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“Celebrating Five Years of Magic” at Hansen Student Center

January 8, 2007

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—A three-day celebration will mark the fifth-year anniversary of Illinois Wesleyan University’s Hansen Student Center.

> [Hansen Reflections](#)

“Celebrating Five Years of Magic” will begin on Thursday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. in the center court of the Hansen Student Center, 300 E. Beecher St., Bloomington.

Cake and punch will be served, anniversary t-shirts will be given away, class banners will be raised and artwork by current students will be displayed on the 2nd floor. Historical photos and memorabilia will also be displayed throughout the building.

The events are free and open to the public and have been planned by the Hansen Student Center Advisory Board, comprised of IWU students and alumni.

Designed by Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, Boston Mass., Hansen Student Center is located in the former Memorial Gymnasium, a Neoclassical-style building that was built in the 1920s in honor of Illinois Wesleyan students who lost their lives in World War I. The gymnasium was designed with multiple purposes in mind, including basketball, swimming, and other sports, oratorios, festivals and large meetings and banquets. The building now is designed to meet the social, recreational and educational needs of IWU students. It is a center for student life featuring a lobby, information desk, newsstand, café, grille and large, student “hang-out” space landscaped with trees, plants and outdoor seating, plus much more. A two-level bookstore is located in the building as well.

The \$8-million renovation of Memorial Gymnasium started in 2000 and was completed in January of 2002. Tom O. Hansen, class of 1982, who with his wife Kathleen gave a multi-million dollar gift to the University that spearheaded the transformation and whose name now graces the building, will attend the celebration and give remarks on Thursday. Hansen, a business-administration graduate, was founder and chief-executive officer of Kentucky-based ACCENT Marketing Services. He currently serves as chairman of Tom O. Hansen Sales Associates. In 1998 he received IWU’s Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

IWU President Richard F. Wilson, Jim Matthews, dean of students at the time of the building’s renovation, who along with IWU Student Senate members played a key role in spearheading the facility’s new look will also speak. Haley Brown, the current president of Student Senate will speak as well.

On Friday, Jan. 12, starting at 8 p.m. two shows are booked for the evening. Performing will be award-winning singer-songwriter Jason LeVasseur, who was one of the first to perform in the Hansen Student Center and mentalist Christopher Carter, IWU class of 1987. LeVasseur, known for his soulful gritty voice, entertains audiences with relatable, story-like lyrics. His world travels are said to have influenced his playing style. Born in the U.S., he spent most of his childhood in Mexico and Belgium and studied French, Spanish, and Italian for a year in Italy. He has shared the stage with the Dave Matthews Band, John Mayer, The Roots and Ben Folds. Additional information can be found at <http://www.jasonlevasseur.com/>.

Carter’s show is billed as a “Theater of Thoughts.” Recognized as one of the world’s most skilled and original thought-readers, he is known to cause a light bulb to explode through his powers of concentration. He can identify serial numbers on currency that is hidden in an audience member’s pocket or purse and can tell audience members’ personal facts that have never been revealed to anyone.

Keeping with the theme of magic, on Saturday, Jan. 13, the Titan Film Series will present the movie *The Prestige*, starring Hugh Jackman, Christian Bale, Michael Caine, Scarlett Johansson and David Bowie. A story about rival magicians, the film is rated PG-13 for violence and disturbing images. For additional information go to: <http://theprestige.movies.go.com>.

There will also be a late night dance party in Tommy’s at 10:30 p.m. Tommy’s is the grille located in the lower level of the building.

For additional information, contact Kevin Clark, assistant dean of students at (309) 556-3850 or kclark@iwu.edu.



Photos from top: Hansen Student Center 1928 exterior; modern exterior; original gymnasium; remodeled interior; students involved in planning the Student Center; and Tommy's eatery in the remodeled lower level.