

THE NIH RECORD

Still The Second Best Thing About Payday

'Stroke Sunday'

NINDS Calls Attention to Stroke Rate in African Americans

NINDS deputy director Dr. Audrey Penn and researchers from NINDS' Stroke Branch joined U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher at a Rockville Baptist church on Sunday, Oct. 8, for "Stroke Sunday," a health education and stroke event cosponsored by the American Stroke Association and the black commissioned officers' advisory group of the U.S. Public Health Service. The event brought attention to the major impact of stroke in the African American community and helped to inform church congregants about reducing their stroke risks.

"Although stroke has a disproportionate impact among African Americans, there is something we can do as a community to combat this disease," said Satcher from the

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Malaria Research Facility Dedicated in Mali

A new malaria laboratory facility was recently dedicated at the University of Mali in Bamako, Mali, West Africa, to promote malaria research, especially the development of vaccines. The facility provides tools, resources and technology to scientists who can then carry out malaria research in their native countries where the disease is endemic.

NIAID has long supported and collaborated with Malian scientists. The labs are part of the Malaria Research and Training Center, which opened in 1989. The MRTTC works closely with the Malian Ministry of Health as well as the National Malaria Control Program. The new facility will house new and ongoing research and training programs supported by NIAID, the U.S. Agency

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Institutes of Health

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5,000 and Counting

First Extensive Tree Census Concludes

By Carla Garnett

Before this past summer, arguably only one man knew every tree on the NIH property. Now, following the campus's first exhaustive tree survey, several more folks have become acquainted with NIH's arboreal residents.

The 3-month, \$17,000 tree survey commissioned by NIH's Office of Facilities Planning was conducted by the contractor Davey Tree Experts. Every tree on the NIH property with at least a 6-inch-wide trunk was identified by species and genus, the state of its health evaluated and its location plotted on an aerial map of the campus. They were also tagged with numbered metal plates; the coin-sized plates prompted many NIH'ers to wonder what was going on.

"This survey was part of our regularly scheduled 5-year updates to NIH's 20-year master plan," said Stella Serras-Fiotes, director of the Office of Research Services' newly constituted facilities planning office. The most recent NIH master plan was completed in 1995, but a comprehensive tree census was not completed at the time. "The results of the survey will serve several purposes," she

SEE **TREE CENSUS**, PAGE 8

Cold and Wet, But Fun

NIH'er Pedals Across Alaska for a Cause

By Rich McManus

Even though he is back at work now as an entomologist in the Division of Safety, Trevor Lubbart is not completely done yet with the 500-mile Alaska AIDS Vaccine Ride, a bike tour he took



Trevor Lubbart bikes Alaska.

Aug. 21-26, stretching from Fairbanks to downtown Anchorage. That's because he still owes thank-you notes to the many donors—including some here at NIH—who pledged a total of \$4,300 to his effort, and because, as the father of a young girl, he is fearful of a world in which a killer virus goes unchecked. And quite frankly, it's also because he isn't done shivering yet at memories of a cold, wet ride marred by almost daily rainfall, prying winds and the unthinkable—especially for a native of Maryland—onset of winter in mid-August.

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church pulpit. "We can reduce our risk of stroke by lowering blood pressure, quitting smoking and keeping heart disease and diabetes in check. We can help our loved ones by knowing the warning signs of stroke and acting quickly in case of a stroke emergency."

Stroke is the third leading cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States. The incidence of stroke among African Americans is nearly double that of white Americans and African Americans are more likely to die from stroke or its complications than any other ethnic group. In

addition, African Americans suffer more severe strokes than white Americans and have a higher incidence of the treatable stroke risk factors, including high blood pressure and cigarette smoking.

In addition to remarks by the surgeon general, Penn and representatives from the cosponsors, church congregants and guests were offered free blood pressure checks, assessments of their personal risks for stroke, and health counseling to encourage awareness of the signs of stroke. Dr. Thomas DeGraba, head of the clinical stroke research unit, and Dr. Steven Warach, chief of the section on stroke diagnostics and therapeutics, answered questions and personally counseled many of the screening participants.

Penn discussed the underuse of stroke interventions and the need to consider stroke as an emergency condition. Despite significant advances in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of stroke, few candidates for treatment recognize the signs and get to a hospital in time to benefit from these advances.

"Stroke is a medical emergency where every minute counts," Penn said. "Immediate treatment can protect the brain from the damage caused by reduced blood flow and enhance chances for successful recovery." ■

Employee Suggestion Program Available

The Employee Suggestion Program is a great way to share your ideas for improving government operations and services and to be recognized for your contribution. Complete form HHS-170 (employee suggestion form) and submit your ideas to your IC Employee Suggestion Program coordinator. To find out who your coordinator is, go to <http://oma.od.nih.gov/ms/employee/> or call 496-2832. ■

OPM Director Honors NIH Office

NIH's Center for Cooperative Resolution recently received one of four Office of Personnel Management Director's Awards for Outstanding ADR (alternative dispute resolution) Programs. OPM Director Janice R. Lachance said, "ADR is a powerful tool for cutting the cost of litigation, enhancing employee morale and improving government decision-making."

The winning agencies "clearly demonstrate the value of using non-traditional approaches to settle workplace disputes," said OPM. "Each of these programs helps bring down the costs normally associated with the traditional, formal proceedings under the federal government's dispute resolution system and, in the end, the taxpayer is the winner."

Techniques used by ADR programs to settle workplace conflicts include conciliation, early neutral evaluation, facilitation, fact-finding, interest-based problem-solving, mediation, ombudsing and peer review.

The other agencies honored included the Department of Agriculture, Defense Logistics Agency and the U.S. Postal Service. ■

Are You Normal Weight?

