

University Notes

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Grant awarded to Burdette Park-USI Trail

Within weeks of the ribbon-cutting for Phase I of the Burdette Park-USI Trail (a bicycle, pedestrian, and nature trail between USI and Burdette Park), Vanderburgh County Commissioners announced the project was awarded a \$1 million grant from the Indiana Department of Transportation.

The grant is awarded from funds that are set aside each year by the Federal Highway Administration and channeled through the Indiana Department of Transportation for transportation enhancement projects.

“This money should complete Phase II of this project which will connect USI with the sports complex along Broadway Avenue,” said **Bill Nix**, commission president.

Phase I is a half-mile in length from Discovery Lodge to Nurrenbern Road. When complete, the trail is projected to be a total of 2.5 miles from Discovery Lodge to USI, allowing students, faculty, and staff access to Burdette Park and 32 miles of bike routes the commissioners dedicated last year in Union Township.

“This is exciting news for our community,” said **Jeff Korb**, commission vice president. “What began as a project that would greatly benefit the students and residents of the west side of Evansville is now being expanded to benefit a far great population of our community. We have already received positive feedback from people who have enjoyed this beautiful pedestrian, bicycle, and nature trail.”

Southern Indiana Higher Education Inc. is aiding the project by contributing easements to the county across land it owns. The county owns the remainder of the land.

“These monies represent an outside recognition of the initiative to connect one of Indiana's top universities with one of Indiana's top parks,” said Commissioner **Troy Tornatta**.

Employee Retirement Reception is Wednesday

The University will honor the contributions and careers of eight retiring employees at a reception at 2 p.m. Wednesday, December 5, in Carter Hall in the University Center. Retiring employees to be recognized include **Dr. Darrel Bigham**, **Larry Bohleber**, **Leonard Cook**, **Linda Culver**, **Barry Hart**, **Mabel Hawkins**, **Marjorie Labhart**, and **Eric von Fuhrmann**.

Mabel Hawkins, supervisor of the Copy Center, will retire on April 1, 2008, after 24 years of service to USI.

Leslie Parker, director of Publishing Services, said, “Mabel met Ann Humphrey, the director of Publications in 1984, at the dry cleaners where Mabel previously worked. Ann asked Mabel to apply for the position because she was impressed with her public relations skills. Being a tailor and having no office experience, Mabel was at first reluctant to apply, but Ann convinced her, saying she didn't want office skills, she wanted good public relations skills.”

“After thinking about it, I decided ‘why not, all they can say is no,’” **Hawkins** said. She discovered that she was well-suited for the job. **Parker** said, “Mabel likes people and she was happy in the position as it provided opportunities to meet many different people.”

The Copy Center was located in the lower level of the Forum Wing until 1998, when it moved to its current location in the Publishing Services

Center, where **Hawkins** claims to have the best view on campus overlooking Reflection Lake. **Parker** said that **Hawkins** has seen many changes over the years in technology related to copying.

“Mabel was instrumental in moving the campus satellite copiers and the Copy Center copiers from analog to digital, and networking the copiers for better efficiency and ease of management. Under Mabel's tutelage, the Copy Center moved from a basic walk-up copy shop to a highly advanced operation; users went from having to keep track of and carry an ‘auditron box’ to access department copiers and tally copy counts, to simply entering codes in a copier for immediate access; Copy Center services have been greatly enhanced to include production-quality color, many bindery options, and greater speed and quality; and, uniformity across campus through a unified system now provides a great economic advantage and consistency for users.”

Parker added, “Over the years, Mabel has received dozens of letters and cards of thanks for the many times she bailed someone out of a deadline bind. In spite of all obstacles, Mabel just gets the work done. She isn't one to want a big deal made of the fine job she does, but she is appreciative of the acknowledgements and gratitude she has received in the form of e-mails, notes, and of course, candy and cookies at the holidays.”

On retiring, **Hawkins** said, “I have mixed feelings about retirement. In some ways I am really looking forward to not having the daily grind, but on the other hand I really do like what I do here. When I retire I plan to do some of the things that I never get a chance to do working full time. I plan to do some more volunteer work at my church, and other things I just can't do now. But the main thing that I want to do is volunteer to read at nursing homes and children's centers. Reading is my absolute favorite pastime and I would like very much to be able to put that to use where I can. I also like to work in ceramics, mostly painting, and I can now get back to that.”

