CITES issues warning: 
Don’t take ‘phishing’ bait
By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

Vigilance is the most powerful weapon employees wield in thwarting the recent spate of “phishing” emails targeting U. of I. computers, say leaders at Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services.

“We’re asking everyone to be more savvy digital citizens,” said Mike Corn, the campus’s chief privacy and security officer and university chief information security officer. “There is a body of miscreants out there on the Internet and they’ve gotten very good at convincing people to give out their private information. We’re asking everyone to stop and think a little bit when they look at their email,” Corn said.

Phishing is just what it sounds like: A dubious URL address throws out a line (in the form of an official-looking email) hoping the receiver bites by clicking on the link and providing a user name and password.

In many of the U. of I. cases, employees will receive an email, complete with university logos and markings, which says the employee’s login and password have expired. Even the link destination has the employee’s login and password.

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If the information is supplied, the infected email will replicate itself and send further lure someone into providing password information.

For the last week, some email sent from the campus is being rejected by other universities and private companies,” Gulick said. “This means that emails sent from an illinois.edu address to schools and companies using these spam-control services will not reach their intended recipients.”

Corn said the university has an effective anti-spam system that detects or quarantines millions of emails daily, and that CITES regularly monitors outgoing emails to detect a determined threshold of email replication. The system sounds an alarm when an infection is detected.

“There are no visible signs of an infection that we can detect until the mail goes out,” he said.

While defending against ever-changing malicious content delivery methods is a virtual game of Whac-A-Mole, Corn said there are ways employees can help protect themselves – and the university.

“One last blast? Winter left what waxy hope was its final curling card March 25-25 after a snowstorm dropped nearly a foot of snow on the area and led to a rare cancellation of U. of I. classes. On the Quad, a sign of the times. A student-led snowball fight started up after an impromptu open invitation was sent out through social media. In less than a week, the snow had given way to 60-degree temperatures.

New campus service untangles the web of website creation
By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

In just its first full year of operation, the publish.illinois.edu website service has led to the creation of more than 700 new campus websites – and the number keeps rising.

The service, created and maintained locally on a volunteer basis by campus information technology professionals, is meant to give anyone with a campus NetID the tools to quickly create a basic, inexpensive website.

“We wanted students, and faculty and staff members to be able to make a website and start publishing within minutes,” said Mike Bohlmann, the director of information technology for the College of Media.

“It’s fully up and running now and we hope it really gets utilized.”

Bohlmann said he’s been amazed at the number of sites developed in the first year, which he sees as a sign that the system is easy to use. The system’s virtual servers are provided by Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services and are capable of handling thousands of websites without taxing infrastructure. Virtual servers allow many servers to be added onto a single physical machine, making the hardware more efficient.

The need for such a Web publishing system had been discussed among campus IT professionals as an alternative to the Netfiles service, which required HTML knowledge and was not user friendly. In 2010, the IT pros started meeting as a group to figure out how to develop it – choosing the freely available and customizable WordPress software because of its demonstrated usability.

Bohlmann said the websites created through publish.illinois.edu – sometimes called PIE for short – do have a 10 MB space limitation for large files like images, videos and PDFs. But he said there are ways around that, including the option of integrating plug-in software such as Flickr and cloud computing such as WEBSITE SERVICE.

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Zoning restrictions also a key factor in foreclosure crisis

By Dusty Rhodes
Arts and Law Editor

The causes of the foreclosure crisis seem obvious: Buyers purchased homes they could never afford, junked in part by lenders pushing subprime mortgages. Real estate values escalated, and when the bubble burst, buyers were left owning homes that were worth less.

Arnav Chakraborty, a professor of urban and regional planning at the U. of I., has identified another factor in the neighborhood zoning.

According to a study published in the journal Housing Policy Debate, communities that zoned too strictly for the development of larger, single-family homes have a higher risk for foreclosure when compared to areas that accommodate a broader spectrum of housing opportunities.

“It intuitively makes sense,” Chakraborty said. “If you push too much housing in the higher-priced sectors, you would otherwise buy cheaper housing would either be forced to buy more expensive housing or move elsewhere. It is, ultimately, a question of choice for the homebuyers.”

Chakraborty and two doctoral students, Dustin Allred and Robert H. Boyer, focused on metropolitan areas across the United States – Baltimore-Washington, D.C.; Boston; Miami; Minneapolis-St. Paul; Portland, Ore.; and Sacramento, Calif. – starting in 2005 through 2008, the period of the housing bubble.

The researchers adopted a similarly broad definition of foreclosure risk, counting any mortgage that entered the foreclosure process regardless of the ultimate outcome. “We did that for a very specific reason, which is that foreclosure regulations vary a great deal state to state,” Chakraborty said. “The fact that the mortgage loan entered foreclosure was an indicator that the homeowner was under some vulnerability.”

They also had to take into account a host of factors already associated with foreclosure, including the number of high-cost or subprime mortgages, the percentage of Hispanic and African-American residents, foreclosure rates in surrounding municipalities and the type of rampant market speculation seen in cities such as Phoenix and Miami.

“We were trying to see whether after controlling for those factors, if there is a structural link, or a connection between the restrictions of the zoning and the risk of foreclosure,” Chakraborty said. “We found that the higher the proportion of single-family detached housing, the more mortgages are entered in foreclosure.”

The journal has asked several experts to write detailed commentaries to be published as a result of Chakraborty’s study – an indication that the findings might generate debate. And Chakraborty has already expanded this research to include 20 more metropolitan areas and to hone in on more exact foreclosure data. “This way, we can see whether someone who bought a home in the 1980s or ‘90s had the same level of risk as somebody who bought in what are called the ‘go-go years’ – 2000 through 2005,” he said.

These findings could interest municipalities and potential homebuyers alike. Municipal governments might use the study findings to identify broader range of housing choices; homebuyers might focus on the odds of protecting themselves by buying in communities that are predisposed to these risks.

Foreclosure risk

Urban and regional planning professor Arnav Chakraborty, left, and graduate students Robert H. Boyer, center, and Dustin Allred collaborated on a study of foreclosures from 2005 through 2008.

Case could have tax consequences for same-sex couples

By Phil Cicloza
Business and Law Editor

The resolution of a U.S. Supreme Court case challenging a 1996 Defense of Marriage Act could have complicated tax consequences for same-sex couples, a U. of I. expert on tax law said.

On March 27, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a historic case defining marriage as being between a man and a woman that could have enormous legal implications – including the prospect of many same-sex couples facing higher tax bills, says law professor Richard L. Kaplan.

“Marital status is implicated in more than 1,100 separate federal provisions, including more than 200 provisions in the tax code alone,” said Kaplan, the Peer and Sarah Pedersen Professor of Law.

A ruling is expected by the end of June.

“Social Security and Medicare benefits and Medicaid also includes valuable protections, however, do not apply to same-sex couples unless DOMA is overturned,” Kaplan said. “If the court overturns DOMA, married same-sex couples would be eligible for these benefits.”

Medicaid also includes valuable protections for an applicant’s spouse in terms of how much income and assets can be retained if a person requires nursing home care, Kaplan says.