Individuals ages 18-60 are needed to participate in a study examining eating patterns among nonobese adults. You do not have to be a "perfect" weight to participate. The study involves keeping 2 weeks of an eating diary and completing an assessment for \$50. If interested, call Dr. Tracy Sbrocco at USUHS, (301) 295-9664. ■



On hand at the "Stroke Sunday" event at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Rockville recently were (from l) Dr. Audrey Penn, NINDS deputy director; Surgeon General David Satcher; and Levon Parker, NINDS equal opportunity officer.

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NHGRI Intramural Short Course Alum Returns, Finds Information 'Invaluable'

NHGRI's annual Current Topics in Genetic Research Short Course, held recently at the Natcher Bldg., drew more than 27 university and college teachers from across the country, including a repeat visitor, for whom "summer school" is fun if the topic is DNA.

Elizabeth Staton, chair of the science and math department at Martin University in Indianapolis, a non-traditional, liberal arts and predominantly African-American university, first attended the NHGRI program, initiated 6 years ago, in 1998.

"The short course that year was invaluable to me," says Staton. "It gave us the most current information from some of the world's leading researchers. But the opportunity to be part of the course a second time was quite appealing."

The course, organized by NHGRI's Office of Science Education, is designed to give information on recent developments in genetics to biology teachers from historically black colleges and universities, predominantly Hispanic-American institutions and Native-American tribal colleges.

More than 15 NHGRI scientists and genetics professionals led hour-long workshops for the participants. Topics included bioinformatics, the Human Genome Project, genome mapping and sequencing, microarray technology, mouse models, single nucleotide polymorphism analysis, stem cell research, ethics, genetic counseling, mentorships, effective grantsmanship and diseases such as hereditary prostate cancer and sickle cell anemia.

"Our goal is to attract science teachers to NHGRI each summer and show them the latest technologies, let them learn about the latest research and update them on the Human Genome Project," says OSE Director Jeff Witherly.

"By the time the course is done, the instructors are ready to go back to their schools in the fall and incorporate what they have learned into their curricula. Our job is to excite them, so they can in turn excite their students to pursue a summer internship or career in genetics or biology," adds Witherly.

Because the course is so well attended, participants are asked to sit out for one year to allow new colleagues from the same or different institutions to participate.

Staton used the information she acquired from the 1998 course to develop an undergraduate genetic counseling program at Martin, complete with course syllabi and lab performance requirements. The curriculum follows guidelines from NHGRI and the National Society of Genetic Counselors. A professional team of certified genetic counselors, medical physicians and consultants from several collegiate institutions evaluated the course work.

"I was able to fully utilize what I learned because the course truly prepared me," says Staton. "I chose to participate again to further enhance my knowledge and ultimately, our curriculum."

Staton also has established several internships for Martin University students majoring in genetic counseling and molecular biology.

This year's short course included teachers from such institutions as Alabama A&M University; Bossier Parish Community College (Louisiana), Diné College (New Mexico) and Tuskegee University (Alabama).—April Thompson ■



Elizabeth Staton has taken the NHGRI short course twice.

NIAMS Conference on Health Disparities

NIAMS is organizing a 1½-day scientific conference on "Health Disparities in Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases," to be held Dec. 15-16 at the Natcher Conference Center. The goals are to review current knowledge about health disparities in arthritis and musculoskeletal and skin diseases and promote new research opportunities and approaches to eliminating disparities. Cosponsors include several NIH offices, and professional associations.

The deadline for advance registration is Dec. 1. There is no charge for the conference. To register electronically, go to <http://www.nih.gov/niams/news/hdreg.htm> or phone (202) 973-8696. For special accommodation needs contact Felecia Taylor at 594-2463, email taylorf@mail.nih.gov. ■

Symposium on Oligonucleotides, Dec. 8

The Therapeutic Oligonucleotide Interest Group will hold its 5th annual symposium, "Therapeutic Oligonucleotides: The Genome Era and the Gene Targeting Clinic," on Friday, Dec. 8 in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10 from 7:55 a.m. to 5:05 p.m. In addition to scientists from NIH and Georgetown, speakers will be coming from a variety of universities and biotech companies from the United States and Germany. There will be 15 platform speakers. Registration is not required. Contact Dr. Cho-Chung (chochung@helix.nih.gov) for details. ■

Control Subjects Needed

Do you work at a computer at least 4 hours per day? Are you a female between the ages of 21 and 50 who is currently working full or part time? If so, you are invited to participate in a research study of job stress and computer use. This study includes a \$100 payment. For more information, call (301) 295-3672.

NIAID Brings Technology to Mali

Imagine what it would be like to conduct research with no Internet connection, no email communication, and no reliable phone system to communicate with your colleagues. Until recently, this is how life was for scientists at the Malaria Research and Training Center (MRTC) at the University of Mali

in West Africa, which for 10 years has been a primary center of collaborative malaria research in Africa for NIAID's Laboratory of Parasitic Diseases. But recently, Chris Whalen, a computer specialist with NIAID's office of technology and information systems, and his colleague Jonathan Folkers began work to change all that.

The first step was wiring the MRTC for connection

to the local Internet service provider in Bamako, Mali. But phone lines are expensive to use, unreliable and experience frequent outages.

To solve this problem, they recently switched the Internet access from phone lines to microwave radio communication. A microwave transmitter uses radio waves to communicate directly to the ISP in downtown Bamako, which then connects to the Internet via a satellite dish shared by the entire country.

Whalen and Folkers configured the computers so that when a person connects to the Internet, he or she is actually connecting via the local area network to a microwave transmitter on top of the building. Microwave radio communication is less expensive in developing countries and more reliable than phone-line connections.

Although the microwave connection has proved to be a great improvement, it is still not an ideal solution; a few weeks ago, the satellite connection the country uses to tap the Internet went down. And two days later, the state telephone company, which maintains the system, went on strike, essentially leaving the entire country off-line with no Internet service. International phone lines were down for several days as well.

"In the past six to eight months, there has been an explosive growth in the number of people using the Internet in Mali, and you still have the same size 'pipe' (satellite link) for the entire country. It's gotten more and more congested to the point where it's almost unusable," said Whalen. MRTC therefore needs its own satellite connection.

