



LSC Heritage

By Margot Miller
LSC Graduate Student

The second annual LSC scholarship reception reflected the importance of heritage. While discussion savored the prospect of our move to an ‘old home’ in Hiram Smith Hall in December 2007, everyone was jolted back to the urgency of the present and the demands of our young, when Patricia Howell arrived straight from the delivery room to joyously announce the birth of her and the late Brian Howell’s grandchild. She left her daughter and granddaughter immediately after the birth, she said, because she so much wanted to meet the recipient of the Brian Howell Memorial Scholarship. In this way, Pat reached out to all of us who try to create and sustain a meaningful legacy for our students, our children and our grandchildren.

Professor Larry Meiller emceed, and noted the significant increase in LSC’s undergraduate students who focus on the natural sciences, and on those double majoring in a science field. Recent graduates are enrolling in medical school, as an alternative to graduate school in a communication-related discipline. Professor Dietram Scheufele provided an update on the graduate program, including the initiative to provide a Master’s of Professional Studies for graduate students pursuing a non-academic career as science communicators.

Department Chair and Professor Jacqueline Hitchon McSweeney announced that Dr. Bret Shaw will join the faculty as an assis-



Professor Larry Meiller
- Addressing attendees at the 2007 LSC Scholarship Reception

Erick Danzer

tant professor specializing in environmental communication on July 1. His hire fleshes out the department’s capacity to address the breadth of life science issues.

Nicole Schmidt, the recipient of the John E. and Elizabeth B. Ross Scholarship, who is studying abroad in Chile, was unable to attend but was still able to thank the Rosses via a video she created. The Rosses’s scholarship has

responsibilities life science communicators must fulfill, particularly in terms of the interpretation of science issues, the economics involved, current advances in the field, and the development of science in relation to philosophy.

Beth Ross also spoke, thanking the department, Dean Molly Jahn, the scholarship committee, and the Foundation on behalf of all donors for their participation

The first recipients of this scholarship were Buffy Sacia, an undergraduate from Melrose, Wisconsin, and Mike Cacciatore, a graduate student from Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Professor Emeritus Maury White said, “It’s a good idea to get recipients and donors together. One of the most enjoyable parts of the ceremony for me was the visit with parents of the students. It was nice to be sitting at the same table with students and parents and have conversation.”

Mike Cacciatore, a Witter White Scholarship recipient said, “More than anything it was wonderful to have the opportunity to meet the generous donors, and hear about their experiences with the department.”

In her comments, Dean Jahn thanked journalists and communicators for the commitment they make to their field. Jahn’s cousin, Bob Woodruff, was the first American news anchor to be injured in Iraq. Woodruff was seriously injured by a roadside bomb in Iraq, but is making a full recovery.



Professor Emeritus John Ross and CALS Dean Molly Jahn
- At the 2007 LSC Scholarship Reception

Erick Danzer

been recently reframed to help a student meet tuition costs in hard financial times. Emeritus Professor John Ross, who served in the department from 1954 until 1993, addressed the audience and stressed the

in awarding scholarships to deserving candidates.

The awards ceremony celebrated a new addition this year: the Maurice E. and Grace Witter White Life Sciences Communication Scholarship.

“It was wonderful to have the opportunity to meet the generous donors, and hear about their experiences with the department.”

Mike Cacciatore
LSC Graduate Student

“It’s a good idea to get recipients and donors together.”

Maury White
LSC Emeritus Professor
Scholarship Donor

from the chair...



Erick Danzer

Dear friends,
This summer we are very excited to welcome our newest faculty member, Bret Shaw, who will join us on July 1. Bret comes to us with a wealth of experience in the

online media industry and also with an impressive record of scholarly productivity addressing how online communities of patients battle serious illness. His tenure track position is shared with UW Extension and he will be focusing on improving environmental communications in the state. Welcome, Bret!

April saw our second annual scholarship reception, with recipients, their families, and donors sharing their perspectives on the importance of recognizing and celebrating students' talents and hard work. This is such an uplifting

event. Even the weather has blessed us for two years! We looked out on the lake from a beautiful, sun-drenched room in the Pyle Center, as we listened to our students articulate their achievements, goals and dreams.

The dream of a new home for LSC is rapidly becoming a reality. We are now scheduled to move on December 21st, 2007. Asbestos abatement is currently in process, we are told; because of the hazards involved, we are unable to confirm progress in person! As you can imagine, we are

impatient to be able to get a sense of the new space ---- architectural drawings can only convey so much. Staff member, Brenda Klusmeyer, has been researching furniture styles at the turn of the 19th into the 20th century so that whenever we need to buy new furniture, we can aspire to create coherent interior design. Fortunately, the building of Hiram Smith Hall coincides with the birth of Mission furniture, which can be locally sourced, is robust, and is compatible with a professional environment. Since we have workable contemporary furni-

ture in our classrooms at this point, it will be many years before we can become fully faithful to the Hall's historic legacy. And even then, we will be striving to maintain state-of-the-art communication technology, of course!

