

2-16-2007

## We Are ... Marshall, February 16, 2007

Office of Marshall University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: [http://mds.marshall.edu/mu\\_newsletter](http://mds.marshall.edu/mu_newsletter)

---

### Recommended Citation

Office of Marshall University Communications, "We Are... Marshall, February 16, 2007" (2007). *We Are ... Marshall: the Newsletter for Marshall University*. Paper 219.

[http://mds.marshall.edu/mu\\_newsletter/219](http://mds.marshall.edu/mu_newsletter/219)

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Marshall Publications at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in We Are ... Marshall: the Newsletter for Marshall University by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact [zhangj@marshall.edu](mailto:zhangj@marshall.edu).

# WE ARE... MARSHALL™

THE NEWSLETTER FOR MARSHALL UNIVERSITY • FEB. 16, 2007

## Barbara Guyer Finalist for Professor of the Year

Dr. Barbara P. Guyer, special education professor at Marshall University, has been chosen as one of three finalists for Professor of the Year, the Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia, Inc., announced.



Dr. Barbara Guyer

"The Faculty Merit Foundation exists for one purpose only – to recognize and reward excellence in college teaching," Dr. Ken Sullivan, secretary of the foundation, said. "Guyer made a strong showing."

To be among the finalists is quite an honor in itself because of the competition offered from all the public and private higher education institutions in the state, Sullivan said.

"We regard all the finalists as very strong teachers," he said.

"Something such as this is just a

capstone to a lot of good work she (Guyer) has done throughout her career."

Guyer said the nomination makes her feel unworthy because she knows there are numerous professors at

## Faculty Senate to Observe 20th Anniversary Beginning Feb. 26

Marshall University's Faculty Senate will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a series of events beginning Feb. 26, according to Dr. Larry Stickler, professor of music and chair of the senate.

"For Monday, Feb. 26, we've planned a reception with a program that will observe the anniversary in a very special way," Stickler said. The reception will take place from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Shawkey Room of the Memorial Student Center. The program will include a video presentation of the senate's history and remarks from some of those who were instrumental in the senate's founding, including Dr. Simon Perry, professor of political science, who served on the constitution committee; Dr. Rainey Duke, retired professor of English, who was the first president of the senate; and Dr. Dale Nitzschke, who was president of the university when the senate was established.

On Tuesday, Feb. 27, Faculty Senate members will participate in "Marshall University Day at the Capitol" in Charleston. In addition, the university bookstores on the Huntington and South Charleston campuses have scheduled an appreciation day, which allows faculty and staff with IDs to receive a 20 percent discount on Marshall

(continued on page 4)

Marshall and in other parts of the state who are as dedicated as she is.

"However, I do feel very honored to be in the top three nominees, and I look forward to learning who will be the winner of the Professor of the Year award.," she said.

Guyer said she believes the one accomplishment that most stands out in her career at Marshall is the founding of the Higher Education for Learning Problems (HELP) program, which she started in 1981 with a budget of about \$5,000. Since then, the program has grown to employ 45 graduate assistants, 40 part-time employees, and 15 full-time employees and has an annual budget of \$1 million.

The Faculty Merit Foundation will honor the three finalists March 6 in Charleston, beginning with a reception

(continued on page 4)

## Bob Easthom is Employee of the Month

Robert "Bob" Easthom, trades specialist in Residence Services, has been named the Marshall University Employee of the Month for January, according to Jim Stephens, chair of the Employee of the Month Committee.

A Marshall employee for 15 years, he was nominated by Winston A. Baker.

In his nomination Baker wrote: "Bob is dependable and extremely dedicated to our department and the University. He is a leader who is well respected by the staff in Residence Services. His input has saved the department money with his ingenuity. A case in point: we had a steam line breakage under Laidley and Hodges Halls, water line leakage by Holderby Hall and many

(continued on page 3)



Bob Easthom (right) receives his Employee of the Month plaque from President Kopp.

# Littlehales, West Have New Marshall Posts

Lance West, vice president for alumni development and director of alumni relations at Marshall University for the past 4 ½ years, has been named vice president for major gifts at MU, John Kinzer, interim CEO with the Marshall University Foundation Inc., announced.

Kinzer also announced that Tish Littlehales has replaced West as Marshall's director of alumni relations. Both West and Littlehales assumed their duties earlier this month.

"Lance enjoys fundraising and he's good at it," Kinzer said of West. "He meets people well and people like him and respond to him. I think he will do a great job as a major fundraiser."

