

JAMES A. GRAASKAMP COLLECTION OF TEACHING MATERIALS

XI. PERSONAL LIFE

H. Articles about Graaskamp

2. Disability

# The Advertiser

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Phon

## Immobile 'chief' is a whirlwind in a wheelchair

By CHRISTOBEL BOTTEN

It is not surprising that Professor James A. Graaskamp refuses to acknowledge that his quadriplegia of more than 30 years has been a handicap or disability.

For despite his immobile limbs, he has successfully steered his US education through degrees and doctorates in finance, creative writing, risk management and property valuation, and now occupies the Wisconsin University chair of Real Estate and Urban Land Economics.

The 50-year-old professor — or "Chief" as he has been affectionately dubbed — was in Adelaide yesterday as part of a seven-week Australasian lecture tour in real estate feasibility, consulting and investment.

From his wheelchair, positioned on a dais before 110 seminar guests at the city's Gateway Inn, he spent eight hours joking and fast-talking information into the real-estate minds before him.

At his fleeting lunch break, he spoke of his love for Australian seafood, his pleasure in Adelaide as a "progressive" city, and his busy lifestyle which embraced full-time teaching, lecture touring, litigation work and a private consulting business.

Said the Chief, in between mouthfuls of food given to him by his business partner and fellow traveller Ms Jean Davis: "I'm not sure whether I think of myself as having a physical disability or not.

"I've never self-consciously identified with my handicap ... if so, my uneasiness would make others uneasy."

To illustrate his point, he added: "The State of Wisconsin made me Handicapped Man of the Year in 1970, and one of my graduate students sent me a beautiful

telegram which said 'Handicapped? When did it happen?'"

Professor Graaskamp, who won school basketball, football and athletics colors before contracting poliomyelitis during his later teens, said his strong family background supported him in his academic quest.

"I came from a family of relative means. We could make the decision to invest in education," he said.

For his first trip to Australia, Professor Graaskamp has travelled with "two boys," or, as Ms Davis said, "his two strong right arms."

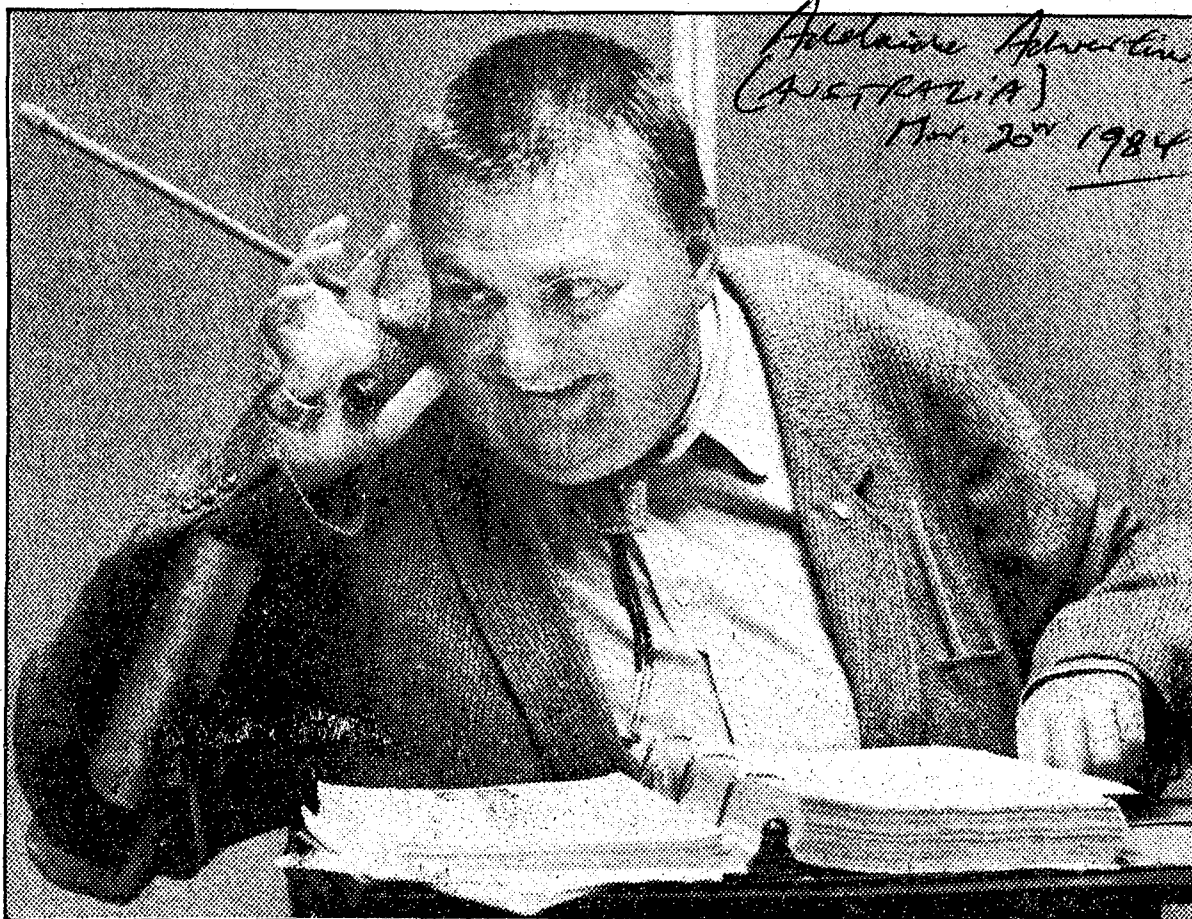
Said the professor: "It's the first time we've taken the circus on the road, so to speak. Of all the cities we have been in, I think Adelaide has been the most advanced for things like transport (for physically-handicapped people).

