

LA Story

Newsletter of the College of Liberal Arts

New teaching theatre takes center stage

A project long-awaited by the College of Liberal Arts was approved in the budget passed by the Indiana General Assembly in July. The General Assembly authorized \$15 million in bonding authority for a teaching theatre to be located on the USI campus, adjacent to the expanded University Center.

The University's number one capital priority for the 2009-2011 biennium, the 350-seat teaching theatre will replace USI Theatre, located four miles from campus on Igleheart Avenue - and in the path of the planned widening of Highway 62/the Lloyd Expressway.

Dr. David Glassman, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, said, "The new teaching theatre will be a spectacular addition to the USI campus and will provide long-range benefit to our students and to the cultural opportunities of the entire Tri-

state region. It will be home to the USI student theatre as well as our prestigious Repertory Project that allows students to work directly with professional Equity actors and stage managers. It is truly a dream come true."

Plans for construction of a performing arts facility have been part of the University's 10-year Capital Improvement Plan for almost 20 years, since 1991-1993. Authorization by the General Assembly allows the University to move forward on design of the project, which must then be reviewed by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and the State Budget Agency before funds are released for construction.

Elliot Wasserman, chair of the Department of Performing Arts, said, "While the teaching theatre will greatly enhance the theatre program itself, it



also is a symbol of the important role that the University plays in our community as a provider of cultural enrichment opportunities. The presence of this theatre at the heart of the campus is reassuring to us all because it signals the commitment of USI to define itself both as a service institution and as a traditional university, committed to preserving the best our culture has to offer its future generations."

Look for an artist rendering of the teaching theatre in a future issue of *LA Story*.

Inaugural activities celebrate USI's third president

The installation of Dr. Linda L. M. Bennett as USI's third president will be held at 3 p.m. October 15 in the Physical Activities Center (PAC). Inauguration activities are scheduled throughout the week:

- Parents and Family Weekend, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. October 10. President Bennett will welcome USI students and parents during a picnic lunch on the quad hosted by the USI Parents and Families Association.
- Alumni Reception, 2-4 p.m. October 11. President Bennett will greet alumni during a reception in the McCutchan Art Center/Pace Galleries hosted by the USI Alumni Association. Alumni art will be on display.
- New Harmony Reception, 5-7 p.m. Tuesday, October 13. President Bennett will meet with donors and patrons at the Atheneum/Visitors Center in New Harmony. Hosted by Friends of Historic New Harmony.
- Inauguration Symposium, 3 p.m. October 14, Carter Hall, University Center. Hosted by the Faculty Senate.
- Inauguration Day, noon delegates lunch, October 15, Carter Hall; Inauguration, 3 p.m., PAC. A reception in Carter Hall will follow the ceremony.
- President's Associates Dinner, 6:30 p.m., October 16, Carter Hall. President Bennett will greet major donors. Hosted by the USI Foundation.



For a video message from USI's new president, go to www.usi.edu/president.

Dean's Message

Another great year for Liberal Arts

I am amazed by all that the College of Liberal Arts has achieved in the last year. Let me share just a few highlights with you. During the 2008-2009 year we dedicated two new facilities, the beautiful Kenneth P. McCutchan Art Center/Palmina F. and Stephen S. Pace Galleries and the state of the art new Ceramics Center. The Art Center has quickly become an icon of cultural expression and outreach for USI and the College of Liberal Arts. And it was wonderful to see the faces of our talented art students light up when they viewed their creations on the walls of our professional gallery during the Senior Art Seminar and the annual Juried Student Art Exhibition.

Last year we gained approval from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education to expand our programs to include a major in criminal justice studies. The interest in this new program has been phenomenal and we expect it to grow quickly, reaching 300-plus majors in the next few years. This year we will be seeking state approval to add a new master's-level graduate program in communications. The program, already approved by the USI Board of Trustees, will appeal to students and professionals pursuing



Dr. David Glassman

careers in advertising/public relations, healthcare and business organizations, human resources, media management, and mediation and facilitation consulting, among many others.

Finally, the past year was truly outstanding for our students who continue to grow in academic excellence, talent, and creativity. Over 176 students were honored with scholarships and awards during our College of Liberal Arts Honors Convocation in spring. Never before have so many students been recognized for excellence. **Brittany Gray**, an exceptional student with a triple major in art, Spanish, and international studies, received the College's highest honor, the Liberal Arts Outstanding Student Award.

