Songbird genome sings of the communicating brain

By Diana Yates

Life Sciences Editor

The Australian zebra finch, Taeniopygia guttata, weighs less than half an ounce, mates for life and, unlike most vocalizing animals, learns its songs from its elders. A new analysis of its genome, the first of a songbird, is providing tantalizing clues to the mechanisms and evolution of vocal communication.

Researchers at the UI, Washington University in St. Louis, Uppsala University, UCLA and more than 20 other institutions collaborated on the analysis, which appears in the journal Nature. Recognizing the unique relevance of songbirds to human biology and medicine, the National Human Genome Research Institute provided the main support for the sequencing effort.

Much like humans learn speech, songbirds learn their vocalizations—an ability rare in the animal kingdom. Zebra finches have been domesticated and are easy to rear, making them an accessible subject for scientific study, said David Clayton, a professor of neuroscience and of cell and developmental biology at the Illinois and leader of the group that proposed and organized the genome sequencing effort.

“There is a real diversity of investigators doing research on the zebra finch,” said Clayton, who is also an affiliate of the Institute for Genomic Biology and of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology. “It is a unique animal model for things like sexual differentiation in the brain, sensitivity to environment, local communication, speech, learning, steroid responses and vocal behavior.”

One striking outcome of the genome analysis is the discovery that song communication activates large and complex gene regulatory networks in the brain. A 2009 study conducted in Clayton’s lab showed that hundreds of genes are switched on or off in the zebra finch brain quickly as the bird learns the sound of a new song. Now, using the new genome sequence, the researchers observe that many of these song-responsive genes do not encode proteins but give rise to “non-coding” RNAs. Among the genes that are suppressed immediately after a zebra finch hears a new song, two-thirds are non-coding RNAs. Non-coding RNAs are believed to interact with protein-coding messenger RNAs (mRNAs) to regulate their stability, intracellular location and translation into protein.

“When we talk about the genes in a genome, many people still think exclusively in terms of protein-coding genes,” Clayton said. “We’re not the first to recognize that these non-coding RNAs are important. They’ve been studied a lot in the context of embryonic development, for example. But certainly this is a surprising observation that these things are also active in the moment-to-moment operation of the brain.”

As expected, the finch genome shares certain characteristics with that of the chicken, the only other bird genome sequenced to date. But a comparison of the two also reveals some striking differences. Some see SONGBIRD, Page 2.

Bilingual family liaisons increasingly important service for schools

By Phil Ciciora

News Editor

Even during tough economic times, a school district’s decision to cut support services aimed at helping Hispanic students and their families navigate the public school system will prove to be a shortsighted one, especially given long-term demographic trends and the need for a highly educated workforce, says a UI expert in social services for vulnerable populations.

According to Lissette M. Piedra, a professor of social work at Illinois, eliminating auxiliary positions such as bilingual family liaisons to save money now will ultimately only hurt a community, especially ones with a growing Latino population.

“Bilingual family liaisons are huge assets to local schools and communities, and the fact that these positions are being threatened due to state budget shortfalls is a cause for concern,” Piedra said.

Schools often employ bilingual family liaisons to assist non-native English-speaking students and families in adjusting to the U.S. public school system, working with them on everything from paperwork in English to helping them find where they can purchase inexpensive clothing, school supplies and food.

Family liaisons also operate as cultural brokers, helping teachers, administrators, and school personnel understand the cultural differences that could interfere with academic success.

Frequently, cultural misunderstandings can lead to the misguided notion that Latino parents lack interest in their child’s education, Piedra said.

“School personnel need help understanding how the concept of parental involvement may mean different things to Latino families,” she said. “Many parents are willing to work long hours so that their children can have the clothes, books and pocket money to succeed in school. While some parents may not have the language or literary skills to help their child with homework, they will insist that their child attend school, respect their teachers, behave in class and study hard to avoid a life filled with low-wage labor—often holding up their own lives as cautionary examples.”

Nationally, about one-in-five public school students are Hispanic. Sixty percent of the total growth in the nation’s public school enrollment over the past 15 years was due to the increase in the number of Latino students, a trend that shows no sign of decline.

The national demographics change, so bilingual family liaisons became cultural liaisons, Page 2.

Inside Illinois seeks input in online survey

Your opinions wanted ... by April 30

We hope you will take the time to complete our online survey and share your opinions about Inside Illinois with us (NetID and blueset password required).

The survey is anonymous, but survey-takers will have the opportunity to enter a drawing for a $25 gift certificate for the Illini Union Bookstore. A winner will be randomly selected from all of the entrants on or about May 1.

If you are unable to access the Internet, you may call or e-mail to request an electronic file or a printed version of the survey.

We appreciate your feedback and will use it to make Inside Illinois a more useful publication for our readers.

To request a printed survey, call or e-mail Doris Dahl, 217-333-2895 or dkdahl@illinois.edu. ◆

READER SURVEY: http://Illinois.edu/goto/IIsurvey10

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On the Web
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Inside Illinois
For Faculty and Staff, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
C  

changes to university and state policies, and to the campus grade-replacement policy, were presented at the first meeting of the Urbana-Champaign Senate meeting March 29.  

Shared governance clarification  

The meeting, senators discussing clarifying language in the statutes that stip-  

ulates that tenure-track faculty members have a representative on the Aca-  

demic unit that is eligible to vote on pro-  

motion and tenure decisions.  

The idea is that tenure-  

track faculty members may belong to more than one tenure home, but must have at least one.  

Another major language clarification specifies that the formation of new units or changes to existing units, such as through consolidation with other departments, must include the advice of each unit. That advice is to be taken and recorded by faculty vote through a secret written ballot.

BILINGUAL LIAISONS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1  

schools must accept that a growing number of students have to do. Having a bilingual family li-  

aision conveys the crucial message to His-  

panic students and their families, family li-  

aisons facilitate academic engagement and  

achievement.  

If you find educational institutions alienating, your options are limited. Be-  

cause education is a main artery toward  

mobility, those who reject the educational track risk a downward social trajectory,” Piedra said.  

When young people opt-out of main-  

stream education, and when society per-  

mits the social disengagement of youth on a large-scale, “we do so at our peril,” Piedra said.  

“Given the current demographic shifts and the pivotal role the children of immi-  

grant families play in the future labor force, society cannot afford to allow cultural and linguistic differences to stymie the academ-  

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The Senate adopted the Senate Executive Committee’s recommendation for the campus to have a more direct voice with the UI Board of Trustees.  

Senate Chairwoman Joyce Tolliver said the campus has undergone dramatic changes, and debated over the last few years, but their implications are more important now because of the university’s financial and strategic review of programs and units as a result of the budget crisis.  

In her remarks at the Senate meeting, Tolliver said she feels the Steadfasting Excellence @ Illinois initiative has a good process that includes the full community, from the diagnosis to the implementation and that she is optimistic about the shared governance process.  

The chairwoman on the Senate Executive Committee are working to give the senate a more direct voice with the UI Board of Trustees.  

Becoming President  

Interim Chancellor Bob Easter told the senate during his remarks that he wanted to make sure the university’s continuing cuts aren’t teaching the campus that the university is not committed to making those institutions accessible to the children of immigrants and their families.”  

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Stewarding Excellence: A status report  

Dear Colleagues,  

I write to provide an update on some of our recent activities regarding the campus budget. It is tremendously gratifying to see how much interest and engagement there is across campus in the Stewarding Excellence @ Illinois effort. As of March 26, we have charged 13 project teams involving 104 people, including 52 faculty mem- 

bers, 21 administrators, 25 academic profession- 

als and six students.  

We also have received more than 350 nomina- 

tions of faculty, staff, and students willing to serve on future project teams. I would like to thank all of these individuals for their dedication to our campus and their commitment to maintaining the level of excellence we have come to expect at Illinois. In addition, we have created individual e-mail addresses for each of the teams so that concerns and suggestions can be submitted directly to project team members. We hope that this new communication venue will strength- 

en the further the voice of faculty, staff, and students, in this process.  

The project reports start coming in April 2, per the schedule below. In our budget sessions for faculty and staff, a number of people have expressed interest in the relationship between the distribution of funds across the campus and the sources of those funds. The link below will take you to a short commentary on how we distribute tuition dollars, grants, indirect cost recovery funds, and general revenue funds on campus. I hope it throws some light on the complex phenomenon of cross-subsidies in the university budget process.  