Such a connection will permit collaborative research projects. A dish will be placed on top of

the Twinbrook I Bldg. in Rockville, where NIAID's malaria vaccine development unit is located. This will enable communication between researchers at NIH, the main MRTC lab facility in Mali, and a remote field laboratory and clinic in Bandiagara, which will also be equipped with a dish. The satellite connections are due up by April 2001.

In addition to microwave networks and satellite technology, Whalen is also working to install a packet radio system to connect field sites that have unreliable or no power sources. Packet radios are being installed in trucks, which will allow voice, fax, email communication and database updates from any location within 1,000 kilometers, or 620 miles, of Bamako.

It's crucial to have packet radios available for researchers to transmit data once the malaria season begins in Mali in the spring. Researchers traveling to villages must keep patient records in the village clinics. Packet radios will enable them to send and receive email from field sites and make updates to the vaccine research databases in real time.—Diana Carroll

MALARIA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for International Development, the NIH Office of Research on Minority Health, the Fogarty International Center, the World Health Organization and NASA. The new building, which has recently been set up for connection to the Internet (see sidebar above), contains two large labs, a conference room and library, and several classrooms.

Each year, an estimated 300 million people are infected with the malaria parasite, and more than 1 million people, mostly children, die from the disease.

The MRTC labs conduct a range of research activities, including studies on the basic epidemiology of disease. Current MRTC program objectives include the detection of parasite resistance to anti-malarial drugs; the role of hemoglobin C in malaria pathogenesis; and clinical and field testing of malaria vaccine candidates.

Although there is no vaccine available for the prevention of malaria, two promising vaccine approaches are being investigated at the MRTC.

The new labs will be an important collaborating facility for NIAID's malaria vaccine development unit located in Maryland, as well as for other NIAID-supported investigations. ■



Map of West Africa, location of Mali



Malian researchers study blood smears in one of the new labs.

President Hails Outstanding Young Scientists

President Clinton on Oct. 23 named 59 young researchers—including ten NIH grantees and two scientists in the intramural programs—as recipients of the fifth annual Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, the highest honor bestowed by the United States government on young professionals at the outset of their independent research careers. The researchers received their awards Oct. 24 in a White House ceremony.

The awards, established by President Clinton in February 1996, embody the high priority the administration places on producing outstanding scientists and engineers ready to contribute to all sectors of the economy. Eight federal departments and agencies join together annually to nominate the most meritorious young scientists and engineers who will advance the science and technology that will be of the greatest benefit to fulfilling the agencies' missions. The scientists and engineers receive up to a 5-year research grant to further their study.

"I am delighted that two scientists here at NIH and ten grantees were given this high honor. Such talented young researchers are essential to the future success of medical research," said NIH acting director Dr. Ruth Kirschstein.

The recipients associated with NIH, and their grantee institute, include: Philip Ashton-Rickardt, University of Chicago, NIAID; Michael L. Dustin, Washington University, NIAID; Leslie S. Ritter, University of Arizona at Tucson, NINR; Monica Kraft, National Jewish Medical and Research Center, NHLBI; Charles E. Murry, University of Washington, NHLBI; Henrike von Gersdorff, Oregon Health Sciences University, NIDCD and NEI; Karl Kandler, University of Pittsburgh, NIDCD and NEI; S. Barak Caine, Harvard Medical School, NIDA; Christopher S. Chen, Johns Hopkins University, NIGMS; Geoffrey A. Chang, Scripps Research Institute, NIGMS; Orna Cohen-Fix, NIDDK intramural program; and Jeffrey S. Diamond, NINDS intramural program.

Using yeast as her model organism, Cohen-Fix studies processes that ensure that chromosomes segregate properly during cell division. When the processes go wrong, cells accumulate an abnormal number of chromosomes. This situation is seen in some types of cancer. She is a cell biologist in the Laboratory of Molecular and Cellular Biology, NIDDK.

Diamond studies the communication between nerve cells in the brain (synaptic transmission) and the mechanisms by which those communications are changed in the process of learning and memory; he is in the synaptic physiology unit, NINDS. ■

NINDS Grantee Jessell Honored

NINDS grantee Dr. Thomas M. Jessell, an investigator at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and professor of biochemistry and molecular biophysics at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, recently received the 13th annual Bristol-Myers Squibb Award for Distinguished Achievement in Neuroscience Research.

Jessell was recognized for his work in defining many of the key cellular and molecular mechanisms that control the development and functional organization of the spinal cord.



Dr. Thomas M. Jessell

His research laid the foundation for our current understanding of the biological programs that generate highly specialized and diverse cell types in the spinal cord. These cell types perform very specific functions such as processing sensations or executing motor behavior. This basic knowledge has led to a better understanding of how brain cells become specialized, and may have clinical implications for the treatment of spinal cord injury and other diseases of the central nervous system.

Jessell was first to show that each of the motor neurons and interneurons in the spinal cord achieve their distinct identities through the actions of two classes of inductive signaling molecules, members of the hedgehog and bone morphogenetic protein families. His work has increased understanding of motor neuron development and functions, and has led to many other major discoveries in the field.

He received the \$50,000 award and a silver medallion at a dinner in his honor held recently in New York City. ■

Winter Blues Study Recruits

Do you hibernate in the winter time? If you notice that you feel fatigued and down and that your sleeping and eating habits change in the winter, you may be eligible to participate in a research study on seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Diagnostic assessment and treatment consisting of light therapy, psychotherapy or their combination will be offered. There is no charge for participation in the study. Interested volunteers, 18 or older, are invited to call the Uniformed Services University seasonality treatment study for more information, (301) 295-9718. ■



Dr. Rass Shayiq is the Center for Scientific Review's new scientific review administrator for the alcohol and toxicology integrated review group, subcommittees 1 and 4. Prior to joining CSR, he was affiliated with Thomas Jefferson University, where he was director of the laboratory of investigative medicine and assistant professor in the departments of medicine and biochemistry and molecular pharmacology. He has also been on the faculties of Temple University School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania and University of Kashmir, India. Shayiq has made major contributions in establishing the presence of hepatic mitochondrial cytochrome P450 by purification and molecular characterization of six P450 isoforms from rat hepatic mitochondria. He has been supported from various sources, most recently through an NIH research project grant.

