

# ***We Are...Marshall!***

THE NEWSLETTER FOR MARSHALL UNIVERSITY • MARCH 10, 2000

## ***Ailey II Dance Troupe Arrives March 14***

They're a troupe of highly trained and energetic dancers performing works by some of today's most acclaimed choreographers and they will be appearing in Huntington at 8 p.m. March 14 at the Keith-Albee theatre as part of the Marshall's Artists Series.

The high energy Ailey II dance company (formerly Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble) will be



*The Ailey II company will perform in Huntington on March 14.  
(Photo courtesy of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.)*

showcasing an eclectic repertoire of modern dance, staged by some of today's most innovative choreographers.

Ailey II is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> year as a spirited and creative dance troupe company. It began in 1974 when Alvin Ailey, an internationally acclaimed African-American choreographer, initiated a workshop composed of the most promising scholarship students from the Ailey School. From that group he hand-picked dancers who became the original members of the Ailey II. The company, which emphasizes a balance of repertoire, technique and performance

has grown into one of the most popular and critically acclaimed dance companies in the U.S.

Ensemble members are between the ages of 17 and 25 who rehearse six hours a day and perform between 35 and 50 shows a year, according to Sylvia Waters, artistic director.

A perennial favorite on college campuses, the troupe's 1999-2000 tour consists of performances in 41 cities, as well as visits to elementary, middle and high schools. The group has received numerous honors and awards in recognition of its community outreach programs.

The tickets are \$25, \$23, or \$21, plus tax, and are currently on sale at the new Marshall Artists Series Box office located in the Joan C. Edwards Performing Arts Center. They may also be ordered by phone with a Visa or Master Card by calling 696-6656.

Ailey II is sponsored in part by Cabell Glass Company, Inc., Neighborgall Construction Company, WOWK-TV and the DAWG.

## ***Community Service Awareness Shows "Impact" Apr. 2-8***

If you have a few hours of time to volunteer the first week of April, the MU Office of Student Affairs would like to hear from you.

"Impact 2000 - Community Service Awareness Week" will kick off April 2 and run through April 8, according to Andy Hermansdorfer, director of student activities. It's an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to work with a variety of agencies on a variety of projects, he says.

"The week has been designated 'Impact 2000' and will present an opportunity for students, faculty, staff and the Marshall community to come together and celebrate community service," according to Hermansdorfer. Currently his office is compiling a list of agencies with which to pair volunteers.

They are now in the planning stage for this event and requests are being made for student organiza-

*(continued on page 3)*

# Brooks Traces “Family Circus” History

When Monica Garcia Brooks, Interim Dean of Libraries, recently attended a session of the American Library Association Conference in San Antonio, Texas, it was for her, at least, just like a circus.

It was, in fact, her family’s circus, complete with dangerous high-wire acts, lithe dancers, lyrical singers and energetic acrobats, all memorialized in a permanent display at the Hertzberg Circus Museum in celebration of her family’s Mexican Tent Show, La Carpa Garcia, which flourished from 1914-1947. Currently housed in a former Carnegie Library, the museum is located only a few blocks away from the new city library. One of the highlights of the ALA conference was a session at the San Antonio Public Library in which La Carpa Garcia was featured for its contribution to Mexican heritage and history.

Founded in Mexico by Brooks’ great-grandparents, Manuel and Teresa Garcia, the traveling show featured several members of the Garcia family, including her grandparents Manolo and Florinda. The clan moved to the United States after another family member, Victoriano Huerta, was deposed from his brief reign as President of Mexico during the Mexican Revolution in 1914.

In the summer of 1998 the troupe was honored with a permanent exhibit at the Hertzberg Circus Museum, which is named after circus aficionado Harry Hertzberg and which is now housed on the first floor of a former Carnegie Library building.

“We are so proud—my family’s contribution to Mexican theater during this time period has only recently been recognized—so we are pretty happy to have a permanent display in the Hertzberg Museum. We are also in the *Hispanic Almanac*, in Washington, D.C.,” Brooks said.

Bringing their talent and circus acts to the people of the communities, La Carpa entertained audiences for more than 30 years. During that period they

traveled and performed in California, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and Azlan. The show eventually settled in San Antonio. In 1947 family members retired from show business or went on to perform in the Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus while others chose to go into education and law enforcement.

“The traveling show was more like a vaudevillian tent show with music, skits and dancing,” Brooks explains. “There was also some trapeze and certainly lots of clowning around!”



Manuel and Teresa Garcia founded La Carpa Garcia.

She says the tent shows always incorporated a variety of entertainment including Mexican dances, flashy costumes and traditional songs. They also included venues for social commentary in the form of comedic sketches, she notes. And sometimes there were attention-

getting specialty acts such as Pilar Garcia’s very dangerous high wire act that gained him fame in the circus community. His wife, Consuelo, also performed as a singer, dancer and acrobat.

