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report

FOR THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF AUBURN UNIVERSITY

In flight

Bald eagle Spirit thrills visiting students from the Temple Christian School of Valley. Spirit swooped over the visitors during a demonstration last week at the Southeastern Raptor Center's new Edgar B. Carter Educational Amphitheater. AU will dedicate the facility in a ceremony at 3 p.m. Wednesday. The Raptor Center is located off Shug Jordan Parkway north of Wire Road.



Health insurance premiums to rise 10 percent with start of new year

Health insurance premiums for AU faculty and staff will increase 10 percent, and, for the first time, smokers will begin paying an extra \$20 per month for coverage on Jan. 1.

The university will also pay an additional \$2.1 million in 2006 as its share of increased health insurance premiums. Employees pay 20 percent to 40 percent, depending on individual salary level, of the actual cost of health insurance at AU, and the university pays the remainder.

The increases, which were recommended by the University Insurance and Benefits Committee, are necessary to offset rising costs of medical care covered by employee health insurance plans, said Executive Vice President Don Large, AU's chief financial officer.

Although Blue Cross Blue Shield administers the AU health insurance plans, Large noted that the university must maintain enough funds and reserves in a separate account to pay all medical claims covered by the insurance for participating employees with individual or family coverage. Those claims increased by 15 percent from 2004 to 2005.

The cost increases are being driven by higher

hospital costs along with physician and prescription drug claims.

In 2006, employees with AU's traditional health insurance plan and with incomes of less than \$23,400 will pay \$33 per pay period, if biweekly, for individual coverage or \$67 for family coverage. If they work year-round and are paid monthly, they will pay \$70 a month for individual coverage and \$145 per month for family coverage.

Those earning \$23,400-\$35,099 and paid biweekly will pay \$48 every two weeks for single coverage or \$101 for family coverage. Those on 12-month appointments will pay \$103 or \$219 each month, respectively. For those on nine-month appointments, the rates will be \$124 or \$262 per month, respectively.

Those earning \$35,100 or more and paid biweekly will pay \$64 for single or \$134 for family coverage. Those on 12-month appointments will pay \$139 per month for single coverage or \$292 for family coverage. Those on nine-month appointments will pay \$166 or \$350, respectively.

The Personal Choice option under AU's Blue

See [Insurance premiums](#), page 2



Now playing

In a scene from "The Shape of Things," Whitney Thornberry as Jennie shares a laugh with Daniel Ochoa as Adam over his transformation from "dork" to "totally hot guy." The play is in repertory this week with "Defying Gravity" at Telfair Peet Theatre. See Upcoming Events, at right, for show times of the two AU Theatre productions.



United Way issues new call for support as 2005 campaign enters final phase

Entering its final phase for 2005, the United Way campaign at AU last week reached 64 percent of this year's goal.

As of Nov. 7, the campus campaign had surpassed \$90,000 in pledges and contributions toward its \$140,000 goal for 2005. The campus campaign is part of the United Way of Lee County, which was at 63 percent of its \$1 million goal last week.

With the holiday season approaching, Campus Campaign Chair Bill Sauser said volunteers are reminding faculty and staff in their areas of the impact their gifts have on local charities and social

services. Nearly 90 percent of local collections go to 34 local organizations, which range from Girl Scout and Boy Scout councils to the East Alabama Food Bank and the American Red Cross in Lee County.

"This one annual fund drive is the primary source of support for nearly three dozen community organizations and charities that support youth programs and help hundreds of our neighbors in their time of need," said Sauser. "Volunteers all across campus are asking all faculty and staff to help these organizations serve the less fortunate among us by contributing to United Way."

He added, "We would like to conclude the campaign by Thanksgiving, but the campus volunteers are prepared to continue beyond that, if necessary, until we reach the goal."

AU is also starting a new vision plan, effective Jan. 1. Coverage includes a vision exam and purchase of one pair of eyeglasses or 12 months worth of contacts each year, new frames every two years and discounted refractive eye surgery, if needed. Co-pay and restrictions are covered in documents mailed to all full-time employees earlier this month.

