With email outages starting on Friday (see below) and details on the parking restrictions on Friday (see below) we are sending the Newsletter out a bit early. If you are planning on coming in to work on Friday, you should be aware of the road closures and email closures before you arrive.

Summer must be coming to an end. The amount of news in the Newsletter is picking up. You can read it below and I do not need to summarize it. Enjoy the remaining days of summer. Keep cool.
-- Lou

**Department News**

Preview Days—Coordinator Needed
We need a Departmental Coordinator for Preview Day on Saturday, September 24, 2011. The Browse Session, with departmental and organizational displays, will occur in the Stephenson Gym from 1:00 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. We are asking faculty/staff, and student representatives to have someone present at the tables/displays this entire period. Please have tables set up and manned by 1:00 p.m. Joe Morgan has made a new display board. We just need someone to coordinate faculty to attend and make certain that things are set up. Let Lou know if you would help out with this.

You might have noticed the closed road...
Emergency response personnel from throughout the region will conduct a major mock disaster exercise on the Jacksonville State University campus on Friday, August 12. The event will take place from 9:30 a.m. - early afternoon in the vicinity of Wallace Hall; however, the exercise will require the closure of Bennett Boulevard (the road between McGee Hall the School of Nursing) for several hours beginning at 7:30 a.m.

On Friday, you will need to access the Martin/McGee parking lot from Highway 21 (not from Church Street) - according to a UPD spokesperson, employees will be allowed access to the parking lot through their barricade. Should the disaster exercise last until lunch, you may exit the parking lot at Church Street. For those wishing to avoid the confusion, you may choose to park in the International House or Ayers Hall parking lots and get in a little exercise.
Email will be down
The process of updating the JSU e-mail system (GEM) will begin Friday afternoon, August 12th, at approximately 1:00 PM. These upgrades will consist of updates that will not be visibly noticed by users such as firmware and operating system updates to the mail servers. There will be e-mail outages on Friday afternoon and into the evening to accommodate these updates. Once these are complete, Zimbra software updates will begin next week (the week of August 15th-19th). The time frame of these updates depends on the success of the updates applied on Friday and over the weekend. Please see check MyJSU announcements and the University News Wire for updated outage times. This is a major upgrade and will require both minor and extended outages. Every effort will be made to keep the length of downtime as short as possible. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Board of Visitors
The Board of Visitors (successful JSU alumni) will be meeting on Friday, 16 September in McGee Hall. Part of the reason for the visit is to show off the new NMR spectrometer. I will ask that the chemist (and this does NOT mean Bernice) to get the laboratory cleaned up a bit. We do not need major changes, but to get rid of a large cardboard box and pallet and to tidy things up a bit would be nice.

The Dean would also like for the some of the students to present their research work to the Board of Visitors. (Actually, the Board asked to have such presentations.) I would like for the students to present to a group of the faculty before the 16th of September -- so the students can be properly prepared. Please let me know within the next couple of weeks if you have a student who can be ready to make a presentation by the 16th Sept.

Study Leave News

News from Nanded, India
Well, I am learning a great deal. That being said there are some lessons that I had just as soon put off. The faculty here at Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwata University are great, welcoming, attentive, and very helpful in everyway. The students come to class eager to listen, to interact and to learn. I have 15 actually registered in my GIS class, and so far, every lecture has been filled to capacity. I know that will thin out soon, but it has a way of making a lecturer feel special.
The University has no general Air Conditioning, but they were nice enough to put a window unit in my office, thank God or Genesh or Lord Shiva or someone for that consideration. The classroom at 9 in the morning is very hot and unfortunately I am soaking wet at the end of lecture, another unanticipated part of the experience. Not that it surprises me, I simply did not think about it.

The good news, we have a computer lab, the bad news, it is more like a computer graveyard with a variety of mismatched parts and pieces cobbled together. Out of 18 machines, the best one (or two) has 256 meg of RAM. The data that I am loading actually has over 500 meg of data. So far, no software has been loaded, but they are, as of today, reformatting all of the machines and upgrading them with at least 1gb of RAM. Actually I am pretty sure that will not work as well as they expect but as I always say Hope Springs Eternal.

