Signs of the season

With Auburn nights turning silent as students head home for the holidays, signs of the season are appearing along College Street, such as a gaily lit Christmas tree, with Samford Hall in the background, a newly erected menorah for Hanukkah and downtown streets lined with lights and decorations. And, The Hotel at Auburn University continues to expand its festive gingerbread village in the lobby.

Former leader of nation’s military intelligence joins Auburn’s Cyber Initiative

Recently retired Lt. Gen. Ron Burgess, a 38-year U.S. Army veteran who spent much of his career in the upper levels of military intelligence and security, joined Auburn University on Dec. 1 as senior counsel for national security programs, cyber programs and military affairs.

A 1974 Auburn graduate, Burgess served as director of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency from 2009 until July 2012, prior to his retirement from the Army in September. At Auburn he will work in coordination with the university’s Office of the Vice President for Research, providing guidance, direction and support to a broad range of interdisciplinary research initiatives.

“Gen. Burgess is a heavyweight player in the defense intelligence arena,” said David Umphress, an associate professor of computer science and software engineering. “We are looking to him to help us develop a big-picture perspective of how the software cyber security research being conducted by the finest students around can be shaped to the benefit of the nation.”

Burgess will be an integral part of the Auburn University Cyber Initiative, and his office will be located at the new cyber training and laboratory facilities in the Auburn University Regional Airport.

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Auburn to award more than 1,400 degrees on Saturday

Auburn University will award 1,441 academic degrees during two fall graduation ceremonies Saturday in Auburn Arena.

The 10 a.m. ceremony will include the colleges, schools and programs of Architecture, Design and Construction; Engineering; Interdisciplinary Studies; Liberal Arts; Nursing; and Sciences and Mathematics. The 2 p.m. ceremony will be for the colleges and schools of Agriculture; Business; Education; Forestry and Wildlife Sciences; and Human Sciences.

The ceremonies may be viewed live online through the university’s website at www.auburn.edu/graduationlive.

Leonard Bell, a professor of poultry science at Auburn, will present the charge to the graduates. In 2011, he was honored with the university’s highest teaching honor, the Gerald and Emily Leischuck Endowed Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Of the degrees Auburn will award, 1,145 are bachelor’s degrees, 230 are master’s degrees, 63 are doctorates and three are education specialist degrees.

The College of Liberal Arts will award the most bachelor’s degrees with 285, followed by the College of Business with 218. The College of Education and the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering each will present 151 degrees; College of Sciences and Mathematics, 109; College of Human Sciences, 80; College of Architecture, Design and Construction, 66; College of Agriculture, 52; Office of the Provost, 20 degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies; and School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, 13.

— Charles Martin
Alumni Professors for 2012

The Auburn Alumni Association recently recognized five faculty members who joined the ranks of Auburn Alumni Professors in 2012. They are, from left, Herb Rotfeld of Marketing, Margaret Ross of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology, Henry Kinnucan of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Allen Davis of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures and Chantel Acevedo of English. They join 20 other Alumni Professors, who hold the appointments for five years on a rotating basis.

Royston named Mitchell Scholar for study in Northern Ireland

The U.S.-Ireland Alliance has awarded one of the nation’s most selective fellowships, the Mitchell Scholarship, to Auburn University senior Marian Royston for study in Northern Ireland next year.

Royston will pursue a master’s degree in leadership for sustainable rural development at Queens University Belfast in Northern Ireland. She is an Auburn Honors College student majoring in history and double-minoring in political science and community and civic engagement in the College of Liberal Arts. She becomes Auburn’s first recipient in the Mitchell Scholars Program, which began in 2000.

“Marian is an excellent student and will represent Auburn well in her overseas studies,” said Auburn President Jay Gogue.

The program, to honor former U.S. Sen. George Mitchell’s contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process, is sponsored by the U.S.-Ireland Alliance to introduce future American leaders to the island of Ireland. Only 12 students in the U.S. are selected annually for the fellowship that is based on scholarship, leadership and a commitment to community and public service.

“In retrospect, I realize that I neither fully understood the magnitude of the rural crisis nor believed that there was a way I could personally work toward fixing the problem. My college experiences have helped me find the link between my past and future while still allowing me the opportunity to impact the world in a meaningful way.”

— Charles Martin

Cindy Reed leading international council

Cindy Reed, director of the Truman Pierce Institute and Emily R. and Gerald S. Leischuck endowed professor in educational leadership in the College of Education, recently took office as president of the University Council for Educational Administration.

Reed was installed as the organization’s 52nd president during its annual conference in November. She is the third College of Education faculty member to hold the office, joining former deans Frances Kochan and Truman Pierce.

The UCEA is an international consortium of higher education institutions with peer-recognized high-quality educational leadership programs.
There is a broad spectrum of communities across Alabama, many in decline and facing seemingly intractable development challenges. Yet each is brimming with potential when viewed through Cheryl Morgan’s engagement lens.

In her broad-reaching work, touching more than 70 cities and towns across the state over 15 years, Morgan has applied an asset-based planning strategy that has helped Alabama communities renew and advance.

Morgan, who is director of the Center for Architecture and Urban Studies in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture, is the 2012 recipient of the Auburn University Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach. The award is Auburn’s highest recognition of engaged faculty scholarship.

“Few people have touched the heart of the state as has Cheryl Morgan,” said Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach. “Her engagement with small communities all across Alabama has not only given these towns hope, but also the tools to grow and be vital.”

David Hinson, head of the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture, added, “She has extended the professional expertise and talents of our discipline into more Alabama communities than any other faculty member in the 105-year history of our program of architecture.”