During November, AU employees may add or make changes to insurance for health, dental, vision, cancer, supplemental disability and related benefits, such as flexible spending accounts for tax savings on medical or dependent care expenses. Changes made this month will take effect on Jan. 1. For information, contact the Office of Payroll and Employee Benefits at 844-4183 or see www.auburn.edu/administration/business_office/payroll.



Insurance premiums

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Cross Blue Shield coverage offers an alternative with similar benefits at savings of \$60 to \$220 per year, depending on salary level and individual or family coverage. That plan applies some restrictions, primarily requiring each participant to use his or her family physician or other approved doctor before consulting a specialist for medical treatment.

Premium and co-pay changes also take effect for certain other benefits on Jan. 1. These include:

- ◆ Increase in the outpatient emergency room and surgery co-pay to \$100.
- ◆ A monthly premium increase of 50 cents in the basic dental single-coverage plan and \$3 in the family plan, based on the 12-month rate.
- ◆ A monthly premium increase, on a 12-month basis, of \$3 in the expanded dental plan for individual coverage and \$11 for family coverage.

Upcoming Events

Continuing

EXHIBITION "Quilts of Gee's Bend," Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, through Dec. 4

Tuesday, November 15

AU THEATRE "The Shape of Things," 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre; Box Office 844-4154

PUBLIC LECTURE "Afterlife: American Quilts as American Elegy," Alicia Carroll, English Department, 4 p.m., JCS Museum

Wednesday, November 16

PUBLIC FORUM Hearings on "Initiative for Alabama" options for reorganization of AU agricultural programs, 9 a.m.-noon and 2 p.m.-5 p.m., AU Hotel.

VIDEO CONFERENCE "Pedagogy 202 for Distance Learning: Measuring What Matters," 1:30 p.m.-3 p.m., O.D. Smith 328; e-mail pallapu@auburn.edu

DEDICATION Amphitheater, Southeastern Raptor Center, 3 p.m., enter from Shug Jordan Parkway

AU THEATRE "Defying Gravity," 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre

Thursday, November 17

GROUNDBREAKING AU Research Park, 10 a.m., near South College Street entrance

MEETINGS Board of Trustees committees, starting at 11 a.m., AU Hotel; for updates on meeting times, see www.auburn.edu/administration/trustees

CONCERT "Sounds of Auburn," 7:30 p.m., Coliseum

AU THEATRE "The Shape of Things," 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre

Friday, November 18

MEETING Board of Trustees, 10 a.m., AU Hotel

AU THEATRE "Defying Gravity," 7:30 p.m., Telfair Peet Theatre

Monday, November 21

NEXT AU Report; no AU Report on Nov. 28

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS No classes this week; offices open Monday and Tuesday only



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Research park

Cooler weather has led to several beautiful sunsets over Auburn recently. At times, the setting sun colors the sky an Auburn orange and creates optical illusions, such as this view of AU's future research park off South College Street. From across a pond, the site appears to float in the sky. Gov. Bob Riley will join AU officials and guests in a 10 a.m. Thursday groundbreaking for the 156-acre research park.

AU Board of Trustees to meet, consider hiring consultant for review of university

The AU Board of Trustees is scheduled this week to consider hiring a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the state of the university as a prelude to starting a presidential search in 2006.

The board is scheduled to meet at 10 a.m. Friday at the AU Hotel.

Board committees are scheduled to meet on Thursday, starting with a joint meeting of the Agriculture and the Property and Facilities committees at 11 a.m. Afternoon meetings are scheduled for the Academic Affairs, Finance, Investment and Executive committees.

James L. Fisher, a nationally prominent consultant on university governance, is scheduled to meet with the board and/or its Executive Committee before the board considers a resolution on Friday to conduct a review that would include issues of governance and relationships among the board, administration, faculty, alumni and students.

The author of 10 books on university governance,

Fisher is president emeritus of Towson University in Maryland and president emeritus of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Presidential search consultant John Kuhnle recommended him to the board on Oct. 28 after urging the university to address unresolved issues that could hamper the search for a new president.

