Interim administrator, Executive Committee appointed for NVC

By Joan Ziembis
Graduate School Acting Dean Joseph Merola has appointed Karen Akers, assistant to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, as interim administrator of Virginia Tech’s Northern Virginia Center.

While also continuing in her role as assistant to the dean, Akers will work with a Northern Virginia Center Executive Committee appointed by Merola that includes Jim Wolf, College of Architecture and Urban Studies; Tom Grizzard, Engineering; Barbara Hoopes, Pamplin College of Business; Octavia Madison-Colmore, College of Human Resources and Education; Sean Bohner, College of Arts and Sciences; and Steve Guiffre, continuing education. As interim administrator, Akers will manage the fiscal, personnel, space and other resource issues that support the academic programs.

“This is a temporary solution to help us finish the academic year smoothly and bridge the gap between the loss of NVC’s previous director and the search for a new center director,” Merola said. “I’m sure that Karen and the committee will do an outstanding job of building the framework for that search. I’m very excited about the future of Virginia Tech and the important role our efforts in Northern Virginia will have in shaping that future,” he said.

Akers joined the Virginia Tech Northern Virginia Center as assistant to the dean in 1997. Before that, she served as an outreach manager and administrative associate for the Center for Public Policy Education at the Brookings Institution. She is an Ed.D. candidate in educational leadership at George Washington University where she also earned her master’s in education. She received her bachelor’s degree in communications from Miami University.

SAAP grant to improve response to sexual assault

By Christina D. French
The U.S. Department of Justice has awarded nearly $300,000 to the Sexual Assault Awareness and Adjudication Project (SAAP), a new collaborative effort of Virginia Tech’s Women’s Center and the university’s Office of Judicial Affairs.

The funding comes from the Office of Justice Programs, Violence Against Women Office (VAWO), an organization created to spearhead legal and educational improvements in how the nation addresses domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and was one of only six given by the Department of Justice in 2001.

The grant proposal was co-written by Ellen Plummer, director of the Women’s Center, and Jennifer Calhoun, director of Judicial Affairs, and calls for the creation of SAAP.

“A unique feature of this grant is the highly defined collaboration between the Office of Judicial Affairs and the Women’s Center,” Plummer said. “Ultimately our goals are the same, even if our methods of arriving at them are dissimilar, which is important when you’re dealing with two offices with different guiding philosophies that have, traditionally, not always cooperated on issues of victimization.”

Plummer and Calhoun estimate that 22 percent or fewer of victimized students report their victimization.

According to Plummer and Calhoun, (See SAAP on 4)

Veterinary College’s Large Animal Hospital re-opens

By Jeffrey Douglas

The Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine (VMRCVM) has re-opened the large-animal in-hospital services component of its Veterinary Teaching Hospital following a six-month hiatus.

The Harry T. Peters Large Animal Hospital was closed last summer to mount a major renovation and remedial effort designed to solve a stubborn salmonella problem that had posed a recurring infection risk for people and animals.

Salmonella is a zoonotic disease, or one that infects people and animals. The salmonella bacterium infects the gastrointestinal system, causing diarrhea, fever, and flu-like symptoms.

From time to time animals suffering from salmonella infections are in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital. The organism is shed in the feces of infected animals and people and the disease is spread when salmonella-contaminated fecal material is inadvertently moved from one area to another.

Salmonella infections commonly affect large-animal teaching hospitals in colleges of veterinary medicine across the country. However, this is the first time in 20 years that VMRCVM officials have had to shut down clinical services in an effort to eliminate a persistent problem.

The primary component of the $275,000 project included the replacement (See VETERINARY on 4)

New funding package proposed for building projects

Senator John Chichester and Delegate Vincent Callahan announced Monday that they would sponsor legislation for a multi-phased capital projects package.

The program would partially or completely fund up to 16 projects at Virginia Tech, totaling $123.2 million. Some projects would be included in a package of general-obligation bonds requiring voter approval.

“Dr. Dolan’s creativity and experience in making the science of biotechnology accessible and understandable to young people will help us move our outreach efforts (See DOLAN on 3)
Construction to affect parking lots

A large section of Pamplin/Derring parking lot will be lost for two years to support the project staging area for the chemistry/physics construction. The only vehicles that will be allowed access to the area between Derring and Pamplin halls will be handicapped, service and vendors. There will only be parking spaces for these three types of vehicles.

