Benefit Choice enrollment open through June 17

By Mike Helenthal

Assistant Editor

S
ome advice for anyone seeking health insurance on the university’s employee health insurance program: Don’t pay attention to politicians, news reports or co-workers.

That’s because, despite the attempts of Springfield politicians to challenge the decision by Illinois Healthcare and Family Services to drop popular local health plans, the reality is quite simple:

“What we know is Central Management Services has come forward with their announcement,” said Jim Davito, interim executive director of University Payroll and Benefits. “This is the decision and it’s happened. It’s effective in three months and it will be in place.”

Davito’s office wasted no time in sending out emails to university employees after the CMS announcement, which followed the state’s Executive Ethics Committee de- nil of protests filed by officials of Health Alliance HMO, Humana-Winnubegao and Blue Advantage. PersonalCare Open Access Plan, HealthLink Open Access Plan and Quality Care Health Plan.

The most important thing I’d like to tell people is the need to make an active selection,” he said. “This is your chance to choose the plan that is best for you.”

Your plan was canceled and fails to select a new health care provider by June 17 will be placed into the Quality Care Health Plan.

Davito said even if legislators were to find an effective way to repeal the HFS health-carrier decision, any challenge could still require a year to survive if it resulted in the appeal process.

With that May 24 ruling, university employees under PersonalCare HMO, Health Alliance HMO, Health Alliance Illinois, Humanas, and Blue Advantage must be enrolled in the Department of Health and Human Services. Winnubegao were given until June 17 to change their plans. Plans go into effect July 1.

The study used radio telemetry and a sophisticated activity-tracking device to capture the haunts and edges of many towns.

by contrast, stayed very close to home (black dot).

Largest range of those tracked (white outline). A pet cat in the study, found activity 97 percent of the time. On average, the owned cats were highly active 14 percent of the time.

The un-owned cats had devices that continuously monitored the cats’ every move. This un-owned cat was one of those tracked.

The un-owned cats had devices that consistently tracked the cats’ every move. This un-owned cat was one of those tracked.

ON THE WEB:
For the latest information:
- Benefits Choice: http://go.illinois.edu/BC_booklet12
- Benefit Choice Options booklet: http://go.illinois.edu/BC_booklet12

Information sessions
http://training.ohs.illinois.edu

Questions?
Email benefits@illinois.edu or call 217-333-3111.

Researchers track feral and free-roaming house cats

By Diana Yates

Life Sciences Editor

R
Search Institute at Illinois. Without these sensors, it would require a field team of 10 to 12 people to collect that data.”

In most cases the un-owned cats had larger territories than the pet cats and were more active. But the size of some of the feral cats’ home ranges surprised even the researchers.

One of the feral cats, a mixed breed male, had a home range of 547 hectares (1,351 acres), the largest range of those tracked. Like most of the feral cats, this lone ranger was seen in both urban and rural sites, from residential and campus lawns to agricultural fields, forests and a restored prairie.

“Straying how far? One of the feral cats in the study, a mixed breed male, had a home range of 547 hectares (1,351 acres), the largest range of those tracked (white outline). A pet cat in the study, by contrast, stayed very close to home (black dot).”

By Diana Yates

Life Sciences Editor

Researchers track feral and free-roaming house cats

“Still, some of the cat owners were very surprised to learn that their cats were going that far,” Horn said. “That’s a lot of backyards.”

Davito advised employees to refer to the coverage map in the Benefit Choice Option booklet to determine which carriers are available in their region. That booklet may be accessed at http://go.illinois.edu/BC_booklet12.

Davito said the extended choice period means his office will have less time to finish its health insurance work by the July 1 deadline.

“Generally we have the whole month of June,” he said. “It shortens the window and we’ll just have to work twice as hard. It won’t be easy, but it’s certainly doable.”

Information sessions for university employees are available. Register at the Office of Business and Financial Services’ website at http://training.ohs.illinois.edu.

The UI Veterinary Teaching Hospital’s Small Animal Clinic is expanding its services to include critical care.

Critical care
The UI Veterinary Teaching Hospital’s Small Animal Clinic is expanding its services to include critical care.

Non-compliance
Are corn farmers who are not compliant with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s requirements putting the evolution of genetic resistance in insects at risk? PAGE 6

PAGE 4

Tracking cats
The cats were fitted with radio collars and tracked over two years. Some of the cats also had devices that continuously monitored the cats’ every move. This un-owned cat was one of those tracked.

