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We Are...Marshall, April 13, 2011

Office of Marshall University Communications

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Dr. Ancella R. Bickley to deliver Moffat Lecture

Dr. Ancella R. Bickley, professor emeritus of English and former Vice President of Academic Affairs at West Virginia State University, will deliver the 2011 Charles Hill Moffat Lecture Thursday, April 21, at Marshall University.

The lecture, which is free to the public, will take place at 4 p.m. in Room BE 5 of the Memorial Student Center on Marshall's Huntington campus. The title of Bickley's lecture is "African American History of West Virginia."

Read more.

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All faculty, staff, students, and members of the public are invited to attend. After the meeting a reception to honor the retiring and award-winning faculty will be in the lobby of the Performing Arts Center.

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Marshall launches Simon Perry Center for Constitutional Democracy

The Simon Perry Center for Constitutional Democracy, a new and innovative academic program that will promote the study of the history and contemporary significance of this nation's Constitution, has officially been launched.

Dr. David J. Pittenger, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, said the college already has raised funds well in excess of $500,000 to support the program. It is named after Dr. Simon Perry, a professor of political science who served Marshall University for 48 years and developed many of the program's signature courses.
The college is now working to raise an additional $1 million for the center's endowment.

Read more.

Wine Festival to benefit Marshall Artists Series

A wine festival fundraiser to benefit the Marshall Artists Series will take place Saturday, April 16, from 1 to 4 p.m. in the lobby of the Frederick Building on Fourth Ave. in downtown Huntington.

"Uncorked" will allow participants to sample nearly 60 different wines and savor a sampling of cheeses while enjoying music by Laura Evans & Company. Live and silent auctions will include items such as a week-long vacation trip, dining experiences, and a chance to acquire all-access badges to the Greenbrier Classic.

Read more.

Former Ashland Inc. Foundation president to speak at Woodson Memorial Foundation, Inc. fundraising banquet

Charles Whitehead, former president of the Ashland Inc. Foundation, will be the keynote speaker at the Carter G. Woodson Memorial Foundation Inc. fundraising banquet Saturday, April 23.

The 19th annual banquet begins at 6 p.m. in Room BES on the lower level of the Memorial Student Center on Marshall University's Huntington campus. Proceeds will help fund a scholarship endowment to support outstanding Marshall University students, as well as the purchase of materials on black culture and history.

Read more.

President and Mrs. Kopp, Farley receive awards from Herald-Dispatch

Marshall President Stephen J. Kopp and his wife, Jane, have been named The Herald-Dispatch Citizens of the Year. The award is part of the newspaper's 2010 Citizen Awards.

In announcing the award, the newspaper said, "President Stephen Kopp and his wife, Jane, still find time to do more -- much more as they work in a variety of other ways to boost the community and the people in it."

The Kopps were nominated by several members of the Huntington community.

Read complete story on Herald-Dispatch website.

Photo by Lori Wolfe; courtesy of The Herald-Dispatch.
John Farley, director of both the Birke Art Gallery and Gallery 842 and an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Art and Design, has received The Herald-Dispatch Award for the Arts. The award is part of the newspaper's 2010 Citizen Awards.

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Marshall University is among the founding members of the new West Virginia Association of Graduate Schools, according to Dr. Donna J. Spindel, dean of Marshall's graduate college.

“This new association is committed to building an awareness of the importance of graduate education in the State of West Virginia," Spindel said, "and its enormous potential for enhancing the health and future of the state.

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Upcoming Events

Marshall University Jazz Ensemble 12.0 to welcome guest saxophonist Craig Treinen Thursday

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More than 100 low brass musicians to converge on Marshall University April 16

The Department of Music will host "Low Brass Day 2011" beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 16, in Smith Music Hall. The events will be hosted by Marshall faculty members Dr. George Felton and Dr. Michael Stroehl.

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Profile: Jan Parker

- a series on Interesting Marshall University people

When Jan Parker says she "did a little traveling" after graduating from Wahama High School, she isn't kidding. In fact, the teenager, with her
parents' permission, took off across the county with a friend for a five-year odyssey that would take her to the mountains of New Mexico, the heart of Kansas City, and to the seashore in San Diego, Calif.

