



The **Bailey Dailey**

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

July, 2002

This Month's
edition is
dedicated in
memory of
Charles
Beachnau, a
fellow Bailey
Scholar, Stu-
dent, and Friend.

College is a journey
Not a guided tour!

Eulogy for Captain Charles Beachnau July 3, 2002 - Nashville, MI

By Lynn Harvey, MSU Professor

Many of you knew Charles Beachnau for much longer than I had the pleasure. I first met Charles two years ago when he walked into my office at the university to introduce himself and indicate he had transferred into the Public Resource Management and Environmental Economics program in our department. I was impressed with his forthrightness, maturity, and since he was returning to college after an Army career, I knew immediately he was a serious, dedicated student. I am extremely grateful and honored to have been asked by Marge and Charles's family to eulogize and celebrate his life that we all became a part of. Many of Charles's MSU friends, including fellow students, fraternity brothers, academic advisor and professors are here today to celebrate Charles's life and my role is to represent all of them.

Who was Charles Beachnau? It is difficult to summarize in a few minutes but as his mentor and professor let me reflect on who I thought Charles was.

Charles was a doting father, a significant other, a son, brother, uncle, a soldier, a friend to many, and a student scholar.

Each of our many office visits began with a discussion of what was happening in the lives of Tyler and Audrey. He was a very proud father who loved his children and celebrated their successes. His recounts of a weekend's activity or trip or achievements in the classroom often diverted our discussion from the academic topic at hand and became the central focus of our time together.

Marge, as his partner, Charles successes were your successes. Your support for Charles and his children, which was manifested in so many ways, enabled Charles to pursue his dream of completing college and pursuing a professional degree. You can take comfort in knowing that you were a part of helping Charles become
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the student scholar and leader, though the time was all too short and the quest for even greater achievement was interrupted.

To Charles parents, brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles, we extend our thoughts and prayers. I empathize with your pain and loss having suffered a similar loss four years ago when my two brothers both died within six months of each other in the prime of their lives. It is difficult indeed to reconcile why such events occur? But our faith, love and memories carry us forward. Charles is in part a product of his upbringing and his family. The values of hard work, honesty, a loving heart and desire to achieve are instilled at a very early age. Charles possessed those traits so the Beachnau family should be proud of how Charles turned out. Your influence and love enabled Charles to succeed.

I knew Charles best as a student scholar. Charles would have graduated this school year and fulfilled a lifelong dream. We used to talk about what it was like to be a 40+-year-old student in the midst of hordes of 18-22 year olds. Other students looked up to Charles. In the classroom, he evolved as the leader, no doubt in part to his military career and training.

An excellent student, he main-

tained a grade point average of 3.5 out of a possible 4. At times in the classroom, I would have students complain of the assigned workload or that they did not have enough time to complete tasks due to competing activities. I always pointed to Charles and stated – “if Charles can complete the assignment in the allotted time, you should be able to since he has a lot more on his plate that you do.”

Charles approached every task and situation with enthusiasm, never taking life for granted. He was a planner, goodness could the man make charts and lists. His organizational skills evolved from his military career where he was responsible for moving hundreds of men and tons of equipment from staging grounds to engagement areas. He was accustomed to giving and receiving orders, for taking responsibility, and following through on tasks, all skills and traits that served him well as a student scholar. No one ever had a quick conversation with Charles, there was always – “and one more thing...” and the discussion continued.

As a student scholar Charles distinguished himself in various leadership roles. He was selected in 2001 as a Bailey Scholar, an group of students in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources who are committed to

lifelong learning and making a difference in the world. The Bailey’s Program focuses on developing individual potential and learning in a community environment.

Charles was selected by fellow students in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources to be a representative to the college’s student senate where he served on several committees and developed his interest in student government. This led to his seeking an active role in the ASMSU, an association representing the interests of undergraduates at Michigan State University. This past spring he competed for the position as director of the student governance organization and was hired as their director. He had already begun to make changes in the student organization – everything from budgeting, to staff evaluations, the establishment of outcome measures, all designed to improve the effectiveness of the organization that represents 30,000 undergraduates at MSU.

This past spring he was awarded the Jake and Maxine Ferris

Undergraduate Study Abroad Scholarship from our Department of Agricultural Economics.

Charles had planned on studying in China but unfortunately due to

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passport problems was unable to travel with the group. But the fact that Charles competed with other students for the scholarship attests to the high esteem in which College faculty and staff hold Charles.

Charles was a member of Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity on campus and no doubt was the oldest member, several of his fraternity brothers have joined us today to honor and celebrate Charles's life. The fraternity is associated with the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Charles most recent recognition was being selected in the fall of 2001 as a McNair Scholar, a year-long program to develop students and enhance their potential to enter graduate school in pursuit of a PhD or professional degree. I was most honored that Charles asked me to be his mentor for the program especially in view that he perceived me as a tough professor, at least in terms of grading and evaluation.

The McNair Scholar Program is named in honor of Dr. Ronald E. McNair, an African-American who graduated with a PhD in physics at the age of 26 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and became a leading authority in laser physics. In 1978, Dr. McNair was selected as Mis-

sion Specialist for NASA and in 1984 was aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger. Like Charles, his life too was cut way too short but he left a legacy to enable others to pursue excellence.

In January 1988 the US Congress funded the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program that would provide funding to support first generation, under-represented college students in pursuit of post-undergraduate studies. So it was indeed an honor for Charles to be named a McNair Scholar. Now the problem with Charles was narrowing his field of interest. He wanted to do it all – at various times we discussed his interest and career pursuits in local government, state politics, the field of law, environmental economics, obtaining a PhD and teaching at a university, Charles perceived no limits as to what he could accomplish. Our most recent conversation dealt with combining his interest in law with environmental economics and pursuing a masters degree in environmental economics with a specialty in law. My only concern that with his broad interest, if he sampled all the areas that he wanted to pursue that when he finally achieved his goal he would be ready to draw social security.

