

Still The Second Best Thing About Payday

Straus To Give Director's Lecture

Increasingly, the American public is looking beyond conventional Western medicine to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) for treatment of a wide variety of diseases and conditions. Consumer demand has fueled an explosion of CAM articles, advertisements, products and practitioners offering remedies for virtually every medical complaint. One study found that over 42 percent of the American public uses CAM, and in 1997, an estimated \$27 billion was spent on CAM products and procedures. Thus, in 1998, Congress mandated the creation of the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

To help inform the NIH community about CAM, Dr. Stephen Straus, the first director of NCCAM, will deliver an NIH Director's Lecture on Monday, Mar. 11 at 3 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. His talk, "Exploring the Scientific Basis of Comple-

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NIEHS Tool Tracks Grantee Publications

By Colleen Chandler

NIH's extramural side has always had its share of challenges—managing substantial portions of the budget with a limited number of staff. But the selection of and justification for funding extramural research projects just got a little easier at NIEHS.

Administrators have always grappled with how to measure scientific productivity and impact. NIEHS employees have created their own tool to help them through the process. The Scientific Publications Information Retrieval System, better known as SPIRES, was specifically designed to track grantee publications and citations.

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Bird-Loving Volunteer Documents Progress

On Wings of Success, Birdhouse Project Enters Phase 2

By Carla Garnett

Proving the theory that "if you build it, they will come," NIH's groundskeeping maven is crowing not so much about a "field of dreams," but about what happened in a few of



Tweet Success? More birdhouses go up on campus grounds.

NIH's fields. The results of last year's birdhouse project are in, and they are splendid.

"Because of our success, we're expanding," reports Lynn Mueller, chief of NIH grounds maintenance and landscaping, Office of Research Services. "We're entering phase 2. We're looking to attract more bluebirds, songbirds and other cavity nesters."

A bit of good fortune, coupled with good conditions and

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The Marathon Habit

Newburgh Goes Distance in 50 States

By Rich McManus

Last October, Dr. Janet Newburgh of the Center for Scientific Review joined an exclusive club that has only 150 or so members. Theoretically open to anyone, the club has one rather daunting requisite: members must have completed marathons in all 50 United States.

Newburgh, deputy director of the Division of Receipt and Referral, notched her final marathon of the circuit in Connecticut, at a race in Hartford. And like the proverbial journey of a thousand miles that begins with a single step, her running career began humbly, with no hint of the achievements that lay ahead.



CSR's Dr. Janet Newburgh

"I ran my first mile on Christmas Day, 1977," she recalls. "I

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Dr. Ernest D. Marquez has been named NIMH associate director for special populations; he will develop and coordinate research on the mental health needs of women and minority populations. Since 1996, he has served as director of the Minority Biomedical Research Support Program at NIGMS, where he directed efforts to recruit minority scientists to conduct biomedical, behavioral and social science research. Previously, he served NIH in leadership roles at the National Institute of Nursing Research; the Staff Training in Extramural Programs committee and as president of the Hispanic Employees Organization. He has received an NIH Director's Award for outstanding service.

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mentary and Alternative Medicine," will provide an overview of CAM—what it is, who uses it, and other aspects—as a basis for understanding the field in the United States. The lecture will be given as a special Monday event in the NIH Director's Wednesday Afternoon Lecture Series.

NCCAM's mission is to identify promising CAM practices using rigorous scientific methods to evaluate their effectiveness. Straus's talk is designed not only to educate the NIH community, but also to announce the launch of a new lecture series, the "Distinguished Lectures in Complementary and Alternative Medicine." Each year, NCCAM will sponsor two lectures that feature top researchers in the field. The first lecture in the series will be given by Dr. Charles Rosenberg, professor of the history of science and Ernest E. Monrad professor in the social sciences at Harvard University, on July 25 at noon in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg. 10. The second speaker will be Dr. Arthur Kleinman, professor of social anthropology at Harvard University and Lillian Presley professor of medical anthropology and psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. He will speak in Lipsett on Nov. 7 at noon.

