

## Former UI leader White spends thousands to renovate President's House

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Former President B. Joseph White bought a \$42,500 rug for the President's House in Summer 2008 among other thousands of dollars in renovations, according to 1215 pages of documents obtained by The Daily Illini through a Freedom of Information Act Request received on Wednesday.

In a letter to Debbie Clabaugh, a business manager for the President's Office, on July 29, 2008, White said that the maintenance of the house is the responsibility of the President and his spouse, and that since the house is an "architectural treasure" it needed updates that had not been done for 20 years.

Most of the work was done through regular funds; however, White requested money from the John Needles Chester Endowment to pay for the rug, according to the letter.

White resigned from his job as University president in September 2008 after a controversy that exposed an unfair admissions process. He was replaced in the interim by former president, Stanley Ikenberry. Michael Hogan is now the UI leader, starting on the job on July 1.

The Daily Illini will be investigating renovations at the President's House and posting updates as the day continues. Keep checking back to [dailyillini.com](http://dailyillini.com) for updates.

[Rug Docs](#)

## Illinois public bodies thwart the Freedom of Information Act

[The Daily Illini Editorial Board](#) [Contact me](#)

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It sounds simple enough, but "public" still doesn't mean "public" – at least not in Illinois, it seems.

When the new Illinois Freedom of Information Act was implemented at the beginning of this year, it was a major victory for transparency. Price caps on requested documents, a five-day response deadline (down from a seven-day deadline) and fines for institutions who failed to comply strengthened the law. The added role of the Public Access Counselor (PAC) was put in place to help shed light on a state that was still darkened by corruption.

But nearly a year later, it's hard to ignore the fact that transparency isn't as clear as it seems. In the spring session, the legislature voted to exempt public employee performance evaluations from disclosure, a move blocked by Gov. Quinn. Other bills aimed at the FOIA have targeted price limits and sought to restrict documents on issues still "under investigation."

Then there are the deadlines.

Public bodies have a five-day deadline to respond to requests for public documents. But that can often be a ten-day deadline because public bodies can invoke extensions. The time between filing a request and receiving documents might be at least two weeks — unless the records are denied or the body asks for a review from the counselor.

In that case, well, it's hard to say exactly what happens.

According to the guide to the PAC, the PAC will issue an opinion "within 60 calendar days after receiving the Request for Review from the requester. The PAC may extend the 60-day time period by 21 working days by sending a written notice to the requester and the public body."

All of those days start to add up quickly.

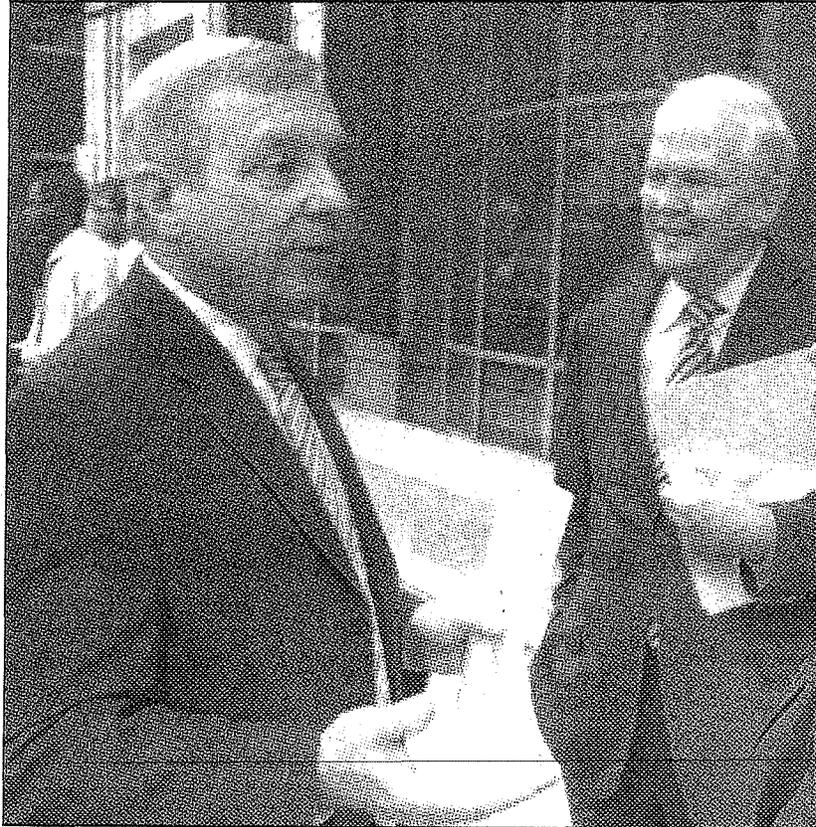
Which is great, if you're an Illinois public official or public body with something to hide. Especially if the person requesting it intends to publish that information so that anyone can read it. If we sound paranoid, think about the admissions scandal that ended in two of the University's top leaders resigning – a scandal that went public after the Chicago Tribune fought hard for the University to fulfill a Freedom of Information request for the documents.