Wishing you all a wonderful summer,

Jacque
Professor and Chair
Jacqueline Hitchon McSweeney

On the Road and On the Air

By Chris McIntyre
LSC Senior

Whether coining alliteration or simple but catchy slang, Jean Fewster has a way with words. No one can live up an otherwise dull sentence quite like her, dropping such phrases as "Magical Madison" at just the right, unexpected juncture.

But when describing how she ended up in Madison for grad school after years in Canada, even Fewster can't resist hyperbole—"a miracle," to be precise.

When one looks at her journey, it is understandable why that hyperbole isn't so far-fetched.

Fewster, who received her undergraduate degree from the University of Saskatchewan, spent years traveling through Canada in a variety of different home economics positions. She was seeking something more in her career, but was unsure what. During summer vacation she enrolled in a course at the University of West Virginia focusing on worldwide cultural and social aspects of food and people. It was enough to trigger a change of path.

"I knew I needed to do something, even though I had an enviable job in Canada," Fewster

said. Then came the magic. "I got in touch with my former assistant, who had gone to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She said 'there's a whole department of agriculture and home economics journalism here,'" Fewster said.

The program fit perfectly with Fewster's background in communication and community nutrition.

"Down I went (to Madison) on our long holiday weekend," she said. "I was hooked - and was there, as a student, three month later."

In Fewster's time, the mid-60s, the MS degree was in Agricultural Journalism and the interdisciplinary doctoral degree was in Mass Communication. After completing her PhD she was preparing to join a university in Canada, when she received a cable from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. It offered her a three month consultancy position in its Home Economics Service at its headquarters in Rome. Ironically—or perhaps fittingly after her journey—the course Fewster took years ago at West Virginia was a result of a FAO field assignment that did not materialize.

That little three-month



Erick Danzer

Recipients of the 2007 Jean Fewster Scholarship
- (from left): Heather Akin, Laurel Norris, Kate Tiller-Danzer

position turned into a 15-year career. The programs Fewster generated in Rome were numerous—an education program called "Planning for Better Family Living" is an example. In addition, she will forever remember working in underprivileged areas and collaborating with individuals from across the world.

Upon returning to North America, Fewster stayed active in her field. She served as food editor while working with the Dairy Foods Service Bureau. The Bureau, which links Canadian dairy farmers with consumers, promoted and educated the public in nutrition realms. The position was dubbed "Marie Fraser," and its success led to similar programs in other food industries—meat and bakery goods, for example. Fewster's "Marie Fraser" works are still housed at the Special Collections Unit at the University of Guelph Library in Ontario.

Despite extensive travels, Fewster still fondly recalls her time spent in Madison. Since she had family in town, visits to Madison were frequent after leaving. Plus, the trips helped Fewster stay in touch with the Agricultural Journalism faculty she had grown so close to while broadcasting a half-hour

radio show originally called "Homemaker's Program," a large aspect of her work in Madison.

"The guests were fascinating," she said. "It was like having a multi-faced Master's program laid out before one. So the radio work was a privilege - and an opportunity of a lifetime. As were the studies and later the work with FAO."

Madison affected her so much that Fewster established a fund at UW-Madison in addition to a scholarship she started at the University of Toronto. And in a way that only Fewster can, she always manages to turn scholarship discussions around, preferring to discuss UW's new generation of communicators than her own role as donor.

"The caliber of the students," she begins, "is incredible in terms of backgrounds and experiences they bring to grad school as well, as in the very meaningful manner in which they have communicated their thanks for the awards."

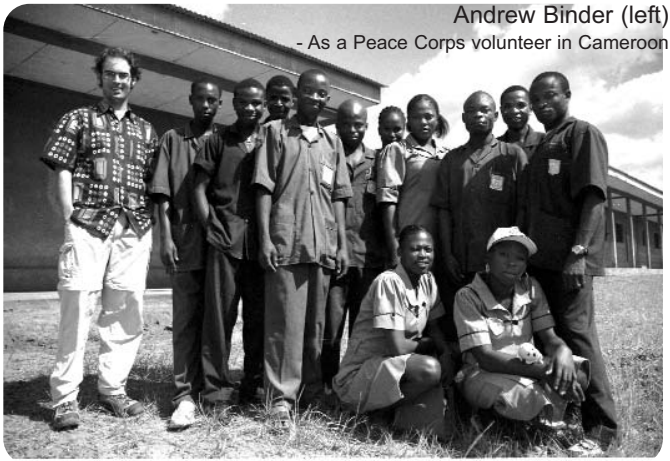
Certainly, Fewster would know. Communication is something she has spent her life doing, from Canada to Europe and everywhere in between.