Straus is an internationally recognized expert in clinical research and clinical trials. In addition, he is chief of the Laboratory of Clinical Investigation at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. He has extensive basic and clinical research experience related to many conditions for which CAM remedies are used, including chronic fatigue syndrome, Lyme disease, HIV/AIDS, chronic hepatitis B virus, and genital herpes infections and chronic post-herpetic pain. His scientific accomplishments include demonstrating that acyclovir suppresses recurrent genital and oral herpes, and characterizing a previously unrecognized, genetically determined disease, the autoimmune lymphoproliferative syndrome.

For more information on his lecture or for special accommodation, call Hilda Madine, 594-5595. ■

Experts Speak on Brain, Body, Aging

Experts from seven institutes at NIH will share their knowledge at a free Brain Awareness Week event called "The Brain, The Body, and Aging" at the University of Maryland Shady Grove Center, Rockville. From 9:30 a.m. to noon on Monday, Mar. 11 and Friday, Mar. 15, area residents are invited to learn more about brain-related conditions like depression, vision problems and memory loss.

Refreshments will be served. Following the lectures, a free hands-on computer workshop to help seniors find health information online will be offered from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. on both days. Call 1-800-438-4380 for more information about the event, including speakers and topics. ■

CRIS Classes Continue in Bldg. 10

Educational sessions for the Clinical Research Information System (CRIS) now under development continue Monday, Mar. 11, 1:30-3 p.m., in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg. 10. The presentations will focus on the value of technology.

CRIS will offer innovative tools to support NIH's intramural programs conducted at the Clinical Center. Eventually CRIS will replace the Medical Information System (MIS) in use at the CC since the mid-seventies.

Session presenters are Dr. John P. Glaser, vice president and chief information officer of Partners HealthCare System, Inc., in Boston, and Dr. Thomas H. Payne, medical director of Academic Medical Center Information Systems at the University of Washington, VA Puget Sound Health Care System. Glaser will discuss incentives, risks and benefits. Payne will focus on clinical and process outcomes.

"CRIS must meet the needs of NIH's intramural researchers," said Dr. Stephen Rosenfeld, chief of the CC department of clinical research informatics and head of the CRIS project management team. "These presentations and others in development will help everyone involved in clinical research better understand what CRIS can offer as we work together to craft the best system for the NIH community."

For more information, or to register for CME, call 594-DCRI or visit <http://cris.cc.nih.gov/overview/>. ■

Adults Needed for Study

College-educated, middle-aged adults are needed for a 2-day outpatient study at NIMH. Involves blood draw and routine clinical, neurological and cognitive procedures. A stipend is available. Inquire at 435-8970. ■

N I H R E C O R D

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♻️ *The Record is recyclable as office white paper.*

Dr. Peter Lyster has joined the Center for Scientific Review as scientific review administrator for the new study section that reviews applications for neuroinformatics under the Biomedical Information Science and Technology Initiative. He received his Ph.D. in plasma physics from Cornell University. While there on a Fulbright scholarship, he



developed computational models for nuclear fusion. He continued this research as a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute for Fusion Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Lyster then focused on computational models for analyzing earth science data. He worked for 4 years at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology, where he developed high

performance computing algorithms to visualize geophysical data. He spent the next 7 years at the NASA Data Assimilation Office at Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt. He was the principal investigator there on a grant from NASA to develop computational methods for assimilating atmospheric data into models of weather and climate change.

Need Help Quitting Smoking?

American University is offering free group treatment for smokers who want to quit as part of a research study in the psychology department. To learn more, call (202) 885-1784. ■

TRACKING TOOL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Publications are the fruit of our labor in extramural,” and represent the midpoint between taxpayer money and public health, said Ben Van Houten, head of the Program Analysis Branch at NIEHS.

