Elkin joins academy — institute of arts, letters

WU’s Stanley Elkin, professor of English and a member of the faculty of the Writers’ Program here, was one of 14 new members named Wednesday, Feb. 24, as having been elected to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the national organization that honors achievement in art, literature and music.

In selecting him for this prestigious honor, the academy-institute stated: “Stanley Elkin is widely acknowledged to be among the country’s best writers of fiction. His latest book, The Living End, has been honored previously by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1980, he received the $3000 Richard and Hindy Rosenthal Foundation Award for his book, The Living End, a novel published by E. P. Dutton in 1979. Four years earlier, he was honored for his book Searches and Settlers, a collection of three short novels published by Random House in 1973. The latter work and his novel, The Dick Gibson Show, were nominated for the National Book Award in Fiction. Elkin’s The Dick Gibson Show was adapted into a play which was produced in WU’s Edison Theatre in January 1980. It came to St. Louis after a successful run in Chicago. The work was adapted for the stage by Frank Galati, associate professor in the department of interpretation, School of Speech, Northwestern University.

The guest editor of The Best American Short Stories for 1980, Elkin served as a National Book Award judge in 1975. He has written articles for popular magazines, including Esquire, Oui, Harper’s and TWA’s Ambassador, and received numerous fellowships and awards.

Elkin and the other 13 distinguished individuals named members of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters will be inducted into membership by William Meredith, the well-known poet and secretary of the group, at special ceremonies at the academy-institute’s headquarters in New York on May 19. The prominent historian, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., president of the academy-institute, will preside at these ceremonies.

The academy-institute combines the National Institute of Arts and Letters, founded in 1904, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, founded in 1968. The institute has 250 members, the academy whose candidates are chosen by the institute from among themselves, is limited to 50 members. WU’s Howard Nemens, another well-known man of letters and Edward Malinckrodt Distinguished University Professor of English, is a member of both groups.

Simon to speak during foreign language week

U.S. Rep. Paul Simon, D-Ill., who has been championing legislation to improve foreign language instruction at the college level, will give the keynote address at 11 a.m. Wednesday, March 17, at Graham Chapel during Foreign Language Week.

Simon’s topic, “The Tongue-Tied American,” is taken from a book he wrote by the same name that dealt with U.S. inefficiency in foreign language instruction.

Simon, chairman of the House subcommittee on secondary education, has introduced a bill into the House of Representatives to authorize the Secretary of Education to establish a state-run model foreign language grant program.

The bill, which authorizes $87 million over the next three years, proposes direct grants to colleges and universities that have more than 5 percent of their students enrolled in foreign language courses. The bill is expected to be introduced to the House floor soon. A companion measure has been introduced into the Senate.

Other events during Foreign Language Week are:

At 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 17, an informational meeting on pre-arranged and summer programs will be held in Ridgley Hall. The German meeting will be in room 222, French room 215, and Spanish, room 110A.

Thursday, March 18: German Day for high school students will be held at various locations on the campus. Events include a slide show of scenes from Hamburg, a sing-along of German folk songs, and a student performance of Bertold Brecht’s Die Marseillaise.

Friday, March 19: Spanish and French Day for area high school students. Spanish Day will feature a WU student performance of En la diestra de Dios Padre, by contemporary Colombian playwright Enrique Buenaventura, to be presented at 11 a.m. French Day will be highlighted by a three-hour workshop for high school French teachers in the St. Louis area.

The three departments are expecting from 400 to 600 persons to attend the high school events.

On Friday, March 19, at 2 p.m. in the Ann Whitney Olin Women’s Building Lounge, there will be a panel discussion on careers and foreign languages. The moderator will be Gerhild Scholz Williams, WU associate professor of German. Members of the panel will be John Biggs, WU vice chancellor for administration and finance; Johanna Mendelson, director of public policy, American Association of University Women; Maryann De Julie, WU assistant professor of French; Peter Warshaw, WU director of planning and placement, and Toby Bernstein, WU senior in Spanish and international development.

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Plant cells zapped by microwaves may hold clues in radiation query

Has the electronic age turned America into one giant microwave oven? Are we being bombarded by low-level radiation that slowly saps our strength, memory, hearing and eyesight? Such were the questions raised several years ago in the wake of a popular book, The Zapping of America, which detailed the dangers of a new form of environmental pollution. While the book was generally regarded as sensationalistic, the truth remains elusive. No one knows exactly what effect microwave radiation has on human health.

