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Weisberg Engineering Facility Dedicated

The planned accreditation of Marshall University's engineering program moved closer to reality Aug. 16 with the dedication of the Arthur Weisberg Family Engineering Laboratories on Marshall's Huntington campus.

The \$4.2 million, 16,000-square-foot facility containing the engineering laboratories, which sits across 3rd Avenue from Smith Hall, is named in honor of philanthropists Arthur and Joan Weisberg of Huntington. Signage revealing the name of the building was unveiled during the event.

The Weisbergs also joined Marshall's Pathway of Prominence that day. Donors who present gifts of \$1 million or more to Marshall are honored with a plaque on

Engineering and Technology (ABET) accredited engineering degree is construction of new facilities.

In May 2006, the Weisbergs, owners of State Electric Supply Company in Huntington, contributed \$2.5 million in support of Marshall's Division of Engineering and Computer Science. The division was renamed the Arthur and Joan Weisberg Division of Engineering and Computer Science to honor their many years of supporting Marshall.

In December 2007, the Weisbergs increased their commitment to engineering at Marshall by expanding their 2006 pledge to \$5 million. According to the revised commitment, as much of the funds as needed went toward construction of the engineering laboratories, with any remaining funds going to the Weisberg division to provide support for future needs of the program. Additional funds for the project were raised through Marshall's Bridge Campaign.

Currently, the Marshall BSE offers an area of emphasis in civil engineering, and the new facility will house laboratories to support courses in material testing, soil mechanics, hydraulics, and environmental engineering. There also is room for expansion as the program adds other emphasis areas such as mechanical engineering.

The building also will have an electronic classroom, offices, a technician room, a balance room and a visualization lab, where simulated environments will be created for specialized training and research. The new facility provides essential resources for accreditation of the engineering program, which Marshall plans to seek in the 2009-2010 academic year.

Art and Joan Weisberg have demonstrated on many occasions their commitment to continuing education and

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Board of Governors Members Reappointed

West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin has reappointed three members of Marshall University's Board of Governors to four-year terms.

Those reappointed to terms ending June 30, 2012 include Letitia Neese Chafin of Williamson, W.Va., John G. Hess of Barboursville and Verna K. Gibson of Sarasota, Fla.

Chafin is an attorney with the H. Truman Chafin Law Firm, PLLC, in Williamson, W.Va.

Hess, a certified public accountant, is a partner with the Certified Public Accounting firm of Hess, Stewart & Campbell, PLLC, which has offices in Huntington and Beckley.

Gibson is nationally known for her career and leadership in the retail fashion clothing industry. She was the first woman CEO of a Fortune 500 company.



Joan (left) and Arthur Weisberg watch the video unveiling of their family name on the new engineering laboratories facility.

the Pathway, which is located at the center of the Huntington campus between Old Main and the Memorial Student Center. The plaque was unveiled during the ceremony.

"This new facility is a tremendous milestone in the history of the University, and without Art and Joan, we would not be where we are today," Marshall President Stephen J. Kopp said. "Their most recent gift has been one of the most important factors in our ability to move forward on the construction and development of the new engineering laboratories."

In January 2006, Marshall University's Board of Governors approved a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering (BSE), to be offered in the College of Information Technology and Engineering's Division of Engineering and Computer Science. One of the most important steps in establishing a four-year, Accreditation Board for

WMUL Continues Winning Ways Over Summer

Students and the faculty manager from WMUL-FM, Marshall University's public radio station, received five awards in the Omni Intermedia Awards Spring 2008 Audio Production Competition and six in the Millennium Awards 2008 Competition, results of which were announced this summer.

MU students received one Silver Omni Award and four Bronze Omni Awards in the Omni competition. The winners were announced by Media Corp. Inc. in Lexington, Ky. Marshall students and Faculty Manager Dr. Chuck G. Bailey received two Gold Awards and four Silver Awards in the Millennium competition. Those winners were named in a letter from Snoqualmie, Wash.

The Silver Omni award-winning entry by WMUL-FM was:

Radio News

"The Pumpkin House: Trick or Treat Night," written and produced by Adam Cavalier, a senior from Montgomery, W.Va., broadcast during "5 p.m. Edition of Newscenter 88."