Reflecting on his 42-year career at USI, Professor **Eric von Fuhrmann** is proudest of the legacy he leaves through his students.

“My real legacy is not personal achievement, but the good students that I've been able to help,” he said. “I've watched them flower. I've watched them go on to further education and professions. To think I had a small role in this is the most gratifying thing I have out of my career.”

VonFuhrmann opened the world up to students both through teaching and through international travel. For 20 years, he took students in his Humanities classes to Greece and Italy.

“I took students who had never been on a plane before – who had never been out of the Tri-state or the country,” he said. “It was something to see their faces when they got out of the Tri-state and into a completely foreign culture.”

He received two International Awareness Grants from the Indiana Humanities Council to produce video tours of Greece and Italy for distance education students studying Humanities and mythology at USI. And for 25 years, he and **Dr. Sherry Darrell**, director of Humanities, took a group of students to the Shakespeare festival in Stratford, Ontario, Canada.

VonFuhrmann was the recipient of two Fulbright Awards and two National Endowment for the Humanities Awards. The Fulbright grants enabled him to create American Studies programs and libraries at the University of Seville and the University of Valencia in Spain. The NEH grants allowed him to attend University of Arizona Institutes on Homer

and Greek literature with master scholars of the Western world.

He created many classes in the Humanities at USI, including the Core courses Ethnic Literature, Classical Mythology, and World Mythology. Along with **Dr. Michael Dixon**, assistant professor of history, he helped to start a minor in Classical Studies.

He was recognized for his teaching with the H. Lee Cooper Core Curriculum Teaching Award in 2004.

As academic head of Humanities from 1966-69, he had a hand in hiring some of USI's outstanding Liberal Arts faculty. He said the early days at USI were an exciting time. "Starting out with 412 students and a handful of faculty in the old Centennial School building, everything was on a shoestring. We carved out a place of our own."

In the community, vonFuhrmann was a member of the committee that brought the LST 325 to Evansville. He will lead a sold-out tour of World War II sites in Europe in July 2008. He and his wife Katherine support Tales & Scales and the historic Alhambra Theatre, and established the USI Matthew Shepard Theatre Award.

Dr. Darrel Bigham, professor of history, will see eight years of work on a federal commission begin to bear fruit in spring 2008, his last semester before retirement from USI.

In 2000, he was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, charged by congress with several mandates, including the creation of Lincoln-oriented stamps, a redesigned penny, and a special rededication program at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C.

For Bigham, who chairs the commission's education committee, retirement means he'll have more time for his commission work. "My responsibilities continue through the end of 2010, so this has been almost a full-time job and I'm glad I'll have more time to work on it," he said. The national kick-off event is in February 2008 in Louisville.

Bigham joined the University in 1970. He was instrumental in the formation and serves as director of Historic Southern Indiana, a USI outreach program that promotes the historical, cultural, and natural resources of southern Indiana. "It's a program I feel very strongly about and feel we've made a significant contribution to the region," he said. "We've gotten a great deal of national attention in the past 21 years. It was one of the earliest outreach programs of the institution, and we continue to make a mark."

He has authored, co-authored, or edited 11 books, most recently *On Jordan's Banks: Emancipation and its Aftermath in the Ohio River Valley* (University Press of Kentucky, 2005). He was guest editor of the Organization of American Historians October 2007 *Magazine of History* focusing on Lincoln and Race.

Bigham organized or served as president of the Vanderburgh County Historical Society, the Evansville Arts and Education Council, the Metropolitan Evansville Progress Committee, the Evansville Museum, and Leadership Evansville, for which he was the first executive director.

He chaired the Evansville committee that observed the American Revolution bicentennial during 1974-1977 and the committee that organized the city's 175th anniversary celebration in 1987. He also created and for many years provided leadership for the education committee of the Rotary Club of Evansville. He organized and chaired the Indiana Council for History Education (1991-2002) and was president of the Indiana Association of Historians (1999-2000).

The Indiana Historical Society honored Bigham with its Hoosier Historian Award in 2002.

When his work with the commission ends, he plans to write, travel, and spend more time with his wife Polly at her family home in Woodstock, Vermont.

Linda Culver retired from the Bursar's office after 23 years in order to care for her husband Derriel. Her retirement was effective in June.

