Inside Illinois to retire print version after 36 years

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

S

op the presses! Literally. And for good.

Inside Illinois, the faculty-staff newspaper, which has served the Urbana campus for 36 years, will this fall transition to an online-only news source.

Distributed by the News Bureau, Inside Illinois started as the weekly tabloid IlliniWeek on Jan. 26, 1979, and was renamed Inside Illinois in 1990 as it became a semimonthly paper.

According to the first issue of IlliniWeek from 1979, the campus newspaper was to serve “as an informational service for all full-time employees on the campus and was created to improve and facilitate communication among employees.”

Doris Dahl, the editor of Inside Illinois since 1996, said campus news coverage would be affected by the change – but in a positive way.

“The change will allow us to be more responsive to campus news and to deliver our stories to our readers in a more timely way,” she said.

Inside Illinois covers employee news, campus initiatives, events and achievements, research and campus government – including the U. of I. Board of Trustees – and feature stories on interesting people and campus happenings.

The new online newspaper, which will be compatible with mobile devices, will be unique on campus as it will “live” on a .info website, thereby allowing the inclusion of online advertising. The campus policy allowing ads on a .info site is being finalized.

“Some studies have already begun using dogs to test new cancer therapies. Starting in 2007, for example, Fan began testing an antibody called PAC-1 as a potential therapy against human cancers. The drug is now in phase I human clinical trials at the U. of I. Cancer Center in Chicago.”

Robin Kaler, the associate chancellor for public affairs, said the department has discussed for some time making the newspaper an online product, but had to sort out the details before proceeding.

Drug trials in pet dogs with cancer may help people with cancer

By Diana Yates
Life Sciences Editor

P

et dogs may be humans’ best friends in a new arena of life: cancer treatment, said U. of I. veterinary clinical medicine professor Timothy Fan.

Physiological similarities between dogs and humans, and conserved genetics between some dog and human cancers, can allow pet dogs to serve as useful models for studying new cancer drugs, he said.

“I believe that about 25 percent of pet dogs will develop some form of cancer in their lifetime,” he said.

“We’re using dogs to help guide drug development for people, but at the same time, innovative therapies that would otherwise never be available to dogs, to help them as well.”

Several attributes make pet dogs attractive subjects for such studies, Fan said.

“Dogs tend to develop cancer as a geriatric population, just like people,” he said. “Because the tumors develop spontaneously, there is heterogeneity in that tumor population, as a human being would have. The size of the tumors and the speed of growth of those tumors are comparable in dogs and humans. So there are many attributes of a dog that develops cancer spontaneously that recapitulate the biology that we see in people.”

Some studies have already begun using dogs to test new cancer therapies. Starting in 2007, for example, Fan began testing an anti-cancer drug called PAC-1 (developed by U. of I. chemistry professor Paul Herzenrother) in pet dogs with naturally occurring lymphomas and osteosarcomas. The results in dogs allowed the scientists to advance PAC-1 as a potential therapy against human cancers. The drug is now in phase I human clinical trials at the U. of I. Cancer Center in Chicago.

“Because you’re taking a human cancer tissue and implanting it in a mouse, that’s a foreign tissue, and the mouse’s immune system will reject it,” he said. “So you have to transplant those tissues into an immunocompromised mouse. Dogs are immunocompetent, and so were an ideal study subject for testing immunomodulatory cancer therapies.”

“Another example in which dogs have been important in demonstrating drug activity was an anti-cancer compound produced by the pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences,” he said. “The company produced a pro-drug, which must be activated by a naturally occurring enzyme in human leukocytes before it can become effective. Mice and rats lack this enzyme, but dogs have it, so the compound was tested in dogs.”

Fan also addressed the strengths and limitations of using mice and rats in preclinical trials of cancer drugs.

“We’ve relied almost exclusively on murine preclinical models, and we’ve been able to show that investigational agents are very good at fighting cancer in these models,” he said. “But only about one in 10 of the agents that show great activity in mice will show similar activity in humans. So the question that we begin to ask is: Why is the hit rate so low?”

It may be that laboratory-induced cancers in mice fail to mimic the natural process of cancer development in humans, he said.

“The formation of cancer in those mice can mimic the progression of cancer development in humans, he said.”

Inside Illinois started as the weekly tabloid IlliniWeek on Jan. 26, 1979, and was renamed Inside Illinois in 1990 as it became a semimonthly paper.
SEC discusses new medical school name, possible change

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

The Carle Illinois School of Medicine name will likely change should an independent benefactor come forward, Chancellor Phyllis M. Wise told members of the Senate Executive Committee at their June 15 meeting.