We would love if all "public" information was exactly that. But it's not, and that means Illinois needs to go back to the drawing board.

Whether it's bulking up the PAC's staff to get requests answered faster, increasing repercussions for public bodies that fail to respond or rewriting the law entirely, something needs to be done.

No, not all documents requested should really be handed over. Privacy is still important. And some of the requests that take a long time to work through the system need that long to be sorted through. But public information that has no legitimate reason to be held back should be available as soon as possible to anyone who wants it.

A legacy of shady Illinois politics should be enough to scare us into the sunshine.



Robert K. O'Daniell/The News-Gazette

**U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., speaks with University of Illinois officials, including President Michael Hogan, right, on Wednesday outside the Illini Union Bookstore in Champaign.**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

# Interim ACES dean takes post on for long haul

## Hauser appointed to job permanently pending board OK

By JULIE WURTH  
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URBANA — The new dean of the University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences says the college's high-quality faculty and staff will help him guide it through a challenging budget environment.

Robert Hauser, an agricultural economist who has been interim dean for the past year, will assume the permanent job later this month.

The UI announced his appointment as dean Wednesday, pending approval by UI trustees at their Sept. 23 meeting in Urbana. Hauser's appointment takes effect Sept. 27.

Hauser replaced Robert Easter, who became interim provost and then interim chancellor last year after the departures of former Provost Linda Katehi and former Chancellor Richard Herman last year.

Richard Wheeler, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs, said Hauser has provided "terrific leadership" in that time, "both as an advocate for the College of ACES and as a leader in the campus effort to address some very serious issues."

Easter said Hauser has worked in the college for his entire career, including 12 years as head of the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics.

"He is a good thinker, and he has a good vision of where the food and agricultural domain is going. And he makes good business decisions," Easter said Wednesday. "He also understands modern agriculture in the United States and beyond, and I think it's important that the person in that role have that context."

Though he's been in the college for almost 30 years, Hauser said his year as interim dean taught him to appreciate the complexity of its academic reach, which spans the physical sciences, biological sciences, social sciences, humanities and engineering. Its activities relate to agricultural production through consumption, food, health, natural resources and the environment, families and communities.



HAUSER

The demand for research, teaching and outreach in those areas is higher than ever, reflected in the college's record level of research funding from federal agencies and other sources, Hauser said in a release.

The college's faculty and staff are also "first-rate," he said, "and I take comfort in that fact as we worry about and address the current budget challenges that are getting so much publicity. At the end of the day, if this college can maintain the high-quality level of faculty, staff and administration that I inherited, then we'll be fine."

Hauser joined the UI faculty in 1982 with a research and teaching focus on grain transportation, the use and pricing of options and futures, and the effects of economic and policy changes on Illinois and U.S. agriculture.

He served as department head from January 1995 through August 2001 and again from August 2004 to 2009. In August 2009, Hauser was appointed the Clearing Corp. Foundation Professor in agricultural and consumer economics.

