Trowbridge to head up public relations office

By Laura Rector
Staff Writer

Kevin Trowbridge has become the acting public relations director of Union University, while maintaining his responsibilities as the university’s coordinator of news and information. Tracey King, former public relations director, resigned to become a full-time mom.

King announced her resignation in August, but stayed for “about a month and a half to prepare for the transition and to wrap up some projects that she began,” Trowbridge said.

“I left Union because I am expecting a child in January of ’98 and currently have a 2-year-old,” King said. “I really believe that the Lord has called me to be at home, or at least for right now, to be with my 2-year-old and my new baby.”

Trowbridge said.

King served as director of public relations at Union for six years. Trowbridge said Sept. 30 was her last official day at the school.

Dr. Michael Duduit, executive vice president, and President David Dockery appointed Trowbridge, effective Oct. 1.

Trowbridge said in January of ’98 there may not be a public relations director after the office is restructured, as planned tentatively.

“The plan is to do some restructuring in the office. Dr. Duduit and I are discussing some ways to restructure the public relations office to make it more efficient and effective,” Trowbridge said.

“The restructuring will only improve the quality of work and isn’t going to change our relationships with other areas on campus,” he added.

“These specific plans are very tentative,” Trowbridge said.

“As soon as the restructuring is complete, we will begin advertising for the position that we will be filling and ideally we would like to see this person in place by Jan. 1 or Feb. 1,” he said.

Trowbridge, an alumnus, returned to Union in January 1997, to serve as coordinator of news and information.

He retains those duties with the help of his administrative assistant, Beverly Fisher, and two student media coordinators, Amy Balthrop and Jane Rice.

“The new position is very challenging because it’s requiring me to balance the media relations aspect of public relations and then the advertising, marketing and publications aspect of public relations,” Trowbridge said.

Fisher worked with King also, so Trowbridge said she has helped with the transition. “We as a team, we work together to accomplish the projects that we’re presented,” Trowbridge said.

“I’m doing a little bit of everything. Actually, I’m doing a lot of everything,” Trowbridge said. His duties include media relations, advertising placement, administrative tasks and working with publications which the university sends off-campus.

Trowbridge advises the Circle K and the Lest We Forget. However, “none of the student publications are considered public relations publications or tools,” he said.

Union’s “atmosphere” drew Trowbridge to Union as a student.

“It’s the atmosphere where you’re walking down the hall of an area sidewalk and even if you don’t know them, you recognize them, with a ‘Hey, what’s up? How are you?’ and that atmosphere has even been made more evident to me since I’ve been working here, because I love the people I work with,” Trowbridge said.

“I can relax and know that I’m just in an excellent place and I’m in the place that God wants me, and I will be in this place until he leads me elsewhere, whether that’s tomorrow or 20 years from now,” he said.

$1 million for software and technical support

By Jonathan Rowland
Staff Writer

Union’s Mathematics and Computer Science Department received a grant of $1 million worth of software from Oracle, one of the top three database corporations in the country.

Dr. Jan Wilms, chair of the mathematics and computer science department, said the university bought a maintenance contract for $500 per year. In exchange, Oracle gives Union any software requested. In addition to the software requested, said Wilms, the university will also receive technical support from Oracle doubling the value of the grant to $2 million dollars.

The software will be used to change the content of the database courses currently offered to computer information systems majors and minors. Wilms said Emily Dunn, assistant professor of computer science who is experienced with industry strength database software, pointed out that the courses needed to be changed to allow students to work with software used in the industry.

“Students are getting industry strength software - knowledge they can apply directly,” Wilms said. There will now be a course for majors and minors taught by Dunn, who “will bring to that course a wealth of industry experience,” said Wilms.

Business majors will benefit from this new software. The university is now offering a Management Information Systems course giving Business majors firsthand experience with the computer aspect of business, Wilms said.

“This software will make it possible for our students to use cutting edge software, which most schools our size are not in a position to buy,” Dr. Hal Poc, dean of academic resources and information services, said.

