Summer Reading heats up

Cornelio Casaclang, events director
Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

The demands of the production schedule at Krannert Center (for the Performing Arts) often make it difficult to sustain a consistent reading effort during the school year. So when summer comes, my reading list often reflects trying to make up for a long lost time.

My summer reading list tends to be ambitious, mostly because I try to have a hard time picking one book over another. One reason is that there are just too many great things to read out there. The other is that from day to day I tend to be pretty fickle, so the variety of books I have going keeps me engaged.

Jazz is both a love and fascination, and I have always wanted to better understand its history. To that end, I have come across “Visions of Jazz,” by Village Voice jazz critic Gary Giddins. Winner of the 1998 National Book Critics Circle Award for criticism, Giddins brings to life the story of jazz in America through his telling of the individual stories of several jazz artists, both the famous and lesser known.

In February 2002 Susan Sontag will come to Krannert Center in a series we are calling “CultureTalk.” To get a better idea of her work, I picked up her novel “In America.” Winner of the National Book Award, she tells the story of a Polish actress who comes to America in the late 19th century.

I always try to have a book of short stories and a book of poetry handy. For short stories, I have the 2000 edition of “The Best American Short Stories,” edited by E.L. Doctorow. This popular anthology series annually picks the best short stories printed in American and Canadian magazines in a given year. For poetry, I have come to really enjoy the Polish poet Wislawa Szymborska. With her book “View With a Grain of Sand,” it’s easy to see why she was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1996. Her poetry is down to earth and insightful.

Christine Mechling, food administrator III
manager, Beckman Cafe at Beckman Institute

I love to read in the summer! I usually try to keep it as light and entertaining as I can. A perfect example of that is “The Bad Girls’ Guide to the Open Road,” by Cameron Tuttle. Every time I pick it up, I have to laugh out loud! I also love the “Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff” series.

And I will be checking out every cookbook that I can get my hands on as I love to use new recipes in the cafe.

One book I’d recommend for cooks is the “Food Lover’s Companion,” by Sharon Tyler Herbst. It has just about every definition for anything food-related that anyone could want to know. Everyone should have a copy of it. One of my favorite cookbooks is the “Fabulous Delicacies from The Queen Anne Inn,” by Bob and Pauline Medhurst. I also use the “Culinary Arts Institute Encyclopedia Cookbook” a lot. I also received the “Best of the Bake-Off Cookbook” from my cook and absolutely love it. But I collect cookbooks so it is rare that I find one I do not like.

I also am in the middle of doing some landscaping in our yard so I will be checking out some good gardening and landscaping books. And I don’t think I could get through a summer without a good romance by Danielle Steele or Katherine E. Woodiwiss. I just hope I will have time to squeeze in some reading soon.

Heavy consumption of tainted fish curbs adult learning and memory

By Jim Barlow
News Bureau Staff Writer

PCB-laden fish from Lake Michigan affect not only young children but also adults over age 49, researchers say. Many of the former big eaters of sport-caught fish now have high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls in their blood and problems with learning and memory.

Since 1992, researchers, led by Susan L. Schantz of the UI College of Veterinary Medicine, have studied Lake Michigan fish-eaters, many of whom regularly had eaten more than 24 pounds of sport-caught fish a year. The researchers’ latest findings show that the heavy eaters who are now over age 49 have problems learning and remembering new verbal information.

“This study suggests, for the first time, that PCB body burdens in adulthood may be associated with impairments in certain aspects of memory and learning,” Schantz said. “The focus has been almost exclusively on increased health risks of exposure to children and pregnant women. It had been assumed that mature adults are less susceptible than are developing fetuses. This may not be the case.”

PCBs were widely used – until banned in the late 1970s – as electrical insulators and lubricants and as extenders in paints and varnishes. The chemicals decompose slowly and are virtually non-biodegradable. Large quantities remain in older electrical equipment still in use. In the Great Lakes, PCBs make their way up the food chain and accumulate at increasing levels in fatty tissue.

The new study by researchers at four institutions...
The Preservation and Conservation Association recognized the UI with the 2001 Laning Prize. A gift of $2 million was expended to restore Engineering Hall. A copy of the award was also presented to the architect, A. Epstein & Sons International, and the general contractor, Felmley-Dickson Co.