"My equipment is all fairly simple. I travel light — I have arm scoops with me, but I left my electric motor for the chair behind."

Professor Graaskamp, a member and trustee on many company and organisational boards in the US, said he ended up in real estate because it satisfied his "eclectic curiosity."

He chose to base his Ph.D. on real estate as a teaching medium because, he said, it cut across a broad field of social, financial and engineering issues.

Did such work exhaust him? — "I'm beginning to reach that point," he laughed, "but courage and determination are important." And modest to the last, he added: "If someone did what I have done, without family means behind him, that would be an accomplishment."



Professor Graaskamp using adjustable arm braces to support his arms as he addresses the real estate seminar yesterday. Partial movement in his fingers allows him to turn pages using a stick.

Picture by staff photographer Moss Ellender



Professor Graaskamp with one of his American students, John Sommer (23), at Royal Perth Yacht Club.

## Professor follows the fish

**PROFESSOR James A. Graaskamp**, of the University of Wisconsin, is a quadriplegic, but he wants to tangle with a big marlin before he leaves Australia.

More than two metres tall and built like a gridiron linebacker, the genial real estate expert has had a special electric rod and reel designed for him, which enables him to cast and reel in any sized fish.

### Seminar

"If you've got a boat, then I'm ready to go fishing," Professor Graaskamp (50) said in an easy mid-west drawl as he prepared to conduct a seminar at the WA Institute of Technology.

By HUGH SCHMITT

Chairman of the department of real estate and urban land economics school of business at the Wisconsin University, the angling professor gave a seminar called "feasibility analysis and real estate consulting" for WAIT's centre for business research and development.

A former star college footballer, he has been confined to a wheelchair since the age of 17 when he suffered a football injury.

"They gave me a tetanus injection and it destroyed my resistance to polio which I got soon after," he said.

His quadriplegia does not stop Professor Graaskamp from travelling coast-to-coast in the U.S. for six to eight days a month giving lectures—and fishing.

He sees Australia as a "marvellous opportunity area" for real estate and property development.

"I'm going to tell my students that Australia is a wonderful place for a young person to come to, particularly in the growing field of property management," he said.



Pictured at the "launch" of RMIT's new property course were (from left)—Noel Anthony (Dean, Faculty of Business), Prof. James Graaskamp, Graham Buckmaster (City Valuer, MCC), Michael Palmer (student), and James Burgess (Head, Dept. of Applied Economics).



James Burgess (Head, Dept. of Applied Economics) with Dick Sheridan (AMP)

# RMIT launches graduate course at 'Lakeside'

RMIT launched its new post graduate course on February 28, at a dinner held at Melbourne Zoological Gardens' venue, "Lakeside".

The special guest speaker at the launch was Professor James Graaskamp who praised the course for the direction it was taking in meeting the increasingly sophisticated requirements of the property industry.

Professor Graaskamp had just completed a successful seminar series for the property industry at RMIT. This was his last Melbourne engagement before continuing his tour around Australia and New Zealand.

Other guests included the chairman of the Industry Course Advisory Board which assisted in the design of the course, Mr Martin Hession (Hillier Parker) and other Advisory Board members including Mr Dick Sheridan (AMP), Mr John Banks (BOMA), Mr Graham Buckmaster (MCC), Mr Ron Rogers (R. Rogers Management), Mr Bill Bowness (Wilbow-Peck), Mr John

Vains (John Vains & Associates) and Mr Brian Pollock (National Mutual—T&G).

The remainder of the guests (40 people in all) comprised the inaugural intake of students and RMIT staff involved in the programme.

During the evening, Mr Sheridan presented a cheque to the Head of the Department of Applied Economics, Mr James Burgess. In response, Mr Burgess acknowledged that the new course could not have been developed without the support BOMA provided.

Mr Bill Bowness of Wilbow-Peck & Associates also presented a cheque to the Department to fund the first student prize offered in the course. This prize will be known as the Wilbow-Peck Award and will be presented to the student with the best overall performance in the first year of the course.