The branch is responsible for assessing the scientific and public health impact, but until now did not have an effective tool to do so, Van Houten said. Individual grantees are required to make annual progress reports to their respective NIEHS program administrators, however this information is not captured electronically. Now NIEHS has a means to rapidly and collectively look at the scientific and public health impact of the projects it funds.

SPIRES tracks grantee publication and citation data by linking information from the National Library of Medicine and the Computer Retrieval of Information on Scientific Projects, or CRISP, system, a web-based interface used to query contracts and grants data electronically. The CRISP system taps into the IMPAC II database, which is used for many extramural programs within the Department of Health and Human Services. IMPAC II, or the Information for Management, Planning, Analysis, and Coordination system, provides access to information on principal investigators, budgets, program administration, and duration of the grant as well as

FEW Chapter Hosts March Events

To commemorate National Nutrition Month, the Bethesda chapter of Federally Employed Women will host a talk by Dr. Susan Z. Yanovski, an expert in obesity research. She will discuss “Overweight and Obesity: Myth and Reality.” She will offer tips on evaluating weight loss products and programs. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, Mar. 12, from noon to 1 p.m. in Natcher Bldg., Conf. Rm. D.

On Monday, Mar. 18, the chapter invites all to its quarterly membership dinner, which will feature a talk by Dr. Diana Apostolos-Cappadona on “The Hand of Fatima: Women and Art in Islam.” Apostolos-Cappadona is a leading scholar of religious art at the Georgetown University Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding. The event will be held at the Bethesda Four Points Sheraton at 5:30 p.m. Cost is \$20, due no later than Mar. 14 to Yvette Porter (porter@od.nih.gov). Sign language interpreters will be available. For other reasonable accommodation, contact Claire McCullough at cm27q@nih.gov or call 435-8601. ■

Perception Study Needs Volunteers

The Uniformed Services University department of medical and clinical psychology needs healthy male and female volunteers, ages 18-80, to participate in a 2-hour study of perception. Payment is \$30. Call (301) 295-9679 to volunteer. ■

the grant abstract and the peer review summary statement.

Van Houten described SPIRES as a tool to assess productivity, providing information on the number and quality of publications that cite studies funded by NIEHS, impact factors that are computed using the number of citations and the prominence of the publication, and literature citations themselves.

The first tool within NIH to enable such searching and tracking, SPIRES is very versatile, Van Houten said. Users can search by grant award, principal investigator, author, organization or by specific word strings in either the publication or the grant.

Data from 1995 through August 2001, including information from 9,615 publications, has already been loaded. Van Houten said the program could expand in many directions and could eventually link much more information from existing databases. Eventually, he hopes to use it to analyze incoming grants, with a brief description of the project in a web-searchable database to track study sections and priority scores.

Van Houten is already getting inquiries from other NIH institutes and centers interested in the program, which uses robust algorithms that could be applied to data from any of the institutes or centers. ■



Dr. Paul Nettesheim, senior science advisor to the NIEHS director, has won a Humboldt Research Award for senior U.S. scientists. The award recognizes lifetime career achievements and provides for extended stays to conduct research collaborations in Germany with German colleagues. Nettesheim recently completed 18 months as acting scientific director, and before that served as chief of the Laboratory of Pulmonary Pathobiology since 1977. He joined NIEHS from a supervisory research position at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. He will use his stays in Germany to study early molecular alterations in human bronchial cells exposed to air pollutants, working primarily with colleagues at the Fraunhofer Institute, which is affiliated with the University of Hannover.

MARATHONER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

was living in Berkeley and doing research in a muscle biochemistry lab. Everyone in the lab ran, so I thought I'd give it a try."

Newburgh had mapped out a mile-long route in her neighborhood on Alameda Island, and on her first try, clad in sneakers, pooped out after a quarter mile. But with a relentlessness that would eventually come to define her running career, she persisted, completing the course in quarter-mile bursts.