Actually there was no master plan to her travels. "I just wanted to see what it was like in the West," she says matter-of-factly. She supported herself with a series of jobs, secretarial gigs and selling cosmetics among others. It was a grand adventure, a carefree life the young Mason County girl had dreamed about, a cure for her wanderlust. But eventually she longed for the green hills of her home state and knew it was time to head home.

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The lecture, which is free to the public, will take place at 4 p.m. in Room BE 5 of the Memorial Student Center on Marshall's Huntington campus. The title of Bickley’s lecture is "African American History of West Virginia."

Bickley also is the co-editor of Memphis Tennessee Garrison: The Remarkable Story of a Black Appalachian Woman.

Dr. David Peavler Trowbridge, an assistant professor of African American history at Marshall, said Bickley is the reason African American history in West Virginia has been preserved.

"Students at Marshall have spent the past semester conducting original research on topics in African American history,“ Trowbridge said. “Examples include the integration of Marshall University, Charleston and Huntington schools; lynching in West Virginia; the Barnett Hospital of Huntington; sit-ins in Huntington and Charleston; the 45th USCT (United States Colored Troops) - an Appalachian Civil War regiment composed of black troops from West Virginia; Affrilachian poets; race relations in law enforcement; the experiences of black teachers in one-room schools prior to integration and the integration of Mingo County schools."

"These topics were inspired by a list I was able to put together last semester based largely on the research of Dr. Bickley. As a newcomer to the state, I traveled to archives and spoke with librarians across the state and most of the secondary sources I found on black history in West Virginia were written or directed by Dr. Bickley. She has done more than any West Virginian since Carter Woodson to collect and preserve African American history. It is truly an honor to have Dr. Bickley come to Marshall to share her knowledge, and I hope everyone who can make it Thursday afternoon will come to hear Dr. Bickley discuss her life’s work."

The lecture is named in honor of Dr. Charles Moffat, who taught history at Marshall from 1946 to 1977 and was recognized as one of the top professors in Marshall history by Marshall Magazine.

The lecture is sponsored by Marshall’s Department of History, Phi Alpha Theta and the College of Liberal Arts.

Additional information:

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General Faculty Meeting to Honor Retirees, Award Winners

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The agenda will consist of a welcome by the Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Camilla Brammer; singing of the Star-Spangled Banner by Dr. Larry Stickler; remarks from President Stephen J. Kopp; remarks from Brammer; call for nominations from the floor for the positions of faculty representation on the Marshall University Board of Governors and the West Virginia Advisory Council of Faculty; recognition of retiring faculty and presentation of faculty awards. The rewards include Sarah Denman Faces of Appalachia, Faculty Distinguished Service, John & Frances Rucker Graduate Advisor of the Year, Distinguished Artists & Scholars, E. Pickens/G. Queen Excellence In Teaching, Marshall & Shirley Reynolds Outstanding Teacher, and Charles E. Hedrick Outstanding Faculty.

All faculty, staff, students, and members of the public are invited to attend. After the meeting a reception to honor the retiring and award-winning faculty will be in the lobby of the Performing Arts Center.

Retiring faculty to be recognized are Mrs. Earline Allen, Dr. George Arthur, Dr. Strous Arya, Dr. Noel Bowling, Ms. Kathy Chezik, Mr. Joe Fuller, Dr. Barbara Guyer, Dr. Sandra Marra, Dr. Michael Moore, Dr. Leslie Pettys, Dr. Gilbert Ratcliff, Jr., Dr. Maria-Carmen Riddle, Dr. Gary Saunders, and Dr. Joe Stone, Jr.
Marshall launches Simon Perry Center for Constitutional Democracy

The Simon Perry Center for Constitutional Democracy, a new and innovative academic program that will promote the study of the history and contemporary significance of this nation's Constitution, has officially been launched.

Dr. David J. Pittenger, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, said the college already has raised funds well in excess of $500,000 to support the program. It is named after Dr. Simon Perry, a professor of political science who served Marshall University for 48 years and developed many of the program's signature courses. The college is now working to raise an additional $1 million for the center's endowment.

"The center represents an ambitious plan to enhance how we teach and study the Constitution and its history," Pittenger said. "Currently, there is a recognizable lack of knowledge among our citizens about how our government developed and how it now functions. Thus, the goal of the center is to provide Marshall University students a broad and comprehensive understanding of the scope and function of our constitutional system. The efforts of the center will not stop at the university's boundaries as the program will also serve the interests of the greater Huntington community."