AIDS VACCINE RIDE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"It was the only time in my life that I prayed for more hills around the next bend," he said. "It was so cold, the only way to stay warm was to really push it."

A fitness enthusiast who runs and cycles regularly in Rock Creek Park, which abuts his neighborhood, Lubbert found out about the ride from friends, some of whom signed on for the tour with him as part of a D.C.-area entourage known as Team D.C.—The Filibusters. "I went for three reasons: first, I wanted to go to Alaska. Second, I love to cycle. And third, it's a great cause. It was a one, two, three punch for me—a no-brainer," he said.

Funds from the ride, which exceeded its goal of \$3.8 million by some \$300,000, are earmarked for three respected vaccine teams at academic medical centers in the United States. Each of the 1,500 riders who participated in the Alaska ride had to raise a minimum of \$3,900. Lubbert tapped a wide network of friends, family and acquaintances with a touching letter noting the devastation wrought by AIDS. Though he hasn't known anyone who suffers from the disease, he nonetheless felt compelled to act.

"We all have children, and we can only control their activities to a certain point," he said. "This disease is wiping out everyone in Africa. It's horrendous. Something needs to be done now. This is my part—it's what I can do."

Riding a 14-speed Raleigh Team road bike he built 6 years ago, Lubbert trained hard only in the 3 weeks prior to the event; daily 40-mile rides augmented by a 70-miler on the weekends. "Time in the saddle," he nodded.

"That was the main issue."

Once in Alaska, participants' days were regimented as the riders formed a rolling bivouac—a "Tent City," Lubbert said—every 70 to 90 miles, mainly via major highways. It rained every day but one, but also snowed and sleeted. Riders sheathed themselves in Mylar before donning layers of clothing, including ponchos that made them look like mobile Hefty bags. On the hardest day, day 2, only 200 of the 1,500 riders finished the 70-mile course; some suffered mild frostbite and hypothermia. Lubbert was among the 200 who completed every mile of the whole journey.

With logistics managed by a professional tour company of some 500 crewmembers who transported luggage, tents, chow trucks and portable showers, all the riders had to do was make miles

under mostly miserable conditions, but Lubbert and his friends found the fun in it.

"The theme of the ride was kindness, and that's what you felt, even when you were tired and wet. All the people were just outstanding, and very

helpful to one another. The first ones to finish the course would help the others set up their tents," he recalls.

One unexpected challenge, he said, concerned the difficulty of finding your way back—in a sea of identical tents—in the wee hours after a trip to the restroom. "If you didn't leave some kind of marker on the roof of the tent, it was hopeless to find the right one."



Lubbert plans more rides in support of AIDS vaccine research studies.

Despite sundry hardships, Lubbert plans to ride again for the benefit of medical research; he intends to register for the North Carolina-to-D.C. AIDS Ride next year, and also wants to do another AIDS vaccine ride ("It's what they call a 'vac-to-vac' ride," he quipped) from Montreal to Maine. "I haven't gotten to see that part of the world yet," he says.

Lubbert said he "hasn't yet tallied all I spent personally on the ride," but one senses that his bookkeeping won't keep him up nights. The Alaska trip, he concludes, "was a great experience all the way around. I will never forget it. It was quite a personal challenge." ■



It was so cold on the journey that Lubbert and his fellow riders remained swathed in foul-weather gear on most days.

Clinical Research Training Course

The required course for clinical principal investigators, Clinical Research Training, will be repeated on Dec. 12, noon to 4 p.m. in Bldg. 10's Lipsett Amphitheater.

The course was designed to address one of the essential standards (training and education) recently approved by NIH for conducting clinical research in the intramural research program. Topics include ethical issues in human subjects research, roles and responsibilities of the investigator and institution, regulatory issues and clinical investigators and the mass media.

All principal investigators with a protocol approved through the Clinical Center are required to take the course and successfully complete an exam by Mar. 1, 2001.

Registration will be held until Nov. 30. To register, visit the course web site at <http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/cr/training.html>.

Depression Screening for NIH Employees

Have you been experiencing "the blues" for more than a couple weeks, even months or years? Do you swing from a low mood to a high one, where you become more sociable and talkative than usual, or perhaps irritable? If so, you may be suffering from major depression, dysthymia (low-grade chronic depression), or bipolar disorder-depressive illnesses that can be effectively treated.

To find out if symptoms you experience may be due to a depressive disorder, attend the free, anonymous, walk-in depression screening for NIH employees on Wednesday, Nov. 15, sponsored by the quality of work life committee, with the support of the NIH Employee Assistance Program and NIMH. Employees will have the opportunity to view a video, complete a questionnaire, discuss results privately with a mental health professional, and gather free brochures on depression and treatment resources.

Screening will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at six NIH locations: Occupational Medical Services, Bldg. 10, Rm. 6C306; EAP, Bldg. 31, Rm. B2B57; Natcher Bldg., Rm. 1BC17; Executive Plaza North, Rm. 103; Rockledge (6705), Rm. 5038; and in Baltimore at the Bayview facility in two locations, the Scanlon Rm. on the first floor, and a conference room on the second floor. The address is 5500 Nathan Shock Drive; call 496-3164 for directions.