It took her another month to try a second mile. This time, the same thing happened. So again she quit for a month. On her third attempt, she was just about to bail when she saw someone walking ahead of her. "I thought, I'd better not stop now." Still, she didn't complete the mile.

Once more, she tried her loop, this time making it nine-tenths of the way. "At this point, I told my

friends in the lab that I had begun running, and they were very supportive. They sent me out to get running shoes and the whole bit. They took me up to Strawberry Canyon, behind the University of California campus, and I thought I was going to die." Unlike Alameda Island, the canyon was hilly, and 2 miles was all she could manage with colleagues who were used to daily 5-mile jaunts.

"From that time on, I would run 1 or 1.2 miles fairly regularly, when it wasn't too cold. I did that for about 4 years. Then I had a baby (her fourth, in 1983; she also has two adopted children). That threw me off, and I got away from running."

In 1988, feeling out of shape, Newburgh bought a new pair of running shoes and decided to resume her fledgling career as a runner. At NIGMS by this time,

Newburgh said one of her colleagues, Dr. Yvonne Maddox (now acting NIH deputy director), mentioned that she was going to run the Marine Corps Marathon, and suggested, "Why don't you come out and cheer for me?" Newburgh replied, "Yvonne, I'll do you one better—I'll run it with you."

Maddox gave her a copy of running guru Jim Fixx's book and a *Runner's World* article on marathon preparation, along with much encouragement, and she followed the marathon training plan to the letter. "That was a very important aspect of my success. You really need a long-term plan to do a marathon."

By Olympic definition, a marathon course extends 26 miles, 385 yards. Spliced end to end, 50 of them would put you some 1,311 miles away, or a little more than the distance from Washington to

Newburgh's hometown of Miami ("pronounced My-amuh"), Oklahoma, a little town in the state's extreme northeast corner, hard by Kansas and Missouri. It's the kind of wide-open country a gal can stretch her legs in.

But Newburgh wasn't an athlete as a youngster. She got her undergraduate degree in chemistry at Oklahoma State, and remained in the midwest for a graduate degree in chemistry at the University of Illinois. The first race of her life was in 1979, in Chapel Hill, N.C., where she ran a 10K while at the University of North Carolina. A year later she came to NIH as a grants associate, and entered her second race, the Rockville Twilghter, an 8K run that she finished in a respectable 46 minutes (a fact verifiable by consulting her meticulous race logs, one of which is devoted, according to its cover, to "Just Marathons!!")

"At the awards ceremony after that race, I saw how good the runners looked physically and decided that's for me—they looked great," she remembers. "I was 46 years old and decided to commit to running."

Another early race was the Al Lewis 10-Miler, which used to be hosted by the NIH Health's Angels Running Club in Rock Creek Park. "That was the first time I'd ever raced that distance," Newburgh recalls.

She toyed briefly with the idea of becoming a triathlete, but couldn't devote the time to swimming and biking. She was also leery of biking on suburban streets.

When Newburgh finished her first Marine Corps Marathon in 4:05, "it crept into the back of my mind that I'd like to qualify for the Boston Marathon," she said. "I didn't feel that bad—I wasn't wiped out or exhausted. And I recovered quickly. My husband said, 'You're not going to do this again are you?' and in the back of my mind I thought, yes, I am."

Within 6 weeks she was training for marathon #2, the Shamrock Marathon in Virginia Beach. She finished that one in 3:56, and learned from the newspaper the following day that she finished second in her age group, and won third place in the master's category. "It was the first time I ever won money in a race. But I still didn't qualify for Boston."

Her husband, not a runner himself, would go on to become a race organizer, helping out several times in Boston, and directing the upcoming Capital Crescent Trail 5K in June.

At Newburgh's third marathon, the 1989 Marine Corps, she did qualify for Boston, finishing in 3:38. "I had a partner for that, with whom I trained very hard," she remembers.

That success led to serial marathons, two to four a year, including many repeats. She completed the



Newburgh in mid-marathon last June at one of her favorite races at Kona, Hawaii.