John Banks (BOMA), Ron Rogers (R. Rogers Management) and Bill Bowness (Wilbow Peck)



The STATE of WISCONSIN  
GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE  
on  
EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED \*

RECOGNITION PROGRAM FOR:

***James A. Graaskamp***

Wednesday  
March 4, 1970

Lake Windsor Country Club  
Madison  
Wisconsin

\*Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped  
NOW called  
Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities



"WISCONSIN'S HANDICAPPED PERSON<sup>\*\*</sup>  
OF THE YEAR"

1970

JAMES A. GRAASKAMP

FORMER RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARD

1952 Theodore R. Hoyer	1960 Robert Southard
1953 Robert L. Stevens	1961 T. Kenneth Kingery
1954 Raymond F. Dvorak	1962 David L. Hall
1955 Harold Bessac	1963 Obert L. Bauer
1956 Howard H. Fairbanks	1965 Shirley R. Krauss
1957 Alfred R. Meier	1966 John L. Lovdahl
1958 John R. Kostuck	1968 Russel Weisensel
	1969 Herbert W. Oviatt III

\* \* \* \* \*

\*\*Handicapped Person  
NOW referred to as

Individual with a disability

to signify the person first, the disability second

PROGRAM

RECEPTION - 6:00 P.M.

DINNER - 7:00 P.M.

WELCOME . . . . .

John W. Kemp - -  
Chairman Governor's  
Committee  
Asst. Vice President,  
Marine Nat'l. Exchange Bank

(Introduction of former HANDICAPPED PERSONS  
OF THE YEAR)

REMARKS . . . . .

Mrs. Marie Hoyer - -  
Pres. - Ted Hoyer Co.

PRESENTATION . . . . .

Governor Warren P. Knowles

RESPONSE . . . . .

James A. Graaskamp -  
Professor - - University  
of Wisconsin

PRESENTATION . . . . .

Governor Warren P. Knowles

RESPONSE . . . . .

John E. Linster - Past  
Chairman Gov. Committee  
Vice Pres. - Employers'  
Insurance of Wausau

ADJOURNMENT

John W. Kemp

**WISCONSIN  
REHABILITATION**

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**DIVISION OF  
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**  
**Department of Health and Social Services**  
 1 West Wilson Street  
 Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Secretary of Health  
 and Social Services . . . . . Wilbur J. Schmidt

DVR Administrator . . . . . Adrian Towne

Editor . . . . . John H. Dunn

**Services, financial aid, and other benefits of the  
 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation are provided  
 on a non-discriminatory basis as required by the  
 Civil Rights Act of 1964.**

*Who needs arms  
and legs? This  
makes you wonder*

## UW Professor Chalks Up Remarkable Record



An associate professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, coordinator of campus construction administration program, advisor to handicapped student group, consultant on architectural barriers on campus, founder and partner in a major metropolitan real estate development firm, partner in a real estate research organization, real estate consultant, an avid fisherman — these and related activities keep Dr. James Graaskamp pretty well occupied but only because he has to limit himself.

You see, Dr. Graaskamp is a quadriplegic. Mechanical and electronic assists along with the arms and legs of a student work crew compensate for loss of his own arms and legs.

Little wonder that such a person would be named Wisconsin's Handicapped Person of the Year, and he received that honor in 1970.

Dr. Graaskamp — he received his Ph.D. in 1964 — had polio at the start of his last year in high school. An ironic coincidence probably caused greater impairment than usual in poliomyelitis.

In the fall of 1950 he had an infection following a high school football injury. Polio struck at the same time, though apparently concealed tempo-

rarily by the blood poisoning. It is possible also that the tetanus shot affected his gamma globulin so as to suppress its effectiveness against the polio. By the time doctors detected the virus, the condition had already mushroomed.

Following a year in hospitals at Warm Springs, Ga., and Milwaukee, in 1951 he resumed his senior year at Milwaukee Country Day School (now University School) in Milwaukee. Once graduated, he headed south for Rollins College in Florida.

He rented a house at the edge of campus and hired a housekeeper and two student attendants. He spent the next three years going through the four-year undergraduate program at Rollins.

But without the ability to write, how did he ever take notes in class?

"When notes were imperative, I generally took carbon paper along, found which girl had the best handwriting and charmed her into making a second set of notes. Most of the time, however, if I just listened intently to the lecturer, I found I didn't need notes. I probably got more out of the lectures than those who took notes."

Although he majored in creative writing at Rollins, his career plans were in the direction of business. His



application was accepted by the Harvard School of Business, but complications prevented his going. The young fellow who would be his attendant at Harvard decided instead to get married. Because he couldn't hire another attendant on such short notice, he had to give up the Boston venture.

This didn't mean idleness, however. In addition to attending Marquette University night school in Milwaukee, he operated a construction company. Then with his masters degree in finance and marketing, he later joined the Marquette faculty, serving half-time as a lecturer while still building houses.

"I enjoyed the teaching, but it didn't work out exactly as I had planned," Dr. Graaskamp said. "I was hired to teach finance, but the insurance professor left, and since I had sold insurance during my college days, they immediately assumed I was qualified. I had three weeks to prepare two courses."

#### **Moved to UW-Madison**

After teaching insurance at Marquette for three semesters, he went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison on a fellowship and teaching assistantship for a Ph.D in insurance. He finished his classwork in 1960 and that year was hired to teach in the School of Business.

"They put my desk next to the real estate department, which was closely related to my first love, architecture. I got more and more engrossed in a double major, insurance and real estate, which up here is called risk management and land economics. So I was hired as utility infielder. I could teach finance, insurance, or real estate. When a professor was on leave for a semester I would be thrown into the breach. I also did some research for the Ford Foundation study of pensions.

