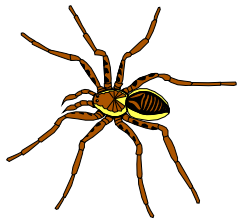
Cobwebs

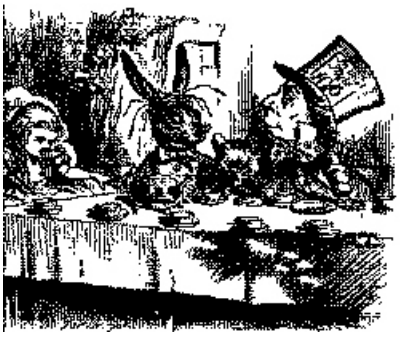


Spring 2004 - Volume 8

A Newsletter for Alumni in Biology, Natural Resources Management, Environmental Science, Planning and Resource Management and Group Science

A Mad Tea Party

Shaily Menon, Biology Chair



How time flies! Last year, at this time, my ruminations identified 'change' as the recurring theme in the Biology department. Alice's encounter with the Red Queen seemed an apt metaphor for change, not only in terms of its use in evolutionary theory but also in depicting the changes that the Biology department has experienced as we strive to excel in learning. In looking for a new theme this year, Lewis Carroll's timeless classic continues to inspire but this time with a counter-metaphor. In the Mad Tea Party, we discover that the Mad Hatter has managed to annoy Time and, as a result, it is always six o'clock. Time drags for the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, and the Dormouse as they move around the table arguing and telling stories to pass the time.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in.
Henry David Thoreau

I suppose we in the Biology department are fortunate that time does not drag for us. Time flies, opportunities knock, the currents turn, and we rise to meet the challenge. As Thoreau said, "Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in."

In late summer, some of us moved to our new offices in Henry Hall and began to settle in after a briefly confusing transition period when students couldn't find the new department office. We are also enjoying our two new teaching labs, a graduate student office, and a seminar room. We remain ever hopeful that the promised connector between Padnos and Henry Halls will be built and will bridge the separated halves of the department. Here are some other things we've been doing with our time in the Biology department: 1) Our faculty taught 88 credit hours in Summer 2003, 326 in Fall 2003, and 327 in Winter 2004. 2) Our new Master's program was launched in Fall 2003 and has 17 graduate students enrolled in it. Several faculty members are involved in the program as instructors of graduate courses and independent study, graduate student mentors, and members of graduate student committees. 3) We have some changes in faculty composition with Paul Huizenga's announcement that he will continue his work with human subject's review at GVSU but will retire from teaching. We will miss Paul's graceful presence and excellent teaching but students will continue to benefit through the newly established Professor Paul A. Huizenga Biology Education Scholarship. We welcome Jorge Lopez who will join us as a new tenure-track faculty member in evolutionary biology. 4) Lana Brock, our wonderful and able Lab Supervisor retired in December. True to character, she helped us find a wonderful person, Diane Laughlin, to continue in this important position. Happy Trails, Lana! Welcome, Diane!

Next fall will bring more changes. We will be part of a science and math cluster in a new College of Liberal Arts and Science with a new Dean. As always, we will continue to rise to the challenge and will keep you updated through this newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you. Do stop by for a spot of tea the next time you find yourselves in our neck of the woods.

β β β and Biology Club News

By Erica Black, President

The Biology Club has had an eventful year. We started out the festivities by participating in the National "Beach Sweep." In October we took a camping trip to Nordhouse Dunes in Manistee, Michigan and enjoyed such activities as hiking, stories by the campfire and of course, eating great food! We were blessed with the presence of Professor Trier. The Biology Club also organized a successful Bake Sale and a "Behind the Scenes" tour of John Ball Zoo. In March, GVSU students as well as faculty enjoyed our yearly trip to Chicago. We visited various museums and had yet another exciting bus ride. Recently we had a Bowl-A-Thon to raise money for teenage boys and infants at Devos Children's Hospital. We will end the school year with a Spring Hayride at Char VanderHoning's place!

2003/2004 Biology Club Officers: Erica Black, president; Angelica Fuentes, vice president; Missy Murphy, secretary; Sara Smolinsk, Treasurer; Mark Staves, Advisor.