The College continues to grow in numbers, programs, and excellence. We have much to be proud of and much to look forward to in the future.

Art Center and Galleries are online

Visit the Kenneth P. McCutchan Art Center and Palmina F. and Stephen S. Pace Galleries online at www.usi.edu/libarts/artcenter-galleries. There you can look for current, past, and upcoming exhibitions, learn more about McCutchan and the Paces, and view pieces from the University's McCutchan, Pace, Warhol, and Zutt art collections in the Virtual Exhibition.



www.usi.edu/libarts/artcenter-galleries



College of Liberal Arts

Office 812/464-1855
FAX 812/465-7152

Dean
Dr. David Glassman 812/464-1855

Associate Dean
Michael Aakhus 812/464-1853

Assistant Dean
Dr. Julie Evey-Johnson 812/465-7152

Departments

Art
Joan Kempf deJong 812/465-1214

Communications
Dr. Wayne Rinks 812/464-1950

English
Dr. Stephen Spencer 812/465-7063

Modern and Classical Languages
Dr. Silvia Rode 812/465-7026

History
Dr. Tamara Hunt 812/465-1202

Performing Arts
Elliot Wasserman 812/465-1614

Philosophy and Political Science
Dr. Mary Hallock Morris . . . 812/461-5207

Psychology
Dr. Julie Evey-Johnson 812/465-7152

Sociology
Dr. Ronda Priest 812/465-1092

www.usi.edu/libarts

LA Story editor
Wendy Knipe Bredhold 812/461-5259

The LA Story logo was designed by USI graphic design student M. Eric Hill '03.



Spring art installation *Aquila* inspired by Earth Day

The constellation *Aquila* (the eagle) adorned the USI quad April 27-30, 2009. Art students and faculty created *Aquila*, a temporary art installation inspired by the 11-star constellation, in celebration of Earth Day. Each star in the constellation consisted of a steel disk surrounded by a plywood circle supported by short wooden stilts. Each plywood circle had an environmental fact painted on it to focus attention on the importance of recycling. The stars were surrounded

by a design created out of aluminum cans which were collected in recycling bins around the USI campus. Those who participated in the piece by visiting each star experienced the impact of the environmental facts. As facts accumulated, the hemispheres or disks turned increasingly red. Altair, the largest star in the constellation, offered participants the opportunity to reverse the process. As they continued visiting the rest of the stars, participants observed how increasing recycling

can help change the hemispheres back to green. Dr. Hilary Braysmith, associate professor of art, said the constellation idea came from a Public Art class she taught several years ago. "I had students do site research on the USI campus – human history, natural history, aesthetic analysis - all of it. A student came to me and asked if I knew that there is a constellation named *Aquila*, which means eagle." The eagle is USI's mascot.



To view a slideshow of images of *Aquila*, go to:
www.usi.edu/newsinfo/photos/SSArtInstallationAquila2009/project

Michael Aakhus named Artist of the Year

Michael Aakhus, associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, is the Arts Council of Southwestern Indiana's 2009 Artist of the Year. The council's annual award winners were announced at a press conference on June 25.

In announcing the award, **Mary Jane Schenk**, executive director, said, "Michael's long career as a professional award-winning exhibition painter and arts educator is well known throughout our community. His works have been exhibited in solo and juried exhibitions throughout the country and in Mexico and are part of numerous important private collections.

"Michael's accomplishments as both painter and printmaker extend far beyond the academic environment through his beautifully conceived impressionistic landscapes and cultural

images of Latin America. Michael is a wonderful and compassionate teacher who is highly admired by his students. He has organized and led numerous community and student trips to Mexico and Latin America over the years. "

Aakhus joined USI as a faculty member in the art department in 1977. He was promoted to associate professor in 1987 and professor in 1997. He holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in printmaking from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville and a Bachelor of Arts degree in art and art history from Bemidji State University. His wife, **Patricia L. Aakhus**, is director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies.

The award winners will be honored at the annual Arts Awards Banquet in September at the Centre in downtown Evansville.



For examples of his artwork, go to www.usi.edu/libarts/artdept/MAakhus/art.asp.

The Aerie becomes FishHook

Student editors and officers of the Student Writers Union (SWU) have changed the name of USI's student art and literary magazine from *The Aerie* to *FishHook*.