The board is also scheduled to discuss steps the university is taking toward adoption of standards for academic program review, post-tenure review and an AU System.

Other subjects on the agenda include steps toward the transfer of the Poultry Research Farm from the new research park south of campus to AU's North Auburn agricultural research land, extension of Lem Morrison Drive across Wire Road to Samford Avenue near the Facilities Division, renovation of Cary Hall and changing the name of the Department of Textile Engineering to Department of Polymer and Fiber Engineering.

Sounds of Auburn to showcase bands, choral groups

The AU Department of Music will present four bands and three choral groups in a musical showcase, Sounds of Auburn – Celebrating Auburn and America, at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum.

The site for the free band and choral concert is a change of venue from previous concerts.

Performing will be the AU Marching Band, Concert Choir, Gospel Choir, Symphonic Band, Jazz Band, Steel Drum Band and University Singers.

Each group will perform individually, and the program will conclude with a musical celebration of

America by the combined Concert Choir and Marching Band. More than 500 performers will participate.

Lee Miller, a 1999 AU graduate and an associate producer of the NBC Today Show, will be Master of Ceremonies. Conductors include Thomas R. Smith, Johnnie Vinson, Rick Good, Doug Rosener, Ramon Vasquez and William and Rosephanye Powell.

"One purpose of the Sounds of Auburn is to showcase the musical excellence and variety of the performing groups in the Department of Music," said Smith, the department chair.





Fall studies

Autumn has been slow to arrive in Auburn this year, but mild temperatures and mostly clear skies the past two weeks have drawn far more students outside for study and recreation. The cooler weather has also led to the first hints of fall color amid the still green lawns, such as here on the grounds of Draughon Library.

U.S. Department of Education honors two at Auburn for rehabilitation training

Suzanne Tew-Washburn and Dawn Browning of the AU College of Education recently received national awards for their work with educational programs on behalf of persons with disabilities.

Tew-Washburn and Browning received the Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner's Award for Excellence in Education and Training for 2005 at the National Council on Rehabilitation Education Conference in Washington, D.C. The award from the U.S. Department of Education agency recognizes outstanding achievement and distinction in the training of qualified rehabilitation personnel.

The two were honored for their work with Academic Certificate Program in Community Employment Services, which Tew-Washburn directed from 1999-2004.

Tew-Washburn is a non-tenure track faculty

member and Browning is an academic program assistant in the college's Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education.

"This award is particularly exciting for our students who have earned certification and can now say they graduated from a nationally recognized program," Tew-Washburn said.

She said Browning played a key role in the program's success by creating a Web site and professional network to keep the program's graduates connected while providing resources for continued professional development.

The rehabilitation education program, which received financial assistance from a five-year, \$750,000 federal grant, enabled professionals in the field to continue their education with studies that combined traditional on-campus experiences with instructional technology for distance learning.

Sesquicentennial book

In time for AU's sesquicentennial in 2006, "Neath the Sun-Kissed Sky," a 150-page pictorial celebrating AU's 150th anniversary, goes on sale in area bookstores this month. The hardcover coffee-table book, produced by the Office of Communications and Marketing, contains a mix of historic photos from Auburn's first 150 years and pictures by AU photographers Jeff Etheridge and Trice Megginson showing the current beauty and vitality of campus.



State effort to boost reading will be model for others

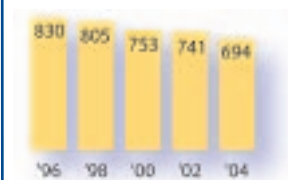
The Association of American Publishers has chosen the "Alabama Gets Caught Reading" initiative, based at AU's Center for Arts and Humanities, as the model for a nationwide campaign to promote reading.

The Alabama initiative is part of the national "Get Caught Reading" program, which is supported by the Association of American Publishers.

The Pebble Hill-based Alabama Center for the Book developed and coordinated the Alabama campaign. The effort involved printing and distributing 20,000 posters showing famous Alabamians as role models reading their favorite books.

How Auburn Stacks Up

Trend in numbers of secretarial-clerical staff at Auburn



Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

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