Nature’s perfect food gets better

Guelph researchers explore your inner ecosystem
When John fell into the boards, here’s what it cost:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physio</td>
<td>$200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>$250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massage</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL OWING</td>
<td>$890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

John’s provincial health plan paid for none of it.

His Alumni Health & Dental Plan paid for most of it.

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A Guelph chemist discovers a way to reduce the environmental impact of aluminum mining, OVC opens a new building for research and diagnostic services, and environmental science professors show that planting trees to offset carbon emissions won’t affect global warming.

HOW GUT BACTERIA AFFECT YOUR HEALTH

Prof. Emma Allen-Vercoe’s made-in-Guelph “robo-gut” is a unique research tool for studying the causes of inflammatory bowel disease, gum disease and even autism.

ALUMNI Profiles

Guelph grad Claudia Harvey entered the Dragon’s Den and came out a winner. Software developer Barry Billings designs health-care tools for the Canadian market. And physics alumni Derek and Michelle Brown are modifying medical equipment for use in developing countries.

Building a better planet

U of G celebrates major donations that will support student learning, promote environmental governance and fund research to improve the health of horses.

content:

3 — president’s page • grad news — 30 • passages — 37

16 —

cover story

MAKING HEALTHY FOOD EVEN BETTER

Foods of the future will be more specialized for the health needs of the individual consumer, says U of G food scientist Milena Corredig.

19 —

ALUMNI PROFILES

Guelph grad Claudia Harvey entered the Dragon’s Den and came out a winner. Software developer Barry Billings designs health-care tools for the Canadian market. And physics alumni Derek and Michelle Brown are modifying medical equipment for use in developing countries.

24 —

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To update your alumni record, contact:

Publications Mail Agreement # 40064673

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Contact Patti Lago: toll free at 1-888-622-2474 • plago@uoguelph.ca
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W e’re inviting the world to Guelph. And we’re issuing a challenge. People from all walks of life and from all over the world will converge upon the University of Guelph in February to attend the sixth annual Universities Fighting World Hunger Summit. It’s the first time this international event has been held in Canada. We expect to see more than 400 people, including university students, faculty members, government and aid workers, politicians and social activists.

Day in and day out, hunger is a fact of life for one of every seven people on Earth. Nearly one billion people in the world don’t get enough to eat. Hunger kills more people every year than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. Faced with such a huge problem, it’s difficult to know how to solve it. But it’s a challenge we can’t ignore.

Universities Fighting World Hunger works with the United Nations World Food Program and aims to prompt university administrators and students to make the fight against hunger a core value of their institutions. U of G was the first Canadian university to join the group, but a few others are now coming on board.

Along with my co-host – Garvin Armstrong, a fourth-year commerce student and a member of the U of G Board of Governors – I’m inviting all Canadian universities to attend the summit and join us in the battle against hunger and malnutrition. We believe universities are perfectly positioned to play an important role in this effort, drawing on two of their most vital resources: students and researchers.

University students have the energy and enthusiasm needed to tackle this challenge. Guelph students already donate money from their meal cards every semester and canvass the city each fall for donations for local food banks. Many of our students also volunteer in disadvantaged areas in Canada and around the world.

University professors and researchers also bring particular skills and knowledge to bear on finding solutions to hunger and malnutrition. Guelph scientists and scholars from varied disciplines already collaborate to address environmental degradation, climate change, disease, social and economic disorder, political conflicts and numerous other issues that cause or worsen hunger and its soul-mate, poverty. Improving the quality of life for people around the world is the goal of The BetterPlanet Project, which is intended to increase the capacity for research and innovation at the University of Guelph.

Supporting The BetterPlanet Project will further strengthen U of G expertise in food, health, environment and community – all critical parts of the solution to hunger and malnutrition.

In fact, fighting hunger and malnutrition is one priority under the BetterPlanet initiative to fund a global network in sustainable food production. This collaboration of experts will lead changes in food production systems through education, research and outreach. For Canadians, that means a sustainable production system and plenty of healthful food choices. For much of the developing world, we aim to improve nutrition and food security. Ideally, we will find solutions no matter where they arise.

“Hunger Has No Boundaries” is the theme of this year’s Universities Fighting World Hunger summit. The event will encourage collaboration among governments, companies, schools, media and not-for-profit agencies. I look forward to a special president’s dialogue and panel discussions on the roles of these groups in harnessing intellectual discovery and social responsibility toward a sustainable world. U of G will be represented by our students, faculty and several alumni experts.

I invite you to follow the Universities Fighting World Hunger Summit Feb. 25 to 27 on the University of Guelph website (www.uoguelph.ca/worldhunger/). And read several stories in this issue of The Portico to learn how other Guelph grad and faculty are looking out for the welfare of others and helping to make this a better planet.

Alastair Summerville, President

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Everybody has a bad habit

“I’ve yet to meet someone who doesn’t have at least one bad habit,” says psychology professor Ian Newby-Clark.

Whether it’s biting your nails or blurt- ing out comments at inappropriate times, we all seem to have some foible. And there’s a reason for that.

“A habit is a behaviour that you do on a regular basis in a less than deliberate man-ner. You’re almost on automatic pilot. Many habits are good, and once they become a habit it’s helpful because they make lower demands on our brains,” says Newby-Clark.

But while good habits make our lives easier, bad ones can be tough to eradicate.

“Bad habits have a short-term benefit but a long-term cost. So if you snack on junk food while watching TV, you enjoy the short-term benefit of the taste and relax-ation, but there will be a long-term cost.”

“...To help people who want to get rid of their bad habits, Newby-Clark started a “Bad Habits” blog three years ago. “It’s a unique, scientifically based perspective,” he says, but written in accessible language — people can understand.

The blog has been so popular — he has more than 70,000 readers — that he was asked to start blogging for Psychology Today in 2009. Although two blogs keep him busy, Newby-Clark says it’s valuable to receive comments, and “I’ve realized that more people have read my blogs than will ever read my scientific research.”

www.my-bad-habits.blogspot.com/

U OF G OPENS ADVANCED PUBLIC, ANIMAL HEALTH FACILITY

The opening of a new research and diagnostic center at the Ontario Veter-inary College (OVC) has strengthened Canada’s capacity to solve health problems that occur where people meet animals.

The Pathobiology and Animal Health Laboratory will support the growing role of veterinarians in research and teaching in public health, infectious diseases, pathol-ogy and immunology. Researchers will diag-

nose and study a range of animal diseases and pathogenic organisms, from bird flu and SARS to E. coli and West Nile virus.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada contributed $37 million to the project, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), $25 million.

“Our government is pleased to provide funding to the University of Guelph to help support ongoing research activities that pre-serve consumer confidence, protect against animal disease and demonstrate our com-mitment to a competitive and sustainable

agri-food industry,” said Carol Mitchell, minister of agriculture, food and rural affairs, at the Oct. 7 opening.

As a partner with OMAFRA in the Ontario Animal Health Surveillance Network, the Animal Health Laboratory helps maintain healthy animals and safe food by providing specialized diagnostic services for veterinaries and public- and private-sector agencies, said OVC dean Elizabeth Stone. The open-concept space around the new labs encour-ages cross-training and improves facilities for better control of pathogenic organisms.

The new building also fulfills a key com-ponent of OVC’s strategic vision as the col-lege approaches its 150th birthday in 2012.

U OF G OPENS ADVANCED PUBLIC, ANIMAL HEALTH FACILITY

W hile searching for a way to produce higher-grade heat-ing fuel from agricultural and forestry biomass, U of G chemist Marcel Schlaf discovered a technique that might also eliminate huge reservoirs of red mud like the one that collapsed in western Hungary in October, flooding three vil-

lages and killing several people.

“...Discovered a technique that might also eliminate huge reservoirs of red mud. Schlaf discovered a technique that might also eliminate huge reservoirs of red mud like the one that collapsed in western Hungary in October, flooding three villages and killing several people.

Red mud is an alkaline waste by-

product of the aluminum industry. About 70 million tonnes of it are pro-duced each year worldwide.

“We think we have found a way in which we can use this aluminium mining by-product to process by-products from agriculture and forestry to create fuel,” says Schlaf.

