



NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT:
Kathy Funke, Director
News & Information Services
812/465-7005
FAX 812/464-1956

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 9, 1995

UC groundbreaking October 9

Ground is being broken today for the \$4.7 million expansion/renovation project at the University Center, with USI students wielding an antique plow loaned by John Stephan of Stephan's, Inc., as a means to recreate the original groundbreaking in 1972.

USI Board members, area legislators, faculty, staff, and USI friends joined the students in the ceremony presided over by USI President H. Ray Hoops. Dr. Hoops called the University Center the "social heart of the University, much like the library is the academic heart. He said, "It is a place for students and community to gather. Student organization offices, dining services, and conference facilities provide a constant level of activity and student life."

The expansion will nearly double the 52,000-square-foot building, which was opened in 1974. There will be an additional entrance on the south side, a ballroom on the second level, and a multipurpose area with the capacity to seat 530 people for dining and 850 for meetings. There also will be a computer lab, a small art gallery, a formal meeting and dining area, and more space for Student Life staff offices, conference facilities, student publications and other student activity offices, and for student recreation and lounge areas.

During the ceremony USI Board of Trustee chairman Bruce Baker of Boonville announced that opportunities for donors would be available to help furnish the new expansion, similar to a program employed in the early '70s when the University Center was opened. "Twenty-three years ago, a fund drive to furnish space in this building brought donors together with student needs. Throughout the building you will see the plaques recognizing the donors whose help was so vital. There will be similar opportunities in this renovation."

The University Center will not be closed during the work, which is expected to take about 12 months. Deig Brothers Lumber and Construction Company is the general contractor. Other contracts went to Premier Electric Company, Arc Mechanical Co., U.S. Industries (roofing), Johnson Controls, and Flotech (test and balance).