M. Quinn Browster, professor of mechanical engineering, became the first holder of the Hermina G. Sook Professorship in Mechanical Engineering, established by the department of mechanical and industrial engineering. Shao LEE Sook, professor emeritus, established the professorship in honor of his wife's dedication to education. Browster was recognized for this research on the combustion stability of solid propellants, the simulation of advance rockets, and laser-energetic material interactions.

Marcelo H. Garcia, professor of civil and environmental engineering, has been named the first Chester and Helen Siess Professor of Civil Engineering. Garcia is a leader in the field of river mechanics, sediment transport and sediment engineering. This professorship was made possible by Chester Siess, professor emeritus, and his late wife, Helen, and through a major gift from Joseph and Mary Colaco.

Taejik Ha, professor of physics, received a Searle Scholars award for 2001. About a dozen Searle awards are given each year in medicine, chemistry and the biological sciences combined. The Searle Scholars award was established at the Chicago Community Trust and is funded by the estates of Mr. and Mrs. John G. Searle.

Shiv Kapoor, professor of mechanical and industrial engineering, is the newest recipient of the James W. Bayne Professorship in Mechanical and Industrial Engineering. The professorship, awarded by the department of mechanical and industrial engineering, recognized Kapoor for his impact on machine tool and machining processes. Joanne and Alexander Rusk established the professorship in honor of Bayne, who served as head of the depart-

The Office of Academic Human Resources, Suite 420, 807 W. Wright St., maintains listings of academic positions available in the five campuses and the five regional business hours. Listings are also available online. Academic professional positions are listed at www.uiuc.edu/hr/jobs/index.asp. For immediate opportunity information can be found at http://webster.uiuc.edu/hr/jobs/employment.html. Prospective employees and students can receive e-mail notification of openings by subscribing to the Academic Position List. Career Information at http://webster.uiuc.edu/hr/default.asp.

Giving Search, hr@uif.uillinois.edu. Closing date: immediately. Contact Assistant Director of Annual and coordinate work in order to meet deadlines, thor-

Bachelor's degree, two years' experience in manage-

good knowledge of Web publishing and dynamic content and two years' experience working with college students and/or community service programs required. Available immediately. Contact: 714-855-8277. Closing date: July 16.

Bachelor's degree and one year's relevant experience, working in career counseling, academic advising or leadership roles required. Available immediately. Contact: Charles Webster, 333-1018, j-bass@uiuc.edu. Closing date: July 23.

Quality assurance specialist. Bachelor's degree and two years' experience in QA testing or related area required. Available immediately. Contact: 714-244-0932. Closing date: July 25.

Alumni Association. Assistant director. BA or BS and two years' experience in alumni relations, event planning or related area required. Must be resourceful, goal-driven, team-oriented and computer-savvy. Available immediately. Contact: Charles Schult, Alumni Relations, Spooner Hall, UI, P.O. Box 20243, Springfield, IL 62794-2923. Closing date: July 16.

Business and Financial Services (Springfield). Director, special projects and financial analysis. Bachelor's degree in accounting or a business/finance area required. Must have at least five years' experience and be immediately available. Contact: John Canion, 206-6700. Closing date: July 16.

Committee on Institutional Cooperation. Network analyst. Bachelor's degree and three years' relevant experience in information technology, marketing and support of computing technologies, knowledge of TCP/IP in LAN/WAN systems, and installation experience and familiarity with secure Web server environments and familiarity with secure Web server administration required. Available immediately. Contact: Russell Stidah, 333-8475, rswynvo@uiuc.edu. Closing date: July 13.

Computing and Communications Services Office. Documentation specialist (content). Bachelor's degree and one year's relevant experience, working in technical writing and support of computing technologies, knowledge of TCPIP in LAN/WAN systems, and installation experience and familiarity with secure Web server environments and familiarity with secure Web server administration required. Available immediately. Contact: Marty Mehta 244-0355, mohan@uiuc.edu. Closing date: July 2.

Computing and Communications Services Office. Recruitment program director (dynamic content specialist). Bachelor's degree and one year's relevant experience, working in technical writing and support of computing technologies, knowledge of TCPIP in LAN/WAN systems, and installation experience and familiarity with secure Web server environments and familiarity with secure Web server administration required. Available immediately. Contact: Marty Mehta 244-0355, mohan@uiuc.edu. Closing date: July 2.