The Omni Intermedia Awards are owned and operated by Media Corp Inc., which exists to recognize outstanding media productions that engage, empower and enlighten. Media Corp Inc. is also dedicated to educating and training higher education students. Winners of the Omni Awards come from radio stations, production facilities, advertising and public relations

Marshall Launches New Home Page Look

Over the summer, a new look has been created for the Marshall Web landing page. It went "live" on Monday, Aug. 18, according to Dr. Jan I. Fox Senior Vice President for Information Technology/CIO.

"The page was designed to promote the university and to direct constituency groups to the pages they are most likely to need," Fox said. "It also provides a visually appealing, less cluttered look for the first Marshall page visitors are likely to see."

Fox said that comments or corrections can be transmitted by using the feedback section of the page.

agencies, government entities, technicians, narrators, writers, and other professionals associated with the production of audio broadcasts and materials.

"This is an outstanding accomplishment," Bailey said. "I am proud of the honor these Silver and Bronze Omni Intermedia Awards bestow on WMUL-FM, the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications and Marshall University."

The two Gold Awards in the Millennium competition were in the following categories:

Feature Package

"The Pumpkin House: Trick or Treat Night."

Sports Play-By-Play

WMUL-FM's broadcast of the Marshall University-East Carolina football game played Saturday, Nov. 10, 2007 at Marshall.

The Millennium Awards were created to honor outstanding creativity, skill, craft and talent in television/film/video/commercials, print, advertising, Web design, audio and radio. Entries are judged by industry professionals who look for companies and individuals who raise the bar of excellence. There were more than 1,200 entries in the 2008 competition.

"This is a noteworthy accomplishment for WMUL-FM to be recognized as having broadcast one of the best feature packages as well as one of the best play-by-play calls of a college football game in the country," Bailey said. "Adam Cavalier's feature package has received multiple awards and this latest gold award further validates the quality of his news reporting skills. Likewise, Marshall fans are treated to superb coverage of Thundering Herd sports by the 88 FM sports team."

For more information on WMUL's awards, contact Bailey at (304) 696-2294.

Faculty/Staff Achievements

An article by *Dr. José Luis Morillo-Amo*, professor of Spanish, titled "Sexual Norms in Post-War Spain" was published in the Fall 2007 issue of *PEGASO*, a refereed journal sponsored by the University of Oklahoma in affiliation with *World Literature Today*.

Note of Thanks

I would like to thank the Marshall University community for the expressions of sympathy shown to my family at the recent passing of my grandmother, Fern Rogers Simon. The flowers, cards, letters, telephone calls and contributions to my home church (Bailey Memorial UMC in Rosemont, W.Va.) are greatly appreciated. Special thanks to the administration, staff and faculty in the College of Education and Human Services.

Albert Simon

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The next regular issue of *We Are...Marshall!* will carry an issue date of Sept. 5, 2008. Deadline is Aug. 29. 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.

Profile: Virginia Holderby

A series on interesting Marshall University people.



Virginia Holderby

Virginia Holderby's life is defined by books. She's immersed in them all day at work in the Drinko Library. She loves to read when she can find a solitary moment, and she's even co-authored a weighty tome about firefighting procedures, "Emergency Incident Command Systems Fundamentals and Applications." So it's no surprise at all that on her off-duty hours she's a committed volunteer firefighter

On the surface, libraries and firefighting don't seem to have a whole lot in common, but in her family they're both cherished traditions. She's had sisters in the library and brothers in the fire station and actually the twain really do meet.

Holderby has done two stints at Marshall, always working in the library. After graduating from Fairland High School in Proctorville, Ohio, where she loved working in the library, she earned an associate degree from West Virginia Career College and took a few temporary jobs before being hired for a position in the Morrow Library. She worked for a couple of years before electing to be a stay-at-home mom for daughter Amanda, and later, son Daniel, before returning to the library in 1989 where she now works as a circulation assistant.

Holderby is proud to be one of three sisters who have held positions in the library. Sister Patsy Stephenson works in cataloging and they were joined by younger sister, Ella Zirkle, who sadly died unexpectedly in 2002 at age 28. Her loss was devastating to the family and they searched for a way to permanently pay tribute to her.

