

# We Are...Marshall!

THE NEWSLETTER FOR MARSHALL UNIVERSITY • DECEMBER 16, 2005

## Marshall Supports Local Agencies with Toy Drive



Jane Kopp (left) and Lance West deliver toys to representatives of Big Brothers-Big Sisters of the Tri-State.

Marshall University and the Huntington community teamed up Sunday, Dec. 11 to help make Christmas special for local boys and girls during an open house at the home of MU President and Mrs. Stephen J. Kopp.

Guests at the three-hour event brought unwrapped gifts that were delivered Dec. 12 to the Boys and Girls Club in Guyandotte and Big Brothers-Big Sisters of the Tri-State by Jane Kopp and Lance West, Vice President for Alumni Development. Four large containers overflowed with toys by the end of the open house.

A similar toy collection has been conducted in past years by the Marshall University Alumni Association.

"This year, because our open house and the event proposed by the Alumni Association were planned just a few days apart, we decided to combine them," President Kopp said. "The response by the community was overwhelming. Marshall University is honored to have joined with this caring community in helping these two outstanding organizations."

## NCA Accredits Distance Degree Programs

Marshall University has received notification that the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association has extended the university's accreditation to include distance delivery of degree programs, effective Oct. 21, 2005.

"While many academic agencies accredit particular programs of study, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association is responsible for assuring that colleges and universities meet certain standards in terms of their missions, operations, and activities in teaching and student learning, discovery and promotion of knowledge, and service," said Dr. Jan Fox, Marshall's vice president for information technology. "Accreditation is an assurance to the

*(continued on page 2)*

## Lu Ann South Named Employee of the Month

Lu Ann South, Administrative Secretary Sr., in Communications Studies, has been named the Marshall University Employee of the Month for November, according to Jim Stephens, chair of the Employee of the Month Committee.

South, who has been employed at Marshall since March, 1986, was nominated by Dr. Stephen D. Cooper and Dr. Bertram W. Gross, both of Communication Studies.

In his nomination Gross wrote, "The Department of Communications Studies was displaced this summer due to renovations. Lu Ann has done heroic work facilitating our move and keeping things functional. Her dedication has kept the department afloat and warrants recognition as truly exceptional."

*(continued on page 3)*



## Strategic Vision Process Nears Initial Deadline of Dec. 19

Marshall University's Strategic Vision process, announced by President Stephen J. Kopp on Nov. 17, is seeking participation from the university community. Between now and Dec. 19, faculty, staff and students may make suggestions for ideas and initiatives to be included in a new strategic plan by visiting the Web site, [www.marshall.edu/strategic/](http://www.marshall.edu/strategic/). Once on the site, respondents can make inputs by choosing a link based on whether they are on-campus or off-campus.



President Kopp presents the Employee of the Month plaque to Lu Ann South.

# Family Begins Endowment in Memory of Misty Endicott

A memorial scholarship fund has been established by the Marshall University Foundation, Inc. to celebrate the life of Wayne County native Misty Dawn Endicott who fulfilled her lifelong dream of becoming a nurse before her untimely death at age 32 this past April.

A graduate of Ceredo-Kenova High School who attended Marshall, Endicott worked tirelessly to realize her cherished goal of becoming a nurse. Her family says that after receiving a scholarship to attend nursing school she continued to take advantage of every opportunity to achieve her dreams and after

award is for tuition/fees and books and may be renewed for up to a total of three years—six semesters—as long as conditions of the scholarship continue to be met.

Misty Endicott's parents, Jan and Virginia Endicott, who have established the scholarship, say they want recipients to know that Endicott walked in their shoes, and to never give up on their dreams. The Endicotts are encouraging recipients "To live by Misty's motto, when the world tells you that it is impossible to achieve your dreams, do it and prove them wrong."

For additional information about the scholarship, contact Jean Augustine in the Marshall University Development Office at (304) 696-6214 or by e-mail at [Augustine@marshall.edu](mailto:Augustine@marshall.edu).

## Marshall to Assist in Study of City of Huntington

Marshall University will conduct an extensive study next year on the finances and day-to-day operations of the city of Huntington.