I am gaining a wonderful new perspective on culture. I went to the Sikh Gurudwara the other night. Rode over on the back of a motorcycle in what for all reason looked like a demolition derby with cars, trucks, people, bicycles, cows, water buffalo, and a few donkeys thrown in. I gave up on the notion of driving in town, it ain’t gonna happen. The Gurudwara on the other hand was a true cultural experience, so guess I have new material for my South Asia lectures. Reading from the religious text over loudspeakers 24/7. I can actually hear on close to campus pretty much all day. Guess I have learned to generally tune it out.

I hope I am teaching them anywhere near as much as I am learning, not sure that is possible. I have been invited to the City Corporation of Nanded to sit in and assess the presentations of bidders for a new GIS and Data Collection system. They have hired a consultant from Mumbai to evaluate the proposals. I am honored to attend but I am afraid my limited capacity for Hindi, will probably limit my actual input.

Well, just to keep ya’ll (that’s a word I haven’t heard in a while) up to date. Hope all is well at JSU. -- L Joe Morgan

University News

Sen. Jeff Sessions’ Office to Present ’Preserving Rural Alabama’ Workshop

Please join us for Preserving Rural Alabama: Technical Assistance Programs for Redeveloping Your Community and Funding Opportunities from the US Department of Agriculture - Rural Development. The workshop will be Thursday, August 25, from 8 a.m. - noon on the eleventh floor of the Houston Cole Library.

For this event, Senator Sessions’ office has organized an experienced group of presenters who have a wealth of knowledge in critical areas of redevelopment including architecture, environmental assessment and cleanup, maintaining historic programs and standards, economic and community development, hazard mitigation, water and wastewater infrastructure and federal funding resources. Seminar attendees will receive useful information on various technical assistance programs available from influential organizations in our state and an in-depth presentation by Ronnie Davis, State Director, US Department
of Agriculture - Rural Development, on the funding programs available through this federal agency.

The goal for this workshop is to deliver programs that support the preservation of small town Alabama while increasing economic opportunity and improving the quality of life for rural residents.

For more information and to confirm attendance, please contact Allison Newton at 256-782-5108 or anewton@jsu.edu.

TIAA-CREF Individual Consultant on Campus
Setting up a long-term financial plan can be a complicated task. It involves evaluating your potential income sources, and then factoring in the impact of taxes, inflation and the larger economic picture. Meeting with a TIAA-CREF Individual Consultant can help you sort things out and make informed decisions. Paul Cimino, a TIAA-CREF Senior Individual Consultant will be at JSU to conduct individual counseling sessions on August 16th in Bibb Graves Hall Rm. # 323. If you are interested in signing up for a counseling session, please call TIAA-CREF at 800-732-8353.

Degenerate States

World's Highest Energy Accelerator
Scientists at NASA built a gun specifically to launch standard four-pound dead chickens at the windshields of airliners, military jets and the space shuttle, all traveling at maximum velocity. The idea was to simulate the frequent incidents of collisions with airborne fowl to test the strength of the windshields.

British engineers heard about the gun and were eager to test it on the windshields of their new high-speed trains. Arrangements were made, and a gun was sent to the British engineers. When the gun was fired, the engineers stood shocked as the chicken hurled out of the barrel, crashed into the shatterproof shield, smashed it to smithereens, blasted through the control console, snapped the engineer’s backrest in two, and embedded itself in the back wall of the cabin, like an arrow shot from a bow.

The horrified Brits sent NASA the disastrous results of the experiment, along with the design diagrams of the windshield, and begged the US scientists for suggestions.

NASA responded with a one-line memorandum: "Defrost the chicken!"

Contact Details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences newsletter, then contact Tracy Casey before noon on Thursdays at: tscasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.