



Feb. 17

This football field has a home run fence

The Iowa State softball team opened its home season last weekend with a five-team tournament in the Bergstrom Indoor Training Facility near Jack Trice Stadium. It was the first time the building was used for regulation collegiate softball games.

Feb. 17

What do you think about ISU's employee benefits?

All faculty and professional and scientific staff will receive an employee benefits survey in their e-mail from human resource services later this week. Don't delete it. HRS wants to know which employee benefits are most valuable to you.

Feb. 17

Council, senate working on rec fee options

P&S Council president Mark Clarridge told members at their Feb. 10 meeting that council and Faculty Senate leaders are working together to find alternatives for the planned increase in recreation services user fees.

Feb. 17

Student retention numbers heading up

An annual report to the state Board of Regents shows gains in student retention and graduation rates.

Feb. 17

For the really hungry ...

Reiman Gardens launched its 2011 insects theme with a "Picnic Antics" conservatory display. The larger-than-life picnic basket houses the state's largest public display of leaf cutter ants, hard at work building their own garden.



Reiman Gardens

Feb. 17

Inside has a new address

If you've bookmarked or linked to *Inside Iowa State*, please take a moment to change the URL to our new location at www.inside.iastate.edu.

Other *Inside* features that now live in the new locale are faculty-staff announcements at

Announcements

- Deadline extended for LAS interim dean nominations
- MU hosts bridal fair Feb. 20
- ISU accredited by Professional Landcare Network
- Advisors' Exchange is March 3
- Edible book festival is April 1
- Export control training is Feb. 24-25
- ISU ADVANCE workshop is Feb. 23

Search forums

VP for extension and outreach

- A. Scott Reed, Feb. 17
- Michael Schmitt, Feb. 22
- Michael Gray, Feb. 24
- Cathann Kress, March 1

LAS dean search discussion

- Feb. 17 (8-9 a.m., 302 Catt)
- Feb. 23 (4-5 p.m., 302 Catt)

Arts & events*The Miracle Worker*

'Miracle' opens Feb. 25 at Fisher
The Miracle Worker, the story of Helen Keller and teacher Annie Sullivan, is ISU Theatre's first spring opener.

'Green' lectures next week
Campus sustainability symposium Feb. 21-22 includes evening lectures by environmental stewards.

www.inside.iastate.edu/announce/fs.php and honors at
www.inside.iastate.edu/honors/honors.php.

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Honors & awards

- [John Downing](#)

Around campus

- [Better batteries soon may be a reality, thanks to ISU researcher](#)
- [Student wins free room and board for the year](#)

Inside tools

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Feb. 17, 2011



This football field has a home run fence

The Iowa State softball team is off to a 5-1 start following the Cyclone Indoor Invitational at the Bergstrom Facility Feb. 11-13. Teams from Creighton, Valparaiso, South Dakota State and Western Illinois joined the Cyclones for this frost-free event. (Pictured) Sophomore Tori Torrescano hits a shot toward third base in the Cyclones' 7-0 win over Creighton Friday afternoon. The Cyclones will compete in an (outdoor) tournament in San Marcos, Texas, this weekend. *Photo by Bob Elbert.*

Feb. 17, 2011



Employee benefits survey: Coming soon to an inbox near you

by Paula Van Brocklin

What do you think of Iowa State's health care benefits? Are you pleased with them? Which ones do you find most valuable? How well do you understand your retirement options?

Iowa State wants to know what faculty and professional and scientific employees think about the university's health care benefits. To accomplish that task, human resource services (HRS), with assistance from the Research Institute for Studies in Education (RISE), will send a survey to all faculty and P&S employees via e-mail within the next few days. Merit employees are not included in the survey because their benefits are part of the State of Iowa collective bargaining plan.

Why now?

HRS currently has no data on what employees think of the university's benefits; this survey should help fill that gap.

HRS's goal for the survey is two-fold: to discover how much employees know about their benefits (what retirement investment options are available, for example), and to understand which benefits are most important to employees.

"Then, we can work closely with administrators and let them know what's most important to employees so that we can allocate funds to those resources," said Mike Otis, associate director of HRS.

