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6-6-1991

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Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "06/06/1991 - Founder's Day Marks EIU's 96th birthday" (1991). *Press Releases*. 1572.

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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Charleston, Illinois

news

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91-250

June 6, 1991

FILE COPY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FOUNDER'S DAY MARKS EASTERN'S 96TH BIRTHDAY

CHARLESTON, IL.--"Athletics Through the Years" at Eastern Illinois University will be depicted in photographs, documents and other memorabilia at the University's seventh Founder's Day June 22.

This year's Founder's Day marks the 96th birthday of the institution. The observance is part of Eastern's Centennial Celebration, which will continue through the University's 100th birthday on May 22, 1995.

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FOUNDER'S DAY

The "Athletics Through the Years" exhibition opens Founder's Day at 9 a.m. in the University Union Grand Ballroom and features more than 20 panels and displays that can be viewed by the public until 11:30 a.m. Admission is free.

"The exhibition, which has taken months to prepare, will consist of photographic panels depicting the history of the development of athletics at Eastern from the time it was a normal school up until this decade. All the records that exist of each sport dating back to the beginning will be displayed," said Daniel E. Thornburgh, chairman of the Centennial Celebration Committee.

Of particular interest will be memorabilia of the late Charles "Pop" Lantz, for whom Lantz Building is named, and from the late Pat O'Brien, for whom O'Brien Stadium is named.

Lantz, known as the "Father of Athletics," was Eastern's first athletic director from 1911 to 1952 and coached football, basketball, baseball and track.

O'Brien, an internationally-known track coach in his time, coached cross country, track and football at Eastern from 1946 to 1974. Another exhibit will highlight EIU women's track coach John Craft of Charleston, a 1972 Olympian.

Other displays will feature the first basketball, photographs of the first health/science building, players' uniforms and lettermen's sweaters and blankets. A video tape of the 1978 football championship game will also be shown continuously.

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As a special part of the program, former coaches and board members and officers of such clubs as the "EI Club" have been invited to join the activities.

A luncheon will follow the exhibition at noon in the Union's University (Old) Ballroom. EIU Professor of Physical Education Thomas Woodall will share the history of post World War II intercollegiate athletics at Eastern.

The program will also include the presentation of University service awards and the Livingston C. Lord Distinguished Service Award.

There will also be a special plaque presentation by former residents of the "Panther Lair," the first men's housing unit on Eastern's campus established prior to World War II. Col. Joe Kelly of Memphis, Tenn., a 1938 Eastern graduate who spearheaded the drive to designate the site as part of the Centennial project, will be present and make brief remarks.

The luncheon is open to the public. Tickets are \$7.50 per person and may be purchased by sending a check payable to the Founder's Day Committee, c/o Eastern Illinois University, Old Main 111, Charleston, IL 61920, no later than June 17.