

AC Plugged In

Faculty & Staff NEWSLETTER

Volume 1

Winter 2009

Welcome

Welcome once again to *Plugged In*, your quarterly newsletter.

To those individuals who responded favorably to our inaugural issue: many thanks for the kindness. To all our contributing authors, without whom the content of *Plugged In* would be severely lacking, thanks to you as well. You make it happen.

We have much to look forward to this winter, not the least of which is a groundbreaking for the three-story nursing and dental health building sometime soon on our West Campus.

The Board of Regents in December authorized naming the new structure in honor of AC President Steven Jones.

Also, we could see placement this spring of a pair of historical markers on or near Ordway and Russell halls. The Potter County Historical Commission made application for the markers, and the Texas Historical Commission has approved them for these two historic buildings that already are on the National Register of Historic Places.

Once we are alerted that the markers are ready for placement, a dedicatory ceremony or event in conjunction with the Potter County Historical Commission will be planned.

Yet of all the great things that we have to look forward to with the arrival of this new semester, nothing takes precedence over the welcoming of our new and returning students to every campus. Fortunately, making folks—especially newcomers—feel at home is something at which AC excels.

I ought to know, and I appreciate that, too.

Joe Wyatt

Communications Coordinator

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Developmental Math Program Tabbed for Prestigious Award

The Developmental Mathematics Program at Amarillo College has been named winner of the prestigious John Champaign Memorial Award for Outstanding Developmental Education Program.

The award is sponsored each year by the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) and will be presented Feb. 26 in Greensboro, N.C., at the 2009 NADE Conference.

Edie Carter, coordinator of the Developmental Math Program, and Kathy Wetzel, who chairs the Department of Mathematics and Engineering, worked together in submitting the nomination, which also garnered support from Sandra Chumchal, president of the Texas Association of Developmental Education.

AC's Developmental Math Program, utilizing a Math Lab and an Outreach Center, has been shown to improve both students' grades (up to two letter grades upon retesting) and pass rates (up to 6.5 percent).

From the President's Cabinet

By Ellen Green

Dean of Communication and Marketing

- The President's Cabinet has authorized James "Rusty" Cornelius, AC's new emergency manager, to chair an Emergency Management Council. The council will begin meeting in late January or early February to plan table-top exercises designed to prepare faculty, staff and students for possible emergency situations on campus. Cornelius will be contacting the employees who have been designated by their supervisors to serve on the council. Emergency management exercises will begin sometime during the spring semester.

- Unfortunately the death of a student is something that Amarillo College faculty and staff occasionally face. In order to help deal with those situations, the President's Cabinet wants to remind everyone of the procedures that should be followed in the event of a student death. If you hear of a student's death, please notify the office of the dean of enrollment management (Robert Austin). After the death is verified, the dean's office will send a condolence letter to the family and notify all current instructors of the deceased. A copy of the condolence letter will be sent to the registrar's office so that the student's files can be closed and the business office will issue a tuition refund.

If you are contacted by the media about the death of an Amarillo College student, please refer all media to the office of the dean of communication and marketing (Ellen Green).

Additional information from the president's cabinet can be found on the website under "About AC."

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APD: 24-Hour Tip Line

By Mike Duval

AC Police Chief

The Amarillo College Police Department has a telephone number dedicated solely to receiving and recording tips that are useful for keeping students, staff and visitors safe.

The new 24-hour recorded TIP LINE is 371-5160.

The TIP LINE should not be used to report emergencies or to report problems such as leaking water pipes or cracked cement steps. AC's phone number to report emergencies is 371-5911, while broken equipment and repair issues should be reported to the appropriate departments.

The 24-hour TIP LINE should be used to report concerns the caller feels will help identify problems that could have an effect on the safety of people at Amarillo College. Information such as possible domestic violence, workplace violence, crime and other information of interest to law enforcement and the college administration can be reported anonymously, or callers can identify themselves if they want.

Callers who leave their name and phone number will be contacted by the College Police. Anonymously reported information may be very helpful for identifying some possible problems, but it also has limitations when used for law enforcement purposes.



The 24-hour, non-emergency number for AC Police is 371-5163.