Straying how far?
One of the feral cats in the study, a mixed breed male, had a home range of 547 hectares (1,351 acres), the largest range of those tracked (white outline). A pet cat in the study, by contrast, stayed very close to home (black dot).

Benjamin Yoder

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Vol. 30, No. 22
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For Faculty and Staff, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

On the Web
www.news.illinois.edu/ii

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By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

派遣的工作人员，包括鸟类学家、生态学家和野生动物专家。这项研究使用了无线电追踪技术来跟踪家猫和未家养的野猫，并记录下它们的行为。

研究发现，家猫的活动范围和行为与未家养的野猫有显著差异。家猫倾向于保持在家庭区域内，而未家养的野猫则有更广阔的活动范围，经常探索公园、森林和农田。研究还表明，家猫的行为更多受人类监督和干预，而未家养的野猫则更独立，不受限制。

这项研究对于了解家猫和未家养的野猫的生活习性和行为模式具有重要意义。它为了解家猫如何影响其生存环境提供了宝贵的见解，也为制定合理的管理计划提供了科学依据。

总之，这项研究不仅为人类提供了关于野猫生活习性的宝贵信息，也为保护野生动物和合理管理家猫提供了科学依据。

（本文内容根据《科学新闻》杂志的文章翻译）
Better systems, compliance for research funding needed

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

The University is moving forward on several recommendations from the STEWARDING EXCELLENCE @ ILLINOIS team, each of them focused on protecting the university from or ameliorating the Urbana campus’s research footprint.

“I think this is something that needs to be on-going – it’s not a one-time effort,” said Stephen Sligar, a biochemist and professor who leads the team studying the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research.

The team’s report identified organizational structure and budgetary transparency as core issues facing OVCOR – and noted those issues needed to be addressed by a full-time administrator as opposed to the current interim vice chancellor, Ravi Iyer.

“Unrealistic to ask an interim person to make some of the overriding changes we need to make,” Sligar said. “There are a lot of things that the university is facing and some shortcomings we have to address, but permanent leadership is going to be an important next step.”

The review team found administrative support for most of its recommendations.

“We have begun the process to form a search committee to conduct a national search for a permanent vice chancellor for research,” noted Bob Easter, interim vice president and chancellor, and Richard Wheeler, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost, in their May 5 response to the report.

The administrators also found credence in the team’s call to create new campus-wide systems designed to offer clearer guidance on research award and compliance processes.

“We are troubled by reports of researchers facing undue delays and negative repercussions from external funding agencies, including the threat of funding loss,” the administrators wrote in their response. “We must respond to complaints by our faculty and staff and move to remove barriers expeditiously, as well as to create new systems that will protect and grow our research enterprise.”

To accomplish that, the administrators suggested improvements to current electronic resources and the creation of a “comprehensive and dynamic” Web portal.

“Leaving some very valuable and vital senior faculty because some of these things are beginning to hinder people on campus,” he said. “This will be a challenge for the new vice chancellor for research.”

The administrators said efforts were already under way to identify and address specific, needed technology upgrades.

Like a university-wide business process analysis conducted by Huron Consulting Group would be guided by a steering team made up of representatives from all three campuses and is expected to be completed July 7.

“Outcomes will include a determination of what systems the university needs to purchase and/or build to meet the needs of the research faculty and administrators, and it will consider best practices and creative new solutions,” the administrators wrote.

“Improved technology can help streamline compliance processes, but must be accompanied by clear and consistent guidance to researchers,” they added.

Other areas where the STEWARDING team and administrators agreed included:

- The formation of a faculty advisory committee to advise the new vice chancellor for research, which could include consolidation of other, disparate committees serving that function currently.
- Improving risk assessment and compliance guidelines to more quickly identify and resolve the web of controversial or non-essential contract language.
- The need to act to ensure the protection of human research subjects.

As a result of the review of the moving of the Office of Technological Management, which oversees the intellectual property, management process, into University Technology Park.

Providing “negotiations training” by University Counsel for campus representatives responsible for contracting.

Expanding financial support to reach efforts increase support for research and scholarship in units not traditionally supported by external funding. To that end, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is already working on a shared business office for sponsored research.

- Lobbying legislators over changes in the state procurement law, which has provisions for creating more “innovative and harmful” to state and university interests.

