

[NEWS BRIEFS](#)[EVENTS](#)[NOTABLES](#)[SEARCH](#)[PRINT THIS ISSUE](#)[PRINT PAST ISSUES](#)[FEEDBACK](#)[UVM HOMEPAGE](#)

[Rescue During the Holocaust](#)



University Scholar David Scrase will discuss rescue and caring during the Holocaust in his Sept. 29 lecture. (Photo: Farrel Duncan)

In reading and thinking about those who risked their lives to save others during the Holocaust, in talking with both the rescuers and the rescued, it is hard to escape an insistent personal question.

[FULL STORY ►](#)

PREVIOUS ISSUE

[Convocation Poses Questions, Challenge](#)

[Fall Community Medical School Begins Sept. 21](#)

[Forum Will Discuss Public Art Issues](#)

[Major Donation Paves Way For Construction of Turf Field](#)

[Speaker Tackles Public Education 'Crisis'](#)

[The Things That Matter at Life's End](#)

[Wilderness Then and Now](#)

["Step By Step" Walking Challenge Starts Friday](#)

[Boston Celtics to Practice at Patrick Gym](#)

[Campus Mourns the Loss of Dean Joan Smith](#)

[War and Healing](#)

[Academia &](#)

[Government](#) Bud Meyers is back. The associate professor of education, who spent four years in Montpelier as the Vermont deputy commissioner of education through the university's faculty leave of absence policy, has returned to Waterman and the teaching duties he performed since 1971.

[Serious Horse Play](#)

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THE WEEK IN VIEW

Sept. 22, 7 p.m.
Symposium:
"Burlington Sculpture Worth Saving," with speakers, artists, historians and advocates of public sculpture. North Lounge, Billings Student Center.
Information: 656-8057

Sept. 22, 6 p.m.
Concert: UVM Lane Series presents pianist Peter Serkin. UVM Recital Hall.
Information: [Lane Series](#)

Sept. 23, 5:30 p.m.
Lecture: "The Orchid Thief Reimagined" with Jane Kent, assistant professor, art department. Fleming Museum.
Information: [Fleming](#) or 656-0750.

Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m.
Concert: UVM Lane Series presents "The Choir of Trinity College" from Melbourne, Australia. UVM Recital Hall.

Sept. 27, 3:30 p.m.
Lecture: "And They Spoiled the Egyptians: The Plundering of Ancient Egypt and the Nile" with Brian Fagan of the University of California, Santa Barbara. Memorial Lounge, Waterman.
Information:

NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

NEWS BRIEFS



At the watershed field day on Saturday in South Burlington's Butler Farms neighborhood, UVM researcher Joe Bartlett (from right) showed neighbors Greg Lothrop and Lisa Yankowski some of the beneficial insects that live in the Potash Brook tributary nearby. (Photo: Cheryl Dorschner)

Research and Grant Awards Hit Another High

Research and grant awards at the University of Vermont reached an all time high of \$124.7 million in 2003/2004, topping last year's total of \$117.5 million by more than six percent. The total number of awards matched the record of 712, a mark first set in 2002.

This year's performance continues a strong upward trend in the university's research program that has seen total awards increase 67 percent over the fiscal 2000 total of \$74.5 million.

"We're very pleased about both the size of this year's total award and the way it is distributed over so many colleges and schools," said Frances Carr, vice president for research and graduate studies. "Faculty throughout the university are demonstrating that their research projects have the kind of quality that will attract grants from the top sponsors in their fields."

Projects receiving federal awards include:

- Mass Media Intervention to Prevent Youth Smoking, led by John Worden, research professor of family practice
- Northeast Sustainable Agriculture and Research Education program, Frederick Magdoff, professor of plant and soil science
- Rural Ecology and Coping with HIV Stigma, Sondra Solomon, assistant

Remembering Joan Smith

Family, friends and colleagues of Joan Smith, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, filled Ira Allen Chapel on Sept. 17 to celebrate the life of a "remarkable woman" who loved to cook, loved to laugh and "invented multi-tasking" as she pursued advanced education and a successful career in academia as she raised five children.

Smith died at home in Hartland, Vt. on Sept. 10, nine years and 15 surgeries after she was diagnosed with a form of cancer that is almost invariably fatal within five years.

