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Milner Library Newsletters

Milner Library

11-1-2023

Milner Monitor, November 2023

Milner Library

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The *Milner Monitor*



November Events

Downtown Bloomington Art Walk

November 3rd-4th

Downtown Bloomington



Fiddler on the Roof

Multiple dates, November 2nd-19th

Community Players Theater



Mystery at the Mansion

November 4th, 7:00-10:00

David Davis Mansion



The Story of Plastic

November 14th, 7:00-9:00

Normal Theater



The Baby Fold's Festival of Trees

November 16th-19th

Interstate Center



Indoor Thanksgiving Farmer's Market

November 18th, 9:00-12:00

Grossinger Motors Arena

November

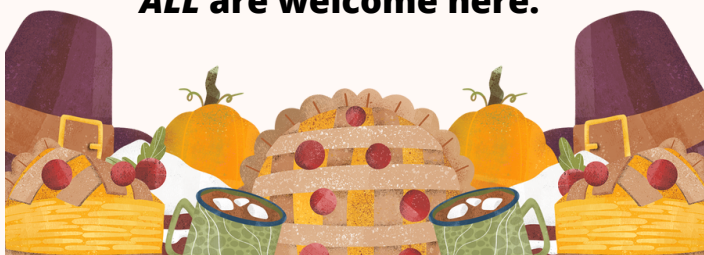
Autumn is the hardest season. The leaves are all falling, and they're falling like they're falling in love with the ground.

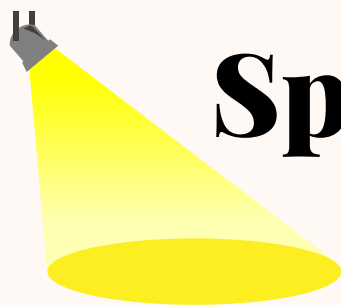
- Andrea Gibson



**Anyone wishing to contribute,
please send an email to
bkoch@ilstu.edu**

ALL are welcome here.





Spotlight on...

Donica Swann

How long have you worked at Milner?

Just a few months, since July 2023

What is your current position?

Digital Archivist, which is a new position!

Do you have any kids? Pets?

My spouse (Oliver) and I have two kids—Cordelia is 12 years old, and Felix is 1 year old. We also have three cats—Eli and Maddox (14) are litter mates and Marzipan (5) is our independent lady.

What is your favorite genre of movie? And Music? And Book?

I enjoy a wide variety of movie genres depending on my mood. My go-to genres for any time are Christmas movies, nature documentaries, and unabashed b-movie horror films. For music, my tastes are also eclectic. I tend to play a lot of 90s hip-hop and R&B, as well as Latin pop and love ballads from any decade. I read several books at once and like to have at least one biography or autobiography in the mix. I'm a fan of non-fiction books about leadership, business, science, technology, animals, and plants. I also enjoy reading YA fiction and sci-fi/fantasy.

What restaurant would you recommend (and why)?

I commute from Champaign, so I would recommend Seven Saints Bar & Grill. They have the best pub food, and their cheese curds can't be beaten.

People would be surprised if they knew-----about me?

My ancestors are from 17 countries! My most recent ancestors come from a mix of places like Scotland, Germany, Spain, Romania, Barbados, Norway, Turkey, and Tunisia.

Do you play any sports? Involved in any exercise?

My athletic skills are severely lacking. I walk incline on the treadmill and practice kickboxing for exercise. My daughter and I also occasionally play pickleball, following a very loose interpretation of the rules.

Weirdest/Strangest job you ever held?

At age 14-15, I worked as a farmhand and mostly picked cherries, raspberries, and blackberries during the summer months. It was hot and the fruit was sticky. Wasp stings were a hazard of the job that I thankfully never experienced.

Top three life highlights?

Becoming a mom, meeting my soulmate, and being the first college graduate in my family.



Did you know



Are you swimming in recycling? In Bloomington you can order a second recycling bin for free with no monthly fee. In Normal there's a \$60 fee for a new or second recycling bin.

-submitted by Becky Koch



Send in anything you think we'd like to know!
This is a recurring column that is open to all

.....
Milner's Menagerie
.....



Michelle Neuffer's cat, Gizmo!



Let's Celebrate



Birthdays

April Anderson-Zorn 6
Josh Layden 12
Ryan Peters 14
Sarah French 17

**Milner
Anniversaries**

Michelle Kauffman 23
Anna Twiddy 1

Milner Memos

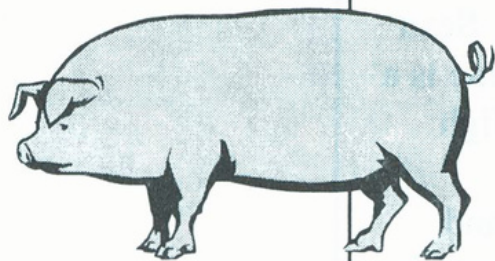
Throwback to 1995...

