

MMG Newsletter

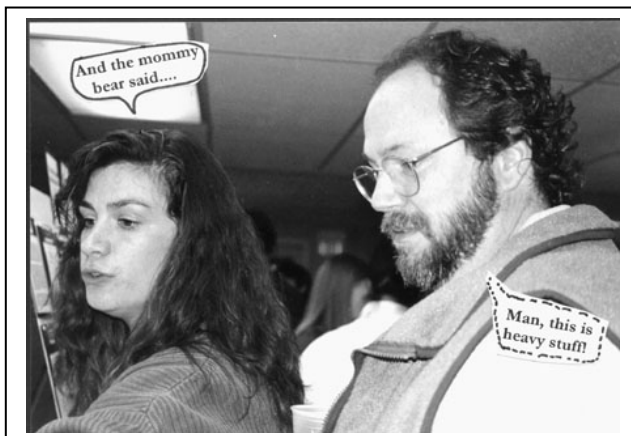
Volume 1, Number 2

Winter 2000

UPDATE ON THE Y2K ANNUAL RETREAT

By: Gary Ward

On October 6 & 7 we will be returning to the Ascutney Mountain Resort for the first MMG departmental retreat of the new millennium. The scientific sessions will be held this year in the base lodge, which is a bigger room with a higher ceiling than last year's meeting room, and should better suit our needs. We're hoping for the same good weather and beautiful foliage we enjoyed in 1999, and Scotty-the-UPS-guy will be back again to run the nighttime festivities. Good science and good fun; please mark your calendars for Oct. 6 & 7, 2000!



Michelle Shields and Doug Johnson.
Photographer: Susan Wallace



Eunice Froeliger, Mary Tierney and Nick Heintz.
Photographer: Susan Wallace



Foreground: Matt Hogg and Jon Cherry relax in the sun.
Background: Mike Mitton waves for the camera.
Photographer: Cindy Villarimo



Gary Ward, Karl Skowronek, Bob Melamede.
Photographer: Susan Wallace

MMG HOCKEY

By: Gary Ward

Out of the ashes of the canceled UVM hockey season have arisen - The Geezers! This intramural hockey team, made up mostly of old men and has-beens, includes several members of the Department: its co-founders, **Gary Ward** and **Nick Heintz**; **Mike Wichroski** ("the Blonde Comet"); **Ken Hampel** ("the Saskatchewan Roughrider"); and **Robert Pinard** ("the flying Frenchman").



In their first game of the season on Feb. 7, the Geezers trounced their opponents, the Cremasters, 5-1. First star goes to Nick Heintz, with a hat trick. Geezer statisticians tell us that's about one goal for every 20 years of his age. Other

game highlights were a goal by Ken Hampel (in his first hockey game ever), a spectacular behind the back pass from Mike Wichroski at the blue line late in the third period, and ferocious forechecking by Robert Pinard. Gary Ward's most notable stickwork of the game earned him two minutes in the penalty box for roughing.

Next Geezer games are Feb. 14 against the Shockers, and Feb. 28 against Slaphappy. Go Geezers!

LAB NEWS

News from the Burke Lab:

David Pecchia recently received his MBA in Administration and he is the proud father of a beautiful little girl that arrived just on time for Christmas.

Cindy Villarimo is going to play the role of an Indian in the Lyric Theatre production of *Peter Pan*. Plan to attend the performance at the Flynn Theatre in downtown Burlington April 27 - 30.



Kirk Brown, Cindy Villarimo and Rebecca Guy.
Photo courtesy of Cindy Villarimo.

Molly Coseno and Ericka Albinson graduated in December 1999.

Danielle Vitiello and Robert Pinard are getting married on October 7, 2000 at the Round Church in Richmond. Danielle received her Ph.D. and is now finishing the clinical core of Medical School. She will graduate in 2001 ...(doc²!!!).

News from the Wallace Lab:

Sophie O'Shea Gifford was born on December 21, 1999. She weighed 8 lbs. 11 oz., and was 21" in height. Congratulations, **Chris!**

News from the Lewis Lab

Tom writes, " Got here in August (the 16th I think). I attended the "Pseudomonas '99" Conference of the American Society for Microbiology in Maui, in September where I presented two posters. I have been toiling alone in my office and a little in the lab all of last Fall and was joined by **Shanti Jeedigunta** (Vishy's wife) recently, who is now a tech II in my lab. Shanti comes here from Florida Atlantic University where she just finished an M.S. degree in natural products chemistry. Imagine her perspective of the weather here."

News from the Ward Lab:

This item from **Mike Wichroski** - We're sad to say that the Ward lab lost two of our dear goldfish over the last year. A tragedy indeed. We had a low turnout at the funeral (held at Autoclave Funeral Home). However, **Carolyn (Donahue)** is

dealing well with the situation and we hope to have new goldfish soon. I'm sure they've gone to a much better place.

News from the Morrival Lab

This photo of **Scott Morrival's** newly-



adopted daughter, **Clarissa Mae** (aka "Mae-Mae"), his wife, **Mila** and **Scott** was taken on July 4, 1999, in Guangzhou, People's Republic of China. Mae-Mae was 13 months old at the time. Her Chinese name is Rao Xiaoyong, birthday is May 18, 1998. She was adopted from the Shangrao Orphanage near Nanchang, Jiangxi, P.R. China on June 28, 1999. The Morrivals spent a total of three weeks in China visiting Nauchang, Guangzhou and Hong Kong.

