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EIU-Sponsored Events to Focus Around "Darwin Day"

Feb-06-2006

While many recognize Feb. 12, 1809, as the date on which Abraham Lincoln was born, few realize that the 16th president entered into this world on the same day as naturalist Charles Darwin.

That number is rising, however, as individuals and groups world-wide join efforts in celebrating Darwin's contributions to philosophy and science. British-born Darwin, known primarily for his efforts at introducing the idea of evolution through natural selection, is recognized internationally as the author of *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*.

This year, Eastern Illinois University will once again join a myriad of academic institutions in commemorating Darwin's contributions by hosting several educational events designed to teach others about Darwin and his theory.

As part of this commemoration, Eastern plans to host five separate events, all of which are free and open to the public.

Steven Lima, a faculty member in Indiana State University's department of ecology and organismal biology, will present "The Ecology and Evolution of Sleep: An Adaptationist Perspective" at 4:30 p.m. Thursday in room 2080 of Eastern's Life Sciences Building.

"Inherit the Wind," the 1960 movie which examines the "Scopes monkey trial" (and stars Spencer Tracy), will be shown at 3:30 p.m. Friday, also in room 2080.

Events will continue on Monday, Feb. 13, when Jon Miller, director of biomedical communication at Northwestern University, speaks on "Darwin and the Politics of Science in the 21st Century." His talk begins at 4:30 p.m. in Roberson Auditorium, Lumpkin Hall 2030.

Lewis Branscomb, from the Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies at the University of California at San Diego, will discuss "What is Science? The Boundaries and Role of Science in Public Education" at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14, also in Lumpkin Hall 2030.

Darwin Day events will conclude locally at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15, when EIU's own John Stimac, department of geology/geography, gives a 30-minute presentation on "The Age of the Earth and its Determination." Richard Foley from Eastern's philosophy department will follow at approximately 7:30 p.m. with "Intelligent Design Before Darwin." Both presentations will take place in Phipps Auditorium, located on the first floor of the Physical Science Building.