Not all of the team’s recommendations were agreed to by administrative leadership.

Administrators disagreed with the team’s recommendation to phase out international research involvement, and to move reporting lines for the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research into the Office of the Provost.

The five-year grant, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, establishes the Illinois Transdisciplinary Obesity Prevention Program, or I-TOPP.

The program will combine a doctoral degree with a master’s in public health focused on child obesity prevention.

“This exciting new program allows us to develop novel hypotheses and approaches as researchers come together from their individual expertise to solve the problem of child obesity,” said Sharon Donovan, the Melissa M. Noel Professor in the department of food science and human nutrition and director of the new program.

Students will be trained to think broadly about diet, nutrition and health and public health interventions, these students will combine a doctoral degree with a master’s in public health.

“We have begun the process to form a search committee to conduct a national search for a permanent vice chancellor for research,” noted Bob Easter, interim vice president and chancellor, and Richard Wheeler, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost, in their May 5 response to the report.

The new degree will integrate research and practice skills to address one of the nation’s most urgent public health problems, said David Buchner, an associate director of the MPH program; and Rodney Johnson, professor of nutritional sciences and director of the Division of Nutritional Sciences.

Fiese said that generation of students has had to teach themselves to become good transdisciplinary collaborators. Because I-TOPP will have a strong evaluative component, the scientists will learn whether this kind of collaboration can be taught.

“At the end of the students’ graduate program, we will be assessing these students, comparing them to students who have received the MPH and Ph.D. degrees to see how successful we’ve been in helping our I-TOPP scholars to achieve this broader, more transdisciplinary view,” Donovan said.

The program will be administered in the UI Division of Nutritional Sciences, a pioneer in modeling transdisciplinary education, said Rodney Johnson, the director of division and an associate director of I-TOPP.

“New program is consistent with DNS goals,” Johnson said. “It is what we are working toward.”

The program will create courses, develop a seminar series, host an annual conference, and seek funding from private foundations, government agencies, and other campuses.

The program will also offer a five-year $4.5 million USDA grant to UI researchers.

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On the Job Linda G. Burris

Linda G. Burris has been chief clerk for the College of Fine and Applied Arts for the past two years after having worked in a similar position for three years in Veterinary Medicine’s department of pathology.

What are some of the similarities and differences between the two jobs?

A lot of it’s the same, though here I’m responsible for payroll, which I didn’t have to do when I was at Vet Med. I have to post expenses and other things related to finances. There are so many different departments, I’m still sort of new in the learning process.

How willing have you been to learn?

Well, there are always new things coming up, so you aren’t left with much of a choice. What helps is it doesn’t bother me at all to ask questions when I don’t know something – and I admit there’s a lot of stuff I don’t know. A lot of times I’m on my own here (in the Architecture Building), so I’ve learned to call or email when I need to find answers. Part of my challenge is searching for the right person to ask.

Have UI employees offered assistance when you ask?

Everybody’s been so nice and helpful. They’ve been very tolerant of me, so it hasn’t been too traumatic.

Does your job include much contact with students?

Not that much, really. Sometimes I’ll do their human resources paperwork if we hire them for the summer. Or, if there are students waiting in the hallway outside my office for a lecture I’ll go out and offer them street maps. I kind of feel like some of the students are new so just I try to be friendly and put myself in their place. That’s the part I enjoy the most about being here, because I get a lot of contact with students. It’s been a big change, but I keep telling myself that with fewer interruptions, I can get more work done.

What did you do before taking a job at the UI?

I was an accounting assistant for 18 years at a welding company in Villa Grove. I was a secretary, but because it was a small company and there was a lot of turnover, I kind of did a little bit of everything. It’s helped me here because I’m not afraid to move on and try new things. Things change fast with the ever-changing world with it.

What is the most important tool you possess as an employee?

I am very loyal to whomever I work with and I am good at dealing with people. It’s kind of like my dad said, I’ve never met a stranger. I gabo lot but it’s because I like to learn about people.

What’s your favorite after-work pastime?

I live on my brother’s farm near Camargo with my mother, who is 88. We raise beef cattle and walking horses. We have three calves, 10 horses, two dogs and a cat. My brother and his son are crop farmers near by. But I can’t imagine living any other way. I don’t think I’d like it in a big city.

Has your family always lived in the area?