Among the courses he's

## ACES DEAN

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taught are a doctoral-level class on price analysis, an introductory course on agricultural marketing, a junior-senior legislative seminar course, and a graduate-level economic-theory short course in Spain.

Hauser earned his doctorate in agricultural economics from Iowa State University in 1982 and his bachelor of science in agricultural business at Iowa State University in 1976.

"This college has given me every opportunity in the world to succeed, and I just hope that I can help do the same for the unbelievably talented faculty, staff and students who define us as one of if not the best land-grant colleges in the country," Hauser said.

He paid tribute to his predecessors, including Easter, David Chicoine, Reg Gomes and John Campbell, who went on to become university chancellors, presidents and vice presidents.

"That is not my future, even if I wanted it to be. Instead I simply hope that I'm not challenging Peter's Principle by sitting in this office," Hauser said.

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SOUTH FARMS

## UI battling feathered freeloaders with help from propane cannon

New bird-control method restricted to daytime usage due to complaints

By JULIE WURTH  
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URBANA — It's man vs. bird on the University of Illinois South Farms, and for the moment man has the edge — with help from a propane cannon.

Those loud booms — some might call them pops — you may have heard over the past couple of weeks are attempts to keep our ravenous feathered friends from feasting on the cattle feed at the UI's Dairy Barns on South Lincoln Avenue. And keep their poop out of the barns.

After all, bird droppings can carry disease, and neither man nor beast really wants them in their food.

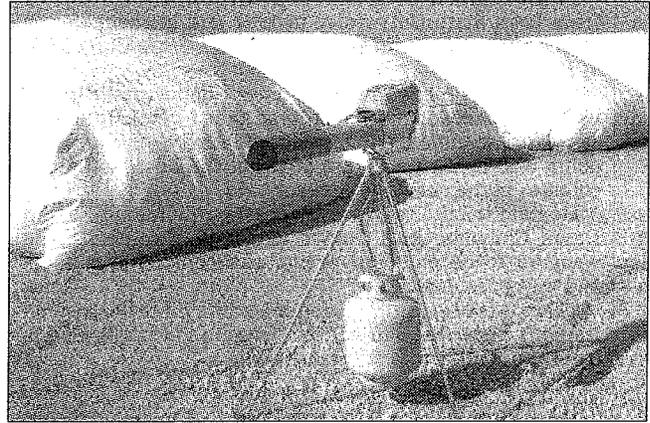
General farms manager Mike Katterhenry and his crew started using the pro-

pane cannon in mid-August to keep away the crows and other birds that frequent the farms for meals. It doesn't shoot the birds but uses a propane charge to make a shotgun-type noise, which frightens them away (at least temporarily).

The propane cannon goes off every few minutes. It's been effective in keeping crows from pecking holes in the giant sacks of corn silage at the south end of the barns, which causes the feed to spoil. (Definition of giant: 200 feet long, each holding up to 250 tons of corn silage, a ground-up mix of corn plants, husks and grains that Holsteins and Jerseys — and crows, apparently — find delectable.)

The cannon has the added benefit of scaring off the grackles, starlings and cowbirds from the feed bunks nearby, where flocks of the black birds typically attack the feed piled on the ground for the cows.

Unfortunately, over the weekend the cannon also irri-



Vanda Bidwell/The News-Gazette

A propane cannon used to keep local birds away from the cattle feed at the University of Illinois South Farms sits poised for action in front of bags of silage and haylage outside the UI Dairy Barns on South Lincoln Avenue. Mike Katterhenry, general farms manager at the UI, has been using the cannon to scare away birds that gather there to eat the feed for cattle.

tated nearby residents, who heard it going off during the wee hours of the morning. Katterhenry said the UI was informed of several complaints along Florida Avenue and other neighborhoods in south Urbana, and even from First Street and Curtis Road in Champaign more than a mile away.

The cannon "really isn't that loud," he said, likening it to a shotgun or small fireworks. But the noise seems to reverberate as you move farther away, and Katterhenry said it can be heard from quite a

distance on a still night, especially if people have their windows open.