B-lot (the large commuter lot off Price’s Fork Road) parking spaces will change designation over winter break to begin addressing the significant loss of spaces. The center section (behind Cowgill Hall and across Perry Street), which is currently designated for faculty/staff parking will be converted to commuter/graduate parking on December 31. The section of B-lot to the west (behind Derring Hall and across Perry Street), which is currently designated for commuter/graduate parking will be converted to faculty/staff parking on December 31. This change will replace all the faculty/staff spaces lost to the construction project.

Several projects are being scheduled for summer 2002 to increase the number of commuter/graduate spaces in this region to replace those lost spaces.

Service-Learning Center to host workshop

The Service-Learning Center is hosting a workshop on Integrating Service-Learning into Watershed Management on Thursday, Jan. 17, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in the Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center.

Tamim Younos from the Virginia Water Resources Research Center will facilitate the workshop, which is titled “Integrating Service-Learning into Watershed Management.”

Younos directs the Stroubles Creek Watershed Initiative, a research-based learning community involving students, faculty members, and community agencies in restoring the health of the Stroubles Creek watershed. Younos has also edited a special issue of Water Resources Journal on “Integrating Universities’ Knowledge and Student Service-Learning into Community-Based Watershed Management Programs.”

For more information, or to register for the workshop, contact the Service-Learning Center at 1-6964 or deramo@vt.edu.

Diversity Summit deadline approaching

By Clara B. Cox

Virginia Tech’s Fifth Annual Diversity Summit, sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs and the Office of Multicultural Affairs, will be held January 21, from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Squires Commonwealth Ballroom. The deadline to register for the summit is Friday, Jan. 18.

“This annual event provides us with an opportunity to reflect on our progress toward becoming a more inclusive and welcoming community. Initiated four years ago on Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, the summit has heightened our awareness of the various communities by listening to the voices of our students, staff and faculty members,” said Barbara Pendergrass, dean of students, whose office coordinates the event.

For more information, or to register for the workshop, contact the Service-Learning Center at 1-6964 or deramo@vt.edu.

Child Study Center to compare different phobia treatments

By Sally Harris

Thomas Ollendick, university distinguished professor of psychology, and two post-doctoral research scientists at Virginia Tech’s Child Study Center are looking for participants for a study of three assessment/treatment programs for children and adolescents with specific phobias.

Children learn to fear many things, from dogs to butterflies, from flying to thunderstorms, Ollendick said. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association defines a phobia as a fear that significantly interferes with ongoing activities or causes significant distress to the child.

Ollendick, along with Alison Shortt and Janay Sander, will study various aspects of phobias, looking at factors that predispose some children and not others to develop certain phobias and the best treatments for them. Angela Scarpa-Friedman and Bruce Friedman, professors in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech, will serve as consultants to the project.

With $1.6 million in funding from the National Institute of Mental Health over the next four years, the study will offer free assessment and treatment for participants, as well as payment to parents for the time required for the study.

The program will divide youths randomly into three groups to study children and families under one of three conditions. The first is an intensive and abbreviated exposure-based treatment delivered in one three-hour session in which the child will gradually be exposed to the phobia-inducing object, but never asked to do anything he or she does not want to do. A therapist will model the appropriate behavior around the object, correct the child’s false beliefs, and praise the child’s progress. “We think it’s..."
EMPLOYMENT

CLASSIFIED POSITIONS

The following classified positions are currently available. Position details, specific application procedures, position-closing dates may be found on Personnel Services website at http://www.ps.vt.edu. Positions are also listed on the JobLine, a 24-hour recorded message service. Information for all job listings, call 1-5300. Some positions include state benefits. Positions with numbers beginning with "W" are hourly and do not include state benefits. Individuals with disabilities desiring assistance or accommodation in the application process should call by the application deadline. Closing date for advertised positions is 1 p.m. Monday. An EEO/AA employer committed to diversity.