The Lewis College of Business will conduct the study which is expected to last several months beginning in January.

The study came about after a meeting attended by Huntington Mayor David Felinton, President Stephen Kopp, Dr. Paul Uselding, dean of the Lewis College of Business, representatives of the Huntington City Council and other city officials.

"There's probably a lot of facts and myths that have been circulating in regards to the way the city does business," Uselding said. "Our role is to scrub all of those things away and provide an arm's length, independent appraisal of the city."

Huntington has experienced a series of financial problems in recent years and has imposed user fees and restructured its health and pension costs to keep the city operating. The city's population has fallen by more than 30,000 residents since the 1950's, to less than 50,000 according to the latest U.S. census estimates.

"The tremendous advantage of this study is that it will be unbiased and nonpolitical," Felinton said. "I truly believe it will be for the good of the community."

## NCA Accreditation

from Page 1

public that an institution is properly prepared to do its job. The North Central Association has provided the formal approval that Marshall University be fully accredited to offer online degrees and certificates."

Marshall is one of the few institutions in the nation to be given this full approval to offer online bachelor's and master's degrees. Online education is one of the fastest-growing trends in higher education, according to Fox. "The target audience most talked about is working adults who can't quit a job to go back to college," Fox said. "Instead they take classes via the Internet, and study and complete assignments on time frames more suited to their busy lives."

"North Central accreditation for on-line programs is a great endorsement and acknowledgement of Marshall's accomplishments," said David Johnson, executive director of distributed education technology at Marshall.

The commission found that Marshall has put into place appropriate and effective academic and student services support systems to ensure that students have a positive learning experience in online programs. This includes structures such as application and admissions, financial aid and student accounts, registration, library and other aca-

(continued on page 4)



Rick Endicott (left), Misty Endicott's brother, and Virginia Endicott, her mother, present a check beginning the endowment for the Misty Dawn Endicott Scholarship to Dr. Lynne Mayer, Associate Vice President for Development and Dr. Linda Scott, Associate Dean for the College of Health Professions. Also present but not in the picture was Jan Endicott, Misty's father.

graduation never finished learning and polishing her skills.

The fund will become endowed once a minimum of \$10,000 is received. The recipient will be a sophomore in the Marshall College of Health Professions (CHP) who has been accepted into the Bachelor of Science Nursing program, has demonstrated financial need and has a 2.5 or better grade point average. Priority will be given to graduates of Spring Valley High School in Wayne County, then to a graduate in any Wayne County high school and then to any West Virginia high school graduate.

The College of Health Professions selection committee, under the direction of the dean, will select the recipient and renew the award in consultation with Dr. Charles Giangarra, of the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine, or his designee in cooperation with the Office of Student Financial Assistance. The

## We Are...Marshall!

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The next regular issue of *We Are...Marshall!* will carry an issue date of Jan. 13, 2006. Deadline is Jan. 6. 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: Katharine Coffey

*A series on interesting Marshall University people.*



*Katharine Coffey*

She sees you when you're coming, she sees you when you're going. If you're a Marshall employee, you're sure to meet Katharine Coffey, HR Services Representative in the Human Resource Services office who is there to talk with you about the benefits that go along with a being a university employee.

She's been on the job since the fall of 1978, working in the same position.

After graduating from West Virginia University with a degree in home economics and minors in art and history, she and her husband migrated to Huntington after he accepted a job on the Marshall faculty in August of 1969. When the Human Resources job opened up, she applied and was hired even though she candidly admits she had no training in the area of benefits.

"I had a degree and could type 40 words a minute and that seemed to qualify me, so I accepted the position and I really learned on the job. I was willing to ask questions and that's how you learn. When I started this job things were pretty simple. There was only one retirement plan. I got to know the TIAA-CREF representatives and they were very helpful. But even TIAA-CREF wasn't as complicated then as it is now. So learning has been an accumulative thing. PEIA was relatively simple when I first started, but has become increasingly more complicated over the years."

The Human Resource Services office helps people with all aspects of benefits, Coffey says. "I used to meet everyone individually when they began working here. Now Judy Blevins, the HRS training and development specialist, and I team up to do group benefits enrollment sessions for all new faculty and staff. We work in tandem and it's much easier to do and more convenient for the employees. I used to do sessions one-on-one and it could really get hectic, especially in August, when so many new faculty were coming on board."

