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## Insights- Sep. 9, 1998

University Relations Staff

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*This issue of Insights takes a look at the variety of events on campus in the month of September. We also continue our ride on Ed Stuart's Trans-Siberian Express.*

### FALL INTO FUN

The Northeastern Programming Board's annual Fall Into Fun Fair welcomes NEIU students to the campus and the wealth of student services. Designed mainly for new students, Fall Into Fun runs Monday-Thursday, September 14-17. The schedule of events and activities has been posted by Student Services on university bulletin boards. Information is available at several locations on campus during the week of the fair on student resources, returning adult programs, intramurals and recreation, and student organizations. □

## The State of the University Address

by NEIU President Salme H. Steinberg will be presented on Thursday, September 17, at 1:40 p.m. in the Auditorium, at a meeting of the Faculty Assembly. A reception will follow. The university community is invited to attend this important address. □

## Jazz in the Afternoon

This year's benefit sponsored by Northeastern Illinois and the NEIU Foundation Board to raise funds for NEIU student scholarships and faculty research will be held on September 20. It features a jazz brunch, including a buffet, entertainment, an auction, and performances by jazz artists Orbert Davis, Andy Goodrich, and the NEIU Jazz Ensemble.

Honored for distinguished service to the community are music luminaries Geraldine de Haas, founder of Jazz Unites, Kahil El'Zabar, internationally renowned percussionist, composer and educator, and NEIU alumna Darlene Y. Blackburn, dancer, choreographer, and music educator.

The event, now in its eleventh year, will be held **Sunday, September 20, 11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at Cathedral Hall, The University Club of Chicago**, Monroe Street and Michigan Avenue. For information and reservations, contact Stephan Donovan, NEIU Development Office, at 773/794-6569. □

## Archbishop Cardinal George to Speak at Northeastern September 23

As part of the university's Presidential Seminar series, Archbishop Francis Cardinal George will speak at Northeastern Illinois on Wednesday, September 23 at 11:00 a.m. in the Auditorium. The Cardinal will meet with NEIU President Salme H. Steinberg and receive a tour of the campus during his visit.

A native of Chicago's northwest side, Cardinal George was ordained a priest of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The Pope appointed him Archbishop of Chicago following the death of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin and elevated him to the College of Cardinals in February of 1998.

Cardinal George and NEIU share a mission in serving culturally diverse populations. For the second consecutive year Northeastern Illinois was named the most diverse university in the Midwest by *U.S. News & World Report*. More than 40 separate ethnic groups are represented among our student population alone.

The Cardinal and the university have something else in common. His father was a 45-year employee of NEIU before retiring as Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds in 1972.

*The talk is free and open to the public. Parking in any designated university lot will also be free. For information: 773/794-2910.* □

## 'Mambo Kings' Author, Oscar Hijuelos to Talk at Northeastern September 25

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his novel, *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*, Oscar Hijuelos will talk about "Fiction and Reality" at Northeastern Illinois on Friday, September 25 at 7:30 p.m. in the Auditorium. A Q&A session and reception follow.

Hijuelos was born to Cuban immigrants in 1951 on the Upper West Side of New York City, a neighborhood which continues to influence and shape his writing. His first novel, *Our House in the Last World*, received the Rome Prize of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and garnered him both a National Endowment for the Arts and an Ingram-Merrill fellowship. The fellowships allowed him to concentrate on writing his second novel, *The Mambo Kings*, which received the 1990 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and became a national and international bestseller.

Of his third novel, *The Fourteen Sisters of Emilio Montez O'Brien*, the *Chicago Tribune* wrote: "Nobody writes about sensuality, nostalgia, and matters of the heart more exuberantly than Hijuelos." His latest novel, *Mr. Ives' Christmas*, (continued on page 2)



# Doing the Trans-Siberian Express

by Edward F. Stuart, professor, Economics (and his mom, Grace O. Stuart, MSW); the third in a four-part story of their recent visit to a land of special memories for many NEIU faculty and staff.

The scenery outside the train was a long procession of birch, larch, aspen, pine, and spruce. This vast expanse of forest would be punctuated by little villages of wooden houses and garden plots that supported the rural residents in these clumps of civilization. Occasionally there would be larger cities that were the basis of Russian industry along the Trans-Siberian. As any traveller to a former Soviet-bloc country knows, cities are primarily grey factories and large, ugly concrete blocks of apartment buildings. The new development was the appearance near every larger city of "dacha districts" of new and modern vacation homes that obviously belong to the "new Russians" who belong to the rising middle and upper class in Russia.

Near dusk on Wednesday, May 20 we approached the shores of Lake Baikal. We would stop in Irkutsk, on the western shore of the lake and take a trip on the lake. This stop to see Baikal was one of the stops my mother insisted upon because of the nature of this famous and unique body of water.

Our stay in Irkutsk included a tour of the churches, monasteries, and convents of this capital of western Siberia. Irkutsk had been the destination of many of the Russian exiles starting in the early nineteenth century and therefore it has a rich cultural,

religious, and political history. In several guidebooks Irkutsk is described as the "Paris of Siberia." While this may be an example of travel book hyperbole, I found Irkutsk to be a charming and attractive city. It also had many signs of economic revival. There were many shops and markets filled with products of high quality at reasonable prices. I took a picture of the Red Tab Levis store on Karl Marx Street. The irony was too obvious to resist.

Our trip on Lake Baikal was magical. The lake contains the largest amount of fresh water on the planet. It is over a mile deep and contains more than 300 species of fish that are unique to it. The water is clear, cold, remarkably clean. This was a wonderful discovery given reports of Soviet-era industrial pollution that had threatened the ecological balance of this one-of-a-kind natural wonder.

Our next train, the "Baikal," would take us in two days to Ekaterinburg. The "Baikal" proved to be even more comfortable and traveller friendly. We even had a Sony television in our compartment. Unfortunately, the only programs shown were American gangster movies. □

(To be continued in the next *Insights*.)

**The 1998 New Faculty issue of *Insights* will be available in October**

(*Mambo Kings*, continued from page 1)

portrays a thriving, deeply religious man whose life is shattered by the murder of his teenage son. The talk is free and open to the public; parking is free in a designated NEIU lot. For information: 773/794-2910.

NOTE: The NEIU Book Club will hold book discussions for the NEIU community in preparation for Oscar Hijuelo's talk:

- On September 10, Dr. Estela López will lead a discussion of *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*; CLS 3005, 1:40 p.m.
- On September 23, Ms. Flora Llacuna will lead a discussion of *Mr. Ives Christmas*; the Library Lounge, Lower Level, 12 noon.

## Also in September. . .

NEIU Stage Center Theatre, Studio Series, presents *A Tribute to Thornton Wilder, "Infancy & Youth,"* Tuesday, Thursday, Sept. 22, 24, 1:40 and 7:30 p.m. For ticket information: 773/794-6652.

The NEIU Management Club sponsors a lecture by **Mary O'Malley**, College of Business/Management, on Business Etiquette, Thursday, Sept. 24, 1:40 p.m. (Room TBA).

## neighborhood news

As you can see, many projects are underway in our neighborhood: sewers are being replaced, pavement resurfaced, and Peterson Avenue between Cicero and Central Park will soon be undergoing median beautification. Striping on Pulaski will also be occurring in the next few weeks. Construction projects will start this fall on Peterson and Pulaski. Work should be completed by Thanksgiving. Drive carefully.

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