Types of questions

Some of the topics included in the anonymous survey include:

- Knowledge of benefit terms
- Knowledge of ISU's benefits
- Importance of ISU's retirement and health care benefits
- Benefit preferences (by ranking)
- Options to control benefit costs

Employees also will have a chance to provide written comments. The survey should take about 15 minutes and employees will have two weeks to submit it.

Survey results

Preliminary data from the survey will be available in early March. HRS will work with RISE to compile more detailed results throughout the spring, with final results by May.

"We will use the feedback to guide discussions for 2012 benefits," Otis said.

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Feb. 17, 2011



Council, senate working on rec fee options

by Erin Rosacker

In an update on the status of recreation services user fees at the Feb. 10 Professional and Scientific Council meeting, president Mark Clarridge said council and Faculty Senate leaders are working together to find other options for a planned increase in rates.

"We see this as a benefit to the university as a staff or faculty member," Clarridge said. "When we lose something like that and we're struggling to keep our benefits, it's kind of tough."

Last month, recreation services sent a letter to users outlining the **new fee structure** for use of the renovated and new rec facilities set to open in August. Administrators were invited to the **Jan. 13 council meeting** to field questions about the change.

"We want to work through the issues and find a good common ground so we can move forward," Clarridge said. "It's still open, there are still some options out there. It is a high priority, so we should see a resolution soon."

He said council and senate leaders may create an ad hoc committee to examine the recreation services budget.

Other business

- Council members will vote next month on bylaw amendments that would tweak the timing of council elections.
- Dan Burden, program coordinator of international and special projects in ISU Extension's value added agriculture program, was voted president-elect for the 2011-12 year. He will assume his duties in July, when Ken Kerns, associate director of environmental health and safety, takes over as president.

Feb. 17, 2011



Student retention rates up in last two years

by Anne Krapfl

Among the annual reports submitted to the state Board of Regents at its Feb. 3 meeting was an update on student retention and graduation rates. Among the highlights in Iowa State's piece of the report:

- The one-year retention rate for the freshman class of 2009 was 86.0 percent, an all-time high.
- Variables that impact one-year retention rates include high school rank, ACT score and first-semester GPA. Racial/ethnic minorities return for a second year at a lower rate than non-minority students; for the fall class of 2009, the overall difference was 7.1 percentage points.

Below is a chart summarizing the success rates.

Retention and graduation rates: ISU freshman classes

Fall class of	Returned 2nd year			Returned 3rd year	Graduated within 4 yrs.	Graduated within 6 yrs.	Average yrs. to degree
	ISU (all)	ISU (LC)	National*				
2002	84.2%	89.9%	72.6%	75.7%	33.6%	67.7%	4.58
2003	84.7%	88.0%	73.6%	77.8%	35.3%	69.3%	4.55
2004	85.8%	90.0%	72.7%	78.0%	36.7%	70.2%	4.54
2005	83.4%	87.2%	74.0%	76.0%	33.3%	-	-
2006	84.9%	88.1%	73.4%	77.1%	38.6%	-	-
2007	83.5%	87.4%	70.9%	75.3%	-	-	-
2008	84.0%	86.7%	72.9%	76.3%	-	-	-
2009	86.0%	88.6%	73.9%	-	-	-	-

LC: ISU freshmen who participated in a learning community

* Public 4-year universities

Feb. 17, 2011



For the really hungry . . .

"Picnic Antics" in the conservatory at Reiman Gardens features an oversized lunch: peanut butter sandwich and (topiary) grapes and an apple. The picnic basket is home to the largest display of leaf cutter ants in Iowa; watch them hard at work. The exhibit is part of the gardens' insect theme for 2011. *Photo by Bob Elbert.*

Feb. 17, 2011



ISU Theatre brings emotional 'Miracle' to stage

by Erin Rosacker

ISU Theatre's spring production schedule will open with a two-weekend run of *The Miracle Worker* at Fisher Theater, beginning Friday, Feb. 25.

