We Are...Marshall, October 31, 2012

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Mountain Stage coming to Huntington Nov. 4

Singer-songwriter Nellie McKay is the newest artist confirmed to appear on Mountain Stage with Larry Groce Sunday, Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. at the Keith Albee Performing Arts Center.

Mountain Stage, hosted by Larry Groce, is a two-hour music radio show produced by West Virginia Public Broadcasting and distributed worldwide by National Public Radio (NPR) and the Voice of America’s satellite radio service. The program showcases diverse music, is recorded before a live audience and travels to venues worldwide.

McKay’s musical talents have been heard from radio to TV, to Broadway and even in movies. She has written original music for Rob Reiner’s film *Rumor Has It*, as well as performed on-screen in the film *PS I Love You*. Her music has also been heard on a variety of TV shows, such as *Grey’s Anatomy*, *NCIS*, *Weeds*, *Nurse Jackie* and *Privileged*. She also recently finished contributing to the soundtrack for the HBO series *Boardwalk Empire*.

McKay has won a Theatre World Award for her Portrayal of Polly Peachum in the Broadway production of *The Threepenny Opera*. She was also the recipient of a very different award, The Humane Society’s Doris Day Music Award for her dedication to animal rights. She is also known as an outspoken advocate for feminism, civil rights and other progressive ideals. For more information on Nellie McKay, visit her website at [www.nelliemckay.com](http://www.nelliemckay.com).

Other artists appearing on Mountain Stage are Dr. Dog, Spirit Family Reunion, the Mountain Goats and Red Wanting Blue. Tickets can be purchased at the box office at the Joan C. Edwards Performing Arts Center, or by phone at ext.6-6656.

[Click to view event website.](http://www.marshallmarquee.com/Events/Detail.aspx?ID=1942)
Marshall University International Festival to celebrate diversity in Huntington

The Tri-State’s international community is diverse and growing. From students to professionals, people from all over the globe now call the region home. On Saturday, Nov. 3, local residents will have a new opportunity to learn more about the traditions and foods of other cultures.

Marshall’s International Festival, now in its 49th year, will take things to a new level when the event moves to the Big Sandy Superstore Arena after outgrowing its previous location on the Huntington campus. International restaurants from the Tri-State area will join the event featuring sample size portions of their cuisine for festivalgoers.

The festival is open to the public from 6 to 9 p.m. Nov. 3 and is free of charge to enter. Food tickets will be available for purchase, allowing guests to sample a variety of dishes from all around the world.

More than 400 international students and members of the Tri-State community representing 60 countries will set up displays about their native cultures, dress and music.

“This is a great step forward for a long-running Marshall event,” said Dr. Clark Egnor, executive director of Marshall’s Center for International Programs.

Music and dance from many different countries and cultures will also be featured, including Middle Eastern music and dance by TarabRaqs and Latin music by ¡Comparsa!. “We’re using all the genres to engage with the world without having to leave Huntington,” Egnor said.

Sponsored by FoodFair Supermarkets, the Marshall University International Festival is partnering with Cabell County Schools and Mountwest Community and Technical College to expand the festival and provide a memorable experience for all ages, including children and families.

Participating restaurants include: The Original Hibachi Japanese Steakhouse; El Ranchito – Authentic Mexican Restaurant; Crumpets & Tea (British menu); Mama Rosa’s (Mediterranean menu); Nawab Indian Cuisine; Wonderful Chinese Restaurant; Thai House Restaurant; The Red Door – A Gathering Place . . . (Ciao Bella Healthy Italian); La Famiglia – A Southern Italian Deli and Marshall Dining by Sodexo.

For more information about the festival and more about the participating restaurants, contact the Center for International Programs at 304-696-6265, e-mail cip@marshall.edu or visit the International Festival website at http://www.marshall.edu/cip/festival/.

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Sociology & anthropology speaker series continues Nov. 7

Dr. Richard J. Chacon, an associate professor of anthropology at Winthrop University, will speak on Wednesday, Nov. 7, in the Shawkey Dining Room of the Memorial Student Center (2E28). The presentation and discussion will run from 4 to 6 p.m.

Chacon’s presentation, part of the speaker series of Marshall’s department of sociology & anthropology, is titled “Conservation or Resource Maximization? Analyzing Subsistence Hunting Among the Achuar of Ecuador.”