As the chapel's bells tolled, faculty in full academic regalia filed into the chapel, where the university's concert choir, choral union, percussion ensemble and chamber orchestra provided music.

The program of speakers included UVM President Daniel Mark Fogel, Provost John Bramley, friend and former college associate dean Donna Kuizenga, friend Ethel Weinberger; and two of her daughters, Beth Danon and Mary Kehoe. T. Alan Broughton, a poet and professor emeritus of English, read an elegy he wrote for Smith, "The Persistence of Beauty Through Loss."

The picture of Smith drawn at her service was intimate and tactile. Speakers evoked the worn wooden spoon she used to manage conversations during her hectic sit-down dinners; the heady aroma of her *boeuf bourguignon*; the percussive echo of her rapid-fire typing on the machine she used to write her early academic work—and type her children's term papers; the warmth of her embraces with her beloved husband, Peter Welch; and the sound of her laughter.

Smith's daughter, Beth Danon, told her mother's story. Joan Smith was born in 1935, and grew up in a working-class Irish neighborhood in Chicago's Southside, where she married early, began having children, and moved to a Levittown-like suburb of the city. As the 1950's gave way to 1960's, Smith was stirred by the Civil Rights movement, working with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Mississippi. As she awakened to political activism, she took action in her own life, returning to school and eventually earning her Ph.D. from New York University. After teaching at Dartmouth College and the State University of New York at Binghamton, she came to UVM in 1990 to become the university's first director of women's studies. She became dean in 1996, a position that she held until her death.

"Joan worked hard and with intense pleasure," said Donna Kuizenga, who worked with Smith as

professor of psychology

- Teachers Technology, Joyce Morris, research assistant professor of education
- Vermont NASA EPSCoR Program, William Lakin, professor of mathematics & statistics
- Dept. of Energy Initiative in Structural Biology and Computation Biology/Bioinformatics, Susan Wallace, professor of microbiology & molecular genetics
- Mechanism of Specific Trunk Exercises in Low Back Pain, Sharon Henry, associate professor of physical therapy
- Northeastern States Research Cooperative, Donald DeHayes, dean of The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources
- Vermont EPSCoR's Research Infrastructure Improvement Plan, Christopher Allen, professor of chemistry

University Videoconferencing Lets Faculty Go Global

The university took part in the first videoconference ever broadcast from Abidjan on the Ivory Coast when Ned McMahon, research associate professor in community development and applied economics, gave a lecture via satellite from an on-campus multimedia room. McMahon's talk was one of several virtual international appearances scheduled to take place this semester.

"It's the next best thing to being there," McMahon says. "It was technically very smooth. You could see the facial expressions and gestures of the people. I've been involved in one-way communication conferences before and this was a quantum leap from that. It's a way that enables UVM to expand our international presence in a very cost effective and technically useful manner. The only other way I could have done it would have been to spend \$4,000 and five days to get there."

ITV Services provided the technical support for the videoconference, which was broadcast from a multimedia room in 308 Lafayette, under the guidance of Wes Graff, manager of instructional television.

Future videoconferences are scheduled with Bob Costanza, professor in the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, speaking to a conference in Bogota, Columbia and Susan Wallace, professor of microbiology and molecular genetics, to the Netherlands.

Englesby Fete Launches Faculty-Staff Fundraising Effort

This year's faculty and staff fundraising campaign for the University of Vermont, "Giving Back to

an associate dean before becoming dean at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

At the request of Smith's family, a faculty professional development fund has been established in her memory. For more information, call 656-3166.

Jane Knodell Appointed Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences

Provost and Senior Vice President John Bramley has appointed Jane Knodell as interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The associate professor of economics was formerly associate dean of the college.

"We are delighted Jane has accepted this offer," Bramley said. "She not only brings administrative and academic leadership to the post, but also is highly respected and supported among arts and sciences faculty and staff."

Knodell earned her bachelor's and doctoral degrees at Stanford University. She was a faculty member at the University of Denver before joining UVM in 1986. Her research interests lie in economic history and the institutional analysis of monetary institutions, and she has taught classes in macroeconomics, national economic policy and American economic history. In addition, Knodell has held several administrative positions at UVM. In the community, she is actively involved in civic affairs as a member of the Burlington City Council and chair of the Burlington Legacy Project's steering committee.