"Everyone loved Ella," she says softly. "We wanted to do something here in her memory." They wanted a living memorial, something that would last and that would capture Ella's vibrant spirit so they decided to plant a tree, a handsome Bradford pear near the library on the back of a lot overlooking Hal Greer Boulevard. But it was soon apparent that the library staff wanted to honor her as well. They decided a bench near the tree dedicated to her memory would be a fitting and lasting tribute. With the proper permission secured, funds were quickly raised and today the bench rests under a big and beautiful tree.

With a family history like theirs, it was inevitable that the sisters would become involved with voluntary firefighting activities. After all, their uncle was the chief of the Rome, Ohio fire department for 21 years, their brothers, Jim and Joe, are members there and have held various offices. Holderby's husband Gerald, along with Ella's husband, are volunteer firefighters. Their mother, Sylvia, and their aunt were active with the auxiliary. Virginia and Patsy both are longtime members of the auxiliary, and now Holderby is an active member of the department. But becoming a full-fledged member didn't come easy.

For many years women were not welcomed as active firefighters, she explains. As auxiliary members they could perform many necessary duties, many of them administrative, but were not trained or authorized to work as volunteer firefighters. Still they hung in there, often doing menial tasks, such as cleaning. "I was in charge of cobwebs and windows," Holderby says

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New Chemistry Professor Receives Start-up Award



Dr. Laura McCunn

Dr. Laura R. McCunn, an assistant professor in Marshall University's Department of Chemistry, has been named one of eight recipients of a Camille and Henry Dreyfus Faculty Start-up Award. The unrestricted five-year grant provides \$30,000 to begin her research program.

McCunn, a native of northeast Ohio, was hired at Marshall last spring and will begin teaching at MU this fall. She is one of only five faculty from a public institution in the past five years to receive the start-up award, according to Dr. Michael Castellani, professor and chair of Marshall's Department of Chemistry.

"It's really a great thing to help get her started," Castellani said.

McCunn, a physical chemist, received her B.S. degree in biochemistry from Ohio Wesleyan University and her Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Chicago. She also received a postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University.

Her research interests include the structure, stability and other properties of radicals, which are reactive chemical species created during combustion. McCunn is building a matrix-isolation instrument to measure the vibrational spectra of the radicals. The apparatus will also be used to learn about the photochemistry of halogenated hydrocarbons, such as CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons).

"We're extremely pleased that Laura received this award," Castellani said. "The money will allow her to hire undergraduate students to study in her research lab and so increase the educational opportunities for our students. This program is very competitive and the award also raises the stature of both our department and the College of Science nationally."

Dr. Wayne Elmore, interim dean of Marshall's College of Science, said he is "very pleased" that McCunn has been awarded this prestigious award.

"Her addition to the Chemistry Department improves an already excellent academic and research intensive program," Elmore said. "I am sure she will have a long and productive career at Marshall University."

What's Marco Doing on a Dollar Bill?

He's participating in an initiative for Marshall faculty and staff, to be revealed soon. Watch this "We Are...Marshall" newsletter for more information in the next issue.



Virginia Holderby

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laughing. But that all changed one day as she vividly recalls. She was on her hands and knees cleaning hoses when as part of a discussion going on, she chimed in with a cogent suggestion. When a man brushed her off with a patronizing "You're not a member," she had had enough. So she marched, not out the door but straight into the office where she filled out an application.

It takes a lot of training to become a firefighter, and she's willingly put in the time and effort to make the grade. The profession requires strength, agility and dexterity. She's a certified Emergency Medical Technician and has put in hours in required training courses, many of them held at the Tri-State Fire Academy. Over the years, she's also attended four week-long sessions at the National Fire Academy in Emmetsburg Pennsylvania. "You have to keep training, over and over again, you have to be ready for anything," she says.

And in her 26 years or so, she's had to do almost everything for which she trained. She's performed CPR, pulled people out of vehicles, gone on emergency medical runs and fought any kind of blaze imaginable—brush, structure or vehicle. Through a twist of fate, she missed the worst of the most horrific fire in local firefighters' memories, the 1996 fire that engulfed a packed retail firecracker store in Scottown, Ohio, killing nine people and seriously injuring several more. The blaze started when someone lit a match and the entire structure exploded in flames with customers unable to escape.