Those so-called ‘community spouse’ protections include the ability for same-sex couples under the current law, but would if DOMA is overturned by the court,” he said.

A ruling is expected by the end of June.

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InsideIllinois
On the Job Tamika Dorris
By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

T he seating at Beckman Institute Café is easy, especially with the skylights providing comforting sunshine for anyone sitting down to eat.

Tamika Dorris, a snack bar attendant there, gives customers a similar feeling. The four-year U. of I. employee said she likes the job because it’s relaxing and allows her to “do a little bit of every-thing,” including cashiering, cooking, serving and even supervising student workers.

She said she most enjoys serving cus-tomers. “The customers that come through here – almost everybody are wonderful people,” she said.

She’s been getting out of her way to exude a positive attitude, even when her day isn’t going as well as she had hoped.

“It takes a lot for me to have a bad day,” she said “I always think, ‘It could be worse,” or ‘I’ve been through worse.’ I have a lot to be thankful for, so I smile and tell everyone to have a great day. Some people don’t even have today.”

The size of the daily lunch crowd has almost doubled in the six months that Dorris started working at Beckman – but she says the staff has handled the increase well.

“I have a really great staff around me and my students are just wonderful,” she said. “My manager is understanding and loves the job. He gets along with all the students and believes in getting it done together.”

Each shift includes three customers – two running registers and a third in the dish room.

“Doing a good job is the best feeling ever.” she said. “I’m so excited to own my home. It’s the best feeling I’ve ever had.”

The Dorris family recently was selected to receive the 65th Habitat home constructed by Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County.

Over the summer, the Dorris family will provide sweat equity at their new house, which will be under construction. The family is the first to use the new building at the construction site.

“I’m hoping not to put any nails through my hand,” she said.

One of the advantages for the family is that the house will have a yard to play in and be completely accessible, with wide doors and specially designed spaces that will help in the care of her mother, who uses a wheelchair.

Dorris described her feelings of being selected in the recent Habitat for Humanity newsletter:

“All my adult life I have worked two jobs to care for my children,” she said. “I’ve always wanted to own my own home and to have the feeling that all of my hard work has paid off. Getting a Habitat home will not only allow me to be a homeowner – but to save for my family’s future. I don’t see myself as one of the lucky ones with a success story. I see myself as one of the blessed ones with a testimony.”

On the Job features UI staff members. To nominate a civil service employee, email insideillinois@illinois.edu.

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WEBSITE SERVICE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

As Box.com to expand website capabilities without using an inordinate amount of stor- age or computing space on the PIE system. The website also offers helpful hints for re- sizing photos and other ways to maximize space.

“We’ve talked about possibly expanding storage space, but the idea has been, from the very beginning, to keep storage small,” he said. “It gets expensive when you start providing more storage.”

Kimberly Gudeman, the associate direc- tor of communications for the Coordinated Science Laboratory in the College of En- gineering, said publish.illinois.edu has al- ready made an impact.

“Over the past few years, requests for new websites have increased tenfold,” she said. “We simply did not have the resources to build custom sites for each group.”

They turned to publish.illinois.edu at the recommendation of engineering’s IT Web team and now have a dozen websites, with plans to create more.

“The idea was to enable everyone from office managers to faculty members to update their own content with little or no HTML experience,” she said. “The process for getting the sites up became seamless. We can literally put up a simple new site in less than 90 minutes, as long as the copy has already been developed.”

What once seemed impossible suddenly has become easily replaceable.

“When you can turn around a new web- site by the end of the day, you kind of feel like a rock star,” she said.

She said the operational and storage limitations mean there are not a lot of fancy bells and whistles, but it leads to templates that can be easily developed and adapted.

“WordPress is probably not the right so- lution for large, complex or highly dynamic sites, but for the smaller sites it’s a total dream,” she said.

Gregory Matheson, a graduate student who works at the Wildlife Medical Clinic in the College of Veterinary Medicine, said publish.illinois.edu was an easy way to up- date the clinic’s website. He said the new site will be active soon.

“Our website was starting to look pretty outdated and students could only edit their sites with Dreamweaver through one computer in the VetMed library,” he said. “But I just wasn’t practical anymore.”

PIE selling points included its low cost and compatibility with social media.

“We are very close to having everything the way we’d like and so far there has been a lot of positive feedback about how the site looks and runs,” he said.

Bohlmann said volunteers come from CITES; the College of Agricultural, Con- sumer and Environmental Sciences; the College of Education; the College of Engi- neering; the College of Media; the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, and the University Library. A governance committee also exists to address issues as they arise. While anyone can create a site through an automated system, sites are re- viewed to be sure they are related to uni- versity business. One of the regular tasks will be to audit sites that no longer have ac- tive university faculty or staff members or students associated with them. The system also allows outside collaborations with non- university users.

He said the management system might have to be revisited should the number of websites grow exponentially – considering all of the volunteers have their own depart- mental responsibilities to tend to during office hours.

“The system’s ease of use makes this possible at all,” Bohlmann said.

However it plays out, he said there is a value in having the service managed locally.

“We think it will continue to grow but we want to keep this community-based as much as we can,” he said. “The members of the community are the ones updating things and we think that’s a real advantage.”
Excellence in public engagement recognized with awards

Outstanding individual and group outreach efforts will be recognized April 30 with the 2013 Campus Awards for Excellence in Public Engagement.

The awards recognize faculty members, academic professionals and students who have consistently applied their knowledge and expertise to issues of societal importance for the public good.

Each faculty member and academic professional receives $1,500 and a permanent $1,500 salary increase. The team award includes $5,000 to the sponsoring unit to support or enhance the project honored. Students receive $1,500 to be used for professional development or other educational activities.

Brant Houston, a professor of journalism in the College of Media who holds the Knight Chair in Investigative and Enterprise Reporting, is the director of the CU-CitizenAccess project (www.cu-citizenaccess.org), an online news and information service devoted to investigative and enterprise coverage of social, justice and economic issues in East Central Illinois. From its inception, the project has been dedicated to increasing the community engagement of the university through its website and social networks. The project has pursued the idea of giving voice to the voiceless in Champaign-Urbana and continues to produce good journalism on a regular basis.

During the past two years, the project has worked with Illinois Public Media on dozens of news radio features, online content or cross-platform projects. Houston also holds a visiting faculty appointment in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science and has forged alliances with other news organizations and community groups.

Madhu Viswanathan, the Diane and Steven N. Miller Professor in the department of business administration, also holds appointments in the Coordinated Science Laboratory, the College of Engineering and the Institute for Genomic Biology. His ability to leverage his basic research to address a diverse set of applied questions that have societal value led him to establish the Marketplace Literacy Project (www.marketplaceliteracy.org), a nonprofit organization with a mission of enabling marketplace literacy among low-literate, low-income people. Through various programs initiated by this organization, he has used this research to improve people’s lives. In India, he developed a socially embedded form of marketplace literacy with educational programs to improve consumer literacy among low-literate, low-income buyers and sellers. He has also worked with the U. of I. Extension program and developed educational materials for the Food and Nutrition Program, currently used by the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program in the state of Illinois.