The Simon Perry Center for Constitutional Democracy will be an interdisciplinary academic program that will improve the quality of scholarship and classroom instruction related to the history and contemporary concerns related to the Constitution. Pittenger said the specific goals of the program are to:

- Support a faculty scholar who will teach courses in the program, oversee a pre law program, and engage in scholarship related to Constitutional history and contemporary interpretation;
- Provide Marshall University students a broad array of courses in history, political science and the other liberal arts that allow them to better understand the importance of the Constitution in defining the American government, the great leaders who defined and shaped this nation, and interplay between social and political events and the Constitution;
- Provide faculty resources to revise and develop courses, at all levels of the curriculum, that will improve students' understanding of their responsibilities as engaged citizens;
- Provide the broader Huntington community lecture series and other events that promote awareness of matters related to the Constitution;
- Support students through scholarships and other forms of support who wish to engage in the study of the constitution and prepare for careers in law and political science.

"I came to Marshall in 1962 having been trained in the new behavioral movement in political science," Perry said. "While this perspective contributed much to understanding various political phenomena, I recognized that many gaps, especially historic ones, required attention. Therefore I developed a new curriculum addressing some of the things that may people overlooked, or what I call Constitutional Democracy.

"Constitutional Democracy is a perspective that studies how people as well as social and political forces shape the Constitution and its interpretation, and how the Constitution defines us as a nation. We want students to understand how the magnificent American experience - our constitutional system - has designed. Our constitutional democracy, however, is not frozen in time. It has evolved over the centuries and has been shaped by important moments in time and the work of many people."

"This new program will help students better understand that the Constitution, with all of its majestic generalities, affects their lives as citizens," Pittenger said. "The program will also emphasize how they, as individuals or members of groups, can influence how we are governed."
A native of Gilbert, W.Va., Perry attended public school in Mingo County and earned undergraduate degrees in political science and history from Berea College. He then received a Master of Arts from the University of Tennessee and a doctorate in Political Science from Michigan State University.

He began teaching at Marshall University in the fall of 1962 and retired at the end of the 2010 academic year. During that time he taught an inestimable number of students. Notable among his many accomplishments has been the development of the courses that define the core of the minor, the Simon D. Perry Program on Constitutional Democracy.

Photo: Dr. Simon Perry, who taught political science at Marshall from 1962 until last year, will be honored by the name of the new Simon Perry Center for Constitutional Democracy.
Citizen Awards: Kopps embody 'town and gown' spirit

April 03, 2011 @ 12:00 AM
BILL ROSENBERGER
Herald-Dispatch.com

HUNTINGTON — For a university president and spouse, just keeping up with steering the institution and its myriad activities would seem more than enough to fill up the schedule day and night.

But Marshall University President Stephen Kopp and his wife Jane still find time to do more — much more as they work in a variety of other ways to boost the community and the people in it, say those who work with them in those beyond-university endeavors.

While Dr. Kopp is touted for his vision, which has translated into significant growth for the university in terms of enrollment, facilities and reputation, he has reached out to the Tri-State community in ways that some have never seen before. And Mrs. Kopp has made her presence felt by volunteering in several organizations aimed at boosting literacy and youth, for example.

“I think more than any other president since I’ve been in town (the past 20 years), he’s pushed that agenda a lot and realized the success of Marshall is tied to the success of the community,” said Mark Bugher, president and CEO of the Huntington Regional Chamber of Commerce.

For their impact both on campus and far beyond, Dr. and Mrs. Kopp have been named The Herald-Dispatch Citizens of the Year, as part of the newspaper’s 2010 Citizen Awards program.

“Dr. and Mrs. Kopp arrived at Marshall University in 2005 and immediately entrenched themselves in the campus and community,” wrote John Hess, a member of Marshall University’s Board of Governors, in his nomination.

In talking recently about community involvement, Mrs. Kopp said Huntington is the first city they’ve been to that she has been able to spend her time volunteering or serving on the boards of such community organizations as the Tri-State Literacy Council, the Clay Center...
in Charleston, Boys & Girls Club of Huntington and the advisory board for the Autism Training Center at Marshall.

“She is very enthusiastic and very eager to help anyone trying to improve their reading,” said Lynn Ormiston, director of the Tri-State Literacy Council. “She’s just always there. Volunteering to help decorate for a recognition dinner, fundraising, sharing tips with new tutors. The community is really lucky to have her around doing this.”

