Scientists discover two-component lantibiotic with therapeutic potential

By James E. Kloeppel
News Bureau Staff Writer

The discovery and preparation of the first naturally occurring antibiotic could open the door to new therapeutic drugs for treating nasty infections. The current arsenal of drug-resistant bacterial strains poses a perpetual threat to human health, and requires new sources of antibiotics to treat infections. University of Illinois researchers are tackling this problem by discovering and preparing natural antibiotics called lantibiotics.

Lantibiotics are a class of very potent antimicrobial compounds whose antimicrobial properties are attributed to their structure. They possess unusual sulfate bridged rings that provide structural rigidity for binding their cellular targets. Lantibiotics are commonly used in the food industry to inhibit the growth of microorganisms.

"Having the ability to make analogs of these naturally occurring antibiotics gives us the flexibility to look for improvements in properties such as toxicity, biostability and drug delivery," said van der Donk, a William H. and Janet Lycan Professor of Chemistry and Biology at the UI. He is a corresponding author of a paper that was posted online this week ahead of regular publication in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

In previous work, van der Donk first identified the molecular activity of an enzyme (LeaM) responsible for naturally turning a small protein into a lantibiotic. That discovery, reported in the journal Science in 2004, involved lactacin 481, a lantibiotic produced by several strains of Lactococcus lactis, a bacterium used in cheese production.

In March 2006, van der Donk's team reported, again in Science, the synthesis of the lantibiotic nisin. The most studied lantibiotic, nisin has been used as a food preservative for more than 40 years without the development of significant antibiotic resistance.

Then, in the Oct. 26 issue of Chemistry and Biology, the team demonstrated that LeaM could accept substrates vastly different from its natural substrate, in vitro.

"Normally, enzymes are very selective, and will work only on their natural substrate," said van der Donk, who is also an affiliate of the university's Institute for Genomic Biology. "We showed that our enzyme could modify many synthetic substrates, and produce sulfur bridged rings of different sizes and shapes. This offered us the opportunity to control and alter the structure of lantibiotics."

In their latest work, to be published in PNAS, van der Donk and his collaborators describe a new two-component lantibiotic. These lantibiotic systems utilize two peptides that are each post-translationally modified to an active form, and act in synergy to provide antibacterial activity.

For Faculty and Staff, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Senate on Global Campus: More information needed

By Sharita Forrest
Senate reporter

Faculty members want to see detailed academic plans and offer their support for the possibility of a new university campus in Urbana-Champaign. Senate decides whether to endorse the Global Campus proposal to the Board of Trustees.

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**Staff members recognized for service, retirement**

**By Shelly Forrest**

The decision to retire from her job as business manager with the UI’s School of Architecture wasn’t an easy one, said Carol Berg, who retired Dec. 1, 2005, after a 33-year career with the university.

But the birth of her third grandchild last year, who lives in Barrington, Ill., with her parents, tipped the scales in favor of retirement. And, since retiring, Berg has been enjoying spending time with 1-year-old Jake, and her other grandchildren, Megan, 9, and Layla, 7, who live in Monticello.

Berg has been busy sewing everything from her grandchildren’s outfits and their diapers. In preparation for Halloween, she made a princess skirt for Megan, who planned to dress as Sandy from the musical “Grease,” and a gown for Layla, who is a princess. A bronze church choir robe is among Christmas presents for her grandchildren, Berg plays in a volleyball league at Old Or, and drives her 14-year-old son, Andrew, to band; and Andrew, 14, an alto and tenor singer in the chorus and plays in the marching band.

In addition to sewing her grandchildren’s clothes, Berg sewed all the linens for a wedding gift and played as Sandy from the musical “Grease.” She also made quilts and has been sewing jackets for a 3-year-old great-grandson.

Lawson is enjoying family and church activities

**By Shelly Forrest**

During the fall, Berg returned from Vietnam, Berg left the university, and was a stay-at-home mom until their daughter entered school in kindergarten. And, since retiring, Berg has been enjoying spending time with 1-year-old Jake, and her other grandchildren, Megan, 9, and Layla, 7, who live in Monticello.

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Berg’s favorite for dance recitals also shows through in “Table Toppers,” an event at Eola United Methodist Church. For more information about this year’s program, call 333-3101.