Martin Wolske, a senior research scientist with the Center for Digital Inclusion in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, has demonstrated a deep commitment to people in the communities in which he works. The center’s goal is to foster inclusive and sustainable societies through research, teaching and public engagement using information and communication technologies. Wolske is a faculty mentor for Action Research Illinois (formerly the East St. Louis Action Research Project) and also is an instructor of an Introduction to Network Systems class in East St. Louis. His most recent work with the Urbana Free Library – redesigning its computer lab, then building the custom furniture for it – is an important focus of his teaching and research. He also incorporates service learning and community engagement in two of his courses, in which students engage in projects that can have a significant impact on a community. While technology is a focus for the projects in his classes, it is technology embedded in a public space, designed to help members of a community accomplish their goals.

Deirdre Lanesskog, a doctoral student in the School of Social Work, focuses her work on immigrant advocacy in the local community. She has conducted studies on a public health agency’s efforts to provide immigrant friendly services in maternal and child health, as well as studies of local government’s responses to substandard housing among migrant workers. She received a Graduate College Focal Point grant to support community engagement activities to address the needs of new immigrants.
Shirley E. Barnhart, 68, died March 22 at home after a two-year battle with cancer. Barnhart was an assistant manager at the Illini Union Bookstore. She began her career at the U. of I. in 1975 at the Illini Union. She had been in her current position, serving as the textbook manager, since 1987.

Roger William Burtness, 87, died March 23 at the Meadowbrook Health Center, Urbana. He was a professor of electrical engineering for 28 years, retiring in 1987. Memorials: St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 2200 S. Philo Road, Urbana, IL 61802.

Katherine "Louise" Clark, 88, died March 26 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. Clark was a maid at the President’s House for 15 years, retiring in 1989.

Gregory "Gramps" Harris, 53, died March 20 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. Harris worked at the U. of I. from 1986-1992 as a laboratory animal technician I for the College of Veterinary Medicine.

PHISHING

"If you’re not paying attention, you can miss it," he said of the cleverly crafted fake emails. "We need everyone to be extra cautious because it’s a risk to data, it’s a risk to our reputation and it’s lost productivity. We take it very seriously." If an account has been compromised it is important to get your password changed as soon as possible. He said there are a variety of ways to protect passwords and avoid becoming a victim, from using a two-factor authentication process with regularly generated random password numbers, to creating encrypted password vaults. The CITES website offers added protection for computers and mobile devices.

He said leaders will make changes to the instructions sent out annually for changing campus passwords to ensure there is no confusion among vigilant employees who may be suspicious if that message is a phishing scam.

As for getting off the Internet blacklist, Corn said it may take some time. Some spam-tracking services won’t lift restrictions until 48 hours pass without them detecting an infected email being sent out from the U. of I.

In addition to investigating the source of the attacks, university officials have contacted some of the services and asked to be reinstated. Corn said that if email sent to a critical correspondent isn’t getting through, as a temporary and emergency measure, consider sending non-sensitive information through a third-party email account or use uofubox.com to store a file and send a link to that file through a third-party account.

The SAWBO initiative has so far produced educational materials on more than a dozen topics related to health, agriculture, sustainability and entrepreneurship. SAWBO reaches a global audience with animated characters of universal appeal and voice-over narrations that can be recorded in any language. The narrated animations are cheaper to deploy and are accessible to people who can’t read or write. The use of animated characters also overcomes many cultural barriers by presenting archetypal characters that appeal to a wide audience.

The team co-founders entomology professor Barry Pittendrigh and Julia Bello Bravo, who also is assistant director of Illinois Strategic International Partnerships, and project manager Francisco Seufferheld, a visiting program coordinator in the department of entomology, is the project manager.

The SAWBO initiative will be presented to the creators of the Scientific Animations Without Borders initiative.

Many who live in developing countries now have cellphones that allow unprecedented access to a world of information. A part of a broader community with a common mission to alleviate problems that affect vulnerable populations.

The Team Award will be presented to the editors of the Scientific Animations Without Borders initiative.

and their service providers. The project culminated in a national conference, and the success prompted the Graduate College to request a second proposal for the next academic year. She has inspired her peers and community leaders to see themselves as a part of a broader community with a common mission to alleviate problems that affect vulnerable populations.

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I n 1953, the novel “Casino Royale” introduced secret agent James Bond to the world, creating a franchise of books and blockbuster movies that continues to this day. April 13 marks the 60th anniversary of the book’s publication, and the U. of I. has planned a collaborative celebration.

Titled “The Birth of Bond: Ian Fleming’s ‘Casino Royale’ at 60,” the event will feature a collection of first editions, manuscripts and Fleming ephemera at the Rare Book and Manuscript Library; a film festival and display of Bond movie costumes and props at the Spurlock Museum; a collection of audio recordings, photographs and sheet music at the Sousa Archives; and a performance of music from the Bond movies and books by the U. of I. Concert Jazz Band. A full schedule of events is online.

Much of the material featured in the “Birth of Bond” comes from the collection of Michael L. VanBlaricum, the president of the Ian Fleming Foundation and a U. of I. alumnus who is loaning pieces of his personal collection.

VanBlaricum will give a one-hour talk on Fleming and Bond at 3 p.m. April 12 in the library auditorium (Room 66), followed by a reception in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library (Room 346). The April 13 jazz concert will begin at 7 p.m. in the Knight Auditorium (Room 66), followed by a piano medley of Bond scores. The April 14 gala exhibition opening presentation will begin at 7 p.m. in the Knight Auditorium, will feature five Bond films April 26 through April 28. The movies will be introduced by John Cork, a documentary filmmaker whose work includes the informational features on most Bond movie DVDs. Cork, a co-founder of the Ian Fleming Foundation, is also the author of the “James Bond Encyclopedia” and other Bond resource books.

VanBlaricum, who earned his bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in electrical engineering at the U. of I. and has been the president and chief scientist at Toyon Research Corp., said the Bond bug bit him in 1964 when, at age 14, he saw the movie “Goldfinger” at the Apollo Theater in Princeton, Ill., his hometown. He didn’t begin collecting Bondiana, however, until more than a decade later, when he decided he wanted to read Fleming’s Bond novels and had trouble finding them in bookstores. His wife, Pam Calvetti VanBlaricum (a U. of I. alumna with bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in aeronautical engineering), happened to be visiting New York City, and at her husband’s request, went to the Mysterious Bookshop in search of Bond books. She bought two first editions (one of which had been owned by Sammy Davis Jr.), and a week later, bookshop owner Otto Penzler called offering more: VanBlaricum has been collecting ever since.

Over the years, his collection has grown two octaves of the libretto. The first came when Ian Campbell, a rare book dealer in London, England, offered to sell VanBlaricum his Fleming collection. VanBlaricum took a second mortgage on his home to buy it. The second occurred in 1991, when an officer of Danjaq, S.A., the holding company that controls copyright and trademarks for Bond movie merchandise, offered to sell him the Neptune – the 23-foot submarine from “For Your Eyes Only.” To acquire the sub, VanBlaricum asked Cork and another Illinois collector, Doug Redenius, to join him in establishing the Ian Fleming Foundation, a public benefit nonprofit California corporation that now owns 34 Bond vehicles.