He’s looking for ways to use oil from biological sources to replace crude oil.

Schlaf says the high acidity of “bio oil” makes it unstable, corrosive and uncom-

For people in a developed country, food can be more worrying than appetizing. Are there pesticides on the vegetables? Too much fat in the sauce? Too little fiber?

History professor Catherine Carstairs says that questioning the health aspects of our diet has been increasingly common since the 1970s, but the roots of these concerns go back at least a few more decades. She’s currently a Fulbright Scholar at the University of California’s (UC) Davis campus, where she’s exploring the lives of two American writers who made the idea of “health food” popular in the mid-1900s.

Gaylord Hauser published his best-known book, Look Younger, Live Longer, in 1950. “Hauser’s book was aimed at women in what he called ‘the second half of life’ and was all about how to keep your beauty after you turned 40,” explains Carstairs. “He was optimistic in his view that pushed relaxation and healthy eating. Adelle Davis wrote books full of warnings about subclinical deficiencies, pesticide-soaked fruits and vegetables, and depleted soils in farm-

ers’ fields. ’She sold fear,’ says Carstairs.

The Guelph professor is re-examining the work of these writers and others whose roots grew into the health-food movement.
**Guelph research redefines dinner**

**Food scientists find new uses for soybeans**

They also found no evidence that higher atmospheric CO2 enables trees to use water more efficiently, contrary to claims that climate change will allow forests to extend into dryer areas. Gedalof and Berg analyzed data from about 2,500 forest sites on six continents to cover 86 species of trees.

Contrary to expectations, tree growth has declined over the past century despite rising amounts of CO2 in the atmosphere, says Prof. Madhur Anand, School of Environmental Sciences. Along with PhD students Lucas Silva and Mark Embleton, he co-authored a paper that challenges predictions that more atmospheric carbon will effectively “fertilize” forests.

The researchers say the predicted benefits of CO2 fertilization may be overestimated. They found that warming has caused a growth decline in temperate and boreal forests during the past century and especially since the 1950s. Under warming-related stress, some trees use water more efficiently but grow more slowly. That means trees are storing less atmospheric CO2 than expected, said Anand, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Global Ecological Change.

“We need to entirely rethink implications of climate change. We need to consider multiple stresses and interactions with disturbances. More research is needed in these areas to better predict impacts for forest productivity, management and even restoration.”

The U of G team studied red oaks, red maples, red pine and black spruce at five sites from Long Point in southern Ontario to Moosonee near James Bay. They measured tree growth rings and studied carbon isotopes in those rings to gauge trees’ water-use efficiency and to distinguish climatic effects from other factors. They focused on Ontario forests after they discovered tree-growth declines in Brazil and then in other parts of the world.

## Under the Kyoto Protocol, countries are encouraged to use trees to sequester carbon and help meet targets for emissions of global-warming gases, but two separate U of G studies suggest this plan is flawed.

**Guelph geography professors Ze’e Gedalof and Aaron Berg say their research results will surprise people on both sides of the debate on carbon-sequestration. “Trees will play a role in ameliorating atmospheric CO2, but it’s much smaller than most people expect,” says Gedalof. “Our results suggest that looking to forests to grow more quickly and thereby offset emissions is not going to work.”**

**The researchers say that faster gas typically accelerates growth in plants. “Eighty per cent of the world’s forests don’t care,” said Gedalof. The researchers found that those faster growth rates could not be traced to climatic change, nitrogen deposition, changing sensitivity to climate, elevation or latitude, all of which may influence growth rates of trees.**

**NOTEWORTHY**

- Graham Walker, one of the world’s most esteemed microbiologists and a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, received an honorary degree from the University of Guelph during fall convocation Oct. 16. Walker’s studies of DNA damage, repair and replication have applications in understanding cancer and bacterial infections.
- Fine art professor Sandra Riechiro created a giant multimedia art exhibit as a focal point of Nuit Blanche, Toronto’s annual sunset-to-sunrise celebration of contemporary art held Oct. 1. She marked the 1850 line where Lake Ontario once met the city with a wide glowing wall of bluish light. The project required 12- by 24-foot scaffolding, hundreds of LED lights and a team of technicians.
- Patrick Case, director of U of G’s Human Rights and Equity Office, has been appointed chair of the board of directors of Ontario’s Human Rights Legal Support Centre. Opened in 2008, the provincial centre offers legal services to people who believe they have experienced discrimination.
- Prof. John Fryxell, Integrative Biology, and PhD student Andrew Kitte are featured in a seven-part National Geographic television series called Great Migrations. The series, which was filmed on all seven continents, looks at how millions of animals, from monarch butterflies to the African wildebeest that Fryxell studies, undertake epic journeys involving great distances and extreme climates.
- An internal review by U of G’s Office of Resource Planning and Analysis estimates the University’s economic impact on the City of Guelph is $750 million a year in direct and indirect spending. Students alone spend an estimated $105 million a year.
Guelph Alumni Pledge to Student Success

Aisha York, left, Laura Jewell and Nathan Lachowsky.

The University of Guelph Alumni Association (UGAA) board has pledged $1 million over the next 10 years to help the University reintroduce its first-year seminar program.

“The U of G offered the small, discussion-based courses for five years but suspended them in 2008 due to funding constraints. The UGAA gift will help to revive these highly interactive classes that Rossoy says are proven to build communication, research and leadership skills in students.”

“What better way to improve the University experience and the quality of education? We’re supporting professors, staff and the University curriculum, and we also get to help students become better people.”

Aisha York, left, Laura Jewell and Nathan Lachowsky.

UTLITY TO STUDENTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH ALUMN

The Better Planet Project

The Better Planet Project

The Better Planet Project

A dedication ceremony was held Sept. 27 to name a new greenhouse in memory of one of the Arboretum’s best-known horticulturists, Henry Kock, who died in 2005. Philip and Susan Gosling of the Gosling Foundation donated $250,000 to help establish the Henry Kock Propagation Centre.

“I am truly pleased that this much-needed and long-awaited greenhouse is now built and ready for growing,” said Philip Gosling. “The naming of the greenhouse gave the foundation the opportunity to remember Henry, and particularly, the important role he played in preserving native species.”

Kock graduated from U of G in 1977 and joined the Arboretum in 1982 as a plant propagator, later becoming an interpretive horticulturist. He also launched the Elm Recovery Project to create a seed orchard and cultivate disease-resistant trees.

“The greenhouse is the heart of the Arboretum,” says director Alan Watson. The 3,600-square-foot facility will provide educational,

GOSLING FOUNDATION BUILDS A LIVING LEGACY

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A BETTER WORLD BEGINS WITH STUDENTS

Guelph native Sophia Olek knew about U of G health research before she came to campus as a Chancellor’s Scholar. She consulted Guelph faculty for a science project on reducing the side effects of chemotherapy; the project earned an innovation award at the Canada Wide Science Fair. Olek is a First Response Team member at U of G and a community volunteer with Red Cross, Canadian Blood Services and a local hospital. She was named one of Youth in Motion’s Top 20 for 2010.

“T he University of Guelph has received $2 million from the E.P. Taylor Equine Research Fund to support clinical research in the health and performance of racehorses.”

“The E.P. Taylor Equine Research Fund was established to honour the enormous contributions of E.P. Taylor to the horseracing industry in Canada and, indeed, worldwide,” says long-time trustee Robert McMartin. “This donation marks our belief in Guelph and its contribution to building a centre of excellence for equine performance and reproduction.”

“This donation will help fund unprecedented new research and allow our equine experts to advance and improve equine medicine, surgery and husbandry.”

Results of the University’s equine performance research will be put into practice at a new Equine Sports Medicine and Reproduction Centre being planned for the U of G campus. The centre will apply discoveries, offer direct access to equine specialists, and attract top students and veterinarians interested in equine research.

The new centre is part of the University’s multi-year plan to enhance existing OVC facilities and services.

There are more than one million horses in Canada, with nearly half of them in racing and breeding.

E.P. Taylor Gift Ensures Win for Racehorses
Promoting environmental and governance practices that support sustainability is the aim of a new chair at the University of Guelph funded by a $1-million gift from Kinross Gold Corp.