And now on the walls of a museum in an art deco museum in a large city, these long-ago performers are frozen in time—handsome men bedecked in jeweled costumes and beautiful women in a swirl of colorful skirts, forever posed in graceful dance positions.

Brooks, who was appointed West Virginia Chapter Councilor to the American Library Association, was delighted to learn that the group’s January meeting was to be in San Antonio, the city where her family’s circus is memorialized. The Hertzberg Circus Collection, she explains, is international in scope, with many materials depicting the American circus during its golden age from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and including prints, rare posters, handbills, photographs, artifacts, costumes, and even circus sensation Tom Thumb’s personal carriage.

Brooks says that Barbara Celitans, the curator of the Hertzberg Museum, received a programming grant from REFORMA SA, the local affiliate of the national ALA group, which is composed of librarians interested in promoting Hispanic culture in library collections as well as encouraging more Hispanics to use libraries as information resources.

The wing dedicated to the Mexican carpas was unveiled in May 1998, Brooks says, and continues to be an attraction for historians, the general public and

(continued on page 4)

## We Are...Marshall!

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Send story ideas to Pat Dickson, Editor, *We Are...Marshall!*, 110 Administration Building, South Charleston Campus, or send by e-mail to [pdickson@marshall.edu](mailto:pdickson@marshall.edu).

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## Profile: Dolores Johnson

*A series on interesting Marshall University people.*



*Dolores Johnson*

She doesn't subscribe to the popular old saw that Johnny or Joanie can't write. Indeed they can write, she says, they just have to learn basic skills of writing processes and be flexible in adapting those skills to various disciplines.

Dr. Dolores Johnson, associate professor of English and director of

the Marshall University Writing Project has faith in most students innate writing abilities, which should come as good news to those students who dread putting words on that blank piece of paper or facing that scary blank computer screen.

"Students have the ability to write. Part of the complaints that you hear about students not being able to write well has to do with their having to write for different disciplines and different regimens in the university or academic environment. What we teach students to do and the way we teach them to write in the English literature class is not going to be the same thing that they are going to be expected to do when they are in science, for example. I think a lot of times the concern about the way students write really has to do with the different ways we require them to write in the academic community."

And Johnson certainly knows about writing. A seasoned teacher, she came to Marshall after teaching literature and composition at Huntington High School for 20 years. Shortly after joining the MU faculty in 1990 she became the first Carter G. Woodson scholar. She had just entered a doctoral program at Indiana University in Pennsylvania when she learned of the Woodson program. During that time she juggled the duties familiar to academicians everywhere — taking care of her family and carrying a full academic load while pursuing the Ph.D. She received her degree in rhetoric and linguistics in 1995.

Good writing begins with skilled teachers, she believes, and training those teachers is an objective of the Marshall University Writing Project (MUWP), which she has headed since 1993. The MUWP emphasizes the teaching of writing for teachers from kindergarten through university; it is part of the National

*(continued on page 4)*

## Excused Absences

Absences have been excused by the university for these students on the dates noted:

February 23-24—LeRoy Longknife, Jr., Jonathan D. Malone, Gregory W. Tharp, and Louis J. Zollo.

February 24—Paula R. Brafchak, John W. Brock, John F. Carter, Paul J. Chapman, II, Jill S. Duncan, Ronald E. Hartley, Alfred J. Hern, Jr., Mark I. Hooper, Adam W. Justice, Allen C. LaDriere, Rodney H. Lipscomb, Ira W. Miller, Geroge P. O'Malley, Luke M. Phillips, Jason M. Reed, Douglas S. Schneider, Brian N. Spotloe, Travis W. Tallman, James G. Temple, Matthew L. Wolverton, and Christina M. Young.

## Music Recitals Slated

Several recitals through the MU department of music are scheduled in March. The concerts are held in Smith Recital Hall and are free and open to the public.

Programs include Tommy Bailey, piano, senior recital, March 10 at 8 p.m.; Chris Hubbard, guitar, graduate recital, March 11, 8 p.m.; Deanna Bertsche, flute, junior recital, March 12, 3 p.m.; Lori Crabtree, flute, senior recital, March 12, 7 p.m.; Joy Ratliff, mezzo soprano, faculty recital, March 27, 8 p.m.; Jon Cook, saxophone, senior recital, March 29, 8 p.m.; Mandy Mobley, soprano, graduate recital, March 30, 8 p.m.

In addition, Audrey Kaiser will perform Music at the Museum on March 26 at 2 p.m. at the Huntington Museum of Art, and Amy Benford will give a student organ recital at Johnson Memorial Church on March 26 at 4 p.m.