Soil and Water Conservation Society News – By Neil MacDonald, Advisor

This year's officers include Danielle Jarois (President), Aaron Rydecki (Vice President), Rebecca Feuerstein (Treasurer), and Jaime Fluegge (Secretary). Fall, 2003 activities included the M-45 Highway clean-up and a project to sample and identify macroinvertebrates in Sand Creek. Results of the macroinvertebrate survey are being used by the Sand Creek Watershed Partners to help evaluate current water quality conditions in this stream as part of the development of a watershed project. In November, we assisted the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Department with streambank stabilization work as part of the Hager Creek restoration project (especial thanks to Dan Mays and Kate Rieger). We also hosted a presentation by Jeff Pietka, who spoke to us about opportunities for internships with the Student Conservation Association. In January, we had a cross-country skiing outing to Pigeon Creek Park, where we all took turns falling down on various hills, and had a very enjoyable time. Other SWCS activities planned for the winter 2004 semester include helping with the GVSU Science Olympiad and ending the semester with the traditional highway clean-up.

The Carmel is a lovely little river. It isn't very long but in its course it has everything a river should have. It rises in the mountains, and tumbles down a while, runs through shallows, is dammed to make a lake, spills over the dam, crackles among round boulders, wanders lazily under sycamores, spills into pools where trout live, drops in against banks where crayfish live. In the winter it becomes a torrent, a mean little fierce river, and in the summer it is a place for children to wade in and for fishermen to wander in. Frogs blink from its banks and the deep ferns grow beside it. Deer and foxes come to drink from it, secretly in the morning and evening, and now and then a mountain lion crouched flat laps its water. The farms of the rich little valley back up to the river and take its water for the orchards and the vegetables. The quail call beside it and the wild doves come whistling in at dusk. Raccoons pace its edges looking for frogs. It's everything a river should be.

John Steinbeck - Cannery Row

Grand Valley Pre-Vet Club

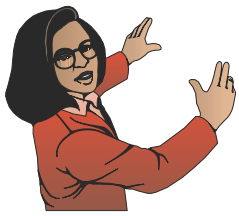
By Ben Weaver, President

At the beginning of the new school year it was nice to see a large turn out for the first meeting. We had at least four new members which means the newly renamed Pre-Veterinary Club (from Vet Club) is still growing. Last year two of our members entered the Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine. It is nice to see veterinary futures developing from the club's members. So far this year we have made three trips to a local dairy farm for a hands-on large animal experience, which sometimes can be hard to find. We got to see both the feeding and milking process along with an artificial insemination of two dairy cows. It was exciting to see club members do hand milkings for the first time. In addition, we were blessed to have Hilda Mejia Abreu, Director of Admissions at the Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine, visit Grand Valley and talk to the pre-vet club about the admissions process, requirements, common myths about admission, and other important facts. Dr. Bruce Langlois, from the Animal Hospital of Lowell, also gave a presentation to the pre-vet club based on his veterinary work in Guyana, South America. Dr. Langlois is the veterinary consultant for Remote Area Medical and a special consultant to the Minister of Agriculture of Guyana. He is very interested in involving pre-vet students from Grand Valley in his work in Guyana and also Africa.

As a club we are a group of friends who are all interested in something to do with animals. Some of us are interested in becoming a veterinary technician and some hope to be practicing veterinarians. All are welcome at our meetings. The pre-vet club looks forward to welcoming new members for next year. For more information, you can reach us through our website at: www2.gvsu.edu/~pre-vet/index.html.

2003/2004 Pre-Vet Club Officers: Ben Weaver, president/treasurer; Amber McPherson, vice-president; Jennifer Schmitz, secretary; Terry Trier, advisor.

Student Scholarship Day 2003



Biology students made a record 39 presentations on Student Scholarship Day on April 9, 2003. As usual the presentations illustrated the diverse research interests of the faculty and students in the department. Presentation topics ranged from integrated pest management to ecology to behavior to cell biology. A list of the presenting students, titles and faculty sponsors follows.

