



INSIDE E·S·F

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*The magazine of the SUNY
COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE & FORESTRY*

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On The Cover

With waterfalls, arbors, rock and herb gardens—and a greenhouse filled with orchids—Peter Black, Distinguished Teaching Professor and our cover photographer, and his wife, Lida, have created their personal paradise on a sloping Syracuse city lot.

The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry offers a diverse range of accredited programs and degree options in chemistry, construction management and wood products engineering, environmental and forest biology, environmental resources and forest engineering, environmental studies, forest resources management, forest technology, landscape architecture, and paper science and engineering.

The college's mission is to be a world leader in instruction, research, and public service related to: understanding the structure and function of the world's ecosystems; developing, managing, and use of renewable natural resources, improving outdoor environments ranging from wilderness, to managed forests, to urban landscapes; and maintaining and enhancing biological diversity, environmental quality, and resource options. As such, ESF has maintained its unique status within SUNY's 64-school system as only one of four specialized colleges and one of only eight doctoral-granting institutions.

ESF takes affirmative action to provide equal opportunity for all people and to build a campus community that reflects a wealth of diversity.

Campus Views

Productivity And Accountability: A Faculty Voice

by Dudley J. Raynal

Higher education in America, both public and private, is the target of frequent attacks by governmental officials, politicians, citizens, and even some within academe. Harsh critiques in books such as *Imposters in the Temple*, *Profscam*, *the Closing of the American Mind*, *Illiberal Education*, and *Killing the Spirit* have fueled public discontent with universities. Among many criticisms, pundits charge that college and university educational standards are too low, curricula lack sufficient rigor, research is overemphasized, teaching is neglected, and that faculty are not as productive or accountable as they should be. Critics argue that higher education in general and faculty in particular are not meeting important responsibilities.

Much is expected of university faculty. Jan Sinnott and Lynn Johnson in their book *Reinventing the University* characterized multiple demands placed on faculty this way:

As a professor, I am asked by my students, my discipline, my colleagues, and my nation to teach much and well; discover and disseminate new information to colleagues, students, the public, and fellow professionals in the field; to be an expert consultant for the public needing my information; provide my expert services, possibly free; bring money into my institution; govern my institution, department, and profession; prepare students for jobs; advise students about life and careers; trade ideas often with my colleagues; justify my existence to whomever pays my salary; accept diminishing wages cheerfully; and to look prosperous to business and policy makers, intellectual to professionals, and administratively practical to grantors. Multiple demands are interesting, hard, and challenging. I won't meet them all, and someone will be angry. Yet it is impossible to meet them all well. We university professionals are set up to fail. We can't be all things to all users.

This acerbic description of faculty expectations and consequent outcomes provides some insight into why higher education is being criticized. Satisfying simultaneous multiple demands is indeed challenging, even for the most gifted, industrious, and committed faculty.

But there is more underlying the deep dissatisfaction of the critics of higher education. Donald Kennedy, president emeritus of Stanford University, in his book *Academic Duty* sees it this way: there is a

"dissonance between the purposes our society foresees for the university and the way the university sees itself." Kennedy observes that while academic freedom necessary for teaching and scholarship is understood and accepted, the attendant responsibilities of faculty are vague and there is considerable confusion about what



Dudley J. Raynal

the university owes to society and faculty to students. Faculty, says Kennedy, are perceived by many judges of higher education to have too much freedom but too little accountability. In *Faculty Work and Public Trust, Restoring the Value of Teaching and Public Service in American Academic Life*, James Fairweather, of The Pennsylvania State University, argues that faculty should seek to restore a balance in activities that contribute to societal needs and those that satisfy professional demands and personal rewards.

Concern about the value of college education in relation to increasing costs is also vehemently expressed. Because tuition and living expenses have risen faster than the disposable income of many, citizens are angry about the cost of higher education in relation to perceived value.

In New York, SUNY has not been immune to criticism. In 1995 the SUNY board of trustees was charged by the state Legislature to develop a multi-year comprehensive statewide plan to increase cost effectiveness of the university while ensuring the highest quality and broadest access across the SUNY campuses. Included in the charge was a directive to increase faculty productivity. In response, the SUNY Trustees produced a document, *Rethinking SUNY* <<http://www.suny.edu/>

continued

Campus Views, continued

rethink.html> that formulated implementation plans to restructure administration, grant greater autonomy to local campuses, adjust the method by which state-appropriated funds are allocated to campuses, and appoint a task force to recommend budget allocations based on performance and campus productivity.

Recently the Faculty Senate of the State University of New York and the Faculty Union of the California State University system joined forces to produce a report, **Public Higher Education and Productivity: A Faculty Voice** <<http://www.suny.edu/vocfac3w.pdf>>. The report acknowledges that while public colleges and universities are “demonstrably productive,” faculty must recognize that what we teach and research, and how we create knowledge must continually change in light of new social needs, new knowledge, new perspectives on teaching and learning, and new standards.

At ESF, faculty and administration are in continuous dialogue to seek ways to fulfill the college’s charter, mission and vision <<http://www.esf.edu/acadlife/mission.htm>>. Through both administrative and governance channels, those charged with stewardship of the academic program strive to assess the effectiveness of our teaching, scholarship, and service to others with good reason. For unless progress in meeting stated objectives can be measured, evaluated, and improved, the institutional mission and vision statements serve as little more than statements of lofty intent. Further, if faculty and staff are not in constant pursuit of increasing productivity and efficiency of our programs, ESF will be vulnerable to the attacks leveled so relentlessly by critics who question the commitment of universities to educational quality and effectiveness.

