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[Making an Impact](#)



"It's time to pay the piper:" Thom McEvoy's new book on forests drives a blunt message home with forceful arguments. *(Photo: Bill DiLillo)*

Thom McEvoy had reached a point in his career where he felt the need to reflect on what he'd accomplished during his more than two decades as an associate professor and extension forester. He decided to take a brutally honest look in the mirror of his professional past, and he didn't like what he saw.

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[The Cormorant](#)

Conundrum Ongoing research took an unexpected turn on June 18, when Vermont Fish and Wildlife workers began shooting and trapping double-crested cormorants nesting on Lake Champlain's state-owned Young Island. David Capen, a research professor, lives within view of the island and studies the birds, but was surprised by the development.

[Reinventing the](#)

Wheel "I'm (looking for) my wheel of smell," says Jamie Miller, head cheesemaker at Shelburne Farms, as he thumbs through his thick three-ring binder of technical information on cheese. Miller was one of more than 20 artisan cheesemakers, researchers and experts who gathered June 16 at Shelburne Farms to become fluent in *fromage*.

THE WEEK IN VIEW

June 24, 8 p.m.
Holocaust Studies
lecture, with Oren
Stier. 427 Waterman.

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NEWS BRIEFS



Aleksandra Drizo (center) leads a tour of the newly built "constructed wetland" on Spear Street. (Photo: Sally McCay)

Constructed Wetlands Friendly to Environment, Farmers

It's not glamorous, but it sure is practical: A constructed wetland is scooped out of the ground with an earthmover, lined with local gravel, and linked to a barnyard with plastic pipes. Gravity draws the wastewater downward through the underground gravel cells, into a collection tank, and then disperses it over a swale, cleaned of its suspended soil and organic matter.

Such a wetland is also extremely environmentally friendly, says Aleksandra Drizo, research assistant professor of plant and soil science and the project manager of a prototype constructed wetland at the Paul Miller Research Center on Spear Street. The UVM wetland, which was first discussed in 2001 and went online in October, 2003, is designed to show Vermont's farmers the possibilities of an inexpensive innovation in agricultural water treatment that is widely used in Europe and other states but almost unknown here.

"It's simple, cheap and doesn't require any energy to operate," says Drizo, who came to UVM in February, after Cully Hession, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering, Don Ross, research assistant professor of plant and soil science, Donald Foss, Miller Manager Greg Eurich and others developed the wetland.

With about \$250,000 in current funding from the United States Department of Agriculture, money obtained by Sen. James Jeffords, Drizo is applying for additional grants and working with a team of three undergraduates and two graduate student to monitor the UVM wetland's performance and assess new technologies.

New High School Partnership Widens Recruiting Web

UVM has expanded its high school partnership initiative to include Burlington High School, the first Vermont school in the program. The university currently has partnership agreements in place with Christopher Columbus High School in the Bronx and the High School for Environmental Studies in Manhattan. The partnerships are designed to provide a college awareness program for high schools – particularly targeted to students whose parents have not attended college – while fostering diversity here.

"Creating an increasingly diverse student body at UVM is a key goal of my administration," said President Daniel Mark Fogel. "Living and learning with students from many different backgrounds enriches the college experience for everyone and is directly correlated to a high quality academic environment," he said. "Since it was launched in 1999, the partnership program has been a key element in the dramatic increase we've seen in applications and enrollments of students of color at UVM."

BHS was chosen for the partnership program because of its close proximity and because it has the largest population of students-of-color and recent immigrants in the state. During the just-ended school year, 14 percent of BHS students were African American, Latino/a, Native American or Asian American. The school also has a significant Bosnian population, at 4.5 percent. The number of ALANA and Bosnian students totals 206.

"When we were looking at expanding the partnership program, BHS was a logical choice," said Don Honeman, director of admissions and financial aid. "The diversity of the student body was a key part of the decision. But being in Burlington, BHS is also in our own backyard and provided an opportunity to add a new element to the strong relationship we are building with the Burlington community."

"The UVM partnership is a great addition to programs we're currently offering, especially for our growing ALANA, immigrant, and refugee populations," said Amy Mellencamp, principal of Burlington High School. "For students and families who don't have a lot of knowledge about post-secondary education, the partnership provides an opportunity to learn first hand how to prepare for college, how to be looked at favorably by college admissions offices, and how financial aid works."

UVM's partnership programs – which target students beginning in the ninth grade – are designed to promote early college awareness,

Drizo, whose previous research involved testing more than 60 materials for their ability to remove phosphorous, a major cause of lake pollution and algae blooms, from domestic and agricultural wastewater, will install new filters over the next month in a test area of the wetlands to monitor the effectiveness of various techniques and compounds in removing the chemical. In that research, tubes filled with a type of slag, a cheap byproduct of steel production, proved highly effective at filtering phosphorous. Drizo's goal now is to find sources of similar material in the Northeast and develop techniques that maximize its life as a filter. The work, she says, grows in importance as the regulatory landscape shifts.

"I believe that farmers will be obligated sooner or later to have a treatment method to control this kind of pollution," Drizo says.