Nathan Adams. Watershed Management Plan for Four Small Ponds in Zeeland, Michigan. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Catherine Baibak. Identifying Wetlands Near the North Country National Scenic Trail. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Catherine Baibak, Kelly Hoffman, Jonathan Lehner, Melanie McGuire, Amanda Orban, Aaron Rydecki, Brent Sodergren, Joel Walen. Habitat Evaluation of Cottontail Rabbits on GVSU Campus. Sponsor: Linda Thomasma

Madelen Boot. Novel Chlorophyll Synthase Gene From Soybean (Glycine max). Sponsor: Lowry Stephenson

Dan Boss. Identifying Connector Trails to the North Country Trail in the Southern Huron-Manistee National Forest. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Sarah Brotz. Blandford Wildlife Rehabilitation: Fauna of Michigan. Sponsor: Terry Trier

Nicola Cadena. Spatial and Activity Patterns of Captive Chimpanzees: Effects of Enclosure and Enrichment. Sponsor: Jodee Hunt

Anthony Chacon. Developing an Online Resource for the Threatened Karner Blue. Sponsor: Terry Trier

Nicole Dafoe. The Effects of RGD on Plant Development. Sponsor: Shelia Blackman

Jessica Demeuse. DNA as a Useful Tool in Conservation Decisions for Frogs. Sponsor: Stephen Burton, Karel Rogers

Kevin Dondzila, Ryan Frisch. Production and Fusion of Protoplasts of *Dendrathema grandiflora* (Chrysanthemun). Sponsor: Sheila Blackman

Kevin Dondzila, Matthew Wilson. Measuring the Effectiveness of a UV Water Filtration System in a Dental Office. Sponsor: Roderick Morgan

Virginia Drueke. Isolation and Characterization of a Novel Gene from soybean (*Glycine max*). Sponsor: Lowry Stephenson

Virginia Drueke. The External Calcium Requirement for Perception of the "Death-Message" in *Chara corallina*. Sponsor: Mark Staves

Virginia Drueke, Adam Klomp, Amanda Pitsch. Effect of Light Quality on Anthocynin Production from Ajuga Cell Cultures. Sponsor: Sheila Blackman

Paul Dymowski, Benjamin Staal, Andrea Thelan. Selection of Variant Tobacco Cell Lines with Enhanced Tolerance to Aluminum. Sponsor: Shelia Blackman

Ryan Frisch. The Identification of Bacteria from Mammoth Cave, Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky, USA that Potentially Produce Therapeutic Compounds. Sponsors: Roderick Morgan

Sheri Giannosa. Tile Location and Mapping at Ives Road Fen, Techumseh MI Along With a Brief History. Sponsor: Terry Trier

Jessica Gleffe. Social Behavior of Captive Chimpanzees: Dominance and Mediation. Sponsor: Jodee Hunt

Katherine Heffron. Applications of Forensic Science to a Homicide Investigation. Sponsor: Nancy Shontz

Katrina Hernandez. The Analysis of Bodily Fluid Identifying Tests. Sponsor: Nancy Shontz

Kelly Hoffman. Creation of an Oak/Pine Barren for the Endangered Karner Blue Butterfly. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Stephanie Januchowski. Plant and Animal Assemblages of Bottomland Hardwood Forests in Southern Lower Michigan. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Nathan Lanning. Tet-Off Inducible Gene Expression System for the Met Receptor Tyrosine Kinase. Sponsor: Roderick Morgan

Nathan Lanning, Sarah Taylor, Matthew Wilson. Transformation of Plants Using Agrobacterium Tumefaciens. Sponsor: Sheila Blackman

Truphena Martim. Reintroduction of African Wild Dogs in Kenya. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Karl Makinen. A Review of Home Range Analysis Using Radio Tracking Data in Mammalian Studies. Sponsor: Joe Jacquot

Melanie McGuire. Management Options for Controlling the Giant Canadian Goose Population in Southern Michigan. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Amanda Orban. Developing a Constructed Wetland to Treat Storm Water at Pimple Lake. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Creela Overton. Integrated Pest Management Plan for an Apple Farm in Southwest Michigan. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Aaron Parker. Effects of Habitat Structures on Trout Biomass and Density, and Macroinvertebrate Biodiversity. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Rick Sheehan. Study of Car-Deer Accidents in Montcalm, Kent, and Ottawa Counties in Michigan. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Brett Shelagowski. *E. coli* in GVSU Stream. Sponsor: Roderick Morgan