Boston Marathon for every year of the 1990s (including her personal best time of 3:31 in 1991, and highest age-group rating—eighth—in 1993), then found things were getting “a little bit repetitive, a bit dull.” A former graduate school colleague told her about the 50-Stater Club. “That seemed like a neat new goal to aim for,” she said, and in 1997 she began the quest.

Her all-time favorite race was Boston 1997. “It was the 101st running, and I was having a hard time. I had stomach

problems. But the crowds were just incredible—so supportive. I thought, gee, I just love this place.”

That year, she picked up the pace of her marathoning, a habit that “took a lot of planning and coordination so as not to interfere with my work or family life.” She ran six marathons in 1997, completed 11 in 1998 and 1999, and peaked with 14 races in 2000. The highlights fly like footfalls: Kona, Hawaii last June, on

the same course as the Iron Man Triathlon; Seattle on a rainy November day, her worst marathon (hilly, hard-surfaced, and “I’ve never been so wet”); the fictitious “University of Okoboji” marathon at a resort “around a beautiful blue glacial lake” in Iowa; Columbus, Ohio, and Louisville, Ky., where she was joined by her daughter; spectacular natural beauty at Grandfather Mountain, N.C., at Keene State University in New Hampshire, and Sugarloaf, Maine; the South Dakota marathon forced indoors by sleet, so that runners ran 209 laps on an eighth-mile track (“We reversed direction every hour so we didn’t end up with one leg shorter than the other”); the Utah marathon in Salt Lake City, which began in the dark and featured a downhill run from the Wasatch Mountains into town.

Nowadays chiefly a morning runner 6 days a week, Newburgh is training for the D.C. Marathon on Mar. 24; she wants to run a race totally within the bounds of the District (the Marine Corps Marathon is mainly in D.C. but starts and finishes in Virginia). And once again she’s at a crossroads, having won membership in the 50-Stater Club.

“I’d like to regain some speed at shorter distances,” she said. “I’d like to focus on 5K races, if I can ever



Newburgh notches her 50th state marathon in Hartford last fall.

get marathoning out of my system.”

She admits to occasional problems with motivation. “Sometimes I question why I am doing this—I’ll say, I don’t really want to go out and run today. So I tell myself I’ll just do it for a little while. Generally that’s enough to get me going again.”

Newburgh, who has been mercifully free of injuries throughout her running career, says she’s never bailed out of a race. You get the feeling quitting is inimical to her, that it isn’t what good Oklahomans do. There’s the plaque on her bookshelf praising “a runner’s unrelenting self-control.” And her advice on handling mid-race mishaps—“back off if you have to, but don’t quit.” It’s the attitude that got her through her first mile, quarter by quarter.

But she’s not all about solo struggles, despite another heroic sentiment on her office plaque: “Distance burns through betrayals, loves and hates.” It was the connections—the lab colleagues, Maddox, training partners, cheering crowds, and family—that pushed her through her various walls. She especially credits membership in the Montgomery County Road Runners Club, which she joined in 1988, and of which she is now serving her second year as president, with inspiring her. “They really provide tremendous support to one another,” she says.

Having run 26 races last year, Newburgh is considering rejoining the 50 Races/Year Club (to which she belonged from 1997 to 2000). With a goal ahead of her and inspiring company, there’s no reason not to hit the road again. ■

Celebrating Plain Language at NIH

On Wednesday, Mar. 20, NIH will pay tribute to the power of clear writing with a special event titled “Celebrating Plain Language at NIH.” Open to all staff, the ceremony will start at 9:45 a.m. in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg. 10.

Acting director Dr. Ruth Kirschstein will host the occasion honoring the winners of the second annual NIH Plain Language Awards. More than 100 nominations, including web sites, speeches, manuals, posters, and other written products were submitted in response to Kirschstein’s call for entries to the plain language competition. The entries were evaluated by members of the plain language coordinating committee, which includes representatives from every institute, center and OD office.

