

To all student organizations on the WIU campus.

10/22/2008

Hello,

My name is Michael Thompson and I am the co-chair of Friends of Vishnu. We are a grass roots organization of local people, who feel the old hotel and surrounding forest is a special place that holds deep meaning for many in the area. Vishnu Springs, which is located in McDonough County, has been a spot of interest and mystery to people down through the ages, and the Friends of Vishnu are actively working to preserve and protect the property, so future generations can enjoy this unique, historical place.

The Capitol Hotel, Vishnu Springs, and land surrounding it, now officially known as the Ira and Reatha Post Wildlife Sanctuary, are now the property of the Western Illinois University Foundation. Because of the tremendous amount of vandalism that has occurred over the last couple of years, the University has taken some rather strong steps to prevent further damage. Extensive graffiti, i.e. personal names and greek letters, can be seen on the interior and exterior of the Capitol Hotel.

The McDonough County Sheriff's Office is actively patrolling all the roads around, and the access lane to the Vishnu property. The property boundaries are under constant surveillance by concerned neighbors and the Vishnu caretaker, and over 40 arrests for trespassing have been made in the last 3 months. The hotel itself has been securely boarded up, so access into the inside is virtually impossible.

Please let it be known to the members of your respective organizations and friends, that the situation at Vishnu IS DIFFERENT this year and a trip out there should not be attempted. You can be arrested, which could impact you and your organization's status here at WIU. That risk is probably not worth it.

Friends of Vishnu and WIU are looking forward to the time when the property will be safe and open for everyone to enjoy. Hopefully that will be in the near future, and you may even have some classes that will spend time at the new Ira and Reatha Post Wildlife Sanctuary.

Please share this information with your fraternity brothers and sorority sisters, as well as all your friends, and help us protect Vishnu. For current information visit our web site at vishnusprings.org.

Thank you,

Michael Thompson,
for the Friends of Vishnu Committee