Kati Smith. Distribution, Preliminary Habitat Associations, and Relative Abundances of Two Frog Species Common to the Grand Valley State University Allendale Campus. Sponsor: Stephen Burton

Brent Sodergren. Managing Southern Hillsdale County for Whitetail Deer. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Andrew Stille. Assessing a Proposed North Country Trail Route Using GIS. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Todd Tiano. Genetic Differences Between Subpopulations of Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*) in the Rogue River, Kent County, Michigan. Sponsor: Mark Luttenton, Alex Nikitin

Stephanie Van Kampen. Impact of Zebra Mussel Infestation on the Diet of Steelheads in the Muskegon River. Sponsor: Carol Griffin

Karen VanKuiken. Left-sided Directional Bias of Cloacal Contacts During House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). Sponsors: Michael Lombardo, Patrick Thorpe

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What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow that runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.

Crowfoot (1821-1890)

New faculty

Chris Dobson

My family and I recently came to Michigan from a full-time teaching position at Front Range Community College in Denver, Colorado. It was quite the adventure with my wife, Susan, our one year old son, Robby, and our two dogs crammed in the cab of a UHaul truck. Since arriving in Michigan, we were blessed with the birth of our second son, Sean. Must be something in the water.

This first year has been rather busy, but I am starting to settle in to my new courses. I currently teach introductory biology for non-science majors and an integrated science course for future elementary teachers. I am also helping to develop an ecology course for pre-service elementary teachers that I will eventually teach as well.

My scholarship is guided by my interest in promoting and investigating the learning of science through scientific inquiry. I jumped right in my first semester at Grand Valley by participating in two separate, grant-funded projects through the Regional Math and Science Center. I continue to work on these projects, supporting K-12 teacher preparation and outreach in the greater Grand Rapids area.

Arriving in Michigan was a homecoming for my wife, Susan. Thank goodness I can stop being nervous about my son wearing all those Red Wing shirts his grandparents kept sending to us in Denver! Although Michigan is new to me, I have been having a great time. What a wonderful place to raise a family. I am very excited about the future and generally delighted to be here.

Margaret Dietrich

My move to GVSU marks a return to the Upper Midwest since I grew up on the other side of the Lake in southern Wisconsin. Even so, it has been a big change since for the past 13 years, I had been living in Tucson while working in the Plant Sciences Department at the University of Arizona. While I will not quickly forget the desert/mountain hiking and the open skies of southern Arizona, I look forward to seeing what Michigan has to offer (and getting used to the sight of water again).

I received my B.S. degree in Biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and my Ph.D. in Plant Physiology from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. I moved to Tucson for a postdoctoral position in plant development and have since continued with these research interests. I work with two species of moss to investigate questions dealing with hormone-induced plant development and the signal transduction processes involved. I use molecular, biochemical, cellular, and genetic approaches in these studies.

This summer I will begin a new collaborative project with Native Seeds/SEARCH, a nonprofit organization in Tucson established to collect and maintain germplasm of crops and related species grown by Native people in the southwest US and northwest Mexico. Initially, we will be using molecular markers to identify duplicate holdings within their collection.

Here at GVSU I teach the Cell and Molecular Biology lecture and lab, Nucleic Acids Laboratory, and Introduction to Biotechnology.

Gary Greer

I am a plant ecologist with interest in topics ranging from population to community levels. My graduate training and research (M.A. from Humboldt State University, CA and Ph.D. at Ohio University) focused on the life history evolution of ferns. Ferns are fascinating plants. Genetically, they are the most complex of plants and the most successful by two measures, longevity (some 340 million years) and continued diversification–while many other groups have diminished or gone extinct. I was, and continue to be, particularly interested in the extent to which individual ferns can adaptively alter allocation to growth and reproduction in response to ques from their environment. Although other research interests have occupied most of my time since graduate school, I continue to study fern reproductive ecology and evolution.