Bursar **M. Suzanne Devine**, said, "Linda was always a friendly presence at the Cashier's window. She always went out of her way to help students

with whatever they needed. She would go above and beyond what she needed to do to ensure that the students were handled in an efficient manner. She was an important part of our office and we miss her dearly."

Culver said, "I loved every minute of working with the kids and the people I worked with. I want to thank **Cindy Miller**, associate bursar, for being such a good friend and supporter for all these years."

Culver also served USI as a part-time telephone operator for a year and volunteered for cross country races under the late **Coach Bill Stegemoller**.

Business Office staff love pranks. "There was a lot of fun over the years," Culver said. "One time, my driver's license had expired and I didn't know it, and my coworkers sent a security guard over to tell me I was not allowed to drive on University property. They told me if I came to work I'd have to park on the highway and walk in. I was getting very upset. Everybody was standing around watching."

Another time, staff members planted an electronic chirping bird in the ceiling tiles above the desk of **Mike Whipple**, assistant treasurer and Business Office director. "He called **Steve Helfrich**, director of Facilities Operations and Planning, and they couldn't find anything. All day long Mike kept calling Steve and saying, 'You better come and get this bird out of here.'"

In honor of the University's 40th anniversary, **Melody Sponn**, former accounts payable supervisor, told stories about pranks in the Business Office, including a time that Culver, who has a sleep disorder, fell asleep during her lunch hour.

Sponn wrote, "Since it was near Halloween, her co-workers took down the fake cobwebs that decorated the cashier's window and decorated Linda. As they got out Christmas lights and began to decorate her, Linda woke up and asked what was going on. I pointed to the cobwebs and said, 'You've been asleep a really long time.'"

Culver said, "Steve Bridges (controller) and Mike made every day at USI fun. Steve and Cindy made you feel like you wanted to come to work every day. It was really enjoyable working there. I miss it."

She plans to spend more time with her five grandchildren and seek part-time work when her husband gets back on his feet.

Editor's note: Retirement stories about Bohleber, Cook, Hart, and Labhart appeared in the in the November 16 edition of *University Notes*.

Museum educator is O'Bannon Heritage Award winner

JoAnne Spiller, a museum educator with the Jefferson County Historical Society in Madison, Indiana, is the recipient of Historic Southern Indiana's 2007 Frank and Judy O'Bannon Heritage Enrichment Award, given to an individual who is an exemplary model of community education through such activities as community heritage, heritage/cultural tourism, historic preservation, and historical interpretation in the HSI region, which includes 26 counties in southern Indiana.

Spiller was nominated for the award by **Joseph D. Carr**, director of the Jefferson County Historical Society. He wrote, "With her enthusiasm and creativity, she has led our educational programming into regional leadership. She is a well-known advocate for local heritage. As our only paid educator, she has recruited countless volunteers, young and old, and her programs reach hundreds of children every year."

Those programs include a week-long summer history camp for elementary school children with daily themes such as Native Americans, immigrants, industry, and the development of the area; two-hour in-school day camps in elementary schools; school programs for grades two through five; the Heritage Days Festival, during which fourth graders visit area museums; girl and boy scout museum trips; an annual Children's Art Exhibit; and a campaign that raised \$25,000 for a children's gallery in the Historical Society's Heritage Center.

Spiller received a check for \$1,000 and a plaque at HSI's annual meeting, held at the Leora Brown School in Corydon, Indiana. For more informa-

tion about HSI, an outreach program of USI, go to www.usi.edu/hsi/index.asp.

Issues for the 21st Century

The USI Honors Program will present its 10th annual Issues for the 21st Century discussion forum at 7 p.m. Tuesday, December 4, in UC 201-202 in the University Center.

This year's topic is "The Environment." Students in the Honors 101 course Issues for the 21st Century have been considering this issue during the fall 2007 semester and will lead deliberation on the topic in the forum.

A deliberative forum is not a debate, but rather a moderated discussion where the participants work toward making choices involving the public policy issue. During the forum, participants will consider how they can act on the problem and what policy they think is best for our society. Participants will weigh the costs and consequences of various options and what they are or are not willing to do in addressing this issue.

The USI Honors Program offers enhanced opportunities to students who show promise of outstanding academic achievement, to develop verbal and written communication skills, critical thinking, and investigative learning.

The forum is free and open to the public, but space is limited. Those interested in attending should reserve a seat by contacting **Dr. Dane M. Partridge**, associate professor of management and director of the Honors Program, at 812/465-7085.