Faculty join in prayer

By Andrew Long
Staff Writer

“What a friend we have in Jesus; all our sins and griefs to bear; what a privilege to carry; everything to God in prayer!” (Joseph Scriven, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”) Union’s faculty recognizes the value of prayer. A faculty prayer group has been meeting each Thursday since Spring, 1997. Dr. Nan Thomas, part-time faculty member of history and political science, arranges the meetings and begins each meeting with a brief devotional.

McMillin said the prayer times are very informal. “We pray for administration, departments and student needs,” Dr. Barbara McMillin, English department chair and associate professor of art, said.

“The faculty prayer group] gives me a place with colleagues to share my needs and burdens in the common act of prayer,” Dr. George Guthrie, Christian studies chair, said.

While attendance has been slim, “a larger turnout is one of the things that we pray for,” McMillin said. About five or six faculty members regularly attend the meetings, McMillin said. She attributes the low attendance to the hectic schedules of most faculty.

McMillin said the prayer group will continue into the spring semester and will also try to find a more convenient time for faculty to meet.

Ted Barnes exhibits his search for truth through art

By Jeremy “Moose” Langston
Staff Writer

The work of artist Ted Barnes will be featured in Union’s art exhibit this month. Barnes received his master of fine arts in painting from the University of Arkansas in 1979, is now the art department coordinator at Louisiana College, Pineville, Louisiana. On Nov. 6 many students were on hand to hear Barnes give a formal presentation of his work, and its meaning.

Along with his teaching, Barnes does various art shows and exhibitions throughout the different parts of the country. Barnes does all work on old army tents, and uses a variety of complementary colors and bold typography to convey his message. “My work is devoted to searching for truth in the midst of mystery and paradox,” Barnes said.

Barnes uses people and issues in his own life to help in the creative process of his paintings. Barnes specifically points to the influences of the females in his life to his work.

“My experiences with my wife and daughter are probably the two main subjects my paintings revolve around,” Barnes said. With titles such as “Female Friends” and “Young Punk Delinquent” Barnes admitted he had some answering to do to his wife and daughter. “I don’t want anyone to think I don’t like women or my family. I just titled the pieces in a way that I felt matched the feeling of the paintings,” Barnes said.

Barnes also uses things such as old paperback books and movie posters as sources for his compositions. “I think it’s from my background in graphic design, and just plain love for old movies that made me use their content in my pieces,” Barnes said.

Michael Mallard, chair of the art department, saw Barnes work at a show in Louisiana, and invited him to Union.

“I find his work to have layered meanings that are very interesting. We are excited he agreed to do a show for us,” Mallard said.

Many art students were also on hand to see the presentation. “These paintings seem to represent the colorful ways the painter has dealt with several personal issues,” Alan Tucker, senior Art major, said.

“The work will be in the gallery until Nov. 28. Everyone is invited to stop by the gallery and see it,” Mallard said.

Barnes also hopes everyone enjoys the show.

“I hope everyone enjoys the show, and can get their own special meaning from the work,” Barnes said.

Lest We Forget
**Students benefit from banquet’s success**

By Andrea Aldridge

Union University’s first scholarship banquet was a “tremendous success,” Kevin Trowbridge, acting director of public relations, said.

Trowbridge said this was “Union’s first kicking-off of what we hope to become a tradition.” Dr. Michael Duduit, executive vice president, agreed by saying, “I hope that sets a standard for our own events.”

The scholarship banquet was held at the Jackson Civic Center Oct. 9. Over 1,000 guests were in attendance.

The banquet got sponsors for the upcoming academic year at Union. Guests in attendance donated more than $120,000 for scholarships at the university. The largest donations amounted to $10,000 each. These four guests sat at the front tables. Other guests sat behind them according to the size of their donation.

Lou Holtz, former head football coach at Notre Dame, was the guest speaker at this year’s banquet. Holtz received rave reviews from guests.

Union has already begun preparing for the 1998 Scholarship Banquet. An invitation has been extended to Lady Margaret Thatcher, former prime minister of Great Britain. Her confirmation has not yet been sealed. “We are very close to signing a contract and hope to confirm in a few more weeks,” Duduit said, Nov. 10.