The true story portrays the relationship between Helen Keller and her teacher, Annie Sullivan. Keller, who lost both her hearing and sight to illness as an infant, turned into a belligerent, undisciplined child in 1880s Alabama. At wits' end, her parents hired Sullivan as a teacher for their uncommunicative daughter. What follows is an emotional journey through anger, discovery and trust.

"Anybody who has been a parent, a teacher or tried to reach someone emotionally or intellectually unreachable knows something of the feeling of triumph when you finally are able to break through," said Jane Cox, professor and ISU Theatre program director. "When it finally happens, it's very moving."



The Miracle Worker's emotional story of a teacher's breakthrough is based on the true experiences of Annie Sullivan (Vicky Stafford) and Helen Keller (Andie Newell). Photo by Nancy Thompson.

Senior Vicky Stafford portrays Annie Sullivan. Andie Newell, an eighth-grader at Ames Middle School (and daughter of ISU professor Jay Newell and ISU ombuds officer Elaine Newell), is cast as Helen Keller. Both actors learned sign language for their roles, and had to master the demands of scenes with intense physical conflicts during Keller's raging tantrums.

"Vicky and Andie have had a huge amount to learn," Cox said. "It's very physical in parts. They really go into it with full commitment, which you have to do."

Tickets for *The Miracle Worker* are \$15 (\$13 seniors, \$8 students), and available at the Iowa State Center ticket office or through [Ticketmaster](#). Show times are 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays (Feb. 25-26, March 4-5), and 2 p.m. on Sundays (Feb. 27, March 6).

Feb. 17, 2011



Evening lectures will frame sustainability symposium

by Anne Krapfl

An oil company employee turned environmental advocate and the co-founder of a craft brewery known for its sustainable practices nearly as much as its beer, will present public lectures Monday-Tuesday, Feb. 21-22. In between, more than 300 staff, students and faculty will participate in Iowa State's third annual [symposium on sustainability](#). All events are free and in the Memorial Union.

Jerome Ringo

By 1989, after a 20-year career in the petrochemical industry in Louisiana, Jerome Ringo had grown weary of standing by while nearby, poor coastal communities served as the dumping ground for his employer's waste products. He began to organize people in those communities to fight the environmental injustice and spawned a second career. He became a vocal advocate for clean energy and more minority participation in the environmental movement.

In 1996, Ringo was elected to serve on the National Wildlife Federation's board of directors and in 2005, became chair and the first African-American to head a major conservation organization. He currently serves as senior executive for global strategies for Green Port, a private company that focuses on establishing sustainable "green" ports around the world. Ringo took part in the United States' 1998 global warming treaty negotiations in Kyoto, Japan, and appeared in the 2006 Academy Award-winning documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*.

His Monday evening talk, "Diversity in the Environmental Movement: Our Collaborative Opportunities," begins at 8 p.m. in the Great Hall.

Ringo also will give the symposium's keynote talk, "The New Color of Green: A Collective Voice Towards Change," at 8 a.m. Tuesday, also in the Great Hall.

Kim Jordan

Kim Jordan is CEO and co-founder (with her ex-husband, Jeff Lebesch) of New Belgium Brewing, Fort Collins, Colo., the makers of more than 30 brands of beer, including Fat Tire. Now the third-largest craft brewer in the country, New Belgium is recognized for its environmental stewardship, which includes diverting 99 percent of brewery waste from the landfill, largely relying on wind power and generating some electricity from methane harvested from its wastewater treatment plant. Spent grain from the brewing process is sold to a local farmer as feed for his cattle. The company's progressive business practices include employee ownership and what's termed "high involvement culture" in the business world, and open book management.

Jordan was a social worker and Lebesch an electrical engineer before they took their basement brewery to a commercial level in 1991. He retired from the company in 2001.

Jordan's presentation on business innovation and the environment begins at 8 p.m. Tuesday in the Sun Room.

In addition to the Ringo and Jordan lectures, this year's symposium includes separate visioning discussions for staff, faculty and students; a recap presentation of successful green efforts at Iowa State in the last year; a panel discussion by faculty and staff; poster session and an awards luncheon.

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