In this presentation, Chacon will discuss findings from his extensive anthropological fieldwork experience among the indigenous peoples of South America in which he has employed methodological and theoretical approaches that range from those basic to the biological and health sciences to studies of the role played in natural resource use by particular systems of belief and associated ritual practices.

Chacon will examine whether observed behavior among the Achuar (and other indigenous groups of the Americas) can be attributed to Western contact as well as ethical issues raised by his findings.

Chacon has conducted anthropological investigations throughout Latin America, documenting the subsistence patterns and belief systems of the Yanomamö of Venezuela (known by many as the “Fierce People” through a book of that name by the anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon), the Yora of Peru and the Achuar (Shiwiar) of Ecuador. He has also examined ritual violence among the Otavalo and Cotacachi Indians of Highland Ecuador.


Chacon’s presentation is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

For more information, contact Dr. Brian A. Hoey at hoey@marshall.edu.

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MU Geography students to modernize maps for state environmental agency

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) has sub-contracted with Marshall University’s Geography Department to employ student interns to convert paper mine maps to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database format.

The contract for the GeoMine project is actually a renewal of a previous contract that lasted from December 2011 to September 2012. The current contract, which provides an additional $129,000 in funding from the WVDEP, runs through December 2013.

“This is a feather in our cap,” said Dr. David Pittenger, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. “Our Department of Geography offers an outstanding education that allows students to learn both the political-economic-historical perspective of geography as well as the powerful tools used to create complex maps using GIS technology.”

Dr. James M. Leonard, a geography professor and director of the Geography Department GIS Lab, said the contract has so far employed 12 different undergraduate and graduate students. He said the GeoMine project is a joint venture among several federal agencies, notably the U.S. Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement and several state-level environmental protection agencies, including the WVDEP.

“The project goal is to create a Geographic Information Systems database for monitoring and regulating coal mining in Appalachia,” Leonard said. “I expect additional students to be hired as the needs of WVDEP may require. One hundred percent of the funding has gone to students.”

Opera Theatre to present ‘Amahl and the Night Visitors’ Nov. 9-10

The Marshall University Opera Theatre, together with the Sanctuary Choir of Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church, will present the beloved seasonal opera, “Amahl and the Night Visitors,” at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 9, and 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 10, at Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church at 513 10th St. in Huntington.

The one-act opera by composer Gian-Carlo Menotti is one of the most popular operas in the repertoire and has been enjoyed by audiences around the world, said Linda Dobbs, professor of music and director of the opera. Its story of the power of love delivers a potent message in today’s world. Amahl, a poor crippled shepherd boy, and his mother receive a brief visit from the
Three Kings who are on their way to see the newborn Christ child. When Amahl is miraculously cured, he joins the kings in their journey to celebrate the new child’s birth.

“We are pleased to feature two young Huntington singers, Majesty Hill and Ethan Proctor, who will share the part of Amahl,” Dobbs said. “We also welcome Marshall alumna and adjunct professor Marlayna Maynard who will sing the Mother.”

The cast also includes MU vocal students, including Sean Price, Robert Nunez and Sean Link, who portray the kings. They are joined by dancers directed by Ella Hay from the Art Center School of Dance.

Yeager Symposium features Laurie Garrett Nov. 5

The second of two Society of Yeager Scholars lectures on the New Terror: Emerging Threats to National Security takes place at 7 p.m., Monday, Nov. 5 in the Marshall University Foundation Hall when Laurie Garrett, a Senior Fellow of the Global Health Program at the Council on Foreign Relations will address “Bioterrorism: the Modern Peril.”

The lecture is free and open to the public.

Garrett has won the Polk, Peabody and Pulitzer prizes for her outstanding work and research. She is the author of several books and served as a script consultant for the major motion picture, Contagion.

The first lecture held yesterday featured Dr. Jason Morrissette, a political science faculty member who spoke on “The Politics of Fear: Domestic and Lone-Wolf Terrorism in the U.S.”
Marshall breaks ground for engineering complex; building will have state-of-the-art instructional, research facilities

Marshall officials, joined by special guests Art and Joan Weisberg and other friends and supporters of the university, broke ground Monday on a $50 million engineering complex on the Huntington campus.

Construction will begin this week on the 145,000 square-foot, four-story Arthur Weisberg Family Applied Engineering Complex. The facility, which will be one of the largest academic buildings on campus when completed, will be located on Third Avenue between the Arthur Weisberg Family Engineering Laboratories and the Robert C. Byrd Biotechnology Science Center.

Construction of the complex is expected to take about 28 months.

