Pumpkin Carve
Students in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction demonstrate their creativity and carving skills at Halloween each year, as shown in this scene from the 2009 Pumpkin Carve competition. The competition resumes today, when students will carve more than 400 pumpkins into jack-o’-lanterns that run the gamut from “school-spirit” designs as shown above to elaborately carved bats, ghouls and fantasy scenes. The finished products will be on display in Dudley Courtyard from 6-9 p.m.

Students bring creative touch to Halloween event

The glow of more than 400 jack-o’-lanterns will light up the courtyard of Auburn University’s Dudley Hall on Friday, Oct. 29, as students from the College of Architecture, Design and Construction hold their 22nd annual Pumpkin Carve. Finished jack-o’-lanterns will be on view from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The public event, sponsored by the Auburn University chapter of the American Institute of Architecture Students, will begin at 9 a.m., as uncarved pumpkins go on sale for $4 for festival visitors and students begin to create their jack-o’-lanterns for the evening’s competition. The public is invited to carve pumpkins beginning at 3 p.m.

The price of admission is one can of food for the Beat Bama Food Drive. Food and drinks will be available for purchase beginning at noon.

This year’s Pumpkin Carve will feature a new event, “AU Canstruction,” which begins at 3 p.m. CADC Student Ambassadors will partner with the Committee of 19 to fight the war on hunger and win the Beat Bama Food Drive by designing and building a structure from donated cans of food.

Also beginning at 3 p.m. are activities for children of all ages such as Pie a Professor, Face in Hole Photo Booth, Pin the Tail on the Werewolf and face painting. The children’s costume contest and pictures with Aubie are at 6:30 p.m.

“The Pumpkin Carve has grown from a small student competition to a community event that attracts hundreds of people,” said Dan Bennett, dean of Auburn’s College of Architecture, Design and Construction. “Each year visitors are amazed at the traditional Halloween and current event themes that are used by our students in their designs for the Pumpkin Carve.”

At 6 p.m., pumpkin carving by students from the College of Architecture, Design and Construction will end and the pumpkins will be lit. At 6:45 p.m., these pumpkins, many with intricate designs and current event themes, will be judged based on creativity, appearance and craftsmanship. Judges will be university, civic and business leaders from the Auburn-Opelika area.

Open enrollment period coming up for changes in insurance

Do you need to make changes in your health, dental or other medical insurance coverage? Do you want to add or change a flexible spending account for savings on your taxes? November is the month to do so.

The Office of Payroll and Employee Benefits is reminding Auburn employees that November is the month set aside each year for faculty and staff to add or make changes in their individual or family health, dental, vision or cancer insurance coverage. The changes will take effect Jan. 1.

Also in November, faculty and staff may enroll in or change flexible spending accounts, which enable employees to reduce their taxes by setting aside money each pay period from pre-tax income to offset anticipated medical expenses for the individual or family members.

For additional information or assistance with either program, contact Payroll and Employee Benefits in Ingram Hall, online at www.auburn.edu/administration/business_office/payroll/ or call 844-4183.
Biosystems Engineering teams receive $4 million for research

Biosystems Engineering Associate Professor Puneet Srivastava and collaborators at Auburn and in Georgia and Florida have been awarded two National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grants totaling more than $4.3 million to help reduce climate risks in the Southeast.

A grant of more than $4 million-plus will support a five-year multi-state and multi-disciplinary project in which scientists from Auburn and five other universities will produce scientifically more accurate climate information and decision-support tools for agricultural, terrestrial and coastal ecosystems in the Southeast.

Srivastava, project leader at Auburn, will investigate whether incorporating seasonal climate data into the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System’s permitting process can reduce water-quality threats. Also participating in the project will be Auburn agronomist Brenda Ortiz, who will determine how climate variability affects the incidence of aflatoxin in corn in the Southeast.

Another grant provides $225,000 for a two-year study led by Srivastava. He will work with Latif Kalin of Auburn’s School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences and other researchers to improve the forecasting, monitoring and response to droughts.

Museum to host public symposium on Audubon

The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art will present a free public symposium featuring five nationally recognized Audubon scholars and curators from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 30.

The symposium will explore the making and publication of the book of John James Audubon’s drawings, “The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America,” including discussions of the artistry and craftsmanship of these beautifully detailed lithographs.

The symposium coincides with the closing of an exhibition featuring a highlight of the Louise Hauss and David Brent Miller Audubon Collection, a bound set of the first edition of the book.

Lecturers for the symposium include Alan Gehret, the curator at John James Audubon State Park in Henderson, Ky. His talk, “The Last Journey: Audubon’s 1843 Missouri River Expedition,” will trace Audubon’s last journey. Thomas W. Jones, executive director of the Old Jail Art Center in Albany, Texas, will address some of the animals featured in the book in his lecture, “Audubon’s Texas Quadrupeds.”

Several other speakers will discuss related topics. For more information on the symposium, visit jcsm.auburn.edu or call 844-1484.