A sampling of ongoing activities at ESF that represent the strong commitment of faculty to excellence in fulfilling the college mission and vision includes the following:

1. periodic campuswide faculty symposia on teaching, learning, and technology focusing on innovations in instructional approaches and methods,
2. yearly colloquia introducing new graduate assistants to the instructional environment at ESF,
3. annual research symposia highlighting undergraduate and graduate student scholarship,
4. integration of public service activities in the instructional arena to facilitate outreach to clients and to provide “real world” learning activities for students,
5. facilitation of science education in public high schools by establishing links with high school science teachers, providing instructional modules, and offering an introductory course in environmental science,
6. instruction to off-campus students through various distance-learning programs, employing the SUNY Learning Network, ENGINET, and the I-81 Consortium of SUNY campuses,
7. ongoing assessment and revision of courses and curricula to ensure that our academic programs are of the highest caliber,
8. instituting an undergraduate honors program to challenge and better educate our very brightest students, and
9. establishing a mentoring program that introduces new faculty to the culture of the ESF campus and provides perspectives of senior faculty about the scholarship of teaching, application, integration, and service in our disciplines.

The essence of faculty duty and service—productivity and accountability—is found in the common experiences of professors: teaching, mentoring, writing, doing scholarly work, obtaining grants and contracts, pursuing collegial relations, and offering professional expertise to others. At ESF, faculty pursue activities in each of these domains as a matter of commitment to our clients, professions, and institution.

Dudley J. Raynal is a Distinguished Teaching Professor at ESF.

Alum Wins International Award

A 1985 graduate of ESF who completed his doctorate at Syracuse University was one of five young scientists worldwide honored with the 1997 Amersham Pharmacia Biotech & Science Prize.

James E. Brownell received the award December 9 in Uppsala, Sweden, in ceremonies that coincided with Nobel Prize festivities. Brownell was the North American regional winner for his essay, "The Identification of GCN5-Related Proteins as Histone Acetyltransferases Links Chromatin Acetylation and Gene Activation," based on his work with Dr. David Allis at SU.

Brownell earned his doctorate in 1996; he also received a master's degree from ESF in 1989. Brownell is employed by Genentech in San Francisco. The prize carries a \$5,000 award.

Peter E. Black Honored By SUNY

Dr. Peter E. Black, professor of Forestry, was named a Distinguished Teaching Professor by the SUNY board of trustees.

Black, a national expert in watershed hydrology, has been a faculty member at ESF for 32 years. He has written more than 70 articles, book chapters, books, and instructional films.

Black is a charter member of the American Water Resources Association and served as its president. In 1996, he received the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commander's Award for Public Service. He served with the Onondaga Lake Management Conference and several other professional organizations, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science,



the Association of Environmental Professionals, and the National Society of Professional Consultants.

The Distinguished Teaching Professorship is a prestigious tenured rank above full professor.

DEC To Open Fourth Camp At Pack Forest

New York's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will open a fourth site for its popular summer camp program for teens at ESF's Charles Lathrop Pack Demonstration Forest in Warrensburg.

About 300 teens aged 15 to 17 are expected to attend the camp for hands-on study of conservation and natural resources topics.

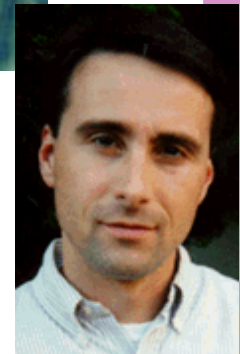
"Pack Forest campers will work with many of the tools and techniques used by today's environmental professionals and, in doing so, will better understand the challenges facing New Yorkers," said Governor George E. Pataki in announcing the camp's opening.

President Ross S. Whaley called the arrangement "another example of the collaborative efforts between ESF and the DEC...[to sustain] the renewable natural resources of the state."

The 52-year-old DEC Summer Environmental Education Camp program



Peter E. Black



James E. Brownell '85

ESF's Warrensburg Campus.

continued

Campus Update, continued

provides week-long opportunities in July and August for young people to explore the outdoors. Some 1,250 campers participate in the program each year, and there is a waiting list.

Pack Forest, former home of the required summer session in field forestry for ESF students, boasts 2,500 acres of forest lands, an 85-acre lake, and miles of trails. ESF scientists conduct research and demonstration programs at the site.

Hassett, Sanford Named To New Posts

Dr. John P. Hassett, a biochemist specializing in environmental chemistry, was named chair of the Faculty of Chemistry and Susan H. Sanford was promoted to director of Admissions.

Hassett joined the college faculty in 1980. He succeeds Anatole Sarko, who retired in November. His research has focused on identifying natural and synthetic organic compounds in aquatic environments and determining their impacts. He holds two patents for sampling methods and apparatus to measure the compounds.

He has taught courses in organic, environmental, and aquatic organic chemistry; chromatography; and environmental analysis.

Hassett has written numerous articles on his research in the Great Lakes, Onondaga Lake, and the St. Lawrence and Hudson rivers. He is on the editorial board of the *Journal of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*.



John P. Hassett

Before joining ESF, he conducted research and taught at Drexel University and the University of Florida at Gainesville.

Sanford's appointment was effective December 30, upon the retirement of Dennis O. Stratton, who served as director since 1985. Sanford was associate director during those years.

Sanford previously worked at the SUNY Agricultural and Technical College at Morrisville, where she held the positions of admissions counselor, assistant director of admissions, and director of admissions. She also worked at Chapman College Academic Center at Hancock Field.



Susan H. Sanford

Sanford has served as president and vice president of the State University of New York College Admissions Professionals. In 1991, she received the organization's service award.

A certified emergency medical technician, Sanford serves with the Cazenovia Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the National Ski Patrol at Labrador Mountain.