The foundation is loaning one of those, the Aston Martin Volante from “The Living Daylights,” for the exhibition at the Spurlock Museum. Titled “Unconventional Bond: The Strange Life of ‘Casino Royale’ on Film,” the Spurlock exhibition contrasts three different dramatizations of Fleming’s first novel – the CBS television version, made in 1954; the 1967 psychedelic spoof starring Ursula Andress, David Niven and Peter Sellers (all playing Bond); and the 2006 movie starring Daniel Craig.

In addition to items from VanBlaricum’s collection, Spurlock will display a handful of props on loan from EON Productions, which has produced many of the Bond movies.

VanBlaricum’s collecting habit was stoked along the way by encounters that he calls “pinch-me moments,” times when he has gotten to meet Fleming’s family, friends and professional fans. He knows the author’s original literary agent, Peter Janson-Smith, and he has spent time with Fleming’s personal friend Joan Bright Astley, who was in charge of the special information center in Winston Churchill’s cabinet war room. In 1996, when English Heritage designated Fleming’s home with a traditional Blue Plaque, the Fleming family selected VanBlaricum to speak at the unveiling.

And at a recent party celebrating the opening of a Bond exhibit at the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C., he met the retired CIA officers portrayed in the movie “Argo,” Tony Mendez and Stanfield Turner, as well as Dame Stella Rimington, the former director general of MI5, the United Kingdom’s internal counterintelligence and security agency.

“I never thought in my wildest ambitions that I’d get to meet people like that. I’ve learned so much about both British and American history, just because Fleming ran in some pretty interesting circles,” VanBlaricum said.

From the beginning, VanBlaricum’s goal was to assemble a complete research collection, because he knew that he would eventually donate his collection to a library such as the U. of I. Loaning so much of his collection to Illinois for the “Birth of Bond” is the first step toward that objective.

“Early on in my collecting, I met a guy who was a Sherlock Holmes collector, a mathematician for Bell Labs,” VanBlaricum said. “When he retired, he sold his entire collection at auction. That just sort of made me cry – that somebody spends their entire life building a collection then just throws it out there to get money.”

The knowledge that Indiana University holds a vast Fleming collection – the writer’s personal collection and manuscripts – adds an element of delight for VanBlaricum. “If you really want to study Fleming or Bond, you’re going to have to come to the Midwest,” he said. “That’s sort of what makes it cool, to me, but I’m an Illinois boy anyhow.”

Ads removed for online version

By Dusty Rhodes
Arts and Humanities Editor

‘THE BIRTH OF BOND’ EVENTS

- Gala Exhibition Opening Presentation
  Michael L. VanBlaricum, 3 p.m. April 12, Room 66 Library

- James Bond Film Festival
  April 26-28, Spurlock Museum

- U. of I. Concert Jazz Band
  7 p.m., April 13, Spurlock Museum

EXHIBITIONS

- Rare Book and Manuscript Library
  “Casino Royale” and Beyond: 60 Years of Ian Fleming’s Literary Bond, April 12-July 12

- Spurlock Museum
  “Unconventional Bond: The Strange Life of ‘Casino Royale’ on Film,” April 16-July 16

- Sousa Archives and Center for American Music
  “The Birth of Bond: Ian Fleming, Your Eyes Only,” April 12, 2013-March 14, 2014

ON THE WEB: go.illinois.edu/CasinoRoyale60

CELEBRATING BOND

April 13 marks the 60th anniversary of the publication of “Casino Royale,” and the U. of I. will reenact the event with a collaborative celebration. Michael L. VanBlaricum, a U. of I. alumnus, loaned pieces of his personal collection to the events.

The knowledge that Indiana University holds a vast Fleming collection – the writer’s personal collection and manuscripts – adds an element of delight for VanBlaricum. “If you really want to study Fleming or Bond, you’re going to have to come to the Midwest,” he said. “That’s sort of what makes it cool, to me, but I’m an Illinois boy anyhow.”

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Rini Bhattacharya Mehta on sex-based violence in India

Editor’s note: The December 2012 brutal gang rape of a 23-year-old woman in New Delhi has focused international attention on India’s legal system, especially laws pertaining to the protection of women. The victim in the December attack died of her injuries. Four men accused in the gang rape are on trial (a fifth alleged attacker was found dead in his jail cell; another accused attacker is a juvenile). In the past few weeks, several more gang rapes have been reported in the media in India.

Rini Bhattacharya Mehta, a professor of comparative and world literature and of religion, made a documentary in 2010 about a new law in India designed to address domestic violence. Titled “Post498A: Shades of Domestic Violence,” the film explored specific laws in India that were created to address issues of domestic violence. Mehta, who is also a news editor, spoke with News Bureau news editor Dusty Rhodes about the status of women in India, and another new law tightening penalties on a broader range of sexual assaults.

News reports of recent cases of gang rape in India include victims as young as 12 years old. Are gang rapes more common in India than elsewhere?

The statistics on rape in general are problematic because of the issues related to rates of reporting in different parts of the world. India has been rising in the list of countries with dismal records of public safety, and the number of reported sexual assaults has also gone up. However, the results that you get from a Google search are related to the recent public and media outrage following the Dec. 16, 2012, incident. The victim, a college student, was attacked and assaulted in a bus that she boarded to go home after watching a movie. She was severely beaten and left for dead on the streets; she eventually succumbed to her injuries on Dec. 29. As soon as the news broke, something unusual happened. The incident somehow struck a nerve in vast sections of middle-class young men and women, and protests erupted all over the country, on the streets and over social media. The bill that was approved by the Parliament in March was to some extent a direct outcome of this December incident.

What triggers public outrage is difficult to say, but the protests that erupted and grew in a sustained manner following this crime were fueled by a new sense of community – social media being instrumental in the process. The pattern was similar to that of the Arab Spring, and I believe this comparison has already been made. This young woman, a middle-class college student living in a city, was one of hundreds of millions of middle-class young people of post-global India who have a different set of expectations regarding their lifestyle from their parents. The response of the politicians and activists, predictable to some extent, was drowned out by the furor of angry young people who kept coming back to the protest sites, kept marching on the streets, often braving beatings and other police action. Now that the government is strengthening the laws on rape, this vocal young majority feels somewhat validated. However, the media have continued to report “gang rapes” in different parts of the country as the protests and the parliaments actions were still going on.

Why does India have such a high number of rapes? Is there something in the cultural tradition that dictates a particular attitude toward women? Is this sexual violence related to the dowry system or domestic violence?

Gender equality is guaranteed in the Indian Constitution. However, modernity and development, either via British colonialism or via India’s nation-building efforts, have remained confined to a select minority of the population which, given India’s total population, is still a staggering number. Gender equality is something that India is still striving for, along with basic personal sustenance and security. The high numbers for sexual assaults and cases of domestic violence are part of the same picture.

How do India’s sexual assault and domestic violence laws compare to the laws in other nations?