Weisberg is president of Arthur’s Enterprises, which this past summer made a large gift pledge to the Marshall University Foundation to help pay for the complex.

“Today truly is another significant day in the history of Marshall University,” President Stephen J. Kopp said. “We are thrilled that Art, Joan and other members of the Weisberg family could join us for this wonderful celebration of this very significant investment in the future of Marshall University, to which they have supported so earnestly. We are very proud and honored that this spectacular building will bear the Weisberg family name.”

Weisberg’s reason for supporting Marshall’s engineering program, which now has about 600 students, is simple: “I love Huntington and I know this gift will make a lasting difference,” he said when the gift was announced.

President Kopp said interdisciplinary and inter-professional education will be enhanced through the opportunities afforded through the addition of this building.

“This new applied engineering complex will move Marshall University and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) majors to the forefront in terms of the quality and caliber of facilities available to support and advance STEM education – especially in new fields of engineering,” he said. “The interdisciplinary and integrated learning environments will foster collaborative research and inter-professional education that previously was not available to the University. The idea that you can link engineering with other disciplines in this building is very powerful.”
Sen. Robert H. Plymale, chairman of the Senate Education Committee, was the lead sponsor of legislation in 2004 that led to the restart of Marshall’s engineering program. He said today’s groundbreaking proves just how far the program has come in a few short years.

“My congratulations to Dr. Kopp and the Weisberg family for recognizing and committing to this project, and its importance to Marshall, the state of West Virginia and the entire country,” Plymale said. “I respect the Weisbergs so much and Dr. Kopp for his commitment to seeing this through. This is a defining moment for Marshall University.”

Plymale said bringing engineering back to Marshall took years of hard work.

“It’s one of the most satisfying projects I’ve been involved in,” Plymale said. “It’s one that I’ve worked on literally for 20 years.”

Dr. Wael Zatar, dean of Marshall’s College of Information Technology and Engineering, said the new complex “will not only provide facilities for substantial development of engineering areas like mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and bioengineering, but will enhance our capabilities in specific engineering sub-disciplines such as environmental engineering, transportation engineering and structural engineering as well.

“The complex will be the home for all our undergraduate and graduate programs and will essentially give us the opportunity to grow and expand into some areas that are important to the region,” he continued. “The completion of the complex will enable us to have state-of-the-art instructional and research facilities and will likely result in significant enrollment increases in all our programs. Undergraduate programs such as engineering, computer science and safety technology are expected to encounter significant expansions.”

The need for more engineers is on the rise, Zatar said. He said engineers saw a 12 percent growth in hiring demand in September, with more than 184,000 job postings online. And, he said, the national unemployment rate for recently graduated undergraduate engineering students dropped from a little over six percent in 2009 to two percent in 2011.

Zatar said projects today are requiring more highly skilled professionals and the nationwide shortage of engineers is evident. He added that engineering and computer science graduates are in high demand and earn salaries above the national average. In fact, he said, engineering graduates have received the highest compensation for graduates from four-year programs.

“Professional societies such as the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Society of American Military Engineers are excited to see the resurgence of the engineering program at Marshall University because it will assist in leading our nation into the future,” he said.

Dr. John M. Maher, Marshall’s vice president for research, said the impact of the new building will be profound and felt long into the future.
“The engineering program will now have a state-of-the-art physical space in which to grow and thrive,” Maher said. “In addition, research at Marshall will be immensely enhanced by the proximity of high-tech facilities and faculty along the Third Avenue corridor. Researchers in engineering will now be closer to colleagues in medicine, pharmacy, chemistry, biology and physics, and the offices of the research corporation will be more convenient to the campus community. Marshall’s already considerable strengths in collaborative, multidisciplinary research will be taken to new levels by this forward-looking investment.”

The completion of the engineering complex means Marshall will have added more than $100 million in academic facilities on the north side of Third Avenue from Hal Greer Boulevard to the parking garage across from Cam Henderson Center in just a little over eight years. The Robert C. Byrd Biotechnology Science Center opened in 2006, and the Arthur Weisberg Family Engineering Laboratories opened in 2008.

The construction firm BBL Carlton of Charleston will build the engineering complex. The design firms are Bastian & Harris Architects from Charleston and Hastings & Chivetta Architects from St. Louis.


The next issue of We Are…Marshall will be distributed Nov. 7, 2012. Please send any materials for consideration to Pat Dickson by noon, Nov. 5.