Knodell will serve as interim dean for approximately one year, while the university conducts a national search, Bramley said.

UVM is Founding Member of New Phi Beta Kappa Association

Calling all Phi Beta Kappans: dust off that golden key and start practicing the secret handshake. The University of Vermont, Dartmouth, Middlebury and St. Michael's colleges are collaborating to create the Phi Beta Kappa Association of Northern New England. The association will serve Vermont (except the Bennington and Brattleboro areas) and northwest New Hampshire.

"You'd be surprised how many members live in this geographical area—approximately 3,500," says Christopher Landry, president of the UVM Phi Beta Kappa chapter and associate professor of chemistry. "The four chapters forming the association want to reach out to local PBK alumni and promote excellence in the liberal arts at the community level."

The new association will host its first meeting on Sept. 28 at 6:30 p.m. in Burlington's Firehouse Center for the Visual Arts. Along with electing officers, discussing future activities and enjoying refreshments, the evening will feature a talk on the mystical cult of Mont-Saint-Michel, a Medieval abbey located off the coast of France.

Our Community," launched on Sept. 20 at Englesby with a reception for 150 university employees that recognized their financial support of the university.

More than 729 members of the faculty and staff made gifts during the last fiscal year, totaling more than \$680,000. The event also recognized the generosity of members of the Wilbur Society, UVM's planned giving society.

The "Giving Back to Our Community" campaign is led by co-chairs Tom Brennan, Wanda Heading-Grant, Wolfgang Mieder and Annie Stevens. The group will work within the campus community to generate enthusiasm for and encourage participation in the Campaign for the University of Vermont (uvm.edu/~campaign link), UVM's comprehensive \$250 million fundraising drive, which is focused on increasing student scholarships and faculty support.

The Phi Beta Kappa Society, founded in 1776, is the nation's most prestigious honor society and a leading advocate for the liberal arts and sciences at the undergraduate level. Approximately 15,000 new members each year are elected from 270 chapters linked to universities across the United States, and more than 50 associations for alumni are active throughout the country. The Phi Beta Kappa chapter in Burlington, Alpha of Vermont, was chartered in 1848 and was the first in the nation to elect women and African-Americans to membership.

To RSVP for the Sept. 28 kickoff meeting, call 656-0270 or email pbk.nne@uvm.edu. For more information go to www.uvm.edu/~pbknne.

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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

EVENTS

Foreign Policy Expert to Speak at 2004 Aiken Lectures

Fareed Zakaria, editor of *Newsweek International*, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Future of Freedom*, and a noted expert on globalization and foreign affairs, will discuss the role of foreign policy debate in the 2004 election campaign on Sept. 29 at 6 p.m. in Ira Allen Chapel. His talk, "An Empire of Liberty? America's Role in the World" is the keynote address for the 2004 George D. Aiken Lecture Series. This year's theme is "The Future of the American Empire."

Widely respected for his ability to spot economic and political trends around the world, Zakaria has been described as "the most influential foreign policy advisor of his generation;" *Esquire* named him one of the 21 most important people of the 21st century. Zakaria's column, which is published in *Newsweek USA*, *Newsweek International* and the *Washington Post*, is the most widely circulated column of its kind in the world. He also offers political analysis on news programs including *This Week with George Stephanopoulos*, *Firing Line*, *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*, the *BBC World News* and *Meet the Press*. Vermont Public Radio will tape Zakaria's speech and air it on Oct. 1 at 1 p.m. and Oct. 4 at 7 p.m.

The Future of Freedom, Zakaria's newest book, explores America's role in the world and on the way in which democracy is changing every aspect of our lives — from economics and technology to politics and culture.