Another significant parameter being tested at the facility is the use of aquatic plants, in this case river bulrush, to improve the wetland's effectiveness. Two of the 40-by-60-foot wetland cells are planted, the other two left as a control. Weekly water testing will compare the results between the two areas.

As the group works on phosphorous removal techniques and gathers enough data for research presentations on the system's overall performance, they will also broaden their outreach work, introducing farmers to the technology's potential with workshops, tours, consulting and a Web site. Drizo will approach this phase of her job with zeal.

"I really love what I do and believe in it with all my heart," she says.

UVM Research Finds Promise in New Diabetes Drug

Now at epidemic proportions, diabetes afflicts more than 18 million Americans and about 170 million people worldwide according to the Centers for Disease Control. At the recent American Diabetes Association scientific meeting in Orlando, Fla., findings regarding several new diabetes treatments, including an investigational drug studied by UVM Professor of Medicine Dr. Richard Pratley, suggest that better treatments are on the horizon.

The sixth leading cause of death in the United States, diabetes is a major contributor to heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney disease and leg and foot amputations. When patients are unable to adequately control blood sugar levels, these risks increase. At the ADA meeting, Pratley presented data on a Phase II study on a drug called LAF237.

"In this study, HbA1c levels – the primary long-term measure of blood sugar control – decreased significantly when LAF237 was added to a patient's course of therapy, and this benefit was maintained for one year," says Pratley. "Bringing patients to an ideal HbA1c level early in the disease process and maintaining those levels for as long as possible is critical to the management

provide counseling to students and families about financial aid opportunities, offer individual counseling sessions to students, pair UVM faculty with high school faculty in their academic disciplines, and provide high school college counselors with realistic assessments of students' readiness to attend UVM.

Since the first partnership was launched in 1999, the university has enrolled 69 ALANA students from partnership high schools, including 62 from Christopher Columbus, making it the largest feeder school during the period. Between 1999 and 2003, UVM's ALANA population increased by 50 percent to 494 students.

Although such programs often benefit UVM, they are meant to be general in scope. "The partnerships are designed to educate students about college in a general way, not to focus strictly on UVM," said Honeman. "One of the reasons we've been successful is that students can see that we're sincere in wanting to provide them with a map as much as a point them to a destination." P> The programs are also open to all students, he said. "The partnership programs are most beneficial to students whose parents haven't been to college, and that is often the ALANA and immigrant populations," Honeman said. "But white students from college-educated families are also welcome and have participated at the other high schools with whom we have partnership agreements."

While the details and schedule of partnership activities have yet to be worked out, Honeman and Mellencamp said the following is planned for next year:

- UVM's admissions staff will meet with college counselors at Burlington High School and advise them of the college readiness of BHS students.
- Admissions staff will conduct pre-college activities, such as application review workshops, that supplement other programs at the high school.
- Financial aid staff will be available to conduct workshops on need-based aid for students and families.
- UVM will work with its faculty to encourage connections to BHS faculty. BHS would especially like to encourage faculty-of-color to become a presence at the school.
- UVM will explore ways to expand opportunities for its students to mentor BHS students.
- UVM's director of admissions will participate in a freshman and parent orientation program at BHS to outline the relationship between the institutions and the various elements of the partnership.

The University Makes News in May

A professor emeritus's role in the new World War II monument, insight into bone loss treatment and a take from a Saudi Arabia expert on oil prices were some of the major national stories featuring UVM and its faculty during May.

of type 2 diabetes, making these findings very encouraging."

Part of a new class of oral anti-diabetes agents, LAF237 increases the levels of an incretin hormone called GLP-1, which helps the body better use insulin, protects important insulin-releasing cells in the pancreas, and helps the body feel full after a meal.

In this phase II study, LAF237 was added to a standard diabetes treatment called metformin in patients whose disease was not adequately controlled by the metformin alone. The goal of this phase of the research was to assess the safety and dosing of LAF237 and to make initial efficacy evaluations. The 12-week, randomized, double-masked, multi-center, placebo-controlled study compared LAF237 and placebo in previously diet-treated patients with type 2 diabetes.

According to Pratley, treatment with LAF237 for 12 weeks reduced HbA1c levels by 0.6 percent compared to placebo in the group as a whole. In patients whose HbA1c level was higher at baseline, there was a greater effect, with average reductions in HbA1c of 1.2 percent. This study suggests that LAF237 is well-tolerated and efficacious in patients with type 2 diabetes.

Based on the strength of these data and other findings from phase II studies, the pharmaceutical company Novartis, which funds the LAF237 research, launched a full phase III clinical trial program for LAF237 earlier this year. Studies on the drug are continuing at UVM; patients with diabetes can contact Julie Martin at 847-8913 to get more information about the trial.

Lamentations Ladies on the Move

"Lamentations," a sculpture group of five female figures created from recycled automobile steel, has long been a fixture on campus, nestled in a grove south of UVM's Fleming Museum. Now, the women have moved to temporary new digs in a Burlington gallery.