Alumni Gifts Fuel Jahn Lab Appeal's Success

The ESF College Foundation has received more than \$830,000 in gifts and pledges for the Edwin C. Jahn Laboratory Appeal, reported Dr. Gary A. Waters, director of Development.

Dr. Edwin C. Jahn, for whom the building is named, will honor five of his colleagues with a \$100,000 endowment. The gift will establish fellowships named for Dr. Conrad Schuerch, Dr. Robert M. Silverstein, Dr. Michael Szwarc, Dr. Tore Timell, and the late Dr. Ernest Sondheimer, all internationally-

renowned scientists who served on the Faculty of Chemistry.

Other gifts and pledges are intended to help equip the new building with cutting-edge research instrumentation and student classroom and laboratory workstations. Among the major contributors are:

- Edward K. Mullen '47, chairman and chief executive officer of The Newark Group, Inc., who pledged a total of \$125,000. Mullen, a Paper Science and Engineering graduate, also is an active supporter of the Syracuse Pulp and Paper Foundation.

- The Niagara Mohawk Foundation, a college supporter and research partner, which will contribute \$100,000.

- Christine Wendel '76, a Resources Management graduate, who pledged \$25,000. Wendel, from Santa Fe, NM, is the daughter of former board of trustees chairman William Wendel.

- The Marsellus family and the Marsellus Casket Company. John D. Marsellus, a long-time member of the ESF College Foundation board of directors, pledged \$20,000.

ESF is seeking a total of \$1.1 million to equip the new building and fund student scholarships.

170 Gather For Air Quality Conference

Some 170 scientists, policy makers, and others interested in air quality issues met in Saratoga Springs November 11-12, for a conference coordinated by ESF's Randolph G. Pack Environmental Institute.

The conference—Adirondacks and Beyond: Understanding Air Quality and Ecosystems Relationships—used the Adirondack region to examine the long-range transport of particulates, effects



Edwin C. Jahn

on ecosystems, and transboundary regulation, said Dr. Richard C. Smardon, conference general chair. "Our goal was to achieve a dialogue among scientists, policy makers, and stakeholders, as well as to synthesize existing and future air quality science and policy options."

The Pack Institute will publish conference proceedings in conjunction with **Environmental Science: The International Journal of Research and Policy**. Interested individuals can visit the conference home page at <http://www.esf.edu/Adirondacks> or call the Pack Institute at 315-470-6636.

'Changing Context' Focuses On Admissions

President Ross S. Whaley released a new planning document, **A Changing Context for ESF: A Planning Summary for 1997-2002**, that outlines an increase in the college's enrollment to 2,150 students by the year 2002.

The document presents broad themes in academic programs, students and student life, faculty and academic staff, college relations, space and facilities, and funding intended to shape ESF's programs and services.

New thrusts in enrollment management and academic programs highlight the planning document. Whaley charges college staff to increase both graduate and undergraduate populations by 400 students from today's enrollment. The increase responds to SUNY enrollment planning initiatives and accommodates additional students seeking ESF degrees.

In academic programs, Whaley proposes a series of interdisciplinary focuses that, he says, "builds on current faculty strengths, is consistent with emerging societal needs, and is attractive to increasing numbers of prospective students." The focuses are urban environments, water quality and quantity, renewable materials, environmental chemistry, environmental communications and policy, and remote sensing and geospatial modeling.

The document also cites ESF's need to broaden our revenue base through development efforts. Much needed scholarship funds will attract and support the best and brightest students who enroll at the college, said Whaley.

Pataki Appoints Three New Trustees

Governor George E. Pataki has appointed Edward J. Heinrich of Marcellus, Heidi J. Busa '80 of Skaneateles, and Gregory Harden of McConnellsville to the ESF board of trustees.

Heinrich is director of the Syracuse campus of Bryant & Stratton Business Institute and is president of OnCenter's board of directors. Heinrich serves on several other boards and is co-founder of the Greater James Street Business Association.

Busa chairs the science department at Marcellus High School. In 1996, she was advisor to a group of students who won a \$10,000 award in a national contest sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for which the students devised a plan to convert a local quarry into a wildlife habitat. Busa serves on the statewide steering committee for Project Learning Tree, and was named as one of five National Outstanding Educators for the project in 1995.

Harden is president and chief executive officer of Harden Furniture Co. of McConnellsville.

He has headed the family business since 1991. He oversees the company's two manufacturing facilities, 500 employees, and annual sales of approximately \$40 million. The company maintains its own sawmills and thousands of acres of forested lands in New York.



At the Soiree: Rebecca Wilkins and Shannon Watchorn, both class of 2000, and Samantha Callender '99.

115 Students Earn December Degrees

ESF's 13th midyear convocation December 5 honored 115 students who completed their degree requirements and left campus for jobs or to pursue advanced degrees.

Dr. Peter E. Black, Distinguished Teaching Professor, delivered the keynote address at the convocation, which awarded degrees to 75 bachelor of science or bachelor of landscape archi-

ecture students, and 40 master's and doctoral candidates.

A reception in the Alumni Lounge in Marshall Hall immediately followed the ceremonies.

Later that evening, students, faculty, and staff attended the traditional December Soiree dinner-dance, this year held at the OnCenter in Syracuse.



Ethical Diy

by Paula Meseroll

A rose by any other name might smell as sweet, but if it doesn't smell at all, it isn't in Sally Webster's new landscaping plan.

Webster, associate professor of computer applications in the Faculty of Environmental Studies, has lived in the same house in the University area for 34 years. For most of that time, she did little to alter the landscape, which consisted of several trees, a few flowering shrubs, and a front yard covered with pachysandra. There were also several areas of grass, which Webster termed "pathetic."