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Creative Mind Humanities Series

By Joan Urban
Instructor of Humanities

The Creative Mind Humanities Lecture Series has been around since 1983 thanks to the hard work and vision of Carol Nicklaus, past coordinator of the AC humanities program. Carol worked tirelessly in the early 1980s to develop the framework for the series and to generate support for it. With the help of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and with the support of generous local donors such as Wendy Marsh, the series took root and is now flourishing as it enters its 26th year at Amarillo College.

Even though the series is a quarter-century old, newcomers to AC may not know much about it. What follows is a crash course about the Creative Mind Humanities Lecture Series, the topic for which this year is "China: From Ming to Modern."

GOAL: The basic goal of the series is to provide cultural and intellectual enrichment. With that in mind, the humanities program selects a new topic each year and then asks four guest lecturers to come to Amarillo College during the spring semester to share their expertise on that topic. Once the spring semester begins, a lecturer arrives about every other week and gives two presentations—one at noon and the other in the evening. By the time the series wraps up, we have had eight golden opportunities to learn more about the world and the people in it.

FREE: One of the great things about the series is that all presentations are free and open to the public, including all of us here at AC. Not only are AC students and employees typically joined in the audience by members of the Amarillo community, but occasional visitors have been known to attend from down state, New Mexico, Kansas and Oklahoma.

LOCATION: Each of the 12:30 p.m. lectures will be in the Washington St. Campus College Union Building, Oak Room. Each of the 7:30 p.m. lectures will be at the Business & Industry Center, 1314 S. Polk St.

FOR CREDIT: For those interested in getting a little more background on the topics that the lecturers will be addressing, the humanities program offers a course that can be taken for one credit hour or as a continuing education class. This course meets from 5:30-7 p.m., on Thursday evenings from Jan. 22 through March 5.



Schedule of Events

Thursday, Feb. 12

Dr. Kenneth Hammond, New Mexico State University
12:30 p.m.: Hiding in Plain Sight: Private and Public in the Chinese Garden
7:30 p.m.: China's Early Enlightenment: Economy and Thought in the Ming Dynasty

Thursday, Feb. 26

Dr. Richard J. Smith, Rice University
12:30 p.m.: Ruling All Under Heaven: The Qing Dynasty's Self-Image as an Empire without Neighbors
7:30 p.m.: The Magnificent Middle Kingdom: The Manchus as the Protectors of China's Cultural Heritage

Thursday, March 12

Dr. Harvey Nelsen, University of South Florida, professor emeritus
12:30pm: Mao's China: Some Neglected Perspectives
7:30 p.m.: What China is and What It's Not in 2009

Thursday, April 2

Dr. David Rolston, University of Michigan
12:30 p.m.: An Introduction to the "Mother of Traditional Chinese Opera," Kun Opera
7:30 p.m.: Traditional Chinese Opera for the 21st Century: Peony Pavilion Comes to America

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AC Accolades

Ellen Green, dean of communication and marketing, has been selected to join the 2009 class of Leadership Texas, the longest-running women's leadership program in the country. She is one of 102 outstanding women leaders who were competitively selected from across Texas to participate in the 2009 program.

Dr. Lana Jackson, division chair for the Department of Mass Communication, recently received her doctoral degree in higher education from Texas Tech University.

Dr. Richard Pullen, professor of nursing and assistant director of the Associate Degree in Nursing Program, has been named Amarillo College's Piper Professor for 2008-2009. That means he is automatically nominated for consideration by the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation, which will select 15 Piper nominees from throughout Texas based on their dedication to the teaching profession and outstanding academic and scholarly achievements.

The AC **Radiography Program** has been advised that its 18-month re-affirmation of accreditation process has been successfully completed. As a result, the program's accreditation status has been re-affirmed for eight years by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology.