Created in 1989 by the late Vermont artist Judith Brown, the 1992 recipient of the Vermont Art Council's Walter Cerf Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts, Lamentations was inspired by a dance piece of the same title by choreographer Martha Graham. The Stettenheim Foundation donated the sculpture to the university in 1993, following the artist's wishes to bequeath the piece to a Vermont institution.

Since then, routine maintenance has failed to remedy the rapidly spreading rust inside the sculpture group, and the effects of weather, accumulated debris and vandalism have brought the piece close to the brink of disintegration. Professional art conservators have recommended that the sculpture be moved indoors as soon as possible and restored.

"We are sorry to see the departure of this monumental sculptural group that has delighted the UVM community and visitors for the past 10 years," said Fleming Museum Director Janie

UVM-related stories included:

- **Memorial Day Monument Dedication:** Associated Press, *Newsday*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Douglas Kinnard, professor emeritus of political science and veteran, helped design and raise money for the WWII monument dedicated in Washington, D.C., on Memorial Day weekend. Kinnard, now 82, taught at UVM from 1973 to 1984.
- **Treating Bone Loss:** *Chicago Tribune*. Dr. Edward Leib, professor of medicine and director of UVM's Osteoporosis Center, was featured in a May 12 *Chicago Tribune* article on osteopenia, a condition characterized by low bone mass that often leads to osteoporosis. "Does it make sense to treat this woman, who has a very low risk of fracture over the next several years, for close to \$1,000 per year – the cost of bisphosphonate, calcium, vitamin D and doctor's visits?" said Leib. "She could wait several years and be treated when her risks increase."
- **On Oil and Terror in Saudi Arabia:** *New York Times*, *New York Daily News*, *USA Today*. A story on Saudi Arabia's control of oil prices published in the May 16 issue of the *New York Times* quoted Gregory Gause, professor of political science and director of UVM's Middle East Studies program. "The prominent consideration now, as far as oil prices are concerned, is whether it's in the country's economic self-interest to have them where they're at," Gause said. Gause spoke to national outlets about possible connections between Saudi royals and Sept. 11 and attacks on Americans in the country.
- **Nicotine Therapy:** Multiple national outlets. Dr. Paul Newhouse, professor of psychiatry and director of the Clinical Neuroscience Research Unit, discussed his nicotine therapy studies in an *Orlando Sentinel* feature article May 16, in a live interview on Southern California Public Radio's "Talk of the City" program May 19 and as a guest on the syndicated program "Radio Health Journal" May 23.
- **Bird Behavior:** *Los Angeles Times*, *New Scientist*, *The Economist*. Bernd Heinrich, professor emeritus of biology, published a new book, *The Geese of Beaver Bog*, chronicling the Canadian geese that nest each spring by his Richmond, Vt., home. In a related story, the May 13 issue of *The Economist* reported on a study by Heinrich and visiting scholar Thomas Bugnyar, which analyzed how ravens respond to human gaze.

For the complete May edition of "UVM in the News," which is published by University Communications, visit [UVM in the News](#).

Cohen. "But it needs a more protective environment."

The university's Sculpture Committee has found a preliminary indoor home for Lamentations in the FlynnDog Gallery at 208 Flynn Ave., thanks to the generosity of gallery stewards Bren Alvarez and David Farrington. Piece by piece, the sculpture group was moved June 2 to the FlynnDog, where it will be on public display from June 4 through August 2004. The FlynnDog will store Lamentations at no cost for one year while the university makes decisions regarding its restoration.

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Exhibit Peers at Vermont Through Postcards

A selection of Vermont postcards from Special Collections at UVM's Bailey/Howe Library will be on display at the Fleming Museum from July 1 through Sept. 19. The postcards depict a variety of subjects including the historic 1927 flood, mountain peaks, and covered bridges. Through these images, the exhibition explores Vermont's identity as a tourist destination and the idealization of New England life.

In Vermont, picture postcards reached their zenith in the first decades of the 20th century as the state's residents and visitors celebrated its natural beauty and its industrial achievements. An informal, quick, and inexpensive means of communication, the postcard enabled Vermonters and visitors to share information about events, vacations, and local landmarks.

Among the postcards on view are landscape views of Mount Mansfield, bird's-eye views of Bellows Falls and St. Johnsbury, an early image of Fanny Allen Hospital with the reassuring note "all OK" written on the back, and a view of Camp Abnaki from the 1940s that delivered a child's request to return home. Vermont's development as a tourist destination, from its earliest years as a rural idyll through the ski resorts of the present day, can be traced through the postcards on view.

Museum admission is free to UVM faculty, staff and students. Information:

www.flemingmuseum.org

Conference Aims to Share Insight Into Making Cities More Sustainable

Sustainable Communities 2004, a conference sponsored by the University of Vermont's Gund Institute of Ecological Economics with regional and national partners, will take place in Burlington from July 14-18.

The conference's goal is to allow community leaders to come together to share their experiences, to learn from each other, and to find the common ground among the diverse issues they face. In the conference, examples from many cities will demonstrate how to use a participatory approach and how to apply vision, principles, and criteria that shape effective strategies.