His presentation will provoke debate regarding whether American military dominance and economic strength make it immune from the pitfalls suffered by previous world powers. Those issues will be further explored in a series of films and discussions held at the Fleming Museum Oct. 6 through Nov. 3, including "Blackhawk Down," and "Lawrence of Arabia." UVM and Burlington

Fagan to Discuss Tomb Robbing and High Adventure in Ancient Egypt

Tales of tomb robbing in ancient Egypt will be at the heart of a President's Distinguished Lecture by Brian Fagan, emeritus professor of anthropology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Rivaling the adventures of Indiana Jones, Fagan will portray the infamous heroes and villains of the time in his talk, "And They Spoiled the Egyptians: The Plundering of Ancient Egypt and the Nile." The event will take place Sept. 27 at 3:30 p.m. in Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building with a reception to follow in the Anthropology Lounge located on the fifth floor of Williams Hall.

Originally a scholar in pre-European African history and archaeology, Fagan shifted his focus to communicating archaeology to a general audience. He is the author of over 35 books, including three books for the National Geographic Society: *The Adventure of Archaeology*, *Into the Unknown* and *The Rape of the Nile*. A highly sought speaker, Fagan's lectures offer a unique juxtaposition of science and adventure. He has also worked to incorporate multimedia into his teaching through the development of a large enrollment course for college freshman, which serves as one of Apple Computer's Higher Education demonstration projects.

Fagan was born in England and studied archaeology at Cambridge University's Pembroke College. Before moving to the United States in 1966, he spent six years as Keeper of Prehistory at the Livingstone Museum in Zambia, Central Africa, where he worked on the excavation of a 2,000 year-old farming village.

The President's Distinguished Lecture Series was established by President Daniel Mark Fogel in October 2002. Funded by discretionary gift funds, the series brings top researchers to campus to enhance the academic experience, showcase faculty, students and programs, and bring the

College faculty will lead discussions after each film is screened.

All events in the Aiken Lecture Series are free and open to the public. For a complete schedule of events and more information, go to [Aiken Lectures](#) or call Continuing Education at 656-2085.

Music Lecturer Parker to Give Piano Recital

Sylvia Parker, senior lecturer of music, will perform a solo piano recital on Sept. 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the UVM Recital Hall, Redstone Campus.

Repertory for her program includes works by Domenico Scarlatti, Charles Griffes and Bela Bartok. Originally written for harpsichord, Scarlatti's "Three Sonatas in D" display virtuosic technique and sounds reminiscent of Spanish guitars. American composer Griffes's "Roman Sketches" are impressionistic in style, evoking images from poetry by William Sharp. Ever interested in folk music of Eastern Europe, Bartok ventured to Algeria to collect the Arab folk music that inspired his "Suite Opus 14."

Parker will perform on the university's Colodny Steinway concert grand piano, which was made possible by the generosity of former Interim President Edwin Colodny and many other donors. Parker traveled with a committee from the music department to New York's Steinway factory to select the piano two years ago. She looks forward to performing on such a wonderful instrument. Admission to the concert is free.

UVM and Fletcher Allen Sponsor ECHO Exhibit on Aging

The University of Vermont College of Medicine, Elder Care Services at Fletcher Allen Health Care and the University of Vermont College of Medicine Area Health Education Centers Program are jointly sponsoring the new fall exhibit at ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain. Titled "The Amazing Feats of Aging," the hands-on health science exhibit focuses on the biology of aging, aging across the animal kingdom, healthy aging and aging of the brain. The exhibit opens Sept. 25 and runs through Jan. 9, 2005.

Among the exhibit's features are a computer program that can age a person's face up to 25

campus community together regularly.

Information: 656-3884 or James.Petersen@uvm.edu

Growing Up in 'Cancer Alley'

Margie Eugene-Richard grew up in the historically African-American neighborhood of Old Diamond in Norco, La., in a house just 25 feet away from a Shell Chemical plant. She believed, as did others, that Shell's plant emissions were making them sick.

"If something isn't done, we'll just sit by and watch people die. And I knew that something had to be done," she said.

In 1989, Richard organized concerned citizens and waged a decade-long campaign, taking action at local, national and international levels to bring attention to their cause. The citizens reached an agreement with Shell Chemical in 2002, which established the basis for a voluntary relocation program for the neighborhood residents. This success has been characterized as a landmark victory for environmental justice and earned Richard, age 62, the distinction as the first African-American to win the Goldman Environmental Prize.