Sincerely,  

Richard Wheeler  

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (Interim)
Michael Hallihan fast facts:
Important people in his life: Michael is married to Suzanne Hallihan, a chief clerk in the College of Veterinary Medicine. They have a teenage son and daughter and live in Urbana.
Other jobs he’s had: I have been a waiter, I’ve been a cook, I’ve worked for a security systems company that worked with AT&T. I worked for Kerasotes Theaters. I was an actual projectionist – back when they hired people who’d actually repair them and run (projectors).

Education: Graduated from Rivermont Community High School, Riverton, Ill.
Interests: Hallihan is a longtime studio musician who plays bass and keyboards. He played in several bands years ago. He met his wife in 1988 at a show in which he was performing. “I’ve played jazz, funk, R&B, rock, metal, punk ... back in the long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long, long hours when guys looked like girls and girls looked like girls.”
A favorite place in C-U: Merry Ann’s Diner: “That’s our kind of place – anything that serves proletarian fare, we’re there. We’re meat and potatoes people.”

On the Job Michael Hallihan

LAN support specialist Michael Hallihan is a self-described “anti-geek” who manages technology needs for the College of Medicine by day and abundant computers by night, when he spends more time working on his house or cooking for his family.

As a Local Area Network support specialist, you do what sorts of things?
I actually do two jobs. One is working for the IT group here in the building. I also handle the technical support for the curriculum, so that would be anywhere from recording lectures and editing video to workstation support to deploying the network.

Is it a lot to keep track of?
Yeah, it is – we’re somewhat short-staffed at the moment, and because of my background I sort of fell into the other role, so it’s kind of an amalgam of both those.

What’s your background?
It’s in electronics, and it’s not in computers. My first job was at the UI working for the Office of Instructional Resources (now the Center for Teaching Excellence). I worked there from ’89 to ’93 and came back in ’96 and started working here doing kind of the same thing in curriculum support.

What does it take to do local area networking?
We’re a small IT group of five, and we support the college faculty and staff members, physicians, residents and researchers.

I could see a student from their first year of medical school all the way through if they choose to stay here during residency. I’m also in charge of recording and archiving all the commencement proceedings, and when the students get their diplomas, they get a DVD from us, so I have to make those up. My job is not one big job but tons of really, really small jobs that take up a lot of time.

We also serve two other sister sites — for the clinical side — that would be Provena and Carle, so our residents in the hospital setting get workstation support. If someone has a problem, I’m usually the one that gets in a car and goes over and takes care of it, so I’m sort of a gopher.

What else do you do?
Our examinations are interesting because they don’t involve paper; they’re all done electronically. We have over 300 students, so at any given time we have to deploy close to 80 laptops in our auditorium. Our students go in there and take exams.

Describe a typical day.
I usually show up at 7 a.m. I prepare the student lab, the auditorium and any of these other small classrooms for any classes that would be taught – it all depends on the first year schedule. Fifty percent of my job actually comes from watching the schedule and making sure the instructors have what they need – anything from a microphone to a laptop and anywhere in between.

What’s something people might find interesting or surprising about your department?
I would think that most people – when they think of an office group – they think of a bunch of geeks sitting around in front of computers not talking to anybody, and being kind of secluded, and that is not what we are. We’re actually very hands-on and we interface directly with faculty and staff members, so I know everybody by name.

So you’re “people” person?
I really like working on the phone with folks – I think that is extremely challenging – especially if I’m moving from one area to another and I get a phone call on my cell and I have to diagnose problems. I think that’s one of the most challenging things I do. For me that’s kind of enjoyable.

I did not go to school to learn computer science, so I think I kind of bring to the group is I try to go the opposite route. I try to treat the human who operates the computer first instead of immediately going to the problem with the computer – because computers are absolutely useless without the human to work them.

What’s something cool about working at the UI from your perspective?
I think it’s cool to be a part of something big. In my opinion having even a small part in the training and nurturing of future surgeons and doctors – I think that’s something important. I can say I work for the College of Medicine and there’s a whole chain of people – that’s what we do.

What is the best and the worst things about your job?
Being part of something big is the worst. The best thing is I spend a lot of time keeping up with the rest of my colleagues in the office. They’re a lot smarter than I am; they’re all computer science people. I have to climb a little harder and work a little harder at my job because of the lack of formal training.

You have to work every single day to keep up with what is going on with IT. It’s evolving every single day – at least for me. They’re pretty cool about letting me ask tons of questions – and I’m always asking questions.

What do you like to do after work?
I’m kind of the anti-geek. I’m not one of these guys who goes home and thinks about his flat panel TV. I like music and cooking and stuff like that. I leave the computers at work and go home and work on my house and walk my dogs and stuff like that.

I cook for the whole family just about every night. I’m one of those domesticated guys – by choice. I’m one of those people who likes to get in and get it done, I don’t have a whole lot of time for gourmet cooking.

What do you like to cook? Anything that goes on a grill.
— Interview by Anna K. Herkamp, Assistant Editor

GO GREEN ILLINOIS

Students approve increase in sustainability fee

The March 4 student election included a Sustainable Campus Referendum that raised the Sustainable Campus Fee from $5 to $14 per semester. The Student Sustainability Committee allocates the refundable fee, which supports grants or interest-free loans to applicable campus projects. Past projects supported by the fee, which was instituted in spring 2007, include the student farm, which grows tons of produce for the dining halls and offers opportunities for students to learn hands-on about sustainable food production; a student project to make biodiesel fuel out of waste from the dining halls for use in university cars; and the green roof and solar array at the Business Instructional Facility. In order to take effect this fall, the fee increase must be approved by the UI Board of Trustees, who could vote for its approval this summer. Seventy-seven percent of voters supported the fee increase, a higher percentage than on previous environmental referenda passed in 2003 and 2007.

Tell us what your department or unit is doing to conserve energy or preserve resources. Send your ideas to herkamp@illinois.edu.

SONGBIRD, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

families of genes have expanded in the zebra finch, for example, and individual chromosome rearrangements have occurred since the two lineages diverged about 100 million years ago.

The zebra finch genome also is unusual in that it does not appear to fully balance the “dosage” of genes found on the sex chromosome, Z, between males and females. Males have two copies of the Z chromosome, while females carry one Z and one W chromosome. As a result, most genes found on the Z chromosome are expressed at higher levels in male finches than in females. This could explain some of the behavioral differences seen between male and female finches, the researchers suggest.

The analysis also found that some genes related to birdsong have undergone rapid evolution in the finch, suggesting that over evolutionary time these genes contributed to songbird survival and perhaps helped songbirds take over new ecological niches.

The new findings are relevant to an understanding of human vocal communication, Clayton said.

“The functional developmental parallel between the way a bird learns to sing and a human learns to speak,” he said, “the avian brain is quite different in superficial detail from the mammalian brain or the human brain, but some striking parallels have emerged.”

The organizing committee of the zebra finch genome sequencing project also included Research Professor of Genetics Wesley C. Warren of Washington University School of Medicine; Professors in Evolutionary Biology Hans Ellegren of Uppsala University; and Distinguished Professor of Integrative Biology and Physiology Arthur P. Arnold, of UCLA.

PAGE 3

Telling us what your department or unit is doing to conserve energy or preserve resources resources...
Six academic professionals honored with CAPE award

In academic professionals will receive 2010 Chancellor’s Academic Professional Excellence awards at a reception April 1 at the I Hotel and Conference Center. Academic professionals perform a wide range of critical functions for the campus community and beyond. They provide critical administrative support, support research laboratories and educational programs, and offer important outreach programs throughout the state. Now in its 22nd year, the awards are intended to honor the accomplishments and contributions of individuals in this employment category.

Recipients are selected for work, professional and personal contributions. Each award winner receives $2,000 — a $1,000 increase in base salary and a $1,000 one-time personal award. The CAPE recipients and a summary of their expertise, according to nominating documentation:

*Angella Anderson*, a disability specialist and text-conversion supervisor in the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services, works hard to provide students with print disabilities their course materials in accessible formats. Many universities outsource text conversion or the video-captioning process, but Anderson has made it possible for her office to provide these services, saving the university thousands of dollars while providing equal access to disabled students.