Unlike traditional research chairs, the Kinross Chair in Environmental Governance will be held by a succession of high-profile experts in the field rather than by a single academic scholar. Spending one or two semesters in U of G College of Social and Applied Human Sciences (CSAHS), each chair will bring governance expertise developed through their professional experience and link it with the scientific and policy expertise of the University community.

The ultimate goal, says CSAHS dean Kerry Daly, is to develop new governance models for achieving solutions to environmental problems. “There is a growing consensus that many of the problems contributing to environmental degradation relate to political, economic, institutional and behavioral considerations rather than a lack of scientific knowledge or adequate technology.” Kinross president and CEO Tye Burt adds: “Addressing the world's challenges requires new forms of collaboration and leadership that build new global connections among citizens, government and industry. The work we are undertaking is vital at a time when people around the world struggle to cope with the effects of environmental changes.”

SCHOLARSHIP FUND HONOURS KEN KNOX
Colleagues and friends of Ken Knox, K.Dip ‘61 and B.Sc.(Agri.) ‘72, have established a scholarship endowment in his honour to benefit diploma, undergrad and graduate students of the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC). The endowment was initiated by Bruce Archibald, B.Sc.(Agri.) ‘79, M.Sc. ‘84 and PhD ’93, who acknowledges Knox as his mentor.

More than $80,000 in donations has been received and will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the provincial government’s Ontario Trust for Student Support program.

After retiring from a 27-year career in the Ontario government, including six years as a deputy minister, Knox is now president and CEO of the Innovation Institute of Ontario. And he is still involved in a 300-acre family farm north of Kitchener that supports educational agriculture programs. The Kenneth W. Knox Scholarships will provide experiential learning and travel opportunities for 14 CAC students. “They will receive guidance from theKnxos’s first gifts, ranging from $1,000 to $3,500, will be awarded this fall.”

PHILANTHROPIST SUPPORTS ATHLETES
A sports enthusiast and philanthropist at heart, John Embry’s decision to establish a scholarship endowment at U of G is a boost for varsity athletes. “Having been an impoverished athlete in college myself many years ago, I thought it would be a great opportunity to help out some deserving student athletes,” said Embry, who is chief investment strategist at Spirit Asset Management Inc. in Toronto. His endowment provides two annual scholarships — one created with matching funding through the Ontario Trust for Student Support program. The awards recognize athletes who excel in this classroom and on the sports field.

DONOR NODS TO AGRI-FOOD SECTOR
Andy Whiter, B.Sc.(Agri.) ‘76, has pledged $50,000 to U of G’s proposed Institute for the Advanced Study of Food and Agricultural Policy. The institute is an important initiative of the Department of Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics. Its members will provide independent, credible and timely analysis of food and agricultural issues with the goal of improving the lives and competitiveness of Canadian farmers, producers and food processors.

Whiter is well-versed on issues affecting the agri-food sector. He is a grain merchant for Horizon Milling in Burlington, Ont., a branch of Cargill Foods that refines four products under the Robin Hood brand. He is also a member of The BetterPlanet Project campaign cabinet and has been a donor to the University’s annual fund almost since the day he graduated.

MANY PEOPLE THINK OF ART AS PAINTING A CANVAS, but for MFA student Dawn Johnston, stripping paint from a cannon is just another form of artistic expression. Much as an archaeologist chips away rock to uncover an ancient relic, she chipped away countless layers of paint that had entombed the cannon for years.

Johnston became a campus celebrity on Sept. 25 when she began her week-long paint-stripping project. But it was clear from the beginning that this wasn’t a publicity stunt. In fact, she built a wooden enclosure around the cannon to give herself some privacy. “I don’t want people to look at me like I’m a monkey,” she said.

But that’s exactly what happened when the wood- en structure came down later in the week. Students would stop by the cannon on their way to class and take photos with their cellphone cameras as Johnston toiled away. Some rolled up their sleeves and pitched in while others took home paint chips as souvenirs.

This wasn’t Johnston’s first foray into deconstructive art. “A lot of my work in the past has dealt with historical objects,” she said. “I was taking apart objects that have some kind of social or cultural significance to understand them in a contemporary context.”

She deconstructed a man’s suit by removing every horizontal thread, transforming the status symbol into a ghostly fringe. She did the same to a cloth-covered love seat, leaving nothing but the vertical threads, springs and wood frame.

Painting the cannon started decades ago, some say the first painters were anti-war protesters who turned weaponry into comedy. “It’s an object of expression, but at the same time, it’s an object of joke,” said Johnston. Mostly the George III-era cannon has been used as a student message board. It has worn many colourful coats, displayed greetings from birthday announcements to marriage proposals and been reincarnated into enough animals to fill a zoo.

According to campus lore, painting can begin after sundown and must be completed by sunrise. In one night, the cannon can get more makeovers than a runway fashion model.

When Johnston completed her work, there was no dramatic “reveal.” She simply packed up her supplies, dismantled the wooden enclosure and shoveled the left-over paint into garbage bins for disposal. Rumour has it that the bare cannon was guarded against would-be Picassos over the weekend, so that it could make its paint-free debut on Monday.

But the paint inevitably reappeared. Johnston said she would keep some of the paint chips and possibly use them in a future art exhibit. Perhaps the paint that once covered the cannon will grace the same wall as a painted canvas.
Jackie Strauss got sick at age 15. It took seven years of inconclusive tests before she ended up in surgery and was finally diagnosed with Crohn’s disease. By then, she was doing undergrad studies at her hometown University of Calgary. That degree took six years to complete. Referring to flare-ups that might be triggered by certain foods, stress or even a cold, Strauss says: “Most of my undergrad was spent struggling, trying to cope with the symptoms and not able to understand.”

That was the bad news. The good news came when she started an undergrad research project in a class taught by microbiologist Emma Allen-Vercoe. By then, Allen-Vercoe had spent four years in Calgary as a post-doc, following her own studies in England. As a newly minted faculty member at U of C, she was launching a research program to learn about gut bacteria and, specifically, how those bugs contribute to inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Referring both to her supervisor’s research topic and to her research acumen, Strauss says: “Emma’s the main reason I decided to go into grad school. IBD research is important to me because I have a connection with it.”

Plans would soon change for both of them. When Allen-Vercoe moved to Guelph as a professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB) in late 2007, Strauss and others came with her. “Research has brought meaning to my suffering. I can live with this horrible disease and still accomplish things. You can still live your life,” says Strauss.

Just inside the door of Allen-Vercoe’s lab in the science complex is a whiteboard where someone has written this line: “The Poopy Lab, where lab stools are not what you expect.” It’s true. Researchers here are studying surprisingly varied aspects of gut microbiota. Those studies take the team from one end of the gastrointestinal tract to the other, and beyond. A primary focus, of course, is learning about IBD. Covering both Crohn’s and ulcerative colitis, IBD affects about 200,000 Canadians, has no cure, and costs this country an estimated $1.8 billion a year in medical and indirect costs.

Microbiologist Emma Allen-Vercoe studies the 1,000 bacterial species that inhabit your “inner ecosystem” — from mouth to bowel.
But the Gaebelins' studies also take them into gut and other mouth diseases, probiotics and even autism, all using a suite of research tools, including a made-in-Guelph “robo-gut,” that is nearly unrivaled in Canada.

More bacteria live inside your gut than there are people living on Earth. Up to 1,000 different bacterial species inhabit your GI tract, and your own microbial melange — Allen-Vercoe calls it a “chemoautotroph” — is unique to you, remaining with you throughout life. Says Eric Brown, a fourth-year microbiology student working in her lab: “We’re like a big ecosystem of bacterial and human cells.”

Call it an inner ecosystem, says Allen-Vercoe, whose workings are as complicated as those of any rainforest on the planet. “It’s becoming increasingly clear that our gut microbiota are key to our overall health, yet very little is known of the ecology and physiology of these organisms and their interactions with host cells.” She believes those bugs are also a key to understanding disease. “If it’s a healthy rainforest, and you throw in a few perturbations, it adapts. But if you start stripping out species and throw stress in, the ecosystem collapses.”