"For some reason my car wouldn't start that day and I had to catch a ride to the station, but the truck has already gone... Fire units came from everywhere that day, but by the time I got there the worst was over and people had been retrieved from the building and were on their way to hospitals ... That was the worst fire scene I have ever been at and I can only imagine how bad it was when the first responders got there." In fact there was lasting fallout from that fire. Several firefighters quit after that day, unable to go on after the inferno and its aftermath they had witnessed, she says.

She became an author after she saw the need for an updated manual on Federal mandates that fire departments run on incident command systems. The last book on that topic came out in the 1960s and was woefully out of date.. It took two years of work, researching, writing and editing, but the result was worth all that effort, she believes. "It's a model for management that can be used for anything from structure fires to major disasters," she explains.

Her love of books and reading have served her well in the circulation department, where she's busy tracking of volumes coning in and out of the library, monitoring fines, keeping collections together, hunting down lost materials, and in general making sure materials are available and where they should be for faculty and students. She even makes minor repairs to damaged books. And she has a sense of humor about her job. "I've had people say 'why are you tired at the end of the day, you just work in the library?' They just don't know," she says, laughing.

One of the joys of her job is working with the library staff. "We have a bond; there is such good camaraderie. They are here for one another in good times and in bad."

There's not much free time for the energetic Holderby, but she likes to garden and do flower arrangements. She had excellent tutelage from her mother who once worked at a florist shop. She finds listening to music relaxing and has eclectic tastes, ranging all the way from gospel to jazz, but she's particularly interested in jazz as Daniel, a MU student majoring in music education, is a jazz musician and a member of the marching band.

It's a comfort to her to know that from some windows in the Drinko Library you can look out, watch the seasons change and see people relaxing and enjoying themselves on Ella's bench in the shade of the flourishing pear tree. Ella would have liked that, the sisters know.

Weisberg Facility

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to helping Marshall and the community grow together. They have been major contributors to Marshall for many years, supporting the Arthur and Joan Weisberg Chairs in Software Engineering and the Arthur and Joan Weisberg Division of Engineering and Computer Science. In recognition of their dedication, both Art and Joan Weisberg received Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees from Marshall last spring.

"Marshall is a major asset to the community," Art Weisberg said. "Marshall is the vehicle we are going to use to keep up in the future. Huntington is a great place to start a business and raise a family. Why shouldn't Huntington succeed? Marshall helps by training people who give back to Huntington."

Art Weisberg said he believes that his success with State Electric, which began in Huntington in 1952 and has grown to 41 branches in five states, proves that the future is unlimited for Marshall and the community.

"I'm a hardware salesman," he said. "Huntington people and Marshall people have been very kind to me. Why have I come this far? Hard work, dedication and believing in ideas. I started this business with no money, no future and no inventory. But I got immersed in it. In six months, I loved it."

Joan Weisberg described the new engineering lab building as "wonderful" and important to the future of Marshall and Huntington.

"Good schools are a hallmark of a fine community," she said. "The best thing you can do is help people help themselves at a higher economic and intellectual level. (Through the engineering program) people will be getting training for intellectually challenging and beneficial jobs."

Dr. Betsy Dulin, dean of CITE, acknowledged the impact of the Weisbergs' support of the engineering program at Marshall.

"With their unerring vision for the future of technology and their unsurpassed community spirit, Art and Joan Weisberg have been with the College of Information Technology and Engineering (CITE) from the beginning," Dulin said. "Their early support for our faculty and students and the naming gift for the Weisberg Division of Engineering and Computer Science were major catalysts for the development and growth of the college. Their most recent gift enables us to pursue the next important steps of our growth, including further development of the engineering and computer laboratory components of our program in preparation for an accreditation visit next year. We're honored and privileged to name the new facility in recognition of their generosity."

Sen. Robert Plymale, chair of the Senate Education Committee, was the lead sponsor of legislation in 2004 that led to the restart of Marshall's engineering program.

"The opening of this building is a defining moment in the engineering program at Marshall University," Plymale said. "I equate this to when I was a student here and the medical school was established, and the impact it has had on the university and community. I believe the engineering school can have that same impact."