Foundation, UI. Assistant director of annual giving. Bachelor's degree in English, communications, advertising, development or related field required. Experience of personal and projects, ability to set priorities and work independently and with a high level of initiative, thorough knowledge of database and data/report generation, ability to deal diplomatically with a wide range of individuals and diplomacy. Contact Assistant Director of Annual Giving, UI, 170 Hillside Ave., 20243-1006. Closing date: July 20.

Geological Research. Scientist. PhD in earth sciences, conditioned matter physics or chemistry related or disci-

engineer. Bachelor's degree and 16 hours in child development or early childhood education required. Available: Aug. 15, Contact Jay Joll, 333-1018, joll@uiuc.edu. Closing date: July 15.

Assignment to Director of Cryptography. Postdoctoral associate. Bachelor's degree and four years' experience in applied mathematics or computer science required. Available immediately. Contact: Pani Williams, 333-6408 (fax). Closing date: July 16.

Associate Law director. Candidate master's degree and three years' experience in legal administration, counseling of students and/or community service program. Available immediately. Contact: Pani Williams, 333-6408 (fax). Closing date: July 16.

Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions. Bachelor's degree in business, law or applied life studies. Closing date: July 2.

Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions. Bachelor's degree in business, law or applied life studies. Closing date: Aug. 1. Contact Virginia Vermillion, 333-4951. Closing date: July 16.

Bachelor's degree and one year's relevant experience, working in career counseling, academic advising or leadership roles required. Available immediately. Contact: Charles Webster, 333-1018, j-bass@uiuc.edu. Closing date: July 23.

Weberti, 244-7033, jjarvis@uiuc.edu. Closing date: July 21.

Assistant director. Bachelor's degree and experience working with college students and/or community service programs required. Available immediately. Contact: 714-244-2024. Closing date: July 15.

Web Portal, coordinator. Bachelor's degree and two years' full-time experience in a career counseling, academic advising or leadership roles required. Available immediately. Contact: Pani Williams, 333-6408 or 333-6431 (fax). Closing date: July 15.

Student Financial Aid. Assistant to the director. Bachelor's degree and successful experience in student financial aid administration, counseling of students and/or community service programs required. Available immediately. Contact: Pani Williams, 333-6408 (fax). Closing date: July 16.

Manager. Program coordinator. Bachelor's degree and two years' full-time experience in a career counseling, academic advising or leadership role required. Available immediately. Contact: Pani Williams, 333-6408 (fax). Closing date: July 16.

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Inside Illinois

On the job

Chuck Burdick and Al Rasmussen

How long have you been at the UI and on the flower crew?
Al: Twenty years in April. I started out doing just general groundwork: mowing, trimming hedges. This is my first year full-time for the flower crew. I’ve planted flowers, beds, in the past, but this is my exclusive job this summer.

Chuck: I’ve been here 21 years this month. Like Al, I started out as just general work force. I worked in the grounds greenhouse for 12 years. Then I was asked to do the flowers out on campus. I think this is my sixth year doing them.

What does your job on the flower crew entail?
Chuck: Well, we don’t get to decide what goes in the beds and where, but we do everything else: plant, fertilize, water and cultivate.

Al: We have two horticulturists in the department, and the guy we work with, Jim Smith, is mostly concerned with the flower beds: the designs, the varieties. He’s gone on a trip right now, but he’s left us detailed maps as to what goes where.

Tell me about what you do from day to day. Do you have a schedule where you work your way around campus?
Chuck: We kind of make a route out of the flower beds. We start on one side of the campus and work our way around weeding, watering, cultivating. By the time we get to one end, we’re ready to start over and do the same thing all over.

How long does it take?
Chuck: A week to 10 days.

Al: We’re still planting a lot of beds. So, first thing in the morning, unless we’re receiving a delivery, we do the route. We make sure squirrels haven’t dug flowers out or that somebody hasn’t run through the middle of a bed and stomped the flowers down. We’re about to the end of our planting schedule, then it’ll just be the daily maintenance.

Where do the live plants come from?
Al: The majority of them come from Kleiss Nursery. They do a grow a few things here [at the university] but the majority of the annual plants come from Kleiss Nursery.

How many annuals do you put out on campus?
Al: Maybe 10,000 ajicipes. And that’s a conservative estimate.

Chuck: We’ve never kept a running total.