"When Professor Ratcliff left for the University of British Columbia, I

became full-time real estate professor. At the same time my interest and background in construction and architecture led to my becoming advisor to the construction administration program here, a hybrid program of civil engineering, business with emphasis on real estate, and architectural design. I coordinate the three-school program and have the students as advisees.

"So the irony of it is, I was trained in creative writing, took a degree in finance, taught insurance, later became a real estate expert, and now I am back approximately where I started, teaching construction administration. So all of these rather diverse threads have seemed to converge, and all have contributed something to my teaching functions here."

Then he chuckled.

"But I suppose this record also looks as though I wasn't able to keep any one job."

#### **Writing Valuable**

Dr. Graaskamp notes that his creative writing gave him a sense of drama, and his writing ability has been an important asset in research. An avocational interest in construction and landscape architecture plus a background in securities analysis and risk concepts have also contributed much.

"I have been able to develop some very innovative techniques for real estate with the result that our program in real estate now is, I think, perhaps the leading real estate program in the country and one of the few schools that has such an intensive program. Applications of electronic data processing techniques have had considerable impact on both teaching and the practice of real estate."

But how can a quadriplegic accomplish all this? A good crew of attendants is the answer. Dr. Graaskamp uses students exclusively.

"I always have a crew of three who live in, several students who drive for me on a regular schedule, and three or four students as secretaries."

He avoids using students from his department, since that could interfere with the student-faculty relationship. And his relationship with students is a good one, as shown in the fact that he has received one of the university's most sought after honors, the William Kiekhofer teaching award.

#### **Business Activities**

Dr. Graaskamp's work at the university has led to a series of business partnerships, including one with the late Mike McBurney, a quadriplegic and former DVR client who became Madison's district attorney. They started a land development business which has just about completed its first development, Applewood Hill near Madison, most of the homes built by Landmark Homes, a firm founded by Dr. Graaskamp and a former student. His partner in Landmark Research, Inc., is a systems engineer and statistician.

"We do a great deal of real estate consulting through Landmark Research, making good use of computer techniques."

The University of Wisconsin's Madison campus was certainly never planned with wheelchairs in mind, but henceforth its planning will reflect the influence of Dr. Graaskamp and others who recognize that persons in wheelchairs should be given some consideration.

"Five or six years ago a handicapped student did a masters paper on campus architectural barriers. It indicated the annoyances which are built into buildings and yet don't have to be there, particularly in the new buildings. The university administration responded with a special fund to correct

some of the barriers and provide safer methods of access and mobility around the campus.

"As a part of the plan, I participated in an analysis of the buildings, the best points of approach and access, and selection of which facilities to remodel with which features. Now almost all major buildings on campus have at least one ramp access convenient to automobiles. Restrooms with stalls and hand rails are placed strategically around the campus."

Dr. Graaskamp said that they have finally convinced the city of Madison that curb cuts are in the city's interest. Curb cut construction is now under way on city streets within the campus.

"It will be possible to roll from Sellery Hall to the Union or down State Street or up Johnson Street to the classroom buildings on south campus without having to go over a curb. And these cuts aren't just used by wheelchairs. We've found on campus right here in front of the building that lawnmower people, the delivery people, and everybody else are using what supposedly was only going to benefit some wheelchairs on campus."

#### **Wheelchairs on Campus**

The university has 14 students in wheelchairs, 12 of them under DVR sponsorship, including 7 quadriplegics.

"Last year the quadriplegics who lived on campus in the dorms used double rooms. In this type of situation, the handicapped individual was permitted by the university to use the double room as a single and then have the immediate double room next door to house two students who would be looking after them," Dr. Graaskamp said.

As advisor to a handicapped students organization, he meets with them about monthly.

“Floyd McBurney (Mike McBurney’s father) and I created a foundation from Mike’s estate primarily for handicapped students. What we did initially was to sell a lot of Mike’s mechanical equipment and use the cash to make it easier for handicapped students to get out to parties, football games and other events. We provide such things as cartop lifters and electric wheelchairs. We feel that one of the basic elements of rehabilitation has to be the sense of convenient mobility for the individual. So we have placed our priority on mobility items.”

Before polio hit two decades ago, Dr. Graaskamp had been an enthusiastic fisherman. Polio didn’t reduce the enthusiasm, but it did force some modifications. For instance, he has an electric fishing rod made of spare auto

parts and operated off a 12-volt car battery. Two of his student attendants devised it. His boat has also been modified to accommodate the wheelchair.

Although he has attendants in his home at all times, Dr. Graaskamp makes use of electronics wherever possible. An instrument panel using low voltage switches enables him to control his hi fi and TV, unlock the front door, and control lights all with a touch of his stick.

And what about some pictures of these things?

“Well, in addition to my classes this week, I have to give a presentation to one client tomorrow, then one to another on Wednesday, I’ll have to be in Chicago all day Thursday, and Friday I’m going fishing at Boulder Junction. Better make it next week.”



# UW Provides Mobility for Handicapped

By ROGER A. GRIBBLE  
Of The State Journal Staff

Not long ago handicapped students at the University of Wisconsin encountered all kinds of obstacles on campus.