Urbana resident Stephen Kaufman, who lives near Race and Mumford streets, said most of his neighbors were awakened by the noise last weekend.

"It kept me awake all night," he said. "If you hear one, it kind of rolls by, but every five minutes through the night. ..."

Kaufman at first thought it was a problem with an electrical box, but after several

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# SOUTH FARMS

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hours he called 911. An operator told him it had something to do with the South Farms.

Robert Myers, planning manager for the city of Urbana, said the UI dairy farms aren't within Urbana city limits, so the city can't enforce its noise ordinance there. But the farm may fall under the Illinois Pollution Control Board's noise regulations, he said.

Katterhenry said the cannon is now being used only between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., though some residents said they still hear it as early as 6 a.m. Crows tend to gather in those early morning hours, he said.

The farm previously used poison bait to curb the bird population, with some success, but ended up with lots of dead birds to dispose of, he said. And some made their way across campus or into the community before succumbing, which led to other complaints.

"We're trying to do a more humane thing here, and benefit the farm and the community," he said. "It's really a time- and a cost-savings, if it works."

So far, so good. Before the experiment started, up to 100 crows would feed on the silage every morning, he said. Now it's no more than a handful.

"For the first week, we didn't see a single bird here, not even sparrows," he said. "We haven't seen any damage on any of the new bags."

But it's possible the birds are getting used to the cannon. On Tuesday, hundreds of black birds hanging around the feed bunks rose as one when the cannon went off, fleeing to the safety of a nearby roof and utility wire. But within a few minutes the bravest souls had drifted back to the feed pile, until the next round went off.

To keep the birds guessing, the cannon rotates 40 degrees every time it shoots. Different tips for the end of the cannon can alter the sound, and the supplier recommends moving the cannon around the farm periodically. Katterhenry may also add a second cannon for the feed bunk area.

Once the weather cools, thousands of birds will try to roost in the barns as they flee their summer homes in the trees, he said. At times, during the afternoon, he'll see swarm after swarm overhead, lining every fence, ridge and roof line, reminiscent of "The Birds."

Bird poop sometimes piles up an inch thick along the railings and fences — not a pleasant situation for the cows or tourists who come to the barns, he said. Mixing bird manure and feed is "just not a good combination," he said. The worry is histoplasmosis, which can be transmitted to humans and other animals, though the farm hasn't had any cases yet.

"That's what we're trying to avoid," he said.

## Big changes in store for Big Ten

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Some big time changes are in store for the Big Ten.

The conference announced Wednesday that it will officially form two six-team divisions, with the change taking effect before the 2011 season, when Nebraska will officially become a member.

"Since (Nebraska accepted their invitation to join the conference), we've been working hard on divisions as well as schedules for 2011 and '12," Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany said. "It was a pretty quick turnaround."

The Illini will be joined in their division by Ohio State, Penn State, Purdue, Indiana and Wisconsin. Michigan, Nebraska, Iowa, Michigan State, Minnesota and Northwestern will comprise the other division.

"We wanted to divide the divisions in a way that they were as equal competitively as possible," Delany said.

Another big consideration, according to Delany, was maintaining long-standing rivalries. The conference wanted to ensure games such as Michigan versus Ohio State, Minnesota versus Wisconsin, and Northwestern versus Illinois would still be played each year, despite many of these teams being in opposite divisions.

The conference will accomplish this with three inter-division games for each team, with one guaranteed to be against the same opponent each season, to go along with five games against teams in a team's own division.

At the end of the season, the top team from each division will meet in a conference championship game, a first for the Big Ten. The 2011 championship game will be played in Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, the home of the NFL's Indianapolis Colts.

The division alignment isn't pleasing everyone, though. The conference could also expand on the current scheduling format to include nine conference games at some point in the future.

"If you ask the coaches, they would rather not play nine," Illinois Head Coach Ron Zook said. "I think we all saw that it was one of those things that was going to happen regardless of what we said. But I think the overall general consensus when we first talked about it was we'd all rather play eight games."