Lawnson spends time with family and still has time for golf

By Shelly Forrest

When Kathy Lawson retired on Dec. 31, 2005, after 30 years with the Illini Union, her golf game included playing more golf, debris her Mahomet home, and spending more time with her 81-year-old mother, Louise Guy who lives a few doors away.

Lawson said that summer she played more golf that she had in five years and spent time helping 81-year-old mother, Louise Guy who lives a few doors away.

Lawson has been enjoying spending time with her family, friends, hobbies, traveling and everything else she has to offer.

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**Lawson, Continued From Page 4**

degree in elementary education from Illini Union. “It was very difficult, not having been to college before,” Berg said.

“We golfed our way down the course, to brighten that corner of the yard,”FIXME: not sure what to put in this spot, perhaps “they felt good”?

In addition to outfitting her houses, to brighten that corner of the yard, she has been enjoying spending time with her family, friends, hobbies, traveling and everything else she has to offer.

As a member of the “sandwich generation,” people who are raising families while caring for aging parents, Lawson’s schedule stays busy. And, since retiring, Berg has been enjoying spending time with 1-year-old Jake, and her other grandchildren, Megan, 9, and Layla, 7, who live in Monticello.

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**Table for one**

| Retiree | Carol Berg | has more time for activities such as dancing recitals for the annual Table Toppers event and playing in the hand-ball choir at Eola United Methodist Church. Berg, whose career with the US spans 33 years, one business manager at the UI’s School of Architecture when she retired Dec. 2, 2005 |

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For acpro employment opportunites: [https://hrnet.uihr.uillinois.edu/panda-cf/application/SearchForm.cfm](https://hrnet.uihr.uillinois.edu/panda-cf/application/SearchForm.cfm)

Although Berg was scouring magazines and books for inspiration, she had’t yet decided on a theme for the event. Last year she decorated a table with a Christmas theme – with scenes of old fashioned winters, holiday-themed dishes and easy wrapped packages in the style of each place – and another table that was awash in oranges and blue as part of an Illini theme. One year, Berg dressed a table with a ball theme, reflecting another of her lifelong interests, playing in the church hand-bell choir.

The hand-bell choir plays for church services, weddings and other events and games. Berg is a member of the “sandwich generation,” people who are raising families while caring for aging parents. Berg, also is sewing Illini cheerleader outfits as Christmas presents for her granddaughters, and costume for her granddaughters.

“Grease,” and a gown for Leslie, also is sewing Illini cheerleader costumes for her granddaughters.

“Mom has always been a craft lover,” Berg said. “We golfed our way down the course, to brighten that corner of the yard.”

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Architecture course lets students hear first-hand from experts

By Melissa Mitchell
News Bureau Staff Writer

At the end of the semester, UI students enrolled in a course coordinated by architecture professor Amin Aminmannour take with them knowledge that can't be found in any textbook.

That's because what they learn in Aminmannour's course on integrated design and construction of buildings comes straight from the source: principle, presidents, project managers, and other key practitioners from some of the world's leading architecture and engineering firms.

Aminmannour designed the course in partnership with the UI School of Architecture's Tang Center, a group of alumni organized to honor the teaching and research of the late Stephen Tang, a UI alumnus and faculty member from 1960-1974. In advance of each course offering, Aminmannour works with members of the committee to coordinate the weekly visits by guest lecturers and plan the curriculum, which does not focus on a single project, but beginning to end, as many design-studio courses do. Instead, students have a ringside seat to the campus to share their expertise.

"Each seal is unique, and the mystery of how they were created is a big part of the experience," said Aminmannour, who designed the course in honor of the teaching and research of the late Stephen Tang, a UI alumnus and faculty member from 1960-1974.

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LANTIBIOTICS. CONTRASTS FROM PLEA 3
"Given the synergy observed among two-component lantibiotics, which display similar or higher activity than the host single-component lantibiotic, the possibility of engineering new lantibiotics with therapeutic potential is even greater for these systems," van der Donk said.

Using bioinformatics, the researchers found genes associated in the fly sequence genome of the Gram-positive bacterium Bacillus Subtilis C-125 as precursors of the lantibiotics macrolide and cytolyxin. These genes had not previously been reported to produce a two-component lantibiotic. The two-component lantibiotic was named halicidin by discovery. "The bacterium that produces halicidin grows at pH 9 and above, suggesting that the halicidin produced will be stable in the human body, and that it may be useful in the treatment of acidosis," van der Donk said.