But thanks to efforts begun here several years ago those days are over. Administrative, as well as physical barriers, have been coming down.

"THE BASIC philosophy is to remove administrative and physical roadblocks but not come up with an activity program for handicapped students," explains Business Prof. James Graaskamp.

Graaskamp, confined to a wheelchair since he was stricken with polio at age 17, was instrumental in getting a program started to remove the barriers.

He recalled that several years ago a graduate student did a paper called "Architectural Barriers of the University" which led to the formation of a committee on which he served.

THE COMMITTEE recommended that a program to make it easier for the handicapped student to attend the University be started on Bascom Hill and then expanded to the rest of the campus.

Initial work included the construction of curb cuts, ramps and special entrances. "We started with ramps at corners before the city adopted its policy to build them and we even built one in the crossover between Van Vleck and Sterling Halls," noted University Architect John Paulson.

"We also have redone several toilet rooms in existing buildings," he added. "We've developed our own typical toilet stall for the handicapped working with people at the Neurological Hospital that we feel is better than the state's type of stall."

THERE ARE also seating spaces for wheelchair students



Handicapped students Robert Mandeville, right, and Truman Karabis use curb cut.

—State Journal Photo By J. D. Patrick

at the Fieldhouse and Camp Randall Stadium.

"And we've prepared a map for the handicapped student's information that indicates where entries and elevators are," Paulson said. "This is a continuing program, by no means complete yet."

The work of the committee on which Graaskamp served also involved the identification of rooms which handicapped students could not reach easily.

"NOW THE timetable even has alternate rooms for exams," Graaskamp said. "And Dean Blair Matthews simplified the registration procedure."

The next area where changes were made was in residence halls. Double rooms were set aside so that a handicapped student could have room and two student attendants next door.

Graaskamp explained that a committee in the chancellor's office is exploring whether the

university should have a more formal program for the handicapped.

"THEY HAVE one at the University of Illinois," he said, "but it tends to isolate them. Former Dean Martha Peterson and I agreed, 'let's correct physical problems on campus but otherwise, so far as possible, let the handicapped make it on their own.'"

Graaskamp estimates there are probably between 12 and 18

students on campus in wheelchairs. "There may be others, possibly up to 200, with fairly serious mobility problems," he added.

The Handicapped Students Assn., which Graaskamp serves as faculty advisor, is a "functional, rather than social organization."

"The University is now re-studying whether to come up with an activity program for handicapped students," Graaskamp explained.

Graaskamp explained.

# Ketchikan Daily News

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KETCHIKAN, ALASKA, TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 1980



James A. Graaskamp, chairman of the real estate department at the University of Wisconsin, was in Ketchikan Monday to conduct a real estate seminar.

Graaskamp, 47, was left a quadriplegic after a bout with polio while in high school. Tony Meyer photo

## Breaking down barriers

*He's mastered his handicap*

By **TONY MEYER**  
Daily News Staff Writer

James A. Graaskamp is a quadriplegic, but the 47-year-old chairman of the real estate program at the University of Wisconsin says his disability has been put to an advantage.

"It has sensitized me to learn how to break down barriers in order to communicate," said Graaskamp as he relaxed during a break at a real estate seminar he was conducting at Ketchikan Community College Monday.

The seminar, sponsored by the Alaska Real Estate Commission and the Alaska Center for Real Estate Education and Research, was attended by a dozen people. Most of those who attended are either involved in the field as a profession, or simply interested in learning more about real estate in general.

"Real Estate — A redefinition" is the title of the seminar, which aims at helping those involved in real estate solve

problems systematically.

The program helps those involved in the field identify real estate problems and fit the real estate to the needs of consumers, developers and regulatory bodies.

The program was developed at the University of Wisconsin, where Graaskamp has taught since 1960. His credentials include degrees in English and securities analysis, with a doctorate in real estate and risk management.

Graaskamp is the owner of Landmark Research, Inc., a real estate and investment consulting firm, but he has also been owned home building, land development and real estate brokerage businesses.

Graaskamp said he thinks his disability helps to get the attention of his students. He said his disability hinders the ebb and flow of the student-teacher relationship at first, but eventually leads to credibility.

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With his disability, Graaskamp said, he initially spends a lot of time putting his students at ease. He said his "radar" is good, which helps him make students feel comfortable quickly.

One of the ways Graaskamp makes his students feel comfortable is by talking about fishing, one of the passions of his life.

Even though he was left a paraplegic by a bout with polio while in high school, Graaskamp said he has "always been a fisherman."

And during his stay in Ketchikan, he took advantage of the good fishing on an overnight charter trip with Jim and Norma Green.

Graaskamp uses a standard rod mounted on his wheelchair along with reels converted to electric motors to fish. "All that's missing is the reel handle," he said in describing his gear.

But anyone thinking he was fishing with a disadvantage would be wrong. Graaskamp pulled in six salmon and a halibut during the two-day trip.

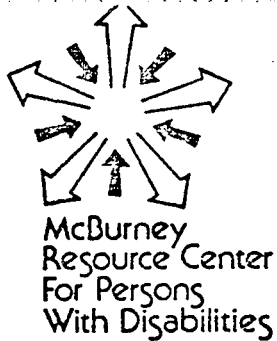
He said he has deep sea fished all over the U.S., and confesses that he likes trolling the best.