Take ulcerative colitis, known to be associated with lower bacterial diversity in the colon. Researchers don’t know what causes the disease. But they know that stress can trigger or worsen inflammation and ulcers in the lining of the colon and rectum. Allen-Vercoe is studying the role of the stress hormone norepinephrine on intestinal bugs. Learning which bacterial species trigger IBD becomes increasingly clear that the ecosystem of bacterial and human cells.

It’s actually a collection of robo-guts whose six glass flasks each hold about two cups of liquid digested from stool samples. Having mastered flow rates, retention time and other parameters, the researchers can run cultures under precise conditions during eight-week cycles to compare, say, samples containing norepinephrine against untreated controls. Fying the brown liquid churning away one morning last fall, Allen-Vercoe says: “It seems obvious, but it’s very difficult to do. Everyone’s gut is different.”

McDonald studied biochemistry and microbiology at Guelph before starting grad work. “I find it so fascinating that something so small and invisible can play such a major impact on our daily lives.” She teaches and helps others to understand the science behind gut health. “I try not to say I work with poop; it has a bad reputation.”

Kathleen Schnetter remembers her own childhood fascination with a different kind of bug. She used to suffer from ear infections as a child and recalls hearing her dad form biofilms, she says, and we might use them to retain good bugs longer, like the probiotics available as food supplements. “We’ve all seen the Activa commercial!” says Schnetter.

Back up the gut far enough, of course, and you arrive at the mouth. There, a bug called Fusobacterium nucleatum can cause periodontitis, gingivitis and plaque — all inflammatory processes similar to IBD reactions. “Many Crohn’s patients have mouth problems,” says Allen-Vercoe. “If it’s a healthy rainforest, and you throw in a few perturbations, the ecosystem adapts. But if you start stripping out species and throw stress in, the ecosystem collapses.”

Although antibiotics are available, the drugs are also a key to understanding disease.

“Pathogenic bacteria use biofilms to hide out and resist antibiotics,” says Allen-Vercoe. “Those mats of clumped-up bacteria can be really tough to destroy.”

“Fusobacterium nucleatum can cause periodontal disease, gingivitis and plaque — all inflammatory processes similar to IBD reactions.”

She’s also encouraged by the Crohn’s and IBD Research Foundation in Canada, which funds research to develop techniques for sorting out and growing rare bacterial species from fecal samples — effectively “culturing the unculured.”

Growing up in England, Allen-Vercoe had planned to become an astrophysicist, but her math wasn’t good enough. She was studying biology when she discovered a new world living on her teeth. “I view a microscope as a very small telescope looking in the other direction.”

In another meeting of minds, she’s one of only a few Canadian researchers working on the “poop print.” Allen-Vercoe follows the progress of her research at the University of Western Ontario and with microbiologists at the University of California, Los Angeles. “It’s a meeting of minds between developmental biology and microbiology,” she says.

In a bizarre turn, Allen-Vercoe is now looking at possible connections between gut microbes and nervous disorders, specifically autism. Microbiological Research (now the Health Protection Agency), she came to Canada. With her came her husband and lab technician, Chris Ambrose, and their oldest daughter, Zoe, who was born in Canada. “We often talk about poop over dinner,” she says, but there is a limit. “I can talk about the science all I like but not any of the day-to-day administrative stuff.”

As both a patient and a researcher, Jack- ie Strauss knows about making it real. After she finishes her doctorate in 2011, she hopes to continue her studies, perhaps by completing medical school and combining clinical and research work. That route might take her back to Canada where her husband teaches public school. Over the phone one day last fall, he told her about two students in his class with Crohn’s disease. One mom had shared her worries about her daughter’s prospects. Strauss smiles as she recalls her husband’s words: “I told them about you doing your PhD.” That’s the kind of thing that motivates her research, she says, “to bring hope to other kids with this disease.”

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HOW DO YOU MAKE EVEN MORE IMPROVING MILK PERFECT?

Improving milk is a bit more complicated than just tossing in a few tasty ingredients. 

BY TERESA PITMAN

The Portico

It’s an exciting new world that just might be closer than you think. Food scientist Milena Corredig and her Guelph colleagues are developing functional food products with ingredients that will take healthy eating to a whole new level. She also predicts that these foods of the future will be far more specialized for the needs of the individual consumer. We all like choice. Right now, for example, you can choose between skim, two-per-cent and whole cow’s milk, depending on your tastes and diet. But Corredig thinks we’ve barely scratched the surface of individualization and options.

“In the near future, I predict we’ll all have scanning codes on our key chains that we take with us into the grocery store.” Shoppers will check their codes against the items on the shelf to learn which products are appropriate for them and which are likely to be harmful to their health. The information will be based on their genes, their participation in sports, their age, or specific conditions such as diabetes or depression.

Does all this sound like science fiction? Not in U of G’s Department of Food Science. Corredig says: “Our department has a common vision. We’re looking ahead to the future of food and finding ways to make food better – not just cheaper or tastier, but with more functionality to promote health.”

Historically, she points out, food science researchers focused on food safety and costs. They developed new ways of processing to keep food from spoiling and to increase shelf life, and found approaches that increased farm productivity to reduce costs. Those accomplishments continue to be important, she says, but today’s consumers expect even more. Now it’s time to create the next generation of food.

Corredig holds the Canada Research Chair in Food Nanostructures and the Ontario Dairy Council Research Chair in Dairy Technology. Her research focuses on developing new ways to incorporate health-enhancing ingredients into food products.

Corredig’s passion for understanding food and milk products in particular started early in life — perhaps from birth, since she describes herself as “born in dairy land.” By that, she means she grew up in Italy and was, in her words, “raised on Parmesan cheese. I think I was given cheese before I was given formula.” She wanted to expand her knowledge of the dairy industry and food production, even though her grandfather teased her about “all those years of study just to make cheese.”

She earned an undergraduate degree in

Imagine a world where a glass of milk can make you feel fuller so it is easier to eat and lose weight. Or a world where a tub of yogourt not only tastes good but also boosts your immune system. Or a world where you feel happier thanks to mood-boosting ingredients in the butter on your toast. Or a world where children in Africa are protected from some of the effects of HIV simply by eating a specially prepared freeze-dried ice cream.
from the butter during the butter-making but the watery substance that’s separated buttermilk — not fermented buttermilk, world studying butter’s by-product, called vide consumers with the benefits of both. Bubbling soy protein into cow’s milk to pro-vide yogourt and looking at techniques for intro-ducing the nutritional properties are diminished, so the team is trying to find a way to process curds and butter that would pre-serve the quality of the phospholipids in butter-milk.

Other research — completed at U of G before her arrival — discovered that a cow’s diet can be adjusted to change the amount of omega-3 fatty acids. Now she’s looking at how globules break down and the role of important components with high efficacy in the intestines. “The matrix to deliver the nutrients is as important as the nutrient itself,” she says.

Corredig is interested in dairy foods, but other Guelph food scientists are exploring ways to reformulate the health benefits of cereals and grains, fruits and vegetables, seeds and eggs, and myriad processed foods that com-bine these essential food groups. “People want more and more from their food,” she says. “Nature has done a good job of providing us with healthy and tasty things to eat, but processing can make them more convenient. In many instances, processed foods are also safer, longer-lasting and healthier. Omega-3 milk and heat-treated tomato juice are good examples of processed foods that are actually better for you than the non-processed version,” she says. “And because they’re well-conserved, you have the sense of freshness for a longer time.”

None of the food scientists are doing research at the interface between nutritionists, engineers, chemists, physicists and animal scientists. I have some really outstanding colleagues.”

Corredig adds that U of G provides a unique environment which contributes sig-nificantly to their success: “My research and work are embedded in the fact that I am part of the U of G community.”

“One other thing that U of G offers is that if you do all this seamlessly And that means our research pro-jects are always a step above the others.”

Corredig says taking advantage of those opportunities to collaborate with others requires discipline of a different kind: you have to stop thinking of conversations with others as wasting time. “I try to schedule in a morning just to knock on my colleagues’ doors and talk to them about what they’re doing,” she says. “That’s where the best ideas come from.” You have to make time for yourself, for down time with people and have a cup of coffee or — a glass of milk.”

Ten years from now, when you are walk-ing by for a barbecue; they chatted about gardening and manicures and starting a business together. They both liked outdoor activities but hated what happened to their nails in the process. With their combined experi-ence in sales and operations, Harvey says they knew what to expect with a start-up business and took their time to make sure they had a high-quality product.