Her job involves not only converting the materials required for the course, but also working with caseworkers to ensure that students are receiving all the materials required for the course.

“Professionally, Anderson is recognized as an expert among her colleagues with her knowledge and experience working with accessible media technologies,” said Karen L. Wold, learning disabilities specialist at DRES.

Anderson has been asked to be part of the AccessTest Network, a collaboration with the largest publishers in the country in order to provide post-secondary colleges with accessible media technologies during the past four years at the center. She has been writing key sections of this document as well as assuming the leadership role in data collection and assembly and helping to provide vision for the center’s future programming. “Her contributions to ensuring that Illinois remain a federally funded area center is critical,” wrote LAS associate dean Ann Menter in a letter of support.

“In spite of her increased responsibilities during the past four years at the center, Barro has not only excelled in a demanding position, but she has continued her own research,” said Merle Bowen, a professor of political science affiliated with the Center for African Studies, in a letter of nomination.

“Although she is not a tenure-track faculty member, Dr. Barro engages in activities that one expects of faculty members,” wrote Violet J. Harris, a professor and associate dean in the College of Education.

“Her peers in other ethnic, gender and international studies programs respect her knowledge, professionalism and ability to interact with widely differing personalities for the greater good of the intellectual community. We are lucky to have someone of her caliber toiling to maintain the academic rigor that is associated with the university.”

*Kimberly Collins*, a clinical psychologist and the assistant director of academic disability support services in the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services, has contributed significantly to the enhancement of educational access and

**Angella Anderson**

**Maimouna Abdoulaye Barro**

**Kimberly Collins**

**Danny Erickson**

**Merry Ellen O’Skoughnestey**

**Dr. Robert D. Palinkas**
people who study soybeans and the many uses of soybeans as food, fuel, and as a function- tion that is a high quality, complete protein.”

He has been instrumental in the develop- ment of the new biodiesel curriculum and course kit that made its debut at the 2009 National FFA Convention in October. The new curriculum encourages evaluation of the economic and environmental benefits of using bioenergy and is used in conjunc- tion with a production kit that lets students produce their own soybean oil in the classroom or laboratory.

He also established a larger biodiesel production facility in the NSRL Pilot Plant. Private industry as well as soybean organi- zations use the facility to test techniques, experiment with processes and fine-tune already established soy milk, tofu, yogurt and other soy foods. Soycows are well suited for developing countries as they produce protein-rich nutrition for people who are lactose-intolerant or where traditional dairy products are unavailable or expensive. He established Soycows worldwide and trained local staff to operate and main- tain them.

“Dr. Hedrick has been a leader in the soybean ambas- sador because he is able to transfer his enthusiasm to others, including students, international visitors and colleagues in the College of ACES,” said Karl Weingartner, the director of INTSOY (International Soy- bean Program) in NSRL.

Mary Ellen O’Shaughnesssey, execu- tive assistant dean in the College of Fine and Applied Arts, has a 30-year record of service in UI administration, working to make McKinley a quality medi- cal care facility and a good place to work. Toward that end, he has been a pioneer in the development of the electronic medical records system. Part of that system allows students to set up appointments online. In addition, he supervised the remodeling and renovation of McKinley, which improved the flow of traffic, medical care, medical records storage and retrieval, and all op- erations of the health center. He also estab- lished a system of primary care so students may select their own physician. In addition, he sees patients, serving as the center’s in- fection disease and tropical disease consul- tant.

During the past year, the H1N1 outbreak was especially difficult, but Dr. Palinkas rose to the challenge in a remarkable way, wrote vice chancellor for student affairs Re- nee Romano in her nomination letter.

Dr. Robert D. Palinkas is the director of McKinley Health Center, which provides ambulatory medical services and preven- tion education to students and medical ex- pertise for campus leadership.

“His vision is to be the health-care provider of choice, as integral part of the university’s educational mission, and a rec- ognized leader in collegiate health,” wrote Dr. David P. Lawrence, a staff physician and the medical director at McKinley, in a letter of support. “Dr. Palinkas followed the mission and the vision and has transformed the building, the practice and us.”

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During the past eight years, he has worked to make McKinley a quality medi- cal care facility and a good place to work. Toward that end, he has been a pioneer in the development of the electronic medical records system. Part of that system allows students to set up appointments online. In addition, he supervised the remodeling and renovation of McKinley, which improved the flow of traffic, medical care, medical records storage and retrieval, and all op- erations of the health center. He also estab- lished a system of primary care so students may select their own physician. In addition, he sees patients, serving as the center’s in- fection disease and tropical disease consul- tant.

During the past year, the H1N1 outbreak was especially difficult, but Dr. Palinkas rose to the challenge in a remarkable way, wrote vice chancellor for student affairs Re- nee Romano in her nomination letter.

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Zipcars are great alternative to having a car on campus

By Anna K. Herkamp
Assistant Editor

Whether their motivation is saving almost $600 a year in parking fees or decreasing their carbon footprints, UI students have an affordable, practical option to having a car on campus.

The UI transportation department, the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District, and the cities of Champaign and Urbana last year began to offer the community a car-sharing program called Zipcar. The company, which now has about 500 members in the area, allows users to pay for the use of a car only when they need it.

“We want people to give up a car,” said Morgan B. Johnston, a transportation demand management coordinator in the UI Facilities and Services division.

“Don’t bring a car to campus – there’s absolutely no need for a student to have a car on campus,” Johnston said.

Johnston said the program, also available to UI faculty and staff members and community members, is gaining in popularity and has 10 cars available for rent in increments as short as a half-hour or as long as four days.

The combination of transportation options available to students makes paying several hundred of dollars to park unnecessary. In addition to Zipcar, the campus offers free MTD bus access and a friendly environment for walkers and bikers, Johnston said.

Undergraduates are catching on to the Zipcar idea.

Christie Gill, 21, a junior in the College of Applied Health Sciences from Chicago, has found that not having a car on campus is no problem.

“I take advantage of the Zipcar when I need to travel somewhere immediately and quick,” she said. “Since I don’t have a car it really comes in handy to rent one so fast and easy, especially since there are a few locations on campus.”

To rent a Zipcar, Gill reserves one online. She travels by bus to the Illinois Terminal, the intermodal transportation hub in downtown Champaign, to claim her car. Her membership card unlocks the car in the lot. The keys are inside each car.

Gill says the program offers considerable value for the cost. Members pay $35 up front, which can pay for $35 worth of rental fees for the first month.

Most car rentals would require the lessee to be 21 years old, but Zipcar members can be as young as 18 if they’re UI students. However, those under 21 have to have held a driver’s license for at least two years. Zipcar members also avoid paying down payments and insurance fees of $300 or more, she added.

“And you don’t have to worry about gas because it’s already included,” Gill said. Gas is paid for with a credit card kept inside each car.

Zipcar membership also covers insurance costs and precludes car maintenance and repairs. Members pay any parking fees associated with their usage.

“I will say that having a Zipcar is very convenient,” Gill said. “It’s just paying the rental fee that is the disadvantage. Everything else is a positive advantage in having a membership.”

Huong Phu, 22, of Wheaton, Ill., a senior in the College of Applied Health Sciences, usually gets around town by bus. There are times, however, when she finds that she needs a car.

“I take advantage of it when I want to go somewhere that the bus would either be inconvenient or it just doesn’t take me there,” she said.

“I also use it when I have to do multiple errands by Market Street, or just buy groceries – since it’s a pain to walk back from County Market on campus to my place or from the bus stop.”

She also has taken advantage of her Zipcar membership when she has out-of-town visitors and getting around by bus is difficult. And she uses it for occasional trips to the Tuscola outlet mall, about 30 minutes south of campus.

Phu has not had a car on campus, but feels that Zipcar provides most of the convenience of having one without incurring so much extra cost. Sometimes she has to adjust her plans to the car availability.

“It’s a good program,” she said. “It’s a great alternative to having a car on campus. Even if I had a car on campus, I don’t think I would use one that much. With Zipcar, I only use it when I really need it.”

Most Zipcar locales are in larger cities, including Boston, Chicago and New York. The campus atmosphere also provides an appropriate location.