Accountant Senior, 007320F, PB 4, Bursar's Office.
Administrative Assistant, 001135J, PB 3, HTM.
Administrative Associate, 00716IS, PB 3, Development.
Cashier, 000772H, PB 1, RDP.
Cashier, 000559H, PB 1, RDP.
Coordinator of Administrative Affairs, 007879R, PB 4, Executive Vice President's Office.
Financial Planning Manager, 007567F, BFP.
Fiscal Assistant, 000111F, PB 2, Controller's Office.
Food Production Supervisor, 000405H, PB 1, RDP.
Government Documents Assistant, W023251G, PB 2, ULTS.
Laboratory Mechan B, 002629M, PB 3, VMES.
Laboratory Specialist, 007707B, PB 3, CE.
Laboratory Specialist, 007860M, PB 3, VMES.
Medical Technologist, 002596M, PB 4, VTH.
Office Services Specialist, 000414M, PB 2, FST.
Operations Manager, 007121H, PB 4, RDP.
Program Support Technician, 000446R, PB 3, Graduate School.
Program Support Technician, 002230J, PB 3, Military Affairs.
Program Support Technician, 005577M, PB 3, APS.
Program Support Technician Senior, 002443R, PB 3, IRD.

Radiologic Technologist, 002394M, PB 3, VTH.
Sous Chef, 000940H, PB 3, RDP.
Sous Chef, 007881H, PB 3, RDP.

PART TIME

Animal Care Technician Large Animal, 002006M, PB 2, VTH.
Fiscal Technician, 002081M, PB 3, VTH.
Graphic Artist, 002506M, PB 3, RDP.
ICU Veterinary Technician Large Animal, 002218M, PB 2, VTH.
Laboratory Specialist, 002335M, PB 3, APS.
Laboratory Technician, 002335J, PB 2, FWS.
Motor Pool Attendant, 0023000F, PB 1, RDP.
Postal Delivery Driver, 002072O, PB 2, UMS.
Program Support Technician, 002335IS, PB 3, CAUS.
Program Support Technician, 002335J, PB 3, HTM.
Research Specialist, 007465M, PB 3, Horticulture.
Veterinary Technicians, 002334OM, PB 4, VTH.
UNIVERSITY ONLY
Fiscal Technician, 0002462J, PB 3, Near Environments.
Research Specialist/Lab Manager, 0007911O, PB 4, WSIF.
OFF CAMPUS
4-H Program Assistant, 005845M, PB 2, VCE.
Adult Program Assistant, 006802J, PB 2, PRP.
Adult Program Assistant, 006604J, PB 2, Prince William Country.
Etnp Adult Program Assistant, 006103M, PB 2, VCE—Prince William Country.
Etnp Adult Program Assistant, 006348M, PB 2, VCE—Virginia Beach.
Fiscal Technician, 007407M, PB 3, VCE—SML—4-H Center.
Program Assistant, 007816J, PB 2, VCE—Suffolk.
Program Assistant, 007334J, PB 2, VCE—Petersburg.
Research Specialist Senior, 003230M, PB 4, Hampton Roads AREC.
Unit Administrative Assistant, 005532M, PB 3, VCE—Exxon County.
Unit Administrative Assistant, 005451M, PB 3, VCE—Northampton County.
Unit Administrative Assistant, 005190G, PB 3, VCE—New Kent Country.
Unit Support Staff, 007095M, PB 2, VCE.
Youth Program Assistant, 005889J, PB 2, HNFE.
Youth Program Assistant, 007464J, PB 2, HNFE.
Youth Program Assistant, 007233J, PB 2, HNFE.

PERSONNEL SERVICES INFORMATION

State Retirement Policy Changes Affect Virginia Tech Community

By Paul Smartschns
University Relations intern

Changes in federal and state laws and the large number of baby boomers approaching retirement age are making retirement a hot topic on campus and at the Volume II Bookstore.

As Virginia retirement laws are modified, the numbers of workers eligible for unreduced and early retirement continue to rise. Recent changes in Virginia Retirement System policy allows workers to improve their retirement options by using prior state service, military time, and time with other out-of-state public institutions, and related time to enhance retirement benefits.

The recent rule change is not the first time the VRS has made retirement more attainable for state workers. Several years ago, the law was modified to allow early retirement at age 50 with 30 years of service. Virginia Tech hired new faculty and staff members during the growth era of the 60s and 70s. Many of these individuals are now eligible for full or partial retirement benefits. In five to ten years, 1,000 to 1,400 faculty and staff members will be eligible to retire.