The event is presented by Global Communities Initiatives. Information: [Sustainable Communities 2004](#)

Robots to Run Wild During Engineering Institute

Building robots capable of climbing hills and waving flags out of spare parts will be the objective of 20 high school teams competing in the UVM/GIV Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Sciences Summer Institute.

Approximately 75 Vermont high school students will use parts from old computers, VCR's, remote control cars and other electrical components to create the robots during the week of June 20-27. The final competition will take place between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. on June 26 in front of Sears at the University Mall.

The students will do finish work on their robots on June 24 in the Simpson Dining Hall before an audience that will include President Daniel Mark Fogel and Richard Cate, the Vermont Commissioner of Education, Jean Olsen of the Governor's Institute and Robert Jenkins, dean of the College of Engineering and Mathematics.

The competition is part of the weeklong event sponsored by College of Engineering and Mathematics, the Governor's Institutes of Vermont and the Vermont Space Grant Consortium. It allows students to explore engineering, mathematics and computer science for eight days and seven nights.

The Summer Institute also gives students a look into some potential career opportunities in aerospace, biomedical, civil, mechanical and electrical engineering as well as statistics, mathematics, and computer applications. Tours of IBM, Husky, the Burlington Waste Water Facility, the Chittenden Materials Facility, the Intervale Compost Facility, Ben & Jerry's Homemade Plant, the McNeil Plant, and the Winooski Dam are also planned.

Former Vermont Gov. Madeline Kunin is scheduled to speak at 7 p.m. on June 25 at the Music Recital Hall on Redstone for teacher Recognition Night.

For more information, contact Dawn Densmore at 656-8748.



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Awards and Honors

Dr. **Jan Carney**, associate dean for public health and research professor of medicine, was recently awarded a UVM Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning Planning & Implementation Grant for Service-Learning. Titled "Public Health Projects in the Vermont Integrated Curriculum at the College of Medicine: creating opportunities for students to take on leadership roles in public health," the grant will help cover expenses for a national meeting where a student project poster has been accepted for presentation. This experience will both provide exposure for select student projects in a national public health research forum, as well as help students develop leadership roles through the presentation of project findings to a national audience. Dr. Carney was recognized at the CUPS Celebration of Service-Learning and Recognition Reception on April 28 in Waterman Manor, where President Fogel served as the guest speaker.

Judy Cohen was one of four faculty who participated in the Faculty Resource Network at New York University, the first group of UVM faculty to take part in the new program. She attended the Network Summer Faculty Enrichment Program in Foundations of Service Learning. The other faculty involved were **Charles Rathbone**, associate professor of education; **James Hoffman**, associate professor of botany; and Yolanda Flores, associate professor of romance languages.

The **College of Medicine Class of 2004** announced the following faculty and staff awards at both the Senior Class Award Ceremony on May 20 and at Commencement May 23: Clinical Department of the Year: Pediatrics at Fletcher Allen Health Care; Basic Science Department of the Year: Pathology; Clinical Teacher of the Year: Dr. **Lewis First**, professor and chair of pediatrics; Basic Science Teacher of the Year: Dr. **Nicholas Hardin**, professor of pathology; American Medical Student Association Golden Apple Award: **Beth Hart**, professor emerita of biochemistry; American Medical Women's Association Gender Equity Award: Dr. **Sharon Mount**, professor of pathology, and Dr. **Virginia Eddy**, clinical associate professor of surgery, Maine Medical Center; Colette Award (inspired by former student affairs staff member Colette Ozarowski for significant contribution to the quality of student life): **Nini Anger**, of the office of student affairs; Dignity in Medicine Award (in recognition of the respect, inclusion, and support for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered students, faculty, staff, and patients): Dr. **Marga Sproul**, associate dean for student affairs. The class also honored Dr. **Peter Cataldo**, associate professor of surgery, with the Howe Outstanding Teacher of Surgery Prize for 2004. The award recognizes the senior medical school class' choice for outstanding teacher of surgery.

Declan Connolly, associate professor of physical education and director of UVM's Human Performance Lab, was elected president of the New England chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine at the ACSM's annual meeting on June 3 in Indianapolis. Connolly takes office on Nov. 7.

Paula Fives-Taylor, professor emerita of microbiology and molecular genetics, has been elected to Fellowship in the American Academy of Microbiology. This fellowship honors Fives-Taylor's important contributions to the field of oral microbiology, including her landmark research on the role of adhesions -- cellular or bacterial components that help microorganisms adhere to inanimate surfaces -- as well as her study on how a microorganism causing endocarditis and other serious infections, employs proteins and thread-like structures called fimbriae to adhere to a surface, among other work. New fellows are elected annually through a highly selective, peer-reviewed process, based on their records of scientific achievement and original contributions that have advanced microbiology.

Bernd Heinrich, professor emeritus of biology, has been elected to membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, an organization founded by John Adams in 1780 to bring together leading figures from universities, government, business and the creative arts to exchange ideas and promote knowledge in the public interest.

