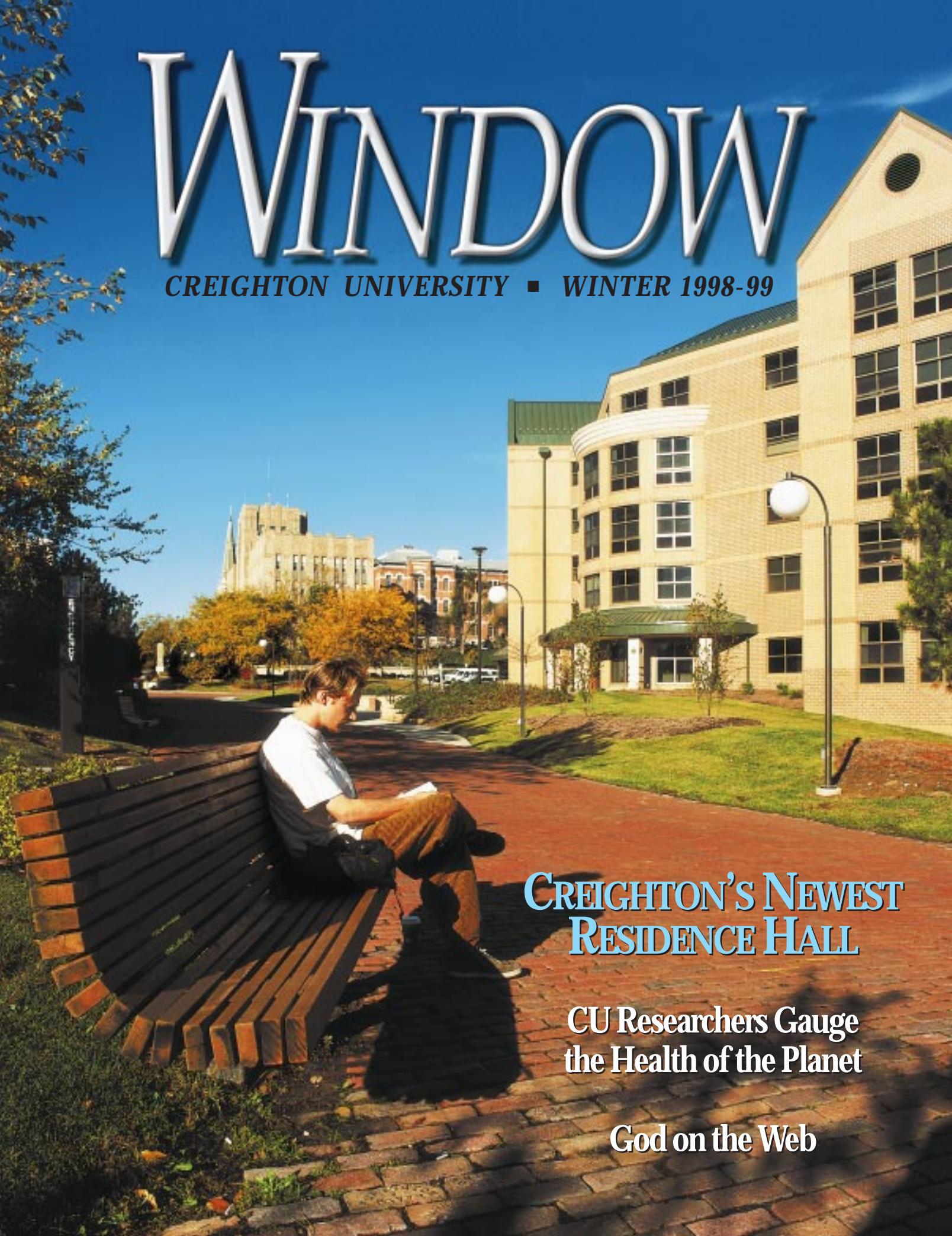


WINDOW

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY ■ WINTER 1998-99

A photograph of a young man sitting on a long wooden bench made of horizontal slats. He is wearing a white t-shirt, brown pants, and a backpack, and is looking down at a book he is holding. The bench is situated on a brick-paved area in front of a large, modern multi-story building with many windows and a green roof. In the background, there are other buildings, trees with autumn-colored leaves, and a clear blue sky.

CREIGHTON'S NEWEST
RESIDENCE HALL

CU Researchers Gauge
the Health of the Planet

God on the Web

WINDOW

Volume 15/Number 2 ■ Creighton University ■ Winter 1998-99

Creighton's Newest Residence Hall

It's been more than 30 years since a new residence hall has opened on Creighton's campus. This past fall, Creighton began a new chapter in residence living with the opening of McGloin Hall. This is not your old "dormitory." Its architecture is unique; the rooms are larger, offer more privacy and are wired for computers; and on the lower level is a warm, comfortable coffee house. Come explore this new 90,000-square-foot addition to the Creighton campus in a photo spread beginning on Page 4.



The Health of the Earth

A piece of bleached coral, a deformed frog, a stretch of native grasslands, the ancient "texts" of tree rings. What are these telling us about the health of our planet? Creighton researchers consult their "barometers" to the health of the earth and offer their insights. What are they finding? Discover more beginning on Page 12.

God on the Web

Cyberspace might seem like a strange place for prayer and reflection, but Creighton's new Online Retreat in Everyday Life is drawing people and praise from around the world. During its first eight weeks, the retreat attracted nearly 12,000 "hits." The online retreat is just one of the innovative ways that Creighton's Collaborative Ministry Office and Jesuits at Creighton and elsewhere are using technology to bring people closer to God. Read more starting on Page 21.