Campus Calendar

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29
PUMPKIN CARVE Elaborately carved jack-o’-lanterns by students in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction, events all day, witness or participate in carving in afternoon, view results after dark, until 9 p.m., Dudley Courtyard

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30
AUDUBON SYMPOSIUM Guest speakers, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum, registration information online at http://jcsm.auburn.edu/edu/2010_08_audubon_symposium.php

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4
PUBLIC LECTURE PowerPoint presentation of archival photographs of Afghanistan and Pakistan frontier taken by the late Cornelia Martin, 3 p.m., Special Collections Suite, ground floor, Draughon Library; part of Discover Auburn Lecture Series

PUBLIC LECTURE Auburn alumnus Valentin Abe, named to Time’s list of 2010 Heroes for his work to establish fisheries in Haiti, 7 p.m., The Hotel at Auburn University, part of College of Agriculture’s E.T. York Lecture Series

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5
MEET THE AUTHORS Professors Gary Mullen and Taylor Littleton discuss “Philip Henry Gosse: Science and Art in Letters from Alabama and Entomologia Alabamensis,” 5 p.m, Special Collections and Archives section of Draughon Library

HOMECOMING PARADE 6 p.m., College Street through downtown

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6
ANNUAL FALL Ag Roundup and Taste of Alabama Agriculture 8 a.m.-11 a.m., Ag Heritage Park, Donahue Drive entrance

SNAKES ON THE PLAIN Homecoming football game, Auburn Tigers vs. UT Chattanooga Mocs, noon kickoff

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8
INTERNATIONAL FILM “La gran final,” 5 p.m., Haley 3195, part of The Other in International Film Series

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12
MEETING Board of Trustees, time TBA, The Hotel at Auburn University; no Auburn Report this week

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16
MEETING University Senate, 3 p.m., Broun Hall Auditorium

PUBLIC LECTURE “The Muslim-Christian Dialogue,” Richard Penaskovic, coordinator of religious studies in the Department of Philosophy, 3 p.m., Special Collections Suite, ground floor, Draughon Library; part of Discover Auburn Lecture Series

INDEPENDENT FILM “Burning in the Sun,” 6 p.m., JCS Museum, part of the Southern Circuit Tour of Independent Filmmakers

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

NEXT Auburn Report
Profiles in Excellence

History professor who followed path of role models has become one for junior faculty in Liberal Arts

Throughout her career as a history professor, Donna Bohanan of Auburn’s College of Liberal Arts has strived to live up to high standards set by two role models from her student days. In the meantime, however, many of her colleagues and former students have looked to her as their role model.

Bohanan, a faculty member in the Department of History since 1982, was named last year as the department’s first Kicklighter Professor in History, which is named in honor of colleague Joseph Kicklighter, one of Auburn’s most acclaimed professors. In addition, last spring’s senior class chose her to deliver the Final Lecture to the Class to 2010, a formal recognition of the seniors’ favorite teacher during their college careers.

More recently, she received the university’s top teaching honor, the Gerald and Emily Leischuck Presidential Award for Teaching Excellence. The award is presented annually to two faculty members who have achieved distinction beyond their college for quality of their teaching and its lasting impact with students, as documented by multiple nominations from colleagues, former students, department heads and others. The other recipient this year is Beth Guertal of Agronomy and Soils.

Until he took a European history class under Bohanan in 1989, Gordon Harvey was en route to a degree and career in marketing. Yet, after a few class sessions, his priorities changed. “I was proud of my marketing degree but history became my passion,” recalls Harvey, who is now head of the Department of History at the University of Louisiana Monroe.

Bohanan quickly became his role model as a teacher, Harvey recalls. “She enlivened European history with an unbounded enthusiasm. I looked forward to her classes, took copious notes and dreamed of becoming a fine teacher like her.”

Larry Gerber, a professor emeritus of history, recalls witnessing Bohanan capture the attention of auditorium-sized classes with an ease that few others can match. “She has an uncanny ability to communicate to students, even in the large class setting of World History, that she is truly concerned about them and wants them to learn,” Gerber wrote in support of her nomination.

Kicklighter, a previous Leischuck Award winner, said junior colleagues, as well as students, look to Bohanan as a role model. “Her expertise in teaching and her overall concern for others are so much in evidence that our junior professors customarily come to her for advice and assistance with all their concerns about their teaching.”

Yet, like some of her own students, such as ULM’s Professor Harvey, Bohanan was a late convert to both history and teaching. And, like her own junior colleagues, she drew inspiration from a senior professor as she was entering the ranks of college teaching.

In the 1970s, Bohanan was an advanced undergraduate in the pre-law curriculum at Hendrix College, a small, prestigious liberal arts school in Arkansas, when she took a history course that caused her to rethink her career choice. Her professor and advisor, Garrett McAinsh, displayed such enthusiasm for history and dedication to teaching it well that she found herself irresistibly drawn toward the subject. “I still have my notes from those classes,” she said. “He did a great deal of preparation for each class, and the intellectual quality of the material was superb. His lectures were full of content, thoughtful and entertaining and there was not a bit of fluff in any of them.”

In her own lectures throughout her career, Bohanan said, she has tried to live up to the standards McAinsh displayed as a college teacher.