Charles Irvin, professor of medicine and director of the Vermont Lung Center and the Asthma Clinical Research Center at the University of Vermont, was awarded the Joseph R. Rodarte Award for Scientific Distinction by the Assembly on Respiratory Structure and Function of the American Thoracic Society at the society's annual meeting in Orlando on May 24.

Three nutritionists from the Nutrition and Food Science Department have been named to the editorial staff of *Eating Well* magazine. Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences **Rachel Johnson** is the magazine's senior nutrition advisor, **Jean Harvey-Berino**, the department chair, was named nutrition advisor and Clinical Research Supervisor **Carol Frary** will be the quarterly's nutrition researcher.

Larry Myott, a 28-year Extension maple specialist, was inducted in the North American Maple Museum "Hall of Fame" for his efforts to support the international maple industry.

Dr. **Terry Rabinowitz**, associate professor of psychiatry, has been selected as a Frymoyer Scholar for the 2005 and 2006 academic years for his proposal on "Development and Implementation of a Telepsychiatry Consultation Teaching Program." His proposal addresses the many and often complex needs of our geriatric population. Named for John W. and Nan P. Frymoyer, the Frymoyer Scholars Program supports clinicians who are actively engaged in teaching medical and nursing students and promotes teaching that emphasizes the art of patient care. Frymoyer scholars are awarded up to \$25,000 a year for two years to develop innovative, educational products or programs and to improve their teaching skills.

Burt Wilcke, chair of the Department of Biomedical Technologies, has received support from the Center for Public Health Laboratory Leadership and the Association of Public Health Laboratories to help evaluate the impact of the workforce shortage and changing educational needs on the public health laboratory system in the US.

Publications and Presentations

Judy Cohen, professor of nursing, **Mary Val Palumbo**, research associate of nursing, **Betty Rambur**, dean of nursing, and **Joan Mongeon**, data analyst in medical biostatistics, published "Middle School Students' Perceptions of an Ideal Career and a Career in Nursing," in the *Journal of Professional Nursing*

Bernd Heinrich has published *The Geese of Beaver Bog* (HarperCollins Publishers) in which he writes on his recent observations on the Canadian geese that have colonized the beaver bog near his Vermont home. Via Peep, a goose born on the author's lawn, we learn about the species' breeding, nesting, and defense of their territory each spring, along with unusual behaviors that Heinrich not only illustrates but ultimately tries to explain. Other geese come and go as Heinrich rushes from his house to the bog, often before dawn, scrupulously tying in what he sees with scientific knowledge.

Toni Kaeding, research associate of nursing, and **Betty Rambur** published two articles, "Recruiting Knowledge, Not Just Nurses" in the *Journal of Professional Nursing* and "Rural Nurse Leadership Project," in *Policy, Politics & Nursing Practice*.

Deborah O'Rourke, assistant professor of physical therapy, published "The Measurement of Pain in Infants, Children, and Adolescents: From Policy to Practice" in *Physical Therapy*.

Alan Wertheimer, professor of political science, was an invited speaker at the National Institutes of Health/University of Sao Paulo School of Medicine Conference on Ethical Aspects of Clinical Research in Sao Paulo, Brazil, June 8-9, 2004. Wertheimer spoke on "Exploitation in Clinical Research in Developing

Countries."

Charitable Activities

A group of 10 College of Medicine students, faculty and friends, led by third-year medical student and MS patient **Alicia Guilford**, raised \$4445 for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society at the annual Vermont MS Walk in April. The UVM Medical Alumni Association donated Dr. Moo t-shirts for walkers to wear. College of Medicine 2004 MS Walk team members included **Beth Hart**, professor emerita of biochemistry; 2004 graduate **Faye Blacker**; fourth-year medical students **Selin Caglar**, **Miki Ford** and **Gina Trachimowicz**; third-year medical student **Greg Rudolph**; second-year medical student **Anne Coates**; and dean's office staff member **Matt Johnson**.

Transitions

Beverly Colston has been selected as the Director of the ALANA Student Center. Beverly has served as the Interim Director of the ALANA Student Center during the 2003-04 academic year, and prior to that she was the Student Services Representative at the center.

This past academic year **Dorothea Brauer** was promoted from Coordinator of LGBTQ Services to director. Brauer has enjoyed a long and successful tenure here; under her leadership LGBTQ Services has influenced the university in a manner well exceeding the size and resources of the department.

LuAnn Rolley has accepted the position of Interim Director of the Women's Center. She has worked at the Women's Center as a grant writer and Project Director for the Campus Gender Violence Project and as a data manager for the four Comprehensive Care Clinics located in the state of Vermont. She served on the President's Commission on the Status of Women from 1997-2000 and served as co-chair from 1998-2000. A national search will be conducted for the director position in the spring.

May 26, 2004

Connell Gallagher, director for library research collections, gave a presentation on "Archiving the Records of Congress" at the biannual meeting of the Association of the Centers for the Study of Congress. The conference was held at the Wilson Center in Washington on May 5-6, 2004.

Linda Hunter, clinical assistant professor of nursing, recently had her manuscript, "Becoming a Midwife Teacher," accepted for publication in the August/September edition of the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses *Lifelines* journal.