Prior to this year, I served as an Assistant Professor at West Virginia State College for six years. During this time, I began studying the "Tree-of-Heaven," (*Ailanthus altissima*), an invasive tree from China that is now found in the lower 48 states. Long associated with urban landscapes and highways, *Ailanthus* has invaded native forests and streamside habitats. My research has revealed that *Ailanthus* releases substances from its root system that have complex affects, mostly negative, on

surrounding vegetation. Most surprisingly, I found that its presence increases understory biodiversity.

I am delighted to become a faculty member of Grand Valley State University and look forward to getting to know Michigan, a state entirely new to me. A native of Colorado, I am a "rabid" skier and an occasional ceramacist. With all of the water here, I hope to take up sailing.

Regina McClinton

Dr. Regina McClinton received her BA from the University of California, Riverside, and her Ph.D. in Molecular and Physiological Plant Biology from the University of California, Berkeley. She then went on to receive a Katharine Esau post-doctoral fellowship in structural biology, from the University of California, Davis. Prior to arriving at GVSU, she was faculty at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her research interest is the establishment and regulation of plant cell shape, with an emphasis on the organization of the microtubule cytoskeleton. Currently, Dr. McClinton is investigating the protein katanin, which severs microtubules. Although she has just arrived, she has gained both a graduate student and an undergraduate, with whom she conducts research.

Heather Rueth

After nine years of bouncing around the country I am happy to be back in the mid-west (I'm a cheese-head & Packer fan at heart). I am a terrestrial ecosystem ecologist who is primary interested in understanding how human-accelerated environmental change alters ecosystems. I have spent a number of years studying how air pollution impacts mountain ecosystems. After I completed my BS in Forestry from UW Madison I headed to up-state NY and worked in the Catskill Mountains. From there I headed to the Rocky Mountains and completed my Ph.D. on the effects of nitrogen deposition on high-elevation, old-growth forests. My latest adventure involved spending the last three summers in the Alaskan Arctic studying the impacts of climate change. While this was a grand adventure producing many stories, I learned a number of valuable lessons. First, I enjoy studying forests (there were no trees where I was) and second, I like summer – there is just something wrong with a blizzard on August 1st. Once I become more 'settled', I hope to find the time to pursue my other passions in life, including ski patrolling, home-brewing, telemark skiing, backpacking, cooking, and traveling.

New Arrival!

Chris and Susan Dobson are thrilled to announce the birth of their second son, Sean Henry Dobson over Christmas break. Sean was born at Spectrum Health Hospital on December 20th, weighing 7lbs., 1oz. and measuring 19 inches in length. The baby is doing well, growing like a weed. Big brother, Robby, is adjusting to the new family addition, having officially nicknamed him Sean-Sean.

Faculty Activity

Besides quality teaching, our faculty are very busy doing research in the laboratory and field, giving talks at professional meetings, winning awards, being featured in newspaper articles and being interviewed on the radio, and doing important professional and community service outside of GVSU.

Speaking of quality teaching we are excited to announce that Carol Griffin or "Griff"' was awarded the 2004 Pew Teaching Excellence Award for the outstanding teacher from the GVSU Division of Science and Mathematics!

Shaily Menon

Biology Chair Shaily Menon received a Glenn A. Niemeyer Award. The Glenn A. Niemeyer Outstanding Student and Faculty Awards are the most prestigious academic award presented by the university. The Awards honor students and faculty who strive for excellence in all aspects of a well-rounded academic experience. Congratulations Shaily!

Several scholarly papers were published this past year. This included several current and former students as co-authors including one by Michael Lombardo and Pat Thorpe in the *Wilson Bulletin* titled "Left-sided directional bias of cloacal contacts during house sparrow copulations." Neil MacDonald also published two papers with student co-authors including

one in the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* titled "Native warm-season grass establishment on spotted knapweed-infested gravel mine soils." Jim Dunn co-published a paper with two students on the topic of Michigan's endangered insects in the *Great Lakes Entomologist*. Dr. Dunn was also awarded an extramural grant by the Natural Heritage Program of the MDNR to study the metapopulation dynamics of the endangered Karner Blue Butterfly. New faculty member Gary Greer has been busy as associate editor of the *American Fern Journal*.

Fall Science Update at GVSU is very important in keeping local high school teachers up to date in Biology. Recently some of our newer faculty Chris Dobson, Janet Vigna and Stephen Burton presented Kaboom!!! Doing Science to Learn Science.

