12-9-2002


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Discovery Channel will spotlight professor's Battle of Actium work

On Dec. 12, Terra Nova Television film crew producers will visit the Tampa campus to document the research of USF History Professor and Chairman William Murray.

The episode on the Battle of Actium will air as part of the series "Moments in Time" set to premiere on Discovery Channel next year. Murray is the program's principal archeologist.

Actium marks the site where Mark Antony and Cleopatra lost to Octavian in their bid for control of the Roman-occupied world. The watershed battle saw the birth of the Roman Empire and the emergence of Augustus Caesar as its first emperor.

Murray's research spans the past 20 years and was included in his book Octavian's Campaign Memorial for the Actian War and numerous articles. His discoveries have forced a complete rethinking of ancient navies and how they were used when the Roman Empire was born.

"It's hard to appreciate how big ancient sea battles were, so we're going to lay out the ships to scale on a giant map of the battle zone," Murray said. "My class will use a 60-by-80-foot map, produced with the help of the USF Geography department and one of Murray's students, Mike Garcia, who is president of Outdoor America Images, Inc."

The film crew will work for several hours near the Sun Dome, planning aerial views of the map and filming from a jib, or a mechanical crane.

"The trick is to get the ships and the map at precisely the right scale, and this forms the subject of Mike Garcia's seminar paper," said Murray. "To my knowledge, no one has ever attempted to do this before."

Murray traveled with the crew to Greece, where he visited the battle site and showed how the ancient remains help piece together what happened more than 2,000 years ago. Murray has kept a detailed journal about the experience, along with digital photos.

It's not the first time Murray's work has been the focus of a television show. Exactly three years ago, National Geographic Explorer aired a segment about dives to retrieve the remains of a 5th century B.C. Greek merchant shipwreck, during the time the Parthenon was built.

Murray worked with nautical archaeology pioneer George Bass on that effort. Bass is the founder of the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, which is famous for its meticulous work on ancient shipwrecks off the Turkish coast.

During summer 1999, scuba divers braved 140-foot depths to recover a bounty of toiletaries, pottery and other artifacts. Now kept in a museum in Turkey, the items will tell researchers how sailors and others lived more than 2,500 years ago.

Work at the site, called Tektas Burnu, is complete, Murray said. "Our ultimate goal is to determine the origin of every item on board, so that we can learn more about local and regional trade when this ship was operating."

The ship's sailors lived at a time when Athens was fully developing its democracy, when Sophocles wrote great tragedies and Socrates was in his middle age.

"There was a lot going on in the Greek world at that time, but we don't know much about how trade was carried out," Murray said, "or about the ships that served as the carriers."

by Marsha Strickhouser and Lisa Cunningham
University extends United Way campaign

The 2002 USF Florida State Employees Charitable Campaign/United Way has been extended into this month, said College of Nursing Dean Patricia Burns. The USF student, faculty and staff contributions to the goal of $350,000 were at about 60 percent as of late November, which reflects what most other Tampa Bay area companies have given until now, said Burns, who is chairing USF's effort.

"We know things economically haven't been the same since 9/11, but USF has a history of being the most giving of Florida's 11 state universities," Burns said. "I would like to encourage anyone who has considered making a pledge to do so as quickly as possible. I would also like to remind everyone contributing via payroll deductions that they will not see those deductions begin until January 2003."

Employees who wish to use payroll deduction only need to donate a minimum of $1 per week. Nearly 155 programs in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties depend upon United Way funding. The United Way of Tampa Bay is entirely funded by private donations, and 60 percent of its budget comes from employee campaigns in the workplace. USF receives at least $250,000 in a year that funds come back from United Way to pay for research and other projects.

Faculty compensation process streamlined

The Provost's office and Human Resources office recently streamlined and simplified the process that faculty use to apply for extra state compensation — contracted activities over and above the position's full-time equivalent. They developed a form to accompany the policy statement and implementation procedures. For details, visit the Web site www.acad.usf.edu/faculty/wrgt.html.

The statement and procedures help reinforce or establish several vital aspects of extra state compensation at USF. These include:

• The policy statement focuses on the time and effort devoted to activities for which extra state compensation is earned. This statement requires that the time and effort will not represent a conflict of commitment with the faculty member's other assigned duties.

• To be eligible for extra state compensation, the faculty member must have a "normal" teaching assignment. If teaching is usually a part of his/her assignment, the primary employer must consider teaching, research and service assignments, as well as the extent of any outside activities, in deciding whether there is a conflict of commitment.

• The 20 percent cap on extra state compensation was eliminated.

• Extra state compensation for employment on the home campus, where the employee usually works, is permitted.

• Compensation for summer term is allowed.

• Each department, college or unit's chairs, directors or deans are responsible for overseeing and managing appointments and extra state compensation.

• The policy statement, extra state compensation procedures and request for approval of workload adjustments will not replace Workload Adjustment, which was cancelled as a compensation process. The Division of Educational Outreach will no longer be involved in processing extra state compensation. All approved forms should be sent to Human Resources.

Direct deposit: Reliable time saver

The university encourages all employees to participate in the direct deposit program, a majority of workers nationwide use direct deposit because:

• It saves time. Research shows that some employees spend about three workdays a year paying their bank to deposit paychecks.

• The chance of having a problem with a check is 20 times greater than with direct deposit.

• U.S. Treasury Department replaces more than $800,000 lost or stolen checks each year. Direct deposit has never lost a payment.

• Almost 1 percent of America's annual gross domestic product, or nearly $33 billion, is spent on handling checks.