Even still, Graaskamp is able to get in some spinning once in a while with the aid of an electric casting rod that can get his lure out into the stream where the big ones are lurking.

Two traveling companions that are students at the University of Wisconsin, Mark Bigalke and Dan Volpano, went along with Graaskamp on the trip to assist him and do a little fishing themselves.

Graaskamp also employs four other students at the university to assist him in his travels, always taking two companions along with him on his trips around the country.

"Even though I'm six-foot-seven and weigh 265 pounds, I'm still very mobile," Graaskamp said.



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Madison, Wisconsin 53706  
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*See next  
page.*



## THE MCBURNEY LEGACY

by Bill Tesch

Floyd W. (Mike) McBurney, Jr. was an extraordinary man. His short career, which ended with his untimely death on February 26, 1967, was characterized by diligence, far-sightedness, and achievement. Indeed, Mike McBurney's accomplishments as an attorney impart an inkling of one who may very well have gone on to become one of this country's most phenomenal lawyers.

Graduating Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1960, Mike McBurney went on to take his law degree, with honors, from the Wisconsin Law School. He ranked third in his class and was elected to the "Order of the Coif". During his academic career, Mike engaged in many extra-curricular activities and received numerous awards. In 1963, he was the editor of the Advocate as well as Articles editor for the Wisconsin Law Review. That same year, he earned the William Page award for the best comment or note appearing in the Review. He also received the Law Faculty Book award for the student who has made an outstanding contribution to the professional spirit of the student body.

Mike's endeavors extended beyond the Law School to church, state, and social organizations in which he was extremely active. In 1963, Mike's father, Floyd, Sr., himself a prominent attorney, was a representative for the Social Action Committee (SAC) of the American Lutheran Church. As a member of that committee, Mr. McBurney proposed that the SAC organize a group to study the laws, presently before the Legislature, which pertain to social action -- a study by which the laws would be disseminated and spread throughout the southeastern Wisconsin churches for lay people to act upon. Mike, who often accompanied his father to the SAC meetings in Janesville, was a chief spokesman for the formation of the Wisconsin Protestant Legislative Committee which his father had proposed. When the decision was made for the go-ahead on the committee, Floyd, Sr., was made the Chief Legislative Counselor. And it was agreed, between father and son, that Mike (who at that time was still in Law School) would carry out the research and reporting necessary to find the pertinent laws and then translate them into layman's terms. It proved a formidable task, but in 1965, Mike published the first volume -- over 300 pages -- for the WPLC, a thriving organization that still exists today -- founded on a father's brilliance and on a son's diligence.


Along those same lines, Mike was the host of a television talk show sponsored by St. John's Lutheran Church called "Topic for the Day". The show aired on WMTV, and was an ecumenical panel discussion of recent social and religious issues.

Mrs. McBurney, Mike's mother, affectionately recalls one night when "the rain came down in buckets", and Mike had to be to the studio to tape the talk show. She is a short woman of about five feet, who was nervous about driving in the rain -- especially when the wind was blowing down oak trees in their backyard and the rain was coming down "an inch a minute". So you can imagine how hard it was for her to push her son in his wheelchair out to his specially-built van, lift him with his specially-built lift into the van, and then drive him, in that torrential downpour, to the WMTV studio. But Mike, as was his nature, remained calm and cheerful. "And do you know what that boy sat there and told me every turn I had

to make and every way I had to go!"

If you haven't guessed already, Mike was a quadriplegic. It may seem as though I only mention it in passing, and indeed, his disability may really appear to be inconsequential when one looks to all of his accomplishments and couples them with the fact that in November, 1966, only three years out of law school, he was elected Dane County District Attorney (the first Republican candidate in 18 years to be elected to any Dane County office). But I assure you, Floyd W. McBurney, Jr.'s disability was as much an integral factor in determining his character as were his academic and law careers. It inspired him to offer a loving hand to many, many others who were also disabled. It was the source of great sorrow, strength, love, and even joy, for his family and for the many that knew, loved, and respected him.

On August 29, 1954, at the age of sixteen, Mike was pushed backwards off the end of a pier into shallow water. A tall boy, almost 6'2", the fall crushed Mike's fourth and fifth cervical vertebrae, leaving him paralyzed from the neck down.

One could go into this story, for it is a deep and beautiful one. There were the friends and neighbors who responded in love. Men like Gill Albrecht and Lester Berman who devised the first tiltboard while Mike was hospitalized, and who crafted the first lift-equipped van especially for Mike; women like Anna Theissen, the woman who aided his mother and father in nursing him during the early days of Mike's injury; there were close personal friends like Jim Graaskamp, who drew him out of the house after his injury, restored his confidence, and remained his lifetime friend. The list goes on and on and on. 

Finally, of course, there are Mike's parents, who toiled in sorrow, love, and joy, and who finally rejoiced with Mike as he triumphed. Not enough can be said for this pioneering family who struggled to adapt to their son's disability. At the time, it was very rare for a man with Mike's sort of injury to live, so families like this one had to find ways to adapt practically by themselves. But adapt they did -- Mike's success and phenomenal accomplishments attest the strength of his own family background.