More than 19 million American adults each year have depressive illnesses, but only one-third seek help. Without treatment, mood disorders can worsen, become disabling, and in some cases, lead to suicide. However, most people who get help feel good again. For more information about depressive disorders, their symptoms and treatments, visit the NIMH web site at <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/depression/index.htm>. People unable to attend the screening may contact the following organizations for referrals to local treatment specialists: the National Depressive and Manic-Depressive Association, (800) 826-3632; the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, (800) 950-6264; and the National Mental Health Association, (800) 969-6642. For more information about depression screening at NIH, call Michelle Russell, 496-9279. **R**

Annual Holiday Auction Set, Dec. 8

The Clinical Center's department of laboratory medicine will hold its 28th annual holiday fundraiser auction to benefit the Patient Emergency Fund and the Friends of the Clinical Center on Friday, Dec. 8 in Bldg. 10, Rm. 2C310 conference room and library. This year's theme is "Quilts 2000." There are five hand-made quilts to be raffled off, ranging in size from baby to wall hanging. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5. Tickets will be on sale through Thursday, Dec. 7 outside the 2nd floor cafeteria in the Clinical Center. Employees are encouraged to volunteer services or donate items to this event. All donations are tax deductible. The day begins with coffee and a bake sale at 9 a.m., silent auction and white elephant sale at 10:30 a.m., and pizza at 11:30 a.m. At 2 p.m., the silent auction ends and raffle winners will be announced. To make donations call Sheila Barrett, 496-5668, Debra Demeritt, 496-3386, or Norma Ruschell, 496-4473. **R**

PBS Premiere Features NINDS's Grafman

Scientific American Frontiers, a PBS science series hosted by renowned actor Alan Alda, will air "Changing Your Mind" on Tuesday, Nov. 21 at 8 p.m. This 1-hour episode will look at the plasticity of the human brain and include an interview with Dr. Jordan Grafman, chief of the cognitive neuroscience section, NINDS.

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to re-wire itself. In the interview, Grafman discusses his work with a remarkable young woman, Michelle Mack, who was born with half a brain. Her left hemisphere was almost completely destroyed by a stroke she suffered in her mother's womb. However, her verbal and object-recognition capabilities—which are normally seated in the missing left brain—are hardly compromised. According to Grafman, Mack's right hemisphere controls tasks handled by the left brain in other people. But this compensation



Dr. Jordan Grafman (l) of NINDS meets with actor Alan Alda.



Michelle Mack (second from l) with her parents and Alda.

comes with a price; she struggles with visual-spatial tasks, which are normally processed in the right brain. It's as if the two abilities, linguistic and visual-spatial, had to "duke it out" for space in her brain—and language won. Mack's extraordinary case provides powerful evidence that the brain is a flexible—and competitive—organ, always prioritizing and re-organizing. Today Mack's skills, and some unusual abilities, surprise even Grafman. **R**

TREE CENSUS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

said. "It will give us the baseline we need for the care and welfare, removal and replacement of our trees. NIH has a self-imposed policy to replace every tree lost due to construction or natural causes with at least one new tree, often more than one. In 1999, 184 trees were lost, but 548 were planted.

The survey will give us a document that we can supply to various county planning agencies to support our construction and improvement activities. The survey also tells us which trees are healthy and which may need special care or attention."

One NIH'er who may find the tree census results most fascinating is also the one man who claims to know

every tree on campus and who singlehandedly conducted a less high-tech NIH tree survey in the summer of 1980.

"This tree survey was very economical," explained Lynn Mueller, longtime chief of the Division of Engineering Services' grounds maintenance and landscaping section. A smaller tree census was done around the site for the new Clinical Research Center, in preparation for the construction that began in 1997. Mueller estimates that NIH is home to about 2,500 younger trees in addition to the more than 5,000 mature ones counted in the census. "[The census] only cost us about \$3 or \$4 per tree and now we know where each tree is exactly located, its species, size and general health. The data base will also provide the history of when and what trees



NIH's first official tree survey found more than 5,000 mature timbers on campus, and that's not counting the more than 2,500 younger or newly planted trees. Shown above is tree #621, a white pine.

PHOTOS: DAMON TIGHE

NIH's Top 10 Timbers

Below are the top 10 largest campus trees, their tag numbers, trunk sizes in diameter and locations:

1. Silver maple #2315, 118"; Located along Rockville Pike at Cedar Lane
2. White mulberry #2155, 80"; Located south of the Lister Hill Center
3. Corkscrew willow #2153, 75"; Located south of the Lister Hill Center
4. Silver maple #4544, 62"; Located east of the NLM near Rockville Pike
5. Tulip poplar #3230, 61"; Located northwest of 15K near bottom of hill
6. Sycamore #38, 60"; Located east of parking lot 10K
7. Willow oak #4600, 58"; Located between NLM and 32T-2
8. Tulip poplar #3229, 56"; Located just south of #3230
- 9/10. White oaks #2981 and #3216, 56"; #2981 is located south of 15K on top of retaining wall; #3216 is located north of 15K.



Tree #4454—located in the center of campus—is in the hospital's backyard.

were pruned, fertilized and other facts such as pesticide applications, lightning strikes or other injuries noted. This will be a tremendous help when we need to site new buildings, building additions or extend underground utilities. We can design the structure and utility corridors in ways to miss the mature trees."

NIH takes its tree stewardship very seriously, Mueller said. In the past several years, NIH has concentrated on planting tree species that are native to the area. These include maple, oak, gum and ash varieties, American elm, sourwood, sycamore,



Tree #2128 is an American Sycamore.

hophornbeam and others.

When a tree is lost a replacement is quickly planted nearby, he explained. In fact, a 12-inch pin oak along Center Drive near Rockville Pike, weakened over the years by insects and weather, was removed on Oct. 7. A 10-inch pin oak was transplanted to the exact spot on Oct. 11. This tree was brought in on a 96-inch hydraulic tree spade on the back of a big truck. Last summer, a 217-year-old white oak near Bldg. 61 was hit by lightning and quickly died. Its remnants had to be carefully removed in sections and hauled away. It was replaced with a new variety of American elm that is resistant to Dutch elm disease.

