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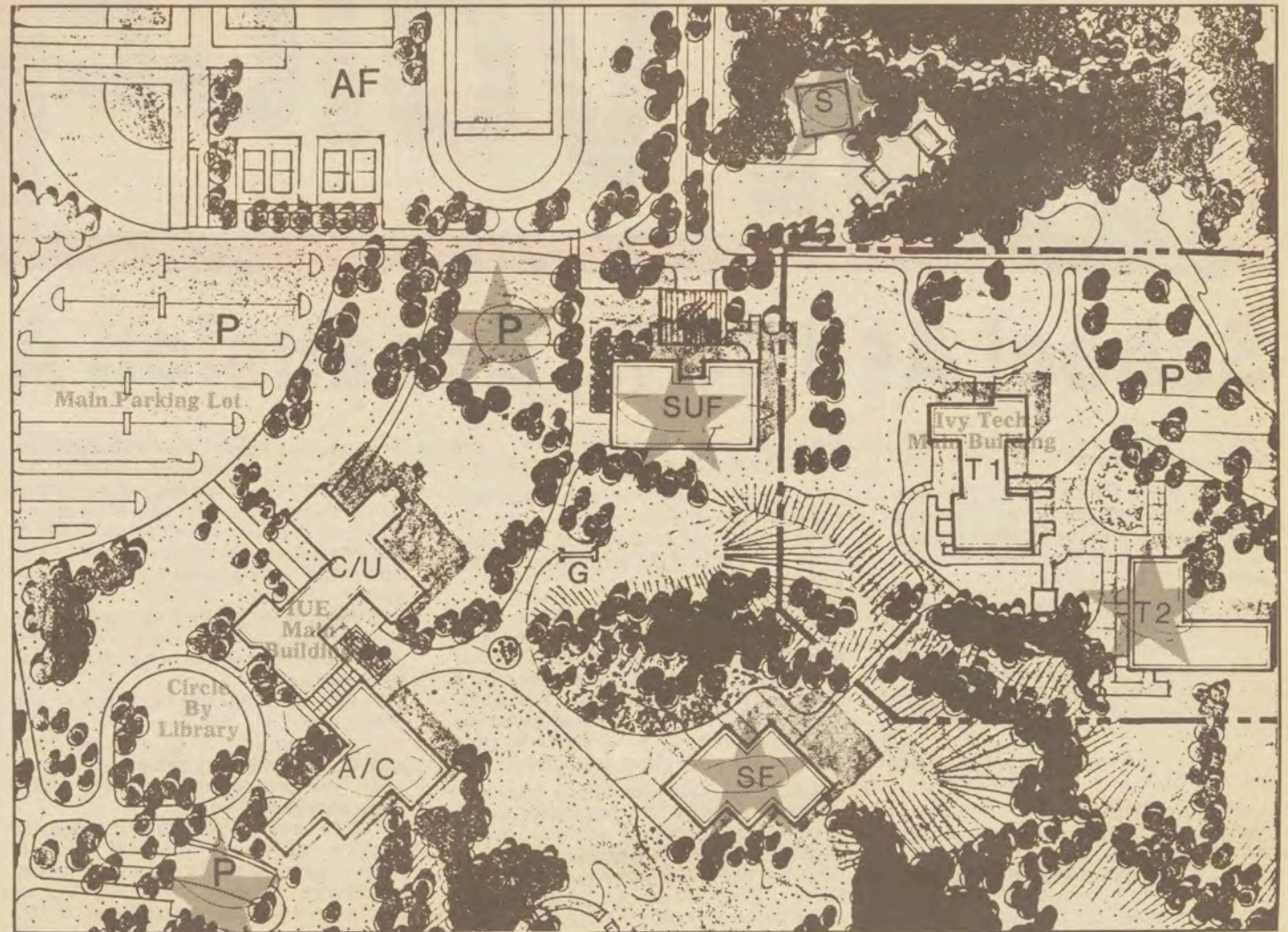
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Tentative grounds plan for new construction on campus: ★ = new, P = parking.