My dad moved the family here from Kentucky in 1968. My dad farmed and I found a job here as a hired hand. I guess we’ve been here long enough to call it home. I went to Newman Grade School, which is no more.

How willing have you been to learn?

I’m still sort of new in the learning field.

On the Job Part 1

By Dusty Rhodes

New research center created by the UI and Indiana University, started that afternoon. Digital Repository, will develop software to foster computer access to the growing digital record of mankind.

The HathiTrust Research Center will enable open access for nonprofit and educational users to published works in the public domain with limited access to works under copyright stored within HathiTrust, a collaborative digital library of more than 8 million volumes and 2 billion pages of archived material maintained by major research institutions and libraries worldwide. (Hathi – pronounced hah-tee – is the Hindi word for elephant and an acronym for its memory, wisdom, and strength.)

The research center will draw on computing resources at Illinois and data storage at Indiana to create a secure computational and data environment for scholars to use form research using the digital repository. It will give scholars the opportunity to use the HathiTrust Digital Library while preventing intellectual property misuse.

“I’ve been working in digital humanities since 2002, and until now, I hadn’t had the kind of sustained effort that really changes the way people do research in text-based humanities and social science disciplines,” said John Unsworth, the dean of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Illinois.

“The opening of the HathiTrust Research Center is that watershed event – the equivalent of the Sloan Digital Sky Survey for astronomers,” said Unsworth, a member of the education and research committee leading the research center project. “This opportunity will be transformational for scholars in the humanities and social sciences, and also will be important to those in computer science and other fields interested in natural language processing, image recognition, optical character recognition and other areas of research.”

Other members of the executive committee: Beth Paige, a professor in the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana; Robert McDonald, associate dean of libraries at Indiana; and Scott Poole, a professor of communication at Illinois who is the director of the Illinois Center for Computing in Humanities, Arts and Social Science.

“This project will open vistas of research in multiple fields, including the humanities; social sciences; natural, biological and agricultural sciences; engineering; and health sciences,” Poole said. “The data provided by the HathiTrust Digital Library is a window on knowledge as it has developed over the past 300 years. Partners in the research center at Illinois:

By Mike Helenthal, Assistant Editor

Center to make it easier to access knowledge on computers

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By Mike Helenthal, Assistant Editor

Efficiency Fair shows how to maximize resources, save money

We were using the same words, but not really saying the same thing,” he said.

He said communication becomes more vital when an organization has already experienced flux.

“You cannot over-communicate,” he said. “Any vacuum of information will be filled in by rumor. Somebody else will do it for you.”

Several administrators from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, including Matthew Tomaszewski, associate dean for administration; Carol Wakefield, director of budget and resources planning; and Deanna Raineri, associate dean of applied technologies for learning in the arts and sciences. The LAS team discussed recent and ongoing EFFICIENCY FAIR, Page 6
**Surge in obesity correlates with increased automobile usage**

By Phil Ciclara

Uncle food, video games and a lack of exercise all have received their fair share of blame for the surging epidemic of obesity in the U.S. But according to a UI researcher, public health enemy No. 1 for our supersized nation may very well be the one staple of modern life most Americans can’t seem to live without one (or more) of: the automobile.

Sheldon H. Jacobson, a professor of computer science and the director of the simulation and optimization laboratory at B-limits, says the surge in passenger vehicle usage in the U.S. between the 1950s and today may be associated with surging levels of obesity.

“You can think of obesity as an energy imbalance,” Jacobson said. “People consume food, which is a form of energy, and then they do nothing to burn that energy. You can literally designed our way of life around it. It is that energy imbalance that ultimately may lead to obesity.

To analyze the relationship between obesity and vehicle use, Jacobson and students Douglas M. King and Yong Yuan analyzed at what rate people traveled per licensed vehicle driver as a surrogate measure for a person’s total lifetime sedentary time.

“Based on Jacobson’s studies the effects of extra driver and passenger weight due to growing obesity trends in the U.S. causing excessive fuel consumption.

After the data was analyzed the study reverse-engineers the relationship between weight and driving.

“We did what we did based on physics: You add more weight to a vehicle, it consumes more gasoline, and we burn more gasoline on an aggregate level,” he said. “This then raises the question, ‘Is the reverse true? If I drive more, are we going to become heavier as a nation?’”