"At one point, I hired a lawn service to come in and kill things like veronica and dandelion, which were threatening to choke me in my sleep," she said. "I did that for a few years and my lawn looked wonderful but I began to worry about what was happening to the water table. Then, when I came to ESF in 1990, I became environmentally aware and just couldn't put those chemicals on the lawn anymore."

A new landscaping plan was in order and to achieve it, Webster hired ESF Landscape Architecture grad Mary Ann Corrigan '96 to redesign her yard. At the top of Webster's wish list was a yard that not only looked good, but one that was fragrant, as well.

"In the back of my mind was always the thought that if you have flowers and they don't smell, what good are they?" said Webster, who confesses to a passion for honeysuckle. "To me, the smell is more important than what they look like."

Corrigan's plan is framed and hangs in Webster's dining room, serving as both a road map to the garden of her dreams and an inspiration for those times when it seems it may never be more than wishful thinking.

"I asked Mary Ann what it would cost and she told me I didn't want to know," Webster said. "She said to just do what I can when I can and don't add it up because I'd have a heart attack. She advised me to do all the heavy work first."

That included a wooden retaining wall along the driveway to create a planting bed and a redwood fence at the edge of the driveway. The fence does double duty as a backdrop for new shrubbery and a screen to hide the view of the house next door, where the neighbors have a penchant for parking cars on their lawn.

Still on the drawing board are raised flower beds edging the backyard, and stepping stones interspersed with low-growing herbs that release their scent when walked upon.

"The landscaping will be heaven for my nose when it's finished," Webster said.

Webster is just one of many ESF employees for whom a garden is a source of pleasure, pride, and relaxation. Many ESF staffers garden as a hobby, spending uncounted hours digging in the dirt with the goal of enjoying the freshest fruits and vegetables, or for the senses-pleasing beauty, color, and aroma of a flower garden.

Don Leopold, professor of Environmental and Forest Biology, devotes a small area of his double lot in the city of Syracuse to vegetables for the table, but his real focus is on

perennials, including wildflowers and plants not native to Central New York. He is especially interested in day lilies and has produced several hundred new hybrids in a rainbow of colors with the help of his children, Kay, 11, and Mark, 9.

"Gardening is the most serene time for me," Leopold said. "It takes your mind away from anything else and erases all the baggage you bring home."



Linda Stubbs, a secretary at Moon Library, lives in Union Springs, a small village on the shores of Cayuga Lake. A creek bubbles through her property, which is shaded by walnut trees.

A gardener from the early part of this century would feel right at home in Stubbs' large perennial garden.

"I like things like bleeding hearts," said Stubbs, who has been gardening for more than 30 years. "I have an older home, and the yard is terraced with stone walls from an old sluiceway that ran through the property. A lot of the bleeding hearts have self-seeded into the stone walls so they drape over the walls in a cascade of color."

Old-time favorites like foxglove and columbine also have found a home in Stubbs' garden, which has evolved over the years without any particular plan.

"I don't have it mapped out," she said. "I move things around a lot. In the spring, sometimes I forget what I have where, so I take things up. I have quite a few lilies, but I don't put them all in one area; I like them throughout the garden."

The garden has inspired her to capture some of its beauty on paper.

"I love the color in the garden, the different textures," she said. "I've taken a lot of photos of the garden and now I've gotten into watercolors, painting some of the flowers on greeting cards."

Stubbs used to be out in her garden every afternoon during the growing season, but now that she works full time, that isn't possible. She still spends about five hours a week among her plants, pulling weeds, distributing mulch, and simply enjoying the view.

"There's something therapeutic about digging in the dirt and being out in the sunshine," she said.

Steve Darrow, senior offset printing machine operator in the Copy Center, grows mainly vegetables in his Chittenango

garden. Three types of tomatoes flourish in his raised-bed, 8-by-20-foot garden, as do zucchini and onions.

"What I like best about gardening is getting the crop at the end of the growing season," Darrow said. "You know it's really fresh."

Novice gardener Chuck Spuches, director of Instructional Development, Evaluation, and Services, started his gardening hobby with a compost pile and has since branched out into the "square-foot" method of horticulture. So far, he has constructed three raised-bed boxes, some with trellis systems for vertical growth of plants, at his Liverpool home.

"This is only my third year of doing this," Spuches said. "We grow the regular stuff, like tomatoes, cucumbers, red onions, romaine lettuce, spinach. We grew beans, which the rabbits came and ate."

The garden has been a learning experience for Spuches, who admits to having had a few failures along with the successes.

"Not everything grew well," he said. "I burned up some pepper plants the first year by using too much composted duck poop. But it's been fun, because I've had a lot of help from people here at ESF who give me tips on gardening."

Definitely not the regular fare found in local gardens, kiwi fruit may seem too exotic to grow in Central New York.



A garden sampler from Don Leopold: far left, a salmon poppy surrounded by lupines; top of page, a tiger swallowtail butterfly rests on a rhododendron; above: red poppies stand tall.

But Brian Underwood, unit leader of the National Park Service's Cooperative Park Studies Unit at ESF, doesn't think so. He has planted a hardy, hairless variety of the luscious, green-fleshed fruit on his property in Borodino, on the eastern side of Skaneateles Lake.

"It's going to take about seven years before we get our first fruit," Underwood said. "But once it starts producing, it's supposed to bear heavily throughout the rest of its life. I'm pretty excited about it."

continued on next page



Above: George Curry carved an oasis out of 'a parking lot,' he says of his heavily-trafficked University neighborhood.