And you plant them all by hand?
Al: Well, if you’ve got your soil worked up, your trowel just kind of melds into the soil, and it can go pretty quickly. Most of this year, we worked with only one extra person.

How long does it take to plant that many?
Chuck: About a month. We’ve been using this compost that’s called mushroom compost. It’s comparable to peat moss but they grow the white button mushrooms in it, wherever it comes from, and then we get it when they’re done with it. We stockpile it and use it to fill in the beds. And that really makes a difference. It lightens the soil up. That’s one of our key features, amending the soil every year, and that’s the key to having good healthy plants.

What’s the most difficult part of your job?
Al: No rain.

Chuck: No rain. When Mother Nature doesn’t cooperate. And the heat. When it gets to be 90 or 95 degrees and it hasn’t rained, you can’t keep the flowers wet, and they’ll dry out in a day’s time.

What do you enjoy most about what you do?
Al: Being outside. You get to meet some new people. It could be students, it could be someone that works inside in some kind of office job. I think that people appreciate the efforts we put into the beds.

Chuck: The compliments from the people visiting campus. They appreciate the flowers and the way they brighten up campus. It’s like the frosting on a cake – little bits of color here and there.

How does your job vary according to time of year?
Chuck: In the wintertime, we go back to the general workforce and do snow removal.

Al: And tree planting. We may not necessarily go back to the same area we worked in the previous year.

Chuck: We kind of get plugged in wherever we’re needed.

Do you both do gardening at home or what do you do in your spare time?
Chuck: I have a garden at home. Actually, my yard’s kind of my laboratory. I try different things and see if it will work so I can carry it over to campus. If something fails in my yard, it’s not as bad as it’s on campus.

Al: I’ve got an acre of ground, and I’m always experimenting with different beds. I do landscape maintenance as a side job, so I don’t have a lot of time to spend on annual beds, so I’m a big perennial person; daylilies, hostas, columbinens, bleeding hearts. I work for another company part-time and then I have my own customers that I take care of, so spring through fall is pretty busy for me. In the wintertime, I get to slow down a little bit and catch up on my reading. I love to read about plant and landscape design. I do some hardscapes things, too. I like to put little paths or borders around the beds. Like Chuck said, my yard is kind of my laboratory.

What tips can you guys offer to the rest of us amateur gardeners?
Chuck: Don’t be afraid to try anything.

Al: And soil is the biggest part of it. If you’ve got good soil, then if you’re a little faithful about watering, the flowers pretty much take care of themselves.

Chuck: And be consistent in terms of watering, weeding, cultivation and keeping the pests off.

Do you have an educational background or training in horticulture?
Chuck: I grew up on a farm near Assumption and always enjoyed plants. My great-grandmother was known for her peony gardens and her gladious gardens. I have a degree in botany from Eastern, so that helps quite a bit. I’m fortunate to be able to make my living in what I went to school for, I feel quite fortunate to do that.

Al: I’m from Penfield originally. Dad was a farmer, so I grew up doing the row crops, but row crops didn’t appeal to me like flowers do. I did four years in the Marine Corps and then some other jobs before coming here.

Interview by Sharita Forrest

FISH CONSUMPTION, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

is online and in print in the June issue of Environmental Health Perspectives, a journal of the National Institutes of Health. They also found elevated levels of DDE (a breakdown product of DDT), lead and mercury in the heavy fish-eaters, but the only negative effects were tied leading to neurological abnormalities and learning dis- abilities, including memory deficits, in children. Schantz previously reported that high levels of PCBs in adult fish-eaters resulted in barely a hint of problems with fine motor skills such as dexterity and hand steadiness. In the latest work, researchers also did not find statistically significant problems with many other cognitive abilities, such as executive function (planning and attention) and visual-spatial function.

Researchers in the study were from the UI, Michigan State University, the State University of New York at Albany and the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. ◆
**d e a t h s**

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Walter O’Daniel Scott, 86, died June 3 at the Carle Arbors, Champaign. Scott was an extension specialist in agronomy at the UI for 35 years. He began his career at the UI in 1946 and was the coordinator of the UI Agronomy Extension programs from 1964 through 1976.

Mary Ann See, 57, died May 7 at her Urbana home. At the time of her death, See was a photographer I in the Division of Printing Services. Memorials: A trust fund for Jacob Day and Daniel Malloch, the Carle Hospice or the Carle Cancer Center for breast cancer research.

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