The results of Jacobson’s research were published in an article titled “A Note on the Relationship Between Obesity And Driving” in the journal Transport Policy.

**Obesity cause** The surge in passenger vehicle usage in the U.S. between the 1950s and today may be associated with surging levels of obesity, says Sheldon H. Jacobson, a UI researcher who specializes in statistics and data analysis.

Based on the 2007 adult population. At the aggregate, if we drive less, not only will our carbon footprint be smaller, we will also lose more weight as a nation.

Ultimately, Jacobson said, we are going to have to rethink the way we use our automobiles if we want to address obesity.

“We have had 60-plus years of infrastructure that has facilitated the obesity epidemic,” he said. “How do you turn that around overnight? You don’t. You don’t do that. If I had a broken tractor I guess I probably wouldn’t think about bringing it in to the College of Engineering.”

“Instead of having to provide pertinent information during a crisis, owners may simply swipe a key-card at the reception desk to make the information instantly available to hospital staff. The procedure, completed through an online form before an emergency occurs, also eliminates the regular $13 new-patient registration fee.

“The last thing you want to have to do in an emergency is fill out a form,” McMichael said.

And for those wondering how the frog’s X-rays turned out, there were no internal injuries and nothing broken; it turns out the “blow” was due to infection.

A frog-sized round of antibiotics is expected to have him up and hopping in no time.
Several of the documentary pioneers found themselves blacklisted for a time, unable to get work, thanks to a book, “Red Channels,” which claimed to identify communist sympathizers in the broadcast industry. It’s a story with many parallels to the present, Ehrlich said. Like today, it was an era of rapid technological change, of revolutionary shifts in the media landscape, and of dramatic political swings.

“I wanted to know how people reacted under these circumstances when the world is changing so rapidly and nobody can really see what those changes are,” Ehrlich said. Early in the period, the radio documentary was nothing like what we would recognize as a documentary today, Ehrlich said. The technology for recording sound in the field was cumbersome and unreliable, and the CBS and NBC networks generally banned the use of recordings on air for other reasons.

A documentary, therefore, was a scripted and rehearsed production, performed live. Actors usually played the parts of reporters and interview subjects, sound effects were produced in the studio, and an orchestra supplied background music. The writers and producers were just as likely to be dramatists as journalists.

By today’s definition, it was more documentary than documentary, Ehrlich said. About 1948, however, plastic audiotape came into widespread use, along with more portable recording equipment, Ehrlich said. With the networks also dropping their recording bans, it opened the way for greater use of field-recorded sound, known in the business as actualities, and documentaries began to take a form closer to that of today. Those changes, in a way, paralleled the change in mood and politics, Ehrlich said.

“Dramatized documentary invites listeners to imagine a better world, whereas the formality or reality-based documentary invites listeners to view the world as it really is,” he said.

Ehrlich’s book also explores some of the key personalities and network strategies, as well as the influence of federal regulators and the community of practitioners (such as the House Committee on Un-American Activities).

In assessing Murrow’s role as both broadcaster and CBS consultant, Ehrlich said he portrays him as neither the “patron saint of broadcasting” found in some accounts nor the overrated liberal that others see him as. For Murrow and Corwin, as well as Robert Lewis Shayan, Robert Heller and other leading documentarians, “these were peculiar times,” Ehrlich said. “You are caught up in it and you make the choices that seem best to you at the time; you do the best you can.”

Other figures Ehrlich does not treat as kindly. “Some people clearly acted with cowardice. I don’t think, and perhaps the NBC executives as well.”

But it was the idealism and often “willful, stubborn optimism” of many of the key figures that Ehrlich found inspiring.
More than 90 percent of Illinois corn producers polled at the UI Extension Corn and Soybean Classic meetings indicated that they planned to plant corn that was genetically modified with the insect-destroying protein Bacillus thuringiensis this spring. However, significantly fewer – just 75-80 percent – of them said that they also planned to comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s requirement that they plant 20 percent of their corn acreage with non-Bt seed. The non-Bt seed creates refuges that prevent or delay the development of genetic resistance among insects by ensuring that an ample supply remains susceptible to the Bt toxin for a number of years, and pass that susceptibility on to their offspring.

