Rivier names speaker

The Rivier University commencement ceremony will take place at the Tsongas Center in Lowell, Mass., at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 7.

Rivier will present honorary degrees to international artist Sylvia Nicolas and local business leader Frederick H. Kocher, president of Kocher and Co. Inc. and past president of the New Hampshire High Technology Council.

Kocher also will serve as the commencement speaker.

"As we celebrate our 81st Commencement, it is appropriate to honor two individuals who have, through their life's work, exemplified the Rivier spirit of transformation and are role models for careers successfully built on a liberal arts education," university President Sister Paula Marie Buley said in a statement.

Kocher is host of N.H.'s Business on WMUR, and has received numerous awards and recognition including a Lifetime Achievement Award from the New Hampshire High Technology Council and Business Leader of the Year by Business NH Magazine.

Nicolas created of the bronze sculpture of Rivier's namesake, which serves as the focal point to Heritage Plaza.

"Ms. Nicolas has brought the founding spirit of Blessed Anne Marie Rivier to life through sculpture," Buley said. "Our campus community now knows this visionary leader, apostle, and educator whose legacy forever moves us forward."

Nicolas has received numerous commissions for her stained glass work including the Church of the Annunciation in Washington, D.C., and St. John's University in New York, and for her sculptures at St. Anselm College, Stonehill College, Providence College and Rivier.

A native of the Netherlands, Nicolas studied extensively in Europe, and in the United States with painter Rufino Tamayo and sculptor Ossip Zadkine.

Agency raises $140K

The Front Door Agency in Nashua raised $140,000 to serve those in need through their annual Gourmet Festival and Auction at the Nashua Country Club on March 20.

The 28th annual auction, "There's No Place Like Home," was "Wizard of Oz"-themed to highlight the agency's mission of supporting individuals and families in Greater Nashua avoid homelessness as they transition to self-sufficiency.

"Just as Dorothy discovered she 'always had the power within her to go home,' many of our