News from the Raper Lab:

The Raper lab reports that *Schizophyllum* is a Y2K compatible fungus and may become the official fungal sponsor of the

2002 Olympics. The most recent publication from the Raper lab was a collaboration with the Kurjan lab -- **Fowler, T.J., DeSimone, S.M., Mitton, M.F., Kurjan, J., and C. A. Raper.** 1999. Multiple sex pheromones and receptors of a mushroom-producing fungus elicit mating in yeast. *Mol. Biol. Cell* 10: 2559-2572. We showed that yeast can be made even "sexier" by expressing *Schizophyllum* pheromones and pheromone receptors. Currently, we are doing gene therapy on some sexually sick Schizo; we'll let you know how it turns out.

There are two MMG undergrad students working in the lab this spring, **Marie Guyette** and **Cindy St. Hilaire**. It is likely that Cindy will stay for the summer and be joined by another undergrad, **Michelle Shepard**. It's great to have these students in the lab. Speaking of summer, will our buddy **Steve Horton** make yet another encore for the summer? Only time will tell. He will be here for the Mycological Society meeting held at UVM in late July. There will be a symposium to honor the late Dr. John Raper at which several of John and Cardy Raper's "scientific progeny" will speak, including Steve, **Lisa Vaillancourt**, and **Tom Fowler**; the session will be moderated (or perhaps stirred up) by Cardy. Tom has been honored as an invited speaker in the signal transduction session at the Cellular and Molecular Mycology Gordon Conference in June -- he has so many things to talk about he doesn't know what to say!

A surprise birthday party was held for Cardy Raper in January.



Left to right: Cardy Raper, Susan Wallace, Warren Schaeffer.

Photo courtesy of Tom Fowler.



Cardy Raper

Photo courtesy of Tom Fowler.

Also from the Raper Lab:

A Genetics Limerick

Was it God's will or was it just fate,
 little Gregor did not want to clean up his plate?
 He played with his peas
 said, "I'm studying these!"
 I bet to his mom that excuse wasn't great.

Welcome More New Members of MMG

Helen Brunelle, our new secretary. Helen comes to us from the Winooski School District. Their loss is our gain!

Wendy Cooper, technician in Sylvie Doublis's lab.

Shanti Jeedigunta, technician in Tom Lewis' lab.

Lauren Gonias, technician in Murry Stein's lab.

Laurie Miller, technician in Markus Thali's lab.

Chelsea Memming, technician in Greg Gilmartin's lab.

News from MMG Alumni

Chad Euler is working as a research assistant in Dr. Mark Shlomchik's lab at the Yale School of Medicine, Department of Laboratory Medicine/ Immunology, studying the roles and regulation, or lack thereof, of tolerance during development of B cells, which express Rheumatoid Factor, in mice with autoimmune disease similar to lupus and arthritis.

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Chili Cookoff

By: Stephanie Phelps

Beans or no beans? With meat or without? These are the questions that chili aficionados lose sleep over! Do you have a secret chili recipe that you brag to your friends about? Well, bring to the 1ST EVER MMG CHILI COOKOFF CONTEST on February 25th and let us be the judges. This party will be hosted by the Doublis, Kurjan and Teaching Labs who will provide the cornbread and all other essential chili condiments (except Pepcid AC or Beano). So individual members of the department or entire labs are encouraged to get cookin' and FIRE! Watch for the Chili Peppers on the flyers in the coming weeks for more information.

Presidential Scholar

Eleanor Rees, a first year student, and a Presidential Scholar, is a new major in our Department.

Our Department also has five Vermont Scholars. They are:

Devin Goss, '00
Kristin Clark, '00
Michael Florucci, '02
Sarah Cabral, '03
Cris Folley, Jr., '03

Bonjour from Montreal

By: Tom Fowler

What a fun and relaxing day we had in Montreal last month! Six of us (Peter Miller, Alia Merla, Cardy Raper, Tom Fowler, Stacey Gilk, Tom Lewis) headed north on a gorgeous winter day to watch a Montreal Canadiens hockey game, but the game was only a part of the enjoyment. The drive had its interesting features, such as seeing the ice fishers out on the lake and assessing the damage from the '98 ice storm that still scars the woods. Once in Montreal, we visited an archeology museum, Pointe-a-Calleire, near the old port. A lot to see there, but not nearly enough time to see it all because we were pleasantly sidetracked by lunch at the museum restaurant. We loved the European attitude about food and service, and we quickly became fond of the Canadian dollar. The hockey game, between the Canadiens and the Philly Flyers with their star from Vermont, John LeClair, featured four goals in the first period, several brief fights, one scary injury, great defense for the second, third and overtime periods, and it ended in a 2-2 tie. We had seats with the best view in the Molson Centre: we could see everyone from our perspective in the last row. Surprisingly, these were still pretty good seats for watching the game. After the game we went to a Vietnamese restaurant, finishing off the day with another delicious, relaxing, inexpensive meal. We learned several things on our trip: cross with the lights in the big city, get Canadian coins for meters and don't let the parking meter expire, you can get back more Canadian

dollars in change than you tendered in US dollars, and we want to go back to Montreal again in the spring.



Left side front to back: Peter Miller, Alia Merla, Cardy Raper. Right side front to back: Tom Fowler, Stacey Gilk, Tom Lewis.
Photo courtesy of Tom Fowler

Thanks!

Once again, thanks to **Warren Schaeffer** for scanning all the wonderful photographs! Also, thanks to everyone who submitted an article or some news!