Hear the story in Richard's own words on Sept. 28, as she discusses "Environment and Humanity: Action for Justice in Cancer Alley." Her free, public lecture begins at 4 p.m. in John Dewey Lounge, Old Mill. Richard will also speak with students in several classes throughout the week as a visiting scholar. Her visit to UVM is sponsored by the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, the Environmental Program and the Office for Multicultural Affairs.

The Goldman Environmental Prize is given each year to six environmental heroes — one from each of six continental regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Island Nations, North America and South/Central America. For more on Richard and her award, go to [Goldman Prize Recipients](#).

years, a giant tortoise that never seems to age, a puppet show that teaches young visitors how animals take care of their elders and a display on how normal aging of the brain differs from changes caused by Alzheimer's disease. Special Thursday evening lectures and weekend public programs by UVM and Fletcher Allen faculty are also featured. Each month's programs will focus on a different topic: October is Peace of Mind Month, November is Healthy Body Month, and December is Community Connections Month.

UVM and Fletcher Allen employees will receive \$2 off the admission price when they show their employee identification card. ECHO is open to the public daily, year-round, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with extended hours on Thursdays to 8 p.m., and is closed only Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

"The Amazing Feats of Aging" is a traveling exhibition by the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry and is supported by a Science Education Partnership Award from the National Center for Research Resources.

Information: www.echovermont.org

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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

NOTABLES

September 21, 2004

Awards and Honors

Lori Stevens, professor of biology, and **Daniel Bentil**, associate professor of mathematics and statistics Daniel Bentil will share a five-year, \$760,000 National Science Foundation grant to design mathematics courses for life science majors and to interface applied mathematics and biomedical science.

Publications and Presentations

Charles Irvin, professor of medicine and director of the Vermont Lung Center, is a co-author of a study published in the Sept. 17 issue of the journal *Science* that used a comparative genomic strategy to demonstrate a causative link between eosinophils, a rare type of white blood cell, and asthma. The research, led by researchers at the Mayo Clinic and conducted at several sites including UVM, shows that the presence of these unique blood cells is absolutely required for the development of asthma.

Cully Hession, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering, was one of eight authors of a study, "Riparian Deforestation, Stream Narrowing and Loss of Stream Ecosystem Services," that recently appeared in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. The paper questions the conventional wisdom about the best methods of handling contaminated stream water.

A letter to the editor by Dr. **John Hughes**, professor of psychiatry, regarding nicotine dependence and WHO mental health surveys was published in the Sept. 1 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Linda Hunter, clinical assistant professor of nursing, had a commentary, "Becoming a Midwife Teacher," published in the Aug/Sept issue of *AWHONN Lifelines*.

Annie Viets, a lecturer in the School of Business Administration, taught ethics, team dynamics, globalization and leadership on the New Horizons Project in Vologda, Russia this summer. The three-week residential management development program, affiliated with Bryansk State Technical University, is designed to prepare young Russian managers to successfully navigate the global business environment.

Appointments

M. Ahmad Chaudhry has joined the Department of Biomedical Technologies as an assistant professor and academic director of the radiation therapy program. Chaudhry, who came to UVM in 2002, also serves as director of the DNA microarray facility. A longer description of Chaudhry's research interests and publications is available at [M. Ahmad Chaudhry Faculty Page](#).

September 15, 2004

Awards and Honors

A poem by **Major Jackson**, assistant professor of English, "from Urban Renewal: XVI," originally published in the 2003 issue of *Provincetown Arts*, and subsequently on *Poetry Daily*, has received a Pushcart Prize and will be included in the 29th edition of one of the country's most prestigious literary anthologies.

NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

UVM HOMEPAGE

Rescue During the Holocaust

By Kevin Foley

Article published Sep 22, 2004



University Scholar David Scrase will discuss rescue and caring during the Holocaust in his Sept. 29 lecture. (Photo: Farrrel Duncan)

In reading and thinking about those who risked their lives to save others during the Holocaust, in talking with both the rescuers and the rescued, it is hard to escape an insistent personal question.

