Varner named Rebstock Professor

Joseph E. Varner, professor of biology at WU, has been named Charles Rebstock Professor of Biology Emerita.

BASIC inventor examines computer impact, future

John Kemeny, former Dartmouth College president and a pioneer in the field of computing and computer science, will speak on "The Impact of Computers on Society" at 11 a.m. Wednesday, March 21, in Graham Chapel. The lecture, which is free and open to the public, is part of the Assembly Series.

During his talk, Kemeny will speculate on the development of computing over the next two decades, including both favorable and unfavorable trends, and will present a case for widespread computer literacy.

Kemeny, professor of mathematics at Dartmouth College, is a co-inventor of the computer language BASIC and the Dartmouth Time-Sharing System. While on WU's campus, he plans to visit a number of computing facilities and discuss the University's computer curriculum and operations with faculty and administrators.

A native of Budapest, Hungary, Kemeny became a U.S. citizen in 1945. He worked on the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos, N.M., while serving in the U.S. Army. He received his BA and PhD in mathematics from Princeton University. While working on his doctorate, Kemeny was a research assistant to Albert Einstein at the Institute for Advanced Study from 1948 to 1949.

Kemeny joined the Dartmouth faculty in 1953 and served as president from 1970 to 1981. He retired from that position to return to full-time teaching. A specialist in finite mathematics and Markov chains, Kemeny has written numerous books and articles on mathematics, computing and the philosophy of science. In 1979, he served as chairman of the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island.

Robert C. Williams, dean of University College, said, "Kemeny is a major figure in the history of computing who can provide us with a valuable perspective on both university computing and the future of a technology."

In addition to the Assembly Series, his lecture is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Data Processing, Department of Computer Science, Department of Mathematics and University College. The lecture also is supported in part by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

Greatest boon for the blind since Braille

"I always try to read an entire sentence or phrase before I say it. That way I can use the punctuation marks to add inflection to my voice. You may notice that I mispronounce a word now and then. Take my word for it, though, it's not really my fault. All I do is apply English phonetic rules to each word. Can I help it if some words don't follow the rules?"

A student studying English as a second language might have spoken these words. The "voice," however, belongs to a "talking" computer called the Kurzweil Reading Machine (KRM), the greatest boon for the blind and visually impaired since Braille.

A recent gift to WU from the Xerox Corp., the KRM is the first device which can scan and convert to synthetic speech nearly any book or typewritten page printed in English.

Housed in Audiovisual Services on the second level of Olin Library, the KRM will be available to both the University and the St. Louis community. David L. Straight, supervisor of Audiovisual Services and a trained KRM operator, said mastery of the reading machine takes approximately 10 hours.

The KRM consists of a computerized scanner and a keyboard. The user places material face down on the glass surface of the machine's desktop scanner. A separate, compact control panel is then activated by the user which causes the reading machine's camera to automatically locate the first line of text and begin scanning the page. Within a few seconds an electronic voice, described by some as possessing a Swedish accent, is heard reading the material.

The KRM exudes a personality of its own in warbling information from a number of practice exercises that accompany the machine. "Some people think I have an English dictionary hidden up my sleeve. Actually, it would have to be in my computer program, since I don't have sleeves."

Continued on p. 3
Hockey Club skates toward varsity status

From little acorns, big oaks grow. And that’s exactly how some club sports attain varsity status at colleges. At WU, the most recent club sport is hockey.

The 21-member team is only a year old, but they’ve already been invited to play an exhibition game at the St. Louis Arena on March 20 prior to the Blues’ final home game against Winnipeg. Tickets for the 5 p.m. game against the UMSL Rivermen are $8, which includes the Blues game. For tickets, contact Jay Susman, the WU team’s student manager and organizer, at 997-6654.

“This is our way of promoting interest in hockey and to let people know we have a team,” said Coach Jim Little, an associate professor of finance and economics and associate dean for academic affairs in the business school. “You get skates and a hockey stick for Christmas when you’re three-years-old where I come from,” said the Canadian-born Little. Little played youth hockey as a child and in college. After joining the WU faculty in 1971, he played for six years on the now defunct St. Louis Seniors League.

The faculty sponsor for the team is Robert L. Virgil, dean of the business school and a former sandlot hockey player. A few years ago, Virgil played once a week with a group of WU students and faculty who wanted to keep the sport alive on campus.

Two years ago, Virgil was approached by WU students John Chabut, Bob Stern and Jay Susman about starting a club team. Susman put an ad in the Student Life for hockey players and received more than 20 answers. This year, the team finished fifth with a 2-12-1 record. Brad Martin was judged to be best goalie in the league. The Bears’ leading scorer was Jeff Caplan with 15 points.