Brenda Hamel-Bissell, professor of nursing, was recently selected by the Faculty to be as faculty ombudperson. She will serve a three-year term.

May 19, 2004

Awards and Honors

Kerry Sibert, a senior medical student, gave a poster presentation that was one of five out of 100 to win an award at the American Telemedicine Association, which took place in Tampa, Fla. on May 2-5.

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Making an Impact

A forester's disenchantment with his discipline sparks an award-winning (but controversial) book

By Jon Reidel



"It's time to pay the piper:" Thom McEvoy's new book on forests drives a blunt message home with forceful arguments. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Thom McEvoy had reached a point in his career where he felt the need to reflect on what he'd accomplished during his more than two decades as an associate professor and extension forester in The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources.

But this would be no self-gratifying walk down memory lane. Instead, McEvoy decided to take a brutally honest look at his professional past,

and he didn't like what he saw.

"I was increasingly feeling like a tool of industry," McEvoy says. "I was sitting in meetings with forestry peers hearing things that I totally disagreed with and discovered that I was the only one in the room who felt that way. I felt like my whole career had been a farce. I realized that I'd advocated a lot of things that were wrong. It's the professional equivalent of a dentist pulling teeth they shouldn't have pulled."

The end result of this midlife reflection is a cutting-edge book on forest management based on what McEvoy calls a "series of epiphanies." He cautions, however, that his second book, *Positive Impact Forestry* (Island Press), is not an attempt to bare his soul in over 268 pages, but rather is an attempt to set the record straight on forestry practices, and more importantly, to offer a new approach to managing forests that meets the needs of landowners while maintaining the integrity of forest ecosystems.

'Positive' instead of 'low' impact forestry

Named "Best Forestry Book of the Year" for 2004 by the National Forestry Association, *Positive Impact Forestry* proposes an entirely new way of managing and enhancing forest ecosystems that is at odds with much of the discipline's conventional thinking. McEvoy says he knew when writing the book that its provocative content was "capable of ending someone's career."

From the outset, McEvoy makes clear his intentions to expose certain commonly held truths within the industry that he now sees as wrong. He admits to remaining in denial even after having these "mini-epiphanies," which he lists in his book. He describes current timber management, for example, as "simply the act of juggling trade-offs between volumes and values that involve periodic reductions in tree densities."

Some of his long-held beliefs, which he later disavowed with age and more experience, were ingrained early in his career.

"I realized that the forest management planning concept I learned as a student



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The Cormorant Conundrum

Ongoing research took an unexpected turn on June 18, when Vermont Fish and Wildlife workers began shooting and trapping double-crested cormorants nesting on Lake Champlain's state-owned Young Island. David Capen, a research professor, lives within view of the island and studies the birds, but was surprised by the development.

Reinventing the Wheel

"I'm (looking for) my wheel of smell," says Jamie Miller, head cheesemaker at Shelburne Farms, as he thumbs through his thick three-ring binder of technical information on cheese. Miller was one of more than 20 artisan cheesemakers, researchers and experts who gathered June 16 at Shelburne Farms to become fluent in *fromage*.

is ridiculously out of sync with 'forest time' and that true stewardship is meaningless unless planning crosses generations," he writes.

"The reason I don't fear writing about these things is that I'm comfortable enough in my career and life to be able to say provocative things," McEvoy says. "If we all sit cowering in the back of the room change would never happen. It doesn't have to be a dirty secret."

Investing in 'forest time'

A review in *Northern Woodlands* magazine describes the book as an approach to management that combines state-of-the-art science with some of the old-world tenets of sustainable forestry practice. "For McEvoy," writes reviewer Alan Calfee, "the difference between 'low impact' and 'positive impact' is 'the difference between activities that merely avoid impacts and those that craft impacts to optimize ecosystem values while also providing benefits.'"

This may not sound like a particularly contentious or revolutionary suggestion to the uninitiated, but it comes with serious costs – ones that McEvoy says most private landowners trying to make a living couldn't sustain under the current economic system. He offers ways to change certain obstacles, such as the current property-based tax structure, in the way of practicing positive impact forestry.

McEvoy says he knows many people will perceive his ideas as too radical and not economically feasible. Although he's yet to hear any negative feedback, he expects to get his first taste in August at a New Jersey Society of Foresters conference that will also be attended by loggers and land owners.

"I'm surprised no one has said 'this guy is crazy.' I realize that if someone owns a forest and they have a sick kid who needs money for medical attention, they're not going to change their practices. And I don't blame them. Neither would I. They'll say 'how can anyone pay the costs of these changes?'. The problem is in the very nature of taxation. It's set up so that people have to extract cash from the forest. Regulation is the only way to change that."

Part of the problem is that forests are viewed in the same context as corporate America, McEvoy says. With company executives having a fiduciary responsibility to shareholders, proper forest management is often the last thing to be considered. "There's an unreasonable emphasis on profitability."

McEvoy says people expect returns on their investments sooner than forests can provide them on what he calls 'forest time.' "If you have a good investment, the last thing you want to do is sell. You leave it alone and let it grow. The time frame we think about for a return period isn't close to being compatible with forest time. We should be thinking in terms of 300, 400 and 500 years.

