ABAC Students Say Thanks
Karen Loredo from Alma pens a letter of thanks to her scholarship donor on Tuesday during the first ever Scholarship Milk and Cookies (MAC) Day at the Alumni House at ABAC. Over 100 students attending ABAC on scholarships gathered to write personal letters of appreciation to individuals and companies who provided the scholarship funding. The ABAC Alumni Association sponsored the event, and ABAC alumni baked homemade cookies for the occasion. Assistant Director of Advancement Lynda Fisher said the afternoon proved to be a lot of fun for both students and alumni.
When the United Parcel Service delivery person handed her the long box, Polly Huff couldn’t wait to open it. The curator of the Georgia Museum of Agriculture at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College admitted that with a thousand chances, she would never have guessed the contents.

When Huff unwrapped the paper around the object, she found a very rare artifact, an 1898 Winchester squirrel rifle in mint condition.

“The rifle was quite a surprise,” Huff said. “And the story that went along with the rifle was really heartwarming.”

A letter enclosed with the rifle identified the owner as Roy Dean Wehunt, a farm boy born in 1925 in Cherokee County. Tucked inside the letter was a faded photograph of Wehunt and a poem he wrote in 1943.

“The picture was of Private First Class Roy Dean Wehunt in his uniform,” Huff said. “The poem was very touching because it described the change taking place in his life from that of a simple Georgia farm boy to a soldier.”

Wehunt served under General George Patton in the Third Army Division, 15th Infantry Regiment, Company A, during World War II. He served his country all over Europe through the end of the war. By May of 1945, the 15th Regiment had 16 recipients of the Medal of Honor including Audie Murphy, the most decorated soldier in U.S. Army history.

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A member of the so-called “Greatest Generation,” Wehunt survived the war, returned to Georgia, and married Helen Ruth Adams of Fannin County who made her home in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains.

The story soon took a sad turn because Wehunt was killed in an automobile accident in 1947 while delivering newspapers for The Atlanta Journal. Wehunt’s son, Stephen, eventually inherited the beloved rifle. Stephen Wehunt married Laveta Margaret Waters, who graduated from ABAC in 1969. They now live in Fayetteville and decided to donate the rifle, the photo, and the poem to the Georgia Museum of Agriculture.

“My dad was a simple farm boy, and he loved farming,” Stephen wrote in the letter which accompanied the rifle. “I am sure if he had gone to college, he would have chosen ABAC.”

Huff said that thanks to a generous donation from the Wehunt family, the Museum will be able to display the rifle along with a plaque which will include Roy Wehunt’s photo, his poem, and the story of his life. The display will open in early September.

For more information about the exhibit, interested persons can contact Huff at phuff@abac.edu.
In today’s fast-paced information world of Twitter and Facebook, college graduates must be well versed in communication skills whether they’re using computers, cell phones, or tablets. And perhaps most importantly, they must be masters of the spoken word in conversations with customers.

If you’re telling that to Dr. Bobbie Robinson, you’re preaching to the choir.

“What we know is that liberal arts graduates can think critically, write well, and communicate well,” Robinson, the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts at ABAC, said. “What we’re hearing from industry is to send us people with these types of skills. We can teach them the technology of their particular job.

“Employers are looking for these skills. They want personnel who can form that communication bridge between the public and their company.”

Robinson said she talked with more students this summer who declared for majors ranging from English, art, communication, and politics.

“Students are gravitating toward the ABAC Rural Studies’ bachelor’s degree majors in Writing and Communication and Politics and Modern Cultures.

“Students in these majors graduate with practicum experience, a developed portfolio of projects they have worked on, and an internship in the area they want to pursue,” Robinson said. “The best thing is they are getting jobs. When someone gets a job, they have to write e-mails. They may have to solve a problem with a customer who comes in upset. Employees must be able to communicate a direct message and communicate it well. These are the skills that we teach.”

Like all the deans on campus, Robinson spends time each semester just listening to students and hearing about their goals in life. A unique partnership developed from one of those discussions.

“Some students come to ABAC to begin a course of study in agriculture because they have been in a setting of that nature all their lives,” Robinson said. “They have grown up in a rural setting. But then they decide they don’t want a specific job in production agriculture.

“This is where we come in. They get a strong foundation of agriculture classes with a heavy dose of liberal arts classes. They graduate with a bachelor’s degree in writing and communication which turns out to really be an agriculture communications degree.”

Robinson said student internships in liberal arts are “the most exciting thing I have worked with in my career.

“We are on the leading edge of schools adding internships to their programs which result in a baccalaureate degree. Depending on the size of the internship, these students have been in a job setting at least 160 hours. Several of them have had job offers from the internship or at least they have added a bullet on a resume.”

Robinson never ceases to be amazed at the wide range of extracurricular activities available to students at ABAC, particularly those with a liberal arts connection.

Students interested in politics can get involved in the College Republicans or the Young Democrats. They can also run for office in the Student Government Association.

“Students don’t have to be majoring in these areas to participate,” Robinson said. “You can sing in the choir and major in biology. You can write for the paper and major in agriculture.

“We have art shows, an open microphone night at Rockin’ Joe’s coffee house, and the Baldwin Players are doing Shakespeare this fall. In the spring, they’re doing an open air production at the Museum of Agriculture.”

Robinson said that ABAC has an internationally known jazz band which has toured Europe on three occasions, a concert band, a concert choir, a jazz choir, a literary magazine, and even a radio station where students can host their own talk show.

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“To go into the liberal arts area, students bring a talent,” Robinson said. “Maybe it’s a talent for the written word, or art or music. At ABAC, we have lots of opportunities to develop those talents during the time they are here.”
The FOCUS is an electronic publication produced by the ABAC Public Relations Office. Please submit information by Thursday at noon to Ashley Mock at amock@abac.edu for inclusion in the next FOCUS.

ABAC Birthdays
5 Amanda Dow
6 Debbie Pyles
8 Diane Jackson
8 Shawn Cox

Blood Drive Today at Soccer Field from 2-6 p.m.
The blood drive will take place on this afternoon between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. in conjunction with the first home soccer game. The mobile unit will be parked near the soccer field. Donate today and save three lives!

ABAC Students, faculty and staff wore green and gold on Friday to support National School Colors Day.

Save these Dates for Stallion Day
Nov. 9           Feb. 15       April 5

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Back to School Bash at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture & Historic Village
SEptember 7th, 2013
9AM - 4:30PM
FREE...
Admission for Children (with purchase of an adult admission)
One Scoop of Ice Cream for Children
Train Rides
Spelling Bee Competition & Organized Children Games
FREEZE TAG  LONDON BRIDGE  KEEP AWAY  FACE PAINTING
CORN HOLE  3-LEGGED RACE  CHECKERS  MARBLES
AND MANY MORE!