Duduit said next year’s banquet is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 20.

Union officials have begun preparations for next year’s banquet by soliciting sponsors. Trowbridge said the goal is to have as many at the banquet next year as there were this year.

Trowbridge said the scholarship banquet serves two goals. The first is to benefit students. All of the proceeds of the banquet go directly to a scholarship fund for students.

The second goal is to bring leaders and top-notch individuals like Holtz into the community. Trowbridge said the community and students get to hear the speakers.

Trowbridge also said the “production of the evening flowed well.” He said the events of the evening moved very well from one to the next.

“I expect next year to be larger,” Trowbridge said.

Duduit and Trowbridge agreed that the 1997 Scholarship Banquet was a great success. They look forward to the upcoming banquets in hopes that each banquet will be a greater success than the year before.

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**“SHOP” ryland: the destruction of the home of American music**

By Stephen Phillips

As they opened the large iron gates on June 30, 1972, the crowds cheered. At last, the people of Tennessee and its surrounding states finally had real entertainment.

Twenty-six years later, the same crowd mourns the announcement that on Jan. 1, 1998, the world-famous gates of Opryland USA Themepark will close forever. In its place, Opry Mills, the largest outlet mall in Tennessee, will arise. Opening in the late autumn of 2000, Opry Mills will offer visitors what is known as "shopertainment," a unique cross-breeding of attractions and value priced merchandise.

Opry Mills will have approximately 200 stores and 1 million square feet, and it will cost around $200 million. It will reflect the history and culture of Tennessee, and each wing of the mall will have a featured Grand Ole Opry star as its theme.

The building will not actually occupy any of the land that the themepark currently sits on. However, one-third of the park will be cleared for parking spaces for the new outlet mall. Although nothing is final, if the current size remains the same, the new parking places will take the place of attractions such as "The Hangman," "The Screamin’ Delta Demon," "The Rock’n Roller Coaster" and "The Dulcimer Splash."

The remaining two-thirds of the present park not affected by the construction of parking areas will be reserved for future attractions. It is uncertain which, if any, of the present rides will remain.

Terry London, president and CEO of Gaylord Entertainment said, "We are evaluating right now which attractions will remain. We are interested in things that can remain open year round."

Currently, only a handful of things can be used during the winter, including CHAOS, the Little Deuce Coup and the American Music Theatre. There is presently $25 million appropriated for the purpose of new attractions.

An additional area to open along with Opry Mills is the Cumberland Landing. A new docking facility for Opryland’s General Jackson and River Taxis will include several entertainment facilities such as show theaters, famous restaurants and night clubs.

The Grand Ole Opry will also be given a minor face lift with a new "grand" entrance, giving what London says “it’s always deserved.”

The Gaylord Entertainment Company, owners of the Opryland complex, claim that the park was not growing; therefore, it must make way for new projects that will.

However, the real fault lies in the fact that Gaylord sold their primary money-makers, CMT and TNN, to the CBS/Westhinghouse company. Both cable television networks were successful, but pressure from the entertainment industry persuaded stockholders to sell the stations to a larger company that could market them to their full potential. This sale left Gaylord without a major property that could produce dividends for its stockholders. In the end, though, Gaylord will only own the land that Opry Mills is housed on, and the Mills Corporation will own the outlet mall itself.

Opryland USA Themepark will operate through its Christmas in the Park season and then close for the construction of Opry Mills to begin in late January. Christmas in Park, a holiday celebration including the nation’s largest nativity scene, ice skating and other shows and attractions, starts Nov. 22 and runs through Dec. 31. Admission is $12.99.

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**It’s a girl!**

- Union welcomes a new bird to the family cage

By Andrew Long

The newest and perhaps most popular member of Union’s family wears a grey suit and has pointy lips.

Dr. James Huggins, biology department chair, bought a new female Zebra Finch to replace the nameless bird that died three weeks ago.

Huggins bought the new bird from a local pet store. He bought her reluctantly, saying “She looked awfully bad.”

The professor decided to rescue her from the four males with whom she shared a cage.

