AU playing role in Chinese food for Olympics

When more than 10,000 athletes and 22,000-plus international journalists converge on Beijing, China, next August for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games, an AU faculty member will have played a pivotal role in helping ensure that the foods they are served are safe to eat.

Yifen Wang, an assistant professor in AU’s interdisciplinary biosystems engineering program, was one of 15 food-safety authorities named to a Beijing Olympics food security panel in 2005. That international group of experts took on added importance this year amid growing global concerns over repeated recalls of contaminated Chinese food products.

Wang, a Shanghai native who joined the AU faculty in 2004, has focused his research on food safety issues for 15 years. The Beijing Food Safety Administration and the Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2008 Olympic Games sought him as a board member on the basis of his expertise on food safety and his fluency in Chinese and English. Wang is one of four U.S. representatives on the panel and is the board’s designated liaison for the English-speaking members. Other members include food safety authorities from China, Australia, the European Union and the World Health Organization.

Since its establishment, the group’s main charge has been to write the protocol manual for the rigorous food safety program for the 14-day August 2008 games. The Beijing Organizing Committee announced recently that this program will rely heavily on the use of Global Positioning System and radio-frequency identification technology to monitor and track all Olympic food products through production, processing and distribution. Wang was instrumental in the committee’s adoption of the RFID system.

The board has met in Beijing annually since 2005.

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ALUMNI ESTABLISH FORESTRY PROFESSORSHIP HONORING MEMBER OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AU School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences has established the Dwain G. Luce Endowed Professorship in Forestry, which has received $380,000 in contributions from 125 donors, including Luce, his family and friends.

“Dwain Luce is the embodiment of a conservation-minded forestland owner,” said Forestry and Wildlife Sciences Dean Richard Brinker. “He remembers the past, but always looks to provide for generations to come. His investment in forestry and wildlife at Auburn University through the Dwain G. Luce Professorship is the consummate contribution from a true Auburn man.”

Luce, an Auburn forestry alumni, wildlife and the outdoors have always interested me. I even attribute some of my survival in World War II to my love of the outdoors. Foresters, despite some stereotypes, are true conservationists. Therefore, it is natural for me to support my alma mater with Luce and the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, which prepares the leaders who will care for the forests and wildlife in the future.”

In addition to his financial support, Luce has served on the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences Advisory Council and as a member of the school’s development team.

The endowment is part of support for AU through the “It Begins at Auburn” campaign, which encompasses all colleges and schools as well as the AU libraries and museums, athletics and Auburn University Montgomery.
Empty spaces
Having trouble finding a parking space on campus? While drivers circle parking areas west of College Street, a new AU parking lot on the site of the former Hardee's on Gay Street remains little known and little used. The lot is available for faculty and staff with "A" or "B" permits and provides direct access to the AU Hotel grounds and the main campus.

AU Theatre looks to Old West for comedic start to new season

AU Theatre’s new season starts Sept. 27 with “Deadwood Dick or The Game of Gold,” a spoof of the action-packed dime novels that helped define the Old West in the late 19th century.

The fast-paced farce runs Sept. 27-30 and Oct. 2-5 at Telfair Peet Theatre, with curtain at 7:30 p.m. on weeknights and Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

Proceeds from the Oct. 5 performance will support scholarships for theatre students.


“Deadwood Dick,” is based on a character of that name in a series of dime novels by Edward L. Wheeler from 1876 until the 1890s. Like others of their ilk, the “Deadwood Dick” stories were hastily written and produced cheaply for a mass audience, leading critics to dub them “dime” novels. Although these and other melodramatic, historically inaccurate dime novels faded in popularity with the early 20th century advent of film, the genre inspired hundreds of equally inauthentic cinema westerns well into the 1950s.

The AU Theatre production provides a comic take on familiar characters, including brave heroes, damsels in distress, venal villains and other colorful characters caught up in episodes involving lost daughters, stolen gold mines, kidnapped heroines, hairbreadth escapes and other staples of the genre.

Tickets are available at the Peet Theatre Box Office weekdays from noon-6 p.m. Admission is free for students. Faculty and staff may obtain tickets without charge for the Oct. 2 performance or pay $15 for other performances. Public admission is $20, senior citizens pay $15 and high school and grade school students pay $10. Season tickets for all five performances are $50.

For information or reservations, call the box office at 844-4154.

Professors take music education to Loachapoka

College of Education professors Jane Kuehne and Kimberly Walls have begun a project to connect AU music education students with students at Loachapoka High School in the Lee County School System.

Kuehne and Walls say the initial goal is to provide a setting in which university and Loachapoka High School students gain valuable teaching and learning experiences in music and music technology.

With help from the College of Education and local support in Loachapoka, project leaders are purchasing the first music technology workstation for use this fall. College of Education students and Loachapoka High School students will use the technology for on-campus practicum teaching and distance learning lessons in music and music technology. Kuehne and Walls say continued growth in the program should lead to additional computer work stations for music education in the future.

The project leaders say they expect it to reinforce the music program’s philosophy that all children and adolescents should be provided musical experiences leading to appreciation for creation and performance, understanding of the role of music in daily living and opportunity to develop musical skills and knowledge.

Author from England to discuss U.S. Constitution

Auburn will observe Constitution Day on Monday, Sept. 17, with a public lecture by British historian Jeremy Black.

An author of several major books on military history, Black will speak on “Framing the New Nation: Responding to the International Challenge, 1775-1815” at 4 p.m. in the Special Collections and Archives Department of Drahough Library.

Black’s latest book, “George III: America’s Last King,” is a biography of the British king whose rule prompted the grievances cited in the Declaration of Independence as cause for the American Revolution. Constitution Day celebrates the occasion, when having won the nation’s independence, leaders of the new nation signed the Constitution of the United States of America.

Black is a professor of history at the University of Exeter in England. In addition to his biography of George III, Black has authored “War: Past, Present, and Future,” “War in the New Century,” “America as a Military Power, 1775-1882,” “The British Seaborne Empire” and “Rethinking Military History.”