One person researching that question is William Pickard, WU professor of electrical engineering. Under two grants totaling approximately $300,000 from the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research, he is examining biological microwave effects at the cellular level. He is especially interested in the possibility of nonthermal effects—possibilities barely considered when microwave radiation standards were set in 1966.

First widely used in radar during World War II, microwaves came to the attention of the public ten years ago when a repeat discredited the notion that the Soviets had been bombarding the American embassy in Moscow with a microwave beam for more than 20 years. The reason why is still a mystery.

"We know of course that microwave energy can bake a potato," Pickard said. "We also know that radar operators will absorb a certain amount of microwave energy on the job. But since they're not enclosed in an oven, a lot of factors are unclear. How much radiant energy are their bodies absorbing? What kind of physiological stress does it cause? Finally, is it harmful?"

Radar operators are not the only ones to encounter microwave "pollution." Sources are all around us—from telephone relay systems and television stations to garage door openers and burglar alarms. Part of the electro-magnetic spectrum, microwaves lie above radio waves and below infrared waves in frequency and wave length.

The problem in studying them is that experiments tend to be long, tedious and expensive, with results that are hard to duplicate. A group at Tufts University, for example, found that microwave radiation produced deformities in meat worms; few other could repeat their data. After several attempts, Pickard and colleague Fred Rosenbaum, WU professor of electrical engineering, discovered that the deformities occurred in significant numbers only at low humidity.

Even harder to duplicate is a vast body of literature from Russia and Eastern Europe that claims to document various ill effects from proximity to microwaves, radio waves and power lines. "Unfortunately," said Pickard, "the Russians tend to leave out just enough information to make their experiments difficult to repeat. A lot of little things are vague. As an analogy, does a cook sift the flour before or after measuring? The difference can affect how the cake turns out."

Scientists hope more and better data will clarify the properties of microwaves and the risks of absorption. Toward this aim, a special experimental technique was designed and tested by Pickard, working first with Rosenbaum and later with Yousri Barsom, a WU electrical engineering graduate student. By sliding a cylindrical cell into an electromagnetic field, they were able to zap one end with microwaves while observing the immediate effect at the other end of the cell. The hypothesis, said Pickard, was that many biological effects would occur at the cell membrane and would be easily detected by the amount of change in the negative charge inside the cell.

Initial results did indeed show such effects, especially in cells with already strongly negative intercell. This strongly negative state, called electrogenic, is critical for moving important molecules in and out of the cell. For instance, Pickard explained, it is implicated in the transport of sugar from point to point in a plant.

While the behavior of electrogenic cells is a new, wide open field, his focus will continue to be on searching for additional microwave effects. Many possibilities remain, but so far, he sees nothing harmful about present safety standards.

Because microwave effects are so difficult to study, and because Pickard's equipment and techniques are unique, he has little competition in this area. "It's absolutely virgin territory," he said. "We're bound to discover something."

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WU witness praises settlement of AT&T "Gordion knot"

One of the nation's most prominent personal financial advisors will be the featured speaker for WU's Seventh Annual Personal Financial Planning Seminar, March 13, at Edison Theatre.

Economist Joel M. Stern, president of Chicago Financial Policy, the fiscal counseling arm of Chase Manhattan Bank, New York City, is also the focal point on public radio's "Wall Street Week," and a columnist in The Wall Street Journal. The theme of the seminar is "Creating and Protecting an Estate in the Age of Reaganomics."

Stern will review the current economic environment and suggest investment opportunities. A number of prominent local financial planning executives will also participate in the one-day seminar, including Eugene Leonard, senior vice president, Mercantile Bancorporation; Frank B. Spinner, president and chief executive officer, Tower Grove Bank and Trust Co.; and Calvin H. East, vice president, Centrere Bank (formerly First National Bank).

The fee is $50 per person, $50 per couple, which covers all seminar expenses and a buffet lunch. Registration will be handled by the Planned Giving Office, WU Campus Box 1193, Cell Jeanette James at 889-3584 for reservations.

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"Wall Street Week" panelist to lead financial planning seminar

The recent settlement of the federal government's antitrust suit against American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) was, in the words of Frederick R. Warren-Boulton, WU associate professor of economics, "the sword that cut the Gordion knot."

Warren-Boulton, who testified last June as an expert witness for the Justice Department in its seven-year battle with AT&T, is very pleased with the settlement, which he says will allow increased competition and extensive deregulation in a major sector of the economy.