And she's often among the first to know of life-changing events happening in the lives of university personnel. "Anytime people have changes in their lives, I know of it early because there's paperwork involved," she says. "When there are changes such as marriages, divorces, new babies, retirement, I need to know about it because usually this affects benefits such as health and life insurance, disability insurance and retirement."

She sees everyone who leaves the institution, explaining benefits to which they're entitled. "Retirement, particularly, can be a scary prospect," Coffey says. "Retirement is a life-altering decision. Some people plan ahead very carefully while others think they want to retire but they don't really know what they're going to do. I think it helps to have a plan, to have some idea of what you want to do with your time, to be thinking about hobbies you might want to pursue and there are always volunteer opportunities out there. You have to be very creative when contemplating retirement."

Coffey grew up in the Moundsville/Wheeling area where she drew inspiration as a gardener from her

*(continued on page 4)*

## Marshall Sends 'Pickled Pepper Players' South

Marshall University's Pickled Pepper Players, a touring children's theatre company sponsored by the MU Department of Theatre, traveled to the Gulf Coast recently to do its part in lifting the spirits of children displaced by this year's hurricanes.



*Student actors Adam Stephens, left, and Karah Markins perform during "Molly and Her Marvelous Mind" at the Hope Drive After School Center in Hattiesburg, Miss.*

On its "Gulf Coast Relief Tour" Nov. 25-Dec. 4, the group gave 24 performances of children's theatre plays for young audiences at 13 locations for 15 different community groups

*(continued on page 4)*

## Debate Team Recounts Successful Season

Marshall University's debate team continues to be successful on the national level with several members winning awards in a number of tournaments. The squad rounded out the fall semester with two members being awarded honors at The Ohio State University tournament held earlier this month in Columbus.

Junior Dan Mistich was awarded fourth-place speaker out of 60 competitors and advanced to the octofinals. Mistich, a communications studies and political science major from the Parkersburg area, became the first debater on Marshall's debate team to advance past preliminary rounds at the annual OSU tournament.

Speaking about the OSU event, Mistich said, "The competition is always stiff there and I'm thrilled that we left Columbus with some awards."

The team also competed at several tournaments earlier in the semester. The squad took first place team honors in a debate at Bowling Green University in Ohio. At Bowling Green senior Geoff Cullopp, a political science major from

*(continued on page 4)*

## Lu Ann South from Page 1

Cooper cited her "outstanding service in our relocation to the third floor of Smith Hall, and oversight of renovations to our permanent offices and return to second floor.... 'Way beyond performance expectations!"

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

## **Katharine Coffey**

*from Page 3*

mother, Augusta Evans, who at 92 is still making things grow. Her own home is a testament to her creativity. "I like to garden and my house sits on a long narrow lot with two apple trees and one sour cherry tree that had a lot of cherries this year," Coffey relates. "I actually had enough cherries to make a pie. Between me and the birds we took care of the whole crop. It's funny, we live right in town but with the trees and flowers it's like living in the country."

Her mother now lives in Glen Dale, in Marshall County and Coffey visits her several weekends a month. "We talk about gardening, she gives me tips, buys me plants and orders things for my yard. She can still grow anything. Once she broke a branch off an antique rose bush and stuck it in the ground and it rooted and now I have it growing in my garden," Coffey says admiringly.

She's delighted that gardening has become a family tradition passed down now to the fourth generation. Her older daughter, Karen Procter, who lives in Huntington, has developed an interest in gardening, and Karen's three children, Emily, 10; Pete, 7, and Ethan, 4, love to help their grandmother in her garden. Besides there is an apple tree to climb.

If the Coffey clan is gifted with green thumbs, they're also proud wearers of the Marshall green. Younger daughter Elizabeth is an administrative secretary for the Counseling Department currently working on her Regents B.A. degree and both Karen and her husband John are Marshall grads.