Fifty feet of grapevines have just started supplying the Underwoods with table grapes. Three large gardens yield crops of tomatoes, peppers, garlic, corn, and beans, plus cabbage, broccoli, and potatoes. Gardening at an 1,100-foot elevation in heavy, clay soil isn't easy, but Underwood credits his wife, Susan, with having a green thumb, while he does "the grunt work." To help with pollination and to improve yields, Susan Underwood plans to start a beehive this year.

Underwood enjoys working the land with his wife and two young sons and finds that growing things not only feeds the body, but refreshes the mind.

"Most people who garden do it for therapy," he said.

'Refreshing' is a word that also can be applied to George Curry's garden. Curry, a Landscape Architecture professor, describes his Syracuse city property as an oasis in the middle of a parking lot, since it is surrounded on three sides by properties with yards devoted to parking spaces for cars. Within the fenced borders of his garden, Curry has created a sylvan glade where parking lots seem to exist only on some other, less fortunate, planet.

The garden has developed in stages, according to a plan Curry designed when he bought the house 30 years ago. Built on the side of a drumlin, the backyard has two levels and includes such landscaping amenities as a bluestone terrace and a fish pond. Because the yard receives very little sunlight, the plantings were selected by Curry for their tolerance of deep shade.

"It certainly does limit the number of plants you have to choose from," Curry said. "I grow mainly perennials. I try not



The Leopolds' colorful yard abloom.

to put annuals in, but in the summer time I do have big pots of impatiens for color."

Curry spends a good deal of time in his yard, which was featured last summer in a segment about local gardens broadcast by Syracuse-area television station, WTVH Channel 5.

"Some people would say it is labor intensive, but I enjoy it," Curry said. "Just keeping the potted plants watered takes time. But I find that it also serves as an experimental area. I try new plants and bulbs, which helps in some of the design studios I teach."

Japanese maple trees and shrubs are Jim Williamson's specialty and they reward him for his work each fall with a brilliant show of blazing color.

"This past fall was really quite good," said Williamson, an associate librarian at Moon Library. "I had everything from clear yellow to almost a fluorescent red. I tell people you really have to see them in the fall because they'll knock your socks off."

Japanese maples aren't native to Central New York and are something of a challenge to grow, according to Williamson.

"It is a bit risky to grow Japanese maples here in the Syracuse area," he said. "They are a sensitive tree, and we're just on the fringe of where they won't grow. But I'm always pushing the envelope, and when I bought my house, I was looking for something exotic to grow outdoors. Japanese maples just filled the bill."

Although he has lost several trees to the cold Syracuse winters, Williamson credits the location of his property with his success in growing the delicate trees.

"I've had a fair amount of luck because the microclimate of my property seems to provide them with a place to grow and thrive," he said. "I live in the city, just on the border with DeWitt and it's relatively high elevation. That's one of the reasons why I've done so well, because the frost doesn't hit quite so early in the fall and we usually get a good snow cover."

Williamson acquired many of his trees from a grower in Washington state who didn't start his business of selling grafted Japanese maples until he was 76 years old. He was 86 when Williamson first ordered stock from him.

"They had an early spring that year in Washington," Williamson recalled. "He sent them here and it was still

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'Vacations For The Mind'

Why do so many people find gardening so enjoyable? Can it help combat the stresses of modern day life?

Kathleen A. Stribley, associate professor of Landscape Architecture, teaches a course, "Behavioral Aspects of Design and Planning," which addresses those questions. In the course, she quotes research on perception and preference done by University of Michigan professors Rachel and Stephen Kaplan over a 20-year period, beginning in the 1970s. Originators of research centering on the psychological role of nature, the Kaplans explore the benefits of gardening and of nature in general, according to Stribley.

In the studies, outlined in their book, **The Experience of Nature**, the Kaplans showed people black and white photographs of different subjects and determined their level of preference. Photos focused on nature subjects had a high level of preference, the Kaplans found.

"When nature content was very high in a photo, it was much preferred over anything else," Stribley said. "When nature content went down, usually the preference went down. So the Kaplans started to look at why people prefer nature."

They discovered that most people's hectic lifestyles lead to what the Kaplans call "mental fatigue," which is also a factor in the high rate of conflict in modern society.

Consequently, people need restorative experiences—vacations for the mind. There are four different aspects to a restorative experience, Stribley noted.

"One aspect is being away from everyday, normal things, such as distractions and worries," she said. "Then there's the concept of a relationship to other worlds. When you're gardening, you're working with a plant and it can bring back memories of other places, or you can be relating to the history of the site you're working on.

"There's also the concept of extent, which means (the garden) doesn't need to be large to represent other things. A window box can have all the aspects of nature and represent memories, history, ties to other times and places. Another principle is fascination, which means it's interesting and keeps you going."



Kathleen A. Stribley

As an antidote to mental fatigue, gardening can be especially therapeutic.

"Gardening meets all the requirements of a restorative experience," Stribley said. "It allows you to get away and, to a large extent, think about other worlds. You can employ your imagination, which is an important component. And, it's fascinating."

People in all stages of life, from the very young to the elderly, benefit from interaction with growing things.

"We need nature to be healthy," Stribley said. "We need it more nowadays because of the demands of modern life. If you spend eight hours a day in front of a computer screen, perhaps in a building where you can't even see nature, your fatigue level will be

very high. People are now recognizing that nature is so important to life. We need it on a daily basis."

—Paula Meseroll



Peter and Lida Black have worked for years creating different landscape views in their yard.

"People mentally fatigued are less likely to help other people," Stribley said. "They may be more aggressive, or more unhappy and depressed. There's a cost to mental fatigue. The more fatigued we are, the worse it is."

frozen ground, so I got a friend to bring them on for a few weeks in one of his greenhouses so they wouldn't die."