Faculty and staff members who are interested in learning about new retirement law and pre-retirement laws can locate information in more than one place. According to Martin, the university provides various retirement resources for its employees. "Formal pre-retirement programs are provided annually in the spring," he said. "To address recent and upcoming rule changes and updates, the university also arranges special programs periodically through out the year. For example, several retirement programs will be conducted next month to inform faculty and staff members of new tax-law and legislation revisions as well as the change in law concerning the purchase of prior services."

Virginia Tech Volume II Bookstore, located in the University Mall, is now catering to the community's growing need for retirement information. Paul Clark, the store's assistant manager and general book buyer, said, "Six months ago, bookstore management recognized that there was a community and university need for a book section dedicated to retirement and pre-retirement. Since then, our new retirement-book section has sold really well. The section draws good customer responses from the community as well as Virginia Tech faculty and staff members."

According to Clark, the store's retirement-book section is very diverse. "This section has books for everyone," he said. "Because retirement is a part of life that addresses so many different dimensions and expectations, the section includes a broad range of books—spiritual, physical, emotional, recreational, financial, etc." Clark said. Volume II management hopes to expand its retirement section and search for new ways to reach out to retirees.

INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY CENTER created here

By Lynn Davis

Greg Amacher, associate professor in the Department of Forestry in the College of Natural Resources, has announced the creation of the new International Forestry Center (IFC). "The mission of the new center is to facilitate research and Extension in international forestry," Amacher said.

Assisting him with the center is Frank Merry, research scientist in international forestry in the Department of Forestry. A steering committee of industry professionals helps to set the agenda. Faculty members in the College of Natural Resources and across the university participate. Amacher said, "The center will draw on a wide range of faculty members in all aspects of international forestry to provide a medium through which faculty members and students at Virginia Tech can collaborate with the international community."

The IFC works in partnerships with gov-
First universal-design forum hosted on campus last fall

By Sarah Newbill

The first universal design forum, INEEADS, was hosted on campus this fall, and was the first of a three-part series bringing together design-related programs across the university, and serving as an internal forum for future design endeavors.

Specific objectives included making students aware of ergonomics, accessibility, and usability principles as they relate to consumer-product design, and to promote a shared working environment across disciplines with respect to this topic.

“Universal design is a big movement across the world right now and we are sitting at the forefront of being able to make a really strong initiative in this direction,” said Professor Ellen Braaten, coordinator of the event who first developed this idea out of her own needs as a person with physical limitations. “This first forum addressed issues that might seem beyond what we consider normal, like a normal walking person. What universal design will hopefully do is expand what our concept of what normal is.”

Eight presentations were a part of the day-long event, and included topics ranging from designing clothing for women with physical disabilities, to problems and solutions in the design of consumer-product labeling, particularly for seniors or those who are visually impaired.

The INEEADS acronym came from combining letters of the sponsors, which include the College of Architecture and Urban Studies’ industrial-design program, the near-environments program in the College of Human Resources and Education, the industrial-and-systems-engineering program in the Civil Engineering department, and the support roles that the university’s Virginia Assistive Technology lab and the EOA office play.

The second forum to be hosted on campus next fall with plans to showcase objects developed that keep universal-design characteristics in mind. Prototypes of these items would then later be submitted to corporations for possible sponsorship. Plans for next year also include offering a cross-college course addressing universal-design issues.

SAAP Continued from 1

SAAP will increase awareness of violence against women among first-year and sophomore students, increase awareness of referral options, and raise the number of referrals to adjudication systems both on and off campus.

Plummer and Calhoun said they plan to use the grant money to hire a full-time victim advocate in the Women’s Center and a judicial administrator for sexual misconduct and harassment in the Judicial Affairs Office. Create a response protocol for cases of sexual assault and other gender-based crimes, and distribute improved educational materials for students, their families, and key referral agents.

A focal point will be to develop an effective response to electronic abuse, such as threatening e-mail messages or electronic stalking. “Most of the time, our jobs are thought of as reactive. So one of the unique things about this project is that it’s proactive through educating and creating awareness,” Calhoun said.