They are pretty comparable in their recognition of the severity of the crime; the government has deemed both as “non-bailable” offenses, for example. But there is already discussion and apprehension about the extent to which the new rape law will actually work, because domestic violence has certainly not waned in the last two decades following the introduction of Article 498A. It is almost impossible to get redress using 498A without the assistance from or involvement of a powerful nongovernmental organization.

So, is the Parliament’s recent bill not enough? What else does Parliament need to do to address this problem?

The Parliament has taken a positive step in approving this bill; it was long overdue. But both reforms and agitations that are larger and wider in scope are needed. For example, it is not enough for the vocal educated middle class to agitate for just its own security and safety, that will be impossible for a democratic government to deliver in an increasingly unequal society. Think of the “normality” of the evening that led to the horrible death of the 23-year-old student. She went to watch a film (“Life of Pi,” as reported in the news) and all she did was board a bus to get home. No one should think of taking a bus in the evening as “taking a risk.”

But in reality, the series of events begun on that fateful evening continued for four long months – from the extreme violence she endured, the delay in police and emergency response, the shifting of blame and responsibility among various agencies of the state and finally the apparent “suicide” of one of the men accused on March 13 in his prison cell. It is all part of the same dysfunctional system every Indian citizen loves to hate. The disjuncture between the “normal” of the young victim’s life and what has long been accepted as a “normal” response from the state is simply staggering.

Both the movie theater and her home were relatively safe islands, like the college she attended or the library where she studied or the mall where she shopped. These places are all compatible with the rest of the globalized world. The hope is for some level of integration to happen in the future between these islands and the ocean that surrounds them. The agitations and reforms have to be about more than just safe navigation routes among these islands. The government as well as the young middle-class majority must come to terms with the fact that there will be no personal safety and security without social justice, for all.

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April 4, 2013

InsidIllinois

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‘Ebertfest’ 2013: ‘Days of Heaven,’ Tilda Swinton, Jack Black

By Craig Chamberlain
Social Sciences Editor

T erence Malick’s 1978 film “Days of Heaven” won an Oscar for best cinematography, and Roger Ebert likely found that no surprise. It is “above all one of the most beautiful films ever made,” Ebert said in a 1997 review.

So it’s only appropriate that the film will open the 15th annual Roger Ebert’s Film Festival on April 17 on the big-screen in the newly renovated Virginia Theatre in downtown Champaign.

Also among the 12 features and two shorts to be screened during the five-day “Ebertfest” – running through April 21 at the Virginia and at the U. of I. – will be a kabuki-inspired drama from Japan; a recent silent film from Spain that deserved as much attention as “The Artist,” according to Ebert; a sympathetic take on the “mad” painter Vincent Van Gogh, directed by frequent festival guest Paul Cox; and a documentary, which will close the festival, about veterans overcoming their wounds through fly-fishing on a Montana ranch.

Oscar-winner Tilda Swinton was a guest for the 2011 Ebertfest and returns this year with the crime thriller “Julia,” in which she plays the title role of an unlikable “tough broad who is in way over her head,” according to Ebert. Jack Black will be a guest with a very different crime story, “Bernie,” in which he plays the title role of a funeral director whom everyone likes but who has something to hide.

Three actors recently added as guests: Shailene Woodley, known for her roles in the TV series “The Secret Life of the American Teenager” and as the teenage daughter of a famous matador in “Kumare,” who will be a guest with the film “The Spectacular Now”; Trevor St. John, known for a long-running role in the daytime TV series “One Life to Live,” who will be a guest with the film “In the Family”; and Roy Abramson, whose credits include a recurring role in the TV series “The Descendants,” who will be a guest with the film “Bernie.”

The film schedule with Ebert’s reviews, information about other events, and a video retrospective from last year’s festival are online at ebertfest.com. Panel discussions and post-film Q-and-A sessions also will be streamed live from the website.

The festival is an event of the College of Media at Illinois. Additional support is provided by the Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance, sponsoring “In the Family”; Steak ‘n Shake, sponsoring “Blanche’s Runaway”; and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Ebert is a Pulitzer Prize-winning critic for the Chicago Sun-Times and co-hosted “Ebert & Roeper,” a weekly televised movie-review program, until 2006. He also produced and contributed to “Ebert Presents at the Movies,” which ran during 2011.

The 1,000 festival passes, covering all festival screenings, went on sale in November and usually sell out – though a few remain available.

Even if tickets for individual films are sold out, entrance can usually be obtained by waiting in a designated line that forms outside the theater prior to each screening. Those seeking additional information and updates on films, guests and festival events should contact Mary Susan Britt, at 217-244-0552 or marsue@illinois.edu, or festival director Nate Kohn, at 706-542-4972 or nate.kohn@gmail.com.

‘Ebertfest’ campus events announced

Part of “Ebertfest” has always included campus events such as panel discussions about film and the film industry featuring many of the directors, actors, critics and other special guests invited to the festival. The schedule of panel discussions, all free and open to the public, and all held in the Pine Lounge of the Illini Union.

Thursday, April 18
9-10:15 a.m. – “Sustaining a Career in Film”
10:30-11:45 a.m. – “Reality or Illusion: A False Dichotomy?”
Friday, April 19
9-10:15 a.m. – “Creative Independence in the Digital Age – How Real is It?”
10-30-11:45 a.m. – “Challenging Stigma Through the Arts”
Saturday, April 20
2-3:15 p.m. – “The Art of the Video Essay: How to Speak Through Movies”

‘Ebertfest’ 2013: ‘Days of Heaven,’ Tilda Swinton, Jack Black

Roger Ebert’s Film Festival, April 17-21

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17
7 p.m. “Days of Heaven” (1978), a drama that takes place in the years before World War I on the Texas prairie, in which a farmhand convinces the woman he loves to marry a rich funeral director who befriends a much-liked funeral director whom everyone likes but who has something to hide.

Saturday, April 20
8:30 p.m. “Julia” (2008), an unlikable woman in search of a big score who is trying to protect a young boy.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21
Noon “Not Yet Begun to Fight” (2012), a documentary about wounded veterans and their therapy through fly-fishing on a Montana ranch.
Town hall meeting to discuss vision of campus’s future

Chancellor Phyllis M. Wise and Provost Ilesanmi Adesida will host their first town hall meeting April 12. The meeting will be held in the Knight Auditorium of Spurlock Museum from 12 to 1 p.m.

The meeting’s purpose is to discuss the steps the university will take to develop a strategic plan for the next five years.

During the meeting, Wise and Adesida will discuss the campus’s vision for the future and the steps that will be taken to achieve it.

If you have any questions or comments, you can email them to wise@illinois.edu. A live stream of the meeting will be available on the university’s website.

College of Education

Conference focuses on critical issues

The role of culture in educational and social interventions will be the focus of a conference in Chicago to be hosted by the University of Illinois College of Education.

The conference, titled “Repositioning Culture in Evaluation and Assessment,” will be held on April 21-23 at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The meeting is the inaugural conference for the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment, which is a unit in the college.