Japanese maples breed true only from grafts, but just to find out what he can come up with, Williamson experiments with collecting and planting seeds from his trees.

"You get outrageous variety from seeds," he said. "You can't believe that the plants came from seeds from the same tree. I've given most of the seedlings away and have had them planted as far away as Virginia and Colorado."

Seeing what fascinating mutations result from nurturing a handful of seeds is only part of the fun Williamson derives from his endeavors.

"I get more pleasure out of seeing a beautiful tree than I do possessing something in my house," he said. "Every season of the year, the trees have something to offer you—branch structure in the winter, some of them flower in the spring, and the foliage color in the fall. Of course, all summer long you have the different shapes, colors, and structures of foliage. The trees are simply beautiful."

As a child, Norm Richards planted his first flower garden on his grandmother's farm and the emeritus professor of Forestry has been gardening ever since.

When working in his garden, which consists of a mix of annuals and perennials, Richards draws on more than 50 years of experience. He has learned to garden successfully in widely diverse weather conditions, from the short, cool Central New York growing season to the long, scorching summers of Sea Island, SC, where he lived for a time.

"I was very excited there, getting out on the first of March to get a wonderful garden growing," he recalled. "It dried up and died by the first of June because it was so hot. It was a very disappointing experience. I had to learn that the whole agriculture of that area is tuned to that natural rhythm. As an outsider, I didn't understand that at all. I found out the hard way."

His latest horticultural challenge is the moist, foggy climate of the Maine coast, where he plans to live in retirement from May to October every year.

"It's a climate that's a little rugged on people, but really quite favorable for plants, if you provide them with some fertilizer," he said. "I'm looking forward to gardening in a new environment."

Richards doesn't believe that working in a garden should actually be, well, work.

"Enjoy it, that's the key," he said. "People are fools to work in a garden. If it's work for them, for gosh sakes, don't do it. Do it only if it is fun and enjoyable and if it adds some enrichment to your life."

Scott Shannon's front yard, in the English cottage garden style, is—at 6 years old—"right at the point where we want to tear out a few of the 'unruly' plants and rethink a few things."

"There is no hassle associated with gardening," he added. "If you don't get done what you hope to—that's no problem. You can start and stop when you want. If you're annoyed with something, go out to the garden and pull weeds twice as fast. To me, it's relaxing."

He offers gardeners—both beginners and those more experienced—several choice nuggets of advice, gleaned from decades of working with plants of all kinds.

"Everybody learns by doing," he said. "There's no big crisis if you mess up; in fact, you're likely to learn more. I also would encourage people to realize that the process is more important than the product. Don't worry so much about the product. Start with a seed, if you can, or a small plant instead of spending a lot of money on a large plant, where someone else has put all their skill into creating a high-value plant. Learn and understand the process by which little seeds may or may not become magnificent plants. Also remember that, in nature, most seeds and individual plants fail.

"That's part of the process, but you'd like to think that maybe you can do something to improve their odds along the way."

Paula Meseroll is a freelance writer based in Syracuse.



Campus Profile

Ron Giegerich: We Can All Learn Something

by Claire B. Dunn



Ron Giegerich

When Ron Giegerich works, many eyes watch.

Two bald eagles stare imperiously, their talons grasping sturdy branches. Two ospreys perch a few feet away and a rare whooping crane stands nearby on spindly legs.

Behind glass doors, an assortment of creatures, long dead but mounted in lifelike poses, gazes through unblinking glass eyes: snakes, a porcupine, a red fox, and a varying hare.

There are roughly 10,000 pairs of eyes—or cotton-stuffed sockets, at least—in the specimens that line the shelves, drawers, and cabinet tops in this unadorned room. Tucked behind Illick Hall's narrow windows, this space contains one of the state's most extensive collections of wildlife specimens.

Some pieces are mounted and positioned to mimic the animal's actions in the wild. Many others are skins stuffed with cotton and lined up neatly in shallow drawers. Others are skeletons, in whole or part. Still others are preserved in jars.

The unassuming Giegerich is in charge of it all.

He is the curator of the college's Roosevelt Wildlife Collection, the enduring legacy of the Roosevelt Wild Life Forest Experiment Station, which flourished at ESF for more than 30 years after it was established in 1919.

"We treasure the collection; it's very valuable," said Professor Emeritus Maurice M. Alexander, the previous curator. "There wouldn't be any other organization in the state that would have what we have."

Giegerich has tended the collection since 1977. He prepares new specimens and oversees

the use of artifacts by ESF students and faculty members who use the items in class. He also teaches a class in vertebrate museum techniques and lectures regularly in courses taught by members of the Faculty of Environmental and Forest Biology.

Giegerich's career is rooted in a boyhood spent exploring the woods and salt marshes near his Long Island home. When he was growing up in the 1960s, birds that had not been seen there for years—glossy ibises, snowy egrets, and great black-backed herons—were responding to protective measures by the federal government. They were returning to areas that had escaped the island's suburban sprawl. Songbirds were returning, too. There were mockingbirds and cardinals in his backyard.

"I actually started out collecting natural history artifacts and chasing insects around with a butterfly net. I would pin up insects and mount butterflies. I had them squished in picture frames," Giegerich said.

He still does the same thing, on a more sophisticated scale. One day this winter, Giegerich spent the morning preparing a screech owl, the newest addition to the Roosevelt collection.

"It feels healthy," he said. "It was probably a healthy little bird. It just had a mishap."