"I'm constantly asking, 'Would I have done this? What would I have done if I were there?'," says David Scrase, professor of German and director of the Center for Holocaust Studies. "That is quite

clearly, continuously in the background. People have quite carefully profiled the rescuers, tracing the aspects of the rescuer self. You read these descriptions, and you wonder, do I fit in any them?"

Scrase, who is a University Scholar for this academic year, will give a university scholar seminar on the topic on Sept. 29 at 4 p.m. in Memorial Lounge, Waterman Building. The title of his presentation is "Courage to Care: Rescue During the Holocaust." After broadly tracing the contours of Holocaust scholarship, which traditionally focused on the calamity's perpetrators and victims, with some attention devoted to the passive bystanders, Scrase will discuss two categories that have become much more prominent in Holocaust discourse over the last two decades: resistance and rescue.

A deeply personal topic

"I came to this originally through the accident of birth. I was born in 1939, and was still in utero when my mother was evacuated out of London into the country," he says. "I remember watching a building 100 feet away from our home burn. I assumed it was some sort of practice for fire fighters. I mentioned this to my older brother some years later, and he said it had been bombed. The German planes would jettison their bombs as they returned home."

At age 11, on a whim, he chose to study German instead of Latin in school. Over time, he fell in love: with the language, with the literature, with the country, with the young Germans who, like Scrase, were trying to make sense of the war. "My German contemporaries were very curious about what had happened, very eager to talk," he says.

As Scrase pursued his graduate studies in modern German literature he found that the writers he studied, like himself, were grappling with the two wars and the Holocaust, trying to make some sense of the inexplicable realities of the country in the 20th Century. After coming to UVM, Scrase taught German literature to small classes, literature in translation to larger audiences and, eventually, began teaching the history and literature of the Holocaust with Raul Hilberg. Teaching that course, Scrase says, was draining.

"I began to have sleepless nights. For a short period, I thought that I couldn't continue teaching the course. It was too disturbing," he says. "Then I came to

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Academia & Government

Bud Meyers is back. The associate professor of education, who spent four years in Montpelier as the Vermont deputy commissioner of education through the university's faculty leave of absence policy, has returned to Waterman and the teaching duties he performed since 1971.

Serious Horse Play

Ashley Arseneau, an animal science major with a concentration in equine science, is confident she is ready to manage a horse barn when she graduates next May. Her optimism is based in part on her current position as student manager of UVM's horse barn, but also on the work she's done over the last three years in a one-credit course.

see that the young students knew nothing of the Holocaust, and I thought that I would teach the subject more, perhaps spending more time on rescue as something more encouraging. But in some sense, emphasizing this was actually more depressing because of the vast disparity between the number of victims and numbers of those rescued."

The rescuers

Even though he didn't find a story powerful enough to even partially temper the Holocaust's horrors, Scrase did become drawn into a burgeoning area of interest within his field. While early Holocaust research downplayed resistors (except in Israel) and rescuers, arguing that there weren't enough of them to be particularly significant, by the 1980's, especially with a major 1984 conference, the topic became more central. The passage of time made it easier for survivors to tell their stories, and scholars had more first-person accounts of rescues and resistance to chew over — Scrase himself had spent some time with Marion Pritchard, a Vermont psychotherapist who saved 150 people in the Netherlands during the Holocaust, and was impressed with her courage.

Pritchard is one of about 20,000 "righteous Gentiles" recognized by Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial authority. These men and woman, Scrase says, had to meet strict criteria for admissions, including saving Jewish lives out of the goodness of their hearts, not in exchange for money. Scrase understands the reasons for these criteria, but he finds the picture more complex. Those complexities informed his work conceiving and co-editing *Making a Difference: Rescue and Assistance During the Holocaust*, a book published last year by the Center for Holocaust Studies in honor of Pritchard, and will color his Sept. 29 lecture.

"Money or no money, if they had been caught, they would have faced dire consequences," he says. "Imagine a Polish Christian, surviving on the bare minimum on his ration card. He' must feed a family he is rescuing in addition to his own, and isbuying food on the black market to do so. That was expensive, illegal. It's important not to condemn people who accepted money. Financial transactions were all but the norm."