Littlehales came to Marshall from Guyan Golf and Country Club, where she was membership and marketing director for nearly three years.

"Tish coordinated the gala at the Big Sandy Superstore Arena for the 'We Are Marshall' premiere and

## Autism Center Participates in Nationwide Study

The West Virginia Autism Training Center at Marshall played a major role in a study to determine the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in multiple areas of the United States, the results of which were made public last week.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funded the study, which resulted in a report that showed an average of 6.7 children out of 1,000 had an ASD in six communities assessed in 2000, and an average of 6.6 children out of 1,000 had an ASD in 14 communities included in a 2002 study. Marshall University's Autism Training Center was involved in both studies.

Dr. Barbara Becker-Cottrill, director of the training center, said this is the first-ever multi-site collaborative study of the prevalence of autism.

"We are excited to have been a part of this collaborative research," Becker-Cottrill said. "We feel we have made a significant contribution to understanding the magnitude of the Autism Spectrum Disorders."



Lance West



Tish Littlehales

did an excellent job," Kinzer said. "She's outgoing and organized and I think will do a great job cultivating Marshall's alumni."

West has been at Marshall since 1995, when he was hired as associate vice president of athletic and university development. He was named director of athletics in 1996, a position he held until 2002 when he was named vice president for alumni development and assistant to the president.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to be able to work with various individuals throughout the United States and the world with one common purpose – to see Marshall advance and prosper in the future," West said. "I am excited about Tish Littlehales coming in as alumni director and think the alumni association is poised to do wonderful things, especially coming off the movie 'We Are Marshall.' "

Littlehales is a native of South Charleston, W.Va., and a 1983 Marshall graduate.

"I look forward to maximizing our efforts to involve the alumni community in the continued growth of Marshall University," Littlehales said. "As a Marshall graduate, I am excited to be joining this great university at an opportune time in its history."

## Humanities Lectures Have Marshall Theme

Three of the four upcoming lectures in the 2007 Little Lecture Series, presented by the West Virginia Humanities Council in Charleston, will have direct Marshall University ties.

The series opens on Sunday, February 25 with WSAZ television sports director Keith Morehouse giving a talk, "Hollywood Comes to Huntington: Making *We Are Marshall*." Morehouse was one of several local consultants involved in the process of making the *We Are Marshall* film. He will talk about how the filmmakers worked with him and others to capture a balance of historical accuracy, sensitivity to the community and the unique challenge of filming a motion picture about how a community coped with tragedy in the place it occurred.

The April 29 lecture, "The Story of a House: The Glenwood Project" by historian Billy Joe Peyton relates the progress of archeological analysis being conducted by the Marshall University Graduate Humanities Program at one of Charleston's oldest properties, the Glenwood Estate which is owned by the Marshall University Graduate College Foundation.

The May 20 lecture, "FDR: Liberalism Without Apology", will be presented by the John Marshall Professor of

(continued on page 4)

**WE ARE... MARSHALL™**



**MARSHALL  
UNIVERSITY®**

Published by University Communications, with offices in Huntington (213 Old Main) and South Charleston (312 Administration Building).

The next regular issue of *We Are...Marshall!* will carry an issue date of March 2,

2007. Deadline is Feb. 23. Articles or other materials for consideration should be sent to Pat Dickson, editor, at the South Charleston campus or by e-mail to [pdickson@marshall.edu](mailto:pdickson@marshall.edu).

## Profile: Leigh-Ann Brewer

A series on interesting Marshall University people.



Leigh-Ann Brewer

Leigh-Ann Brewer spends approximately 25 hours a week attending Marshall classes but she's not getting a single academic credit. She attends classes ranging from Communications to History to Human Anatomy but she's not working toward a degree. And she's always in front of the class, never in the back.

That's because as a sign language interpreter for deaf students, operating out of Disabled Student

Services, she attends classes along with the three students who are assigned to her this semester. While she is not deaf herself, she's there for each class, her nimble fingers deftly spinning out the delicate language of the deaf.

Faculty members are generally very thoughtful of her and the students, she says, and most speak at a slow enough rate for her to interpret. Sign language is very different from English; it doesn't involve the same word order, according to Brewer. And signing for a long period can be tiring both physically and mentally. "I'm not signing word for word; I'm signing concepts. I have to listen to what the teacher has said ... the interpretation takes place in my brain. It's changed over to America Sign Language (ASL) and while I'm signing it I'm listening to the next sentence. That's where the strain comes in; you get tired."

