



Light snow Details, **10C.**
Today **20** Tonight **6**

WIAC Men's Basketball

Blugolds get first home win over UW-Superior since 2006. **1D.**

UW-Eau Claire's Matt Coenen, left, and the Yellowjackets' Trent Davis

Musician Meredith Axelrod

Entertainment

Ragtime fest reaches out to community. **1C.**

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Thursday, January 13, 2011



Photo by Derek Evan, HUW Evans Agency, Cardiff, Wales
Donald Jackson, a master calligrapher from Monmouth, Wales, examined sketches for the book of Psalms, one of seven volumes that are part of The Saint John's Bible. Jackson dreamed of creating a handwritten, illuminated Bible since childhood.

Handwritten Bible project 13 years in the making

Sacred Heart will host reproduction of text with 160 illuminations

By Christena T. O'Brien
Leader-Telegram staff

The Saint John's Bible isn't a typical Bible.

The Bible, once completed later this year, will be the first Bible in more than 500 years to be written by hand. Contained in seven volumes, the 1,150-page Bible has 160 illuminations — colored, gilded pieces of art — woven throughout.

To learn more about The Saint John's Bible project, go to www.leadertelegram.com/links.

"We've had to wait 13 years to see this come together," said

Tim Ternes, director of The Saint John's Bible, "and while 13 years seems like a long time, it really isn't when you look at a project of this magnitude."

Ternes will discuss the development of the landmark project during an open house Thursday, Jan. 20, at Sacred Heart Hospital, where The Heritage Edition of The Saint John's Bible — a high-end reproduction of the original — will be

■ The Heritage Edition of The Saint John's Bible, a fine-art reproduction of the original, will be available for viewing at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 20, in the Community Auditorium at Sacred Heart Hospital, 900 W. Clairemont Ave. To register for the free event, call the Friends of Sacred Heart Hospital at 715-717-4925.

available for viewing.

The hospital is hosting the event to make community members aware of the project and invite them to enjoy prints from the pages of The Saint John's Bible, which have been placed on permanent display near the entrance to Sacred Heart's Community Auditorium.

"It's an amazing project," said Ann Kaiser, director of development at Sacred Heart Hospital. "It's mind boggling — the amount of work that has gone into it."

The Saint John's Bible is the product of a childhood dream of master calligrapher Donald Jackson to create a handwritten, illuminated Bible. The Benedictine monks of Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minn., commissioned the project in 1998.

"This is not a picture book," said Ternes of the Bible, which is 2 feet tall

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by 3 feet wide when opened. "The illuminations are visual spiritual meditations designed to invite you into the Scriptures."

Theologians and scholars at Saint John's University selected the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible as the translation for The Saint John's Bible because its predecessor, the Revised Standard Version, had gained the distinction of being officially authorized for use by most major Christian churches.

"What really struck me about the Bible is the translation," said Dick Cable of Eau Claire, who had never heard of The Saint John's Bible before he, his late wife Marlene, and another couple saw an exhibit at a museum during a trip to Phoenix five or six years ago. "They picked one that they thought would bring all Christian denominations together."

An ecumenical group that does the same — the Wednesday Morning Christian Men's Group, which Cable belongs to — attended retreats at Saint John's Abbey, where its members really became acquainted with the Bible project and Ternes.

Hoping to share the Bible with others, the group added to the hospital's collection of prints and donated reproductions of the Bible's completed volumes to Sacred Heart.

"It is just impressive," said Cable, who is excited to see Ternes come to Sacred Heart Hospital to discuss the project with the public. "Having him come to town is a real opportunity."

Kaiser couldn't agree more. "This project is meaningful to so many different people," she said.

"Here, (at Sacred Heart Hospital), we have that emphasis on spirituality in health care. The images, as you get to know the background of them and you get to know the symbolism of them, they really carry incredible meaning, can be very touching and can really minister to people spiritually."

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The Saint John's Bible

The Saint John's Bible, commissioned by the Benedictine monks of Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minn., is the first Bible in more than 500 years to be written by hand.

The Bible is written on calfskin vellum, using turkey, swan and goose quills. The team of scribes uses natural handmade inks, hand-ground pigments and gold and silver leaf gild, according to The Saint John's Bible website.

Following a calligraphy presentation in 1995 at the Newberry Library in Chicago sponsored by Saint John's, Donald Jackson, a master calligrapher from Wales, discussed a handwritten Bible with Eric Hollas, former director of the Hill Museum

& Manuscript Library at Saint John's University.

The Saint John's Bible was officially commissioned in 1998, and funding opportunities were launched. The public was introduced to the project in 1999.

The handwritten and illuminated Bible is divided into seven volumes — Gospels and Acts, Pentateuch, Psalms, Prophets, Wisdom Books, Historical Books and Letters and Revelation. All are completed, except for the latter, which is expected to be completed this summer.

When opened, The Saint John's Bible is 2 feet tall by 3 feet wide. Once completed, it will contain more than 1,100 pages and 160 illuminations.