Several faculty have given presentations of their research at professional meetings worldwide. Shaily Menon gave talks both in Austrialia and India on her work in Landscape Ecology. Bruce Ostrow who studies the molecular basis of insect development presented a paper at the Midwest Regional Drosophila meeting in Montecello, Illinois. Rod Morgan and Alex Nikitin and several current students gave a presentation at the American Society for Microbiology in Washington DC over their exciting work on the potential use of microbes to clean up oil spills.

Several faculty including Joe Jacquot, Gary Greer, Eric Snyder, Jim Dunn, Karel Rogers, Stephen Burton, Neil MacDonald, Margaret Deitrich, Mark Staves and Sheila Blackman gave individual talks at the annual meeting of the Michigan Academy of Science Arts and Letters over topics as varied as frog and butterfly conservation, invasive plant species, allelopathy, stream energetics, home range of mammals, and the molecular basis of cell death.

Faculty research activities are often recognized by the press. This past summer Rod Morgan was interviewed by *Microbe World* on his work on the biodegradation of diesel fuel (a pollutant) which was broadcasted on National Public Radio.

Faculty of the Annis Water Resources Institute (AWRI) at GVSU are very closely associated with the Biology program as they teach several aquatic biology courses and have had several project in which many current and former students have played important roles. Don Uzarski has published several papers on his work in the development of a macroinvertebrate index that can be used by ecosystem managers to detect changes in the quality of Michigan's coastal wetlands. Al Steinman has been involved in many important projects including the Mecosta County Ice Mountain (bottled water) ground water controversy and the clean-up of Spring lake. Rick Rediske has been awarded several large grants, one to determine the extent of toxic contamination of Little Black Creek which is an urban stream in Muskegon Heights, MI. Carl Ruetz, a fish biologist, has recently given invited talks at both Eastern Michigan and the Kellogg Biological Station, MSU.

New Courses:

BIO 417 – Natural History of Australia

In May 2003, fifteen GVSU students participated in a two-week field course to northern Queensland, Australia led by Professor Joe Jacquot and his spouse, Laurie Mohr. They spent six days at Lizard Island Research Station studying the Great Barrier Reef, and several days each in the local rainforest and outback ecosystems near the city of Cairns. After the course concluded, more than half the group spent additional time in Australia, much of it in the Sydney area. A more detailed trip report with pictures and links can be found on the Biology webpage. Follow the link entitled "Photo essays from summer field courses."

The success story of another GVSU Biology graduate: Laurie Faber-Foster

Laurie Faber-Foster was Biology's Outstanding Graduate in 1985; her continued enthusiasm and academic excellence has won her recent recognition within the West Michigan Community. Since 1991 she has been an instructor of Biological Sciences at Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). In celebration of Woman's History Month, GRCC honored Laurie as an outstanding woman employee.

From GVSU to Woman Honoree: Laurie transferred to GVSU from Calvin College with an interest in biology and education. Her advisor, Paul Huizenga, immediately recognized that her enthusiasm and academic excellence would allow her to excel in education. Following graduation, Laurie began a career as a high-school instructor. A couple of years later she was actively recruited by Jenison High School to teach their Advanced Placement Biology. Jenison based this decision on her demonstrated skills as a teacher assistant during her junior year at GVSU. To further illustrate that events can come full circle, at one point Laurie was invited to teach the Capstone Course for Group Science Majors at GVSU. Laurie's other accomplishments include a Master's Degree in Curriculum and the 1997 State of Michigan Science Teacher of the Year award. At GRCC she quickly moved to the top of the Science Division and was honored on March 23rd for her accomplishments. Perhaps the most accurate gauge of Laurie's success as an educator is that students seek out her classes which are the first to fill each semester.

Regarding her recent recognition Laurie stated: "My wish for women would be to see how far they could stretch. To not settle, to see more and be less afraid."

After sleeping a few hours, I stole quietly out of the camp, and climbed the mountain that stands guard between the two glaciers. The ground was frozen, making the climbing difficult in the steepest places; but the views over the icy bay, sparkling beneath the glorious effulgence of the sky, were enchanting. It seemed then a sad thing that any part of so precious a night had been lost in sleep. The starlight was so full that I distinctly saw not only the bay with its multitude of glittering bergs, but most of the lower portions of the glaciers, lying pale and spirit-like amid the huge silent mountains.