The primary mission of the 2-year-old center is to address the need for policy-relevant research that explores the cultural and contextual dimensions of social and educational interventions.

Keynote speakers for the conference will be Rodney Hopson, a professor of educational evaluation at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Jennifer Green, a professor of educational research at Columbia University.

The conference will be held at the University of Illinois at Chicago, 78 E. Washington St., and the Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe St.

On-line registration, the program and information about fees and accommodations are on the conference website: education.illinois.edu/CREA/conference/registration. Registration must be made in advance. Participants who need to cancel their registration must do so by the end of the week.

IFLIP

Foreign language courses begin May 13

The School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics is offering its intensive Foreign Language Instruction Program May 13-24.

Taught by advanced graduate students or faculty members, the classes meet for three hours every weekday for two weeks. There is minimal homework, no attendance policy and no academic credit.

Each class must have a minimum of 10 participants. Courses are offered from 9 a.m. to noon or, in some cases, from 1 to 4 p.m. or 5 to 8 p.m.

Elementary-level classes, for those with no prior experience with the language, will be offered from 9 a.m.-noon in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish.

Elementary French and Spanish also will be offered from 9 a.m.-noon in Arabic, Italian and Spanish.

Intermediate-level classes, for those with about one year of college-level instruction, will be offered from 9 a.m.-noon in Arabic, Italian and Spanish.

Advanced-level classes, for those with two or more years of college-level instruction, will be offered from 5-8 p.m. in Arabic, Italian and Spanish.

A biblical Greek course also will be offered from 5-8 p.m.

The cost is $100 for U. of I. students, $125 for U. of I. faculty and staff members, and $150 for others. There is a minimum charge of $25 for classes that cannot be cancelled after April 15.

Cancellations after April 15 will be assessed $25. There will be no refunds after May 10.

For online registration and payment, go to www.scl.illinois.edu/conected/iflip.html. For more information, email scl@illinois.edu.

Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Middle East Film Festival begins April 6

The Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies will host its first Middle East Film Festival, featuring films from Egypt, Iran, Israel and Morocco.

Screenings will begin at 7 p.m. Saturdays in Room 1090 Lincoln Hall and are free and open to the public.

On April 13, the Egyptian film “Ali Zaoua” (2000) will be shown. The film tells the story of a group of children living on the streets in Casablanca and their search for justice from the daily plight of sexual harassment in Egypt.

On April 19, the Moroccan film “Ali Zaoua” (2000) will be shown. The film captures the power of dreams and presence of hope in the harshest of circumstances in the lives of a group of children living on the streets of Casablanca.

Talmudic perspectives on poverty

Thulin Lecture in Religion is April 18

Moshe Halbtert, a professor at New York University Law School and a professor of Jewish thought and philosophy at Hebrew University, will deliver the annual Marjorie Hall Thulin Lecture in Religion at 8 a.m. April 18 in the Knight Auditorium of Spurlock Museum.

The lecture, “On the Needs of the Poor – A Talmudic Perspective on Charity and Dignity,” is sponsored by the U. of I. department of religion and is free and open to the public.

Halbtert also is a member of Israel’s National Academy for Sciences and the Humanities. He earned a Ph.D. at Hebrew University in 1985, and from 1988-1992 he was a fellow at the Society of Fellows at Harvard University.


Born in Uruguay in 1958, Halbtert was raised in Israel in a modern Orthodox family. His father was a Holocaust survivor from Latvia, Galicia (Central-Eastern Europe) and his mother was an Israeli who had come to Uruguay to teach Hebrew.

Halbtert is profoundly committed to the democratic process. “Democracy is a nonviolent form of adjudicating different ideologies,” he says. “It’s very easy to be nonviolent when stakes are low; in Israel, we are in a condition where the stakes are very high.”

The annual lecture brings an internationally known scholar of religion and contemporary culture to campus for several days.

A reception in the Spurlock auditorium will follow the lecture. For more information, contact David H. Price, the director of the department of religion, at dprice@illinois.edu, or go to www.religion.illinois.edu.

‘Molecules Under Pressure’

Flygare Memorial Lecture is April 19

Russell J. Flygare, a professor at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, will present the 19th Flygare Memorial Lecture, “Molecules Under Pressure,” at 4 p.m. April 19 in Room 116 of the Roger Adams Laboratory.

Flygare earned his Ph.D. at Harvard University in 1983 under the supervision of professor Dudley Herschbach, the 1986 Nobel laureate in chemistry. After a postdoctoral appointment at Harvard, Flygare joined the Geophysical Laboratory at the Carnegie Institute of Washington and became the laboratory director.

His current research explores the chemistry of materials under a broad range of thermodynamic conditions including very high pressures and temperatures. Among his many accomplishments is the study of dense hydrogen at megabar pressures, and iron at temperatures and pressures present at Earth’s core.

In his lecture, Flygare will describe some of the unexpected and surprising effects on the chemistry of materials caused by high pressure. These studies have clarified the way we understand the physical and chemical properties of elements and molecules.

A reception honoring Flygare will be held in the atrium of the Chemical and Life Sciences Building.

Since last spring,” Wise said. “This planning and visioning effort is playing a critical role in the hard work they have put into the planning and visioning effort since last spring.” Wise said.

Phyllis M. Wise and Provost Ilesanmi Adesida will address the foundational needs of the campus.

Since October, Wise and Adesida have convened smaller working groups around the themes to identify actions that the campus can take in the near- and long-term to address the broad challenges. Wise says the information that has come out of these efforts is playing a critical role in planning the directions of the campus.

“We’re at the point where people are really stepping up, of the hard work they have put into this planning and visioning effort since last spring,” Wise said.

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Laboratory preceding the lecture.

Established by friends and family, this lecture series honors the memory of Willis H. Flygare, a chemistry faculty member from 1961 until his death in 1981.

Modern Greek Studies Program

Annual lecture to begin April 8

The U. of I. Modern Greek Studies Program has announced the establishment of the Arthur G. Nikelly annual lectures. The first Nikelly lecture will take place at 3 p.m. April 8 on the third floor of the Levis Center. Thomas Gallant, the Nicholas Family Endowed Chair in Modern Greek History at the University of California at San Diego, will speak on “Writing Greek History in the 21st Century.”

Gallant, who earned a Ph.D. in classical archaeology at Cambridge University, melds his Greek heritage with a prestigious academic background in the study of Greece and Greeks in the modern era. He is the author of six books and more than 40 scholarly articles.

The annual lecture is established in memory of Nikelly, a clinical psychologist and associate professor of health sciences who began his career at the U. of I. in 1959.

According to lecture organizers, Nikelly’s life was a testimony to the importance of human rights, social justice, freedom of expression and educational achievement.

For more information contact Stefanos Katokas, the director of the U. of I. Modern Greek Studies Program, skatsika@illinois.edu or 217-333-3563.

Calcium and cancer prevention

Nutrition symposium is April 17

Does calcium help prevent cancer? And if it does, how does it happen? James Fleet, an expert on the roles vitamin D and calcium metabolism may play in preventing cancer, will speak about his research in the keynote address of the 2013 U. of I. Nutritional Sciences Graduate Student Association’s Nutrition Symposium.