Under the settlement, the telecommunications giant will be required to give up its local exchange facilities within the next 18 months. The settlement allows AT&T to continue to run its nationwide intercity telephone network. The Bell System will also retain its main subsidiaries, Western Electric and the Bell Telephone Laboratories, and will provide customer premises equipment.

What does this decision mean to the telecommunications industry? "It is "a step forward,"" Warren-Boulton said. "What the decision will do to the structure of telephone rates," he said, "The separation will end the potent subsidization of local telephone service with long distance revenues, but local regulators will still be able to subsidize local service. It will set up high local access charges for intercity calls. Inevitably, however, the structure of rates will change, and some consumers will lose while others will gain."

He predicts, however, that the telecommunications system can be expected to become more efficient. "The separation from the local operating monopolies eliminates the key structural barrier to increased competition in several areas," he said. "First, at the telecommunications equipment level, Western Electric will face competition for local operating company sales and will also now be allowed to sell outside the Bell system. Second, we can now move to deregulate intercity service, because the threat of cross-subsidization between the regulated and nonregulated divisions of AT&T is eliminated. And, finally, AT&T will be able to enter and compete vigorously in new markets."

Warren-Boulton had high praise for the work of Assistant Attorney General William Baxter, who is in charge of the Justice Department's antitrust division.

Shows mark Laskey's silver anniversary

Leslie J. Laskey, who has been a member of the School of Architecture faculty for 25 years, will be honored at three exhibitions opening simultaneously on Wednesday, March 3, from 7-9 p.m. At Martin Schweg Gallery, 4658 Maryland Ave., work by private students of Laskey's will be on display through March 15. These will be bound and presented as a Festschrift to Laskey. At the Martin Schweg Gallery, work by former architectural students of Laskey's will be on display at a "Group Show." A "Silver Anniversary" show will take place in the review room of Greens Hall.

Nearby, in the same building, folios from former architectural students of Laskey's will be on display through March 15. These will be bound and presented as a Festschrift to Laskey. At the Martin Schweg Gallery, 4658 Maryland Ave., work by private students of Laskey's will be on display at a "Group Show." A "Silver Anniversary" show will take place in the review room of Greens Hall. A "Group Show." A "Silver Anniversary" show will take place in the review room of Greens Hall.
Students kept South-40 running in wake of snow storm

They could be called the unsung heroes of the Big Snow of '82. They fed over 1,500 hungry, snowbound students for nearly three days, and carved out a labyrinth of walkways around the South-40. They are the 45 WU students who pushed in to relieve the campus of a chilly white grip.

John Erik Mersek, residence life councilor for business affairs, said the students did "exceptionally well" during the crisis. "We had no emergency," he pointed out. "That while some St. Louis colleges and universities were closed for five days and more by the Jan. 30-31 blizzard, WU opened for business within three days."

Because only a handful of Professional Food Management employees were able to get to work on Sunday and Monday, normal operation of the Wohl Center's cafeteria was virtually suspended. The 2,000 residents of the South-40 would have gone hungry had it not been for the 20 student workers from the Bear's Den, Wohl Center's fast-food facility, who abandoned their small kitchen and moved upstairs into the main cafeteria to feed ravenous students.

Alan Rosenfeld, manager of the Bear's Den and a senior, said his student employees worked in shifts of 8 or 9 people to handle, with relative ease, he noted, the "constant line" of customers that stretched into the lower halls of Wohl Center. Easily prepared Bear's Den fare, which included hamburgers and hot dogs, was served first, he said, but that soon ran out, and the ersatz cafeteria workers rummaged through cafeteria cupboards for more supplies.

Although many students worked longer than the usual hours they have, Rosenfeld said they did so eagerly. Most of them, like senior Jerry A. Johnson, said they put in the extra hours out of concern for their fellow students, but the opportunity to earn a little extra money provided some incentive as well. Colin Lineberry, a sophomore, declared "the work was hard, but somebody had to do it." Ironically, the Sunday of the big storm was his first day on the job.

The equally strenuous job of clearing walkways on the South-40 fell to 23 students, who logged 150 hours of work over four days. They began on Monday with shovels and chemicals, clearing a swath as far as the Forsyth underpass and melting the heavy ice beneath the snow with calcium chloride.