Wise said the “placeholder” name was chosen to provide name recognition for the new college of medicine and has gotten several suggestions, which were sent to Wise for her consideration.

Many of those he consulted expressed concerns that Carle name writing, especially in an ongoing discussion about the city of Urbana and the implications that might have on fundraising. Others said the name was not inspiring and did not believe it would create a strong system of shared governance, would be needed now more than ever. "In times like these, you have to lean forward," he said. "It's not just about cutting our budgets, but optimizing and transforming. We need faculty to be engaged." Killeen said his meetings with legislators and the governor have led him to believe the University of Illinois is a driver for economic activity and that the state's appropriation is an investment.

The president said the themes of an upcoming faculty retreat will be the importance of civic engagement, and finding structure to streamline campus meetings, giving faculty members more time to pursue their academic pursuits. "Efficiency is a collaborative action," he said, predicting that adopting basic principles to shorten campus meetings could cut the time spent on administrative functions by as much as 10 percent. He suggested forming a "guiding coalition" of campus leaders that puts shared campus initiatives into action. "It should be people who 'get it,' who want to see things happen," he said. "We need to put them in places where they can be engaged and inspired. There is nothing stronger than a shared vision, and it is time for us to step forward."
President Killeen redirects $8.2 million for student programs

U of I President Timothy L. Killeen announced June 3 that he would redirect $8.2 million in revenue funds from centrally held university accounts to support financial aid and other student-centered programs on the university’s three campuses.

Killeen, who made the announcement during a speech to the City Club of Chicago, said the move reflects his commitment to putting students first as the university seeks to maintain its excellence amid uncertain state support.

“Leadership starts at the top, and this is a first step to ensure that we manage our financial resources wisely and effectively to serve our students and the people of Illinois,” said Killeen, who took office as the university’s 20th president on May 18.

The $8.2 million to support student programs was identified during an ongoing review to examine spending and efficiency in central administration, which provides support for the university’s campuses in Urbana, Chicago and Springfield.

The funds were previously held in discretionary accounts to support under the direction of the president for various campus and universitywide initiatives. In the recent past, these funds have been used for projects such as campus facility renovations, information technology upgrades and other targeted initiatives.

Killeen said campuses will now be asked to submit proposals for a share of the funds, which could be used for need- or merit-based financial aid, minority student recruitment, counseling and placement services and other student-centered programs.

“The internal reallocation will support our highest priority—a world-class education with student access, affordability, completion and success as key components,” Killeen said.

U of I expert Fred Kummerow on long-awaited ban on trans fat

Editor’s note: Comparative biosciences professor Fred Kummerow, now 100, first reported a link between dietary trans fats and heart disease in 1957. Trained in lipid biochemistry, Kummerow later determined the mechanisms by which trans fats contributed to atherosclerosis in patients with heart disease.

In 2009, he petitioned the Food and Drug Administration to ban trans fats from the American diet. Four years later, when the FDA had not responded to his petition, Kummerow filed a lawsuit to force the agency to make a determination on his petition. Three months after the lawsuit was filed, the FDA announced a “tentative determination” that trans fatty acids “are not generally recognized as safe (GRAS) for any use in food.”

This month, the FDA revoked the GRAS status of trans fats and has given food companies three years to eliminate trans fats from foods.

Kummerow spoke with News Bureau life sciences editor Diana Yates prior to the action.

What key findings led you to the conclusion that trans fats in food were contributing to heart disease in humans?

I had read a paper in the Lancet in 1956 by H.M. Sinclair that suggested there was a relationship between the consumption of hydrogenated fats and the increased incidence of arteriosclerosis. In collaboration with a hospital, I was able to obtain and examine the arteries of people who had died of heart disease, and I found trans fats in this tissue.

This led to my study on rats that developed atherosclerosis in their arteries after being fed trans fats. When trans fats were removed from the rats’ diet, the atherosclerosis disappeared from their arteries.

How long have you advocated for elimination of trans fats from the diet?

Since 1968. At that time I was on a subcommittee of the American Heart Association and found out how much trans fat was in the margarine and shortening that were available from the grocery stores. By pressuring the oil industry, we were able to get the trans fat content in these products lowered from an average of 43 percent to 27 percent. Heart disease also started to decline after 1968.

Do you think health authorities were so slow to recognize the dangers?

The industry told the health authorities that trans fats were not dangerous. The industry liked the properties that trans fats brought their products. Trans fats added a pleasant texture and extended the shelf life of their products that the public liked.

In your earlier career, you were a professor of food science and human nutrition at Illinois. Speaking from that area of expertise, how difficult do you think it will be for the food industry to eliminate trans fats from their products?