Mueller said the next step in the tree project is to replace the nails attaching the aluminum plates to

the trees. Because the existing nails and plates will be absorbed by the growing trees in just a few years, he plans to attach 12-inch steel fish leaders (stout fishing line) to the numbered plates. This will allow for years of tree growth before the leader and plates are absorbed.

"We'll probably replace the existing combination over the next 2 or 3 winters," he said.

On demand, Mueller spews facts about the campus's arboreal interests. At over 27 feet in circumference and nearly 10 feet in diameter, the largest campus tree is a silver maple located along Rockville Pike near Cedar Lane, he recalled. The longest surviving and some of the tallest trees on campus are white oaks and tulip poplars in the "Treetops" area near Bldg. 15K. NIH is also listed in the Montgomery County Champion Tree Registry, he pointed out proudly. Last year NIH was recognized by the county's forestry board for nurturing the county's largest known Japanese zelkova tree. The zelkova is not native, however, having been planted in 1972 off the southwest corner of Bldg. 1.

Mueller has already submitted several more nominations to the Montgomery County Forestry Board for consideration of the 2001 Champion Tree designations. "I know every tree on this campus," he concluded, explaining that the census results, which include a 100-plus-page report and a table-size grid map, will probably hold few surprises for him. "But the long term advantage of having a comprehensive census is invaluable." ■

Thrift Savings Plan Open Season

The Thrift Savings Plan is having another open season from Nov. 15, 2000, through Jan. 31, 2001. FERS employees who were hired before July 1, 2000, as well as CSRS employees have an opportunity to change their current election, or make an initial election.

Eligible FERS and CSRS employees may elect to contribute to the G fund (government securities), C fund (stocks) and/or F fund (bonds). FERS employees may contribute up to 10 percent of their salary each pay period and will receive matching agency contributions on the first 5 percent. CSRS employees may contribute up to 5 percent of salary, but do not receive any matching contributions. FERS employees who do not contribute receive an automatic 1 percent agency contribution each pay period. They may choose to distribute this among the three funds.

The features of the plan are described in the Thrift Savings Plan Open Season leaflet, which will be distributed to eligible employees by their IC personnel office. More detailed information is provided in the *Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan for Federal Employees* booklet and is available in your IC personnel office. ■

CC Rabbi Has Movie Role

You might have the chance to see someone on the movie screen that you know and work with every day. *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg*, a documentary detailing the major league baseball player's life, features an appearance by CC Jewish chaplain Rabbi Reeve Brenner.

Brenner, who joined NIH part-time last January, says three factors converged to lead to his screen debut. First, he grew up in New York City, also home to Hank Greenberg, whom Brenner regards as the all-time greatest Jewish player in the major league. Second, he is a life-long sports enthusiast, and last as a religious leader and teacher, he likes to think and write about ethical issues.

It was Brenner's handling of such delicate issues as race and religion that captured the attention of the film's writer-producer, Aviva Kempner. In his article, "Black Jack and Big Yid Greenberg," which first appeared almost 20 years ago in the *Jewish Spectator* newspaper, Brenner focused on the crossing paths of the two baseball giants, referred to by nicknames used by young Bronx baseball fans.

Greenberg was nearing the end of his major league career. Jackie Robinson was just starting his career as the first black baseball player to reach the major leagues. Greenberg, who had experienced much anti-Semitism in a decade as a public figure, was the first on his team to befriend and encourage Robinson, similarly a target of racial prejudice.

"Having written books, short stories and sermons on just this issue, it was logical for me to do the article that led to my being chosen for the film," said Brenner. "I welcomed the opportunity to talk about an exemplary man, and in particular the very special Greenberg-Robinson meeting."—Linda Silversmith ■



The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg, a documentary detailing the major league baseball player's life, features an appearance by CC Jewish chaplain Rabbi Reeve Brenner.

New Newsletter Goes Inside eRA

To deal with 46,000 grant applications (many with bulky appendixes), 3,166 review meetings and 128 national advisory councils, and some 60,000 grant awards, NIH used hundreds of millions of pieces of paper in FY 2000. Since 1996 the IMPAC II system and NIH Commons have been built to the point that now they handle some 576,000,000 transactions annually. The eRA (electronic Research Administration) Project is combining these systems with the goal of developing an end-to-end electronic information environment for NIH extramural activities.

But going electronic raises questions of organizational change that will directly affect employees. That's why a newsletter, *Inside eRA*, was created. Located online at <http://era.nih.gov/usgnews/usg001013.htm>, it will provide news about the eRA Project, and tips and analyses to help you use the system. *Inside eRA* was launched to provide a forum about current issues, offer new sources of information and solicit input. Editorial board members are Megan Columbus, Kenneth Dillon, Chip Groh, John McGowan, Felicia Shingler, George Stone and Tim Twomey.

Visit <http://era.nih.gov/feedbackhelp.htm> and let the editors know what you would like to see in the newsletter. ■

NIH Marks Opening of Pediatric Rheumatology Clinic

By Janet Howard

NIH has opened its first pediatric rheumatology clinic at the Clinical Center. A reception was held recently to mark the clinic's establishment.

Organized by NIAMS, the specialty clinic offers diagnosis, evaluation and treatment for children with arthritis and other chronic rheumatic diseases.

It also serves as a specialty care facility for children through age 17 who are suspected of having, or have a confirmed diagnosis of a rheumatic disease.

NIAMS scientific director Dr. Peter Lipsky chaired the reception.

"This project represents a coming together of the community and the

Clinical Center," he said. "Thanks to all who were involved in developing this clinic. The clinic will help scientists gather research data we so badly need, especially since rheumatic diseases in children vary considerably from those in adults."

The youngest speaker at the reception, KaLea Kunkel, 16, from Oregon, MO, has juvenile scleroderma. She, like her three siblings, has a rheumatic disease. "I am here representing the more than 300,000 kids with a rheumatic disease, which may be invisible to the outsider," she said. "But the truth is that these irreversible diseases affect every aspect of a child's life."