Significantly, the researchers succeeded in expressing in the bacterium Escherichia coli the machinery to produce halicidin, thereby creating the first in vitro biosynthesis of a two-component lantibiotic.

In vitro biosynthesis opens the door to new, unimagined possibilities involving antimicrobial peptide design and engineering," van der Donk said. "Now we can start applying all the lessons we have learned with lacticin 481."

His paper is titled "The Paradox of Consumer Credit."
Secrets revealed in sequencing of honey bee genome

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Weight gain of U.S. drivers has increased fuel consumption

By James E. Kinnamon

As Americans have expanded since 1960, so has their consumption of gasoline, resulting in a 30 percent increase in fuel consumption since 1980. This is in part due to increased weight gains in the population. The average American was 152 pounds in 1980 and is now 187 pounds. This increase in weight has resulted in a 3.5 percent increase in fuel consumption over the same period.

According to a report by the National Center for Health Statistics, the average weight gain of people in the United States since 1980 was 30 pounds. This increase in weight has led to an increase in fuel consumption, as heavier vehicles require more fuel to operate.

The report also notes that the increase in fuel consumption has been compounded by the increase in the number of vehicles on the road. The number of registered vehicles in the United States has increased from 85 million in 1980 to 240 million in 2010. This increase in the number of vehicles has also contributed to the increase in fuel consumption.

The report recommends that steps be taken to reduce the weight gain of Americans, as this would help to reduce fuel consumption and combat climate change. The report also suggests that federal policies be developed to encourage the use of electric vehicles and other forms of transportation that do not rely on fossil fuels.

Research news

Social-economic implications

Shelby H. Jacobsen, a professor of computer science, and his former graduate student, now a professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, found that the weight gain of U.S. drivers has increased the nation’s fuel consumption.

The researchers used data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, which has been collecting data on the health of Americans since 1971. They analyzed the data from 1988 to 2012 to determine the relationship between weight gain and fuel consumption.

The results showed that for every 10 pounds of weight gained, there was a 3.5 percent increase in fuel consumption. This means that the average American driver is using 10 percent more fuel each year than they did in 1988.

The researchers also found that the increase in fuel consumption is not evenly distributed across the population. They found that drivers who are overweight or obese are using more fuel than drivers of normal weight.

The study also found that the increase in fuel consumption is not limited to the United States. The researchers found that the increase in fuel consumption is occurring worldwide, as more people are becoming overweight and obese.

The researchers recommend that steps be taken to reduce the weight gain of Americans, as this would help to reduce fuel consumption and combat climate change. They also recommend that federal policies be developed to encourage the use of electric vehicles and other forms of transportation that do not rely on fossil fuels.

Research news

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A piece of history

This seal was carved in stone and is one of the oldest in the world. It is a beautiful example of ancient artistry. The seal shows a goddess on the left raising her hands toward a depiction of the king. The inscription reads, “May the king live 1712 years.”

According to Zuckerman, this seal is an example of early Western Semitic writing. It is a beautiful example of the ingenuity of ancient people and a testament to the ingenuity of the human spirit.

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School of Music
Palmer to host lectures, film screenings
The School of Music will host British film critic Tony Palmer on Nov. 16. Palmer will present a film showing the department of food science and human nutrition. The department will also host the screening of Palmer's film, which explores the history of the university's dining facilities and the kitchen facilities. The lecture during fall quarter will be held Nov. 16. Reservations are required.

Two upcoming events on campus will feature music critic and magazine editor Susan Oates, who will be on campus Nov. 16. Oates will present a lunchtime lecture and a screening of blockbusters for music lovers. The film, which will feature music from the 1990s, will be held in the Thorne Auditorium.

The concert will be at 2 p.m. with proceeds going toward the reservation of the Quad's performances and the department of food science and human nutrition. The department will also host the screening of Palmer’s film, which explores the history of the university’s dining facilities and the kitchen facilities. The lecture during fall quarter will be held Nov. 16. Reservations are required.