Prior to the distribution of awards, special guest Susan Dentzer will speak about the power of language and the challenge of communicating science information clearly. Dentzer is a correspondent with PBS’s *NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer, where she leads a unit dedicated to providing coverage of health care and health policy. Issues she has reported on include medical education, medical errors, rural health care, AIDS, mental illness, genetics research and binge drinking on college campuses, among others. The event will conclude with a reception in the Visitor Information Center at 11 a.m.

Sign language interpretation will be provided. For other reasonable accommodation, call 496-1461. For more information about the NIH plain language initiative, visit www1.od.nih.gov/execsec/plainlanguage.htm.

BIRDHOUSES. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

planning, helped the first phase of the project soar. An article about NIH's birdhouse installation project in the Feb. 20, 2001, issue of the *NIH Record* drew the attention of a local newspaper, the *Bethesda Gazette*, which interviewed Mueller for a front page story. A retired neighbor and self-described longtime bluebird fancier, Jim Gardner, happened to see the story and called Mueller to volunteer to track the project's progress. Gardner's faithful biweekly checks of each of the close to 30 birdhouses provided documentation NIH probably could not have gotten any other way.

"We were glad to get Jim Gardner's offer to help," Mueller says. "We really couldn't afford to devote the time that he did to the tracking."

PHOTOS: ERNIE BRANSON



Harry Hill (l) and Ken Hunter of NIH grounds-keeping and maintenance erect one of several new birdhouses on the lawn of the Natcher Center. Last year, birdhouses in the same vicinity attracted difficult-to-lure bluebirds that help keep the mosquito population in check.

A former employee at the Audubon Naturalist Society located a few miles east of NIH in Chevy Chase, Gardner recalls that the society had tried several years ago to attract bluebirds to its property, but never had any success.

"I don't think they have enough field," he says, noting that the NIH grounds are ideal.

"What you need is lots of lawn area with insects and a pretty good water supply. I hope we have a lot more birds and nestings this year."

Pleased with last year's effort, Mueller hopes for more this year as well. "I think we were very successful overall with at least three of the 16 bluebird houses having successful bluebird young in May through June and then having what we think was a repeat nesting in one house in August," he says. "Another house had chickadees in June. Of the 15 other songbird houses erected, there were at least three nestings by titmice, wrens and chickadees, mainly in the wooded area along the creek west of Bldg. 21."

Mueller says there was really no apparent rhyme or reason to the houses or locations that attracted the most bluebird activity. "Success came from the boxes east of the National Library of Medicine and in the Natcher Bldg.'s north courtyard," he notes. "The grounds east of the library don't get much foot traffic, because there are few sidewalks in that area, so we ruled out that the birds were attracted to people. In contrast, the Natcher Bldg. area sees quite a few people," leading from the Metro station to a major conference area. Natcher was the site of the double brood, where a family left and later returned to nest again in the same NIH birdhouse.

Gardner, whose love of bluebirds originated when

he was a small boy growing up at his grandmother's home in Indian Valley, Idaho, explains that short of acquiring the services of experts in banding there is really no way to confirm that the same bluebird family stopped by NIH twice.

"Bluebirds could almost be considered a domesticated bird," Mueller points out. "They aren't particularly bothered by people." The mother bird, he explains, normally will stay with her eggs or hatchlings despite whatever else is going on in the vicinity. However, Mueller requests that the birds and their boxes not be disturbed at any time.

Besides the aesthetic value of having a thriving avian population on the campus, a more practical goal of the project was to try to reduce the number of pesky pests in residence here—without resorting to insecticides. Mueller says jokingly that without a "bite survey, there's no way to tell" if mosquitoes found fairer feasting grounds elsewhere, but he feels certain that "any bird population will have an effect on insect populations."