Including Madison.

“The caliber of the students is incredible in terms of backgrounds and experiences they bring to grad school.”

Jean Fewster
LSC Alum and Scholarship Donor

Communicating Language & Culture



Andrew Binder (left)
- As a Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon

By Sarah Peters
LSC Senior

Charlemagne once said, “To have another language is to possess a second soul.” If this is the case, LSC graduate student Andrew Binder is in luck. As a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2001 with a degree in French and a certificate in African Studies, Binder has embarked on an exploration of communication

that recognizes the roles of language and culture.

Binder has always been intrigued by the use of language in society, and after returning from teaching in France in 2002, joined the Peace Corps. It was during his two years teaching in Cameroon, on Africa’s western coast, that Binder was able to more clearly define his interests.

“A large part of my interest in communications is based on my experience in the Peace Corps” said Binder. “Seeing people trying to persuade oth-

ers, but often times being very ineffective, really made me think about the best ways of communicating ideas.”

Having joined LSC, Binder is currently wrestling with communication issues concerning stem cell research and politics, public service announcements and poverty, people’s understanding of nanotechnology, and the changing public views of global warming. He will present his findings on people’s extreme attitudes toward stem cell research at the International Communication Association Conference, in San Francisco, California this summer. He is also scheduled to travel to Washington, D.C. in August to

speak on his research involving people’s attributions about poverty based on their exposure to public service announcements.

What many dread in the field of research, Binder relishes. “Every time I learn new statistical analysis, I get excited.” Alluding to the thinking skills he gained from studying languages, Binder said, “Language is almost mathematical, the way you structure sentences and express yourself.”

“Seeing people trying to persuade others, but often times being very ineffective, really made me think about the best ways of communicating ideas.”

Andrew Binder
LSC Graduate Student

From Television’s Beginnings

By Heather Akin
LSC Graduate Student

Nellie McCannon’s history in journalism is a long and fruitful one, beginning when television was first came into the mainstream as a communication medium.

Dr. McCannon tracks the start of her career in journalism to the time when television first came to WTMJ in Milwaukee where she was working as a home agent. The county employees were invited to see a demonstration of the new medium, and McCannon was intrigued. A few months later, the Dairy Council Nutritionist started a food program, and with McCannon’s professional experience and her bachelor’s degree in Home Economics from Iowa State College, she was asked to be a guest on the show. She describes the station as “a stage set up in the corner of an exhibit hall,” without a studio or control room.

Eventually McCannon

was given her own program, a 30-minute monthly show on foods that was extremely well received. She was the first extension agent to employ television as a tool, using 4-H and homemaker club members as guests, which required training each to prepare them for their appearance on television. McCannon wondered, “are you really teaching anyone with this medium?” and she began to consider going back to school to learn about the teaching potential of television.

In February 1952, during a session of the Farm and Home Week program, McCannon mentioned to the home economics editor that she was considering graduate work. Later that day, the editor contacted her and told her she could have a graduate assistantship in the Agricultural Journalism Department. That September, she began her graduate studies.

Upon completion of her graduate degree in 1953, the home economics editor position was open and Dr.

McCannon was selected for the job. She describes the department at the time as, “a department with few women faculty, but you could never have found a more wonderful group of men to work with. The Agricultural Journalism family was a remarkable one.” Her duties included teaching graduate and undergraduate courses and advising students.

In 1967, her appointment became a joint one between the Agricultural Journalism department and the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences. In this position she traveled throughout the state of Wisconsin as the use of television as a medium became widespread.

“When stations started in Madison, LaCrosse, Wausau, and elsewhere, Maury White and I held district meetings with agents at each station. They came with a 5-minute TV show, which was taped. Then the show was played back and all could critique each for handling equipment in front of the camera, looking at the camera, even selection

of topic. That way every agent in the state was trained in doing TV and many soon started their regular appearances,” describes McCannon. “Soon Maury and I started doing half hour shows on WHA-TV, in a rickety studio in the old brick building that stood where the parking lot is across from the Union. We each did two shows a week and the consumer specialist did the fifth. That went on for a long time.” In varying capacities, McCannon contributed 37 years to the University.

In her retirement, Emeritus Professor McCannon has traveled the world, visiting all seven continents. She attributes her desire to travel to all of the international graduate students from many countries with whom she worked and studied with in the Agricultural Journalism department.

McCannon now resides in Wheaton, Illinois. She says it



Nellie McCannon

was difficult to leave Madison, but with five nieces and nephews living in Chicagoland, she feels at home. She serves as the secretary of her retirement community’s Resident Council, and still keeps up her editing skills by proofing the monthly newsletter.

“My 37 years being associated with the University was a rare privilege. I couldn’t have been more fortunate,” adds McCannon.

“My 37 years with the University was a rare privilege.”