The industry wants us to believe that it is difficult to remove trans fats from their products. They want the FDA to allow them years to make the change. There are already products available to replace trans fats, however. The industry is working on their formulas so that the texture and taste remain the same. Some manufacturers have already changed their products, and those products are on grocery stores shelves now.

When you first petitioned the FDA to ban trans fats, did you expect success?

Yes, because I had the science to prove that it was harmful to people and caused atherosclerosis.

A Minute With ...™ is provided by the U. of I. News Bureau. To view archived interviews, visit go.illinois.edu/amw.

See more interviews on pages 4 and 8.

Inside Illinois was redesigned in 1999 with the new look provided by the new design. The goal was to increase readability and to better showcase the photography. Additional information, such as web addresses, were provided with the use of graphic boxes provided by the new design.
In Egypt, ‘traditional’ marriage more modern than we think

By Craig Chamberlain

Social Sciences Editor

In Egypt, ‘traditional’ marriage more modern than we think

In Egypt, as in the U.S., modern ideas have influenced the family as the site where future generations were produced. Those intellectuals “saw family stability as a social good, and something that would help the nation advance, because they understood the family as the site where future generations were produced,” Cuno said. Therefore, they advocated monogamy and were extremely critical of easy divorce. “What I show in my book is that even the traditional marriage was shaped by the Family modernizing societies. The chance that a married woman will be the primary breadwinner is much higher today than in the past,” Cuno said. “We need to think about marriage and family in modernizing societies. We should not expect Egypt or other non-Western societies to develop ideas and ideals identical to ours, and should not judge them as somehow inferior because they don’t do so,” he said. “We underestimate our starting points, and our ideas and practices keep changing.”

Egypt, for example, was heavily influenced by the 1800s Western ideas about the value of marriage based on companionship and not just economic concerns, Cuno said. Egyptians also have placed a premium on marital and family stability. They see marriage as a decision not just for individuals, but for parents and the larger families, he said. Most marriages are still arranged to some extent. Families try to assess the financial prospects of the potential house and how well the couple will get along. Financial arrangements are often negotiated as a hedge against divorce.

“The attitude is that marriage is such an important life event that it cannot just be left up to some young, starry-eyed person to fall in love and make a rash decision on their own,” Cuno said. This, of course, is contrary to American several years. So even if the constitutional amendment route were ultimately successful, it would be five, six or seven years before it could be effective. That really doesn’t help the current problem. What can the Illinois Legislature do to resolve the pension situation? The basic answer to this is (1) cut more out of the budget to reduce the pension surplus, (2) raise revenue in the form of raising taxes, (3) push pension costs down to the local governments, school districts and universities that actually employ the teachers, or some combination of the three. I think it’s quite likely that state universities will be required to pay the pension costs of their employees in the future. The revenue-raising options include restoring some or all of the “temporary” tax increase, which could raise several billion dollars, and taxing retirement income at the state level. Most people don’t know that all retirement income is exempt from Illinois income tax; very few states exempt all retirement income from taxation. That alone could produce $1 billion or more in revenue per year. Enacting some sort of services tax – basically, an expanded sales tax – would also help. And Illinois’ retirement system, including our Midwestern neighbors Wisconsin and Michigan – is also an option. California faced a similar crisis a few years ago and adopted a series of modest budget cuts and tax increases to deal with it. They are now in much better shape than Illinois, and their economy is doing well. Perhaps that should be a model for what we need to do. What shouldn’t be a model is another round of likely unconstitutional pension legislation that will accomplish nothing.

A Minute With…™ is provided by the U of I, News Bureau. To view archived interviews, visit go.illinois.edu/amw.

InsideIllinois June 18, 2015
Lucero curates Obama library for the people, by the people

By Jodi Heckel
Arts and Humanities Editor

The Barack Obama Presidential Library is open in Hyde Park, Illinois. Not the official presidential library, which won’t be completed for years, but a Barack Obama Presidential Library exhibit at the Hyde Park Free Theater, a new storefront community arts center. Curated by Jorge Lucero, a professor of art education at the U. of I. School of Art and Design, the exhibit operates on the philosophy that anything and everything counts. The exhibit includes stories from Hyde Park residents who remember Obama from before he ran for office, opinions about how he has handled issues such as immigration and the evidence of Obama’s love for the Chicago Bulls.

The director of the theater approached Lucero about working on an art project that also involved education. The location of the Obama presidential library came up in conversation, and Lucero jokingly said, “Why don’t we just open it here.”

Then he started thinking about it.