Not as successful yet, however, is the effort to establish a brown bat colony. The plan was to install a few bat houses near construction activity that was under way last year for the refurbishment of Bldg. 15K. "We thought that bats might have taken up residence in the old attic or roofing areas of Bldg. 15K," Mueller says. "We hoped that when the construction workers began to clear out those areas the bats would need to find other places to live and would seek shelter in the homes we had provided, but apparently there were no bats in that old house. We're still hopeful that other bat colonies that may exist on campus will need someplace to stay as they expand, have more babies and outgrow their current living arrangements."

In the coming weeks, Mueller and his crew will be installing several more birdhouses on campus grounds as well as providing several houses for the NIH Animal Center in Poolesville. At the Poolesville center in particular, they are hoping to attract kestrels, a small colorful falcon that will nest in boxes. They will also soon do some spring cleaning—examining the current structures and clearing them of parasites and leftover nesting material. Next year, Mueller says he has a plan to lure a population of a certain songbird, a voracious mosquito eater that also happens to be the largest swallow in North America.

"My hope of putting up a purple martin house will probably be postponed until 2003," he says, "because the area where we want to put it is potentially part of the large stormwater management pond that will be located near NLM's southeast lawn. The large water feature will make it a much more attractive area for purple martins and tree swallows." ■



HRDD Class Offerings

The Human Resource Development Division supports the development of NIH human resources through consultation and provides training, career development programs and other services designed to enhance organizational performance. For more information call 496-6211 or visit <http://LearningSource.od.nih.gov>.

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Former Deputy Director Berliner Mourned

Dr. Robert W. Berliner, who was NIH deputy director for science from February 1969 until September 1973, and who also served as NHLBI scientific director and laboratory chief, died Feb. 5 at age 86 from complications of flu. He was also former dean of Yale University School of Medicine, professor emeritus of cellular and molecular physiology and professor emeritus of internal medicine at Yale.

Born in New York City in 1915, Berliner received his B.S. degree from Yale in 1936. He left Yale in his junior year to begin his medical education at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University and received his M.D. degree in 1939. After completing his internship at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, he held positions at Goldwater Memorial Hospital and New York University School of Medicine. It was at these institutions that he collaborated with Dr. James A. Shannon, who subsequently was appointed director of research at the National Heart Institute, and then NIH director.

Berliner was one of the first investigators recruited by Shannon to join him at the NIH in 1950, at which time Berliner was named chief, Laboratory of Kidney and Electrolyte Metabolism at the National Heart Institute. Studies in his laboratory helped establish early concepts of how potassium, sodium, hydrogen and water are transported by the kidney.

Berliner served as president of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, the American Physiological Society and the American Society of Nephrology. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine and the Association of American Physicians.

He is survived by his wife, Lee, two daughters and two sons.

Workshop for Women in Science

HRDD is launching the second in a series of workshops for women in science, "Giving Dynamic Presentations." The 2-day workshop is designed to equip scientists with methods for capturing and holding audience attention and speaking with confidence, poise and enthusiasm. Participants will learn through videotaped presentations, technique review and individual coaching. The workshop will be held Apr. 30-May 1, with a coaching session to follow. For more information, contact HRDD at 496-6211 or visit <http://learningsource.od.nih.gov/>.



Dr. Laura Shrestha has been named deputy associate director for the behavioral and social research program at the National Institute on Aging. She brings to the position problem-solving skills developed while administering loans for the World Bank. "I'm thrilled to be back. I received a lot of my original training from the NIA," she said, explaining that while she was a trainee, NIA funded her doctoral degree in demography at the University of Pennsylvania and her postdoctoral work. She attended the NIA 1993 Summer Institute at the Airlie House before joining the World Bank in 1994, where she managed a \$63 million, 4-year loan to help the Ukraine government arrest the spread of tuberculosis, AIDS and HIV.