No matter how the schedule works itself out, though, Zook stressed that it was all for the good of the conference.

"I think the Big Ten is a great conference now," Zook said. "And when you add a great football team and a great program (in Nebraska) coming in, it's just going to make it that much better."

"Regardless of how the divisions are worked out, it doesn't really make a lot of difference. Over time, everyone's going to play everyone anyway. I think it's just going to make for a great conference."



## News

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### Starting From Scratch

September 2, 2010

The dramatic announcement last week that the University of Colorado at Boulder will explore the discontinuation of its journalism school is the latest iteration of an intensifying conversation about how best to train the reporters of the future and what kind of industry will be in place to absorb graduates.

Discussions about the transformation of journalism education are hardly new, but Boulder's case is distinctive inasmuch as it suggests an existing school may literally need to be destroyed before a more effective model can be realized. To that end, supporters of the move have given the tacit admission that the university's current curriculum is not only ill-positioned to help tomorrow's students, but may not be appropriately serving today's either.

"They are getting a healthy portion of what they need," said Paul Voakes, dean of Boulder's School of Journalism and Mass Communication. "I would say that, yeah, they are getting 80 percent of what they need, because we have a strong curriculum. But there are other things they need that we are in no position to provide, and by that I mean an understanding of applied technology and an understanding of business entrepreneurship [and design]. These are not areas that are typically [covered] in a journalism program."

A working theory at Boulder is that a new program for information and communication technology might be poised to deliver what some see as lacking in the school's current offerings. A task force, which Voakes co-chaired, laid out a broad vision for such a unit, suggesting it could wrangle together multiple disciplines to train students in "computational thinking, creative entrepreneurial strategies and innovative interdisciplinary approaches to solving challenging and socially relevant problems...."

"We've got a choice of going along, doing what most journalism and mass communication programs do, and we've also been presented with the opportunity to really take some risks and go out there and declare that there is a new type of journalism education that integrates new kinds of thinking," Voakes said.

Actually, the first choice Voakes presents -- the status quo -- may not be available for too much longer. Chancellor Philip P. DiStefano has initiated the formal process of "program discontinuation" for the school, and a three-member committee -- with no journalism faculty representation -- will recommend whether to retain, alter or eliminate the school.

And, despite Voakes's expressed desires, there's no assurance a new entity that absorbs journalism instruction will continue offering journalism degrees down the line. While campus officials say they are committed to awarding journalism degrees to those currently enrolled in the program, two separate committees are charged with recommending whether journalism degrees should be offered beyond the life of the school, said Russ Moore, Boulder's interim provost. The recently-appointed committees, which differ from the original task force that first issued a report on the idea of an information school, include a committee assessing the journalism school's discontinuation and an exploratory committee further exploring how an information school might be organized.

The discussion unfolding at Boulder has elicited a familiar response from journalism professors across the country. While many applaud any move that appears designed to address an undeniably altering media landscape, there are notable concerns that training students to work with the new bells and whistles offered in the Internet age may come at the expense of the basic writing, reporting and critical thinking skills so crucial to journalism on any platform.

Roy Peter Clark, senior scholar at the Poynter Institute, said he is concerned about whether colleges enamored with new technologies will lose sight of the broader qualities journalists need, such as storytelling ability, news judgment, evidence-gathering skills and a notion of what the mission and purpose of journalism really is. Most importantly, journalism schools should be the kind of places that teach students to think critically about the world they inhabit, Clark said.

"The journalism school should be a place where the faculty should be engaged not in just turning out little journalism machines," said Clark, who earned his Ph.D. in medieval literature before taking on the position of writing coach for the *St. Petersburg Times* in the late 1970s.

Some of the qualities Clark would like to see incorporated in journalism training are given weight in Boulder's broad vision for a new department or school of information and communication technology. Even so, the details in the task force's report are sparse.