“It really made me think about those objects associated particularly a president’s history, who has an enormous cult of personality. In some ways, the significance of the story gets told,” Lucero said. He decided to invite people to share their thoughts and stories of the president, the sorts of things that won’t be found in the official presidential library. He invited his fellow members and artists to share artifacts — either handmade or readymade objects that, to them, had some significance to their thoughts about the president, whether favorable or critical.

Lucero also worked with 150 students at the Walter Payton College Preparatory High School in Chicago. Part of his work with them was an object-making workshop. But the objects were just a means to an end: Gray considered, describing more important part of the work to be the discussions he had with the students about the educational placards that accompany the objects that are part of museum exhibits, and how the personal histories of public figures are written.

“We were trying to think about those labels in a critical way, in a way that reveals their power,” he said.

“One of the things that was really important was allowing the people who submitted the artifacts to write the museum labels themselves,” Lucero said. “Instead of being written by some anonymous authority figure that was supposed to be objective and the voice of truth, I decided to hand that back to the people. They contain some information, but also personal narratives.”

As an example, Lucero created a copy of the DREAM Act, which establishes provisions for undocumented minors to gain citizenship. In the placard, Lucero wrote a moment from his childhood when he saw his father detained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and his and his mother’s panic.

Some pieces in the exhibit are critical of the way the president has handled immigration reform and of the use of drones by the military. A high school student wrote about her experience as a child of being in a ballet class with one of Obama’s daughters.

A U. of I. graduate student in education, Albert Stabler, submitted a project looking at race and the presidency, in the form of a series of statistics detailing the massive rise in death threats against the president after Obama took office. His artifact is a piece of cardboard into which he carved five tweets that threatened the president.

On the lighter side, Chicago artist Ruben Aguilar’s submission described a stone in Hyde Park with a metal placard on it, memorializing the first kiss between Barack and Michelle Obama.

Visitors to the museum usually laugh at the prospect of this exhibit as the Obama presidential library. Lucero said.

“It’s like any type of parody.”

Presidential tribute

Jorge Lucero, a U. of I. art professor, created a Barack Obama Presidential Library art exhibit in the Hyde Park neighborhood in Chicago.

he said. “The first thing they do is laugh, but then they seem to reflect.

“It’s weird to have so much public that involves the entire nation, and to have this microversion of it with people who have had personal contact with the president,” Lucero said. “For me, it’s interesting that it started as a curiosity. It’s interesting to see what these stories would look like next to each other. It seems to have ignited a conversation about what happens when you do it quickly and cheaply and allow anybody and everybody to be part of it.

“As much as it’s a parody, it’s meant to be serious. It’s sort of cheeky and funny, but, to a certain degree, it’s very serious.”

The presidential library exhibit will be open through Aug. 31 at the Hyde Park Free Theater, 1448 E. 57th St. Chicago. The community center will host discussions and performances throughout the summer related to the “Barack Obama Presidential Library” exhibit.

U. of I. music professor Larry Gray to tour with jazz greats

By Jodi Heckel
Arts and Humanities Editor

Larry Gray is a highly regarded bassist who has played with many legends of jazz music. But playing on the “Made in Chicago” project with drummer Jack DeJohnette, one of the greatest players, is “a career highlight,” he said.

Gray, a professor of jazz studies at the U. of I. School of Music, will play at DeJohnette to play with him at the 2013 Chicago Jazz Festival.

“For a bass player to be called by Jack DeJohnette, one of the greatest drummers in jazz history, it doesn’t get any better than that,” Gray said.

A live recording of the Chicago Jazz Festival performance, titled “Made in Chicago,” was released this spring, and the “Made in Chicago” ensemble performed at a concert at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis in March to celebrate the release.

The group (minus woodwind player Henry Threadgill, who is busy with his own projects) leaves the second week of July for Europe, where they’ll play the North Sea (Netherlands), Gent (Belgium), Molde (Norway) and Budapest (Hungary) jazz festivals. After their return, the complete group (including Threadgill) will play the Newport (Kentucky) Jazz Festival on Aug. 1. DeJohnette brought together three musicians he played with early in his career in Chicago, and those founding members of the Association for Advancement of Creative Musicians, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Although Gray has not been part of the ACJM, he has played with DeJohnette before the first time for a six-night gig at the Jazz Showcase in 1994.

“We have a great connection. Playing with him has been incredible,” Gray said of DeJohnette.

“I just have a deep personal affinity for Jack DeJohnette, for his musicality, his ability to describe things as they are, but extending those being played and what’s appropriate to it. It’s essential to not have any kind of agenda.”

Gray has a varied musical repertoire himself. His first instrument as a child was the accordion. He also learned guitar and piano, and didn’t take up the bass until he was 20. He later studied cello.