He knows the habits of screech owls. This one was found along Route 48 near Three Rivers Wildlife Management Area in northeastern Onondaga County. It was probably hunting small mammals when it was hit by a car.

Watching Giegerich work is a cross between observing a how-to taxidermy demonstration and attending a class in animal behavior.

He weighed the bird and measured its length and wing span. His fingers searched out an area along the midline of the breast, where there are no feathers, and made a quick incision.

He tells his students not to work slowly, even if they're new at preparing skins. Their technique will improve faster if they work quickly and risk a few mistakes.

"I tell them, 'Don't get crazy about it. We're not putting a patch on a jacket, we're sewing up a bird specimen.'"

He never felt squeamish about cutting into the body of a dead animal.

"I don't think it's ever bothered me. It's just part of the job," he said. "Every-

continued on next page

Profile: Ron Giegerich continued

body thinks this is a really messy occupation. It doesn't have to be."

Most of the blood in an animal's body is in the muscle mass and it stays there when Giegerich works. When he neatly scraped the meat off the owl's leg bones, it looked like he was cleaning tiny chicken drumsticks.

The only mess was the Borax sprinkled on the table, the floor, and Giegerich's black jeans. He dusted the bird liberally with 20 Mule Team Borax to absorb fluids, making the owl easier to hold. Sawdust or corn meal would work, but Borax has the advantage of killing bacteria.

Giegerich's work is less a job than it is a lifestyle.

His interest in wildlife takes him into the fields to hunt and trap near the home he built on 39 acres in rural eastern Onondaga County. He lives there with his wife, Anne, whom he married a year ago, and their two Labrador retrievers, Kate, and her year-old pup, Lucy. He has a shop in his home, where he does projects for the college and taxonomy for sporting organizations.

He knows his work is the type that raises protests from animal-rights activists. There are college employees who don't want to set foot in the Roosevelt collection headquarters. Giegerich respects their opinion. He also expects them to respect his.

The animals all died before they got to the lab, he notes, and their skins and skeletons are being used to educate the next generation of scientists.

"We're not desecrating wildlife up here. If anything, we're immortalizing it," he said. "There are obviously some people who don't agree with what I do but I've never had a problem with that here."

Even when the animal-rights group, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, participated in an Earth Week activity on the ESF quad, Giegerich felt no repercussions. But that might be

because the Roosevelt collection is largely unknown to the general public.

"A lot of people don't know we're up here," he said, "They don't know what we do."

Ashe worked on the owl, Giegerich referred to the bird as "he," not "it." When he talks about screech owls in general, he called them "these little guys." But beyond that, he does not get involved with the animals that come through his lab.

"With certain birds, when you see them in Central New York, you wonder why they were here. You wonder what brought on their demise. But you don't get too personal with them. They don't get names," he said.

"But there's a lot of information we can get from these specimens. We can learn something from them."

He can see what constituted an animal's last meal and whether the animal was healthy. The last thing the screech owl munched on was a small mammal, perhaps a young mouse, judging by the remains in the owl's gizzard.

Dr. Neil H. Ringler, chair of the Faculty of Environmental and Forest Biology, said Giegerich's specimens are tremendously useful in the classroom.

Ringler uses pieces from the Roosevelt collection to teach comparative anatomy. He shows his students various skeletons and asks the students to figure out how the animals lived.

Specimens are donated to the lab from ESF students and staff members, state and federal agencies, Onondaga County's Burnet Park Zoo, and outdoorsmen who know Giegerich. Older artifacts, including a tufted titmouse dating back to 1865, were donated by museums or well-to-do families that amassed private collections of animal skins when the practice was in vogue a century ago.

Once the owl was cleaned, Giegerich fluffed up the feathers, stuffed the body with cotton and stitched up the incisions.

He wanted the bird to look good. Some requirements: stitches that don't show, feathers that lie in a natural position, and final measurements that

match those he took when he started.

"We like them to look nice. That's just pride in the preparation. Skins are supposed to represent birds and mammals in death, but like they just died."

There are 10,000 artifacts in the Roosevelt collection. Fish represent the single biggest portion, followed by birds, then mammals, and last, reptiles and amphibians. There are 1,500 birds more than 100 years old. Many of the mammals were collected during studies done in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s by zoologists who worked with the Roosevelt Wild Life Forest Experiment Station.

The rarest items in the collection are birds:

- a pair of passenger pigeons. The species has been extinct since 1914, when a bird named Martha died at the Cincinnati Zoo.

- a pair of ivory-billed woodpeckers. The species was once found in the South but hasn't been seen since the 1950s.

- a pair of heath hens. This type of prairie chicken once flourished in the Eastern United States. In 1916, a fire wiped out much of their only remaining habitat on the island of Martha's Vineyard. The few surviving birds struggled against predators and disease for the next few years and the last one died in 1932.

"They weren't too smart and they were easy game," Giegerich said.

In his 20 years in the business, Giegerich has seen the nature of the students change.

"There's more soccer kids than there are hunting and fishing kids. We grew up playing soccer but we also had an appreciation of the outdoors," he said. "Fathers are taking their sons to soccer practice now, not out hunting. And that's fine, but something's being lost."

Giegerich's goal is to preserve some of what's disappearing.