Sense of community

Those closest to them say they believe the Kopps will retire here because they’ve fallen in love with the university and the community.

“We’ve got somebody here that came with the idea of staying and building the university rather than using it as a stepping stone,” said Supreme Court Justice Menis Ketchum, a former member of the university’s Board of Governors. “He wants to retire here. He has told me that.”

You get the same feeling talking to the couple. The Kopps say they have connected much differently and more intensely with Huntington than anywhere else.

“I’ve been able to get to know more people in the community than any place else we’ve been, since our kids were younger,” Mrs. Kopp said. “At first I was taken aback. People were asking me so many personal questions, and a friend told me, ‘They just want to know you.’”

Both have been involved with Create Huntington, for which Dr. Kopp was recently honored for his efforts to improve the livability of the Huntington community.

They attend Johnson Memorial United Methodist Church and have participated in local fundraising efforts for such projects as the children’s hospital campaign at Cabell Huntington Hospital. He also has contributed to the Walk It Up! campaign and supports efforts for education of public health issues.

Dr. Kopp also is on the board of directors and executive committee for the Chamber of Commerce, on the Planning and Visioning Committee for the Huntington Area Development Council, Council of Presidents for the Huntington Museum of Art and a member of the executive committee for the Marshall Artists Series.

“Dr. Kopp’s leadership extends beyond the campus,” Hess stated. “He is proud to call West Virginia his home and he proudly boasts of the people and beauty of Huntington.”

To put it lightly, the Kopps have heavily invested themselves in making Marshall and Huntington better places.
"It's not just because of my role (as president)," Dr. Kopp said. "We have found the greater Huntington community to be extremely warm and friendly, a very inviting atmosphere."

Bugher and Hess said Dr. Kopp has worked hard to connect Marshall and the community, specifically noting his leadership role in the university acquiring the former Stone and Thomas building on 3rd Avenue across from Pullman Square last August. Plans are for it to become the new home of Marshall's visual arts program and include design studios and classrooms.

"He envisions this Huntington landmark as an arts incubator ..." Hess wrote. "This project exemplifies his effort to bring Marshall and downtown Huntington closer together."

His appreciation of the fine arts program also is highlighted each spring when he picks student artwork to be hung in his office.

Inside the office

Bill Bissett, who worked alongside Dr. Kopp as chief of staff for about four years, had intimate looks at his dedication and work ethic.

"He takes it very seriously because he believes in what Horace Mann said years ago, that education is a great equalizer," Bissett said. "He has very high expectations for himself and those around him."

Bissett described him as an early bird, starting his day at 6 a.m. — the first to arrive and the last to leave.

"He has many meetings, phone calls, emails. He stays in close contact with the Board of Governors," Bissett said. "And most evenings, there are events or athletics he has to attend."

Dr. Kopp said being a university president is a 24/7 commitment, something he and wife discussed before seriously entertaining offers. But those around him said he enjoys the grind because he has fallen in love in Marshall.

"When was it I saw that he understood Marshall and West Virginia? When you hear him talk at recruitment events and college fairs," Bissett said. "He truly sees Marshall University as a force of change for the better of West Virginia."

Bissett, who left Marshall in early 2010 to become president of the Kentucky Coal Association, said he learned a lot from working alongside Dr. Kopp.

"What I learned most is when in doubt, work harder," Bissett said. "And everyone is important to him. From the chairperson of the board of governors to a prospective student."
The current chief of staff, Matt Turner, said Dr. Kopp works as hard as his prior boss, former Gov. Joe Manchin. Turner said if Dr. Kopp doesn't know something, he researches it to the point where he almost becomes the most knowledgeable person in the room.

Both Turner and Bissett also said Dr. Kopp writes all his own speeches and prepares his own presentations.

Action!

One item the Kopps researched when he was being recruited by Ketchum and Mike Perry, who were on the presidential search team, was the 1970 plane crash. He remembers details of the event because it happened about a month after his mother died. But he admits not knowing much more than what was on the surface.

Within months of taking over as president on July 1, 2005, talks started about a possible movie to tell the story of the tragic accident and the birth of the Young Thundering Herd.

