Jay Gogue will be officially installed as the 18th president of Auburn University in a 4 p.m. ceremony Thursday, April 24, on the lawn of Cater Hall. In the event of rain, the ceremony will shift to 9 a.m. the next day in Foy Student Union.

Shortly after Gogue began his duties as president in July, the university began planning an installation ceremony for this spring. At the new president’s request, planners agreed to keep the ceremony dignified but low-key, with limited fanfare and readily accessible to the public.

Paul Spina, president pro tem of the AU Board of Trustees will formally install the new AU president. The ceremony will be between a planning workshop of the AU board earlier in the day and a session of the board the following morning.

Starting with University Faculty Chair Bob Locy, co-chair of a special committee for the event, a contingent of faculty, students, staff members and alumni of the Auburn and AU Montgomery campuses will offer formal greetings to the new president.

Those offering greetings include student representatives Angela Montoya of AU and Anthony Rankins of AUM, faculty members Pamela Boyd of AU and Alan Gribben of AUM, staff members Jenny Swaim of Auburn and Alecia Cyprian of Montgomery, AU alumni representative Ralph Jordan and AUM alumna Leigh Anne Nevins.

At the start of the ceremony, Veterinary Medicine Dean Tim Boosinger, co-chair of the event planning committee, will welcome the audience. Music by a brass ensemble from the Department of Music will precede Boosinger’s welcome, and an ROTC color guard will post the colors.

Following the installation by Spina, Gogue will speak briefly, after which Spina and Human Sciences Dean June Henton will present installation gifts. The approximately 30-minute ceremony will conclude with a benediction followed by singing of the alma mater by student Tracy Rogers.
Sessions to examine easing ethnic tension

AU’s Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities is co-sponsoring a public forum, “Ethnic Tensions in the United States: How Can We Live and Work Together?” at 6:30 p.m. April 21 in the Fellowship Hall of Auburn First Baptist Church, downtown.

Participants will evaluate three basic approaches to addressing the issue of ethnic tensions on the basis of the attractions, concerns, costs, consequences and trade-offs of each. The three approaches are identified as “integrate and fight discrimination”; “combat economic inequality to achieve fairness”; and “address our past.”

The local activity will be one of 12 community forums around the United States in preparation for the New Dartmouth Conference sessions between the United States and Russia later this year. Groups in Russia will conduct forums on the subject simultaneously with those in the U.S., and the comparative results of these forums will form a framework for discussions at the New Dartmouth Conference.

The forum is jointly sponsored by the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University and the AU Office of Trademark Management and Licensing, 06 Samford Hall. Auburn University and may not be reproduced without written permission from auhorticultural@auburn.edu.

AU Report, 23 Samford Hall, Auburn, AL 36849. Telephone: 334/844-9999. E-mail: Sullivan Awards

Each year, AU presents its highest award for service to humanity to a member of the university community and two students. Outstanding Jenda, about the UA Extension System has been teaching the gardening public about the care and use of lotuses.

Auburn faculty member competing in Olympic trials

This will be May’s second trip to the U.S. Women’s Olympic Marathon Trials. She placed 42nd out of 121 competitors in the 2004 event in St. Louis. This year’s competition will be one day before the Boston Marathon.

May, who will be among 160 competitors in the Olympic trials, billed the qualifier as the “biggest” of her career by far, according to multiple media reports.

Auburn horticultural experts bring Chinese lotuses to U.S. gardens

Auburn horticultural experts will launch a program this month to introduce a Chinese aquatic plant noted for large, beautiful blooms to American gardens.

The plants are lotuses, ancient aquatic plants that are larger and more imposing than water lilies. Native to China, the plants are used in various parts of the world as food and medicine as well as ornamentals.

Since 2001, Auburn horticulture professor Ken Tilt and a team of scientists from Auburn, Georgia, Mississippi and China have been exploring the possibility of growing lotus in the Southeast, particularly in Alabama’s Black Belt region as a potential double- cropping option for West Alabama fish farmers.

“The environmental conditions to grow lotus are the same as those to produce fish in ponds,” Tilt said. “Lotus production in association with agriculture has the potential to increase the economic revenue from fish ponds, diversify farm production and make fish farm operation more economically sustainable.”

In this year’s debut, the early flowering lotuses will be in short supply — just 4,500 of them — to be sold at independent garden centers scattered across the country. But every one of those 4,500 will have been gently nudged into bloom weeks ahead of their natural time by Bill Bancroft and crew at Ten Mile Creek Nursery in Hartford in Geneva County with Tilt standing in the wings.