Another 5-10 percent of the growers indicated that they would not plant any refuge acres. “Producers’ growing noncompliance with the refuge requirement is cause for concern because it could, at some point, hasten the onset of genetic resistance, leading to a resurgence of European corn borers, western corn rootworms and other crop-destroying insects that Bt has been keeping at bay, according to Michael E. Gray, a professor of agricultural entomology in the department of crop sciences and assistant dean in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at the UI.”

Gray, who conducted the poll, is one of several UI experts involved in the annual Corn and Soybean Classic meetings, which are held at six sites throughout Illinois and explore crop production and insect management techniques. A significant percentage of noncompliant growers at the January meetings was consistent with data reported by the national watchdog group Center for Food Safety. In Illinois, Gray noted, which indicated that while only 10 percent of U.S. corn producers were noncompliant from 2003-2005, by 2008 the number of growers disregarding the EPA’s refuge requirement swelled to 25 percent.

The evolution of genetic resistance in insects is probably “inevitable” and can develop within 15-25 years, Gray said. Bt corn has been commercially available since 1996.

“Considering this technology has been in the market place for 15 growing seasons and remains the predominant corn insect management strategy in the north central region of the U.S., perhaps we should be surprised that resistance has not yet set occurred,” Gray wrote in a recent article. “As the widespread use of Bt corn continues and the duration of exposure (many growing seasons) to corn insecticides increases, the potential development of resistance becomes magnified. This accentuates the importance of refuge compliance by corn producers.”

The Center for Science in the Public Interest is urging EPA officials to crack down on noncompliance by requiring seed companies to conduct regular field inspections to restrict or deny seed corn sales in geographic areas where noncompliance rates remain high, and to require that farmers purchase records and maps of their Bt and non-Bt crops. Growers can plant refuges of non-Bt corn as strips of four to six rows within their fields or as blocks near their Bt corn. To simplify refuge management and increase compliance, the seed industry may shift to seed mixtures called “refuge in a bag” that intersperse non-Bt seed with Bt seed in every bag, thus throughout the fields. Gray said.

The first commercial product, Pioneer Hi-Bred’s Optimum™ AcreMax™, available to growers this year, contains 90 percent Bt seed and 10 percent refuge seed. However, the hybrid blend may be less effective at managing insects, with resistance anticipated to occur in a little more than 11 years, according to an EPA analysis. A 95 percent Bt/5 percent refuge seed hybrid mixture called SmartStax™, which expresses several proteins – one toxin that controls corn rootworms, a second that targets lepidopteran pests and one for herbicide tolerance to two active ingredients – will become commercially available on a broad scale in 2012. According to the EPA’s estimate, the product is 150 percent as durable as a single-toxin hybrid and structured refuge in terms of delaying resistance. About 80 percent of growers polled at the Corn and Soybeans Classic meetings indicated they would be willing to plant a seed blend that contained 2.5 percent non-Bt seed; however, if the blend of non-Bt seed were increased to 6-10 percent, the proportion of growers willing to use it dropped to 53 percent.

But even corn producers who don’t plant Bt hybrids benefit from the areawide pest suppression generated by neighboring fields, Gray said. “And the producers who plant nontransgenic corn actually benefit more than those who grow Bt corn because they pay less for their non-Bt hybrid seed.”

Bt hybrids generated cumulative benefits of $3.2 billion – including higher yields and reduced costs for pesticides – for corn growers in Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin during the products’ first 14 years on the market, according to a paper published in Science last October of which Gray was a co-author. Even producers in Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin who elected not to grow Bt hybrids reaped $2.4 billion in benefits.

The western corn rootworm, dubbed the billion-dollar insect in reference to its costs in crop damage and insecticide usage, has been diminished by the widespread planting of Bt crops, intense use of broadcast applications of fungicides and insecticides in corn and soybean fields, and consecutive wet springs during late May and early June when larva were hatching.

Densities of European corn borers began decreasing dramatically when Bt corn’s popularity began to surge in 2005-2006 and have been at historic low levels the past few years. Gray said. “There’s been this very significant areawide, regionalwide suppression of the European corn borer. Bt hybrids have lowered this once very prominent insect pest to almost non-post status.”

Motorsists in the Corn Belt may recall past summers when they drove in rural areas after nightfall and their windshields were bombarded continuously with swarms of large insects.

“You people often ask me, ‘What happened to all those bugs we used to have?’” Gray said. “I tell them, ‘Bt corn.’”  