NIDDK's Bob MacKinnon Retires

By Anna Maria Gillis

Bob MacKinnon wants you to pay more attention to your money. Too many people don't know what they're entitled to when it comes to health and retirement benefits, says MacKinnon, who has spent much of his federal career teaching people about their benefits.

Now, NIH's guru of all benefits matters, both arcane and practical, is retiring himself. Well, sort of.

Officially, MacKinnon's last day was Jan. 3, but he's chosen to have "5-day weekends" to play golf and tennis and maybe work in a soup kitchen and to enjoy his retirement house in Ocean Pines, near Ocean City. Tuesdays and Wednesdays he is on campus as a consultant to help NIH human resources staff deal with some of the more complicated retirement and health benefits questions they face.

At MacKinnon's retirement party, Barbara Merchant, NIDDK executive officer, laughed, saying "many of the people Bob counseled are rich and happy on the beach."

"Rich might be an overstatement," says Syd Carter, director of NIDDK's Office of Human Resource Management, "but Bob helped many people retire with more money than they expected."

MacKinnon began crunching numbers for the government in 1969. He started as a claims examiner for the U.S. Civil Service Commission, predecessor of the Office of Personnel Management, without having a formal interview with his first boss. After dropping out of a doctoral program in Russian literature at the University of Colorado, "I took the [civil service] test at the post office, got a good grade, and a few letters and interviews," says MacKinnon.

Optimistic about his prospects, he moved to Washington and pounded the pavement until he arrived at the government's Job Information Service late one Friday afternoon. The woman at the desk looked at his application, looked at him and his five o'clock shadow, and asked whether he was good at math. MacKinnon had been an accounting major before a 3-year Army hitch took him into the Army's Security Agency and language school. She picked up the phone to make a quick call. When she got off, "she told me I'd start on Monday, and that men in the government come to work clean-shaven and wearing coats and ties," says MacKinnon.

Eventually, he moved into benefits policy for OPM before moving to NIH in 1988. Because MacKinnon had worked at OPM, he was the perfect person to do benefits at NIH, says Carter.

NIH has so many employee categories, and there are various sources of retirement annuities—CSRS, CSRS Offset, FERS, Thrift Savings, and Social Security—that it can be difficult to calculate what people will receive, particularly for those who have worked under both the CSRS and FERS retirement systems. "Bob was especially effective with people who left the government, returned later, and had to decide which retirement system would provide a larger annuity in the end," says Carter, who considers MacKinnon the consummate civil servant: honest, hard-working, modest and patient. "He'd maintain his composure and solve problems even for employees who showed up with complicated problems at 4:30 p.m. on the last day of open season."

Human resources staff all over NIH called MacKinnon when they got stuck wading through the government's rules. "It can be tough counseling people because you can't bend the rules," says MacKinnon. "It's sad when you have to tell people that they can't do something." But he's always tried to give people alternatives by helping them figure out how and when it was most advantageous to end their federal careers.

"It has never been the grade or salary that motivated me. What I got was the satisfaction of helping people. Their benefits and retirement are important to them," says MacKinnon. Although some people have been "hard to please," he said the job made him think and do research constantly. "It gave me a chance to do what I do well." ■

Wednesday Afternoon Lectures

The Wednesday Afternoon Lecture series—held (usually) on its namesake day at 3 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10—switches to Monday on Mar. 11 when Dr. Stephen Straus, director of the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, gives an NIH Director's Lecture on "Exploring the Scientific Basis of Complementary and Alternative Medicine" (see story on p. 1).

Two days later, on Mar. 13, the series returns to its normal day and time as Dr. Steven L. McKnight discusses "Ideas on How Circadian Rhythm is Reciprocally Linked to Metabolism." He is chairman, biochemistry department, and distinguished chair in basic biomedical research, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas.

On Mar. 20, Dr. Peter Cresswell, HHMI investigator and professor, section of immunobiology, Yale University School of Medicine, will lecture on "Redox Reactions in Antigen Processing."

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



Employee benefits guru Bob MacKinnon is halfway out the door.