That, he says, is when he really began to learn what Marshall was all about. That's when he heard personal stories from folks who lost family members and friends in the crash and were concerned about Hollywood's attempt to recreate what was such a crushing blow to the community.

He knew the movie could reopen the wound or show how special the institution and community became in building the football program back up to what eventually became a national championship team.

"My thought was, this is the most tragic thing in history," Dr. Kopp said. "I was reluctant ... but (director) McG said if Marshall didn't work with them, there would be no movie."

Dr. Kopp said he made three requests — not to show a plane crash, to film in Huntington and to depict the people well — all of which were honored. And while the story of Marshall's recovery was told, it also helped one of Dr. Kopp's primary goals: to boost enrollment.

People from all across the country have come to know about and, ultimately, have decided to attend Marshall because of the movie. Once they get here, they get a full dose of history along with a whole lot of newness, both in facilities and in themselves.

Since Dr. Kopp's arrival, the campus has undergone a significant transformation — not only with new infrastructure but also with a new infusion of students.

"I discovered very quickly that things did not add up in enrollment," Dr. Kopp said. "I was concerned with the effectiveness of our recruiting program."

Kopp says in spending 18 years at private higher education institutions, he found that enrollment and student success are the two most important factors, and he wanted that to be the case at Marshall.

He set up a strategic plan using input gathered from numerous sources, including a website for the general public, that culminated with a five-year strategic plan. In the fifth year, the fall of 2010, Marshall’s freshman enrollment hit an all-time record of more than 2,000.

“These accomplishments are specifically a result of his passion and vision for Marshall University and its students,” Hess stated.

The campus has grown structurally as well. Under his tenure, Marshall opened two federally funded facilities with the Robert C. Byrd Biotechnology Center and the Erma Ora Byrd Clinical Center.

Arthur and Joan Weisberg pledged $5 million to the College of Information Technology and Engineering, money that went toward the construction of the Weisberg Family Engineering Laboratories on 3rd Avenue near Hal Greer Boulevard.

The Marshall University Foundation and Erickson Alumni Center took on a major campaign that led to the building of a new home along 5th Avenue. And the eastern half of campus is almost entirely new with two freshman dorms, a multipurpose field and recreation center.

“It became obvious very fast he knew what he was doing,” Ketchum said. “It’s unbelievable the amount of work and detail he put in building the rec center and two new dormitories. He had it in his mind that the university couldn’t grow or attract new students without a new rec center and those freshman dormitories.”

Dr. Kopp is already working on a bond proposal to help fund the remainder of an applied engineering complex that should start construction in 2012 along 3rd Avenue. The bond proposal also could contain funding to renovate the former Stone and Thomas building.

“As you are getting certain things teed up and done, you have to still be looking three to five years ahead,” Dr. Kopp said.

With all that both he and his wife have done, Ketchum said the community should thank them both for the value they’ve added to Huntington and Marshall.

“I think the public appreciates the effort that he’s made to increase the enrollment at Marshall, to build better facilities and to better the academic standards,” Ketchum said. “He just had the idea in his mind that he could make the place grow, which he has. He’s been a real jewel.”
Farley receives arts award from Herald-Dispatch

John Farley, director of both the Blirke Art Gallery and Gallery 842 and an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Art and Design, has been named the Huntington Herald-Dispatch’s 2010 Arts Citizen of the Year.

Dave Lavender of the Herald-Dispatch said Farley was selected for the award because of his energy in creatively combining the university and the community.

"The award is part of the newspaper’s annual Citizen’s Award Program," Lavender said. "In addition to profiles, winners receive a $5,000 grant of promotional space in the newspaper to promote the charity or nonprofit of their choice."

Farley was nominated for the award by more than a dozen people, a story in the Herald-Dispatch said. An accomplished artist, he is known for his intensely detailed works, which sometimes take more than 100 hours to complete. Currently he is readying his work for an upcoming exhibit at Gallery 842 in August with Lorin Michld, a junior art major with printmaking emphasis.

Farley, a 2007 MU graduate, said he was humbled to receive the award, particularly given the many individuals who are actively involved in elevating the arts within Marshall and the community.

Photo: John Farley (left), winner of the Herald Dispatch’s 2010 Arts Citizen of the Year, is preparing an exhibit of his work with printmaker Lorin Michld, a Marshall Junior.
Marshall to participate in new graduate school association

Marshall University is among the founding members of the new West Virginia Association of Graduate Schools, according to Dr. Donna J. Spindel, dean of Marshall's graduate college.