In her scant spare time Coffey sometimes relaxes by working on a quilt or sewing an original creation for her lucky granddaughter. She's prodigiously talented as a seamstress and has the awards to prove it, although she's modest to a fault about her abilities. She learned to sew in a 4-H club and was so proficient at it she was chosen to be among the select few from the state who were sent to the national 4-H Congress in Chicago.

"I've always sewed; I used to make all my clothes and sewed for my daughters. I made my wedding dress. I learned to quilt and I love it but it took me eight years to make my first quilt," she says, laughing. Now she's working on a second quilt which will go to Elizabeth. "I still like to sew," she admits, "but after working all day you don't want to go home to sit in front of a sewing machine."

And besides, with a large yard and a house, there's always a mound of maintenance chores to be done and Coffey has proved to be as deft with a hammer and paintbrush as she is with her sewing machine. She's a self-taught do-it-yourselfer who can wield a paintbrush with the best of them. "I do as much around the house as I can myself, doing repairs and painting and all the maintenance things that a house needs," she says cheerfully. "I like working with my hands and I always did like to fix things up. It's a great sense of accomplishment when I can complete a project. But I always know when something is beyond me and then I'll call in help."

Her 26 years at Marshall have gone by swiftly, she says and sometime down the road when she retires, one thing's for sure—she'll certainly know how to complete all the paperwork. And she does have a personal retirement goal. "I want to do more volunteer work once I retire, spend time with my family and friends, and of course, garden."

In the meantime, her advice to those currently on the payroll is to regularly review benefits and don't hesitate to ask questions. "You have to look out for yourself and be willing to say, 'I don't understand this' and then call and ask questions. There are no silly or stupid questions. There's probably no question that we haven't heard before. Just call and feel free to ask for information. That, in the end, is how we all learn."

## **NCA Accreditation**

*from Page 2*

demic support services, advising, instruction, student services and evaluation/assessment of the programs.

Fox adds that online learning has been a part of Marshall's strategic priority for a number of years. And according to Johnson, "Marshall has a real leadership position in the state and is recognized nationally for rapidly scaling up a small program with a few classes to an institutional enterprise with state-of-the-art technology, well-thought out policies, an engaged faculty, and now full accreditation."

## **Pickled Pepper Players**

*from Page 3*

in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. The trip took 10 days and covered 2,400 miles.

The cast included Marshall student actors Krista Carter of Elkins, W.Va.; Jennifer Edens of Petersburg, W.Va.; Samantha Elkins of Barboursville, W.Va.; Shay Hannon of Ironton, Ohio; Elissa Horrell of Scott Depot, W.Va.; Karah Markins of Lavalette, W.Va., and Adam Stephens of Charleston, W.Va. Accompanying the students were MU theater professor Mike Murphy and his wife, Karla.

"The cast really gave up their 'dead' week (the week before final exams) to go down and do this," Murphy said. "I can guarantee you that each one came back with much more than they ever thought they would. They learned a lot about themselves, the human spirit, and the resiliency of the people on the Gulf Coast. They saw a whole lot of devastation and communities coming together to rebuild."

The idea for the trip came to Murphy when he was attending a board meeting of the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Charlotte, N.C., a week after Hurricane Katrina hit the coast. Shannon Robert, an associate professor of theatre at William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Miss., suggested benefit performances as fund raisers.

"Through our children's program here (the Pickled Pepper Players), we thought we could take our shows as benefit performances to the Gulf Coast," Murphy said. "The goal from the very beginning was to not be an additional burden on the communities. We wanted to go to whatever community we thought we could benefit."

Murphy said the group was "completely self contained," living in a recreational vehicle the entire time. They brought their own food, water and generator. Karla Murphy drove in a separate vehicle.

Karla Murphy gave special performances of *The Little Old Lady Who Swallowed The Fly* to children too young to read. In Slidell, La., she had an audience of about 50 children at the Rainbow Child Care Center.

"The cast was wonderful from day one," Murphy said. "They all said, 'Yeah, let's do it.' They were behind it every inch of the way. You couldn't have asked for better representatives from Marshall University."

## **Debate Team**

*from Page 3*

Beckley, was a semi-finalist and freshman journalism and English major Laura Kimpel of Wheeling advanced to the quarterfinals. Mistich advanced to the quarterfinals at Purdue University's tournament in September.