There's a far deeper story to this great man's life, who graduated Phi Beta Kappa, who graduated with honors from Law School, who did so much for his church and his fellow man, who rose to the position of District Attorney in just three short years, and held that position until his death. Yes, there's a deeper story which demands much, much more time than is available in this small space, but let this much be said: Mike's life was enhanced and enriched by his patient, loving family, and that love flowed from Mike to all of mankind. For these reasons, as well as for many more, the McBurney Resource Center is respectfully dedicated to both family and son.

December, 1981



Wisconsin Alumnus  
Vol. 84, No. 2  
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# Catching Up to Where We Ought to Be.

Look inside the timetable for an indication of how far the campus has come toward greater accessibility for the physically disabled. Listed there is every regular-assignment classroom *not* usable by students in wheelchairs; there are only fourteen out of more than 400! The University has spent well over \$2 million in seventeen years toward making buildings and the campus itself negotiable by everyone.

Prof. Jim Graaskamp PhD '65, of the School of Business, has been in a wheelchair since coming here as a grad student in 1958. "Back then, if you wanted to get up some steps, you got two strong students to bounce you up," he said recently. "But since then has come the realization that not only should we all be able to get around inside buildings, but that we should be able to do so as normally as possible. There is no reason why the handicapped should not be able to go through the front door instead of back where the trash is put out. Public capital should be spent on *all* the public."

Seven large buildings have been rehabilitated in the last five years: Education, Music Hall, Mechanical Engineering, the Red Gym, Babcock Hall, the School of Social Work, and Science Hall. The Planning and Construction department is now working on three more: the upper levels of the University Club which house several student-service offices, the Soils Building, and the entrance to the large B-10 lecture hall in the Commerce Building. Last summer, University Housing completed a \$350,000 program in the dorms on the southeast campus and along the lake shore.

Now, campuswide, there are ramps, elevators with braille indicators, larger doorways, new bathrooms, wheelchair space in classrooms (achieved in some instances by removal of a few rows of seats), wider corridors where necessary, curb cuts.

"Not that all the problems are solved," said Gordon Orr MA '71, the campus architect since 1965. "But for the most part, we're now down to such things as adding extra railings or reducing the pressure needed to open a door. I feel good about what we've accomplished. We had a lot against us with the older buildings and the topography of the campus. There isn't much you can do to shave Bascom Hill."

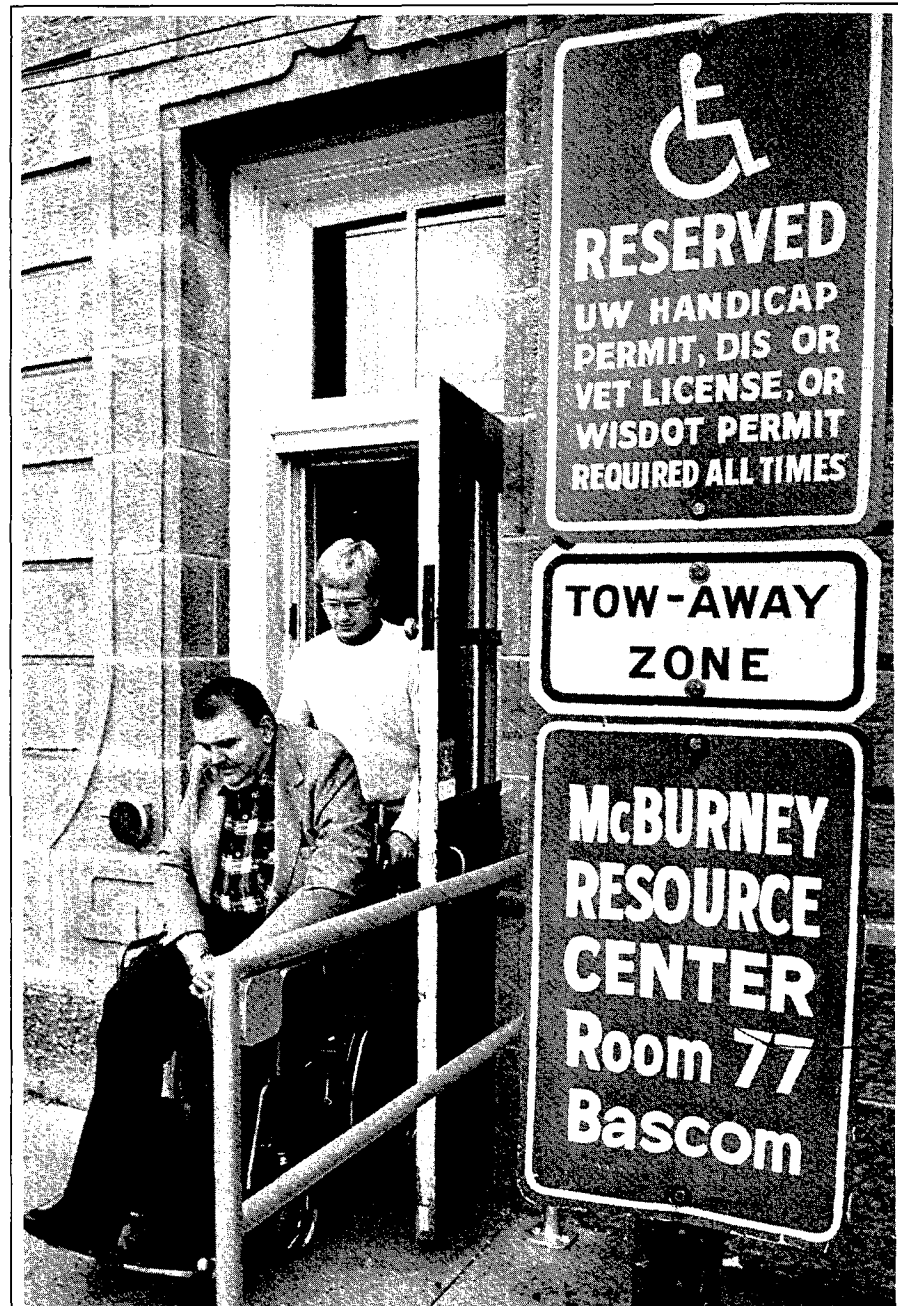
He credits Prof. Graaskamp and the late Floyd W. "Mike" McBurney '60—who also was confined to a wheelchair—with bringing the campus to a new awareness of the problem when both were students. McBurney graduated from the Law School in 1963, and went on to become Dane County district attorney. Before his death in 1967 he lobbied successfully for a state law requiring public buildings to be accessible to