Names in the news

In sympathy

The University community extends sympathy to **Dr. Nadine Coudret**, dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions, whose husband **Raymond J. "Duke" Coudret** died November 18. A sports lover, Duke Coudret served on the board of directors of the USI Varsity Club and was its chairman in 1999. Services were held November 21 at Corpus Christi Catholic Church with burial at St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the Coudret Nursing and Health Professions Endowment Fund at USI, 8600 University Blvd., Evansville, IN 47712.

The University community extends sympathy to the family of **Alice Mayer**, part-time call-in clerk in the David L. Rice Library, who died November 25. Private family services were held. Memorial contributions may be made to The Salvation Army, 1040 North Fulton Avenue, Evansville, IN 47710 or to the Children's Clothing Bank, 1801 Washington Avenue, Evansville, IN 47714.

The University community extends sympathy to **Dr. Greg Valentine**, associate professor of business education, whose father **Albert William Valentine** died November 20. Services were held November 24 in East Longmeadow and Springfield, Massachusetts. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Lung Association, 393 Maple Street, Springfield, MA 01105.

Welcome

Michael Broshears has accepted a position as director in the University Division. He holds a Master of Science degree in college student personnel services from Miami University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Indiana University. Broshears was formerly employed as director in the Academic Advising Center at Northern Illinois University.

Nance Fiester has accepted a position as instructional coordinator of special projects in the College of Nursing and Health Professions. She holds a master's degree in instructional systems technology and a certificate in online course development from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree in nursing from USI. Fiester was formerly employed as an instructional designer in the higher education/online learning division of a large

publishing company.

Tom Kiesel has accepted a position as HVAC operator in the Physical Plant.

Amy Reed has accepted a position as benefit supervisor in Human Resources. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from USI. Reed was formerly employed as a human resource manager at Koch Originals, Inc.

Accomplishments

The Evansville River Cities Postal Customer Council held its fall seminar on the USI campus on November 7. **Darren Shelton**, lead distribution services clerk, facilitated a seminar entitled, "Addressing and Your Bottom Line - It's Your Money." **David Goldenberg**, director of Procurement and Distribution Services, scored the highest on a postal quiz for individuals not directly involved in the mail processing business.

FYI

Fall Commencement is December 8

The fall Commencement Ceremony begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, December 8, in the Physical Activities Center. **Dr. Paul Doss**, the Integra Distinguished Professor Award-winner for 2007, will give the Commencement address. Faculty members who wish to participate in Commencement must contact the Office of Special Events at 812/ 464-1930. Faculty are expected to wear appropriate academic regalia, available for purchase through the USI Bookstore. Faculty and administrative staff will assemble at 9:15 a.m. in the Varsity Club Room. For more information, go to www.usi.edu/commencement/commencement_2.asp.

Due to limited seating, the Commencement Ceremony will be available online via live stream link. A broadband Internet connection will be required and links to the free RealPlayer 10 software for both Windows and Mac OS X can be located at instructech.usi.edu/fall2007. Anyone who wishes to view the event on December 8, and has the software installed, will be able to do so by visiting the link and clicking on a live stream link.

If audience seating in the Physical Activities Center reaches capacity, overflow seating will be available in Carter Hall in the University Center. The ceremony will be televised live and in color on the large screen in Carter Hall. Guests will have the opportunity to witness the full program and see each graduate receive his or her diploma.

University Handbook updated

The University's Outside Speakers Policy was recently amended by the Office of Academic Affairs as part of its annual review of the University Handbook. The Handbook is regularly updated in response to concerns. To view the changes in the policy, go to images/speakerpolicy.pdf.

Children's book sale starts Tuesday

Children's books will be available for sale at a Mini Holiday Book Fair from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, December 4-6 in the USI Children's Center lobby. For more information, contact **Pam Buschkill**, Children's Center coordinator, at 812/464-1869.

Noble wins principal award

Laura Huber Noble '92, M '96, principal of William Tell Elementary School in Tell City, Indiana, is the Indiana Association of School Principals (IASP) top elementary principal in IASP's District 11, composed of 11 southwestern Indiana counties. One elementary principal is honored from each of the association's 12 districts. The USI magna cum laude graduate was Tell City's teacher of the year in 1998 and Perry County Outstanding Young Woman for 2005. She was the Bower-Suhrheinrich School of Education & Human Services Alumni in Residence in 2006.