Other speakers included KaLea's mother, Ann Kunkel, who also has a rheumatic disease, and is an advocate for the American Juvenile Arthritis Organization (AJAO). Renee Thomas, AJAO chair, presented an award to Lipsky and NIAMS for ongoing work in juvenile rheumatic diseases. "This is a wonderful celebration," she noted. "Children walking through these doors will be very fortunate. Working together, we can make the dream come true to eventually cure our children who have arthritis."

Clinical Center director Dr. John Gallin pledged, "As the clinic project evolves, and needs become clear, ask us to help. We are fully committed to this project."

The clinic will expose additional doctors to the subspecialty of pediatric rheumatology, an area of medicine that is greatly underserved. According to a 1999 report from the American Board of Medical Specialties, there are only 162 pediatric rheumatologists in the United States, and most are clustered around large cities. There are no pediatric rheumatologists at all, for example, in Idaho, Maine or North Dakota.

Staffing the clinic are a host of medical professionals from NIH and the private sector, including

pediatric rheumatologists, pediatricians, nurse practitioners, research nurses and fellows.

"Rheumatic diseases in children can compromise many developmental and educational tasks," said Dr. Barbara Mittleman, a rheumatologist and NIAMS director of scientific interchange. "Early and effective treatment can restore or improve the chances of kids with rheumatic diseases to enjoy childhood."

"This is a dream come true," said Dr. Robert Lipnick, a pediatric rheumatologist in private practice in Bethesda, who helps staff the clinic along with NIAID's Dr. Karyl Barron, a pediatric rheumatologist and NIAMS's Dr. Raphaela Goldbach-Mansky, a pediatrician. "I am extremely excited about this clinic," Lipnick said. "It will provide a tremendous opportunity for training young physicians to diagnose and treat children with rheumatic diseases and for conducting innovative and unique research studies. It also offers children all over the country the chance to participate."

Pediatric rheumatic diseases include juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, scleroderma, dermatomyositis, familial fever syndromes and other chronic diseases that affect the joints, muscles, bones and skin. ■



Helping to launch the new pediatric rheumatology clinic are (from l) KaLea Kunkle, who has pediatric scleroderma; Renee Thomas, chair, American Juvenile Arthritis Organization; NIAMS pediatrician and clinic staffer Dr. Raphaela Goldbach-Mansky; NIAMS scientific director Dr. Peter Lipsky; and clinic codirector Dr. Robert Lipnick.

NIH-Duke Training Program Open

Applications for the 2001-2002 NIH-Duke Training Program in Clinical Research are now available in Bldg. 10, Rm. B1L403.

Designed primarily for clinical fellows and other health professionals training for careers in clinical research, the program offers courses in research design, statistical analysis, health economics, research ethics and research management.

Courses are offered at the Clinical Center by means of videoconferencing from Duke or on-site by adjunct faculty. Students completing the coursework are awarded a master of health sciences in clinical research from Duke University School of Medicine.

Prospective participants should consult with their institute or center regarding the official training nomination procedure. Applications must be received by Mar. 1, 2001.

For more information, visit http://www.cc.nih.gov/cc/cc_duke/info.html.

Use or Lose Reminder

Don't forget to officially schedule your "use or lose" annual leave no later than Saturday, Dec. 2, 2000. Questions concerning use or lose leave should be directed to one's human resource office or other program official designated by your institute or center. ■

Computer Classes

All courses are on the NIH campus and are given without charge. For more information call 594-6248 or consult the training program's home page at <http://training.cit.nih.gov>.

NIH Contractor Performance System Update	11/17
Data Warehouse <i>Query</i> : Property Management	11/20
SAS Programming Fundamentals II	11/20-21
Advanced Presentations w/PowerPoint 2000	11/21
Web Security - Avoid Being Zapped on the Internet	11/21
Knowledge Management Interest Group	11/22
Contractor Performance System for New Users	11/22
Producing Tables with SAS	11/28
NIH IntraMall for Purchase Card Holders	11/28
Advanced SAS Tabulate Features	11/29
Outlook 2000 Tips and Tricks	11/29
Fundamentals of Unix	11/29-12/1
Basic Security for Unix Workstations	11/30
Data Warehouse <i>Query</i> : Budget & Finance	11/30
Web-Based Tools for DNA and Protein Sequence Analysis	11/30
Meet Your PC - What's Inside the Box	11/30
Avoiding Pitfalls in Statistical Analysis I	12/1
Introduction to JavaScript Programming	12/1
Data Warehouse <i>Query</i> : Research Contracts & Grants	12/1

STEP Session on Biomedical Imaging

The NIH staff training in extramural programs (STEP) will present a Science for All session entitled "Looking Inside: A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words," on Thursday, Nov. 16 from 8:30 a.m. to noon in the Natcher Conference Center, Conf. Rms. E1/E2.

Biomedical imaging is used in almost every aspect of modern medicine, from the diagnosis and treatment of disease to revealing clues about how the brain, heart and other organs work. Advances in technology are providing physicians with more sophisticated imaging tools than ever before. What are these imaging technologies, including MRI, CT, PET and ultrasound? How do they work and what do they tell us? This session will explore the state-of-the-art of biomedical imaging and offer a glimpse into the possibilities for imaging in the future.

The speakers planned are: Dr. Robert Balaban, chief, Laboratory of Cardiac Energetics, NHLBI; Dr. Peter Choyke, chief of research, diagnostic radiology, and chief of magnetic resonance imaging at the Clinical Center; Dr. James Smirniotopoulos, chairman of radiology, Uniformed Services University; and Dr. David Yousem, director of neuroradiology, Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Call the STEP office at 435-2769 for more information or for reasonable accommodation. ■

Budget Community Mourns Herron

Terence J. "Terry" Herron, 50, who had been chief of the Program Budget Branch, Office of the Director, since 1996, died of cancer on Sept. 30 at the Clinical Center.