And, of course, some rescuers were greedy. Many were even anti-Semitic — statements like "I don't like Jews, but I can't kill them," are not uncommon in accounts of rescue. They were also brave, even heroic. What motivated significant numbers of people to risk their lives to save others? What qualities do they share. The many shades of the rescuer self fascinate Scrase.

"As a literary person, I go into the gray areas," he says. "That's the stuff of my discipline. It's not just facts, facts, facts."

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NEWS BRIEFS

EVENTS

NOTABLES

SEARCH

PRINT THIS ISSUE

PRINT PAST ISSUES

FEEDBACK

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From Academia to Government, And Back

By Kevin Foley

Article published Sep 22, 2004

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He's back: Education Professor Bud Meyers is on campus again after four eventful years working for the state. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Bud Meyers is back. The associate professor of education, who spent four years in Montpelier as the Vermont deputy commissioner of education, has returned to Waterman and the teaching duties he performed since 1971.

Though tan, and ready ("It's very exciting to be back," he says), Meyers isn't exactly rested. His stint with the state, which ended July 1, spanned four education commissioners, two governors, numerous

doctoral defenses (he kept his graduate students during his faculty leave) and a complex multi-state response to the student assessment provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the governmental work that the long-time assessment researcher is most proud of.

But the hectic was exactly what Meyers was looking for. After two decades of consulting, he was quite familiar with how the state education department worked and had close relationships there, but he was still an outsider. "I really wanted direct experience on the line, in the real world, my hands in the middle of a very complex organization," he says.

And with his stint in the department's leadership, he got it. Now, early in his first semester back, he says the experience is informing his teaching in a variety of ways. He has a bulky library of current research and policy materials that he'll deploy in classes, a broadened range of case studies and hypothetical, and a laundry list of pressing state issues to shop around to graduate students sharpening their research agendas. Meyers says he is also returning with a more realistic attitude about school policy.

"Negotiating long-term goals within a short-term system of making policy is a major challenge, and while I was aware of this problem, I don't think I had nearly enough appreciation for its complexity," he says.

A sense of where we are

Meyers's academic expertise is in school improvement and assessment — areas precisely on-point for the state working on an appropriate response to the "No Child Left Behind Act," a 2001 federal law that requires that states give annual assessment tests for children in grades three through eight, and that all students become "proficient" on the tests by 2014. States are required to closely track progress toward that goal, and schools must continuously make "adequate yearly progress" in improving their overall numbers (as well as for sub-groups like students with disabilities). If a school falls short of that for two years running, it receives technical assistance — and parents are allowed to move their kids to a different school.

When faced with this gauntlet, Meyers requested another year of leave to finish developing the New England Common Assessment Program, a cooperative effort of Vermont, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. The states

[Holocaust Rescue](#)

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[Serious Horse Play](#)

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have jointly created tests in reading, math and writing that will let them cost-effectively comply with the federal mandate. The new program is being tested now, and the first testing under the program will take place next year. In part because of the success of him and his colleagues in creating the cooperative assessment effort, Meyers is optimistic about the effect of “no child left behind” on Vermont.

“I think it’s going to be mostly positive for the state,” he says. “Its framework of standards could have an enormous effect on providing equity between and among schools on what students are supposed to learn.”

Some of that optimism, he admits, comes from his sense that the law will probably be modified — provisions for testing students with disabilities, Meyers says, are particularly problematic because accurate assessments for these children do not yet exist, and applying inappropriate standards for students with disabilities could lead to “students with disabilities being blamed for school failure.”

On some crucial points, Meyers says, the federal law has already been adjusted to work within a Vermont context. The adequate yearly progress measures are susceptible to wild yearly swings in a state where 57 percent of schools have 30 or fewer kids at each grade level, and 25 percent have 15 or fewer kids. Meyers and his others at the state department approached their federal counterparts, and found that they were willing to negotiate adjustments to the rules to make the law work in Vermont. The progress measures, for example, will average results over two years to smooth averages that might otherwise bounce around due to small sample sizes.

Back at UVM, Meyers is pursuing a nationwide study of “value-added” school assessment over long periods of time. Value-added assessment, currently a hot topic in the field, involves using sophisticated statistical techniques to reduce the influence of demographic variables on student results and more accurately measure the role of a school in improving a student’s performance.