everyone. Graaskamp adds that their efforts would have been far less successful were it not for then-safety director Earl Rupp and Blair Mathews, an assistant dean of students who was instrumental in the founding of what is now the McBurney Resource Center (WA Nov/Dec '82). The center provides what Graaskamp calls the second phase of concern for campus handicapped, the realization that "this whole definition extends beyond just those in wheelchairs or with hearing or sight impairments; circulatory problems, learning problems, emotional problems—all are disabilities."

The center, in Bascom Hall, is a clearinghouse of information and individual help. It's headed by Nancy Smith and Kitty Barry MA '81, and is available to faculty and staff as well as students. (At fall regis-

tration, 331 students mentioned disabilities of one kind or another, but Mathews believes there are many more; the others fear being "labelled.") Among McBurney's services—all involving volunteers—are the use of reading machines or readers, tape recorders, proxy registration, class notetakers, alternative testing methods, wheelchairs with "pushers," and counseling; these, and a constant alertness to newly discovered needs. Said Planning and Construction department assistant Jim Roeber '58, '68, "The campus will never be perfect for everyone. It's like trying to paint the Golden Gate Bridge. But tomorrow, if there's someone with a disability problem we've not considered, the McBurney Center will get the word to us and help us take care of it."

—Steve Schumacher '72



Photo/Norman Lenburg

Prof. Jim Graaskamp was instrumental in the updating program.

# Quadriplegic Serves as Example Of How To Overcome Handicaps

By JANE ELLEDGE  
Press-Gazette Staff Writer

Jim Graaskamp is a quadriplegic — his arms and legs are immobile.

He has been confined to a wheelchair since 1950, when a combination of polio and a high school football injury paralyzed him for life.

But to his friends, Graaskamp is a Ph.D., an associate professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, adviser to handicapped students there, and something of a real estate tycoon.

## Spoke Here

Graaskamp, named 1970 Wisconsin Handicapped Person of the Year, was guest speaker here recently at the Curative Workshop-Rehabilitation Center annual dinner.

"Medicine is concerned with saving a life, but rehabilitation deals with the living of it," he told the group. "There is no limit to what the handicapped person can do if given the means through rehabilitation."

Graaskamp believes that persons handicapped later in life adapt better than do those handicapped since birth.

"The basically mature, well adjusted person who becomes

handicapped during his teens, for example," Graaskamp said, "will probably be better off psychologically than the person who's been handicapped all his life."

## Applies to Veterans

The individual handicapped since birth may have been sheltered all his life and thus, not capable of coping with the mo-



JIM GRAASKAMP

bile world on his own, Graaskamp said.

"But the recently handicapped person can adjust psychologically because he is attuned to the mobile world," Graaskamp noted. "At one time he was a part of it."

This idea applies to the Vietnam veteran who comes back handicapped.

"If he was basically well adjusted before, then he should be

able to make it," Graaskamp said.

Two major problems for the handicapped individual are inconvenience and lack of complete self-mobility.

To help alleviate them for the university's 300 handicapped students, Graaskamp serves as a consultant on campus architectural barriers. He has implemented numerous special facilities, including ramps and specially equipped restrooms.

## Heads Club

There is no effort to segregate handicapped persons from the mobile ones.

Graaskamp heads up a handicapped students club of about 15 members, mostly confined to wheelchairs. But, it is not intended to promote social isolation. Members meet only to discuss mobility problems and to exchange technical information on technique and equipment.

"Social rehabilitation within the mobile society is very important to the handicapped person," Graaskamp says.

"Ninety-nine per cent of all people are handicapped in some way," he said. "We all have emotional and physical scars and been through traumas."

"So," he continued, "I would suggest that we all be kind and giving to one another . . ."