Faculty Profile: Ronnie Carter

By Susan Davis
New Voice Reporter

Ronnie Carter attended various schools in southern Idaho before dropping out of high school in his junior year, "I made it in the big bad world without the benefit of a high school diploma," he says. He received the Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) while in the army.

After his tour of duty, he continued his education, earning a Doctor of Philosophy in 1972. This was also his first year at IU East, where he has been teaching ever since with two exceptions - in 1981-1982, he was a National Endowment for the Humanities resident fellow at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In the spring of 1984, he was a visiting professor at Warsaw University in Poland.

NV: Why did you quit high school?

Carter: I dropped out of high school because, like most confirmed juvenile delinquents, I wasn't getting along with my parents or the school administration. So it was strongly suggested by the school superintendent that I quit school and join the army. I enlisted on my 17th birthday and spent three years in the military, most of it — two and one-half years — in Germany.

NV: Why did you decide to return to school?

Carter: While in the service, I became friends with two guys in my squad, both of whom were college graduates. They inspired me and when they saw a certain amount of potential and intelligence in me, they encouraged me to return to school. I enrolled in college at the first opportunity, and I've never looked back.

NV: Why did you decide to major in English?

Carter: My first major did not pan out. I was a civil engineer on paper, but between enrolling and actually showing up on campus, I changed to a German major; this lasted two years. Then I took a poetry course under an inspiring professor and decided that English literature was a lot more fun than the grind of learning German grammar. It's the beauty of the English language, the ideas, the concepts it maintains....I did it because I was amazed that you could read great literature and actually get paid for it — that's why I got into teaching.

It was an astounding revelation that one could actually do something that one loved and get paid for doing it.

NV: Do you think a person can learn to write well or must one be born with the talent?

Carter: It's both. People with natural talent find it a lot easier to become excellent writers. However, most people can achieve a very good command if they approach it as a skill and with the same sort of diligence that they would apply, say, to becoming a competent athlete, a cook, a good mother — learn the techniques and then persevere. However, on the level of great artists it is truly an art. It's a science and an art, and that is just pure talent — Shakespeare is one of a kind.

But I think most of us can become quite competent writers. There are millions of adults who write English prose with clarity, precision and correctness, so it's not beyond the grasp of an intelligent, dedicated adult.

NV: Do you have any special theories on teaching composition?

Carter: When I joined the faculty of IU East in 1972, composition was taught using the traditional product, approach which focused on polished professional essays, much literary analysis and essays that were supposedly modeled after those by accomplished writers. The focus was on the end product.

In 1976, I attended a semester-long seminar at IU Bloomington and learned about a recent advance in writing education that focuses on the process of writing itself. Rather than just reading what others have already written, the student is taught to do adequate pre-writing, writing and revision.

I was very taken with this new approach and as a result, convinced my colleagues in the English department to adopt this new approach. Since 1979, IU East has offered the process-centered composition course.

NV: I've heard that you have traveled extensively. What were your favorite places?

At latest count, I have been to 17 foreign countries. My favorite vacation spot is the Greek Isles, and I truly enjoyed my 25 days in 1984 when I roamed around England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. But I'm looking forward right now to returning to Poland, hopefully next summer for 90 days to do some field research on Polish perceptions of the American wild, wild west.

NV: What perceptions do the Poles have?

Carter: When I was in Poland in 1984, I taught Western American Literature — cowboys and Indians — and I was amazed to find that the Poles

had some very peculiar ideas. One, they believed that the American Government had, with malice and forethought, provoked war with Mexico with the design of stealing the northern provinces which now comprise New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, etc. They also believed that it was a so-called conspiracy between the white settlers and the American Government to systematically exterminate the native red man.

NV: Is there any truth to the Poles' ideas?

Carter: American *historians* think that the Poles are probably right. Think of the reward of the first Mexican war. We got a very large piece of real estate from Mexico as the prize of the treaty. When the white settlers hit the Atlantic shore in the 1620's, there were between 4 and 5 million native red men in what was to become the United States. In about 1910, the Indian population was only about 400,000, while we had increased from a few boatloads of Pilgrims in 1620 to approximately 180 million. One wonders. And of course, we put the Indians on reservations.