The Program Budget Branch is part of the Office of Budget, which serves as the central budget office for NIH. Herron was responsible for directing the activities of the branch, providing budget policy, planning and analyses to support the NIH budget of \$18.8 billion.

Prior to coming to NIH, he had a long career within the Department of Health and Human Services, serving as a budget analyst with the Agency for Children and Families, policy management specialist with the Office of Human Development Services, and as a claims authorizer for the Social Security Administration.

Born in Washington, D.C., he graduated from Our Lady of Good Counsel High School and the University of Maryland. He also attended the University of Maryland Law School and American University for postgraduate studies.

Herron was an active member of St. John the Evangelist Parish, a member of the church choir, cubmaster and scoutmaster, intramural coach and referee for Catholic Youth Organization sports, and coach and judge for the Washington area Catholic Forensic League. He was also a keen student of history, with special interest in the American Civil War, WWI and WWII and a musical theater buff.

He was a participant in the NIH-sponsored clinical trial on regression of metastatic renal-cell carcinoma after nonmyeloablative allogeneic peripheral-blood stem-cell transplantation. In addition to his many other volunteer efforts, he was generous in sharing his experiences with other cancer sufferers. During the eulogies at his funeral service at St. John's, friends and family were highly complimentary of the quality of care Herron received at the Clinical Center.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia, four children, Brian, Ken (a freshman at Longwood College), Sean (a freshman at Towson University), Megan (a student at Good Counsel), and six brothers and sisters. His coworkers have established a memorial fund to benefit his family at the NIH Credit Union. You may send donations to the Herron Education Fund, MSC 0134 Bethesda, MD 20892. Anonymous donations may be sent c/o NIHFCU, P.O. Box 6475, Rockville, MD 20849. Checks should be made out to the Herron Education Fund.



Terence J. "Terry" Herron

Chamber Music Concert, Nov. 26

The Rock Creek Chamber Players will perform at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 26 in the Clinical Center's 14th floor assembly hall. The free public concert, sponsored by the recreation therapy section, will include Fritz Kreisler's recitative and scherzo for solo violin; Gordon Jacob's quintet for clarinet and strings; and Mozart's sonata for piano four hands, K. 497. For reservations (required) and information call (202) 337-8710. ■

NIH Employees Explore Work/Life Services

The Oct. 5 fair, "Real People, Real Choices: Quality of Work Life at NIH" gave employees a chance to see the broad range of work/life related services available to them at NIH. Representatives from 28 organizations including R&W, the Work and Family Life Center, FAES, CIVIL, the NIH Library, and Federally Employed Women were on hand to give out materials and talk about their services.



Keynote speaker Linda Breen Pierce (l) is introduced by Martina Vogel-Taylor, senior analyst, Office of Disease Prevention, OD

More than 350 people made time to stop by and chat with exhibitors. Attendees expressed a great deal of enjoyment, saying the fair was "friendly, informative and fun" and they learned about "services [they] did not know existed!"

The keynote speaker, author Linda Breen Pierce, spoke about the benefits of simplifying our lives. She left the audience with ideas about how they could integrate simplicity into their work and personal lives, and provoked a great deal of post-presentation discussion.

The event also included presentations of the QWL Awards and the R&W Service Awards, given to individuals who have made outstanding contributions in the last year.

For a copy of the Fair Guide, which included detailed contact information and service listings for all the exhibitors, contact the Work and Family Life Center at 435-1619.



Attendees talk to exhibitors at the fair.



Winners of R&W Service Awards at the fair included (from l) Maria Stagnitto, Jane Robak, John Frankenburg, Sharon Antonelli, Rowena Ahern, Bob Bingaman and Dee Dee Adams-Camera.

MCP Class of 2000 Graduates

A graduation ceremony was recently held at the Lawton Chiles International House for participants in the NIH Management Cadre Program.

They are Vivian A. Auld (NLM), Robert Bock (NICHD), Gladys Melendez-Bohler (NINDS), Dr. Diane Case (NRC), Rebecca DerSimonian (NIAID), James Hadley (NIAID), Christine L. Hollingsworth (NCCAM), Joseph Januszewski III (CIT), Myrna L. Lopez (OD/ORS), Patrick Miller (NCI), Yvette Porter (OD), Barbara Wingrove (NICHD), and Judith Wortman (NIAMS).

Acting NIH director Dr. Ruth Kirschstein and Dr. Yvonne Maddox, acting NIH deputy director and cochair of the leadership development committee (which administers the MCP), presented the certificates.

The Management Cadre Program is designed to train and qualify successful and highly motivated NIH employees currently at GS/GM grades 12, 13 or 14 to help meet NIH's future leadership staffing needs. The 18-month program is designed to enhance career growth and provides a combination of on-the-job training, academic courses and selected short assignments to prepare individuals to compete for advancement and/or career change to leadership positions. ■

Dr. Scott Leischow has been named chief of the Tobacco Control Research Branch in the Behavioral Research Program of NCI's Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences. He comes to NCI from Arizona, where he was director of the Arizona Program for Nicotine and Tobacco Research and was an associate professor in the University of Arizona School of Public Health. In 1998, he was named Arizona Prevention Center Researcher of the Year. His research interests have focused on nicotine behavioral pharmacology, cessation of tobacco use and addiction.



Wednesday Afternoon Lectures

The Wednesday Afternoon Lecture series—held on its namesake day at 3 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10—takes a Thanksgiving break on Nov. 22, but returns with Dr. Tobias Bonhoeffer on Nov. 29, speaking on "A Thorny Path to Memories: Dendritic Spines, Neurotrophins and Their Role in Synaptic Plasticity." He is professor, Max Planck Institute for Neurobiology, Germany.

For more information or for reasonable accommodation, call Hilda Madine, 594-5595. ■