"We've been blessed with great natural resources and we've squandered it. And now it's time to pay the piper and make it right."

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The Cormorant Conundrum

Study into managing troublesome birds takes a turn when the shooting begins

By Cheryl Dorschner



Doctoral student Adam Duerr, left, and Wildlife and Fisheries Biology Professor David Capen, along with several colleagues, study the devastation of several Lake Champlain islands wrought by overpopulation of double-crested cormorants. (Photo: Cheryl Dorschner)

Ongoing research took an unexpected turn on June 18, when Vermont Fish and Wildlife workers began shooting and trapping double-crested cormorants nesting on Lake Champlain's state-owned Young Island, saying that other efforts have not control the burgeoning bird population as biologists had hoped. With federal permission, the state workers are allowed to take up to 10 percent of the troublesome colony – about 300 birds.

David Capen, a research professor, lives within

view of the island and studies cormorants, but was surprised by the development. "I woke up and saw through my spotting scope there were no birds on the nests and cormorants everywhere in the sky. I had no idea what was going on," he says. "When I got in the boat I thought I was going to chase someone off the island. Then I saw the wildlife services boat."

Capen has been tracking these birds since 1995, as have fellow UVM scientists Therese Donovan, Donna Parrish and doctoral candidate Adam Duerr, along with Cornell University Professor Milo Richmond and others. The cooperative project has nearly \$200,000 in current funding, including money from the fish and wildlife department. Other money is from the Lake Champlain Sea Grant and the Berryman Institute.

Neutral observation

Capen doesn't take sides on the issue of controlling the population of this species through shooting.

"Our role is to provide the scientific evidence to help wildlife managers make informed decisions," says Capen. "Purely from the research standpoint, it's fine (that they're shooting). We now have the opportunity to test what has only been an opinion of ours – that disturbing the colony will cause the surviving birds to abandon the colony and relocate – the real test will be next year. My guess is that the numbers in this colony will drop much lower than the number they shoot. And I'm sure we'll see more birds on Four Brothers, Missisquoi, Crown Point and in Quebec, Ontario and western New York."

The cormorant study involves other scientists in these locations and who report sightings of banded birds. All totaled, UVM researchers have put identification bands on some 1,200 birds that inhabit this area of Lake Champlain – 724 currently residing in the area.

"If they show up elsewhere, we'll know why. We already got a report from

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Positive Impact Forestry

Thom McEvoy had reached a point in his career where he felt the need to reflect on what he'd accomplished during his more than two decades as an associate professor and extension forester. He decided to take a brutally honest look in the mirror of his professional past, and he didn't like what he saw.

Reinventing the Wheel

"I'm (looking for) my wheel of smell," says Jamie Miller, head cheesemaker at Shelburne Farms, as he thumbs through his thick three-ring binder of technical information on cheese. Miller was one of more than 20 artisan cheesemakers, researchers and experts who gathered June 16 at Shelburne Farms to become fluent in *fromage*.

Quebec of four bird sightings after Friday's shooting," Capen said. And this week, we've seen birds from Oneida Lake (New York) that are looking for a place to breed. These birds are traveling far."

Duerr agrees, saying, "The biggest advantage we have is that we have a cooperative effort with several areas in New York and Canada and we share information and sightings. The whole point of the studies is to see how management affects the bird population."

Duerr and Capen were surprised last weekend when they arrived on Young Island to band birds and found the whole colony acting strangely, mating and building nests as if it were April instead of June.

As a population-management technique, eggs on Young Island had been sprayed with a light film of corn oil to stop them from hatching without interrupting the birds' nesting activity – the lack of interruption is important, because if these birds abandon their nests, they will build another one and lay more eggs. The shooting caused the survivors to abandon their nests, possibly to breed again.

"The question is, can they lay a new clutch of eggs and hatch and fledge those birds by the end of September? They're right at the edge of their ability to do that given the calendar," says Duerr.

The cormorant conundrum

Of the estimated 20,000 cormorants that inhabit this area of Lake Champlain, Capen estimates that 98 percent reside on Young and nearby Four Brothers islands – an area of barely eight acres. Four Brothers is just 20 miles away as the cormorant flies and is owned by the Nature Conservancy, which has chosen not to oil these nests. While most native and rare bird species have left Young Island, Four Brothers is home to black crowned night heron, cattle egret, great egrets – "perhaps the only ones in the Lake Champlain area," says Capen, and glossy ibis. Both islands are home to the endangered Caspian tern.

"By disturbing nests, I think (the state is) going to be putting at risk the birds that they're trying to save," Capen says. "Just because these birds are in somebody else's jurisdiction doesn't mean they shouldn't be concerned. Otherwise I wouldn't object to this approach."

The primary reason for trying to control this waterfowl, which is a nuisance along both coasts and on several large lakes, is its ability to devastate a habitat quickly and force out other species. Just six years ago the two Lake Champlain islands were lush with basswoods and white pines and verdant undergrowth. Now the steep, sandy cliffs are held together only by a tough growth of burdock and stinging nettles. The earth and the silver bones of these tree-forms are covered with the white chalky guano. In addition to the chalky dust, the air is filled with a sound best described by the birders bible *The Sibley Guide to Birds* as "hoarse bullfrog-like grunting."