Morgan’s “unbridled passion for finding and embracing new visions in Alabama communities has truly benefited the City of Valley,” said Martha Cato, former city clerk of Valley in Chambers County. “The 1999 ‘Design Valley’ document her team created was a road map for Valley’s short-term and long-term plans that the city is still following today.”

In addition to numerous individual town projects, Morgan’s efforts have contributed to the establishment of two nonprofit organizations devoted to community development. The first, YourTownAlabama, has organized workshops on planning and design, which have involved more than 800 citizen leaders from 65 of Alabama’s 67 counties. The second, Alabama Communities of Excellence, provides towns with guidance on economic and community development. Morgan’s work through these and other programs has influenced a new generation of enlightened community leaders.

“Morgan’s work is the mentoring she has provided to so many people throughout Alabama,” said Nisa Miranda of the University of Alabama’s Center for Economic Development. These include professionals in state agencies and regional planning commissions, community planning teams, elected and civic leaders, and others who are “guiding Alabama in its quest for continuous improvement,” Miranda said.

Beyond her leadership role with the center, which is familiarly called “Urban Studio,” Morgan is a licensed architect and a professor of architecture. She holds bachelor’s degrees in architecture and sociology from Auburn and a master of architecture degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and she is certified by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Morgan practiced architecture and urban design in the San Francisco Bay area before joining the Auburn faculty in 1992. She was appointed director of the Urban Studio in 2001.

In more than 26 years of teaching, she has worked with architectural programs at Georgia Institute of Technology, Oklahoma State and California College of Arts and Crafts, as well as at Auburn. Outreach and civic engagement are key to her teaching and scholarly philosophy. “One of the best ways to learn and teach is ‘learning by doing,’” said Morgan. “One of the great things about the design profession is that you begin in school to engage with the elements that are fundamental to the activities of practice. The Urban Studio adds to this with projects that engage with real-world clients.”

More than teaching methodology, Morgan said, outreach provides her a venue to practice what she preaches. “There is an incredibly important and significant relationship between the classroom and the real world,” she said.

Cyber security

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“Having Gen. Burgess at Auburn will give us a strong voice in national and homeland security policies and cue our cyber research toward major national contributions,” said Drew Hamilton, a professor of computer science and software engineering.

Working with faculty and research staff, Burgess will specifically promote and advance Auburn University’s technical expertise and leadership in cyber education and training; open source intelligence and analysis; and cyber security to include information assurance, intrusion detection and critical infrastructure protection.

“Gen. Burgess’ strategic vision is to grow our research enterprise, foster economic development and create opportunities for Auburn experts by matching their capabilities with business and federal agencies at the highest level,” said John Mason, Auburn associate provost and vice president for research. “He will interface with federal, state and commercial entities on national security interests, cyber programs and military concerns.”

The Auburn University Cyber Initiative fosters interdisciplinary research programs. In 2012, the Alabama Legislature issued a joint resolution recognizing the AUCI for its support of economic development in the state of Alabama.
Gus Malzahn returns to campus as new head coach of the Auburn Tigers after a year at Arkansas State

Gus Malzahn, who served as offensive coordinator of the Auburn Tigers from 2009-11, returned to campus this week as head football coach.

Director of Athletics Jay Jacobs said Malzahn was the unanimous choice of the selection committee that included himself, Pat Sullivan, Bo Jackson and Mac Crawford. President Jay Gogue approved the appointment, and the new coach was reintroduced to the media and fans at a press conference Tuesday evening.

“It’s a pleasure to welcome Gus back to Auburn, this time as our head football coach,” Gogue said. “We owe the search committee our gratitude for their time, expertise and dedication to Auburn. They are each distinguished graduates of this great institution and I’m grateful for their ongoing commitment. I appreciate them working so closely with Jay Jacobs as a team – a very good team.”

Malzahn, who won the Broyles Award as the nation’s top assistant coach in 2010 while helping the Tigers to the BCS National Championship, spent the past season as the head coach at Arkansas State, where he led the program to the Sun Belt Conference title.

Known for his innovative offensive style, Malzahn has made a major impact during each of his coaching stops at the collegiate level at Arkansas State, Auburn, Tulsa and Arkansas.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to become the head football coach at Auburn University. It’s an outstanding institution with a storied football program that I had the pleasure of experiencing firsthand for three years,” Malzahn said. “I deeply appreciate the confidence that Dr. Gogue, Jay Jacobs and the search committee had in my ability to turn this program around and to bring Auburn back to national prominence. This is a homecoming for me and I look forward to being reunited with the Auburn family.”

This season at Arkansas State, Malzahn led the Red Wolves to a 9-3 record and 7-1 conference mark, including a current seven-game winning streak. They defeated Middle Tennessee, 45-0, on Dec. 1 to claim the Sun Belt championship and a berth in the GoDaddy.com Bowl on Jan. 6.

Malzahn becomes the 26th head football coach in the Auburn program’s history.

“We are tremendously excited that Gus Malzahn will be our next head football coach,” said Jacobs. “Coach Malzahn was the clear unanimous choice of our search committee, and I am pleased that Dr. Malzahn will also be an outstanding ambassador for Auburn University, and that was important to the committee.”

Malzahn made an immediate impact during his earlier tenure at Auburn, highlighted by a record-setting offense in 2010 when the Tigers finished 14-0 and claimed the school’s first national championship since 1957. He coached Heisman Trophy winner Cam Newton during the Tigers’ run to the 2011 BCS National Championship. Newton produced one of the best single-season quarterback performances in collegiate history and was the overall No. 1 pick in the 2011 NFL draft.

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