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**Deaths**

Jearnice A. DeVor, 67, died May 18 at the Fort Memorial Hospital, Lake Mills, Wis. She worked at the UI for 17 years, working in the Housing Division and the Office of Risk Management. Memorials: Lake Mills Area Community Foundation, www.lakemillsareacommunityfoundation.org. 

Joel Jack M. McCord, 76, died May 18 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. McCord was a professor emeritus of law. McCord received the College of Law in 1965. From 1991-1993 he served as associate dean for academic affairs for the college. He retired in 1999 as professor emeritus. 

Mary Ellen Merrick, 82, died May 14 at her home in Urbana. Merrick was an administrative assistant at the UI Memorials: Friends of WILL-TV, http://will.illinois.edu/ or Philo or Sidney fire departments.


Margaret M. Thompson, 90, died May 4 at her home in Mahomet. She was a professor emeritus of kinesiology. Her career led her to be a pioneer in the research of elementary-aged children using physical movement in social and cognitive development. She retired in 1989 after 16 years at the UI. 

Alvin Weatherhoss, 85, died May 11. He worked as a stovekeeper at the UI, retiring in 1983 after 35 years. 

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**Non-compliance** Michael Gray, a professor of crop sciences, has found growing non-compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s requirement that farmers who plant genetically modified corn plant 20 percent of their acreage with non-modified corn to prevent genetic resistance.

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**Pest resistance** Commercially available since 1996, Bt corn is resistant to European corn borers, western corn rootworm and other crop-destroying pests.

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**Efficiency fair** Contained from page 3 information, resources allocation and revenue generation efforts.

Keith Marshall, associate provost for enrollment management, said the event, while new at the UI, has been put in place at other Big Ten universities, including Minnesota and Iowa.

“The idea is that when (staff members) see the presentations, they’ll go back to their units and say, ‘Hey, we can do that,’ ” he said.

Marshall said administrators hope next year to expand the event in hopes of high-lighting more success stories — some of which they hope to foster by the ideas pre-sented this year.

“We’re quite pleased with the level of interest and participation,” he said. “Hope-

fully it will be a recurring event into the future.”

Richard Wheeler, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost, said the ideas shared at the event are important because they illustrate university em-ployees’ capacity for positively addressing future.”

He said real change will not occur without the committed efforts of those who

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Japan House

Open house to honor Kinoko Gunji

In honor of the upcoming retirement of Kinoko Gunji, Japan House will host an open house Sunday from 2-5 p.m. June 11. Gunji, who has been a professor of Japanese arts and culture at Illinois for more than 30 years, is the director of Japan House.

Gunji has won excellence in teaching awards for her courses in Japanese culture and arts, the theory of Japanese aesthetics, and the art of Japanese flower arranging. She was instrumental in cultivating the Japanese Garden at Japan House at the UI in 1998, and has, over the years, organized many artistic and educational exchange programs between the UI and Japan. In 2006, she received the Champa-Quang Mai International Humanitarian Award in France.

The Urbana-Champaign Chapter of the American Harp Society, the Midwestern Regional Climate Center, the Music Building, and the Office of International Affairs are sponsoring the event. The open house will include performances by the UI Harp Ensemble, which is performing a duet on themes from Bizet's opera “Carmen,” and a performance of the Illini Union Bookstore Summer Book Festival.

For more information, visit www.japanhouse.art.illinois.edu.

Illinois Summer Harp Class

Concerts to feature harp performances

A series of harp concerts will be presented in conjunction with the 2011 Illinois Summer Harp Class. On June 9, Stephanie Gustafson and Chen-Yu Huang will perform a duet on themes from Bizet's opera “Carmen” at 7:30 p.m. in the Recital Hall of Smith Hall. Gustafson was a finalist in the 2011 American String Teachers Association's national solo competition; Huang has won numerous awards, including a gold medal in the 2008 International Harp Competition.

On June 10, Molly Noble O'Roark, recipient of the Howard Hanson scholarship at the Eastman School of Music, will perform at noon in the Memorial Room in Smith Hall. At 7:30 p.m., members of the UI Harp Quartet will perform selections by J.S. Bach, Prokofiev, Ravel and Michel Maganuco in the auditorium of the Music Building.

On June 11, lively works from Argentina, England, France, Germany, Ireland and the United States will be performed by a diverse group of award-winning harpists: Erin Brook, Ireland; Svetlana Slobodskaya, Hong Kong; Sirshana Thomas, China; and Erin Brook, Germany.

