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EIU Alumnus Jerry Van Dyke to Serve as Homecoming Grand Marshal

Oct-11-2006

A much-loved veteran of dozens of television classics will add a personal touch to Eastern Illinois University's Homecoming 2006 celebration.

Danville native and EIU alumnus Jerry Van Dyke will serve as grand marshal during the annual parade, scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 21. His appearance will be quite fitting, given the week's theme – "EIU Homecoming 2006 Tunes In To Classic TV Land Flicks."

Perhaps best-known to younger crowds as Assistant Coach Luther Horatio Van Dam, from the 1990s sitcom "Coach," Van Dyke has also appeared on shows such as "Yes, Dear," "Grace Under Fire," "The Drew Carey Show," "Charles in Charge," "Newhart," "The Love Boat," "Fantasy Island," "Mary Tyler Moore," "Love American Style," "Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C." and "The Andy Griffith Show."

Television viewers also will remember his art-imitating-life role as Stacey Petrie, brother of Rob Petrie, in the 1960s series "The Dick Van Dyke Show."

Van Dyke, who currently lives on a cattle ranch in Arkansas with wife Shirley, will accept one of Eastern's Distinguished Alumnus awards while in Charleston.

This year's Homecoming parade will follow the traditional route – north on Seventh Street from EIU's Old Main, west on Monroe Avenue (north side of the Charleston square) and south back to campus via Sixth Street.

Early risers are invited to start the day off with a warm meal, courtesy of the Charleston Rotary Club. Serving will take place from 6 to 11 a.m. for the organization's **seventh annual all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast** in the parking lot of Domino's Pizza, located at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Seventh Street. Prices are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children ages 12 and under, and the menu includes pancakes, sausage, orange juice and coffee. Tickets may be purchased at the "door" or in advance from any Rotary Club member.

Well-fed individuals can then cheer their favorite athletes on as they participate in the **seventh annual 2.5K (1.5 miles) Homecoming Race**, which begins at 9 a.m. and encompasses the same route as the parade.

Runners may register between 7:45 until 8:45 a.m. in Old Main (corner of Seventh and Lincoln), with an entry fee set at \$7. Awards will be given to the first-, second- and third-place male and female (run) and first-place male and female (walk and wheelchair). For participant information, contact John Henry Pommier at 217-581-6597; jhpommier@eiu.edu.

The annual **Homecoming football game**, in which the EIU Panthers host Murray State, begins at 1:30 p.m. Tickets may be purchased the day of the game at O'Brien Stadium at a cost of \$13 for adults, with discounts for senior citizens and youngsters. EIU students will be admitted free with their Panther Card ID.

Other events occurring during Eastern's 90th Homecoming week include a **pep rally** at 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20, inside Lantz Arena. Community members are invited to come and cheer on the EIU Football Panthers.

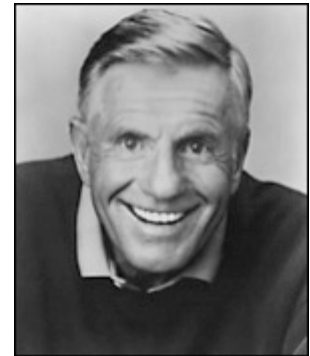
Dennis Haskins, best known for his role as Mr. Belding on the 1980s hit teen sitcom "Saved By the Bell," will serve as master of ceremonies. Highlights of the evening will include a "Saved By the Bell" sing-a-long, trivia contest, video presentation, giveaways and photo/autograph session with Haskins.

In addition, EIU students will square-off in a sumo wrestling competition, along with special appearances by the EIU pep band, cheer team, Pink Panthers and more. Admission is free and open to the public.

Other Homecoming 2006 events open to the public include:

- **Homecoming Coronation Ceremony**, 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 16, Lantz Arena. Admission: \$2.
- **Fun and Games Picnic**, 4 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 17, South Quad. Admission: Free.
- **TV Land Jeopardy** (4 to 6 p.m.) and **The Dating Game** (6 p.m.), Wednesday, Oct. 18, Grand Ballroom, MLK Jr. Union. Admission: Free.
- **Yell Like Hell!** and **Who Wants to be a Mascot? Competitions**, 9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 19, Lantz Arena. Admission: Free.

For up-to-date information on all of these events, plus others on the EIU campus, please see <http://www.eiu.edu/~pubaff/calendar.php>.



Jerry Van Dyke