"Freshman Jeff A. Kaster put in 22 hours on the snow-clearing brigade, making him the student who worked the longest. He was undaunted by the rigors of snow clearing because he lifts weights, he said, but the bitter cold was difficult to work in.

To get in shape for spring bicycling competition was senior David A. Ely's reason for joining the shoveling students. "I was also tired of stumbling around in so much snow," he grumbled.

A sense of duty and esteem of the corps motivated two New Yorkers, senior Mark A. Gross and senior Greg A. Edelstein, to begin clearing snow early. "With the frigid temperatures that stretched into the lower halls of Wohl Center," Ely said, "I had to work in the snow and with working with other students."

Simon — continued from p. 1

A public performance of Die Massnahme will be held at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 19 and 20, in the Mudd Courtroom. The play, directed by Philip Boehm and Martina Mueller, both graduate students in German, is open to the public without charge. The Spanish students will stage their public performance of En la diestra de Dios Padre at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 20, at Graham Chapel. The play, directed by Phil Keefer, a junior majoring in economics, will be free for WU students and $1 for WU faculty, staff and other students.

The coordinators of Foreign Language Week are Gerth Schold Williams, Raymond L. Williams, WU assistant professor of Spanish, and James F. Jones, Jr., WU associate professor of French.

By George! What a birthday party!

Even that most devout of presidential expressions might have grinned had its owner, George Washington, been present. The merrymaking that marked the 250th anniversary of his birthday and the 125th anniversary of the founding of WU, his St. Louis namesake university, in the Quadrangle Feb. 22. George may have given him slightly chagrined by the historical license taken with his image in the festivities here.

For example, his fabled toasting of the silver dollar across the Potomac River was represented by a hunt in the Quadrangle for coins bearing the likeness of suffragist Susan B. Anthony. The old cherry tree story — the one he supposedly couldn't lie about — was recreated in contests in cherry pie eating and lie telling. And George himself, garbed in revolutionary finery, astride a white horse, was portrayed by a woman who proclaimed "I cannot tell a lie . . . I am not a man!"

Also on hand was William Greenleaf Eliot, one of the founders of WU, who read excerpts of the University constitution and a speech he delivered shortly after the granting of the University's charter 129 years ago on Feb. 22. Had it not been for Eliot's modesty WU might celebrate its founding on August 5, Eliot's birthday — the institution was called Eliot Seminary for nearly a year before it was renamed Washington Institute.

Seeminers offered on aliens' rights

The Legal Resource Center for International Students, a WU law student organization, will sponsor a series of workshops throughout March on the legal rights of aliens.

The first workshop will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, March 15, with Susan Roach, a St. Louis attorney, speaking on the rights of foreigners in criminal proceedings. The second workshop at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 17, will feature George Newman, also an attorney, who will focus on status adjustment.

Workshops on income taxes and consumerism will be held later in March. All of the workshops will be held at the Stix International House, 6440 Forsyth Blvd. They are free and open to the WU international community.

For more information, contact Diane Haury at 889-5991.
February 25-March 6

Lectures

Thursday, March 4

1 p.m. George Warren Brown School of Social Work Lecture, "Divorce and Family Mediation," Robert D. Blumenmeyer, lawyer; Nancy McMillan, social worker; Adolfo Rizzo, WU ass. prof. of business administration; assembly; John Wharton, chairman, WU Student Board for the Arts; Participants will be on hand to discuss the final readings of the course. The University Club, 6220 Indian Ave. 4:30 p.m. Opening reception for the "The banquet of the Best of the Best IV," a show of winning package advertising designs. The banquet will feature the work of the Package Designers Council of New York City. The university club, 6220 Indian Ave. 7:30 p.m. W.E.B. DuBois Lecture Series, "African-American Art and Culture," Robert D. Blumenmeyer, lawyer; Nancy McMillan, social worker; Adolfo Rizzo, WU ass. prof. of business administration; assembly; John Wharton, chairman, WU Student Board for the Arts; Participants will be on hand to discuss the final readings of the course. The University Club, 6220 Indian Ave. 8 p.m. Evening Film Program, "The Arts Coordination Council," 215 Rebstock. 8:15 p.m. Asian Art Society Slide Lecture, "Earthenware Sculpture in Japan - The Case for the Meiji Period," by John T. Griffin. The university club, 6220 Indian Ave. 9 p.m. Department of Technology and Human Affairs Lecture, "The Arts Coordination Council," 215 Rebstock.

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