The WU team is the only one out of six in the St. Louis College Hockey League that has all full-time students. Other schools in the league are UMSL, St. Louis University, St. Louis Community College at Meramec, Logan Chiropractic College and Parks College of Aeronautical Technology. “We are the only genuine club team,” declared Little. “Some of the other teams have 26- to 28-year old players taking away three credit hours,” added Susman.

League membership fees, transportation, uniforms, and rink rental for practice comes to a grand total of more than $3,000 per season in operating expenses. The team gathers funds from a variety of sources, including individual dues and the Student Union. Susman recently reinforced his image as an entrepreneur by making a deal with St. Louis Beer Sales, a local distributor looking for on-campus sales representatives. “I convinced them that they’d have over 20 reps with our team,” said Susman. “It brought us $500.”

Life as a hockey Bear can be rough. Most practice sessions are at 11 p.m. and many games don’t begin until midnight. Still the team seems full of enthusiasm.

Susman, a senior, looks forward to the time when he can remember his college days and say, “I helped start the hockey team,” especially if it becomes a varsity sport with a big following.

Howard Kee

Economist examines national employment crisis

Barry Bluestone, professor of economics at Boston College, will be the keynote speaker for the Council of Students of Arts and Sciences’ (CSAS) two-day symposium, March 22-23.

Titled “Economics in the Real World: The Search for an Economy That Works,” the symposium also features two panel discussions with WU faculty and a radio interview with Bluestone. The symposium events are free and open to the public.

Bluestone, director of the Social Welfare Research Institute of Boston College, will speak on “Deindustrialization and Dualism: The Employment Crisis in America” at 11 a.m. Thursday, March 22, in the Women’s Building Lounge. Other panel members are Laurence H. Meyer, WU professor of economics, and Jerry Tucker, director of Region five of the United Auto Workers.

A radio talk show and listener call-in with Bluestone will be aired at 9 p.m. Thursday on KWUR, 90.3 FM.

Another panel discussion, titled “National Economic Policy in a Democratic Society,” will be held at 11 a.m. Friday, March 23, in the Women’s Building Lounge. Panel participants are William R. Caspary, WU associate professor of political science; Hyman P. Minsky, WU professor of economics; and John F. Zipp Jr., WU assistant professor of sociology.

In addition to CSAS, the symposium is sponsored by the Assembly Series and Student Union Speaker’s Programming Board.
Symposium reviews Goethe works

The Seventh St. Louis Symposium on German Literature, titled “Goethe’s Narrative Works,” will be held from March 30 to April 1 at the Holiday Inn-Clayton Plaza, 7730 Bonhomme, Clayton.

The symposium, hosted by WU every two years, has brought internationally known experts in German literature to St. Louis since 1972. Nearly 200 scholars from around the world are expected to attend the 1985 Symposium. Siegfried Unseld, director of the Subkamp Publishing Company in Frankfurt, West Germany, will speak (in English) at a banquet at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, March 30. Unseld, who also is the author of critical works on Goethe and other German authors, holds an honorary doctorate from WU.

Paul M. Lutzeler, chairman of WU’s Department of Germanic Lan-

guages and Literatures, and James McLeod, assistant to the chancellor and assistant professor of German, are faculty in the symposium. In addition to the University, sponsors include the Missouri Committee for the Humanities Inc., the state branch of the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Goethe Institute of Chicago; and the German Research Association in West Germany.

Charles D. Churchwell, dean of library services, will host a reception at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 31, in the Special Collections Room of Olin Li-

brary. He has arranged an exhibition with rare books from the Goethe collection of the Von Gontard Collection. A catalog of this exhibit will be distributed to all symposium par-

cipants.

The lectures, which are free and open to the public, will be given in German.

Biggs joins College Retirement Commission

John H. Biggs, vice chancellor for ad-

ministration and finance, is one of 18 members of the newly formed na-

tional Commission on College Retire-

ment. The commission has been formed to review the role and function-

ing of college and university re-

tirement programs and to make re-

commendations for improvements in such programs for the remainder of the century and beyond. Up to $1.5 million has been committed by four major foundations for the com-

mission, including the Carnegie Cor-

poration of New York, which created the Teachers Insurance and Annuity

Sonnenwirth dead at 60

Alexander C. Sonnenwirth, a profes-

sor of microbiology and immunology and of pathology at the WU School of Medicine and dean of the Divi-

sion of Microbiology at Jewish Hospi-

tal, died Thursday, March 1, at Jew-

ish Hospital after an extended illness. He was 60.

Sonnenwirth was presented post-

humously the 1984 Becton-Dickinson and Company Award in Clinical Mi-

crobiology on March 4 at the opening ceremo-

nies of the 84th annual meet-

Sing presents lecture, class

Soprano Helen Boatwright will pre-

sent a lecture on American composer

Charles Ives (1874-1954) at 2 p.m.