Fleet will speak from 4 to 5 p.m. April 17 at 134 Temple Hoyne Buell Hall. The lecture is open to the public.

Recently named a Distinguished Professor at Purdue University, Fleet is the director of Purdue’s Interdepartmental Nutrition program for graduate training in nutrition. He holds a Ph.D. from Cornell University and has previously held faculty appointments at Tufts University and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

In addition to Fleet’s keynote address, a mini-symposium that morning features the work of U. of I. researchers in “Bioactives and Cancer Prevention.” Presenters: John Erdman, a professor emeritus of nutrition and food science; Hong Chen, a professor of food science and human nutrition; Elizabeth Jeffery, a professor of pharmacology; and Alan Diamond, a Division of Nutritional Sciences faculty member from UIUC. The event will be in the ACES Library Monsanto Room.

Graduate student oral presentations will highlight DNS research in the ACES Library from 12:40 to 3:10 p.m. The presentations will be followed by a poster session, and hors d’oeuvres will be served from 5:15 to 6:40 p.m. with an awards presentation at 6:40 p.m.

For more information, contact the Division of Nutritional Sciences at 217-333-4177 or nutritionalsciences@illinois.edu.

‘Integrating Approaches to Ancient Drama’

Classics hosts conference April 12-14

The department of the classics is hosting a conference on ancient Greek and Roman drama April 12-14. The event will bring together specialists and practitioners of ancient drama who are from the Midwest and the Illinois campus.

Its goal is to initiate an interdisciplinary conversation on ancient and modern performance and reception.

The program features a broad array of topics on ancient and modern performance, including women’s networks, religion, war, politics and the legacy of drama in theater and film by leading authorities in ancient gender studies, religion, theater, opera and film. The conference also highlights current research by graduate students in these areas.

The department of the classics and the New Revels Players also will present a production of Aristophanes’ “Clouds” at 8 p.m. April 12 and 13 at the Chapel of St. John the Divine, 1011 S. Wright St., Champaign. The full conference program is online at www.classics.uiuc.edu/news/conferences/. For more information, contact Angeliki Tzanetou at tzanetou@illinois.edu.

‘Mixed Identity and the Hapa Project’

Artist Kip Fulbeck to speak April 4

Artist Kip Fulbeck will discuss “Mixed Identity and the Hapa Project” at 7 p.m. April 4 in the Illini Union Ballroom. Following the lecture, a gallery reception celebrating the opening of “The Hapa Project” exhibition will be at 8 p.m. at the Illini Union Art Gallery.

The exhibit focuses on those who are “Hapa,” defined for the project as a person of mixed ethnic heritage with partial roots in Asian and/or Pacific Islander ancestry.

“The Hapa Project” features a series of portraits of people, photographed from the collarbone up. The project’s goal is to increase awareness and promote positive self-identification for this ethnic group.

Fulbeck is an author, filmmaker, performer and arts professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

At the exhibition reception, Fulbeck will sign books and answer questions about his work. The exhibition will be in the gallery through April 26. Both events are free.

The event is co-sponsored by the Illini Union Board and the Asian American Cultural Center.

American Council of Learned Societies

Funding opportunities to be presented

Nicole A. Stahlmann, the director of Fellowship Programs at the American Council of Learned Societies, will host an information session at 10 a.m. April 16 on ACLS funding opportunities for faculty members and advanced graduate students. Her talk, on the third floor of the Levis Center, will provide information on research proposal preparation and ACLS’s peer-review process. The presentation will conclude with a Q-and-A session.

The council offers research support in the humanities and related social sciences through more than a dozen fellowships programs. With more than $15 million in annual fellowship stipends to be awarded in the current 2012-13 competition, ACLS is one of the largest supporters of scholars in the humanities.

Stahlmann oversees a large portfolio of initiatives to support individual and collaborative research in the humanities and humanistic social sciences, including the innovative New Faculty Fellows and Public Fellows programs. Prior to joining ACLS in 2008, Stahlmann was the program director of the International Dissertation Research Fellowships Program and the director of the Fellowships Office at the Social Science Research Council for seven years.

The lecture is hosted by the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities.

Illinois Radio Reader

Drop off donations for Vintage Vinyl sale

Illinois Radio Reader’s Vintage Vinyl used record sale is accepting donations of records, CDs, DVDs, video games and players, stereo equipment, speakers, and CD and DVD players. Donations can be taken to the sale location week-ends.

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Ads removed for online version
A lecture at Beckman, “Design Innovations in the Design of Housing and Community Settings for Older Adults,” will be presented by architect Victor Regnier at 3 p.m. April 15. The SmithGroup Distinguished Lecture in Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology building.

For more information or to volunteer before or during the sale, contact Deane Geiken, the director of Illinois Radio Reader, at 217-333-6503.

**Dino-Mite Mobile Devices**

Technology showcase for kids is April 6

During the Dino-Mite Devices event at the Champaign Public Library, 200 W. Green St., families can meet Buddy the Dinosaur from the PBS Kids’ show “Dinosaur Train” and test drive the hottest new mobile devices. The event will showcase free apps, ebooks and emagazines for the whole family.

The event is from 2 to 3 p.m. April 6, with a technology “petting zoo” provided by Best Buy. WILL will provide iPads and Kindles with PBS educational games so families can try them out, along with other dinosaur activities. The library will demonstrate how families can make use of ebooks and emagazines from the library collection.

“Our goal is to showcase technology tools that help kids learn and highlight free tools and services that are available to kids and families,” said MJly Delaney, the educational outreach director at Illinois Public Media. Illinois Public Media is sponsoring the event with the Champaign Public Library and Best Buy.

**SmithGroup Distinguished Lecture**

Architect Victor Regnier to speak April 15

Victor Regnier, a professor of architecture and of gerontology at the University of Southern California, will present the SmithGroup Distinguished Lecture in Beckman Institute Room 1005 at 3 p.m. April 15. Regnier has focused his academic and professional life on the design of housing and community settings for older people. His lecture at Beckman, “Design Innovations in Long-term Care: The Dutch Apartment for Life Model + Dementia Housing in Northern Europe,” explores how northern Europeans have set the bar for long-term care innovations with their approach to universal design specifications for senior housing and their community-based home care service delivery models. The Dutch Apartment for Life model is designed so residents can age-in-place in an adaptable residential apartment. Care services ramp up as the competency of residents declines. The coordination of these two strategies and a philosophy that stresses self-supportive behaviors allow the vast majority of residents to avoid institutionalization.

The SmithGroup Lecture Series brings nationally known scientists and innovators to campus for talks at Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology building.

**Illini Union food court**

Einstein Bros. Bagels now serving

Einstein Bros. Bagels is now open in the Illini Union food court, in the lower level. In addition to bagels, the restaurant offers wraps, bagel dogs, deli sandwiches, salads, soups and vegetarian choices, as well as egg white options and low-fat smoothies.

Restaurant hours: 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Fridays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays.