“This can save students so much money by not bringing their own car,” Johnston said. “They still have all the convenience of using a car when they need it and they’re not paying for something to sit in a parking lot when they’re at school.”

ON THE WEB
www.zipcar.com/uillinois/
Center to help campus community achieve overall well-being

By Anna K. Herkamp
Assistant Editor

The new UI Wellness Center director has one main goal for her new position: making wellness accessible to everyone on campus.

Previously a research coordinator in the College of Applied Health Sciences, Michelle Guerra became director of the center in January.

In addition to creating a comprehensive strategic plan that will begin in mid-2011, Guerra wants to help people understand what wellness is: a holistic well-being that encapsulates much more than physical fitness.

“If you’re truly well, there’s balance in your life,” she said.

The center – in the Activities and Recreation Center – brings together a coalition of many campus resources, including nutrition programs, Campus Recreation programs, services from the Faculty/Staff Assistance Program and other tools that help alleviate stress and help those who are looking to be more centered, Guerra said.

Maximizing the quality of your life, regardless of physical condition, can include financial well-being, as well as emotional well-being.

“It’s not about being perfect, or reaching a certain destination,” she said, but rather about maintaining overall health.

The center, whose services are free to employees and do not require a campus rec membership, has traditionally been mostly used by students (faculty and staff members and students) want in a wellness program and where they want them delivered,” she said.

Referring to statistics from the Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Guerra said that area residents have a way to go toward gaining healthy habits.

The public health moderate physical activity guideline refers to moderate intensity exercise for 30 minutes at a time five times per week. Only 40.4 percent of Champaign County residents, according to the Illinois BRFSS, meet the standard. The survey shows that 28 percent of Illinoisans don’t get any exercise.

“What we’re missing is being able to reach the people who are not there yet,” she said.

People struggle with work-life balance, weight management and many other issues, she said.

Over the next year, she’ll develop surveys to find out what kinds of things faculty and staff members would like to see at the center – and what resources best meet their needs in the long run.

Currently the center offers programs such as the Laughter Group, which teaches techniques about the body’s natural relaxation response, and the Cookbook Club, which reviews a different cookbook each month and samples a recipe in the center’s instructional kitchen at the club’s meeting.

On Wellness Wednesdays, staff members offer mini-seminars on a variety of topics, some related to physical health such as nutritional talks while others are about financial topics such as debt management.

Guerra hopes to add to the list in the next year.

“We’ll create an interest survey and find out what (faculty and staff members and students) want in a wellness program and where they want them delivered,” she said.

Guerra, who has worked various places as a fitness expert, said she sympathizes with people who haven’t found their exercise niche.

“I have a heart for all the people who are not the jocks of the world,” she said.

She didn’t like competitive sports as a kid, describing herself as a “tall, skinny kid not the jocks of the world,” she said.

Her goal is to awaken that desire in others – whether they’re physically active or not.

Guerra also has served as the wellness director of Provena United Samaritans Medical Center in Danville and worked at Human Kinetics Publishing Inc., in Champaign, where she coordinated efforts with the Cooper Institute to write books about healthy eating and lifestyles. She also served as the associate director of the Fitness and Lifestyle Improvement Program at Dartmouth College.

Her first foray into exercising by choice was at the advice of a choral instructor from her high school who advised her singing group that one way to maintain a good voice is to have a physically fit body.

That day, she went home, put on jogging shorts and went for a run. It was the beginning of a new passion, she said.

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Eating smart
Registered dietitian Stacey Krawczyk offers advice in the Instructional Kitchen on how to prepare and cook healthy meals on a budget. For a complete menu of cooking classes, see Campus Recreation’s homepage.

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In addition to the kidnappings and extortions alone (out of a total of 18,000 nationally) almost non-stop at least since 1993. The result of President Calderon’s declaration on drug-related violence on the U.S.-Mexico border. Anthropology and Latino Studies professor Alejandro Lugo, the author of an award-winning book about working class border life and death in Ciudad Juárez has continued working on the border. What role, if any, do these factories, called “maquiladoras,” play in the stability or instability of the border regions? After more than 40 years of the maquiladoras’ existence (since 1965), nobody can imagine either the U.S.-Mexico border or the rest of Mexico (after NAFTA) without them. They have become part and parcel not only of Mexico’s economy but also of everyday life. In this regard, the hiring of thousands of otherwise underemployed or unemployed workers certainly offers them some measure of economic stability. The bad news is that for the majority of Mexican factory workers, that stability is unreliable due to the meager wages they earn. I believe that if the multinational corporations offered a real living wage to these hundreds of thousands of rank and file workers, those looking for decent paying jobs would not be lured by the alternative informal economies, including the illicit one associated with drug-trafficking. What initiatives or policies would, in your opinion, lessen the violence currently threatening the social and economic stability of the region? As it is well known, the drug cartels are both global and local. Lessening the strength of cartels in the western hemisphere will require multinational and international collaborations through the Americas. Unfortunately, progress against the drug cartels in Colombia worsens the problem in Mexico, due to the latter’s proximity to the U.S. The solution will not be achieved without close collaboration between Mexico and the U.S., and specific cultural, political, and historical knowledge about each locale (city, state, or region) on both sides of the border is vital to success. This kind of highly reliable information can be obtained by actively seeking out the views and perspectives of the affected communities. This would include obtaining testimonies from local citizens and reports from journalists, while also incorporating the legal, cultural, political, historical and economic expertise of scholars from American and Mexican universities and other research institutions. These resources should inform mutually respectful, cross-national policy-making.

A Minute With …™ is provided by the UI News Bureau. To view archived interviews, go to http://illinois.edu/gotos/aminutewith.
Ebertfest 2010: Rock opera, war, foreign and regional films

By Craig Chamberlain
Social Sciences Editor

The rock opera “Pink Floyd: The Wall” and the Vietnam War epic “Apocalypse Now” are the headliners at the 12th annual “Ebertfest,” Roger Ebert’s Film Festival, April 21-25 in Champaign-Urbana.

“The Wall,” in 70mm, will open the festival. “Apocalypse Now Redux,” a longer 2001 re-edit and reprint of the 1979 original, will be the second-evening feature. Ebert calls the first film “the best of all serious films devoted to rock” and the second “one of the great films of all time.”

Less well known on this year’s schedule is “Synecdoche, New York,” starring Philip Seymour Hoffman. Its writer-director, Charlie Kaufman, “generally considered the most creative screenwriter of his generation,” according to Ebert, will be a guest on stage after the screening.

Many of the other 10 films on the schedule tell personal stories, but in different ways and in very different settings.

The 13 film screenings will take place at the 1,500-seat Virginia Theater, a 1920s-era Champaign movie palace, with other events at the UI. The festival is an event of the College of Media at Illinois. Partial support is from a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and from the Champaign County Anti-Stigma Alliance.

Ebert is a Pulitzer Prize-winning critic for the Chicago Sun-Times and co-hosted “Ebert & Roeper,” a weekly televised movie-review program, until 2006. He also is a 1964 Illinois journalism graduate and adjunct journalism professor.

Ebert selects films for the festival that he feels have been overlooked in some way, either by critics, distributors or audiences, or because they come from overlooked genres or formats, such as documentaries.

Guests connected with the selected films are invited to attend, and many appear on stage for informal Q-and-A sessions after the screenings. As in recent festivals, Ebert’s wife, Chaz, will act as the emcee.

Other festival events, including panel discussions held on the UI campus, will be announced soon. Updates will be posted on the festival Web site. Also available on the Web site, for the first time this year, will be live streaming of the panel discussions and the post-film Q-and-A sessions after the Virginia Theater. Tickets for individual films will go on sale April 5 through the theater box office; phone 217-356-9063; fax 217-356-5729. The price will be $12 each for regular admission and $10 each for students and senior citizens. Sales will be limited to four per person.

For updates, contact Mary Susan Britt, at 217-244-0552 or marsue@illinois.edu, or festival director Nate Kohn, at 706-542-4972 or nate.kohn@gmail.com.

Ebertfest 2010 schedule of films:

Wednesday, April 21
1 p.m. – “Pink Floyd: The Wall” (1982)
10 p.m. – “You, the Living” (2007), actress Jessika Lundberg will be a guest, along with assistant director Johan Carlsson, also the author of a book about Andersson.

