



"It really is all about the students. We're not just talking it, we're acting it out."

Bob Knight, Clark College president



ZACHARY KAUFMAN/The Columbian

Clark College President Bob Knight leads walkers on one of three Penguin Paths delineated on campus as part of a new health and wellness initiative. Knight unveiled the program and cited other recent advances Thursday during his State of Clark College speech. Program participants earn points by performing a healthy activity each day.

Healthy direction

Knight

debuts

wellness

initiative

for Clark

students,

employees

By **HOWARD BUCK**
Columbian staff writer

Darned if Thursday wasn't plenty chilly, just about right for a Penguin walk.

"Forward, march!" barked Bob Knight, Clark College president and former commander of the U.S. Army barracks in Vancouver.

With that, about 60 Clark staff, students, followers and a 6-foot school mascot set out from Gaiser Hall. At a brisk pace they knocked off the first formal Penguin walk, a half-mile romp around the campus quad.

Thanks to a new Healthy Penguin Nation initiative unveiled by Knight during his State of Clark College address minutes before, hiking or jogging three new designated campus loops will be encouraged.

The movement fit Knight's theme for the speech, and for 2008.

Whether new facilities, job training slots, a state tuition grant or online learning options, Clark is better serving students, Knight told an overflow crowd. And, by extension, better serving the community, as a big milestone looms.

"It really is all about the students," he said. "We're not just talking it, we're acting it out."

Exercise is one slice of a new Penguin Points program intended to nudge Clark employees and students to a healthy lifestyle. Mary Deal, Clark's health services officer, and health professor Veronica Black helped craft the plan.

Participants earn points by logging a singular healthful act each day, whether physical, emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual. A healthful meal or workout, a journal entry or prayer, reading a book, recycling a water bottle or gardening: Each deed, or many more like them, would be worthy.

Self-completed scorecards earn entry into a prize drawing May 14. A \$100 Clark bookstore gift card is one of the awards.

Among new health and wellness efforts for 2008 is broader selection of trans-fat-free and healthful foods sold by Culinary Arts students, Knight said.

It's all part of a larger trend. In 2006, Clark became the state's first community college to ban tobacco.

PUMPING UP THE PENGUINS

■ For more on Clark's Healthy Penguin Nation initiative for employees and students, see: www.clark.edu/healthypenguin.

■ Clark will soon mark three Penguin Paths on campus: a 0.5-mile Humboldt Loop, 1.3-mile Emperor Loop and 2.0-mile Rockhopper Loop. They are mapped on brochures, and on the health initiative Web site.

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Clark:

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Last year, it launched Mental Health Mondays, weekly discussion and resource sessions on concerns such as depression, anxiety, even post-war trauma.

In sum, Knight portrayed Clark as quite the healthy institution as it steams toward its 75th anniversary celebration in October.

Enrollment is up. Clark soon will graduate its first class of medical radiography students. Its well-regarded nursing program will add eight student slots each of the next six quarters, doubling in size. A welding program will add 16 slots. Aggressive international recruiting continues to pay off, with 75 foreign students now on campus, the highest number in five years.

Clark might create an honors program and a Weekend College to better serve working students, Knight said. The college also has a \$188,000 state Opportunity

Grant to help pay tuition, book and supply costs for low-income students.

Renovation of central Gaiser Hall and O'Connell Sports Center will end soon. The Legislature is expected to commit design money for a \$30 million health classroom building that could help transform adjacent East Fourth Plain Boulevard.

Come October, the school will undergo its 10-year accreditation review and inspection, to conclude a two-year process. Knight said he expects good marks, but also some stern advice — much like that he gave the Clark men's soccer team, honored again Thursday as 2007 regional winners.

Knight told players he'd check on current grades before he doles out championship rings due soon.

"Congratulations to all of you — and hit the books," he said.

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