Milner Library Pig Roast

Levity and good food were enjoyed by Milner faculty and staff at the annual Pig Roast held at Ewing manor on Friday, Sept. 8. **Fred, Alan, Carroll, and Cheryl** provided the liquid refreshments, with a sumptuous repast of other dishes brought by library faculty and staff.

Jim Cunningham added to the festivity with his laptop version of "Old MacDonald's Farm" complete with various pig noises. The electronic pig didn't stop anyone in the food line from "pigging out."

The highlight of the evening was the traditional pig door prizes. This year's winners were **Marie Bosche's** daughter, Molly Sharer (she was thrilled to win the stuffed animal Piggy Sue); **Ida Meihnsner** (Ida always wins something); **Aaron Elzy** (a tin pig night light); and **Pat Dolan** (the wooden pig tray).



What's So Special About Special Collections?

by Rebecca Fitzsimmons

Echoing Voices from the Sverre O. Braathen Correspondence Collection: Luisita Leers

Collector and circus fan Sverre O. Braathen and his wife Faye developed relationships with many of the top circus performers of the day. Braathen's ongoing and active correspondence with them reveals little-known details of the circus and of personal lives that paint a rich picture of the industry and surrounding social and cultural events that shaped the mid-20th century. A meticulous collector, Braathen saved carbon copies of his own letters alongside the replies he received, leaving behind 22 linear feet—and a complete record of these conversations. Braathen exchanged letters with circus star Luisita Leers (1909-1997) from 1931 until 1959. In addition to the letters, Special Collections holds photographs, posters, pamphlets, and programs that document Leers' life and career.



Martha-Luise Kroekel was born in Wiesbaden, Germany on October 14, 1909. She studied with her stepfather, Guido Kroekel-Leers, eventually becoming a single trapeze performer and strongwoman known as Luisita Leers. Leers made her professional debut in 1920 with the Leers-Arvello Troupe, an act that combined Roman Rings and acrobatic pyramids in an aerial display of strength. She was eleven at the time and went on to develop a solo trapeze act that she began performing in 1926. Leers' act included a neck-hang on the trapeze bar held while doing a vertical split, a one-arm planche (or plange), and a series of as many as 139 back rotations around the trapeze bar.

Her tremendous strength garnered attention, and Leers' worked with a number of famous circuses and performance venues, including procuring a contract with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus from 1928-1933.



Continued on page 7...

When Leers attained center ring status for The Greatest Show on Earth, she spent winters in her homeland; she continued working in U.S. venues until 1936, traveling between Europe and America. In 1938, against the looming backdrop of WWII, she was forbidden from leaving Germany. She served her country as a performer until war conditions made that impossible. Leers' letters to Braathen resumed after the war, detail the grueling life she endured during and after. Among other issues, her apartment in Berlin was bombed twice, she was in the hospital for a foot surgery, and postwar, when severe food shortages were the norm, she was left begging her American circus friends for food, clothing, and shoes.



July 31, 1948 The Bill

Van Cleef Reports Miss Leers, Former R-B Performer, in Need

Editor's Note: The following letter was received by The Bill-board and is self-explanatory:

"Dear Sir:

I am writing in behalf of a dear friend, Luisa Leers. Unquestionably you are well acquainted with Miss Leers's past career as a star performer with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. This truly great aerial gymnast was the successor to Lillian Leitzel with the Big Show and for nearly a decade was a featured artist. If you knew her in person, I am confident you were aware that this rather serious person is a very admirable one in character.

Miss Leers has, as a war victim, endured considerable hardship for a period of years. Due to acute malnutrition, she has been in the hospital more than once. Her state of health has been improving. The food that my wife and I have been sending to her and her parents has been a factor in helping to withstand the shortages of food that have so seriously undermined her health. But I know she needs more food than I alone can provide. Right now she could resume her career as a circus performer by having an operation on her arm. But the specialists refuse to operate until she can improve her physical state with more nourishment. She particularly needs dextrose, vegetable fats, coconuts, powdered milk and eggs, brown rice, sugar and some canned meats.

I feel confident that more than a few of the readers of the circus section of The Bill-board would welcome the opportunity to assist this great performer and wonderful person by sending her some much-needed food articles. Miss Leers had many admirers throughout the nation when she was a star with the Ringling-Barnum show. I know that none know of her present whereabouts and distress.