Thursday, April 22
Noon – “Munyurangabo” (2007), director Lee Isaac Chung, writer Samuel Gray Anderson and co-producer Jenny Lund will be guests.
3 p.m. – “The New Age” (1994), writer-director Michael Tolkin will be a guest.
8 p.m. – “Apocalypse Now Redux” (2001), Oscar-winner Walter Murch, the movie’s sound and film editor, will be a guest.

Friday, April 23
1 p.m. – “Departures” (2008), director Yojiro Takita will be a guest.
4 p.m. – “Man With a Movie Camera” (1929), a Russian silent film. The Alloy Orchestra will accompany.
6 p.m. – “Synecdoche, New York” (2008), the writer-director Charlie Kaufman will be a guest.

Saturday, April 24
11 a.m. – “I Capture the Castle” (2003), the free family matinee. Based on the novel by Dodie Smith, it should appeal especially to adolescents. Ebert thinks its R rating is unjustified.
2 p.m. – “Vincent: A Life in Color” (2008), Vincent R. Falk and the director, Jennifer Burns, will be guests.
4:30 p.m. – “Trucker” (2008), actress Michelle Monaghan and writer-director James Mottern will be guests.
8 p.m. – “Barfly” (1987), director Barbet Schroeder will be a guest.

Sunday, April 25
Noon – “Song Sung Blue” (2008), director Greg Kohn will be a guest, along with “Thunder,” Claire Bardina, who will perform – and is “dynamite,” according to Ebert.

ON THE WEB

www.ebertfest.com
A new technique to study protein dynamics in living cells has been created by a team of UI scientists, and evidence yielded from the new method indicates that an in vivo environment strongly modulates a protein’s stability and folding rate, according to research published in the journal Nature.

Professor of Chemistry at Illinois and co-author Scott Irwin and his team of co-researchers dubbed “Fast Relaxation Imaging,” a technique that combines fluorescence microscopy and fast temperature jumps.

“It is a concept that combines two worlds: chemical dynamics, and the ability to study reactions as they occur; and biological environments, where cell biologists observe how reactions occur in cells,” Gruebele said.

To study the biomolecular dynamics inside of a single living cell, Gruebele and his team have developed a hybrid method they've dubbed “Fast Relaxation Imaging,” a technique that combines fluorescence microscopy and fast temperature jumps.

“This is the first experiment that allows us to observe the dynamics of a protein folding in a live cell,” Gruebele said. “Now we have the capability of looking at how fast biological processes occur as a function of environment.”

To study the biomolecular dynamics inside of a single living cell, Gruebele and his team have developed a hybrid method they've dubbed “Fast Relaxation Imaging,” a technique that combines fluorescence microscopy and fast temperature jumps.

“With fluorescence microscopy, we’re able to take live cells and observe them, but we can’t observe how anything rapidly changes or adapts with time, so you can’t see the fastest processes,” Gruebele said.

According to Gruebele, the proteins studied in vivo using the new technique were more stable, their thermal denaturation was more gradual and their folding kinetics were slower than the same proteins studied in vitro.

“With this new technique, we now have the capability of looking at how fast biological processes occur as a function of environment, including potentially interesting disease processes, especially with neurological disorders and diseases that cause dementia such as Alzheimer’s, Huntington’s, Parkinson’s, and Lou Gehrig’s,” he said.

In addition to revealing the inner workings of cell dynamics, Gruebele, who is also a researcher at the Beckman Institute, says Fast Relaxation Imaging will have practical, human-scale applications as well.

“With this new technique, we now have the capability of looking at how fast biological processes occur as a function of environment, including potentially interesting disease processes, especially with neurological disorders and diseases that cause dementia such as Alzheimer’s, Huntington’s, Parkinson’s, and Lou Gehrig’s,” he said.

There’s also the potential to induce disease processes, and study the dynamics of those processes in a live animal study.

“We can take these proteins that cause these diseases, actually put them into the kind of cells where they cause these diseases, give them a heat shock and actually see if they bind differently to the membranes, if they cause the membrane to puncture,” Gruebele said. “We’ll be able to follow these events in real time and give researchers an idea of if this is a possible pathway through which disease could occur.”

Gruebele’s co-authors of the paper are Simon Ebbinghaus, a postdoctoral researcher; and J. Douglas McDonald, a professor of chemistry.

Funding was provided by The National Science Foundation and the James R. Eicizer Chair.

By Jan Dennis
Business & Law Editor

Green supermarket owners face hefty price increases if bad weather washers a U.S. corn crop that is now tethered to grain-intensive renewable fuel mandates, a new UI study warns.

A corn shortage, coupled with surging demand to meet government-ordered etha-

nal standards, could push cash prices to at least $7 a bushel, the study found, squeezing live-

stock producers and driving up prices for meat, eggs and milk.

Economists Darrel Good, Scott Irwin and towel say federal policymakers need to forge solutions now to cushion the blow of a shortfall that high corn prices are an inescapable fact and when severe, not if.

“Our belief everybody will be better off with a reasoned, well thought-out response if a crisis would occur rather than rushed, short-term solutions as the crop is burning up,” Irwin said.

Economists Darrel Good, professors of agricul-
tural and consumer economics, analyzed weather and harvest records in key corn-
growing states, projecting U.S. yields based on the five best and worst growing seasons since 1960.

The study found that average yields could range from 135.5 bushels per acre with bad weather to 172.5 bushels per acre in peak growing conditions, compared with a trend of 156.7 bushels per acre fore-
cast for 2010.

If weather turns sour in 2010, for exam-
ple, the nation would have to find about 10.9 billion bushels of corn, down more than the 2.1 billion bushels from last year’s record crop, according to the study. The shortage could drive daily cash prices to $7 a bushel and average prices to about $5.75, up from about $3.50 today.

Livestock and poultry producers who need corn for feed would bear the brunt of the shortfall because ethanol producers have no wiggle room under federal mandates, and even the most aggressive producers were limited by short-term price spikes, Good said.

“Those producers have already seen price spikes,” Good said. “The last couple of years and many would be quick to cut back livestock inventory, netting higher prices for milk, eggs and meat. On average, prices could go up 5 to 10 percent instead of the normal 2 percent that we typically see annu-

ally for food costs.”

Good and Irwin say the government can ease the impact by developing contingency plans now so that biofuels mandates could be quickly scaled back if summer weather makes a harvest shortfall imminent.

Reducing etha-

nol-production standards and easing restric-

tions on imported ethanol would spread the pain of a shortage, propping up live-

stock producers and holding down price spikes for food, Ir-

win said.

“Lobby thinking is it may be the only policy solution that could rein in the pain for all of us in the near future,” Good said. “Making some cuts in the ethanol sec-

tor would prevent forcing all of the cuts on the livestock sector.”

The study discounts arguments that ad-


vances in seed technology have made the U.S. corn crop “bulletproof” capable of strong yields even during hot, dry growing seasons.

Irwin says seed technology has undoubt-

edly improved, but he has yet to be truly tested because the nation’s corn crop has faced no widespread drought since the mid-1990s.

Weather patterns over the last half-cen-

tury show that another drought is inevi-

table, he says, and putting too much faith in yet-unproven technology is a gamble that leaves livestock producers and consumers at risk.

“No doubt there has been enormous sci-

cient progress, but the question is whether the improvements are so dramatic that we can ignore bad-weather scenarios,” Irwin said. “We’re persuaded by our modeling that another drought will occur. And even if it’s not as bad as our scenarios, it could still be devastating.”

Protein dynamics A new technique to study protein dynamics in living cells has been created by a team of UI scientists, from left, graduate student Apratim Dhar; Martin Gruebele, professor of chemistry; Simon Ebbinghaus, postdoctoral researcher; and J. Douglas McDonald, professor of chemistry.

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Flexible electronics could help put hearts back on rhythm

By Jan Dennis

Flexible electronics A team of researchers led by John Rogers, the Lee J. Flory-Founder Chair in Engineering Innovation at Illinois, has developed biocompatible silicon devices that could mark the beginning of a new wave of surgical electronics.

Rogers said the UI and Pennsylvania teams also are exploring applications for the arrays in neuroscience, applying grids to brain surfaces to study conditions of unusual electrical activity, such as epilepsy.