Having changed her major to history, Bohanan went to Emory University in Atlanta for her master’s and doctoral degrees. There, she found a second role model in her graduate advisor, the eminent historian J. Russell Major. Although he was among the most respected historians of his day, Major frequently reminded Bohanan that teaching was the first and most important responsibly of a history professor in college. “I had always known that Dr. Major took seriously his teaching responsibilities, but to hear a scholar of his magnitude say that nothing surpasses teaching in importance made an enormous impression on me,” she said. “Dr. Major’s record of scholarship and publication brought him all sorts of international recognition and acclaim, yet he viewed himself as a teacher first.”

She added, “Over the years, I have tried never to lose sight of the fact that, as a university professor, I am a teacher first.”

Class size is not a problem for Bohanan, who prepares differently for large classes than for smaller ones but tries to reach students individually in classes of 200 as well as 20 or fewer students.

Rather than stand on the stage in the auditorium for an extended time, she walks through the aisles of her World History class, taking the discussion to students throughout the room.

“I want to make sure that no one feels anonymous,” she said. “In small classes, there is more discussion, more give and take, but we have some of that in large classes, as well. The best part of any class is the interaction, where we discuss the material and I can challenge them to think in new ways about the material.”

World History, part of the core curriculum, is especially challenging and, at times, especially satisfying to teach because it touches so many lives, she said. “For most of the 200 students in there, this will be the last class in history they will ever take,” she explained. “This is my last chance to communicate to them how important an understanding of history can be to their lives. It gives us a sense of how complicated the world really is and why there are no simple answers to many of today’s problems.”

Does she have any regrets over choosing the history classroom over the courtroom, choosing teaching over law for a career? “No, I would have been a wretched lawyer,” said Bohanan, who is married to an attorney. “I don’t have the right temperament for it. Instead, I am doing what I love, and I want to keep doing it for as long as I can.”

Roy Summerford

Editor’s Note: Profiles in Excellence is a periodic feature of the Auburn Report presenting Auburn University faculty who have been honored by the university or nationally for the top level of achievement in teaching, research or outreach.
Changes in Auburn Report publication schedule for November and December

As in previous years, the Auburn Report will depart from its regular two-week publication schedule in November and December to accommodate the Thanksgiving holiday and the approaching end of fall semester.

Over the next six weeks, we will publish on Nov. 19, Dec. 3 and a week later, Dec. 10. This will enable us to provide timely coverage of the Nov. 12 Board of Trustees meeting, avoid publishing on Nov. 26, when the campus is on Thanksgiving holiday, and publish twice in December, before the winter break.

Please submit items for publication a week before the publication date.

Business Office announces appointment of new university controller, assistant

The University Business Office has announced a promotion and a new appointment to two key positions. Following the retirement of Linda Pearce earlier this year, Amy Douglas was promoted to controller from assistant controller.

As university controller, Douglas is responsible for overseeing all financial and compliance audits, maintaining the financial records, implementing new accounting and reporting standards and regulations regarding compliance for Auburn University, AUM, the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. She also supervises Property Services and oversees accounting, reporting and tax matters for the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation.

Earlier in her career at Auburn, Douglas served in Internal Auditing for six years. Previously, she was employed by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP for seven years. She is an Auburn graduate with a degree in accounting and is a Certified Public Accountant.

The assistant controller position formerly held by Douglas was recently filled by Michelle Hancock, who comes to Auburn from Deloitte Services. Hancock is also an Auburn graduate and a Certified Public Accountant, and she holds a Master of Accountancy degree from the University of Tennessee.

Auburn authors to discuss their new book on British naturalist in Alabama

The Auburn University Libraries will host a talk by Entomology Professor Gary Mullen and Mosley Professor Emeritus Taylor Littleton about their newly published book, “Philip Henry Gosse: Science and Art in Letters from Alabama and Entomologia Alabamensis,” at 5 p.m., Friday, Nov. 5, in the Special Collections and Archives section of Draughon Library.

Auburn University Libraries recently added the book as its three-millionth volume.

In 1838, Gosse, a British naturalist, visited Alabama for eight months. In 1859, he published “Letters from Alabama,” providing an account of his observations about the state. The letters were originally serialized in a magazine. “Entomologia Alabamensis,” previously unpublished, contains scientifically precise, miniature watercolors of insects that Gosse observed during his stay in Alabama.

Bonnie MacEwan, dean of Auburn University Libraries, said, “I’m delighted that Auburn University Libraries played a major role in making the Gosse watercolors of Alabama insects available for the first time in a published format. We are extremely pleased with our three-millionth volume. In addition to the book’s availability through the Jule Collins Smith Museum giftshop, we also have a collection of these lovely works of art and science on our digital library website.”

The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art collaborated with the Auburn University Libraries and with Littleton and Mullen to produce this volume, which was published by the University of Alabama Press.

To visit the Philip Henry Gosse digital library collection, go to www.diglib.auburn.edu. For further information on the special lecture, contact Dwayne Cox, head of Special Collections and Archives at 844-1707.