Nellie McCannon
LSC Alum

Visual Communication of Nature and Science

By Nicholas B. Schmuhl
LSC Special Student

For over a century, the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Lakeshore Nature Preserve has been cherished by the campus community as an intellectual and recreational gateway to the natural world. The protected lands along Lake Mendota's shoreline have been treasured by distinguished UW alumni including Frank Lloyd Wright and environmentalist John Muir, whose name adorns the

famous woods on the Preserve's Eastern outpost. On November 19, 2006, the new Preserve website (www.lakeshorepreserve.wisc.edu) went live, providing Preserve enthusiasts and newcomers alike with an innovative way to access their natural surroundings via the internet, and expanding the relationship between humans, technology, and the environment.

"[People] have to feel connected to the places they visit," said Melanie McCalmont, Lakeshore Nature Preserve Web Designer and Life Sciences Communication graduate student. "If all you have is a paper map and a sign by a path, all the features of the Preserve aren't apparent. On this website, you can zoom in on your favorite trail from the air, mark locations of vanished historic sites, or watch a time-lapse view of the entire Preserve since 1927.

Those features don't work on paper and signs. It's like a personal interpretive center, a personal trail guide."

experience of being among the trees or at the water's edge." Thus, McCalmont set her bar high, striving for a result that

tive but repeatable, visual but data-rich." National acclaim for the site is a testament to the team's

vision. The site was recently given an award for "Best Interactive Digital Map" in the professional category in the 2006 American Congress for Survey and Mapping's Cartography and Geographical Information Systems Map Design Competition, and earned a first-

place award from the Wisconsin Land Information Association for "Best Interactive Map."

For McCalmont, perhaps the most flattering endorsement came from the President of the Trust for Public Land, who forwarded the Lakeshore Nature Preserve link to the Board of Directors and Vice Presidents as a model to con-



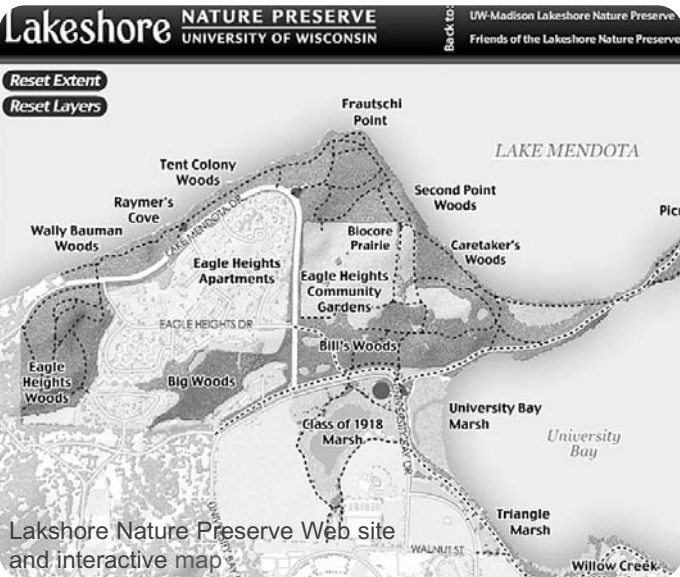
Melanie McCalmont
- In the Cartography Lab in Science Hall

The new site, funded by UW alumni Eleanor and Peter Blitzer, represents the collaborative efforts of Preserve Staff, members of the advocacy group Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, and an interdepartmental coalition of UW faculty and students.

Preliminary work began in the summer of 2006 as historic documents and images were gathered and organized and a team of Geography graduate students devised the interactive map that would serve as the site's striking centerpiece. Meanwhile, UW historian and environmental scholar Professor William Cronon coordinated and edited source articles for the site. When web construction commenced in September, McCalmont used these articles to design over 325 connecting web pages, and create over 25 index maps and process over 2,400 images, video clips, and panoramas. She also produced hundreds of graphics and over 60 page banners.

Concerned by the public's trend toward indoor, sedentary culture, Preserve Program Manager Daniel Einstein envisioned the site as "an enticement...an adjunct to visiting the Preserve—not a substitute for the sensual and kinetic

would combine appreciation of nature with learning, and affording guests a feeling of partnership with the Preserve. She attributes the end product's scientific depth and human interest to the 22 authors and four photographers whose contributions allowed her to visually portray the Preserve's stewardship mis-



sion through the site's design, organization, and applicability. "It takes unusual insight and craft to communicate science issues so that people can answer the question 'Why should I care?' and feel empowered to take action," McCalmont observed. "Websites are the ideal medium for this. [They're] interac-

sider in promoting land conservation via the web. "To me," says McCalmont, "this is what Life Science Communication is all about—the unselfish connecting of people, knowledge, and technology so that we can use science to make better decisions."

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Melanie McCalmont
LSC Graduate Student

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