Swartzendruber Tours EMU

By Grete Horst
Contributing Writer

Those worried that EMU President Joseph Lapp's successor would take a while to get to know the college can rest assured: Loren Swartzendruber is no stranger to the university.

As the EMU community learned during his two-day visit last Thursday and Friday, Swartzendruber attended Hesston College for his first year of college in 1968, when there were trimesters instead of semesters and classes met Monday through Saturday. After a hiatus at Iowa State he received a master of divinity degree from Eastern Mennonite Seminary and later worked in the EMU admissions department.

Swartzendruber has since worn a variety of hats (to borrow President Lapp's metaphor): he was a pastor in Harrisonville, Pa. for five years; worked 10 years in Elkhart, Ind. on the Mennonite Board of Education; and has just completed a 10-year term as president of Hesston (Kan.) College.

Of Swartzendruber's presidency at Hesston, junior-year Hesston transfer Jon Leichty said, "he was genuinely concerned about the student body."

"He's able to really connect with them," senior Jeremy Good asked Swartzendruber to talk about what he saw as "EMU's identity," as increasingly more students come from faith backgrounds other than Mennonite.

"It's important for any church institution to have a strong identity," replied Swartzendruber. "If someone comes to EMU they should know it's a Mennonite institution." He stressed that he thinks students of other faith backgrounds should be welcomed, that diversity within a campus is a strength, and went on to point out that EMU's strong Mennonite identity contributes to the diversity of the community of American colleges and universities.

In response to another question, Swartzendruber said, "I'm not afraid of conflict and disagreements, that's just part of being in public life." When asked about his personal goals for EMU, Swartzendruber highlighted a variety of visions, including focus on preparing students to insert themselves as peacemakers within the conflict around them, increasing student enrollment in order to be more economically efficient, and increased fundraising. He said he sees increased economic efficiency as a way to increase financial aid funds, which at EMU are currently "below the national average." Swartzendruber added, "I can do fundraising... It's easy to ask for money if you believe in the cause."

On Friday morning Swartzendruber was the featured chapel speaker, addressing an auditorium full of students and faculty. He remarked on the "impressive Friday chapel attendance" and went on to share stories and memories from his time spent at EMU, including a visit in which his newly discovered enthusiasm for apple cider proved unpleasant for himself and his fellow travelers on their way back home.

Hollywood Alternative:
New Class Offers Free Fare for Thoughtful Moviegoers

By Christopher Fretz
Staff Writer

A student-proposed class that watches and discusses off-beat contemporary films has begun meeting Tuesday evenings. The class was proposed by student Conrad Erb, who felt the need for a change in the movies being publicly shown on campus.

"This was something I thought about over Christmas break," said Erb. "There's a tension between students who want to see lighter movies and more intellectual, substantive movies."

Erb considered the possibility of having less entertainment and more discussion, and together they coordinated the details of the class.

The class is offered on an audit basis, meaning that students take the class without getting academic credit for it. It counts as a one-credit-hour class on transcripts, but does not go toward any credit requirements. Erb also mentioned that regular participation, discussion, and attendance are not required.

"Auditing is typically offered for lecture classes," said David Detrow, university registrar, "but the definition for auditing has become more flexible. There is typically a fee to audit classes, but that is not the case here."

Detrow was impressed with Erb, who is acting as a professor's assistant for the class.

"Conrad was willing to do the legwork to get the class going," he said.

The class meets weekly on Tuesday evenings at 9 p.m. in Science Center room 106 and is structured around having a series of films in one theme. After the