**Race to benefit Wildlife Medical Clinic**

April 7 trail race held at Homer Lake

The "Run Wild for Wildlife" trail race April 7 at Homer Lake will support the U. of I. Wildlife Medical Clinic. The race will begin at 8 a.m. with the clinic’s resident raptors serving as course marshals. Runners may choose between the long course (10 miles) or the short course (6K). Timing and scoring will be provided by the Second Wind Running Club.

For more information about the race and to register, visit www.eaps.illinois.edu/RunWild.

**Sinfonia da Camera**

Romantic music featured April 9

Sinfonia da Camera, the professional chamber orchestra of the U. of I., will end its season April 9 with a concert aptly titled “Rush Hour Romance.”

Beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, the hourlong concert opens with Sarasate’s “Fantasy on Bizet’s ‘Carmen,’” Op. 25. This iconic showpiece will be performed by Stefan Milenkovich, a professor of violin and a former child prodigy, who won his first international competition at age 7. Ronald M. Romm, another child prodigy turned professor, will pay tribute to legendary trumpet virtuoso Rafael Mendez, who recorded Paganini’s violin challenge, “Moto Perpetuo,” by circular breathing for more than four minutes. Romm has performed as a soloist since age 10, and played with the Canadian Brass for almost 30 years.

Ilan Hobson, Sinfonia music director and a professor emeritus of piano, will play and conduct from the keyboard Chopin’s “Grande Polonaise Brillante,” Op. 22, the piece Chopin was said to have composed for showmanship, now perhaps best known as the ending of the 2002 film “The Pianist.” The concert will conclude with Tchaikovsky’s Overture 1812, Op. 49.

After the concert, audience members get complimentary pizza, served in the Krannert lobby, where Rick Murphy will be playing jazz piano. Tickets are $10 for adults (children 18 and under get in free), and are available through the Krannert Center ticket office, 217-333-6280 or online at www.KrannertCenter.com.

**Island dispute subject of symposium**

They are just five tiny, uninhabited islands in the East China Sea, but China and Japan have looked ready to do battle over them several times since last summer. Known as the Diaoyu Islands by China and the Senkaku Islands by Japan, the islands and the dispute over them will be the subject of a diaoying campus symposium on April 19 sponsored by the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies.

The symposium will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the second floor of the Levit Center. It is free and open to the public.

Presentations will explore aspects of law, history, economics, nationalism, social media, politics and U.S. security concerns in the region, related to the dispute. Presenters will include scholars from Australia, Canada and Japan, as well as from several U.S. universities. U. of I. presenters will include Tim Liao, a professor of sociology, and Koji Taira, a professor emeritus of economics, with other Illini faculty members taking part in a panel discussion at the end of the day.

For more information, go to www.eaps.illinois.edu/aciprogram.
Although they share some important similarities, religious organizations, such as churches, which file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection differ from small business debtors in two significant ways – they seek to preserve the “going-concern value” of the organizations themselves, and their members are more integral to their successful reorganizations, says a new study by a U. of I. law professor.

Between 2006 and 2011, faith-based institutions in the U.S. filed more than 500 petitions under Chapter 11, according to the research of law professor Pamela Foohey.

“Religious organizations filing for bankruptcy interest in their own right,” she said. “Their operating models are not the same as other businesses, perhaps even other nonprofit entities. Yet when they encounter financial problems, under certain circumstances, they file Chapter 11 and attempt to reorganize.”

Before a string of Roman Catholic dioceses sought bankruptcy protection to handle litigation stemming from sexual abuse allegations, the notion of a religious organization filing for bankruptcy seemed somewhat far-fetched, Foohey said.

“The general public might know about the Catholic dioceses cases or the Crystal Cathedral Ministries mega-church bankruptcy, but they’re probably unaware of the 190-plus other bankruptcy petitions that are filed every year by religious institutions,” she said. “The filing entities are predominately smaller Protestant churches that are apparently unable to secure financial assistance from their governing bodies in times of trouble, but they’re also synagogues, mosques and religious schools.”

Religious organizations and small businesses share many similarities. Most notably, they are driven by and dependent on their leaders, Foohey says.

“When leaders make poor business or poor life decisions, or when they move away or die, a sizable portion of congregants lose faith, move with them or abandon the religious community altogether,” she said.

Nonetheless, there are distinct differences between religious organizations and small businesses that file for Chapter 11.

Perhaps the most apparent difference is that the religious organizations have significantly more assets than the typical small business debtor, Foohey said. “These assets are predominantly real property” – the physical church itself, for example – “that may be relatively illiquid. By contrast, small businesses tend to enter bankruptcy with fewer assets that predominantly are not real property, and the assets they own tend to be liquidated easily.”

The religious organizations in the study also tended to have roughly the same amount of debt as the small businesses.

“This means that religious organizations generally enter bankruptcy with a solvent balance sheet – that is, the reported value of their assets is greater than the reported amount of their debts,” she said. “This solvency indicates that there may be value to be preserved through their cases. Given that religious institutions tend to own real estate, protecting the equity cushion in their real property may be of particular concern to them. Small businesses, on the other hand, generally own less to be preserved, and generally owe more than the value of what they own.”

The data show that the vast majority of the religious organizations file under Chapter 11 because of troubles with paying mortgages on their real property.

“They seek to reorganize primarily so that they may restructure their mortgage payments and retain their real property,” Foohey said.

Moreover, the religious organizations in the study usually have operated – that is, stayed open and held services – longer than the typical small business debtor.

“They survive about 20 years before filing, which appears to be long enough for a stable congregation to take root,” Foohey said. “Indeed, perhaps most unique about religious organization debtors is that the organization’s members, along with the leadership, often are the champions of the reorganization. Only with their commitment and support is the reorganization a successful one.”

In some ways, the congregants are akin to customers of small businesses, “but these customers are invested in seeing their congregations continue,” Foohey says.

“This makes a religious organization’s Chapter 11 case partly about saving a financially troubled business and partly about saving a community that has spent time and money to build a place where it can gather and worship.”

As evidenced by the successful reorganizations and continued operations of some of the debtors in the study, Foohey says Chapter 11 can provide religious organizations with a productive means to revive their congregations following economic downturns, transistions and failures in leadership, and problems with creditors, thereby allowing members to continue worshiping in the same space they have gathered in for decades.

“For these entities, the results of my study show that reorganization through bankruptcy has the potential to be a viable solution to their financial problems,” she said. “In general, the organizations that are successful – that is, they confirm and complete reorganization plans – tend to own real property of significant value; owe less on that real property than it is worth; and commit to the bankruptcy process, such as retaining counsel, filing complete schedules, and remaining current with fees and other obligations.”

Successful organizations also, and crucially, often have trusted leaders, such as a pastor and spouse, who guide the church through the bankruptcy and continue to energize the congregation post-bankruptcy, Foohey says.

“Broadly, these reorganizations seem to preserve the physical buildings members have gathered in for years, allowing congregations to continue to worship and meet in the same location going forward, which perhaps is the ultimate goal of their Chapter 11 filings,” she said. •

Key differences between bankruptchurches, small businesses

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By Phil Ciciora
Business and Law Editor