She must also sign for any ambient sounds, such as alarms or cell phones ringing. "It's my job to let the student know anything I'm hearing. Anything the student signs, I will voice to the instructor."

It's not unusual for her to sign through a two-hour class, which she admits can be exhausting.

"I love what I do, so if a class lasts two hours I just do it." Like most interpreters, she is aware of physical problems like the potential to develop carpal tunnel syndrome. "I have some pain in my wrists from time to time. I've been doing this for 13 years and the years have taken a toll. But so far I just live with the occasional pain and go on signing."

Her lifelong passion for sign language was sparked by an impulsive gesture from her second grade teacher at Milton Elementary School. The teacher, who had given birth a short time before to a deaf daughter, taught Brewer to fingerspell her name along with a few rudimentary signs. "I don't know why the teacher continued to work with me but she did. Then when I was 15 I met Donna Whittington, who worked for the West Virginia Rehabilitation Center, and she became my mentor. She picked up where my teacher left off. By this time I was totally absorbed in signing. I knew that was what I wanted to do with my life."

Once her interest was awakened, she had a fierce determination to do whatever necessary to get additional study and a perceptive high school principal helped her fulfill her dream. While a student at Calvary Baptist Academy in Teays Valley she went to the principal one day and was straightforward with him. "I told him, 'I'm not good at algebra, science or math, but I am good at sign language and I would like to have it arranged so I can take classes at the West Virginia Rehabilitation Center.' "

(continued on page 4)

## Bob Easthom

from Page 1

more emergencies. His creative input/effort has saved us over \$100,000."

In closing Baker notes "He never hesitates to return to work after hours or on the weekend in an emergency. He is a valuable employee..."

Easthom was presented with a plaque, a balloon bouquet and a check for \$100 by President Stephen J. Kopp.

## McKernan's 5th Book Is Published

Dr. John McKernan, Professor of English and author of five poetry collections, has had his latest book, *Resurrection of the Dust*, published by The Backwaters Press.

His work has appeared in hundreds of national literary journals over the years, notably *The New Yorker*, *Paris Review*, *The Ohio Review*, *The New England Review*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Antaeus* and *Field*. He edited *The Little Review* for 12 years and now edits the new journal *ABZ*.

McKernan's poetry has been recognized by grants from the Benedum Foundation, the West Virginia Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Poetry Society of America recently presented him the Robert H. Winner Award. He also is a distinguished teacher who was named West Virginia Professor of the Year in 2000 by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

## Marshall Staff Member Compiles Exhibit for Public Library

The Cabell County Public Library is marking Black History Month with an exhibition, "Africans in Academic Art," which has been compiled by Helen Majdalany, a program assistant at Marshall.

The exhibit will spotlight the painters who traveled to and from North Africa and the artworks they produced reflecting the people of the area, their customs and aspects of their daily life.

Majdalany and her sister have created similar exhibitions in the past that focused on academic art, a style of painting and sculpture produced or influenced by European academies or universities. Academies flourished in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and prescribed strict guidelines for the production of works of art and many trained in those schools took an interest in North Africa.

Much of what Majdalany said she learned as she compiled the exhibit was not about the North Africans, but rather those who were so taken with the area. The exhibit includes copies of paintings mainly from the

(continued on page 4)

## Classified Staff Announces Election Results

Elected to the Classified Staff Council in a special election held last week are Ronnie Hicks, Plant Operations, EEO Group 10 (Administrative/Managerial); Terri Moran, Lewis College of Business, EEO Group 30 (Other Professionals); and Patsy Stephenson, Drinko Library, EEO Group 40 (Technical/Paraprofessional).

They will serve on the council through June 30, 2007.

## Leigh-Ann Brewer

from Page 3

Recognizing steely determination and great potential when he saw it, the principal agreed and Brewer was excused from classes two days a week to train at the rehab center located in Institute. She quickly became so proficient that she was asked to teach signing classes at her high school during her senior year.

By this time Brewer knew she had found her lifelong calling. At the age of 17 she passed the rigorous requirements of the National Association for the Deaf and became the youngest person in West Virginia to attain their certification. She's currently working toward certification by the other major association for the deaf, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. In addition, she also is an EIPA (Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment) certified interpreter.

Brewer can't stress the importance of being certified enough. "It takes a lot of work, training and experience to become certified. You have to sign in front of a panel and pass a series of other tests ... Many people know the rudiments of sign language, but they can't properly interpret and this can be very important."

As a case in point, she's on call for hospitals, emergency rooms and she's even gone into delivery and operating rooms to interpret.