The Poles' ideas reflect the European version of the settling of the west, rather than the (average) American view. When given a choice between the cowboys and the Indians, they always side with the Indians. And while Americans tend to glamorize the Northern Plains Indians, like the Cheyenne and the Sioux, the Poles admire the Comanches and the Apaches of the Southwest, as the true noble Red Man. They consider the bad Red Man to be the Sioux. This is quite the opposite of the American view.

NV: What is the attitude of the Poles

CARTER-contd. from page 2.

towards Americans of today?

Carter: the Poles are intensely interested in all things American, and they have a great deal of admiration for American ingenuity, energy, resourcefulness and generosity.

American donations of food and money during the martial law of 1981, '82 and '83 essentially kept many Poles alive with American families and friends sending cash, food and clothing — assisting the Poles in a truly significant way.

When you go to Poland, the people on the street are very fond of Americans. If you tell them you are American, they burst into smiles. Almost every Pole has a friend or a family member who is in the United States.

NV: What books do you think every college student should read?

Carter: I strongly approve of students becoming aware of the so-called classics of the world, especially British and American Literature because not only are they very good reading — they are our cultural literacy.

People who have not read these great works of literature, who don't know their history, are severely handicapped. They won't have the cultural literacy that a well-educated person has. We find many phrases in our language that come from Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton and great English romantics like Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and Byron.

We also have a great legacy of American novelists starting with Hawthorne, Melville and Twain. I think that people who are not acquainted with the classics of their own literature have denied themselves their own birthright. It's really analogous to willingly denying yourself the vote. You cannot participate fully in the American experience and culture if you think it started in 1975 with Steven King.

NV: Do you have any favorite contemporary authors?

Carter: In the field of humor I am a great admirer of Garrison Keillor of "Lake Wobegon Days," and Tom Robbins who is very funny and witty. I also admire the American novelists — Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Kurt Vonnegut.

My favorite 20th century poets are E.E. Cummings, T.S. Eliot and of course, the All-American poet, Robert Frost.

NV: What are your plans for the future?

Carter: I just finished a trip out to Idaho and Nevada this last August to do some background research for a novel. It may be four or five years down the road before it will be finished.

It's a tale of revenge. At the turn of

the century, a distant relative of mine hunted down and killed ten men, who as a gang had killed his prospective father-in-law and molested his fiancée and the other women in the group. His fiancée eventually died in childbirth from a pregnancy that resulted from the gang rape.

My relative disappeared for three and one-half years between 1912 and 1915 and when he died in 1935, they found his gun with ten notches on the trigger.

It's a fact, and I'm doing a fictional treatment of that.

My relative never talked about all this, but evidence proves it to be true. When he left he was a nice looking fellow about 27 years old, but when he returned three years later he had three shot gun holes in him and multiple knife cuts.

This is Carter's 17th year at this school, and he says, "I've grown very fond of IU East and Richmond."

He said he really appreciates the students. "I think the returning students bring a lot to the classroom; the mix of recent graduates from high school and the older student in the small class really makes for an excellent mix where a lot of learning takes place," he said.

Carter added that he thinks the students at IU East are very fortunate to have a caring faculty and small classes where a lot of personal attention can be given. "I think that the quality of education, in many cases, is superior to that of the main campus, because, on the large campus, students are often taught by teaching assistants or in mammoth, 500 or 600 student classes," he said.

Carter said it is especially difficult for the student who has gone to a small high school where the largest class is 22 or 25 students to then go to a lecture hall with "800 other students where no one knows your name, no one takes attendance, no one checks on your progress." He says it can be a "frightening, nonpersonal and dehumanizing experience."

Carter said he thinks IU East's smaller classes are more conducive to learning. "Interestingly enough," he said, "our students who transfer to Bloomington or Indianapolis, generally do better than students there. Part of it is of course, the solid undergraduate teaching that goes on here," he said, and added that IU East is very fortunate to have three distinguished teachers who have received all university teaching awards — Dr. Blakey, professor Thomas, and Dr. Brown. Percentage wise that is higher than any other campus in the system, he said.