I would greatly appreciate your inserting a notice in The Bill-board calling attention to the fact that Luisa Leers is in need of food. All food packages to her should be addressed as follows:

Miss Luisa Leers
Helenenstrasse 1
(208) Bronschweig, Germany (British Zone)

It is advisable that all packages be marked "unsolicited gift" by the sender.

I am leaving Wednesday, July 14, on a trip to England with our Olympic group. I am serving as the trainer for the U. S. weightlifting team. It will be the first week in September by the time I arrive back in York. All mail received here in the near future will be forwarded to me. I hope if possible to arrange to visit Miss Leers before returning. Send food directly to Miss Leers at the address given in this letter but any mail to me regarding her will reach me at the address below.

Sincerely yours,
Ray Van Cleef,
Associate Editor Strength and Health,
51 North Broad Street,
York, Pa.

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CONCESSION TRAILER

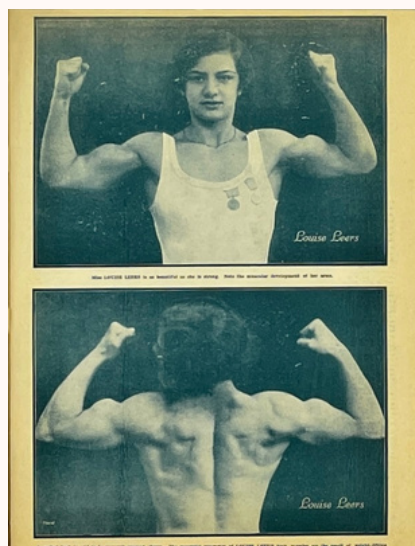
Trucks, wheels, all metal and plate glass, low centers, heavy lifting jacks and one-way tires. Orders proper, careful care, easily applied, chrome right over left. Free machine, toilet and trailer. All items. Arranged for electrical line. Truck has most practical outfit on road today. Big money maker. Other business reasons for selling. For \$2,700.00 takes it. The good spots will pay for itself. See at address below. 1934 to 31.

AL HATCH
c/o FAIRGROUNDS MT. VERNON, OHIO

In a letter written June 15, 1938, Leers notes, "I went to Berlin, because I had an offer for a sportive activity. Therefore my arm also should have been operated, so I saw our most renowned Professor Dr. Sauerbruch. It was very hard for me, when he told me, that my arm could not be operated at present, because I am too undernourished. Such are things over here in reality and one has to take them as they are. I am afraid, you people over there really can not realise, how things really are over here. Yes, there is coming some food from Sweden now too. Children may get a little more therefore, but our rations did not increase yet. You surely always hear what we are promised always, but you never hear, what we really do get.

So, for this month we were promised to get 5 eggs. We received only 2 and therefore less meat as ever before, only one ounce for the whole month. Of the promised one pound of fed, we also only received 6 ounces. Now you know."

Though Leers wanted to get back into showbiz after the war, her body was too malnourished to perform her act. This is born out in details from her letters. Shifting focus, she embarked on a new career, using her fluency in several languages to assist British and American forces with translating documents. She eventually went on to turn her attention to the visual arts, becoming a sculptor.



A number of Leers photographs and advertisements are on view in Special Collections through the end of the semester.



Recipe Corner



Submitted by Nancy Boulware

Pumpkin Cake Roll

Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup sugar, divided
- 2/3 c. pumpkin
- 3/4 c. flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. salt

Filling

- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 2T soft butter
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 3/4 tsp. vanilla

Directions

- Line jelly roll pan with waxed paper. Grease paper – set aside, – in large bowl beat egg yolks on high speed until thick and lemon colored. Gradually add 1/2 c. sugar and pumpkin – beat until sugar is almost dissolved.
- In small bowl – beat egg whites until soft peaks form – gradually add sugar until stiff peaks form. Gradually add sugar until stiff peaks form. Fold into egg mixture. Combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Gently fold into pumpkin mixture.
- Bake at 375 for 12-15 minutes until cake springs back when touched. Cool for 5 minutes. Turn cake onto kitchen towel dusted with powdered sugar. Gently peel off waxed paper. Roll up cake in the towel jelly-roll style, starting with short side. Cool completely on wire rack.
- In small bowl, beat cream cheese, butter, powdered sugar and vanilla until smooth. Unroll cake and spread filling evenly to within 1/2 in on all sides. Roll up again, cover and freeze until firm. Remove from freezer 15 minutes before cutting. Dust with powdered sugar.

