

# News & Views



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Faculty and Staff Newsletter of the University of Oregon

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April 21, 1997

## **Campus gears up for new payroll system**

Stephen Pruch has circled July 1, 1998, in red on his calendar. That's the date when the University of Oregon will "go live," converting from the outdated, centralized Budget, Payroll and Personnel (BPP) system on the aging and expensive-to-maintain Honeywell-Bull mainframe computer in Corvallis to the modern, distributed Banner Human Resource Information System (HRIS) on a soon-to-be-upgraded Daisy mainframe computer in Eugene.

The new, streamlined method of recording, managing and archiving employee data will affect every UO employee and every office, but Pruch, who is project manager for the two-year implementation project, hopes practically no one notices anything about the changeover except a speedier, easier to use and more efficient system.

"We learned a lot from the FIS conversion," says the associate director of information systems for Business Affairs. "HRIS is not as complex as the Financial Information System and the data elements are more intuitive, so learning to use the new HRIS should be easier."

The university and all of the other OSSHE institutions are switching to Banner HRIS because the BPP system contains an unidentifiable number of "year 2000" bugs and will begin failing in March 1999. Moreover, it isn't cost-effective to try to find and fix those glitches in 25-year-old COBOL software code which has been patched so many times by so many different programmers that it is increasingly difficult to modify correctly.

Implementation of HRIS will complete the integration of UO information systems into a single database, with common data elements, a common user interface and common technology.

Payroll and personnel information will become part of the existing student and financial information systems.

"Integration will produce many benefits for administrative transaction processing, strategic planning and management decision-making," Pruch says. "That means administrators will have more information available faster and in forms that they can deal with more readily."

The HRIS project also will give UO administrators a golden opportunity, he says, to examine personnel procedures and organization to improve them as appropriate. Among likely improvements will be automating of some Human Resource functions that are performed manually now.

HRIS also is expected to create efficiencies in processing personnel and payroll actions, reducing or eliminating duplicate work and cutting the cost per transaction.

"It is the intention of the project team to distribute access as widely as possible within the constraints of security and confidentiality of personnel data," Pruch says. "We believe that most personnel actions will be entered into the system at the originating department level and electronically routed for approval and processing."

Pruch says a Web for Employees interface that the vendor is still developing would allow employees to execute some transactions by themselves, such as updating a mailing address or changing the number of deductions claimed.

The UO share of the OSSHE-wide conversion will cost about \$2.6 million. Estimated annual costs after start-up are \$500,000.

Pruch says this investment will be financed by money borrowed through certificates of participation, to be repaid in six or seven years.

The HRIS implementation project includes an upgrade of the university's computing system infrastructure, expenses for personnel to perform the conversion and conduct user training, and six months of HRIS operation.

In addition to the Banner HRIS software provided by SCT Education Systems of Malvern, Pa., the project includes two other components--Greentree Applicant Tracking software and TBD Time and Attendance software--that will simplify recordkeeping for job applicants and for all UO employees, especially hourly workers. The applicant tracking software is already in place, and the time-and-attendance package is slated for implementation this summer.

Training on HRIS is getting underway this month and will continue through December 1998 under the full-time direction of Mark McCulloch, Business Affairs. Todd Matson has been hired

half-time in Human Resources to facilitate information access.

Systemwide, the HRIS project is being managed by a Human Resource Management Committee. Sherri McDowell, Business Affairs director, is the UO representative.

Human Resources Director Linda King chairs the UO Human Resource Management Committee which has overall project responsibility and oversees the Human Resource Implementation Team that Pruch heads. The eight functional teams which report to Pruch and the implementation team focus on training, security and information access as well as payroll, employment, position control, employee records and benefits.

Further information about the HRIS project is available on the Web at <http://rhinos.uoregon.edu/hris/hrit.htm>. Anyone on campus also may subscribe to the list server HRISNEWS, which offers electronic notices and discussions of topics related to the conversion.

"It is the intention of the project management teams to emphasize communication throughout the project," Pruch says. "We will make every effort to ensure that the campus is kept informed as the project proceeds."

## **EMU North Addition to begin in May**

Assuming the bid opening goes as expected on April 24, the North Addition--first phase of the Erb Memorial Union major renovation--could begin as early as May 5, says Dusty Miller.

"May 15 is more likely, but if everything falls into place, we could have construction staging in the Courtyard and excavation and demolition of the north side of the EMU nearest the Copy Center in early May," says the EMU Director.

Wildish Construction of Eugene is general contractor for the \$4 million EMU project which will upgrade food service and recreation areas throughout the 45-year-old west wing. Alex Gordon, Facilities Services, is project manager.

The North Addition will add a coffee shop along the south side of the Breezeway, shift the existing entrance to the west and create space for a convenience store where the Copy Center is now. Courtyard work, co-funded by ASUO over-realized fees and EMU Board reserves, will dovetail with planned changes in the EMU.

Faculty, staff and students should expect lots of noise when the heavy-duty demolition work begins in the courtyard. However, Gordon says, a test-run with a jackhammer did not impact classes in nearby Columbia and Friendly halls.

"Access to the Copy Center will be maintained throughout the project because we'll construct the convenience store door early on," Gordon says. "Access through the Breezeway will be problematic."

The Recreation Center will close in very early June so that space can be prepared for renovation. Asbestos abatement will get underway then, and Gordon expects access to the One Card and Copyright offices may not be possible during some of that work.

Miller says the main EMU entrance also will close in June and isn't likely to re-open until the start of Fall Term classes in late September.

The remainder of the renovation project will begin in July, with the expanded and modernized spaces slated to be up and running by Fall Term 1998.

"We appreciate everyone's patience as we take the first steps toward the kind of university union that campus user groups told us they wanted," Miller says.