Nicole Louise Reid, associate professor of English and managing editor of the magazine, said, "Students wanted to replace the name with one that is edgy and more in keeping with other fine journals' eschewing of lyricism for its own sake in favor of purposeful meaning.

"A fishhook speaks to Evansville's sense of place, tucked in a crook of the Ohio River, and serves as a metaphor for the process of being lured, hooked, and changed by the images - whether visual or verbal - of the magazine. Like a hook pulled from a river trout's mouth before the fish is tossed back to the water, the fishhook does not pull cleanly free; the barb catches, leaving an echo of its shape in the cheek of the fish. Gruesome as it may sound, that is how the editors of *The Aerie* and officers of SWU feel good literature and art should leave us: changed forever, with an echo of its image and voice deep in our flesh."

The 2009 issue of the magazine will debut as *Fishhook*. For more information, go to www.usi.edu/libarts/english/fishhook.asp.

In memory

Dr. Donald Wolfe, associate professor emeritus of German, died July 19, 2009, after a long battle with non-Hodgkins lymphoma and myelodysplasia (MDS). He and his wife **Dr. Susan "Suzi" Wolfe** taught at USI until his retirement in 1999 and hers in 2007. Wolfe held a Ph.D. in German literature from the University of Oregon. He was awarded a Fulbright Teaching Exchange grant to Gevelsberg, Germany; a Fulbright dissertation grant to the University of Bonn, Germany; and a Fulbright Senior Scholar summer seminar grant to Bad Godesberg/Berlin, Germany. He received the Grawemeyer Award from the University of Louisville for his research on German unification and a grant from the Cultural Ministry of Bavaria, Germany, for his research on German writer Uwe Timm. Wolfe also researched and lectured widely on German prisoners of war at Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky. Memorial donations may be sent to the Donald S. Wolfe Foreign Language Scholarship, USI Foundation, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Blvd., Evansville, IN 47714, or to the American Cancer Society Hope Lodge, 2500 University Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414.

Arabic and Chinese language courses now offered

The Department of Modern and Classical Languages will begin offering Beginning Arabic and Beginning Chinese this semester. This will bring the total number of languages offered by the University to seven, including French, German, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish.

Dr. Silvia Rode, department chair, said, "We live in a global community and by offering nonwestern and western language and culture courses we can help students to compete in the world market, to prepare them for graduate school, and to become better citizens of the world."

There have been requests from students and the community for classes in Arabic and Chinese, as well as requests for translations. Coincidentally, the Alliance for Language Learning and Educational Exchange (ALLEX) from which the department received Japanese instructors recently began providing instructors in Chinese.

Instructors in Japanese and Arabic have been hired for the fall.

Rode said, "With 10,000 students on campus there should be plenty of choices for all students to engage in language learning."

In the future, Rode would like to offer four semesters of each language including a culture and civilization course taught in English. This course would encourage student interest in language through culture, and enhance the facilitation of cultural knowledge for students already taking the language.

Rode said that anyone, no matter your age, can learn a new language. "Language learning is very broad-based," she said. "Some people are good at pronunciation, others at picking up the grammar, others at audio recognition. There is an aspect to language learning that applies to everyone."

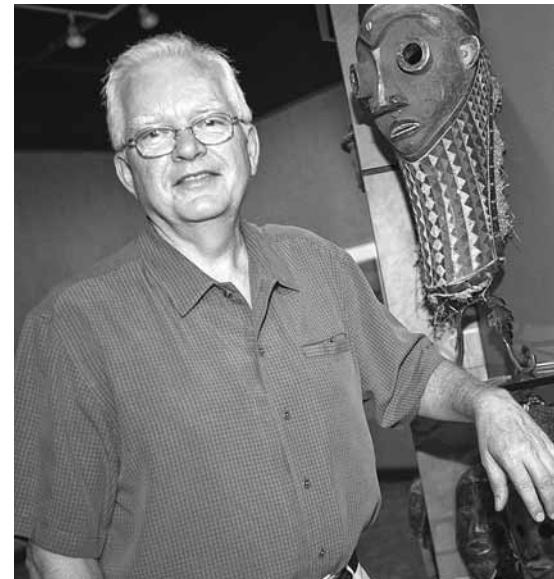
Award honors Wilhelmus' love of writing

Dr. Tom Wilhelmus' English Department colleagues surprised him at the 2009 RopeWalk Writers Retreat with the announcement of an award in his honor: the Thomas A. Wilhelmus Award, an annual chapbook contest for which the winner will receive \$1,000 and a publishing contract from RopeWalk Press.