Huggins said that research concerning nesting habits may be possible in the future. He also said putting a microphones in the cage might also be a possibility in the future so more people can hear the birds.
Annual children’s play brings ‘Tempest’ to area youth
• Adaptation of Shakespeare to entertain both young and old alike

By William Marshall
Staff Writer

Once again Union’s theatre program will delight Jackson’s youth as they present the annual children’s play. The event is held every year with its purpose being to “reach out to public schools,” said David Burke, director of the theatre. Area children are given the opportunity to visit Union and watch the play.

“The Tempest,” by William Shakespeare, is this year’s play. It is a story about a banished duke who seeks revenge on his brother, who banished him. The duke gets his chance for revenge, but he chooses “reconciliation over revenge,” Dorothy Stokes, public relations director for the event, said. She said the play is full of humor, love and some poetry.

The event usually is held the first week of May. The change was made in hopes of allowing more schools to participate. Burke said, however, that this may decrease the attendance. Either way, as far as the cast is concerned, Burke feels “the show has the best cast that I have ever had.” He credits this to the number of “seasoned veterans” participating in the production.

The play has been adapted for children ages six to 11. This was done by Gillette Elygren, Burke’s friend who is employed by Regent University. Burke said the writer has a “real heart for children,” and thus the play is “real energetic, real fast-paced, with a lot of action.”

Although the play is directed toward children, Burke said it will be entertaining for all ages. Jimmy Duke, senior, said it will be “a real fun show.”

The play will be presented at the following times in the G. M. Savage Memorial Chapel:
• Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 10 a.m.
• Thursday, Nov. 20, at 10 a.m.
• Friday, Nov. 21, at 10 a.m.

Handicap accessibility to be improved on campus

By Fred Shackelford
Staff Writer

Elizabeth Hume, junior Music major, suffers from muscular dystrophy, which prevents her from walking for long periods of time. She spends much of her day in a wheelchair, and is, at times, frustrated by the lack of accessibility on Union’s campus presents. For many of Union’s disabled students, the campus has proven to be less than ideal.

“Overall, the campus is fairly accessible. There are just a few areas that need work,” Hume said. Specific areas she pointed out were large cracks in the sidewalks, particularly in Hume’s complex, which makes it difficult to operate a wheelchair, as well as the large step at the end of the ramp behind the post office in the Hyran Barefoot Student Union Building. Hume also mentioned problems in the cafeteria, which, she says, is nearly impossible to facilitate in a wheelchair due to the height of the counters.

Josette Soard, senior Elementary Education major, is Hume’s roommate and close friend. She finds it easy to sympathize with Hume in that she has lived with disabled students all four years she has been at Union.

“Most students don’t realize the struggles that disabled students face on a daily basis ... None of the girls that I have lived with have ever asked for accommodations. It’s not that they didn’t think they needed them - they just didn’t feel that they were entitled to them,” Soard said.

Soard, president of the Honors Student Association, brought some of her concerns before Dr. Michael Duduit, executive vice president, at a Prexy Club meeting Oct. 21. “He asked us if we had any recommendations for improvements that needed to be made or recommendations for campus plans over the next 10 years,” Soard said. “I felt that, rather than spend so much money on unnecessary construction, we should first observe the problem areas of the campus and take suggestions for improvements. No date has been set for this tour, but it is planned to take place before the end of the fall semester.

Soard said Union has only two full-time students on campus confined to wheelchairs, although there are other students with a variety of disabilities. Soard feels this low number is likely due to the lack of services and accessibility available on campus for disabled students.

Fortunately, steps are being taken to remedy some of the problems. Dr. Margaret Lillard, director of counseling services, held a meeting Sept. 24 with disabled Union students to get input on problems they face.

One solution proposed by Soard is to have an “Awareness Day,” involving speakers who have experienced disabilities or work with disabled people. This could also involve certain simulation exercises in which any student could experience firsthand what it is like to be handicapped.

“Basically, we’re not asking for major renovations, but simple adjustments and awareness so that everyone on campus has an equal opportunity to do (his or her) best,” Soard said.