## **Symphony honors Humanities Center's 10th year**

The Oregon Symphony's world premier of an original work by Robert Kyr, Music, on Wednesday, April 23, honors the Oregon Humanities Center's first decade.

The performance of Kyr's "Symphony No. 7, The Sound of Light" highlights a special concert beginning at 8:00 p.m. in Silva Concert Hall at the Hult Center. Mezzo-soprano Milagro Vargas, Music, is featured soloist, and Murry Sidlin conducts the symphony.

Reserved-seat tickets range from \$8 to \$20, with discounts for students and senior citizens. They are available through Hult Center or EMU ticket offices.

The evening concert program includes Brahms' "Academic Festival Overture," Beethoven's "Symphony No. 5" and the premiere of Kyr's symphony, which is based on texts by internationally acclaimed poet Denise Levertov of Seattle.

A free talk by Kyr and Levertov is set at 7:00 p.m. April 23 in the Hult Center's Studio One. Besides reading her poems that inspired Kyr during the concert, Levertov also will give a free reading of her poetry at 2:00 p.m. April 22 in the EMU Ballroom.

The Oregon Humanities Center commissioned Kyr's work to honor the 10th anniversary of its becoming fully operational. The center not only supports research and teaching but also offers a broad range of public lectures, conferences, symposia, exhibitions and performances that extend humanistic understanding.

The concert, part of the Music Today Festival, will cap a day-long UO residency by symphony musicians. They will participate in workshops and master classes, and take part in a free Oregon Horn Quartet concert at 1 p.m. in the EMU's Taylor Lounge.

The concert and residency are sponsored in part by a grant from Bi-Mart, along with the Eugene Symphony, Music, Public Affairs and Development, and the Oregon Humanities Center. For schedule and other information, call 6-5678.

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Always Regularly Occasionally Rarely Do not read

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## Our People

### In the spotlight

**Charles Kimmel**, Biology and Neuroscience, is among 164 artists, scholars and scientists named Guggenheim Fellows for 1997. The only Oregon recipient, Kimmel was honored for his research on the developmental patterning of the vertebrate head. He joins three colleagues--**Philip DeVries**, **Russell Lande** and **Janis Weeks**--who received Guggenheims last year. Guggenheim Fellowships are awarded for "unusually distinguished achievement in the past and exceptional promise for future accomplishment."

**Frank Stahl**, Biology and Molecular Biology, is recipient of the Genetics Society of America's 1996 Thomas Hunt Morgan Medal for his lifetime contribution to genetics. A member of the UO faculty since 1959 and an American Cancer Society Research Professor since 1985, Stahl has developed a deep knowledge of genetic recombination. He is a two-time Guggenheim Fellow, one of seven UO faculty who are members of the National Academy of Sciences and in 1985 a MacArthur Fellow.

Michelle Batchelor, Knight Library student assistant, celebrated her 23rd birthday on Jan. 28 by making the 72 millionth interlibrary loan request through the international Online Computer Library Center. For **Joanne Halgren**, Interlibrary Loan Service head, the OCLC milestone came 12 years almost to the day after she hit the 7 millionth request on Jan. 21, 1985. In that time, the UO Library System has more than doubled its annual interlibrary loan activity, climbing from 20,000 loans in 1985-86 to 50,000 this year.

Ten management service and classified employees were honored April 3 for their noteworthy achievements and outstanding service. They were **Teresa Benedict**, Geography; **Sharon Fox**, University Printing; **Brett Giles**, Business Affairs; **Laurie Matsen**, Facilities Services; **Nick Miller**, Business Affairs; **Jerry Reese**, Student Health Center; **Jane Spagnola**, University Mail Services; **Sandra Stewart**, Romance Languages; **Debbie Thurman**, Law; and **Mark Turner**, Political Science.

## On the move

**Neill Archer Roan**, Oregon Bach Festival executive director, has submitted his resignation to Music Dean **Anne Dhu McLucas** and to the festival's board of directors. His resignation, citing personal reasons, was effective April 15. McLucas, who joined OBF Board president Tom Wildish in praising Roan's leadership of the world-renowned festival since he took the helm in 1994, says a search to fill the executive director's post will be announced soon. Oregon Bach Festival co-founder **Royce Saltzman**, Music emeritus who has been acting executive director since Roan began a medical leave in January, will continue in his interim leadership role.

**Eric S. McCready**, UO Foundation, will become senior vice president for development at the High Desert Museum in Bend on May 1. An associate director of development for nearly seven years in Eugene and Portland, he most recently served as executive assistant to the president for development after Vice President **Brodie Remington**'s departure last October from Public Affairs and Development.

## In Print

**Robert Grudin**, English, is the author of *On Dialogue: An Essay in Free Thought* (Houghton Mifflin, June 1996).

**Andrew Goble**, History, has written *Kenmu: Go-Daigo's Revolution* (Harvard 1997).

**Molly Westling** is the author of *The Green Breast of the New World: Landscape, Gender and American Fiction* (University of Georgia Press, 1996).

## In memoriam

**Donald W. Ferguson**, Facilities Services, died April 2 in Springfield. A construction project manager for 12 years, Ferguson, 47, was a 1967 graduate of Thurston High School. A memorial service was held April 8. Memorial contributions may be made to the UO Athletic Department or to the American Cancer Society.

**Walter Gordon**, 89, died April 5. Dean of Architecture and Allied Arts from 1958-62, he designed more than 60 houses, many of the best done in the late 1940s for prominent Portlanders, and libraries throughout the state. A graduate of Princeton University, Gordon studied at the Sorbonne in Paris and later at Yale University. No service was held. Remembrances may go to Architecture and Allied Arts.

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