“We created five prototypes and organized focus groups to get feedback,” Harvey says. “Originally we only had two sizes, but the focus groups showed us that we needed to expand the range to get a better fit.”

Their Dig It gardening gloves remain the signature product in a lineup of protective gloves sold through their website and by more than 200 retailers in Cana-dia, including the Home Hardware chain. Canadian Tire will launch the product line this spring. Harvey and Johannson have also patented their unique glove to prevent sunburns — a concept that helped.”

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Billings has always loved to build and create things, and he’s always loved agriculture. So he came to U of G to study engineering, figuring that one day he’d wind up designing combine harvesters or other large automated farm equipment. When he enrolled at Guelph, he sold his motorcross bike, believing he’d have neither the time nor the inclination to indulge in his childhood hobby. Of course, life doesn’t always turn out exactly as one expects at age 18.

Billings did go on to design and build things — but not exactly the big machines he’d imagined. In fact, his latest creation was for something so small that it can fit in the palm of your hand. And that “childhood” hobby? ‘Let’s just say it didn’t stay parked forever.

Billings is the founder and president of MedShare Inc., a Cambridge, Ont.-based company that designs software systems for home health-care providers and their clients. MedShare creates electronic scheduling and record-keeping tools to manage and enhance care and improve health outcomes. Designed for handheld devices such as the BlackBerry, the systems allow health-care providers to review client information — schedules, medication records, care plans — without carrying around bulky paper files.

Those providers typically look after many clients of varying ages and with differing health-care needs, often dispersed over large areas. Providers also spend large chunks of time — paid and unpaid — filling out required paperwork. MedShare’s software has made things quicker and more efficient.

“Essentially we’ve eliminated all the pens and paper from their lives,” Billings says, adding that, by saving time and money, his software enables providers to make more home visits. It’s also improved recordkeeping, he adds.

There are more than one million home health-care workers in North America, making it the fastest-growing sector of health care. In Canada, the industry (public and private) generates about $15 billion a year and is expected to increase to $24.5 billion a year in technology enhancements. In November, MedShare’s multi-lingual BlackBerry application became available to clients in Quebec.

“We made a conscious decision to get really good at designing products for one market and to make our services market-driven, and we decided to focus on home health care exclusively.”

He hit a turning point in 1989 when a workshop facilitator “told me I was too innovative to be a government employee and that I should go into business for myself.” Three months later, he bought a new car and refinanced his mortgage. “I thought, once I’m self-employed, I might never have the money to buy a car or get a loan.”

His new company was called Other Computer Systems. Among its first clients was Sentex Canada, which needed a complex computer system to handle dairy cattle genetics for breeding. That program has been translated into many languages and is used in 70 countries.

After a disagreement with partners over where computing was headed, Billings sold his shares in the company. “I saw the industry evolving and felt the next generation of application platforms was this thing called the Internet.”

His second company, ActiveWeb Corp., designed membership management systems for large organizations such as businesses, associations and health-care agencies. While working on a system for American military hospitals in Europe, Billings came across a medical software-sharing portal server called MedShare. “I thought that was catchy.” After a bit of domain searching — “I ended up paying a woman in Hawaii $500 to buy the name” — he secured the rights, and MedShare was born.

Billings was the lone staff member when he started in 2005. Today, MedShare has more than two dozen employees. Its clients include the largest private and non-profit home health-care providers in Canada. Government grants have allowed MedShare to upgrade its medical software and to engage university students on projects.

Billings and his wife, Kathy, live north of Cambridge and have a combined family of five children ages 13 to 28 and two grandchildren. When not working, he plays hockey on the U of G campus, practices windsurfing and, yes, races motorcycles. He dusted off that childhood hobby at around age 45, when his kids were old enough to take an interest in the sport. Soon after, someone suggested he try competitive racing.

This year, he was named the Canadian Enduro Veteran champion. He’s endured his share of crashes and injuries, notably dislocated shoulders, bashed-up knees and one finger sliced open mid-race. “I had 20 minutes between laps to stitch it up; I had to do it with my left hand too.”

But he’s hooked. “I absolutely love the adventure, the adrenaline, the thrill of it. I’m competitive in racing, competitive in business.”

BY LORI BONA HUNT
GRADS ADAPT MEDICAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE WORLD’S POOR

Derek and Michelle Brown say they’ve developed a better tool for diagnosing anemia in rural areas without power.

They graduated from U of G in 1999, the same year that Derek completed his biophysics degree. They met during a final-year physics project on the fractional quantum Hall effect. “It’s very romantic,” she quips.

Combining their science smarts, they’ve developed what they believe is a better tool for pinpointing anemia and other health problems that are often misdiagnosed and left untreated. “Diagnostics for people who can’t afford it” might be the mantra for their after-hours pursuit, which has become a non-profit humanitarian organization called Diagnostics for Development (www.diagnosticsfordevelopment.org).

Today, clinicians in parts of Africa and Asia use a litmus paper test developed by the World Health Organization (WHO). Drop a blood sample onto specially treated paper and compare the paper’s colour change against a standard chart. That test has numerous problems, says Derek. It’s invasive, generates hazardous chemical waste and is not reusable. And because it relies on subjective eyeballing, it’s often inaccurate and unreliable.

Looking for a non-invasive, accurate and easier-to-use alternative, he and Michelle have designed a tissue box-sized device containing a light source and powered by a hand crank and a battery. Attach a chip with light-emitting diodes to a patient’s finger and you get a number on the computer readout. Says Derek: “Below that number, you’ve got anemia. If it’s above that number, you don’t.” He says the simpler and more portable technology is better, particularly for a nurse or aid worker using the device in a rural clinic.

The Browns began to assemble a prototype at home but lacked enough money. Too, they faced a long process involving patent and regulatory approval from agencies such as the United States Food and Drug Administration and Health Canada. “This is a major endeavour,” says Derek. Now they’ve switched tactics. They hope to attract a partner company to make their version of their device and find someone, perhaps the WHO or other agencies, to distribute it.

Derek stresses that Diagnostics for Development is not making brand-new technology but is repackaging existing ideas and materials. “Our focus is to take that technology and make it usable for the developing world,” he says. “We’re confident that with enough seed funding, we can make it work.”

He first read about problems in diagnosing anemia while doing his post-doc in near-infrared spectroscopy, measuring blood flow in patients using longer wavelengths than those of visible light. He completed a PhD in medical biophysics at the University of Western Ontario and is now a medical physicist at the cancer centre located at the Foothills Medical Centre in Calgary. He’s also an adjunct professor at the University of Calgary and belongs to the Canadian College of Physicians in Medicine.

Michelle attended Western for her doctorate in chemistry and did a post-doc in materials and bio-surfaces at ETH Zurich, one of the world’s top universities. She’s a part-time editor, science writer and consultant, and a stay-at-home mom to two toddlers, Jackson and Carter. She figures their diagnostic idea might be adapted not only for other health problems but also for water-testing kits or biosensors.

Also on the board of Diagnostics for Development is Jeremy Brown, a financial analyst with Bravole Group Ltd. in Montreal and a two-time Guelph grad who napped with Derek during their undergrad years. Jeremy says U of G is where he “discovered a passion for development issues.” After his B.Com. in 2000, he pursued environmental economics for a master’s degree here before doing his economics PhD at the University of Arizona.

“Tou hoping Diagnostics for Development can make a difference in the lives of children in developing parts of the world,” says Jeremy, who is also a certified management accountant. “Malarial anemia is treatable if diagnosed properly.” Other board members include a Calgary lawyer and a Vancouver medical doctor. The board recently applied for charitable status.

The Guelph grads hope to get their idea into the right hands to make a difference overseas. They say U of G gave them not only a solid science education but also social awareness. Michelle spent her first year living in International House and remembers what she calls Guelph’s community feel. “It’s a down-to-earth university, conscious of what other people are doing in the world.”

What keeps them going with their after-hours pursuit? “It’s an interesting challenge,” says Derek. “That attracts both of us to it. It would have a major impact, and there’s no serious impediment other than money or time.” Referring to anemia, he adds: “It’s such a preventable and treatable condition. That’s very much in contrast to the palliative nature of many cancer treatments. You can diagnose and treat cancer, but you can’t always save lives.”