Bancroft, an horticulture alumna who worked on the lotus project during his final year at Auburn, received crated dormant lotus tubers from China in early February and immediately planted them in the four greenhouses he built for the lotus venture. Using data from almost a decade of Auburn research into lotus as an alternative crop for Alabama farmers, Bancroft now is managing greenhouse temperatures and lighting conditions to simulate the long days of summer.

Bancroft and Tilt said the “dormant” lotuses should be blooming and ready to grace gardeners’ ornamental ponds and containerized aquatic patio gardens in mid- to late April.

“We are selling any of these plants directly to the public. The lotuses will be marketed and distributed by Moerings-USA, a Virginia-based producer, which will give us the opportunity to evaluate the feasibility of double-cropping,” he said.

On the outreach front, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System has been teaching the gardening public about the care and use of lotuses.
Auburn, Arkansas professors create new concept for warehouse design

A warehouse layout design by Kevin Gue of Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering and Russell Meller of the University of Arkansas is in use by Generac Power Systems in what the designers say is the first implementation of non-traditional diagonal aisles anywhere.

In a traditional warehouse layout, storage is laid out to create parallel picking aisles and perhaps one or more cross aisles in the middle, similar to the layout found in many grocery stores.

In a paper for IIE Transactions, Gue, an associate professor in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering at AU, and Meller proposed two new designs, both with cross aisles that cut diagonally into the picking space. The layout at Generac closely follows one of those designs.

Gue and Meller went public with their designs a little over a year ago, and they have been working with potential adopters since then.

“For most managers in the logistics industry, implementing this kind of design is a little scary,” said Gue. “Everyone wants someone else to be the first adopter.”

Brian Randleman, logistics manager at Generac, said, “We had a clean-slate opportunity for our warehouse in Whitewater, Wisc., and I had just learned of their work in Modern Materials Handling magazine. I contacted our director of operations, and he was positive on the idea. His team ran some numbers to prove the benefit, and three months later we had drawings in our hands.”

The Generac Power Systems warehouse in Wisconsin stores stores electrical generators and transfer switches that are shipped to customers all over the country.

Randleman said the decision to set up diagonal aisles was part of a broader strategy to dramatically improve logistics at Generac.

“For what we do, the layout really works well,” said Randleman. “We have racking in the middle section, between the diagonal aisles and floor storage below the diagonals. That gives us the flexibility to adjust to changing operating conditions in the future.”

“Workers have responded positively to the new design,” said Meller. “When we first proposed these designs, we met with numerous objections from practitioners. Some objections were based on changing traditional ways of doing things, but some were related to safety, which is obviously an important consideration. Generac installed safety mirrors at key intersection points to help workers navigate the layout safely, and the combination of their product and racking allows excellent visibility.”

Weather watches will no longer go out on AU Alert

In response to campus feedback, the AU Department of Public Safety and Security has announced that AU Alert will no longer be used to announce weather watches.

The emergency notification system will continue to be used for situations requiring immediate action as well as other potentially threatening situations when possible. This includes tornado warnings, which notify the public that a tornado has been sighted or indicated on radar in Lee County.

For information online about AU Alert, including how to register, see https://fp.auburn.edu/ualert/.

AU Archives talk, music to explore origins of rock ’n’ roll

Historian Tim Dodge of AU Libraries will speak this week on the influence of gospel music on early rock ’n’ roll as part of the Discover Auburn Lecture series.

Dodge will present the public lecture at 3 p.m. Wednesday in the Special Collections and Archives Department of Draughon Library.

Dodge is a reference librarian and history subject specialist at AU. He is also known in the community as a radio disc jockey playing early classics of rock ’n’ roll.

Using a combination of lecture and samples of recordings, Dodge will trace the multifaceted and sometimes surprising connections between the sacred and profane worlds of gospel music and early rock ’n’ roll.

Dodge received a doctorate in history from the University of New Hampshire and a master of library science degree from Columbia University.

As “Dr. Hepcat,” he hosts the Golden Oldies show on WEGL FM, 91.1, from 5 p.m-7 p.m. on Fridays, playing rock ’n’ roll, rhythm and blues, gospel, and related music recorded between 1945 and 1963.

Now playing

The starring carnivorous plant and other cast members belt out the finale during the AU stage production of “Little Shop of Horrors.” The popular play continues this week at Telfair Peet Theatre. Show time is 7:30 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. For tickets or box office information, call 844-4154.

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