He continued to study classical music even while playing jazz because he didn’t want to get pigeonholed in Chicago’s eclectic musical environment. Cellist Karl Fruh and Chicago Symphony Orchestra principal bass Joseph Gua- tafeste were his primary mentors.

Gray has been the bassist of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, also played on several occasions with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and was the featured bassist in the Lyric Opera of Chicago’s production of “Amistad.”

He also has played extensively at the Jazz Showcase and “just soaked it all up. It was my school, my chance to connect with the best musicians in Chicago.”

Gray is part of two long-standing jazz trios: the Larry Coryell Trio, with Larry Coryell on guitar and Paul Wertico on drums, and, from 1998-2010, the Ramsey Lewis Trio. He plays with numerous other jazz musicians, as well as leading his own trio and recording his compositions on five solo CDs.

The music played by the “Made in Chicago” group is largely free improvisation; and rehearsals for the upcoming tour were about the musicians tuning into one another, and the give-and-take on the music itself.

“The reflexes of this group are really finely tuned,” Gray said. “It’s not about the paper (composition) so much, like trying to bring a classical score to life. We’re trying to bring each other life. It’s really in the moment.”

Jazz tour

Bassist Larry Gray, who teaches jazz studies at the U. of I. School of Music, will play at jazz festivals in Europe and the U.S. this summer with the “Made in Chicago” ensemble, led by drummer Jack DeJohnette.

ON THE WEB
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGZf1muAA5A

The submissions for the Barack Obama Presidential Library art exhibit include (clockwise from left) a political cartoon; a photo of the grandmother of a U. of I. graduate, with a portrait of Obama’s name, a can of Spam, and postcards featuring Obama’s smile. (photo courtesy Jorge Lucero)
Crop rotation-resistant rootworms have a lot going on in their guts

**Key differences** U. of I. eco-physiologist Manfredo Seufferheld and his colleagues found substantial differences in gene expression between rotation-resistant rootworms and those that are susceptible to crop rotation.

Crop rotation

Scientists discovered that gut microbes, gene expression and enzyme activity all differ between rotation-resistant rootworms and their rotation-susceptible counterparts. View an infographic about the research.

go.illinois.edu/rootworm_graphic

**ON THE WEB**

uicpress.edu

**by jodi heckel**

Arts & Humanities Editor

**First English translation of work by Japanese activist included

**book corner**

First English translation of work by Japanese activist included

Japen entered a period of colonial expansion in the late 19th century, starting with its annexation of Taiwan in 1895. Within just a few years of this colonial conquest, an anti-imperialism movement began in Japan. One of the key figures in the movement was Kōkū Shūsui, a journalist and anarchist who wrote a book opposing imperialism and who was executed by the Japanese government in 1912.


“I think this book will be valuable reading for people who want to study not only the history of modern empires, but also of the imperialist regulation of antimperialism and of the movements that opposed it,” Tierney said.

Shūsui contended that imperialism is not the result of economics — the growth of capitalism and export of money to foreign markets, as some early 20th-century theorists suggest — but rather derives from political and psychological motivations. Tierney said Shūsui’s theory is that imperialism offers governments a way to divert public attention from domestic inequalities and conflicts and instead focus the energy of citizens on an external enemy, “a manipulated hatred of other nations.”

Shūsui helped establish the first Japanese socialist party in 1901, and he started an anti-war newspaper in 1904 titled “The Anti-Imperialist League, and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) that was eventually driven out of business by the government. He was subsequently jailed for a year in 1906, and later started the Asia Solidarity Association, forming alliances with Chinese and other Asians studying in Japan. In 1910, he was accused of being a ring-leader in an alleged conspiracy to kill the Japanese emperor and executed, an important case known as the High Treason Incident. As a result of postwar research of the trial records, most Japanese historians believe that Shūsui was framed by the authorities in order to destroy the early socialist movement; Tierney said Shūsui was widely considered to be a martyr today.

At the same time Shūsui was opposing Japanese imperialism, similar movements were happening in the U.S., with the formation of the Anti-Imperialist League, and in Britain, with opposition to the Boer War in South Africa. In addition, Shūsui is an important forerunner to the Japanese peace movements that developed after World War II.

Tierney believes the audience for the book will include those interested in the history of Japan, as well as those interested in Japanese history.

“Although this book is about a specific period and discusses events that people may not be familiar with, the bigger issues raised by Kōkū Shūsui and that he faced during his life are still relevant to us today,” Tierney said.

For example, Tierney is interested in whether a different form of imperialism exists today, in the concentration of the world’s wealth and imbalance of power, and problems of inequality and terrorism.

“We can use (Shūsui’s work) as a lens to understand the problems in the world today,” Tierney suggested.