"I'm impressed with the dedication of the student body to their programs," Carter said. "The difference between success and failure in college is seldom a matter of intelligence, it's a matter of motivation — and the students here display a high degree of motivation."

Vita: Ronnie D. Carter**Education:**

Idaho State Univ., Pocatello, Idaho—B.A., English, 1963; M.A. English, 1966.

Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, WI—Ph.D., English, 1972.

Honors/Awards/Fellowships:

Summer fellow, IU regional campus, 1974.

Seminar fellow, Univ. of Detroit, June 1979.

Sabbatical leave, IU, fall 1980.

Resident fellow, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1981-82.

Exchange professor, American Studies Center, Warsaw Univ., Poland, spring, 1984.

Teaching Experience:

1964-66: Teaching assistant, Idaho State Univ.

1966-67: Instructor, Treasure Valley Comm. College, Ontario, OR.

1967-68: Instructor, Clatsop Comm. College, Astoria, OR.

1968-72: Teaching assistant, Univ. of Wisconsin.

1972-present: Asst. Professor, Assoc. Professor, Professor, IU East.

Spring 1974: Exchange Professor, Warsaw Univ., Poland.

Administrative Experience:

1972-73: Chpn. English Dept., IU East.

1973-74: Chpn. Humanities Div., IU East.

1974-81: Chpn. Humanities and Social Sciences Div., IU East.

1972-87: Dir. of Composition, IU East.

1973-87: Chpn. 14 Search and Screen Committees, IU East.

1985-87: Exec. Secretary, Faculty Senate.

1987-present: Chpn. Humanities and Fine Arts Div.

Publications:

Syntax and Style in Milton's English Prose, unpublished dissertation, 1972.

The Writing Process Workbook and Journal, co-authored w/ Tom Clark, Kendall-Hunt, 1979.

Five Obstacles to Effective Teaching of Writing, NASSP Bulletin 61, (Oct. '77), 96-100.

A Survey of Revision Practices in Today's Advanced Composition Course, ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (Urbana, IL: NCTE, '83).

Counterfeit Kings: Visual Imagery in Shakespeare's I Henry IV., Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny/Neophilological Quarterly, 31 (Warsaw Univ., Poland: fall '84).

Work In Progress:

The Long Search, A semi-biographical novel (in first draft).

Polish Perceptions of the Wild, Wild West, (research phase).

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OTHER RECIPES

CHICKEN FRIED ROUND STEAK

1 1/2-2 lbs. round steak
2 beaten eggs
2 T. milk
1/4 c. fat

1 c. cracker crumbs
salt and pepper to taste

Pound steak well. Mix eggs and milk. Dip steak in eggs mixture then into crumbs. Brown in fat on both sides. Cover and cook slowly for 45 to 60 min.

(Mabel Murray,

FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP CO.)

LAREDO SUPPER

1 lb. ground beef
1/2 c. chopped green pepper
1 c. chopped tomatoes
1-8 oz. jar Cheez Whiz
1/2 c. chopped onion
1-16 oz. can kidney beans, drained
2 tsp. chili powder

Brown meat; drain. Add onion and green pepper; cook until tender. Stir in remaining ingredients; simmer 15 minutes. Serve with corn or nacho chips if desired. Will serve 6.

(Carolyn Hunter,

FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP CO.)

APPLE BREAD

1 c. sugar
1/2 c. shortening
2 c. pared apples (4 med.)
2 c. flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c. chopped nuts
1/4 tsp. cinnamon

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a loaf pan, 9x5x3 inches. Mix 1 cup sugar, shortening, eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt until smooth. Stir in apples and nuts. Spread in pan. Mix 1 T. sugar and the cinnamon; sprinkle over batter. Bake until wooden pick inserted in center, comes out clean. 50 to 60 minutes. Immediately remove from pan, cool bread completely before slicing. Store tightly covered.

(Kelly Hurd,

FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP CO.)