

In Our Own Words | Staff Editorial

Staff impressed by LCC progress

On Friday, Jan. 25, LCC President Dr. Judith Cardenas addressed a crowded Kennedy Cafeteria with news about the college's future.

If her words hold true, the college is headed in an excellent direction.

Among the plans discussed during Cardenas's speech were the highly anticipated launch of the *Banner* system, hopes for increased funding for the school's science department and the launch of a new website, which, according to Cardenas, will boast a much friendlier user interface.

LCC's transition to *Banner* will not come soon enough, but we applaud the college's commitment to not launch the system until virtually all the kinks have been worked out.

The software will replace the glitch-ridden *Oracle* system that has plagued the college for far too long. It goes without saying the entire school anxiously awaits *Oracle*'s elimination and *Banner*'s implementation.

While not scheduled for launch until June, the college's new website hopes to feature what Cardenas called the "three-click rule," which means anyone accessing the website will not have to click their mouse more than three times to get where they need to go.

In terms of the current website, this will be both a

blessing and a joy. LCC's current web homepage is irritatingly busy, and the user interface could be much better.

Also mentioned during the president's speech was the possibility of new parking for LCC, which may include either the purchasing of a ramp from the city of Lansing or the construction of an entirely new ramp. During these days of traffic lines from the Gannon Ramp all the way to Michigan Ave., we implore the school to address parking concerns in a timely manner — more specifically, as soon as humanly possible.

LCC's recent past has been dismal, at best. The school and its administrators were constantly lambasted on the front page of the *Lansing State Journal*, and it seemed the college's reputation had been permanently dented.

Yet, with a freshly reorganized Board of Trustees and an administrative team presenting fresh, new ideas for the college, it seems LCC's future is looking bright.

While Cardenas and her management team are not batting a thousand, we feel the need to give credit where credit is due.

It would certainly behoove this school to tread carefully into new prospects, while keeping the interests of the students, faculty and staff in mind at all times.

Somebody had to say it

Board chair-elect should bring needed peace

When the LCC Board of Trustees convened on Tuesday, Jan. 22 to elect new officers, it was anyone's guess as to who would be chosen to replace the frequently embattled Chris Laverty as the board's chairperson.

When all was said and done, it was, at least in my opinion, a surprising yet appropriate pick: Trustee Robin M. Smith.

Before I proceed with my discourse, I would like to note I was unable to attend the Jan. 22 meeting because of a family emergency. As *The Lookout's* news editor last year, I fervently attended and reported on board meetings. Naturally, it was very disappointing to me when I missed one of the most important meetings of the year.

Thus stated, I will continue my analysis.

If one were to ask me two weeks ago whom I believed would be elected as the board's next chairperson, I would not have been able to give a hands-down answer. In my time covering the board, I heard of approximately three possibilities for a



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new chair-elect.

When interviewing Chris Laverty near the middle or end of the Spring 2007 semester, I learned Robert Proctor (who, until Jan. 22, served as the board's secretary and treasurer) had expressed interest in the position.

Then, last semester, the *Lansing State Journal* published an article following the results of the public November trustee election which speculated newcomer Jerry Hollister might be a possible candidate.

To be frank, the thought of Smith serving as chairperson would not have crossed my mind at all. Yet, upon reflection, her election as chairperson could prove to be a turning point in the path of a board divided.

There was a time when it was more appropriate

to refer to the boardroom as the "House of Ill Repute." Under the direction of Chris Laverty, whose governing tactics were widely criticized in the local media, the board's reputation suffered.

I am not saying the board's fall from grace is the direct result of Laverty — that's borderline slander and isn't necessarily true.

However, the Laverty Dynasty was pockmarked with payouts to disgraced employees, large servings of infighting and hefty heapings of public scrutiny, among other things.

Now, at a time when the board and the community are on one another's last good nerve, it is Smith's turn (and prerogative) to extend a diplomatic arm.

She should have no problem doing this. During most meetings I have attended, Smith is quick to show gratitude, even in the face of adversity. She has also shown a penchant for giving her opinion without sparking a throwdown, a skill most of last year's board could not boast.

Her appointment as



Smith

chair is perhaps in the best interest of the board, and something tells me they

knew that.

They needed a leader who could be a diplomat not only between board members, but between the trustees and community as well.

Smith's friendly demeanor and experience in the community make her an appropriate choice for the position, and the board should do well under her direction.

I charge Chairperson Smith, as well as the rest of the board, to strive to make a greater connection with the student body of LCC.

It is time to put the petty squabbling aside and not only strengthen relationships amongst one another, but the tens of thousands of students who give the trustees a reason to report to the boardroom once a month.

For once, it seems that possibility stands a much greater chance of actually taking shape.

The Lookout

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Editor's Rant | Zane McMillin

Sufjan Stevens always amazes me

If you were to ask me to name my favorite movie, I would have to think awhile. Favorite restaurant? Five more minutes, please. But ask me about my favorite music, and I will jump all over that. As I said last issue, Modest Mouse and Sufjan Stevens are my absolute favorites of all time. Since I talked up the former last issue, it's high time I ranted about the latter.

I could listen to Sufjan's (SOOF-yahn) music until my ears bled. I mean, why would I want to, but I could definitely do it without feeling bad about it.

A product of Michigan (he grew up in Petoskey, and now resides in Brooklyn, NY), Stevens has been considered a large part of the folk revival. Relying on a plethora of instruments to play his music (his fortés being banjo, guitar and, interestingly enough, the oboe and English horn), he creates sounds that not only surpass the barrier of originality, they knock it down.

Along with these instruments, Stevens' hauntingly melodic voice is captivating, holding on to listeners from beginning to end. His songs range from beautifully somber to amusingly upbeat.

One of Stevens' best attributes is his humor. For example, he once announced his intentions of releasing 50 different albums, one for each state. (This came after he completed two albums titled "Michigan" and "Illinoise," respectively.)

While Stevens received critical acclaim for the "Illinoise" album, the "Michigan" album is nothing short of amazing. One of his older albums, "Seven Swans," is breathtaking from start to finish.

Songs of note are "Holland" and "For the Widows in Paradise, For the Fatherless in Ypsilanti" from the "Michigan" album, "Size Too Small" and "The Dress Looks Nice on You" from "Seven Swans," "The Avalanche" and "John Wayne Gacy, Jr." from the "Illinoise" album, and "Pittsfield" and "Chicago (Acoustic)" from "The Avalanche - Outtakes and Extras from the Illinois Album."



Photo courtesy of www.last.fm