"Running out of food supply is the only thing that will curtail the population," Capen says. "And that is unlikely for a long time. But for now, we've got a lot of banded birds out there, and we've got a very good chance of documenting any management technique's effect."

And so the scientist waits and watches to find out what the latest chapter of the cormorant saga will bring.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Reinventing the Wheel

UVM helps cheesemakers add science and business to their art

By Cheryl Dorschner



Linda Dimmick (right), a cheesemaker at Neighborly Farm, sniffs a wedge of cheese during a training session sponsored by a new UVM institute. (Photo: Cheryl Dorschner)

"I'm (looking for) my wheel of smell," says Jamie Miller, head cheesemaker at Shelburne Farms, as he thumbs through a thick three-ring binder that serves as a primer in how to describe the appearance, taste, aroma and feel of cheese. He was searching for accurate words to describe the aroma of a chunk of raw-milk, organic cheddar cheese.

His instructor taps a button on her computer and the cheesemakers' equivalent of a huge color wheel flashes onto the screen, with an arc of adjectives like floral, toasted, spiced, fruity, lactic and animal.

Miller was one of more than 20 artisan cheesemakers, researchers and experts who gathered June 16 at Shelburne Farms to become fluent in *fromage*. This workshop and press conference officially launched the University of Vermont's Vermont Institute of Artisan Cheese – the first organization in the country dedicated to providing professional education, applied research, and technical and marketing support to makers of hand-crafted cheese. Sales in the gourmet/specialty cheese market will reach \$2.9 billion by 2005, according to analysis from Iowa State University.

The institute is intended to help the state preserve and extend its strong position in that large and fast-growing market. UVM has received \$500,000 for the program thanks to the efforts of U.S. Sen. James M. Jeffords (D-Vt.), the John Merck Fund and a private donor. The institute resides in the Carrigan Dairy Science Building on campus.

Getting fluent in *fromage*

At the June 16 event Miller attended, VIAC research associate Montserrat Almendra-Aliste led the group through practical sessions and traditional grading exercises; prompting her audience to learn the lexicon of cheese much the way wine aficionados speak eloquently of viniculture.

Participants worked their way through 29 different scents from fresh butter to rancid Romano in unmarked vials. They sampled seven flavored ricottas and learned to distinguish textures with a platter of fruit, vegetables, sausages and cookies. An hour after they marked up their four-page cheese evaluation sheets, Almendra-Aliste handed back computer tabulations of their grading.

By the end of the day, cheesemaker Miller was remarking that a certain cheddar showed "a quick acid (flavor), then leveled out to a creamy with a sour dip at the end."



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The Cormorant Conundrum

Ongoing research took an unexpected turn on June 18, when Vermont Fish and Wildlife workers began shooting and trapping double-crested cormorants nesting on Lake Champlain's state-owned Young Island. David Capen, a research professor, lives within view of the island and studies the birds, but was surprised by the development.

Supporting small cheese producers through research and technical training is a new idea here, but it's common in other parts of the world.

"This institute has been modeled after centers in Europe. Such assistance is virtually absent in the U.S. for artisan and small-scale cheesemakers," said Catherine Donnelly, professor of nutrition and food sciences at UVM. Donnelly co-directs the institute with Paul Kindstedt, also a professor of nutrition and food science at UVM.

UVM is a natural home for the institute because of its "reputation of excellence in dairy food and dairy nutrition research," says department chair Jean Harvey-Berino. "Rarely do food scientists interact so intimately with nutritionists and rarely do nutritionists get so involved in understanding the production, development and distribution side of agriculture. In Vermont we live close to the land."

Despite this stature, artisan cheesemakers face a variety of challenges that the institute can help address. "Cheesemakers contend with increasingly complex regulations, challenges around quality assurance and food safety and mounting competitive pressures," Donnelly said.

Science and outreach

The institute's research program, which the appropriation from Sen. Jeffords supports, may be the most urgent part of the center's mission. As the federal Food and Drug Administration is considering mandatory pasteurization of all milk used in cheesemaking, which would eliminate many of the full-flavored cheeses produced on the farmstead, VIAC hopes to define the safety parameters of raw-milk cheeses to make the case against pasteurization. "These cheeses have enjoyed a remarkable food safety record, and we hope to elucidate the scientific basis for microbiological safety," Donnelly says.

Neighborly Farms of Randolph Center, Vt., for example, is known for its raw-milk cheddar. "As we did our marketing analysis, we found out there was no raw milk, organic, farmstead cheddar on the market in New England. We decided to fill this niche, and it has really worked out well for us," says cheesemaker Linda Dimmick, who attended the June 16 Shelburne event.

A thriving artisan cheese industry would play a significant role in the state's agricultural economy. The Vermont Institute of Artisan Cheese, Donnelly says, also "expects to make a strong contribution to dairy science, both nationally and internationally."

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