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The Badger Awards

The First Year Experience (FYE) Team has initiated a new way to recognize outstanding efforts by AC employees to foster student engagement. The first "Badger of Honor" awards were presented at the end of the fall semester to Cherie Clifton, advisor for allied health; Jack Stanley, division chair of science, math, and engineering; and Frank Sobey, English instructor. Billy Badger himself presented each of these initial recipients with a framed certificate and a FYE coffee mug.

path," April Sessler, chair of the FYE Team and dean of enrollment management, said. "It's one of the most important ways we can help students stay interested and motivated to succeed in college. Many times, it's that one individual who goes the extra mile to offer direction, encouragement or support that keeps a student going during challenging times."

The FYE team is made up of various faculty and staff members who make recommendations to provide the best experience for first-year students at Amarillo College. The team plans to honor an outstanding "Badger" each month. Congratulations and thanks to Cherie, Jack, Frank and Charlotte!



The FYE Team has since announced the December "Badger of Honor" recipient: Charlotte Goebel, peer tutoring supervisor.

"Student engagement is about helping students develop a sense of belonging and to make connections to their institution, their peers, their instructor and other professionals who help them along their educational



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Business Office: Internal Auctions

By Carol Bevel
Business Office Accountant

In October, Amarillo College began utilizing PublicSurplus.com to sell surplus items, and the new process has led to some minor confusion. PublicSurplus only auctions for governmental entities and is structured to meet governmental requirements.

We have listed items such as household and office furniture, exercise equipment, appliances, etc. This will be ongoing, so please check the site as often as you like (there will be times when nothing is listed, and others when there are quite a few items).

What is an Internal Auction and how does it work?

When items are available for use within the college we can list them in an internal auction. This auction is open ONLY to departments for College use. If any department is interested in an item, simply make a \$0 bid for that item and contact Tom Sanders at 371-5198 or Carol Bevel at 371-5038. The item will be removed from the auction. If an item is not selected by a department during the designated time frame, it automatically converts to a public auction.

If at any time you see an item on public auction that your department wants, please contact Tom or Carol as soon as possible.

What does the 🍊 mean? What is a Dutch auction?

When there is more than one of a like kind item available, it may be listed as a "Dutch Auction" with the icon displayed. This enables bidders the opportunity to bid on one or more of the item at the same time with the same bid. The bidder must designate the quantity they are bidding on and the proxy bid. The bidder may be awarded anywhere from one to the entire quantity, depending on the other bids.

What is a proxy bid?

A proxy bid is the maximum that you are willing to bid on the item. PublicSurplus will place incremental bids for you up to the proxy bid that you set. For example: an item is listed at a minimum bid of \$10 with an increment of 50 cents and there are no other bids at the time you enter a proxy bid of \$15—the highest you are willing to go for the item (you are the only one able to see this amount). PublicSurplus will automatically list your bid at the minimum bid of \$10. As other bidders bid more, your bid will be increased incrementally as necessary for you to remain in the bidding until your proxy bid is met or the auction ends. You may change your proxy bid at any time..

Please call if you have questions.

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Badger Bargain



T-shirts featuring the new Badger logo are on sale now at the Bookstore on the Washington Street Campus. With your 10-percent employee discount, these spiffy shirts are priced at \$8.96 plus tax.

Distinguished Lecture Rescheduled

Due to circumstances beyond the control of special guest speaker John Walsh, the Distinguished Lecture Series scheduled for last November had to be postponed. Fortunately, a makeup date has been set and Mr. Walsh, host of television's "America's Most Wanted," will present his lecture at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 5 at the Amarillo Civic Center Grand Plaza.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$15 for everyone else. Of course patrons also may purchase a \$50 ticket that entitles the bearer to attend an hour-long, private reception for Mr. Walsh and includes front-section seating for the lecture. Tickets are available at all campus Assistance Centers.

The Distinguished Lecture Series is presented each year by Student Government. Sponsorship assistance is provided by AC Foundation, Wells Fargo Bank and SandersBaker Law Firm.

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New Programs - Wind Technology

By Jack Stanley
Chairman of Sciences and Engineering Division

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in November granted approval for Amarillo College to offer two certificate programs and an associate degree in wind energy beginning this semester. The basic wind technician certificate involves 25 credit hours over a two-semester span, while an advanced certificate consists of 39 credit hours.

The 66-hour associate of applied science degree in renewable energy/wind technology is the first A.A.S. degree of its kind among community colleges in Texas.