## Staff Council to Meet

The Classified Staff Council will have its monthly meeting March 16 at 1 p.m. in Room 2W37 Memorial Student Center. Staff at the Marshall University Graduate College in South Charleston can attend the meeting via videoconferencing in room 134 of the Administration Building.

## Volunteers

*from Page 1*

tions, residence hall floors/ class rooms to sponsor community service projects; volunteer agencies to let them know of opportunities and projects; and faculty/staff/community leaders to present lectures, forums, round table discussions concerning volunteerism, community service or service-learning.

If you are interested in participating in "Impact 2000" contact the office of student activities at 696-6770. For additional information visit <http://www.marshall.edu/volunteer-services/>.

### Next Issue on March 24

The next issue of *We Are...Marshall!* will carry an issue date of March 24, 2000. Deadline is March 17. 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).

## Delores Johnson

from Page 3

Writing Project (NWP), whose national office is located at the University of California in Berkeley.

"The theory which undergirds the 170 sites of the NWP advances the idea that teachers are the best teachers of teachers," she says. "Teachers come together and work closely together in a very intensive summer workshop, usually 4 to 5 weeks. They talk about writing assignments; they share ideas and strategies; they develop workshops for inservice for the schools."

Many teachers who go through the summer institutes come away with an evangelical fervor to share what they have learned with both students and other teachers, a welcome outcome of the program, Johnson believes. In addition to inspiring teachers, the NWP is a major teacher leadership center and a recognized program for school reform efforts. Teaching and writing are two passions that Johnson shares with many other teachers in this collegial network.

At Marshall, students interested in having their work published have several opportunities through the annual literary magazine, *Etcetera*; the Maier awards in which entrants submit writing under the signature of a faculty member, and the annual Martin Luther King, Jr., essay contest, which is open to students in both the university and in public schools.

In addition to her regular load of English and writing courses, this semester Johnson is teaching a popular course at the community college for aspiring journal keepers. "Rivers of Memories" is designed for people who are interested in composing written records of their lives for family members or friends.

"The focus of the class is on writing about your life, your memories, creating an autobiographical memoir for your own pleasure or to leave to others," she notes.

Johnson, an avid journal writer herself, believes journal writing keeps one, in her words, "healthy, sane, and ever aware of the rhythms, the beauty, and the relationships we share in life."

## Library Announces Spring Break Hours

Drinko Library spring break hours will be: Saturday March 18 and Sunday, March 19, closed; Monday through Friday, March 20-24, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, March 25, closed; Sunday, March 26, 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. Regular hours resume on Monday, March 27.

## South Charleston "Brown Bag" Series Set for Spring

Members of the Marshall University community will be treated to a diverse series of free programs this spring presented by Marshall University Graduate College's Committee on Social Justice and Cultural Diversity.

Designed to take place during the lunch hour, the "Brown Bag Diversity Dialogue Series" will explore the life of a Harlem poet, Ann Spenser, as characterized by Brucella Jordan, will take a look at some creative selections of Jewish literature and explore the issues of biracial identity.

The Brown Bag series has been popular since its inception several years ago. All programs are held from 11:45 to 1 p.m. in room 137 of the administration building on the South Charleston campus. Those attending are invited to bring a brown bag lunch and drinks and snacks are provided.

"Harlem Renaissance—A Characterization of Ann Spenser, Poet" will kick off the series on Tuesday, March 28. Jordan is a former Minority Faculty Fellow at MUGC and is currently completing work on her doctorate. She has performed as Ann Spenser for numerous schools, libraries, and community groups.

"A Buffet of Jewish Literature: Short Creative Selections" is scheduled for Wednesday, April 12 and will be presented by MUGC staff members Dr. Robert Rubenstein, Professor of Counseling and Dr. Anne Fishkin, Director of the Community Services Clinical Center.

Dr. Michael Burton, program director for counseling, and Lorinda Roberts, a former student, will present "Biracial Identity: An Exploration of Issues" on Wednesday, April 19.

Anyone may attend any of these sessions which are supported by additional financial assistance from the Office of the Secretary, West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts.

## Faculty and Staff Achievements

**Pamela Ford** was a luncheon speaker at a January meeting of the Huntington Kiwanis Club. The title of her speech was "Marshall Libraries: From a Personal Historical Perspective."

## Monica Brooks

from Page 3

school children. Former members of the La Carpa Garcia proudly participate in the museum's activities, she notes.

In fact Brooks and her parents have a web page devoted to La Garcia with text compiled by her and her mother and photographs provided by her father. The web site can be reached from <http://webpages.marshall.edu/~brooks/>.