• In 2000, the federal government experienced more health insurance claims than $43 million in forged, counterfeited or altered checks. According to the American Bankers Association, attempted check fraud at commercial banks has doubled in recent years, exceeding $2.2 billion.

• Using direct deposit eliminates the need to rush to the bank during banking hours.

• Employees know that their pay will be available in their bank account — on time and every time.

• Checks that are direct-deposited are posted to the account faster than a paper check, reducing the possibility of error.

• Direct-deposit checks are delivered to the account holder's home address, saving the employee time off.

• It's free.

Keep leave records up-to-date

Accountable officers should notify the Human Resources office of attendance and leave administrator when there is a change of the employee assigned the responsibility for the maintenance and verification of departmental attendance and leave records.

Keeping this information current and accurate ensure that departmental coordinators have an opportunity to attend a training session created for them, which will assist them in understanding their roles.

The updated information also helps to ensure that all written communication about changes in processes, practices or rules are sent to the department's attendance and leave coordinators.

All changes should be reported to Jo Ann Myers, SVC 2727, Employees in the Health Sciences Center or on the Sarasota/Manaseas or St. Petersburg campuses should send a copy to:

• USF Health Sciences Center, MDC Box 28, ext. 4-3983;

• Susan Williamson, USF Sarasota-Manatee, SARPMD, ext. 2-4244;

• Barbara Reisch, USF St. Petersburg, BAY 125, ext. 3-1139.

University to close Dec. 25 and Jan. 1

USF will be closed in observance of Christmas Day and New Year's Day on Wednesday, Dec. 25, and Monday, Jan. 1. All full-time employees, except those on eight-hour pay plans, will receive eight hours paid leave for the holiday. Part-time employees will earn a pro-rated number of hours for the holiday based on their full-time equivalent time.

To determine the prorated number of holiday hours, multiply the full-time equivalent number by eight hours. Faculty, A&P and USP employees required to work on a holiday are eligible for equivalent time off. Faculty and A&P will receive another day off and USP employees will earn compensatory leave.

HOPE employees are not eligible for paid holidays, and are paid only for the actual hours worked. To bring hourly HOPE employees to their maximum hours for the week, supervisors may allow employees to work extra hours during the workweek, if needed.

Graduate assistants and associates in class codes 9181 through 9186 and professional, salaried employees may receive their regular bi-weekly pay, if they are so certified. For details, call Jo Ann Myers at ext. 4-3971.

Eligibility for retirement plan changes

Starting Jan. 1, the definition of instructional employees eligible for the Deferred Retirement Option Program, called DROP, will change. The state Legislature in a May special session passed a law to change eligibility rules.

The revised definition will affect instructional employees eligible for those participation at any time after reaching normal retirement age of 62. This definition excludes university and community college faculty members from the definition of instructional employees.

Instructional faculty must now elect to enroll in DROP within 12 months following the date they reach their normal retirement age. For details, call Betty Green at ext. 4-5718, or Sonya Techtin at ext. 4-5718.

Rate increase means more health services

Starting Jan. 1, the university employee's share of health insurance premiums will increase from $18.57 to $20.38 bi-weekly for individual coverage, and from $69.81 to $73.49 bi-weekly for family coverage.

The employer's share will also rise, from $111.12 to $124.33 bi-weekly for individual coverage, and from $252.17 to $267.40 bi-weekly for family coverage.

Faculty and staff on the state's PPO plan with Blue Cross Blue Shield will earn coverage for birth control pills and other contraceptives, occupational therapy and ambulance services. Prescription drug prices will remain the same.

Time to enroll in prepaid college plan

The open enrollment period for the Florida Prepaid College Plan and the Florida College Investment Plan will end Jan. 31. Those choosing the Florida Prepaid College Plan can lock in the cost of tuition, state fees and residence hall fees at public Florida universities and community colleges. Money in the Florida College Investment Plan can pay for a student's other qualifying college expenses, in Florida or out of state.

Both plans are called $29, a two-year out-of-state prepaid college plan authorized by Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code. Employees may select the plans separately or together. For details, call (800) 552-4723, or visit the Web site www.florida529plans.com.
CALENDAR

December 11, 2002 - January 5, 2003

Your guide to all that's happening on campus—sporting events, lectures, seminars, workshops, art events and more—for faculty, staff and their families. Send items for the calendar to Lisa Cunningham at lunning@helios.acomp.usf.edu. For the most current events listing, visit the Web site http://webcal.usf.edu/

Until Dec. 21:

Mighty fine art:

The groups will most current events listing, visit the Web site for the calendar to Lisa Cunningham at lcunning@helios.acomp.usf.edu. For the most current events listing, visit the Web site http://webcal.usf.edu/

Tuesday 12/24

Follow that star:

“VeggieTales: The Star of Christmas” will air at 7 p.m. on WUSF-TV Ch. 16.

Dickens’ classic:

Comedian Jonathan Winters will perform “A Christmas Carol” at 8 p.m. on WUSF-FM 89.7.

Wednesday 12/25

Merry Christmas

Spread the joy:

The Cambridge Singers, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay and others will perform instrumental and other holiday carols from 8:35 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 6:30 to 11 p.m. on WUSF 89.7.

Thursday 12/26

Happy Kwanzaa

Saturday 12/28

Bulls vs. Blackbirds:

The men’s basketball team will play the Long Island University at the Holiday Classic at 7 p.m. in the Sun Dome. Belmont will also take on East Tennessee State at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday. For ticket information, call ext. 4-2125.