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Serious Horse Play

By Jon Reidel

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Horse course: Students in an equine management one-credit class get a hands-on introduction to the realities of managing a barn. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Ashley Arseneau, an animal science major with a concentration in equine science, is confident she is ready to manage a horse barn when she graduates next May. Her optimism is based in part on her current position as student manager of UVM's horse barn, but also on the work she's done over the last three years in a one-credit course.

The "Horse Barn Cooperative" class was designed to give students practical skills

in equine management. Arseneau, who has long since mastered the daily routine of cleaning stalls and other maintenance chores, says the real challenge of running a stable is being able to deal with unexpected calamities that affect the health of the horses or somehow prevent the normal operation of the barn.

Students in the course faced one such event this spring after poor drainage caused water to pool at the entrance of the horses' grazing paddocks. The standing water mixed with mud and manure, creating a filthy brew that increased the risk of abscesses. In cold weather, the pool became icy and dangerous to walk on.

The class researched the cost of drainage pipes and other materials, installed the pipes themselves, and filled the area with gravel. "It had really become a safety issue," Arseneau says. "So we learned as a group how to best deal with it. If someone is going to manage a barn these are the types of problems they need to know how to solve, and they won't learn how in a classroom."

Preparing for the real world

Betsy Greene, an extension associate professor and equine specialist, teaches the course and says it has been invaluable to students and graduates who wish to enter the equine industry, \$25.3 billion endeavor that generates 1.4 million full-time jobs, and spans everything from veterinary work to providing services for the country's seven million horses.

For some students, like first-year history major Kate Claflin, the course has provided valuable problem-solving and team-building skills. And although Claflin doesn't plan to enter the equine industry, instead aspiring to law school, she will likely own a horse and needs to know some barn upkeep skills.

Greene says she wanted to prepare students for their equine futures by showing them the reality of running a barn. To some extent, that was already being done for the 16 students who brought their horses to school and are asked to work at the barn as partial payment of the cost of boarding the animals. Greene wanted to press matters further.

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[Holocaust Rescue](#)

In reading and thinking about those who risked their lives to save others during the Holocaust, in talking with both the rescuers and the rescued, it is hard to escape an insistent personal question.

[Academia & Government](#)

Bud Meyers is back. The associate professor of education, who spent four years in Montpelier as the Vermont deputy commissioner of education through the university's faculty leave of absence policy, has returned to Waterman and the teaching duties he performed since 1971.

"This course is designed to take theory to practice," Greene says. "We wanted students to understand horse life and apply that knowledge to their own future situations. The course touches on a lot of areas because we have students who go into different fields within the equine industry."

Since the course started in 2002, the types of e-mails Greene receives from former students have gone from questions about work issues to thank you notes.

"I have been thinking a lot about how your class prepared me so well for what I am currently doing," writes Danielle McNamara '03, manager of Dry Water Farm in Massachusetts, who managed to figure out that the fertilized hay that was being fed to their horses was causing them to retain water. "You really did a good job making us find the answer for ourselves..."

Horse realities

Kristen Munger, who helps teach the course and is assistant barn manager, says the projects the class has undertaken have been an eye-opener on many levels, not the least of which is the cost of running a horse barn.

Last semester, for example, students decided to improve the sand-based footing in the arena inside the horse barn since it was uneven and deteriorating. The group's first inclination was to buy high-end footing made of a rubber-sand mixture. But after seeing a price tag of about \$15,000, and discovering that the barn's current arena material was similar to many other farms in the area, they opted to spend \$1,200 on a machine that spreads out the surface sand more evenly.

"It was good for them to see the reality of what it costs to run a barn," Munger says. "They wanted ideal footing, but came to a more realistic conclusion after seeing the prices."

Arseneau, who has taken on a different project with the group of the past three years, helped build a walking trail for horses last year, which included the use of global positioning satellite equipment and clearing and marking of trails. Students had to learn about contracts involving adjacent landowners and other laws that come into play when trying to construct a multi-property path.

"These projects touch on so many different areas," she says. "When we find a problem we research it and then get together to find ways to solve it. When I came here four years ago I didn't know that much about running a barn. Now I can say I feel completely comfortable running a facility."

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