"This new association is committed to building an awareness of the importance of graduate education in the State of West Virginia," Spindel said, "and its enormous potential for enhancing the health and future of the state."

In addition to Spindel and Marshall, the founding members of the association are graduate education leaders from Fairmont University, Mountain State University, Shepherd University, West Virginia University, West Virginia Wesleyan College and the University of Charleston.

According to a statement prepared by the group, the mission of WVAGS is to ensure that graduate education in the State of West Virginia:

1. Will produce leaders in the private sector, government, and education;
2. Will contribute directly, through research and creative activity, to the economic growth and reputation of the state;
3. Will attract to West Virginia state-of-the-art facilities and programs in research and development, transportation, health care and the private sector;
4. Will provide the licensure, certificate, and degree programs necessary to sustain high standards in K-12, community college, and higher education;
5. Will provide high quality opportunities for West Virginia students to earn a terminal degree in their field of choice; and
6. Will promote the means by which graduate and professional education can improve the future of West Virginia.

Return to newsletter front page.
Marshall University Jazz Ensemble 12.0 to welcome guest saxophonist Craig Treinen Thursday

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Treinen is currently the director of jazz studies/applied saxophone at Washburn University. He has performed in Kansas City as the lead alto saxophonist for the Kansas City Boulevard Big Band, for which he recorded three albums. Other performances included local big bands such as Trilogy Big Band, Tony Dipardo Big Band, Topeka Jazz Workshop Big Band, Blue Devils Big Band, The Des Moines Big Band and Mom's Big Band in Lawrence, Kan.

In addition to his duties at Washburn, Treinen is serving as artistic director for the Coleman Hawkins Legacy Jazz Festival, which is a two-day event held in Topeka, Kan. He is also the education director for the Topeka Jazz Workshop Inc. He has performed with such legendary performers as Lee Greenwood, Shirley Jones, Crystal Gayle, Bob Denver, Frank Mantooth, Brian Stripling, Karin Allison, the Shirelles, the Jimmy Dorsey Big Band, Kevin Mahogany, Todd Strait, Terrell Stafford, George Duke, Bobby Watson, Eric Marienthal and many others all over the world.

Admission is free and the public is cordially invited to attend, Bingham said.

http://www.marshall.edu/ucomm/Newsletters/2011/041311/nl_041311_2.html
More than 100 low brass musicians to converge on Marshall University April 16

The Department of Music will host "Low Brass Day 2011" beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 16, in Smith Music Hall. The events will be hosted by Marshall faculty members Dr. George Patton and Dr. Michael Stroeher.

"The day will include a faculty concert, clinics, chamber and large ensemble concerts, and a massed ensemble," Patton said. "Everyone is welcome, and bring your horns!"

Featured artists and clinicians include Christopher Hayes and the Ohio University trombone studio, William Mann and the Morehead State University trombone studio, Gretchen McHamara and the Wright State University trombone studio, Stroeher and the Marshall University trombone studio, Thomas Zugger and the Capital University trombone studio, Stacy Baker and the Marshall University tuba/euphonium studio, Ben Miles and the Wright State University tuba/euphonium studio, Patton and the Marshall University tuba/euphonium Studio, and Tony Zilincik and the Capital University tuba/euphonium studio.

In addition, there will be exhibits from Kerr's Music and Cimarron Music, Patton said.

Admission is free and open to the public.
African Drumming and Dance Ensemble to perform April 26

The Marshall University African Drumming and Dance Ensemble will perform a concert at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 26, in Smith Recital Hall on the Huntington campus. The group, under the direction of Steven Hall, coordinator of percussion at the university, will perform traditional music from the West African countries of Benin, Guinea, Togo, and Ghana.

"Traditional African music is very much a community activity on a number of different levels," Hall said. "This music is used to maintain a deep connection with the history and memory of the ancestors. Most traditional music has four aspects: drumming, dancing, singing and costumes."

When the weather permits the group is often seen rehearsing on the lawn of Smith Music Hall, facing Hal Greer Blvd., since, according to Hall, "this music is meant to be performed outside in the open air where anyone in the neighborhood can enjoy."