“It sets out a new design paradigm for interfacing electronics to the human body, with a multitude of possible applications in human health.”

—John Rogers

Ambiguous ad claims can alienate consumers, study finds

By Jan Dennis

New UI study has bad news for advertisers who hope a sprinkling of glossy-but-obscure product knowledge will woo buyers.

Advertising that tout head-scratching scientific ingredients or other details only an expert could appreciate can turn consumers away instead, according to research by Alison Jing Xu and Robert S. Wyer Jr., of the UI College of Business.

“When consumers suspect that advertisers are just trying to manipulate them with useless information, they may react negatively and lose trust,” said Xu, a doctoral student in marketing. “And trust is very important in advertising.”

The unique study, which will appear in the Journal of Consumer Research, gauged consumer reaction to technical, tough-to-decipher advertising claims that seek to give products a competitive edge, which the researchers refer to as “puffery.”

A personal cleansing gel ad used in the survey trumpeted in-gredients such as “Sebopur Complex,” while another ad promoted a beer brewed through the “European Pilsen Method.”

How consumers responded to these head-scratching claims varied based on their own personal knowledge of the product and where the ad appeared, according to findings by Xu and Wyer, a professor of business administration.

Consumers who considered themselves less knowledgeable than the target audience rated the higher, assuming the claims are meaningful to primary buyers and may like a product less if ads include meaningless information they think is just there to persuade them.”

Consumers perceive that puffery could be counterproductive for companies that rely on ads in the popular media. Though murky claims can sway less-informed consumers, they can alienate the knowledgeable buyers who provide the greatest sales potential.

According to Alison Jing Xu, the research findings show that consumers filter ad claims, rather than accepting them blindly. As a result, she says, effective advertising should relate to consumers on a personal level, rather than talking down to them.

Puffery can actually harm your target market,” she said. “For instance, puffery in beer ads could influence women, but men are the primary buyers and may like a product less if ads include meaningless information they think is just there to persuade them.”

The backlash could have long-term implications if consumers have a strong negative reaction to the claims, Xu said. “Positive impressions of products can change easily, but not negatives.”

Puffery in advertising has been around for at least a half-century as companies seek to carve a niche in an increasingly competitive marketplace, said Xu, who will join the marketing faculty at the University of Toronto this fall.

“Advertisers need to catch consumers’ attention and make products impressive,” she said. “But attention only helps when it’s positive.”

Consumers who are engaged should relate to consumers on a personal level, rather than talking down to them.”

“When advertisers create campaigns, they should try to imagine that they’re engaging in a conversation with their target audience,” she said. “So if using technical terms is important, they should explain them. It’s important that your audience knows what you’re talking about.”
2010 Thulin Lecture

Lecture focuses on religion and culture

Sabrina Alkire, a Champaign native and director of the University of Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative at the University of Oxford, will deliver the annual Marjorie Hall Thulin Lecture on Religion and Contemporary Culture at the UI.

Alkire’s lecture, which is free and open to the public, is titled “How an Adequate Notion of Human Flourishing Challenges Economics.” Alkire will speak at 8 p.m. April 7 in the Knight Auditorium of the Spurlock Museum.

During her talk, Alkire will discuss the rapid pace of change occurring in economics and “the fact that economic growth has not always ushered in advances in other dimensions of life that matter to people.” Alkire will draw on new natural law theory as advanced by Australian philosopher John Finnis and the capability approach of Harvard University economist Amartya Sen, 1998 winner of the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel for his work on poverty and welfare economics.

Alkire’s research interests include multidimensional poverty measurement and analysis. She is the author of “Valuing Freedoms: Sen’s Capability Approach and Poverty Reduction” (Oxford University Press, 2002) as well as many publications about the dimensions of human development and multidimensional measures of poverty and well-being.

Alkire graduated from the UI in 1989 with a bachelor’s degree in Sociology and was a Rhodes Scholar at the University of Oxford, where she earned master’s degrees in Philosophy, Politics and Economics as well as a doctorate in economics.

The Thulin lecture, which is sponsored by the department of religion, is named in honor of Thulin (1910-2009), a 1931 UI graduate.

For more information, contact Robert McKim, the head of the department of religion, at 217-333-6503 or rsmckim@illinois.edu.

Vintage Vinyl sale

Donations sought for annual sale

The Vintage Vinyl used record sale is now accepting donations of LPs, CDs, DVDs, video games and players, stereo equipment, speakers, and CD and DVD players.

Donations can be taken to the former Dr. John’s SoLo of Cosmetology at Lincoln Square Village in Urbana from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday through May 3 and to Busey Bank locations in Champaign, Urbana and Savoy during business hours through April 30. Donations should be delivered in sturdy containers or boxes.

The sale, set for May 8 at Lincoln Square, benefits Illinois Promise Scholarship program and is seeking donations of up to 10 LPs, CDs, DVDs, video games and players, and CDs and DVD players.

For more information, contact Deane Geiken at 217-333-6503.

Graduate College

Proposals requested for Focal Point

The Graduate College invites proposals from faculty members and graduate students for 2010-2011 Focal Point projects. The full RFP and a list of current projects is available at www.grad.illinois.edu/focal-point-feature.

Focal Point is an initiative that seeks to catalyze the formation of intellectual communities made up of faculty members and graduate students who help them succeed by giving them advice about getting jobs and navigating the university. Proposals should be submitted electronically (PDF format) by April 16 to Lynne Schafer, axlachei@illinois.edu.

Illinois Promise

Volunteer mentors needed

Organizers of the Illinois Promise scholarship program are seeking volunteers for its second mentoring program for freshmen. Illinois Promise scholarships benefit more than 600 low-income students, many of whom are first-generation college students. In addition to financial support, the program matches scholarship recipients with mentors who help them succeed by giving them advice about getting through first-year college obstacles.

For more information, contact Susan Gershenfeld, the director of Illinois Promise Scholarship, at 217-244-9960 or e-mail sgers@illinois.edu.
African women writers featured April 4-11

The department of theater, in cooperation with the University of Chicago Press, the Center for African Studies, and the department of Theatre, in cooperation with the University of Chicago Press, will host the inaugural writers from Africa and the Diaspora Festival from April 4-11. The program will celebrate and acknowledge the writings – plays, novels, poetry and short stories – by African women.

In addition to lectures, film presentations and roundtable discussions, there will be free performances featuring April 9-11 at the Armory Free Theatre, 505 E. Armory Ave. Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and at 3 and 7 p.m. on Sunday. The program of music and drama will feature "Resident Alien," performed by Omoofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka (Friday only); "A Coloured Place," by Malika Luen Ndlou (performed by Chantal Snyman); and "May I Grow as Tall as My Mother," performed by Mshwi Mwangola.

Tickets for the opening reception are $75 each. For information about the event, reservations or membership, call 217-244-0516.

International conference
Proust conference is April 8-10

The UI Department of French will host an international conference, "Marcel Proust and his Era," April 8-10 at the Illini Union and Levis Faculty Center.

The goal of the conference is to bring together a group of eminent scholars to talk about Proust's works, both the ones depicted in the novel and the one in which he lived, according to Professor Seremetakis, a French, political, and co-organizer of the conference along Patrick Bray, also a professor of French. "We will thus include papers not only on Proust's work, but also on works by artists who lived in the 20th century, including, for example, Colette and André Gide," Schehr said.

The conference will begin at 7 p.m. April 8 on the third floor of the Illini Union. The conference will feature over 50 speakers, including 14 independent scholars, including Sylvain Tesson, a professor of French and independent scholar Jonathan Lehrer, "Proustian Intuitions: What Marcel Proust Can Teach Neuroscientists about Memory." Events on April 9 and 10 will be at the Illini Union. Considered one of the most important novelists of the 20th century, Proust was a pillar of modernist writing, as illustrated in his massive seven-volume novel, "La recherche du temps perdu" (known in English as "In Search of Lost Time" and "Remembrance of Things Past"). In his famous novel, Proust (1871-1922) provided analyses of social structures, family life, Parisian society, social movement, sexualities, gender roles, religion, citizenship, politics, science and the arts.