Wednesday, March 14, in Tietgens Rehearsal Hall.

A master class will follow the lecture. Both events are free and open to the public.

Boatwright is professor of voice

at Syracuse University, New York. She has performed with major con-

ductors such as Erich Leinsdorf, Leo-

pold Stokowski and Zubin Mehta, and has recital series on WQXR and on Decc.

ca. Columbia and Overtone labels.

For more information, call 889-5581.

Association (TIAA) and College Retire-

ment Equities Fund (CREF), the Ford

Foundation, the William and Flora

Hewlett Foundation, and the Andrew

W. Mellon Foundation.

Almost all colleges and univer-

sity faculty in private institutions are

covered by pension plans run by TIAA and its affiliate CREF, including WU. Faculty members in 55 states who work for public higher education also have the option of joining TIAA-

CREF.

The commission will consider the needs and aspirations of individ-

ual beneficiaries, together with those of the academic institutions, the higher education system as a whole, and the nation. A complete report by the commission is expected before the end of 1985.

Singer presents lecture, class

The Performing Arts Area will pre-

sent “Flowers for the Dead,” a the-

atrical presentation of playwright Tennessee Williams’ works, at 8 p.m. Thursday through Sunday, March 22-25, in Edison Theatre.

The production, conceived and directed by Herbert E. Metz, director of the drama division, commemorates the first anniversary of Williams’ death and celebrates Edison Theatre’s 10th anniversary.

Williams was born Thomas La-

ger Williams on March 26, 1911, in

Columbus, Miss. He attended WU from 1936 to 1937 and in subsequent years wrote numerous plays. He was the recipient of four New York Drama Critics Circle Awards and two Pulitzer Prizes. He died Feb. 25, 1983.

The script incorporates excerpts from Williams’ plays, poetry, letters, essays, and assorted memorabilia that will be presented in a stylized formal fashion, said Metz.

A students and guest alumni will be featured as readers of poetry and prose, and in major roles from “The Glass Menagerie,” “Summer and Smoke,” “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” “Suddenly Last Summer,” “A Streetcar Named Desire” and “Small Change: Warnings.” The script also in-

cludes extensive biographical and background information on Williams and his works.

The death of Williams shocked me profoundly,” said Metz. “I have met, talked, even broken bread with him, and although I cannot say we were personal friends, his bizarre demise gave me new dimensions to the word bereft.”

Metz designed the production “to share information about a genius’ life and work,” he said. Staging will be unconventional in the areas of costume, scenery, lighting and move-

ment.

Metz has directed several of Will-

iams’ plays and has studied and taught his works for over three dec-

ades. David E. Belmont, WU asso-

ciate professor of classics, is assistant director.

General admission is $4. Admis-

sion for WU faculty, staff, and all university and area students is $3.

For more information, call the box office at 889-6543.

Kurzweil—continued from p. 1

The KRM acquaints the idio-

syncrasies of the English language, admitting to occasional mispronun-

ciation; yet if the word is unrecog-

nizable, the KRM will spell it upon request.

Thirty-eight controls on the key-

board allow the reader to perform many more reading functions: speed-

ing up or slowing down the reading rate, repeating the previous few lines or words, spelling out words which may be obscure, announcing punc-
tuation and capitalization, and mark-

ing certain words or phrases for later reference.

The KRM also serves as an ad-

vanced talking calculator that can perform and announce not only ar-

ithmetic computations, but also complex logarithmic, trigonometric and ex-

ponential functions.

“There is no limitation as to what the KRM can do functioning as a calculator,” said Straight.

By reading aloud most books and printed materials, the KRM will give WU and area students access to the resources of a college library, with-

out sole dependence on readers, Braille books or specially recorded editions of books and magazines.

“I don’t mean to brag, but I’m a very versatile machine,” croons the Kurzweil. “I know how to read hundreds of different styles of print.”

The KRM, however, acknow-

ledges it limitations, “I cannot read handwriting, pictures, or graphs just yet.” But the words “just yet” speak of promise.

Raymond Kurzweil, inventor and entrepreneur who has been working with computers for 24 of his 36 years and is founder of Kurzweil Computer Products, Kurzweil Music Systems and Kurzweil Speech Sys-

tems, believes his future will eclipse his past.

The KRM today continues to open doors to worlds of words previously difficult, perhaps impossible, for many to obtain.

From scholarly library reserve materials to Harlequin romances, the Kurzweil scans it all. “I can read X-rated books,” proclaims the KRM, and then adds with a computerized smugness, “but I don’t get excited about them.”

Cynthia Georges
Thursday, March 16

Friday, March 17
10 a.m. German Day Activities, "The Peace Movement in Germany" and "German Dias-"