Baker, Jost Announce Surprise Resignations

**Men’s Basketball Coach Baker Has Nothing to Say**

By Rachel Swartzenegger

Layout Editor

After a disappointing 2002-2003 season, Royals Men’s Basketball Head Coach Thomas Baker unexpectedly announced his resignation last Saturday. Baker declined to return to the Weather Vane’s phone calls when a reporter called to ask why he was leaving.

During spring break, Baker approached Athletic Director Larry Martin concerning a possible resignation. After talking together, Martin asked Baker to make a concrete decision by Friday, Mar. 7. On Saturday Mar. 8, the Harrisonburg Daily News Record reported his resignation.

The news came as a shock to many, including his basketball players. “We had no idea,” said First-year forward Bryan Williams.

Sophomore forward Eric Timothy Koehn, however, the Royals have had a surprising, Royals fans were not terribly shocked. “Te me, it’s not surprising,” said First-year Timothy Koehn.

Sophomore Keith Coles said, “I think his alarm went off and he felt it was time to depart.”

Baker’s EMU career ended on a low note. In 11 seasons, Baker’s overall record stands at 89 wins and 184 losses. The highlight of his EMU coaching career came during the 1997-1998 season, when the team went 11-7 in ODAC games and 16-9 overall. In the past two years, however, the Royals have had recurring disappointment, with an ODAC record of four wins and 33 losses.

This past was a trying one for the team, with a record of three wins and 22 losses. Junior center Michael Swartly said, “It’s been a frustrating year for everyone, the players and the coaches ... When you have a hard season like that, people talk and there are rumors.”

This is not the first time that the Royals basketball program has experienced conflict. As reported in the Daily News Record, the 1999-2000 season raised some eyebrows. During the season, the team met with then Athletic Director Rob Roeschley and President Joseph Lapp to discuss concerns with the basketball program. The issue, however, seemed to be resolved, when Baker returned as head coach.

In a press release issued by EMU, Baker referred to “career opportunities” as the reason for resignation. Additionally, Martin said, “Coach Baker has indicated that under the current circumstances he does not have the energy to continue at EMU and has elected to pursue other interests.”

Scott Jost Leaves for Rival Bridgewater

By Michael J. Sharp

Managing Editor

Neighbor Bridgewater College has some things that EMU can’t offer to art professor Scott Jost. Amid much speculation, Jost has resigned his position after seven years at EMU. Since his arrival in 1996, Jost has helped to create several pop new courses and has significantly advanced the department. “It’s really a big loss, considering that he brought a lot of expertise to the department and developed it like he did,” said fellow art professor Barbara Fast. Jost linked the Art and Communication Departments through some of his courses. He had planned to co-teach a course with communication professor Jerry Holosopple next year. Even in his absence, Holosopple said, “We are committed to carrying on with his classes.”

Jost will be leaving for Bridgewater College this fall. Bridgewater’s enrollment is on the upswing, and the art program is going to increase to three full time professors. Jost knows the two artists already there fairly well and is pleased about his prospects both professionally and personally: “The climate feels very positive in terms of just about everything.”

To speculation of an alternative motivation, Jost said only, “They have articulated a clear statement on academic freedom [at Bridgewater], which is attractive.”

Current art students will miss him in class, too. Sophomore art major Jessica Byler said, “It’s sad to see him go, but I think the job at Bridgewater will fit him.”

Any replacement for Jost would have large shoes to fill. “His position is not necessarily the easiest position to fill,” said Fast.