The nearest glacier in particular was so distinct that it seemed to be glowing with light that came from within itself. Not even in dark nights have I ever found any difficulty in seeing large glaciers; but on this mountain-top, amid so much ice, in the heart of so clear and frosty a night, everything was luminous, and I seemed to be poised in a vast hollow between two skies of equal brightness. How strong I felt after my exhilarating scramble, and how glad I was that my good angel had called me before the glorious night succeeding so glorious a morning had been spent!

John Muir - The Century Magazine (1895)

Announcements

Biology web pages – Stephen Burton became our website administrator this year. The format of the biology web pages will be changing this summer in order to make them more user-friendly. Any input or suggestions that you might have should be directed to Stephen at burtonst@gvsu.edu.

Biology Department Endowment Funds

The Biology Department currently has three active Endowment Funds. Interest from the endowments is used for a variety of purposes. Each of these funds has to reach a minimum amount before interest on the endowment can be used. Our three funds have each just reached this minimum ($30,000).

The Salski Fund, named for John Salski, supports student projects and three awards of $750 each have been made for this coming summer. John E. Salski graduated from Wayland High School in 1966 and was a 1970 Biology Group Science graduate. He was teaching junior high school in Detroit when he was killed in December 1974. The ice rink in Clark Park in Detroit, which he helped plan, was named after him following his death. The department received money from John's insurance policy after his death and established the John Salski Memorial Fund.

The Howard and Rose Stein Scholarship funds scholarships in Biology. The first award from this fund will be made this coming academic year. Howard Stein was a long time faculty member in Biology and tragically died of cancer in 2002. This fund was established in his memory to honor his commitment to teacher education and his interest in cell biology.

A new endowment fund, The Paul A. Huizenga Scholarship was established by his family this year. Scholarship money will be awarded biannually to a deserving GVSU Junior level student preparing to teach Biology at the secondary level. The criteria used for selection will be a combination of academic achievement and financial need. The award will be renewable (without re-application) up to a total of 4 semesters, provided that the student remains academically qualified

Paul Huizenga

The Biology Laboratory and Field Equipment Fund purchases specific pieces of equipment to enhance student experiences in the lab or field courses.

We encourage you to contribute to these funds especially as they are directly targeted to students.

Lab Manager Retires

Lana Brock, who has served as the lab manager for the Biology Department since 1990, retired December 2003. Lana ("No Problem") Brock began in the days when the Biology prep space was what is now the herbarium room in Padnos. In those days this space was located in Loutit Hall (around which Padnos Hall was built) and was only about 15 by 20 feet including a closet which housed the only source of distilled water (a still!). When Padnos Hall was built she supervised a seamless year of transition where at one point faculty and students used wooden planks to walk to labs in the midst of construction. Numerous students have worked with Lana in the prep room and under her supervision labs (especially the 100-level labs) were always setup and ready to go (we didn't trust the biology faculty to do this!). In addition she handled the ordering for the department including the last minute "but I have to have this in two days!" requests as well as the monumental annual bid orders. In the midst of all the daily chaos and confusion she was always a calm, collected spot. The Department will miss her and we wish her well.

Keeping in Touch!

We hope you enjoy our newsletter and that you will keep in touch with us. We welcome your feedback. Share news with us–even if it is old to you. Give us your email address and expect some kind of response (though not an instant one). We are accessible through menons@gvsu.edu, phone: 616-331-2470.

Keep the Biology Department informed of changes in your mailing address, and if there are classmates out there that you've lost touch with, ask us for addresses. And don't forget to visit us at www.gvsu.edu/biology or from the GVSU homepage under academic programs.

Looking for back issues of Cobwebs? No problem! We are online at: http://www4.gvsu.edu/triert/cobwebs/Cobwebs.htm

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Name: ____ Year graduated: ______________

Corrected address :______________________________

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___________________________ Zip ________________

email: ______________________

To: Biology Department
Grand Valley State University
Allendale, MI 49401