BY ANDREW VOWLES
Singing career combines two loves

MUSICAL IS SAID TO BE A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE, and Andrea Lindsay, BA ’91, is proving this true. Lindsay transferred to Guelph’s language program after spending a year studying classical music at Laurentian University. Her goal was to earn a degree in French language and translation with the hopes of one day becoming a translator.

As her appreciation and understanding of French grew, her love of music was further ignited when she joined the U of G choir. She couldn’t imagine not pursuing either professionally and thought it would be great to find a way to bring those interests together.

With a soft yet strong voice, thoughtful lyrics and emotionally charged musical arrangements, Lindsay is navigating her way through the world of music as an anglophone who writes and performs music in French.

“Not bad for someone who dropped French midway through high school because she thought she ‘wasn’t any good’ at it,” Lindsay jokes.

That was a decision she came to regret. After high school, she spent a year in France working as an au pair and immersing herself in French language and culture.

“Sometimes you don’t expect to find a passion,” says Lindsay. “I found I had a love for the language. There’s romanticism in it and a vocabulary that I like. The more time I spent at it, the more I understood. I was excited about it, and it became a hobby of sorts that I thought it would be great to find a way to bring those interests together.

“With a soft yet strong voice, thoughtful lyrics and emotionally charged musical arrangements, Lindsay is navigating her way through the world of music as an anglophone who writes and performs music in French.”

The School of Languages and Literatures gave her some of her first paid singing gigs by hiring her to perform at a couple of faculty wine-and-cheese events. Since then, she has been performing in Canada and Europe.

Her debut album, La Rel Évité, was released in 2006 and earned her a nomination for the Félix Leclerc Award at the FrancoFolies in Montreal. The next year she received the Trille Or Award, which recognizes artistic excellence in the Franco-Ontarian music industry.

Lindsay’s second album, Les sentinelles dorment, garnered an impressive seven nominations at the 2009 Gala Trille Or, which recognizes artistic excellence in both Quebec and in France. One reviewer says they hear a slight accent sometimes I throw that in, too. I feel like it’s authentically me. It’s in French, but it’s the vocabulary I use to describe my world around me.”

Although she was raised in Guelph, Lindsay’s singing voice tricks audiences into both Quebec and in France. One reviewer says they hear a slight accent but think it comes from a regional dialect. The songwriter admits, however, that people recognize her as an anglophone when they talk to her audience. Quebec audiences think she learned the language in Europe. But in France, they think she speaks like a Québécoise.”

“I also like ‘60s pop references, so sometimes I throw that in, too. I feel like it’s authentically me. It’s in French, but it’s the vocabulary I use to describe my world around me.”

The school received the Trille Or Award, which recognizes artistic excellence in both Quebec and in France. One reviewer says they hear a slight accent but think it comes from a regional dialect. The songwriter admits, however, that people recognize her as an anglophone when they talk to her audience. Quebec audiences think she learned the language in Europe. But in France, they think she speaks like a Québécoise.”

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 accruing this is true. Lindsay transferred to Guelph’s language program after spending a year studying classical music at Laurentian University. Her goal was to earn a degree in French language and translation with the hopes of one day becoming a translator.

As her appreciation and understanding of French grew, her love of music was further ignited when she joined the U of G choir. She couldn’t imagine not pursuing either professionally and thought it would be great to find a way to bring those interests together.

With a soft yet strong voice, thoughtful lyrics and emotionally charged musical arrangements, Lindsay is navigating her way through the world of music as an anglophone who writes and performs music in French.

“Not bad for someone who dropped French midway through high school because she thought she ‘wasn’t any good’ at it,” Lindsay jokes.

That was a decision she came to regret. After high school, she spent a year in France working as an au pair and immersing herself in French language and culture.

“Sometimes you don’t expect to find a passion,” says Lindsay. “I found I had a love for the language. There’s romanticism in it and a vocabulary that I like. The more time I spent at it, the more I understood. I was excited about it, and it became a hobby of sorts that I thought it would be great to find a way to bring those interests together.

“With a soft yet strong voice, thoughtful lyrics and emotionally charged musical arrangements, Lindsay is navigating her way through the world of music as an anglophone who writes and performs music in French.”

The School of Languages and Literatures gave her some of her first paid singing gigs by hiring her to perform at a couple of faculty wine-and-cheese events. Since then, she has been performing in Canada and Europe.

Her debut album, La Rel Évité, was released in 2006 and earned her a nomination for the Félix Leclerc Award at the FrancoFolies in Montreal. The next year she received the Trille Or Award, which recognizes artistic excellence in the Franco-Ontarian music industry.

Lindsay’s second album, Les sentinelles dorment, garnered an impressive seven nominations at the 2009 Gala Trille Or, which recognizes artistic excellence in both Quebec and in France. One reviewer says they hear a slight accent but think it comes from a regional dialect. The songwriter admits, however, that people recognize her as an anglophone when they talk to her audience. Quebec audiences think she learned the language in Europe. But in France, they think she speaks like a Québécoise.”

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Although she was raised in Guelph, Lindsay’s singing voice tricks audiences into both Quebec and in France. One reviewer says they hear a slight accent but think it comes from a regional dialect. The songwriter admits, however, that people recognize her as an anglophone when they talk to her audience. Quebec audiences think she learned the language in Europe. But in France, they think she speaks like a Québécoise.”

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Alumni Gift Will Engage Future Grads

In this issue of The Portico, I am pleased to announce a $1-million pledge to The BetterPlanet Project from the University of Guelph Alumni Association (UGAA). Over the next 10 years, revenue from our affinity programs will support small, discussion-based seminar courses for first-year students in all academic disciplines.

The UGAA board believes that investing in U of G’s first-year curriculum will engage students, producing graduates who will become leaders in our society and will stay connected with the University. Strong alumni connections are important to future UGAA endeavours. Our mandate as an association is to support and sustain U of G — not just through fundraising but through advocating publicly for our alma mater, raising awareness among university applicants and engaging new graduates. I encourage you to look at the various insurance and credit card programs offered by UGAA’s affinity partners. Our new partnership with National Group Mortgage offers competitive mortgage rates to help meet your financial needs. Your participation in our affinity programs will not only provide you with better rates and services, it will also generate revenue to help lessen the impact on farmers across Canada. It will not only provide you with better rates and services, it will also generate revenue to help lessen the impact on farmers across Canada.

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The celebration helped launch the Macdonald Institute restoration project that has generated more than $500,000. Surgeon ran her own business for many years and taught entrepreneurship courses for women. She has also received the Lincoln Alexander Medal of Distinguished Service.

ELMUNI MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT
Karen Dupont, DVM ’98, began practicing at the Owen Sound Veterinary Clinic in 2003, and is an active volunteer at the U of G and within her community.

Five years ago, she began offering veterinary assistance to the northern Ontario First Nations community of Cat Lake and recruited colleagues for a week of surgeries, vaccinations, parasite control and school presentations on pet care and animal welfare.

During the Rural Area Veterinary Service, she travels with other veterinary grad to remote areas for surgeries and student mentoring. Dupont also volunteers on campus in the undergraduate DVM program’s communication lab.

International Students Receive an Alumni Welcome

Alumni-in-Action volunteers held their annual dinner for U of G international students Oct 6. The group includes U of G grads and staff who offer their time and experience to University programs that help international students adapt to life in Canada. From left: students Akeil Morgan and Anna Manore, alumnus Murray Woods, BSA ’76, and students Holly Clark and Maria Gonsalves.

THE BETTERPLANET PROJECT DEBUTS AT THE ROYAL

Game tickets for the Sept. 25 Homecoming football game against the Western Mustangs were sold out two days ahead; almost 9,000 people attended the game, and 350 grads bought tickets for the alumni entertainment tent. After a hard-fought battle, the Mustangs downed the Gryphons 15-8. Guelph ended the 2010 season play 4-4.

VETERAN GRYPHONS PLAY SHINNY
An all-ages shinny game was the highlight of Guelph’s third annual Hockey Day in Gryphonville Nov. 13. More than 100 former Gryphons played shinny with Taylor and Massicar.