What can we learn from Charles in addition to the admirable traits

discussed above? Dr. McNair is quoted as stating that "Before you can make a dream come true, you must first have one." Charles had a dream, he established, re-established and pursued his goals -- the goal of being a loving father, loving partner, a student scholar, and an exemplary soldier. He accomplished many of his goals and his dreams were coming true. We all can be a part of furthering Charles's dreams and goals by living life with enthusiasm, always reaching beyond, by serving thy fellow man, by being involved in civic life and community organizations.

In a recent personal statement that Charles wrote – he stated that he had six goals in life. To improve society by being involved in communities and being a contributing member; to be involved in politics and the political process; to provide for the economic welfare of Audrey and Tyler; to enhance and protect the environment through the pursuit of a graduate degree in environmental economics so that he could work professionally in the area; to excel academically; and finally to grow spiritually. We as his friend, family, children, and mate can further Charles's dreams by adopting some if not all his personal goals.

Goodbye my friend, we shall not forget you.

Smiles, Talks and Even a Few Life Lessons

By Glenn Sterner, Agriscience

So many times people walk in and out of our lives, and often we never realize what kind of impact they leave behind. Charles Beachnau, a Bailey Scholar, a fellow student and friend, entered our lives as he began his career at Michigan State University, and left just two short years later. Without a doubt, we all will miss him, and no one will ever take his place. Yet, that void we all have felt is the impact Charles has left our lives.

Charles was the type of person who could cheer up anyone. An extremely upbeat person, Charles constantly was smiling, and spread his joy to all around him. He could walk into a room, talk to a few people, and instantly you noticed a change in the atmosphere.

A small talk with Charles was never short. He was always excited and eager to tell you of some quest he was embarking upon. You'd see him in a hallway or on a sidewalk, begin talking to him, and little did you know an hour passed, but he wasn't yet finished telling you the exciting new news. My favorite topic with Charles was politics. That man new all there was about the subject. I remember when the Presidential race was in full force, and we were talking about our choices. Dur-

ing this he was telling of his intense research he'd done on the candidates, what they stood for, and why this candidate was better than the other. I believe we sat in Bailey Central for nearly 2 hours that day.

His *jois de vivre* was not only evident in his conversations, but in every single action and task he undertook. He was constantly busy with a new great idea, and putting his plan into work. "Plan your work, work your plan," as Charles would say. His heart was always out to help or aid someone. In all his endeavors, he knew his efforts were always for another, to make their life just that much better. He lead initiatives, took charge of projects, and worked towards a cause, all for the sake of others.

Now as we reflect upon what Charles has done for us, or merely just great memories of him, we realize the impact he left. Although he may no longer be with us physically, a part of him will always remain with us in spirit. Charles is not someone who could be dismissed with little thought, instead he is a person who has left each of us with a lesson, and we may not even realize it. Be it his extreme dedication to any cause he was part of, his upbeat attitude, or his ability to take time out of

his busy schedule for each of us, he has definitely taught us all something. However, I believe the greatest lesson he left behind is merely live. Charles lived his life to the fullest everyday, taking his positive aura and spreading it to his work, his school, his friends, and his family. So many of us put off today for tomorrow. Let us all take initiative and live life for TODAY. Live life to the fullest, and that is how we can each remember Charles and honor him. You never know when you may lose a loved one, a friend, or someone you have lost touch with. Let each of us live our days as if it's our last, and put aside some of our precious time for those who are precious to us.

To leave an impact on others as Charles did on each of us should be a goal for all. We will miss him in our work, our university, and our lives. Thank you Charles for all you have done for us, and we'll see you soon.

Reflections of Charles Beachnau

Lisa Erickson

Charles always made me smile and I'll remember him with joy in my heart.

Stephanie Marchbanks

In June 2001, I attended the Ecospheres Conference in Lincoln, Nebraska with Charles. Long car trips and other adventures away from home can reveal a lot about someone you never knew very well. The open road ahead of you invites plenty of conversation.

The things I remember most about Charles are that he had so many ideas, ambitions, and goals in his life. He reminisced about his military career and talked about his children, fraternity, classes, school, and how he wanted to eventually write a book. I thought it was admirable that he wanted to learn so much more, about so many different things, and get a college degree. He seemed determined, hard-working, and did what he thought was right. He was a friendly, considerate and proactive person, and seemed concerned about the future of our communities and environment. He also gave me encouragement as I was on the lookout for a "real job" that summer.

I'm glad I could share in that experience with Charles and wish him well on his next journey.

Michael J Rodriguez

This past spring semester I got to experience Charles first hand when I attended RD 491 with him. He was passionate about a great number of causes and he was always sharing with the class information about current events on campus. Whether it be with ASMSU, or his work in one of his classes, Charles went at it with full force. His energy will be missed.



Important Bailey Dates

- **Thursday, August 8th:** Convener Working Sessions 9:00–11:00 a.m. in Bailey Central
- **Thursday, August 15th:** Convener Working Sessions 9:00–11:00 a.m. in Bailey Central
- **Thursday, August 22nd:** Convener Working Session 9:00–11:00 a.m. in Bailey Central
- **Wednesday, August 28th:** Scholar Orientation 5:00–6:30 p.m. in Bailey Central
- **Saturday, September 14th:** Michigan Organic Harvest Festival at Kensington Park
- **Don't forget to drop by for Wednesday Lunches, held at Bailey Central every Wednesday at 12:00pm**



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