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network (TMMSN).

“Some people think this work may be boring but I love it. You watch this amazing creature for hours for FREE. Sometimes he puts on a show, sometimes he is quiet, sometimes this guy reminds me of a two-year old boy!” explains Cissy.

If you’re looking for a place to volunteer, TMMSN needs you. Contact Cissy for details on this amazing effort. TMMSN is dedicated to the conservation of marine mammals through rescue and rehabilitation, research and education. Read more about Toby at http://www.caller.com/news/2009/jan/06/toby_update/

KUDOS

Renea Dillion, principal of COM's Collegiate High School, has had an upcoming feature appearing in a statewide publication. Her article, Dual Credit in Texas, will appear in the spring issue of Texas Study of Secondary Education. In recent years, Renea has written about COM's Collegiate High School and COM's Career Pathways programs for statewide publications.

HYPERALERT

Don’t forget to sign up to receive emergency information directly to your communication device of choice. For more information about HyperAlert and to sign up, visit www.com.edu/hyperalert.

MARCH Birthdays

LOOK WHO’S HAVING A BIRTHDAY THIS MONTH!

Nancy Oliver Child Development Specialist ................................. 03/01
Martin Perez Admissions/International Student Counselor ........ 03/02
Laura Divine Assistant Registrar ........................ ....................... 03/04
Peggy Blizzard Manager of Telecommunications ....................... 03/05
Jennifer Sanders Admin. Assistant, Student Support Services ... 03/08
Lisa Plasek Accounting Specialist, Financial Services ............. 03/10
Doloris Dutton Library Technician I ........................................ 03/13
Doc Miller Faculty, Continuing Education ................................ 03/13
Estela Leon Administrative Assistant, Nursing ......................... 03/13
Darin Plasek Automotive Mechanic, Facility Services ............... 03/14
Tige Cornelius Coordinator, Leisure and Wellness ................. 03/14
Giao Nguyen Computer Support Specialist, IT Services ........ 03/15
Rick Gearing AVP for Enrollment Management ..................... 03/16
Katherine Friedrich Director of Institutional Research .............. 03/16
Debbie Cothern Telecommunications Operator ......................... 03/17
Ethel Johnson Custodian ...................................................... 03/18
Pamela Millsap Faculty, Social & Behavioral Science ............... 03/20
Lester Taylor Custodian ....................................................... 03/23
James Burkharter Professional Trainer I, Continuing Education .... 03/23
Hortencia Garza Custodian .................................................... 03/24
George Bowes Faculty, Performing/Visual Arts ....................... 03/24
Tina Burkhalter Admin. Assistant II, Public Service Careers ....... 03/25
Adrienne Kegler Library Technician ........................................ 03/25
Vernetta Jones Police Officer ................................................ 03/26
Michael Johnson Professional Trainer II, Continuing Education ... 03/26
Juanita Sanchez Admin. Assistant, League City Center ........... 03/26
Joe Fiesel Maintenance Technician-Journeyman HVAC ........... 03/27
Jarvis Clark Academic Advisor ............................................. 03/28
Johnny Tinsley Custodian ..................................................... 03/29
Frank Williams Dir. of Telecommunications/Infrastructure, IT .... 03/30
Steve Keller Faculty, Public Service Careers ........................... 03/31
Fatima Abdeldaim Academic Advisor ............................... 03/31

SAVE THE DATE

The annual Employee Recognition Dinner will be at the Doyle Center May 1, with a cocktail hour from 6 to 7 p.m and the awards program starting at 7:30 p.m. This year’s theme is Celebrity Night – Come as your Favorite Celebrity even if it’s Yourself!

There will be a DJ for music and Karaoke (for the future “American Idols” present), door prizes, great food and dancing.

A list of all milestone employees to be recognized (years of service) will be sent out soon.

So mark the calendar, dig out your Elvis suit, and plan for a great evening out.
COSMETOLOGY STUDENTS WIN USING E-FOLIO

COM Cosmetology Instructor, Jamie Powell, has incorporated E-Folio into the first year curriculum. The students are required to upload images and text in E-Folio to receive a grade on perms. Additionally, the IE department challenged the students to a contest determining the top three ‘cutting edge’ sites in the class.

Savannah Davis helped to judge and observed, “E-folio gives you the ability to show perspective employers what you can do along with giving you web skills that will help you with your own business some day.” Everyone in the class did a great job.

To learn more or set up easy training please contact Martha Willis at mcrain@com.edu.

CALLING ALL 2003 (AND YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE!)

Office 2007 is on campus and coming to your PC. Martha Willis, COM’s on-campus technical trainer, says, “The looks of Office 2007 are more drastic than any feature changes. If you can operate in Office 2003, you won’t have any problems in Office 2007. I strongly recommend you buy a reference book for your desk and come see me. I promise in an hour you will be more confident and ready to start work in the new on-screen environment.” If you need training on Office 2007 or a refresher course on Datatel, please e-mail Martha Willis at mcrain@com.edu.

Cross Pollination through April 10

LISA QUALLS • LOVIE OLIVIA

For gallery hours, call ext. 354/348 or visit www.com.edu/gallery

WELCOME TO COM

Jameeka Williams
Allied Health Advisor
Public Service Careers
Ext. 684
jwilliams7@com.edu

Trudy Trochesset
Payroll and Benefits
Financial Services
Ext. 464
ttrochesset@com.edu

ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR JOB FAIR

COM is seeking qualified instructors.

Sat., March 28, 2009
9 a.m. - Noon
COM Student Center

For more information, call ext. 461 or e-mail cmatthews@com.edu.

VISITING ARTIST

Kay Nguyen
Monday, March 23, 2009
12:30 - 5 p.m.
Fine Arts Building, F135

Demonstration from 12:30 - 5 p.m. and 6 - 7:30 p.m.
Slide lecture at 7:30 p.m.
She will also demonstrate on Tuesday, March 24 from 1 - 5 p.m.
For more information call ext. 349.

HANK FIVE ON THE 25TH – FREE PREVIEW NIGHT

March 25 is the free employee preview of Shakespeare’s Henry V at the COM Community Theatre. The play runs through April 5 and then resumes April 16-26. It only cost $5 to bring a guest.