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Guest online account services expanded

Guests of UI faculty and staff members and students now have a way to stay connected while they’re on campus. Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services is expediting its sponsored guest account service by allowing anyone with a UI Network ID — students and faculty and staff members — to sponsor guests to connect to UIUC-net, the campuswide computing network.

Whether they’re visiting friends, family, or to see an Illini football or basketball game, campus guests will now be able to get online to check e-mail and surf the Web, said Mike Smidt, director of network communications for CITES.

The Web address for the expanded service is https://ict3.cits.uiuc.edu/guestaccounts. Guest account sponsors must authenticate using their Network ID and Bluestem password in order to create guest accounts.

In the past, a campus unit had to sponsor a guest account and special unit registration had to create it. Now anyone with a valid Network ID can create up to two simultaneous sponsored guest accounts. Campus units may sponsor more than two simultaneous accounts.

The Web-based interface for creating guest accounts also has been streamlined.

“It’s a nice visual face lift,” said Mark Notaras, senior research programmer at CITES. “… For the guest account sponsor, this means they can easily generate guest accounts, enable and disable guest users, and most importantly, manage passwords. There are also new tools for generating account information paperwork, such as a business card printed with the guest’s name and password.”

Guest accounts allow the user to connect to the Internet through any one of four major campus network services: UIUCNet Wireless, UIUCNet Quick Connect, UIUCNet Virtual Private Network (VPN), and UIUCNet Walkup services. The fastest and easiest way for a guest user to connect is to open a Web browser window and log in to UIUCNet Quick Connect with their guest account name and password.

UIUCNet Quick Connect works via an eduroam connection or a Wi-Fi-enabled computer when UIUCNet Wireless service is available.

Sponsored guest accounts can remain active for up to 30 days; registered network administrators can create accounts that last up to 90 days, and units can submit a request to www.cits.uiuc.edu to extend some accounts’ life span up to 90 days.

A personal account sponsor takes responsibility for the network activity of his or her guests. Guests must adhere to the behavior as outlined in the Acceptable Use policies of the UIUCnet network. The campuswide computing network.

For assistance with sponsored guest accounts, contact Web1.cites.uiuc.edu/guestwireless. Guest account sponsors are also directed to visit www.cits.uiuc.edu/wireless/locations.html.

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Issues will be discussed from a variety of perspectives, including literary traditions, political implications, and the impact of continued globalization on territories that are in one place politically and in another geographically.

For information, call 217-333-2085, or visit the Calendars home page at https://www.illinois.edu/calendar/. A searchable PDF version is available on the web site.


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A personal account sponsor takes responsibility for the network activity of his or her guests. Guests must adhere to the behavior as outlined in the Acceptable Use policies of the UIUCnet network.

Issues will be discussed from a variety of perspectives, including literary traditions, political implications, and the impact of continued globalization on territories that are in one place politically and in another geographically.

For information, call 217-333-2085, or visit the Calendars home page at https://www.illinois.edu/calendar/.

"It’s a nice visual face lift,” said Mark Notaras, senior research programmer at CITES. "For the guest account sponsor, this means they can easily generate guest accounts, enable and disable guest users, and most importantly, manage passwords. There are also new tools for generating account information paperwork, such as a business card printed with the guest’s name and password.”

Guest accounts allow the user to connect to the Internet through any one of four major campus network services: UIUCNet Wireless, UIUCNet Quick Connect, UIUCNet Virtual Private Network (VPN), and UIUCNet Walkup services. The fastest and easiest way for a guest user to connect is to open a Web browser window and log in to UIUCNet Quick Connect with their guest account name and password.

UIUCNet Quick Connect works via an eduroam connection or a Wi-Fi-enabled computer when UIUCNet Wireless service is available.

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CALENDAR. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

through Saturday. For more
info and a schedule of events,
visit illinois.edu/events.
French
Dinner and Film Series.
"Finland, The Far and Away
Scandinavia." 7:30 p.m. Illini
Rooms, Illini Union. Tickets
available at Illini Union Ticket
Center or Assembly Hall Box
Office. Illini Union Faculty
Staff Social Committee.

Thursday
Workshop: "Grils Engaged in
Math and Science." 4-7 p.m.
400 S. State St., Urbana.