COMING EVENTS
Jan. 25 • In Florida, an alumni excursion to Ringling College of Art and Design in Sarasota. 9:30-11:30 a.m. The cost is $7 and includes the tour and lunch. After lunch, visit the Circus Museum and Ringling Museum of Art, $20 admission. To register, call Bert Mitchell at 941-921-6426 or email him at bro@telnex.net, or contact Mary-Anne Moroz at mamaroz@uoguelph.ca.

Jan. 25 • CBIS and HARA-HTM grads: Share your career experience with students at career and networking events. For details, call Jarrodt Barratt at 519-824-4120, Ext. 54703, or email jbattle@uoguelph.ca.

Jan. 27 • OVC Alumni Winter Hiking Hole in the newly formed Health Care Centre. Call Kim Robinson at 519-824-4120, Ext. 54454, or email kbro@uoguelph.ca.

Feb. 22 to 25 • Winter Convo-
cation.

March 2 • Annual Rondas Lawn at Maple Leaf Golf and Country Club in Port Elgin. Oct 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., $20 per person includes lunch, dessert and wine. To regist-

January 25 • CBS and CBNE/HTM grads: Share your expertise. To volunteer, contact Victoria Hulbert at 519-824-4120, Ext. 52965. For information, contact Kim McCalle at 519-824-4120, Ext. 52965, or contact kim@cbishtm.uoguelph.ca.

March 22 • College of Arts grad: Meet with students and share your expertise. To volunteer, contact Kate Cooper at kcco@uoguelph.ca or 519-824-4120, Ext. 52965.

April 1 and 2 • OVC Alumni Chal-

lege Cup hockey tournament; for details, contact Kim Robinson at krob@uoguelph.ca.

June 17 and 18 • Alumni Week-
end 2011, details at www.alum-
i.uoguelph.ca. If you are orga-
nizing a class reunion, contact

Helen McCairley at 519-824-4120, Ext. 56691, or hmccairley@ uoguelph.ca.

To find out more, please visit www.alumni.uoguelph.ca.
Does it really matter where you obtain your next mortgage?

Dear University of Guelph Alumni:

It really does matter where you obtain your next mortgage, and here’s why.

Millions of Canadians are paying too much for their mortgage. The UGAA is pleased to announce a new partnership with National Group Mortgages that will help you!

When you choose to work with National Group Mortgage Program you will receive outstanding service and product knowledge. They are committed to finding you the best available rate in Canada on the product most suited to your mortgage needs. National Group Mortgage Program will help you save thousands of dollars on your mortgage and, at the same time, you help support your alma mater with no additional cost to you.

As a graduate of the University of Guelph, you can benefit from the combined buying power of close to 100,000 U of G alumni for substantial savings on your mortgage. Thanks to a special agreement between the UGAA and National Group Mortgage Program, you have access to over 30 lenders, the best rates in Canada, and a free mortgage consultation.

To find out how much you can save on your mortgage, contact National Group Mortgage Program at 1-877-243-1255 or visit nationalgroupmortgages.com/guelph. You will automatically be entered in their annual contest for a chance to win your dream vacation.

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Brad Rooney, AIA '93, B.Sc. (Agr.) '97
President, University of Guelph Alumni Association

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called in 2008, he wrote a book in Orangeville, he practised law in Orangeville, appointed a deputy judge in 1950, he introduced last February has turned out to be a big success. More than 200 people got involved in redesigning the park, construction is now complete, the park, construction is now complete, the people got involved in redesigning the park. "Following my internship, I was offered a position by the city to continue my work related to public and community participation in the planning process, although this time in the development of a master plan for one particular district." Cohlmeyer will complete the contract in March. She says Colima has many projects underway, all with an urban sustainability imperative, and mentions a new transport and mobility plan, a Sunday city-wide bike event, new green space developments and the revival of the downtown historical centre. In some ways, Colima could be compared to Guelph, she adds. "It is fairly close and thus influenced by bigger cities but definitely has its own characteristics and governance. It has a vibrant historical centre, universities, and a friendly and pleasant street life." Colima is not on the tourist route. It's the inland capital of the Mexican state of the same name that touches the Pacific coast. "The people are so kind and open and have such a sense of community. It has been easy to adapt to the Mexican culture and to build lasting friendships with local people. I am now fluent in Spanish, and I owe this to time spent in Colima, being fully immersed and working in Spanish.

"I think the biggest difference between working in Mexico and in Canada would be the importance of time. A meeting time, a deadline or a start time are mere approximations here; this definitely takes some getting used to. For example, if a meeting is supposed to start at 12 p.m., a 1 or even 2 p.m. start is not unheard of, and may even be the norm.

"On the other hand, I find the general culture here much more appreciative of a slower pace of life, the importance of family, spending time together and taking care of each other, and food — oh, the food!"

Before her work in Colima, Cohlmeyer travelled and worked in Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, Uruguay and Nicaragua. "I also worked at the YMCA in Victoria, B.C., before participating in the CIDA internship. Now I look forward to moving ahead in the field of urban planning and urban sustainability practices, and community health and vibrancy."

By Mary Dickeson
British Columbia and Ontario’s Algonquin Park. In 1994, they were jointly awarded the Equinon Citation for Environmental Achievement.

1970

■ John Buckingham, B.Sc., 1970, after many years working in the pharmaceutical industry in Europe and the United States, is now living in Toronto supporting early-stage health technology companies in the MaRS Discovery District and Health Technology Exchange, as well as more established companies worldwide.

■ Judith Carson, BA ’75, writes: “My strong, fond memories of Guelph from my undergraduate days led me to return here in my retirement. Guelph is a great place to live.”

■ Ian Darling, BA ’71, recently had his second book, Amazing Airmen: Canadian Flyers in the Second World War, published by Dundurn Press. It’s a collection of stories about Canadians in the air war against Nazi Germany. Two chapters discuss Canadians who became professors at the Ontario Agricultural College after the war: Tom Lane, B.A. ’49 and M.Sc. ’51, who still lives in Guelph, and Ralph Campbell, H.D.La. ’74, who died in 2008. Another story involves former U of G languages professor Manfred Kremer, who was nine when his German city was bombed by Allied forces. He says he looks forward to attending U of G’s Homecoming weekend “one of these years.”

■ Barbara Ann Chidlias, B.W ’80, has been teaching at Box Hill College in Kuwait for 10 years. She says he looks forward to attending U of G’s Homecoming weekend “one of these years.”

■ Nicholas Leyland, B.A. Sc. ’79, recently moved from the University of Toronto to McMaster University to become professor and chair of the department of obstetrics and gynecology, Faculty of Health Sciences, at the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine. He is also chief of obstetrics and gynecology at Hamilton Health Sciences.

■ Mary van de Kamp, B.Sc. ’78, is an authorized nuclear operator for Ontario Power Generation in Pickering, Ont.

■ Chris Clark–Solominka, B.Sc. (Agr.) ’81, received his PhD last May from Middlesex University in London, England.

■ Diane Deans, BA ’80, was re-elected in October to her sixth consecutive term as a city councillor in Ottawa. She was first elected in 1994. Among her greatest accomplishments, she cites the construction of the Greenboro District Library, saving the Greenboro Trilobite Nature area, a sensitive wetland, from development; and establishing a business park association in her ward. In 2006, she was elected chair of the community and protective services committee, which directs such essential services as fire, paramedics, housing, public health, and parks and recreation. Deans co-chaired the 2009 City of Ottawa United Way Campaign.

■ Charlene (Gillies) Gilmer, B.A.Sc. ’82, and Karen (Lochhead) Walton, B. Comm. ’83, have been best friends since Grade 5; they even attended U of G together and were roommates for two years. Both women met their hus-

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Winter 2011 33
works for the County of Oxford. Karen runs her own bookkeeping and accounting business. They have three daughters; the eldest two cur- rently attend U of G. In July, the Gilmers and the Waltons cele- brated their 25th wedding anniversaries together.

