Local Art Panel Visits Honors Program

On Tuesday, February 19, local arts patron Delton Harrison brought a stellar panel of experts to visit with the Honors Program students. For over an hour, we heard about opera, the symphony, the Robinson Film Center, and all of the plans to build an arts community in the center of town.

“IT’s your responsibility to go to the Opera,” joked Steve Aiken, director of the Shreveport Opera. After describing his childhood in Anchorage, Alaska, and his subsequent introduction to classical music which lead him on a career as a performer, he explained that only one-half of one percent of the population attends performances. “They’re afraid of opera,” he explained. “But it’s great. We provide the subtitles for everything you hear on stage and the plots have love and death and deceit and all sorts of exciting human events.”

Alexandyr Kent said that the impetus behind opening the Robinson Film Center was that the community wanted good movies. “We have independent films, international offerings, and both classical and documentary works,” he explained. The Robinson is a non-profit enterprise that costs about $60,000 per year to operate. Funding is raised through memberships, gifts-in-

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kind, and admission fees but most theatres don’t make their money selling tickets. He also noted that whenever the Robinson has a film festival, those coming to town spend additional money on food, lodging, and other expenses which generates revenue for the larger community.

Lois Robinson is the executive director of the Shreveport Symphony with a conservatory background and a law degree. “Most symphonies have between forty and one hundred musicians,” she explained, “and it takes significant community support to keep the orchestra from going under.” The symphony and the opera work together although the symphony may put on up to eight programs each year while the opera does three performances.

Pam Atchison, with Wendy Benscoter, provides funding and support for the arts community through the Shreveport Regional Arts Council (SRAC). “We have a grant process in place and distribute city and state funding in partnership with the local arts organizations,” Atchison explained.

“We create accessibility to the arts for the community and to funding for the arts.” Atchison refers to herself as “Yenta” from Fiddler on the Roof who brings people together for training and grant possibilities as well as public art space. For example, fourth and fifth graders in the Shreveport area attend a Symphony performance for free, funded by SRAC.

A new arts community, covering a nine block area in downtown Shreveport, is in the process of being constructed. “SRAC speaks for all the arts,” she concluded.
Reaction to The Arts Panel From Sam Cook

Meeting with what was basically the heads of Louisiana's arts industry was a great opportunity. I was in an arts program in high school, but I never really comprehended what a major impact the arts have on our economy, especially financially. It was also nice learning about the various art activities going on in Shreveport. I am really excited about the "Shreveport Common" project. It sounds like it will be a really cool place to hang out when it is finished. I also learned how cheap it was to go to some of the arts events, like the opera or the symphony. They are basically the same price as going to the movies.

After meeting with the panel I am really motivated to get active in some of these art opportunities.

Dr. James Humes to Speak

The spring 2013 Distinguished Speaker will be Dr. James Humes whose expertise on Winston Churchill grows from years of research as well as having met the statesman in person.

Humes is a former presidential speechwriter who accompanied President Nixon to China. He is also a lawyer, legislator, diplomat, and college professor whose various careers have spanned decades.

His visit is being sponsored by the Shreveport Chapter of the English Speaking Union. He will speak with the Honors Program students and to the public at a lecture and book signing at 11:00 am, March 27, on the third floor of the Noel Library.
**Visit From A Federal Court Judge**

I found it very interesting to talk to a Judge out of the courtroom. Judge Hicks did a splendid job speaking with us in our Honors class. I even found him to be very entertaining, especially when he started to tell us stories based on his experience in the courtroom. I also found his journey to becoming a District Judge to be very interesting. It is not every day you get to speak with a district judge on a personal level. **Tyra Brown**

**Federal Judge Maury Hicks answers questions from the Honors Program students on January 22.**

I found it very interesting to talk to Judge Hicks. I watch television shows about crime and the stories he told are quite similar to those that happen in the shows. It really opened my eyes to the judicial system. **Autumn Garner**

**Riddle**

How many honors students does it take to figure out that these really aren’t cinnamon rolls?

**About The Honors Program**

Applications for the fall, 2013, semester are now being accepted.

Go to [http://www.lsus.edu/honorsprogram](http://www.lsus.edu/honorsprogram) or

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**Students and faculty gather for an orientation to HONR 102 on January 15.**