**Advertise your event on the Illinois Student Activity Network**

The Illinois Student Activity Network (SANS) offers an exciting and affordable alternative to advertising your event. With SANS, you can advertise your event for a low fixed price, and reach thousands of students on the University of Illinois campus.

**go.illinois.edu/iisads**

**Summer ‘15 rates and dates online**

Advertising rates and a full schedule with deadlines are available online.

go.illinois.edu/iisads

**By diana tates**

Life Sciences Editor

**After decades of effort, scientists are finally figuring out how insects develop resistance to environmentally friendly farming practices — such as crop rotation — that are designed to kill them. The researchers say their insights will help develop more sustainable agricultural practices.**

In their study, published in the journal Evolutionary Applications, the researchers report that the key to rotation-resistance, at least for the western corn rootworm, lies in its gut.

Previous research from this team, led by U. of I. eco-physiologist Manfredo Seufferheld, found that heightened activity of protein-degrading enzymes and microbes in the microbial community of the gut allowed rotation-resistant rootworm beetles to tolerate a diet of soybean leaves longer than other rootworm beetles. This gave them an advantage wherever crop rotation was practiced. If a female rootworm beetle lingered long enough in a soybean field to deposit her eggs there, and that field was planted with corn the following spring, her larvae would feed on the corn and grow up to repeat the cycle. (Any larvae that emerge in soybean fields will die.)

The new study looks at gene expression in the insect’s gut, and also finds significant differences between rotation-resistant and susceptible (also called “wild type”) rootworm beetle gut microbes. These differences in gene expression may help researchers develop molecular markers to identify rotation-resistant rootworms and improve rootworm-management strategies.

“We found many genes that are differentially expressed between wild-type and rotation-resistant rootworms over 3,000 genes,” Seufferheld said.

Some of these genes code for proteins involved in immunoregulation and antimicrobial functions, he said. This could help explain the differences seen in microbial populations in the digestive systems of rotation-resistant and wild-type rootworms, according to U. of I. eco-physiologist Manfredo Seufferheld, the researchers say.

“We found many genes that are differentially expressed between wild-type and rotation-resistant rootworms,” Seufferheld said. “Some of these genes are associated with insect resistance to other toxins, he said.

The new study deepens scientists’ understanding of the complex interplay of forces that give rise to rotation resistance, he said.

“Understanding the interplay of ecology and evolution will allow us to design more sustainable agricultural practices while minimizing undesirable consequences,”

The study team included researchers from the University of Buenos Aires – CONICET, Argentina; DuPont Pioneer, Buenos Aires; the Illinois Natural History Survey, which is part of the Prairie Research Institute at the U. of I.; the U. of I. departments of entomology and crop sciences; the Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center at Illinois; and the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative of the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture supported this research.
Many older adults going online to discuss, learn about sex

By Sharita Forrest

Forget stereotypes that senior citizens have little interest in sex and are befuddled by technology. Many older adults are going online to dish about the joys of sex and swap advice about keeping their mojos working well into their twilight years, a new study found.

"Many older people preserve both a high interest in sexuality and a high level of sexuality in sexual activities," said researcher Liza Berdychevsky, a professor of recreation, sport and tourism at the University of Illinois who researches sexual behavior and well-being. "The popularity of sex-related discussions in seniors’ online communities suggests that technology is not a sex turn-off."

Berdychevsky and co-author Galit Nimrod, a faculty member at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, conducted an online ethnographic study – or netnography – in which they examined discussions of sexual topics in 14 online communities geared toward adults age 50 and older. Seven of the websites were based in the U.S., four in the U.K., two in Canada and one in Australia.

Berdychevsky said online communities offer notable potential for helping people with the three primary sexual vulnerabilities that occur in later life: health issues and life circumstances that affect sexuality, disinterest in discussing sexuality with health care providers about sex-related problems, and limited access to sexual health information.

The researchers drew their data from an existing dataset, which archived all the discussion threads for a one-year period, and they filtered the messages using various search strategies. While the majority of the discussion threads were a small portion of the entire threads with sexual content were quite popular, with some posts viewed as many as 5,000 times.

Seniors’ discussions of sexual subjects were lively and wide-ranging, the researchers found, with participants swapping opinions and information about topics such as age differences between sexual partners, taboos, same-sex marriage, pornography, prostitution, and the use of sexual aids, toys and sex-enhancing drugs.

For some users, the online discussions provided a forum of leisure entertainment, with discussion forums that were characterized by open, lighthearted atmospheres and posts rife with sexual jokes, anecdotes and innuendos.

Some members wrote about how much they relished opportunities to engage in intellectual discussions about sex, and an especially popular topic was societal stereotypes about older adults’ sexuality, the researchers found.