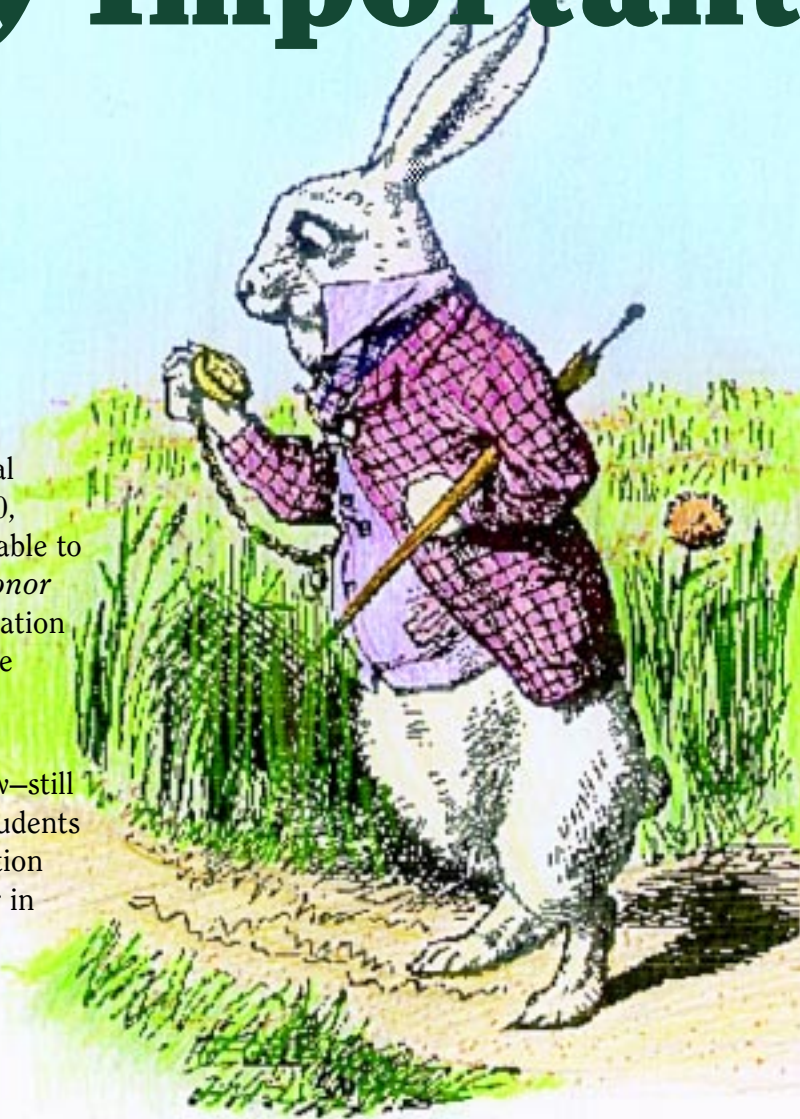
"It's a way of leaving artifacts for people to look at in the future," he said. "And hopefully, some of what I do will be around for a while."

Claire B. Dunn is assistant director of News and Publications.

It's A Very Important Date

The 1997-98 Annual Fund will end June 30, 1998. We want to be able to include you in our *Honor Roll of Donors* publication as a contributor to the college's fund-raising program.

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June 30, 1998

ESF Annual Fund

"Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!" said the White Rabbit.

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On Campus

Books and Monographs

Leopold, Donald J., William C. McComb, and Robert N. Muller, *Trees of the Central Hardwood Forests of North America—An Identification and Cultivation Guide*. Timber Press, Portland, OR. February, 1998.

Potteiger, Matthew and **Jamie Purinton '88**, *Landscape Narratives: Design Practices for Telling Stories*. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York. February, 1998.

Awards and Honors

Abrahamson, Lawrence P. 1997 Award for Outstanding Contributions. From the New York Christmas Tree Growers Association, January 23, 1998.

Coufal, James E. Elected vice president (president-elect) Society of American Foresters.

Daley, Douglas J. Education Service Award, Mid-Atlantic States Section, Air & Waste Management Association. October, 1997.

Johnson '98, Carol. 1998 Unsung Heroes and Heroines Award, Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission. January 18, 1998.

Luzadis, Valerie A. Young Forester Leadership Award, Society of American Foresters.

Maraviglia, Frank. Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service, United University Professions.

Campus Calendar

- April 14 Spotlight on Research '98: Undergraduate and Graduate Research Symposium. 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Alumni Lounge, Marshall Hall. Additional information: Russell D. Briggs, Faculty Subcommittee on Research, 315-470-6989.
- April 17 Graduate Student Association Annual Conference: Shifting Paradigms. Additional information: GSA, 315-470-6776.
- April 25 Spring Open House for prospective students. Additional information: Office of Undergraduate Admissions, 315-470-6600 or 1-800-ESF-7777.
- April 28 Last day of classes. Syracuse campus.
- April 30 Central New York Alumni Dinner. Additional information: Office of Alumni Services, 315-470-6632.
- May 9-10 Syracuse campus commencement weekend.
- May, TBA Metropolitan New York Alumni Reception. Additional information: Office of Alumni Services, 315-470-6632.
- May 19-22 108th Conference of the Empire State Paper Research Associates. Syracuse, NY. Additional information: Hannu P. Makkonen, ESPRI, 315-470-6521.
- May 23 Ranger School graduation.
- June 4-6 Senior Alumni Reunions. Syracuse campus. Additional information: Office of Alumni Services, 315-470-6632.
- June 7-22 NSF Summer Program for Educators: Applied Environmental Problem Solving. Additional information: Great Lakes Research Consortium, 315-470-6816.
- August 7-8 Ranger School Alumni Reunion. Wanakena, NY. Additional information: Ranger School, 315-848-2566.
- September 19-23 Alumni Reception, Society of American Foresters annual meeting. Traverse City, MI. Additional information: Office of Alumni Services, 315-470-6632.
- October 3-5 Alumni Reception, American Society of Landscape Architects annual meeting. Portland, OR. Additional information: Office of Alumni Services, 315-470-6632.