For more information about the conference, including the complete program, visit www.french.illinois.edu/proustconf or contacting Schehr, schehr@illinois.edu, or Bray, pbray@illinois.edu.

Modern Greek Studies
Cultural anthropologist to speak April 8

The program in Modern Greek Studies will host a lecture "Cultural Memory in Diaspora," by C. Nadia Seremetakis, at 8 p.m. April 8 in the Lincoln Room at the I Hotel and Conference Center. Seremetakis is an innovative and widely published and translated author and a professor of cultural anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania.

Her lecture will summarize her research during the past 20 years synthesizing historical, archaeological and anthropological perspectives on the Southern Peloponnese as well as her intellectual contribution to the Greek Diaspora in general.

Best known for her books "The Last Word" and "The Senses Still," both published by the University of Chicago Press, Seremetakis has written several books in Greek, including a book of poetry and numerous articles in scientific journals and newspapers. She has taught and lectured at major universities in the U.S. and Europe and served as an adviser to the minister of public health in Greece and the World Health Organization. Seremetakis will also participate in "Sociocultural Perspectives: From the Balkans to the Araf Seases" on April 8-9. The Russian, Eastern European and Eurasian Center Annual Conference, co-sponsored by the Division of Russian and East European Studies, will be held in the reading Room of Levis Faculty Center.

Through an investigation of song, instrumental melody, timbre, vocalization techniques, instrument construction, music iconography, local music theories and philosophies, and verbal arts, this conference will examine the interrelationalship between sound art and cosmology in the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia from both historical and contemporary perspectives. For conference details, visit www.recce.illinois.edu/. TEDxUIllinois
TED-inspired events on campus, online

Conferences that will bring together U of I and Champaign-Urbana experts from the worlds of technology, environment and design (TED) will be the first of their kind on campus this month.

The TED talks were originally created in California in the 1980s and now have resulted in a non-profit organization. Speakers at TED events are challenged to give "the talk of your life" in 18 minutes or less.

The inaugural "TEDxUIllinois" conference on April 1 carries the themes of "Life and Death." Topics to be discussed include artificial intelligence, virtual lives online, the mysterious deaths of millions of bees, raising the quality of life despite disabilities, the life and death of the American auto industry, and the death and rebirth of the music industry. The April 10 event, titled "TEDxUIUC," carries the theme "Bold – Ideas, Innovations, Performances."

Attendance at the events is by invitation only, but the recorded talks should be available online for live viewing, and for later viewing. Each TEDx will be titled "TEDx" to show that the local, independently organized TED events.

Journalism professor Brant Houston and UI alumni and writer Greg Lindsay chair the TEDxUIllinois events. For more information, visit www.tedxuiuc.com and www.tedxuiuc.com.

Legal and regulatory changes
Biofuels conference is April 9

The second annual Biofuels Law and Regulation Conference, "The Renewable Energy Legislation and Policy Conference," held in April, will address issues of law and policy for establishing viable renewable energy systems in Illinois and beyond.

Conference topics include:
- Incorporating agriculture’s role in combating climate change into national legislation
- The economic and policy implications of the proposed biomass and hydro-bioelectricity assistance program regulations
- Integrating assessment, planning, and practice protocols and models from existing agricultural programs into sustainability requirements for biomass cropping systems
- Each session will offer question-and-answer and brainstorming opportunities with renowned academic experts in biofuels law and regulation. Attendees will represent a variety of law and regulatory fields encompassing government, academia, industry and non-governmental organizations.

Sponsors of the conference include the University of Illinois Energy Biosciences Institute’s Biofuels Law and Regulation Program and the Program in Intellectual Property & Technology Law at the College of Law.

For more information, visit www.biofuelslawconference.org. The conference is free, but registration is required. Registration questions should be directed to Elizabeth Stull, estull@illinois.edu.
deaths

Bruce Wayne Bradley, 56, died March 20 at Provena Covenant Medical Center, Urbana. Bradley was a firefighter at the UI.

Portia Brownell Miller Cureton, 93, died March 18. She taught physical education at the UI from 1944-47. Memorials: First Presbyterian Church, 602 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801.

Mabel R. Gifford, 91, died March 27 at Kirby Hospital, Monticello. Gifford retired from the UI, where she worked in Admissions and Records. Memorials: Piatt County Nursing Home or the United Methodist Church of Paxton.

E. Atlee Jackson, or the United Methodist Church of Paxton.

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March 18. She taught physical education at the UI from 1944-47. Memorials: First Presbyterian Church, 602 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801.

E. Atlee Jackson, 79, died March 9 in Austin, Texas. Jackson, a professor emeritus of physics, was a faculty member for 37 years. He was a charter faculty member of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, where he was the director of the Center for Complex Systems Research until his retirement in 1998. A memorial service will be held in Urbana this summer.

Heinrich Philipp Lotz, 75, died March 19 in Urbana. Lotz was a professor of mathematics for 28 years, retiring in 1997.

Paul D. Moore Jr., 78, died March 26 at Illinois Heritage Rehabilitation and Health Care, Champaign. Moore worked for the UI department of dairy science for 28 years. Memorials: Circle of Friends Adult Daycare, Avary’s Angels, the American Diabetes Association or St. Patrick’s Parish.

Lee H. Sentman III, 73, died March 20 in Florida. Sentman was a professor emeritus of aeronautical and astronautical engineering at the UI. He taught for more than 38 years and directed the Chemical Laser Laboratory. He retired in 1997. Memorials: Donations, payable to UI Foundation with “Lee Sentman Memorial Fund” noted on the check, may be sent to Brett Clifton, department of aerospace engineering, 306 Talbot Lab, 104 S. Wright St., Urbana, IL 61801.

Cynthia Fisher, a professor of psychology, has been elected a fellow in the Association for Psychological Science. This honor is given in recognition of her “sustained outstanding contributions to the science of psychology.”

Roger Koenker, professor of Economics, is the 2010 winner of the Emanuel and Carol Parzen Prize for Statistical Innovation. The prize is awarded by the statistics department at Texas A&M University to North American statisticians who have made outstanding and influential contributions to the development of applicable and innovative statistical methods.

Walter W. McMahon, a professor emeritus of economics, has been awarded a 2009 American Publishers Award for Professional and Scholarly Excellence in Education from the Professional Scholarly Publishing Division of the Association of American Publishers for his book “Higher Learning, Greater Good: The Price and Social Benefits of Higher Education.” PROSE awards recognize authors and publishers for their contributions to the conception, production and design of landmark works in their fields. Recipients are recognized at the PSP Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

Brent Roberts, a professor of psychology, has been awarded the American Psychological Foundation’s 2010 Theodore Millon Mid-career Award in Personality Psychology.

public affairs

News Bureau photographer L. Brian Stauffer was honored by the University Photographers’ Association of America. His photo of the McFarland Bell Tower as seen through the Aurora I sculpture garnered first place in the campus environment category for the association’s monthly image competition for December 2009.

Lansing. The association is an international organization of college and university photographers concerned with the application and practice of photography as it relates to the higher education setting.

Three library staff members will be honored at the American Library Association’s annual conference in Washington, D.C., in June.

Cindy Ingold, women and gender resources librarian, is the recipient of the 2010 Women’s Studies Section Career Achievement Award from the Association of College and Research Libraries. The award honors significant long-standing contributions to women’s studies in the field of librarianship over the course of a career.

Beth S. Woodard, staff development and training coordinator at the UI Library has won the Association of College and Research Libraries Instruction Section’s Miriam Dudley Instruction Librarian Award. The honor recognizes a librarian who has made a significant contribution to the advancement of instruction in a college or research library environment. The award is jointly sponsored by the ACRL Instruction Section and the LOEX Clearinghouse for Library Instruction.

Cheryl L. Wehrle, head of the interlibrary loan and document delivery at the UI, is the winner of the 2010 Virginia Boucher/OCLC Distinguished ILL (Interlibrary Loan) Librarian award administered by the Reference and User Service Association. The award recognizes an individual for outstanding professional achievement, leadership and significant contributions to the fields of interlibrary loan and document delivery.
April 1, 2010

Much of this information is drawn from the online Campus Calendars on the UI Web site at http://illinois.edu/find/calendars.html. Other calendars should be sent 15 days before the desired publication date to insidelines@uiui.edu.