"Of particular interest was society’s lack of acceptance of sexuality in older adulthood, the reasons for this agestigma view and the importance of changing it," Berdychevsky said.

Some participants recounted bad experiences when they attempted to discuss sexual problems with clinicians who ignored or dismissed their concerns, and other seniors disclosed they were too embarrassed to even initiate such conversations.

The anonymity of cyberspace enabled some seniors to overcome shyness or embarrassment and share their uncensored thoughts about sex for the first time, according to their posts. For people who received little or no sex education during their youth, online consultations with peers enabled them to expand their sexual knowledge and

overcome obstacles to sexual fulfillment. For seniors struggling with the loss of intimacy due to their partner’s death or decline in intimacy, the researchers found that online communities were a small portion of the threads with sexual content were quite popular, with some posts viewed as many as 5,000 times.

Seniors’ discussions of sexual subjects were lively and wide-ranging, the researchers found, with participants swapping opinions and information about topics such as age differences between sexual partners, taboos, same-sex marriage, pornography, prostitution, and the use of sexual aids, toys and sex-enhancing drugs.

For some users, the online discussions provided a forum of leisure entertainment, with discussion forums that were characterized by open, lighthearted atmospheres and posts rife with sexual jokes, anecdotes and innuendos.

Some members wrote about how much they relished opportunities to engage in intellectual discussions about sex, and an especially popular topic was societal stereotypes about older adults’ sexuality, the researchers found.

"Of particular interest was society’s lack of acceptance of sexuality in older adulthood, the reasons for this agestigma view and the importance of changing it," Berdychevsky said.

Some participants recounted bad experiences when they attempted to discuss sexual problems with clinicians who ignored or dismissed their concerns, and other seniors disclosed they were too embarrassed to even initiate such conversations.

The anonymity of cyberspace enabled some seniors to overcome shyness or embarrassment and share their uncensored thoughts about sex for the first time, according to their posts. For people who received little or no sex education during their youth, online consultations with peers enabled them to expand their sexual knowledge and

For seniors struggling with the loss of intimacy due to their partner’s death or decline in intimacy, the researchers found that online communities were a small portion of the threads with sexual content were quite popular, with some posts viewed as many as 5,000 times.

Seniors’ discussions of sexual subjects were lively and wide-ranging, the researchers found, with participants swapping opinions and information about topics such as age differences between sexual partners, taboos, same-sex marriage, pornography, prostitution, and the use of sexual aids, toys and sex-enhancing drugs.

For some users, the online discussions provided a forum of leisure entertainment, with discussion forums that were characterized by open, lighthearted atmospheres and posts rife with sexual jokes, anecdotes and innuendos.

Some members wrote about how much they relished opportunities to engage in intellectual discussions about sex, and an especially popular topic was societal stereotypes about older adults’ sexuality, the researchers found.

"Of particular interest was society’s lack of acceptance of sexuality in older adulthood, the reasons for this agestigma view and the importance of changing it," Berdychevsky said.

Some participants recounted bad experiences when they attempted to discuss sexual problems with clinicians who ignored or dismissed their concerns, and other seniors disclosed they were too embarrassed to even initiate such conversations.

The anonymity of cyberspace enabled some seniors to overcome shyness or embarrassment and share their uncensored thoughts about sex for the first time, according to their posts. For people who received little or no sex education during their youth, online consultations with peers enabled them to expand their sexual knowledge and

Some seniors reported that their sex lives changed as a result of their online activity, which emboldened them to talk more freely with their partners about their sexual needs and overcome hang-ups to try new sexual practices that they previously considered sinful or taboo.

"It seems that the most significant changes from these online sex-related communications were cognitive and emotional, including a greater sense of entitlement for sexual pleasure and fulfillment, loosened inhibitions and a better understanding of the self and others," Berdychevsky said. "Members described various kinds of reappraisal that they achieved through online discussions, such as seeing sex differently or discovering strategies that affected – or had the potential to impact – their sex lives."

Despite the popularity of sexual topics, community members often clashed about propriety, the researchers found. Critics branded the sexual content offensive, pornographic and prurient, and chided participants for their frankness. Proponents characterized objectors as prudish and ignorant, vigorously defended freedom of speech and upheld the threads as interesting, amusing and informative.

Previous studies suggest that the seniors using these online communities are relatively young – with a mean age of 65 years, according to one estimate – and tend to be well-educated, healthy and affluent. Therefore, participants in the current study might not be representative of the broader population of seniors, the researchers cautioned.

The paper, which will be published in the Journal of Leisure Research, is available online.