A number of resources are already in place on the Tech campus that will help researchers meet the intended goals of the project. Among them are the university’s Sexual Assault Task Force, mandatory orientation prevention and education program, and on-going training of campus police and disciplinary-board members.

“We are pleased to be collaborating with Student Affairs on this important project for the Virginia Tech community. Sexual assault and related crimes of violence against women can have devastating consequences, often derailed the academic careers and ambitions of victims and perpetrators. What we want to do is create a safer environment for students and this grant will help accomplish that important goal,” said Pat Hyer, associate provost, who oversees the Women’s Center.

Edward Spencer, who oversees judicial affairs, said he hopes that “through this grant, we will improve the overall environment and social norms to the point where all members of the Virginia Tech community will agree and ensure that such acts should not, can not, and will not be tolerated.”

CHILD Continued from 2

very effective and a good treatment that will work well with children,” Olleindick said.

The second group will get an education-support treatment in which they learn, also in one three-hour session, about the phobia-inducing object and about fear and how it is acquired. The child is not exposed to the feared object. “Once the child has detailed information about the phobic object and they understand why it seems fearful to them,” Olleindick said, “they become less afraid of it.” There is evidence that indicates the education-support treatment is good when done well, Olleindick said. However, if the children in either group do not respond to the treatment to which they are assigned, they will be offered the other.

The third group of children will be in a wait-list control group that will receive one of the two active treatments three weeks after the initial assessments to determine whether some children improve simply by going through the assessment process, without subsequent treatment, as some evidence suggests. All three groups will get follow-up assessments at six months and one year to determine the treatments’ long-time effectiveness.

The researchers hope to gain an understanding of what severe phobias look like in children and what the long-term effects are. “Often, phobias are viewed as relatively insignificant,” Olleindick said, “but that’s not the case. For many children, effects persist into adolescence and adulthood.”

“Some phobias affect not only the child, but also the entire family,” Shortt said. Some children, for example, may not be able to visit friends or go to the park with the family if they fear dogs.”

The group wants to study, also, what causes phobias, what temperaments pre-dispose children to phobias, and what thought processes cause an incident to evolve into a phobia.

The researchers need children and adolescents between the ages of eight and 14 for the study, which is all free and confidential. Shortt and Sander will provide the treatments, and trained graduate students will do the assessments, all under Olleindick’s supervision.

The study will start January 14. To enroll a child in the program, call Shortt or Sander at 1-3514.

INTERNATIONAL Continued from 1

ernments, universities, non-governmental organizations, and communities throughout the world to better participate in local and regional forestry issues. The center is involved in short- and long-term consultancies in international-forestry-development projects.

Current IFC projects and consultancies cover a breadth of international-forestry issues, including forest policy and economics, forest management and reduced-impact logging, community forestry, industrial forestry, agro-forestry, and the tropical timber trade.

For more information, go to http://www.cnr.vt.edu/ifc/Fmerry/pages/IFChome.htm, or contact Amacher at gamacher@vt.edu, or 1-5943.

Director Robert Martin to area veterinarians in a letter informing them that the facility had re-opened. “We believe we can serve you better now than ever before and that is our goal and commitment.” A task force of university faculty members has been working with the university facilities staff and private contractors throughout the remedial and improvement effort.

A number of other structural enhancements were made to the Peters Hospital complex as part of the improvement efforts. Some of those include the replacement of existing wood casement and counter areas with stain less steel, the installation of new stall matting in many of the animal holding areas, and new electronic plumbing fixtures designed to foster high standards of biosecurity in the hospital environment, according to Hospital Administrator Rick Hiller.

VMRCVM clinical services for large animals such as horses, cattle, sheep and goats had been available throughout the shutter-down period on an outpatient basis, Martin said. But major clinical services had been curtailed in the facility that includes animal holding stalls for 37 patients and two large-animal surgical suites. About 1,100 large-animal patients are treated in the Peters hospital annually.

“This has been a major project that has required the assistance, cooperation and understanding of many people in our college and among those we serve,” said VMRCVM Dean Peter Eyer. “Our clients expect excellence in animal health care from us, and these steps were taken to ensure that we meet those expectations.”