■ Neil Hawthorn, BIA ‘86, chairs Nelson and Hawthorn, a golf course design architecture firm based in Singapore. He designed the Sheshan Interna- tional golf course that hosted the 2010 World Golf Champions- hip in November. Landscape architecture architect Robert Brown says Hawthorn’s Sheshan course “is really quite spectacu- lar. He designed the course around two 1,000-year-old Ginkgo biloba trees and a 50- metre-deep rock cliff.”

■ Scott Jordan, B.Sc. ’85 and PhD ’90, is a toxicologist in Health Canada’s marketed health products directorate in Ottawa. He was recently select- ed by U.S. Pharmacopeia to serve a five-year term on its expert committee on dietary supplements. USP is a non-gov- ernmental authority responsible for creating and revising stand- ards for prescription for creating and revising stan- dards for prescription and over-the-counter medicines and other health-care products manufactured or sold in the United States.

■ Jennifer La Chapelle, BA ’81 and MA ’83, is pleased to announce that both of her chil- dren are now U of G students. Madelaine Donnelly has just started a degree in theater stud- ies, while her brother, James Donnelly, is in his fourth year of studio arts.

■ Desmond Layne, B.Sc. ’86, and Ontario organic grower Ted Shlayeg, B.A. ’64 and M.Sc. ’84, hosted farm leaders and politicians on his Scotland, Ont., farm in September as he plugged into a new revenue source: a solar panel that will generate up to 10 kilowatts of power per day during the summer. The energy will enter the provincial power grid. “This will reduce my carbon footprint,” he said, predicting that many other Canadian farmers will soon be “growing” solar energy. Shlayeg, who taught high school science for 30 years, farmed part-time throughout his teaching career and gained organic cer- tification in the early 1990s.

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He’s doing things differently

Ontario artist Jane Eccles, BA ’70, is publishing a large exhibition of work that will be at the Station Gallery in Whitby, Ont., from Feb. 26 to April 10. The show comprises 45 paintings of garments originally worn by women who, as Eccles says, “tried to beat the odds and succeeded at their chosen disciplines.” Included are garments bor- rowed from Canadian icons such as Karen Kain, Alderlinne Clarkson and Margaret Atwood. Eccles has written stories about all of the women to accompany the paintings and garments in the exhibit.

Dr. George Plumley, BA ’86, has been a visiting assistant professor at the University of Alberta and completed a PhD thesis on the anti-Vietnam war movement in Canada at the University of New Brunswick.

■ Jeff Walker, B.Sc. (Ag.) ’89 and MBA ’00, married Suzanne Liles in July 2009 in Moncton, N.B. The couple announce the arrival of Zoe Elizabeth, born Oct. 22. They live in Stud- nee, NS, where Jeff oper- ates a dairy consulting business called Lomdale Dairy Solutions. He also owns and operates The Heifer Hotel, which raises dairy heifers for customers in Newfoundland.

1990

■ Kenn Beaton, B.Sc. (Ag.) ’95, married Iran Malik in August; they live in Pultegrev, Ont. While enrolled in the co- operative education program at U of G, Beaton worked for two semesters at Mars Canada (formerly Effen Foods). He now has a full-time position in research and development in Mars Canada’s pet-care division.

■ Peggy (Burruss) Cernick, B.Comm. ’99, has worked at the conference services and special events manager at the Prince of Wales Hotel and Spa in Niagara- on-the-Lake for five years. Dur- ing the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, she worked with CTV, as a hospitality manager and says she was proud to provide endu- ristic energy for such a high- profile sponsor of the games. This past summer she married Mike Cernick of Grunby, Ont., in “a picture-perfect setting at a local Niagara winery. ‘Life couldn’t be any better’.”

■ James Fenstrma, BA ’07, completed a master’s degree in history at George Mason Uni- versity and is now enrolled in a doctoral program at George Washington University. In both schools are in the D.C., area.

■ Christine Garsen, BA ’99, is completing a master’s degree at Simon Fraser University. She is guest editor for a special issue of the Southern Journal of Canadian Studies on the theme “Constructing Black Canada: Becoming Canadian,” due out later this year.

■ Tracy-Ann (Amoeba) Gooden, BA ’92, is assistant professor of African diaspora studies at Kent State University in Ohio. She is guest editor for a special issue of the Southern Journal of Canadian Studies on the theme “Constructing Black Canada: Becoming Canadian,” due out later this year.

■ Aleksander Oniszczak, BA ’97, was recently married and has moved to Silicon Valley, California.

■ Al Shaw, B.Sc. ’94, earned an M.Sc. in environmental solutions at The University of British Columbia in 1999. His wife, Bee Wicks, B.Sc. ’94 and M.Sc. ’96, earned a PhD in 2001, also at UBC Shaw and Wicks have partnered with James Nairn, B.Sc. ’94, and Bob Wilson, B.Sc. ’96 and M.Sc. ’99, to start an environ- mental consulting firm in Muskoka, Ont. With six U of G degrees among the four part- ners, Shaw says: “Our academic and social experience at U of G must definitely shape the way we view the natural environ- ment and, in turn, how we apply our knowledge to our profession.” Learn more about RavenStone Environmental Solutions at www.rsenviro.ca.

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Family pride in U of G grads

Michael and Elisabeth Maynard have seen three of their four children graduate from U of G, including Alison Maynard, who received the University’s prestigious Brock Scholarship for doctoral research in 2005. Martha Archibald, B.Sc. ’02, has moved to London, England, to pursue a master’s degree in human rights at City University. Previously, she interned at two human rights organizations in the Philippines and volunteered with Amnesty International for three years in Ottawa. John Dempster, B.Sc. ’00, has opened an integrated holistic health care centre in Toronto (www.thedempsterclinic.com) to integrate naturopathic and traditional medicine practices and to promote durable prevention through proactive health care. Shannon Gregg, B.Sc. ’09, received her bachelor of education from Queen’s University in June. She lives in Ajax, Ont., and works as an occasional teacher at the Durham Catholic District School Board.

Jenna Healey, BA ’09, continued her education in a University of Toronto master’s program in history and philosophy. Valerie Hawke, B.Sc. (H.K.) ’01, is a physiotherapist in Ger- ringong, New South Wales, Australia. She and her husband, Brian, welcomed their first child, Matthew Jack, on Sept. 11.

Heather (McCready), B.Com. ’07, and Jeremy Hertel, M.Sc. ’08, were married in Guéph in 2008. They both work at The Co-operators in the communications and actuarial departments and celebrated the arrival of baby Jake on July 25.

Alisha Janzen, B.Ed. ’04, and Libra Yeung, B.Sc. ’06, were married July 10 and live in Markham, Ont. They met at a bus stop while they were students at U of G Tang works in the natural health industry and Yeung works as a pharmaceutical consultant. Toria Vandepolder, B.Sc. ’09, had her work featured at The Telephone Booth Gallery in Toronto. Her oil-on-panel painting depicted an abandoned architecturally significant structure through abstracted layers of colour and texture. Dylan White, B.Sc. (Env.), ’09, is part of a 14-man crew that will now unassisted across the Atlantic Ocean to raise money for charity. The crew left Halifax in December, planning to arrive in Barbados at 30 days: www.row4survival.com.

David Wilson, B.Com. ’07, is a senior associate at KPMG Financial Institutions. He says the B.Com. program at U of G offered him’s unique experience which enabled him to focus my area of specialization beyond what other co-operation offered.”

Valery Wolosylin, B.Sc. (Eng.) ’03, and Debajani Mookerjee, B.Sc. (Eng.) ’02, served as pan-chairs at the Consulting Engineers of Ontario 2010 conference. Wolosylin is an intermediate project manager at CH2M HILL Canada Ltd. Mookerjee works in the environmental services sector at R. J. Burnside & Associates Ltd.

Don Woods, B.Sc. ’01, and his wife, Diane, wrote The Mill and Watermill: The Growth of an Ontario Village, 1790 to 1915, which was published by the Waterdown-East Flamborough Heritage Society. The book provides a historical tour through the development of the village as it grew around Grindstone Creek and the 28 different uses that have operated there. More than 250 maps, photos and sketches are included.
Thank you.

The Impact of Giving Report is available online. Please visit www.alumni.uoguelph.ca.

Thank you to the 14,672 alumni and friends, corporations, associations and foundations who made gifts to the University last year. Your support continues to make a difference.