In announcing the award during the June retreat, **Matthew Graham**, who co-founded RopeWalk with Wilhelmus 21 years ago, described him as "a friend, colleague, and mentor." Graham said the retreat is "a dream of Tom's – to bring a vibrant literary community together for an exchange of ideas and stories and experiences once a year in an utopian setting – that he made reality.

"Without Tom's vision, guidance, and persistence, RopeWalk would not have existed– nor would its developing umbrella projects, the year-long visiting writers' series, the *Southern Indiana Review*, and the RopeWalk Press. As a critic, scholar, educator, administrator, and gentleman, Tom has added a professionalism and style to this conference it would have lacked without him."

The Thomas A. Wilhelmus Award is underwritten by private gifts to the USI Foundation. The award will alternate between poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. Official guidelines are at ropewalk.org. Wilhelmus joined USI in 1970, served as associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts from 1989 to 2003, and interim dean from 2003 to 2004.



RopeWalk Press publishes *Ghost Season*

Ghost Season, a poetry chapbook by **Melanie Jordan** recently published by RopeWalk Press is available for purchase at www.usi.edu/ropewalk/ssl/purchase.asp. Jordan teaches at the University of West Georgia. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Crab Orchard Review*, *Diagram*, *Iowa Review*, *Pebble Lake Review*, *Poetry Southeast*, *Southeast Review*, *Third Coast*, and *Southern Indiana Review*, USI's literary magazine. **Ron Mitchell**, instructor in English and co-founder of RopeWalk Press, said, "Jordan's poems are insightful, sensual, and striking—often all at once to a dizzying effect." *Ghost Season* is the third publication by RopeWalk Press.

Bringing professional experience to the stage

When USI theatre majors ask **Elliot Wasserman** about the world of professional theatre, they know he is speaking from experience. Wasserman, chair of the Department of Performing Arts and professor of theatre, has directed major musicals at professional venues across the country, most recently *Anything Goes* at the Starlight Theatre in Kansas City, Missouri.

A member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Wasserman has directed such Broadway stars as Kay McClelland, Tony award nominee Mark Baker, and Tony Award winner Donna McKechnie. In 2007, he directed a production of *A Few Good Men* starring film actor Lou Diamond Phillips (*La Bamba*, *Young Guns*) and television star Jensen Ackles (*Supernatural*, *Dark Angel*, *Smallville*). In 2008 he directed a production of *Damn Yankees* starring Richard Kind (*Mad About You*).

"It's extraordinarily fulfilling to be in touch with very vital members of the successful theatrical communities of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles,



who have been wonderful to me," he said. "There is no greater high than getting a show ready, and getting out here and doing this is a wonderful opportunity."

There is educational value for Wasserman and his students. "I always learn something and I always bring back

what I learn. There are many programs in the country where professors have gone from college into teaching and done little to no professional work. There are certain things you can only learn by going out into that world. And if you have a student who wants to go out into that world, you want to be able to give them helpful information."

Alumni News

The spring 2009 issue of *Southern Indiana Review*, USI's literary magazine, features the photography of **Paul Van Hoy II '04**. Eleven bold images by Van Hoy, currently of Rochester, New York, are featured in the magazine. Van Hoy graduated *cum laude* from USI with a Bachelor of Arts degree in art and received his Master of Fine Arts degree in fine art photography from the Rochester Institute of Technology. In the 2007 Microsoft Future Pro Photographer competition, Van Hoy emerged with the Grand Prize from thousands of top-level entries from around the world. His work has been published in many photographic magazines, including *Creative Quarterly*, which recognized him as Photographer of the Year. To order *Southern Indiana Review*, go to www.usi.edu/sir.

Damon Dawson '01 was awarded a \$2,000 Individual Artist Program Grant from the Indiana Arts Commission for The

Tensioned String, a project in which he built five stringed instruments, composed five musical pieces, produced and recorded a 30-minute album, and made it available for free at www.myspace.com/damondawson. Dawson, who is employed as a library assistant in the David L. Rice Library, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in art with a minor in art history from USI.