"The whole thing is full of unknowns," said Len Ackland, co-director of the Center for Environmental Journalism and an associate professor at Boulder. "The big question for me on this whole thing is whether or not the senior administration, by taking this action, is intending to strengthen journalism education or kill it. And we don't know; that remains to be seen."

Those who have most vociferously supported the closure of the journalism school have done so with the assurance that they would like to see the preservation of the "best classes" offered in advertising, news writing, reporting and television. So said a letter from the school's external advisory board, which includes alumni and others who have worked in media.

"We support the closing of the SJMC," the board wrote to DiStefano in April. "As long-time news and advertising professionals who revere the rich tradition of journalism, we make this recommendation soberly and thoughtfully. And yet, we are clear-eyed about the current and future landscape and the need to prepare our students to thrive in a new, diverse and digitally rich information environment."

The board's letter followed a more harshly worded "white paper" authored by Doug Looney, an alumnus who formerly chaired the board and wrote for *Sports Illustrated*, the *Denver Post* reported.

"The SJMC and its dysfunctional faculty are hopeless," Looney wrote, according to the *Post*. "Prospects for improvement are nonexistent. It should be closed."

The school houses 28 full-time faculty members, of whom 18 are tenured. University officials have said the tenured faculty would be reassigned if regents approve the school's closure, but the fates of the non-tenured are uncertain.

#### **Berkeley Model Differs**

The Boulder task force that looked into a future college of information cited several other universities that have such programs, but the extent to which journalism thrives in those other programs isn't explored in great detail within the report.

The University of California at Berkeley, which has a School of Information, is among the institutions mentioned in the report as a potential model. It would be inaccurate to suggest, however, that Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism -- the lone journalism school on the campus -- has been enveloped by the information school in the way some have suggested Boulder may do, said Neil Henry, Berkeley's journalism dean.

"There are no formal linkages," said Henry, who was not contacted by anyone on Boulder's task force to discuss the issue. "There are plenty of informal collaborations ... but as far as that kind of folding of different disciplines into the other, that's not taken place."

It's not likely to take place, either.

"We believe very strongly in the independent integrity of this enterprise on campus," Henry said.

#### **New Media Offers Hope**

One of the ironies that's still something of a mystery to journalism deans across the country is the fact that enrollments in many journalism programs have not fallen, despite the well-publicized struggles of daily newspapers and the difficulty that journalism graduates have finding jobs. With nearly 650 undergraduate majors, and hundreds more seeking competitive admission, journalism remains among Boulder's most popular majors.

A national survey of 2009 journalism and communication graduates found the lowest full-time employment of any time in the study's

24-year history. Just 55.5 percent of such graduates with a bachelor's degree found full-time work within a year of leaving school, according to the University of Georgia's [Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communication Graduates](#).

"It's a lousy market for our students, but it's a lousy market [for most students], so that has to be kept in mind as well," said Lee B. Becker, a Georgia journalism professor who co-wrote the survey. "I think the more important point is that it's obvious that we are going through a sea change in the industries we have been linked to historically, and I would look to that more than I would look to the current job market.... I think it only makes sense one should rethink how one prepares students for a set of occupations that are different than in the past."

While newspapers and other traditional media may be struggling, Becker echoes many others in journalism who see a new future opening up.

"My sense is that we are not in a situation where communication is any less important or communication skills are any less important," said Becker, who directs Georgia's Cox International Center. "When I pick up a newspaper or look at a magazine or look at what's on any of the online sites I check, I see a tremendous amount of evidence that the communication industry -- broadly defined -- is vibrant."

That optimism about emerging media may explain why there hasn't been more public outcry from Boulder faculty or members of the news industry. Dan Haley, editorial page editor at the *Denver Post*, said there's a sense that Boulder may be taking necessary steps to adapt -- even if it's not entirely clear what the advisory board's agenda was in pushing so forcefully for the school's closure.

"We did talk about the issue [as an editorial board], and we thought that it was a good move," he said. "It's a smart move; you have to retool journalism schools in order to educate tomorrow's journalists."

— Jack Stripling

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