Friday
CALENDAR
P
day-Friday. Urbana. 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Center
Asian American Cultural
Watercolors by Siti Mariah
"Siti’s Diary"
Monday-Friday.
Ave., Urbana. 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
cett, UI.
"Conversations About Some
teller. 2 p.m. Spurlock Muse
18
politan Club.
Cosmopolitan Club, 307 E.
ience, technology and forensics.
signed to teach girls who have
Math and Science.”
Workshop: "Girls Engaged in

Staff Social Committee.
available at Illini Union Ticket
rooms, Illini Union. Tickets
"Finland, The Far and Away
Dinner and Film Series.
French.
e-mail hmurdoch@uiuc.edu.
in architecture.
Exhibits
"Here+There"
"Critical Dualities: Front of
"House/Back of House"
Professor.

More info: 244-6017.
Arboretum Tours
To arrange a tour, 333-7579.
Beckman Institute Café
Open to the public. 8 a.m.-
1 p.m. Monday-Friday. Lunch
served 11 a.m.-2 p.m. For
monthly menu, www.beckman.
iuc.edu/cafe.
Bevanc Café
8:30-11 a.m. coffee, juice
and baked goods, and 11:30 a.m.
to 1 p.m. lunch.
Campus Recreation
DPIE, 201 E. Peabody Drive,
Champaign.
102 W. Gregory Drive,
Urbana.
Sanctuary at Home.
Kreft Art Museum and
Kinkel Pavilion. 9 a.m.-
5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday,
2-5 p.m. Sunday. Free admission;
333-3404. Special exhibits
expected.
Dante at Illinois
146 Main Library.
istinguished Lecture Series.
"The Life and Opinions of
Tristram Shandy, Gent.,” by
Laurence Sterne for Jan.
14; “The Life and Opinions of
"Sputnik Sweetheart,” by
Haruki Murakami for Nov.
9; “Sputnik Sweetheart,” by
Murakami Haruki for Dec.
14; “The Life and Opinions
of Tristram Shandy, Gent.,” by
Laurence Sterne for Jan. 11.
More info: 333-3167 or www.
iuc.edu/beauty.
PC User Group
For schedule, call Mark
Zimmer, 244-1289, or David
Harley, 244-1843.
Scandinavian Coffee Hour
6-6 p.m. Wednesday. The
Bread Company, 706 S.
Goodwin Ave., Urbana.
Secretariat
11:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m. third
Wednesday monthly. Illini
Union. More info: 533-1374,
malcow@uiuc.edu or www.
iuc.edu/secretariat.
The Deutsche
Konversationsgruppe
1-3 p.m. Wednesday. The
Bread Company, 706 S.
Goodwin Ave., Urbana.
VOICE
Food and fiction reading. 7-45 p.m.
Second Thursday of each month.
The Bread Company, 706 S.
Goodwin Ave., Urbana.

workshops
"Greetings from the University of
Illinois Library"
"When We Were Young: New
Perspectives on the Art of
the Child"
"A Saint in the City: Still Arts of
Urban Senegal"
Kreft Art Museum
and Kinkel Pavilion. 9 a.m.-
5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday,
2-5 p.m. Sunday. Free admission;
333-3404.
"Dante at Illinois"
146 Main Library.
"Pride of the Illini: The Illinois
Buildings," 205-2529.
Marshall Gallery, Library.
Green Design and Planning
Exhibits.
"Critical Dualities: Front of
House/Back of House"
"Here/There"
Through Nov. 11.
1 space, 230 W. Superior St.,
Chicago. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tues-
day-Saturday.
"Art gallery.
Exhibits
"Signs of the Times"
through March 4.
Five galleries featuring the
cultures of the world.
Spurlock Museum, 600 S.
Gregory St., Urbana.
Tuesday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4
p.m. Saturday, Noon-4 p.m.
"Decorative and Musical Art of
the 17th-20th Centuries:
A Quartet of Ornamented
String Instruments by Antonio Stradivari"
Through Nov. 26.
"Summarist Interventions:
Selections from Krannert Art
Museum and the University of
Illinois Library"
"When We Were Young: New
Perspectives on the Art of
the Child"
"A Saint in the City: Still Arts of
Urban Senegal"
Kreft Art Museum
and Kinkel Pavilion. 9 a.m.-
5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday,
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