Brewer is a Marshall graduate with a degree in elementary education. Immediately after graduation she went to Roane County, where she worked with deaf children for more than two years. When there was an opening for an interpreter at Marshall, she applied, was quickly hired, and soon became a key player in an amazing coincidence. One of the first students she was assigned to was a young woman who was struggling with her studies in a medical field with difficult terminology. The student's name was familiar; it was, in fact, the same name as the second grade teacher who had sparked Brewer's fervor for her field. It turned out the student was the baby born to the teacher 19 years earlier. "Her mother and I had a really good reunion and now the daughter has graduated and is doing well in a medical field."

Brewer points out that sign language is only one of the services offered by Disabled Student Services. "We offer services to students with a variety of disabilities. For example, we offer extended test times for them, proctoring, note taking, reader services, books put on tape, early registration, just a whole array of services to help students, whatever their needs. We also have equipment for loan, such as tape recorders or wheelchairs."

This semester she's taken on a new duty—teaching a sign language class for the Marshall Community and Technical College. "One thing I'm stressing is that I want them to leave with a passion for sign language. Most deaf babies are born to hearing parents and of those parents, approximately 93 percent never learn to communicate with their deaf children ... The deaf can feel so isolated from the rest of the world. I want my students to leave with signing skills so when they meet someone who is deaf they can sit down with them and have a conversation."

Brewer has scant time for anything but work, but she has a creative side and it shows in the 15 opulent scrapbooks she's turned out to date. She loves music and until recently she was the member of a unique musical ensemble, The Signing Hands, which performs music through both singing and signing. Travel is another of her interests. She has a particular fondness for the regions of the Caribbean and to date she made seven trips there, two of them to work at camps for the deaf. In addition, she's a faithful member of the Open Door Bible Church where her father, Ron Brewer, is the pastor.

But nothing is more important to her than the work she does with her students. "Marshall has truly become my home. On some days I come in at 9 a.m. and work until 9 p.m. It's more than a job to me ... When I was 15 I felt that God had called me to work with people with disabilities and it's become a passion. When you love what you do it's no longer work."

## Guyer

from Page 1

at the Governor's Mansion at 6 p.m. An awards banquet follows the reception at 7:15 p.m. in the Cultural Center, where the foundation will announce the recipient of the Professor of the Year award.

Sullivan said anyone from the Marshall community who wishes to support Guyer by attending the reception at the Governor's Mansion and dinner at the Cultural Center may do so by calling the foundation in advance. The professor who wins the top award receives a \$10,000 cash prize, courtesy of United Bank.

For more information, contact the foundation at (304) 346-8500. Its email address is [marsh@wohumanities.org](mailto:marsh@wohumanities.org).

## Library Exhibit

from Page 3

Dahesh Museum of Art in New York City, but Majdalany said that many museums throughout the nation have these sorts of works on hand.

The display can be found on the second floor of the library at 455 9<sup>th</sup> Street. More information is available by calling 528-5700.

## Humanities Lectures

from Page 2

Political Science at Marshall University, Jean Edward Smith and will promote his new Random House biography due out in May on Franklin Delano Roosevelt titled *FDR*.

All lectures begin at 2 p.m. and are presented in the parlor of the historic MacFarland-Hubbard House at 1310 Kanawha Boulevard, East in Charleston. Admission is \$10 and includes a wine reception with the speaker. Seating is limited to an audience of 50. To make reservations or for additional information, call 304-346-8500. For more information on each lecture, visit [www.wohumanities.org](http://www.wohumanities.org).

## Faculty Senate

from Page 1

clothing, gifts, and general reading books. There will also be a drawing for door prizes. On the Huntington campus, Sodexo has scheduled a "Faculty/Staff Appreciation Pasta Bar Buffet" for \$3.99 in the John Marshall Dining Room.

"Right around this time, faculty members should be watching their university mailboxes for a commemorative gift from the Faculty Senate," said Bernice Bullock, administrative secretary senior for the senate. "We think it is something that everyone can use."

On Wednesday, Feb. 28, plaques honoring faculty award winners will be unveiled at 11 a.m. at the Drinko Library on the Huntington campus. A reception will follow the unveiling. The plaques will carry the names of the recipients of the Marshall and Shirley Reynolds Outstanding Teacher Award, the Charles E. Hedrick Outstanding Faculty Award, the Pickens-Queen Teaching Award, and the Marshall University Distinguished Artists and Scholars Award.

The public is invited to the events, according to Bullock. For more information, persons may contact the Faculty Senate office at (304) 696-4376.