Wendy Knipe Bredhold '98 was appointed to the Evansville City Council and began serving a three-year term in January. Bredhold holds a Bachelor of Science degree in sociology with a minor in journalism from USI and is employed by the University as a writer in News and Information Services. She represents Evansville's Third Ward on City Council and is a member of the Pigeon Creek Greenway Passage Advisory Board and the Central Dispatch Board.

College to offer master's degree in communication

The USI Board of Trustees has approved a graduate degree program in communications expected to begin in 2010. The Master of Arts in Communication degree will be offered as a two-year program for full-time students or a three- to four-year program for part-time students. It was listed as the second most highly needed graduate program in the USI service region in the 2007 President's Taskforce on Workforce and Economic Development. The program will require

completion of 36 semester hours and is expected to begin in fall 2010. Individuals earning the degree can pursue careers in advertising/public relations management, human resources, communication in healthcare and business organizations, media management, communication training, and communication consulting. The program will be submitted to the Indiana Higher Education Commission for review and approval.

USI named Radio School of the Year

The University of Southern Indiana was named Radio School of the Year by the Indiana Association of School Broadcasters (IASB) at its 2009 College Radio Competition. IASB is composed of 16 universities including Ball State University, Indiana State University, and DePauw University. USI's WSWI AM 820 "The Edge" beat out 16 member colleges to claim the prize and took top awards in six of nine categories.

Help strengthen the College of Liberal Arts and support USI students

Make a tax-deductible gift. No gift is too small.

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- Friends of The New Harmony Theatre
- Student Art Show Scholarship
- Student Art Show Award
- USI Theatre
- Chamber Choir/Madrigal Feaste
- RopeWalk Writers Retreat
- Southern Indiana Review*
- Robert W. Carithers Scholarship for Arts & Humanities
- Walter & Shirley Everett Literature Award
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- Mary A. Schroeder Scholarship in Communication Studies
- Donald S. Wolfe Foreign Language Scholarship
- Michael and Patty Aakhus Art Travel Scholarship
- Oscar Ozete Spanish Scholarship
- Daniel Miller Senior Prize in History
- Sigma Tau Delta English Honorary Society Scholarship
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Fall 2009 Calendar of Events

August 22-October 4

Rowland Ricketts, New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art

September 14-October 30

Mid-America Print Council
Juried Members' Exhibition

USI Alumni Show, McCutchan Art Center and Pace Galleries

September 24

RopeWalk Reading Series: Lee Martin, Kley Meyer Hall, Liberal Arts Center, 5 p.m.

October 1-11

USI Theatre presents *True West* by Sam Shepard, Mallette Studio Theatre

October 8

Islands: An International Interdisciplinary Colloquium, University Center

October 10-16

Inaugural Events for President Linda L. M. Bennett

October 10-November 15

The Print Invitational is Going Green, New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art

October 12

Columbus Day Concert, Carter Hall D, University Center, 4:30 p.m.

October 15

Inauguration of President Linda L. M. Bennett, Physical Activities Center, 3 p.m.

RopeWalk Reading Series: Brett Eugene Ralph, Kley Meyer Hall, 5 p.m.

October 29

RopeWalk Reading Series: XXX Eccentric Women, Kley Meyer Hall, 5 p.m.

November 9-December 11

Senior Seminar Exhibit

Sanders Fellowship Recipient Curated Exhibit, McCutchan Art Center and Pace Galleries

November 12-22

USI Theatre presents *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, Mallette Studio Theatre

November 12

RopeWalk Reading Series: Lili Wright, Kley Meyer Hall, 5 p.m.

November 21-December 31

Dan Brawner, Roger Clayton, Alexis Holeman, and Griffin Norman, New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art

December 3-6

USI Chamber Choir Madrigal Feaste, Carter Hall

December 7

Lighting a Tradition, David L. Rice Library

December 12-13

Fall 2009 Commencement Weekend

For more information about events, call the College of Liberal Arts at 812/464-1855 or go to www.usi.edu/libarts.

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Dr. David Glassman

Dean, College of Liberal Arts

Michael Aakhus

Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts

Dr. Julie Evey-Johnson

Assistant Dean, College of Liberal Arts



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College of Liberal Arts

University of Southern Indiana
8600 University Boulevard
Evansville, Indiana 47712