Deaths

Robert Gold, 93, died May 28 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. He worked at the U of I News Bureau for 9 years, retiring in 1988. He was the first editor of Inside Illinois.

Andrew Vincent Granato, 89, died June 3 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. He was a professor of physics at the U of I for 33 years, retiring in 1994. Memorials: Uni-

tarian Universalist Church, 309 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801, succu.org.

Robert G. Kaiser, 87, died June 13 at Helia Healthcare, Champaign. Kaiser was a building service worker for University Housing from 1969-76.

Ruth Schindler Lottman, 92, died June 5 in Duluth, Georgia. She was a clerk typist III in stenographic services for extra help from 1978-93. Memorials: First United Methodist Church, 210 W. Church St., Champaign, IL 61820.

Arthur J. Siedler, 88, died June 12 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. Siedler was the acting director of the Division of Nutri-

tional Sciences (1978-81); the head of the department of food science (1972-89), a professor of food science, of internal medi-

cine and of nutritional science (1972-94); and retired as professor emeritus in 1994. Memorials: Send donations to the depart-

ment of food science and human nutrition for a scholarship in his name.

Mary Ellen “Mimi” Smith, 63, died June 1 at her Urbana home. She had been the direc-

tor of Parent Programs at the Illini Union for 12 years, retiring in 2009. Memorials: Relay for Life of Vermilion County, 2509 S. Neil St., Champaign, IL 61820.

Memorial service

A memorial service to honor Robert G. Kaiser, 83, will be held at 11 a.m. June 20 at the Mansfield United Methodist Church, 200 S. Main Street, Mansfield, IL 61854. Henderson-Dittmer, 61, died June 11 at her home in Mahomet, Illinois. She was a mail handler at the Campus Mail Center from 1985-2000. Memorials: A fund es-

established in her name through the Sunset Funeral Home and Cremation Center, 710 N. Neil St., Champaign.
The changing demographics of the labor movement.

The editorial staff of Gawker Media—a new media company that publishes the popular websites Deadspin, Gizmodo, Jezebel and Lifehacker—voted overwhelmingly in favor of unionizing. It's also an important organizing case and the changing media landscape.

It appears to have been a campaign in which the employer saw the benefits of having a unionized workforce. It helps when management views unionization as beneficial to work or as a partnership that strengthens a company's position in the industry. And that's too often overlooked:

Not all organizing campaigns are contentious or unfold in a deeply hostile situation where workers and management are at loggerheads. But here, you actually have an employer recognizing that a collective bargaining agreement is consistent with wanting to put out a high-demand, quality product.

Beyond the media value of the story, I also think it reflects a shift in demographics. The writers who voted to organize are highly educated young professionals. It's old economy-new economy. Labor now encompasses a small corner of the new economy. So it really points to a new direction for the labor movement, as well as the movement itself adapting to new workplaces and the new way in which we work.

It's certainly a good story, one that plays well in the news media—particularly because it's about the news media itself, as well as the changing media landscape.

To some degree, it's also about how the mainstream media cover labor and the labor movement. For example, in 2014, unions organized nearly 10,000 new workers in 160 National Labor Relations Board elections. The win rate was 65 percent. But no one reading any newspaper had any idea that happened. So Gawker is news, in part because it's about news production.

It's also an important organizing case because young people get their news from news sites like Gawker, and young journalists also aspire to work at new-media organizations like Gawker. So it's certainly an attractive company in the current media landscape, as well as an example of where unionization can grow.

The mainstream media cover labor and the labor movement. But younger workers are still somewhat unsure that the institution of organized labor is open and welcoming to them. Does this suggest that younger workers view labor unions more positively than older workers?

Polling indicates that younger workers support unionization at higher rates than older workers, and that they view unions in a more positive light than older generations. And I think it's because there is a lot more interest in activism and social justice in the younger generation. The AFL-CIO has been engaged in a multiyear initiative to address the interests of workers under age 30, and they found that there's tremendous interest in social issues among younger workers.

But younger workers are still somewhat unsure that the institution of organized labor itself is open and welcoming to them. Labor also faces the challenge of how to develop young leaders, how to get them into the decision-making process, and how activism, social justice and labor unions can work together for mutual benefit.

It's all part of an ongoing conversation that labor is having right now with younger workers. But what they're finding is that when you explain the values of the labor movement to younger people, they match up really well with the kinds of social issues young people are focused on, such as reducing income inequality, creating new opportunities for people to move into the middle class, poverty and other public policy issues. So there is a zone of agreement where labor finds itself nicely aligned with the younger generation of workers. Now the question is, can the institution capitalize on those shared values and create even more opportunities for younger people. That remains to be seen. ✉