At 7 p.m., in the same location, participants from the Summer Harp Class will present a concert featuring the world premiere of Julia Kay Jamieson's “Tikitaak,” a work inspired by paleontologist Neil Shubin's book “Your Inner Fish” and 1990s hip-hop.

All concerts are free and open to the public.

Midwestern Regional Climate Center

Online map tracks freezing temperatures

The Midwestern Regional Climate Center in the Illinois State Water Survey, a division of the Prairie Research Institute at the UI, is providing a tool for users to glean information on the occurrences of freezing temperatures to help assess the vulnerability of spring flowers and plants.

Located on the Midwest Climate Watch page (http://mcc.nws.illinois.edu/climwatch/watch.htm) the freezing temperatures map is updated daily. Weather stations recording a minimum temperature equal to or less than 28 degrees are marked with different dots.

“The changing symbols are intended to de-emphasize the areas that are still freezing every day and those that have been above freezing for a period of time,” said Steve Hilberg, director of MRCC. “They also make it easier to determine if it has been some time since the last freeze.”

The map also includes shading to represent the areas that have accumulated at least 150 growing degree days, or the amount of heat accumulation used to predict plant development rates such as when plants will bloom.

“The implication of the shading is that plant development in these areas may have occurred to the extent that another freeze could damage them,” Hilberg said.

Another new map on the Midwest Climate Watch web page is a 24-hour county-level soil moisture map. The site also includes month-to-date maps of temperature, snowfall, snow depth and soil temperature.

Each week the center posts a narrative of the previous week's temperatures, precipitation and weather events. The narrative describes the impacts of these events, generally including a “What Are You Reading?” display at the bookstore.
the owned cats throughout the day and throughout the year, especially in winter," Horn said. "These un-owned cats have to search harder to find food to create the body heat that they need to survive."

The cats also differed in the types of territories they used throughout the year. Pet cats randomly wandered in different habitats, but un-owned cats had seasonal habits. In winter, feral cats stayed closer to urban areas than expected. And throughout the year they spent a good amount of time in grasslands, including a restored prairie.

Most of the cats in the study stayed within about 300 meters of human structures, said co-author Nohra Mateus-Pinilla, a wildlife veterinary epidemiologist at the Illinois Natural History Survey. "Even feral cats were always within range of a building," she said. "That shows that even though they’re feral, they still have a level of dependency on us.”

One feral cat chased another out of a dairy barn. Another feral cat waited for a pet cat to emerge each morning and tried to chase it out of its own backyard, Horn said. The overlap of feral and pet cat territories outdoors spells trouble for the environment, the cats and potentially also for the cat owners, the researchers said.

In an earlier study, co-author Richard Warner, an emeritus professor of natural resources and environmental sustainability at Illinois, followed the cats of about two-dozen rural residences over several years. "Two of the leading causes of cat deaths in that study were other cats and disease," Warner said. "And both of these leading causes of death are sitting here waiting for these owned cats outdoors.”

Cats also get diseases from wildlife or other cats, Mateus-Pinilla said, and can bring them home and infect their owners and other pets.

"For example, Toxoplasma gondii, a parasite spread primarily by cats, may cause neurological, reproductive and even respiratory problems in humans, cats and wildlife, depending on the species affected," she said. Rabies, cat scratch fever, feline leukemia and feline immunodeficiency virus also are of concern to pet owners whose cats encounter other cats outdoors, she said. Vaccination of pet cats will reduce but not eliminate the threat of disease transmission, she said.

Even though pet cats have relatively small ranges and are active only in short bursts, Warner said, their impact on wildlife in the immediate vicinity of their homes is likely much more intense than that of a feral cat that wanders over a larger territory.

Unlike other feline predators, such as bobcats, that are native to the Midwest, domestic cats are invasive species that have a disproportionately damaging effect on wildlife – either through predation or disease, Horn said.

Wild animals that have adapted to ecosystems that are already fragmented, such as the prairies of Central Illinois, are even more endangered because domestic cats are disrupting the ecosystem by hunting, competing with native predators or spreading disease, he said.

Illinois Natural History Survey mammalian ecologist Edward Heske also contributed to this study.

The survey is a unit within the Prairie Research Institute. This study was funded by the survey, the department of natural resources and environmental sciences and UI Extension.