Most of the members in the group are not music majors and the ensemble is open to any MU student with a desire to learn about non-western cultures, Hall said.

Admission to the April 26 event is free and open to the public. For further information about this concert or music at Marshall University, please call (304) 696-3117 or email Hall at hallj@marshall.edu. 
Campus Conversations continue April 15 and 25

Two more sessions of "Campus Conversations" will take place focusing on the book Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses, published this year by the University of Chicago Press.

- Student Panel Conversations: Student Responses to Some Assertions, Claims, and Conclusions of Academically Adrift
  
  Friday, April 15, in 349 Drinko Library (broadcast to GC 134 in So. Charleston) 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Lunch will be provided.
  
  - Academic Master Plan: Redux—Beyond the Immediate
    Monday, April 25, in 402 Drinko Library (broadcast to GC 134 in So. Charleston) 3 to 5 p.m.

Questions and requests for additional information should be directed to the Office of Academic Affairs via e-mail at academic-affairs@marshall.edu.

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Return to newsletter front page.

Profile: Jan Parker

When Jan Parker says she "did a little travelling" after graduating from Wahama High School, she isn't kidding. In fact, the teenager, with her parents' permission, took off across the county with a friend for a five-year odyssey that would take her to the mountains of New Mexico, the heart of Kansas City, and to the seashore in San Diego, Calif.

Actually, there was no master plan to her travels. "I just wanted to see what it was like in the West," she says matter-of-factly. She supported herself with a series of jobs, secretarial gigs and selling cosmetics among others. It was a grand adventure, a carefree life the young Mason County girl had dreamed about, a cure for her wanderlust. But eventually she longed for the green hills of her home state and knew it was time to head home.

And more than that, it was time for her to embark on a career path, Parker, who is an administrative assistant senior in the Graduate Dean's office, says. Although she had been "footloose and fancy free" for the past several years, she needed to give some serious thought to the rest of her life and Marshall loomed large in her future. "I've always liked business practices and accounting, they're so structured, so I decided to major in accounting. After a while I decided I would rather work in higher education but I went ahead and got my accounting degree and I'm glad I did. That's something no one can take away from you."

There was a bonus to her Marshall years—she met her husband, James, a Vietnam War veteran who was working on a social work degree. Parker received her degree in 1982 and the couple married two years later. She fulfilled her wish to work in higher education when she was hired for a secretarial position in the academic accounting department, a position she held until 1988 when she took time off to be with the couple's three children.

And the couple passed their Marshall legacy to their children. Daughter Jenna has two degrees from Marshall and currently works for Mount West Community College, while Jodi has a biology degree and is completing a master's degree. Son J.T. chose another career path and is attending a recording arts school in Ohio.

The whole family are avid football fans and attend games in good years and bad to cheer the teams on.

Parker returned to the university in 2000, this time working in the Graduate Dean's Office, a position she loves. She has high praise for the people she deals with daily. "I work with a lot of offices, both academic and administrative. I have a lot of contact with departmental people and they are just great. They make my job easier."

And she's known for her empathy and helpfulness for the graduate students she sees daily. If there's a way to solve a problem or make the graduate experience easier, she'll find it with her soothing, calm demeanor. "Our students are
under a lot of stress," she says. "Usually they have a full-time job, they're taking classes and many have families with children. They have so much stuff going on in their lives, so if they slip up on something and I can help them get back on track, that's what I'm here for. Seeing the students make it to graduation is so rewarding."

With their family close by, the Parkers find plenty to do in the Huntington area. She particularly likes scoping out craft fairs. "I'm not the least bit crafty but I enjoy seeing what others do and I can buy the items that appeal to me." They enjoy traveling to the periodic reunions of Vietnam War veterans that have been held in various areas of the Midwest and South. But mostly the family enjoys their home and each other.

Looking back on the years of carefree adventure that followed her high school graduation, it's still a source of amazement to Parker that her parents allowed her to set off cross country, virtually alone, but she's grateful for the confidence they had in her. "That was very generous of them. It was a different time and I would have second thoughts if one of my kids wanted to do this. It was a wonderful time for me; I got to see so many different cultures. I made a good friend in New Mexico and we still keep in touch. But I'm glad I got right back on track when I came home. Coming to Marshall was one of the best things I ever did. I met my husband, I got my degree, I got my job. I couldn't ask for a better place to work or better people to work with."