## Jobs in Illinois

To view job postings, apply for civil service or academic jobs at Illinois, or to update your application information.

http://illinois.edu/jobs

## Calendar of Events

### Ad approved for online version

### Ad approved for online version

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**Friday**

**16 Friday**

**Education Abroad:** A Nostalgic Look Back, A Clear Look Ahead. Ann Heerden Jr., National Security Language Institute. 7 p.m. 5402 Beckman Institute. Spiro DFA, Office of the Provost. For information, visit http://illinois.edu/see/.

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**Saturday**

**17 Saturday**

**The University of Illinois at Chicago's 12th Annual Conference on Science, Technology, and Society**

**Sunday**

**18 Sunday**

**“Autoimmune Preserving, Multitask Survival.”** Markus Pachl, University of Illinois at Chicago. 11 a.m. Florida Center for Public Policy Seminar. 6:15 p.m. Florida Center. Professor Edgington, Federal Reserve Board. For information, call 217-333-2691 or visit http://illinois.edu/see/.

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**Monday**

**19 Monday**

**“Imperial Parasites, Past and Present.”** John Ronald, Sheffield University. 2 p.m. Illinois Natural History Survey.

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**Tuesday**

**20 Tuesday**

**“How to Bury a Scythed Weapon.”** mashed potatoes and other food. 4 p.m. 5601 Beckman Institute. Monica Smith, University of Illinois. For information, call 217-333-2691.

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**Wednesday**

**21 Wednesday**

**“Equity and Climate Change.”** Andrew Lloyd, George Mason University. 7 p.m. 202 Natural History Museum. 3 p.m. 202 Natural History Museum.

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**Thursday**

**22 Thursday**

**“Adaptation to Iron Starvation in the Intestine.”** Dara T. Cotter, University of British Columbia. 3 p.m. 134 Astronomy Building.

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**Friday**

**23 Friday**

**“The Flex-Bond, a Mechanically Stabilized Ligand Bond Important in the Vasculature.”** Timothy Spring, Harvard Medical School. 4 p.m. 101 English Language and Literature.

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**Saturday**

**24 Saturday**

**“How to Bury a Scythed Weapon.”** mashed potatoes and other food. 4 p.m. 5601 Beckman Institute. Monica Smith, University of Illinois. For information, call 217-333-2691.
CALENDAR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

Native American House, American Indian Studies.

1 Wednesday

“Investments in Child Well-

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Chamber Music Recital: Sun. 7:30 p.m. Memorial Hall, School of Music.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>UI Brass Band: 7:30 p.m. Recital Hall, Smith Memorial Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: Jeremy Cheung, piano. 11:15 a.m.</td>
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<td>Memorial Hall, School of Music.</td>
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<td>April 3</td>
<td>UPC Percussion Ensemble: 7:30 p.m. 2100 Music Building.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Master of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Recital Hall, Smith</td>
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<td>Memorial Hall.</td>
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<td>April 7</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: Jarrell Chabino, trumpet. 7:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Memorial Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 7</td>
<td>Studio Recital: 7:30 p.m. 25 Smith Memorial Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>Master of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Smith Memorial Hall.</td>
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<td>April 11</td>
<td>Recital Hall: 7:30 p.m. School of Music.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>Chamber Music Recital: 7:30 p.m. Memorial Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Recital Hall, Smith</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Memorial Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Memorial Hall.</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td>Recital Hall: 7:30 p.m. School of Music.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Memorial Hall.</td>
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<td>April 22</td>
<td>Recital Hall: 7:30 p.m. School of Music.</td>
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<td>April 24</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Memorial Hall.</td>
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<td>April 25</td>
<td>Recital Hall: 7:30 p.m. School of Music.</td>
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<td>April 26</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Memorial Hall.</td>
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<td>April 28</td>
<td>Recital Hall: 7:30 p.m. School of Music.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>Doctor of Musical Arts Recital: 7:30 p.m. Memorial Hall.</td>
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**Contact:** Doris Dahl • dkdahl@illinois.edu • 333-2895
more calendar of events

CALENDAR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Friday


Sunday

10 Saturday

Bonyard Rock Community Day. Volunteer to pick up litter, mark storm drains and naturalize the Bonyard Rock. Registration at 9 a.m. at one of three sites: Farley College and Scott Park in Champaign or Anita Purves Nature Center in Urbana. More info/to register online: http://bwonderland.illinois.edu.


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ongoing
Allerton Park & Retreat Center
Open 8 a.m. to dusk daily.
Allertonpark.illinois.edu

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Illinois citizens a key to political change, author says

By Jan Dennis
Business & Law Editor

Illinois residents share the blame for a state government dogged by a legacy of corruption and paralyzed by a deep, festering budget hole, according to Jim Nowlan, a co-author of a new book on state politics.

Citizens feed an entrenched Statehouse culture of shady ethics and unresolved problems by failing to demand better, said Jim Nowlan, a former state lawmaker and now a senior fellow with the Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the UI.

“I don’t think you change it by simply saying ‘Let’s elect good people and let them fix it,’ ” he said. “Citizens need to change their own cultural attitudes about right and wrong in government and what they expect of their elected officials.”

Grassroots change requires soul-searching by voters, who likely cross some of the same ethical boundaries as lawmakers in their own lives, said Nowlan, who co-wrote “Illinois Politics: A Citizen’s Guide,” published by the UI Press, was co-written by Samuel Gove, Nowlan and Rick Winkel, all affiliated with the Institute of Government and Public Affairs.

Nowlan cites an ethics quiz he gives to students, laying out a scenario where a relative flushes out college faces a drunken-driving charge that threatens his new job. For an extra $1,000, his lawyer says he can pull strings and make the charge disappear. In every class, two-thirds of students say they would support the under-the-table move.

“The culture runs deeper than politics,” he said. “Rare is the person who goes into politics planning to be corrupt. It happens because elected officials weren’t thinking or saw an opportunity that looked good and wouldn’t hurt anyone, but ended up being personal gain at public expense.”

The new book, published by the UI Press, provides an in-depth, historical look at how government works in Illinois, providing a guide to help people understand the political process and to work through it if they seek to affect change.

“It’s a tough, uphill struggle to achieve significant change in the game of Illinois politics,” Nowlan said. “You have to be willing to hit your head against the door of government repeatedly in order to open it.”

He says the competing interests of Chicago, its suburbs and downstate are among the obstacles to broad, fundamental change. With common ground hard to come by, lawmakers historically skirt big-picture problems in favor of protecting their own turf.

“Our government is one in which frustration over the inability to affect change ultimately causes elected officials to focus on their own objectives rather than the objectives of society as whole,” Nowlan said.

A record-breaking $13 billion budget deficit and a $6 billion stack of unpaid bills are a case in point, he said, sparking lots of saber-rattling and hand wringing, but no solutions.

The budget impasse also has steep political consequences because any tax increase would likely be toxic for incumbents when voters go to the polls in November, said Nowlan, a former president of the Taxpayers Federation of Illinois.

“So I think the legislature will adopt a six-month budget and kick the ball down the road to whoever is elected governor,” he said. “Then next year, I think there will be tax increases because there’s just no way to cut government enough to resolve the gap between spending and revenue and reduce the accumulated deficit.”

Beyond closing the budget gap, the state needs to invest more in its education system through longer school days, longer academic years and other initiatives, Nowlan said.

“The future lies in the quality of our educational system, both K-12 and higher education,” he said. “The challenge for Illinois voters and elected officials is whether we can look to that larger good rather than simply focusing on our individual needs.”

Nowlan fears Illinois is setting to be average, a label pinned on the state by a 2007 Associated Press analysis that named Illinois the nation’s most average state based on indicators such as demographics, wealth and government spending.

“We as an Illinois society seem to be comfortable in our average-ness,” he said. “We aren’t a state that likes to lay claim that our education system or roads are the best in the nation. I’m surprised that we don’t take more pride in saying we’re No. 1 in something.”

Nowlan, a state representative when Illinois first enacted an income tax in 1969, gives the state even lower marks.

“I think you’d have to give the state a D-minus for its failure to address the budget problem and for lack of a longer-term vision of what we want to accomplish for its citizens,” he said. “I don’t think we can give the state any credit right now because of the situation we’re in.”

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