The catalyst for these new programs is the Texas Workforce Commission, which estimates the need for between 500-750 wind-energy technicians in the Texas Panhandle by 2012. Also looking ahead is the Amarillo Economic Development Corporation, which approved a grant of \$440,000 to help Amarillo College develop the program. The AEDC estimates that approximately \$7.5 billion will be spent on construction and operation of wind-energy infrastructure over the next 5-10 years.

Thus far, interest in the new programs has been substantial. We have more than 115 students enrolled in the new programs this spring. It is our intention to allow 40 more students into the program by summer, while making room for 60 additional enrollments next fall.



To be considered for the program, students must fill out the student data sheet found at www.actx.edu/wind.

One major challenge for students interested in the wind energy program is a climb test. Students must be able to climb to the top of a wind turbine that is between 250-300 feet high.

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Outstanding Classified Employees

The Outstanding Classified Employee Performance Awards are given each year to recognize those classified employees who demonstrate outstanding job performance. Nominated employees must have worked in their current departments for at least six months at the time of nomination and have a minimum of one year continuous service at AC. Awardees receive a \$500 cash stipend.

The 2008 recipients of Outstanding Classified Employee Performance Awards are:

Angie Alvarez, advising associate
Carol Bevel, staff accountant
Raul Dominguez, HEP recruitment/placement coordinator
Chi Doung, technology inventory specialist
Stacey Herman, senior staff assistant
Adam Kirchgessner, field support technician
Khristi McKelvy, nursing resource center supervisor
Lissa Merchant, administrative assistant I
Donna Miller, administrative clerk
Kelly Murphy, veteran affairs and graduation specialist
Jeanette Nelson, accountant
Suzette Overstreet, night custodian
Donna Pergrem, career assistant
Judy Salazar, customer services assistant
Dave Snelson, groundskeeper
Michael Sugden, disbursement supervisor



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Faculty Senate Report

By Lana Jackson
President of Faculty Senate

MYTH: Student success is measured by certificates and degrees completed.

FACT: Twenty-two years ago when I enrolled at AC, I just wanted to learn to play the guitar.

The Faculty Senate is engaged in a unique discussion aimed at defining student success. The one item we can agree on: there is no single trait or descriptor which defines the "successful AC student."

So why are we trying?

The administration has given us the unique opportunity to play a more active role in writing AC's success story. Ultimately, our mission is to provide "educational, cultural and community services and resources to enhance the quality of life for the diverse population in the service area." As a College, we are charged with improving lives through learning. Faculty will guide the discussion on student success because they are key to the educational process, engaging students daily in activities and opportunities which challenge them to strive for personal growth and fulfillment.

That does not mean that the discussion is limited to faculty. Administrative and classified personnel also are engaging in similar conversations, seeking to identify student success

and elements which impact student success. And, naturally, we must consider the students' perspectives. As one senator asked in the last meeting, "Do we define student success in our terms or in student terms?" Maybe both. It would certainly be presumptuous of us to assume we understand how each student defines his or her own success.

In an ideal world, the Senate, with your input, will identify no more than 12 measurable, global descriptors which define student success to take back to the administration. One of those may be as simple as "completed a certificate or degree." However, we anticipate more elusive descriptors such as "enrolled for hobby."

Yes, the intent is to assess ourselves, on an ongoing basis, on our ability to achieve our mission. No one doubts we make a difference. This is our opportunity to identify variables which clarify and allow us to scientifically measure our success. Through this process we will grow as an institution and enhance the lives of others. That's why we're here.

Join us on our quest to define student success. Future Faculty Senate meetings are at 3 p.m. on Jan. 16 in the Private Dining Room; Feb. 6 in Library 113; March 6 at West Campus; April 3, Library 113; and May 8, Library 113.

MYTH: Student success is measured by certificates and degrees completed.

FACT: I still have the guitar.

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Plugged In's Winter Photo



Leading up to the holiday break, Terry Berg, dean of finance and administrative services, donned a Santa hat and simulated a weenie roast at the decorative faux fireplace in the Business Office on the Washington Street Campus.

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