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In-Tent—Athletics Department staff and students walk a tent down Georgia Southwestern State University Drive to get it in place near the softball field. This spring, GSW hosted the Southern States Athletic Conference (SSAC) men’s basketball tournament, baseball tournament and softball tournament.
‘Canes join Peach Belt Conference

GSW has been initially accepted for membership in the NCAA Division II Peach Belt Conference. The Peach Belt Board of Directors has notified GSW that its application has been approved. Membership will become effective upon meeting the requirements for provisional membership of the NCAA. GSW is in the process of beginning the conversion from the NAIA to NCAA Division II status, and hopes to begin Peach Belt competition in the fall of 2006.

“We are excited about this transition, and look forward to the work ahead,” said President Michael L. Hanes, Ph.D. “We feel that the Peach Belt’s emphasis on academic achievement as well as athletic competition is a good match for our focus at GSW.”

“The Peach Belt Conference welcomes Georgia Southwestern State University,” said Dr. Daniel Ball, president of Lander University. “We have visited their outstanding campus in Americus, we have come to know their personnel and believe that they will not only be a welcome addition to our conference, but a contributing member for the future.”

“We anticipate strong, healthy competition in the Peach Belt, and that will be good for our athletic program,” said Randolph Barksdale, athletic director. “To grow, you must evolve. We’ve been working hard, and will now work even harder to step up to the next level.”

Barksdale said the GSW Hurricanes look forward to renewing rivalries with such Peach Belt competitors as Armstrong Atlantic State University, Columbus State University, North Georgia College & State University, Georgia College & State University, and Clayton State University.

GSW fields teams in men’s and women’s basketball, baseball, softball, men’s and women’s tennis, men’s and women’s golf, men’s and women’s soccer, and women’s cross country.

“This is a great move for the Peach Belt,” said PBC commissioner Marvin Vanover. “Georgia Southwestern is a school that is continuing to improve itself on the field and in the classroom and I am confident that they are ready to take the next step forward and join our league. Every single school in the Peach Belt moved up from the NAIA at one time or another, so it is fitting that we help another school move up into the NCAA Division II ranks. The road will be difficult, but we will do everything we can to help them along.”

Barksdale steps down as head men’s basketball coach

After 537 career wins and 27 seasons as a head coach, Randolph Barksdale is leaving coaching.

This spring, Barksdale announced that he is stepping down as head men’s basketball coach for the Hurricanes. He will remain as the University’s athletic director. Barksdale has held both posts at GSW since 2001 and has spent a total of 18 years coaching the ‘Canes.

“There’s a lot of work to be done as GSW makes the transition from the NAIA to the NCAA Peach Belt Conference this year,” Barksdale said. “This is a good time for me to step back from coaching responsibilities and focus all of my attention on our entire athletic program.”

“We are grateful to Coach Barksdale for his many years of dedication as head men’s basketball coach for the Hurricanes,” said President Michael L. Hanes, Ph.D. “He remains an excellent mentor for our student athletes, on and off the court. We look forward to his continued leadership as athletic director.”

Barksdale has been head men’s basketball coach for the Hurricanes since 1996, and previously served as head men’s basketball coach at GSW from 1979 to 1987. His record at GSW is 374-197. This past season, Barksdale led the ‘Canes to a 19-12 record and through the semifinals round of the NAIA’s Southern States Athletic Conference tournament, which was hosted at GSW’s new Student Success Center.

Hanes said that the University is planning a national search for Barksdale’s successor, which should be concluded in the coming weeks.

While Barksdale looks forward to focusing on his AD agenda, he said he’ll miss the coaching interaction with his student athletes.

“Basketball has given me the opportunity to help student athletes that come from varied backgrounds develop into well-rounded citizens,” Barksdale said. “I consider that a rare privilege.”

Barksdale coached at Dekalb South Junior College, now Georgia Perimeter College, from 1987-95. He graduated from North Georgia College in 1976 with a Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education and received his master’s degree in Health and Physical Education from Georgia State University in 1981.
Southwestern Stitches—As part of the Centennial celebration, the University is selling a commemorative afghan featuring color representations of GSW’s historic landmarks. The 48” by 68” afghan, crafted from 100% cotton ultra weave, is available in limited supplies. Cost is $49.99. To order, make check payable to the GSW Centennial Celebration Committee and send to Paula Williams, Office of the President, Georgia Southwestern State University, 800 Georgia Southwestern State University Drive, Americus, Ga., 31709. Mark checks for “Centennial afghan.” The afghans will ship in January 2006. Questions? Call (229) 931-2309.

In Tune—Senior Alex Anishchenko and English professor Gabriele U. Stauf, Ph.D., collaborated to compose the Centennial Anthem that debuted April 7 at a special Rylander Theatre concert. “I tried to write something that is majestic, and perhaps more modern than classical in style,” said Anishchenko, 22, a pianist since the age of 7 and current organist at Calvary Episcopal Church in Americus. “I wanted people to be aware that we are celebrating a proud tradition,” Stauf said. “The accomplishment of 100 years of life is significant primarily in the service that it perpetuates. People dedicating their lives and careers to helping new generations of students grow and learn is perhaps GSW’s greatest contribution.”

New Name—Americus Mayor Barry Blount and the City Council have formally renamed Simmons Drive and a portion of Wheatley Street as Georgia Southwestern State University Drive. Subsequently, the University’s new address is 800 Georgia Southwestern State University Drive. The change was implemented to honor the Centennial.

Rural Roots The 1949 8N Ford tractor, believed to be the second tractor purchased by the institution, was restored as part of the Centennial Celebration. The tractor was in use through 1994.

Marking Time—The community gathered on the front lawn Feb. 10 to recognize the institution’s Centennial, and unveil a State of Georgia historical marker. Joining President Michael L. Hanes (third from right) to dedicate the marker were past presidents including, left to right: William H. Capitan, William B. King and Henry King Stanford. The permanent plaque chronicles the 100-year rise of the institution from the Third District A&M School to Georgia Southwestern College and, ultimately, to university status in 1996.
**CENTENNIAL BRICK ORDER FORM**

Order your brick for the new Centennial Plaza, at the entrance to the Student Success Center.

Name ______________________________________________________
Address ______________________________________________________
City, State, Zip __________________________________________________
Day Phone Number _______________________________________________

___ Alumnus ___ Student ___ Faculty/Staff ___ Friend of GSW

Brick Engraving:

Please indicate how many of each you would like to purchase.

___ Bricks for Students enrolled in 2006 .......................................$50
___ Bricks for Alumni, Faculty/Staff or Friend .................................$50
___ Wood Bench .................................................................$1,500
___ Family Seating Area .........................................................$2,000
___ Lamp Post .................................................................$1,000

Make check payable to the GSW Centennial Celebration Committee. If mailing please send to Georgia Southwestern State University, 800 Georgia Southwestern State University Drive, Americus, Ga. 31709, ATTN: Paula Williams.

For MasterCard_____ or Visa cards_____ please provide following information:

Acct Number ____________________________________________
Expiration Date __________________________________________
Signature _______________________________________________