AlumnewsPages 26-27

Publisher: Creighton University; Rev. Michael G. Morrison, S.J., President; Michael E. Leighton, Vice President for University Relations. *WINDOW* staff: Stephen T. Kline, Executive Editor; Rick Davis, Editor; Pamela A. Vaughn, Associate Editor. Editorial Advisors: Rev. Donald A. Doll, S.J.; Charles J. Dougherty, Ph.D.; Richard L. O'Brien, M.D.; Allen B. Schlesinger, Ph.D., and David G. Schultenover, S.J.

Creighton University *WINDOW* (USPS728-070) is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October by Creighton University, 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178-0001. Periodicals postage paid at Omaha, Nebraska, and additional entry points. Address all mail to Public Relations and Information, Omaha, NE 68178. Postmaster: Send change of address to Creighton University *WINDOW*, P.O. Box 3266, Omaha, NE 68103-0078.

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LETTERS

WINDOW Magazine may edit Letters to the Editor, primarily to conform to space limitations. Personally signed letters are given preference for publication. Our FAX telephone number is: (402) 280-2549. E-mail to: [window@creighton.edu](mailto>window@creighton.edu)

'Doc' will be missed

I had the privilege of being a member of the basketball and baseball teams at Creighton while "Doc" Bevilacqua was the team physician. As a Creighton athlete, I enjoyed the special relationship with Doc up until the day he died.

Doc's funeral was a great statement to what he meant to the university and, from my perspective, to the basketball team of 1973-74. Attending the funeral from the class of 1974 along with me were Gene Harmon, Ted Wuebben, Jerry Massie, Ralph Bobick, Bimbo Pietro and Doug Brookins. Wayne Groves and Tom Anderson, who were juniors on the same team, also attended.

What was truly unique about Doc's approach to life is that it didn't make any difference to him if you were an athlete, a student or a poor street person. He treated everyone with the same respect. While I attended law school, he continued to take care of my health needs, as well as have me to his home. After I graduated from law school, he was concerned about my family and provided medical care for not just my spouse and children but for my family as a whole. This same story could be told by any number of Creighton students.

As Athletic Director Bruce Rasmussen stated so well at Doc's funeral, instead of "trying to be like Mike," we should all "try to be like Doc."

Richie Smith, BA'74, JD'77
Wahpeton, N.D.

Portz taught at Prep

This letter is in reference to your summer edition of *WINDOW*. You had a very pleasant article on Fr. Bernard Portz, which struck many a chord in my memory. You have indicated that Fr. Portz was ending a 31-year relationship with Creighton. He came to Creighton University on June 1, 1957. I would like

to point out that I had the pleasure of having Fr. Portz as my teacher in mathematics at Creighton Prep in 1946, and I believe he spent three years there as a scholastic. From the contents of your article, it sounds as though his gifts as a teacher and his pleasant personality prevailed throughout his career. I just thought you would like to extend his years of contact with Creighton University a bit longer than the 31 years. Keep up the good work!

James G. Haller, BS'58, MS'61, MD'63
Cheyenne, Wyo.

Witch trials spark interest

The story of the Salem Witch trials was most, most interesting. I usually glance through *WINDOW* magazine, but, this time, I read every word.

Roderick L. le Bron Jr., Arts'44
Omaha

Law library's early history elusive

I read with great interest the recent article about the law school's treasured Rare Book collection (Summer 1998). A limited number of manuscripts and publications stored in the Archives speak to the elusive early history of the law library.

On Dec. 28, 1904, the university's eminent historian Fr. William F. Rigge, S.J., mentions in his diary that John A. Creighton "donated \$10,000 for the new law library."

The *True Voice* (Jan. 20, 1905) details the Omaha Bar Association's plan for the "establishment of a law library to be located in rooms at the Creighton University Law School." Financial support for the library from the legal community was encouraged.

Almost two months later, the *World-Herald* (March 11, 1905) noted that the

"New York Life building library ... has been bought for \$10,000" and would have a permanent home in the Creighton law school building.

During the mid-1940s, the law school support was included in a successful university development campaign (*Alumnus*, January 1947).

Since it is evident that the law library has been supported consistently by the community, perhaps some of the rare volumes now being preserved in its Rare Book Room were given to the university by the legal profession.

Whatever the genesis of the collection, I congratulate the law library upon the completion of its attractive, environmentally sound Rare Book Room to assure that these treasures will be available for researchers in the future.

Marjorie Wannarka
Archivist, Reinert Alumni Memorial Library

Creighton Researchers Investigate High Bone Mass Gene

Creighton University researchers are identifying and characterizing a high bone mass (HBM) gene that is expected to lead to the development of new treatments for osteoporosis, a skeletal disease that affects some 25 million Americans.

Researchers from Creighton's Osteoporosis Research Center and Genome Therapeutics Corp. of Waltham, Mass., reported on their progress at last month's American Society of Bone and Mineral Research Conference in San Francisco.

"We are utilizing a unique family resource to gain understanding of the biology associated with the HBM gene — namely, why affected members from the family have increased bone density, no incidence of bone fracture and apparent protection from osteoporosis," said Dr. Robert R. Recker, internationally recognized leader of bone research and director of Creighton's Osteoporosis Research Center.

"Affected family members exhibit increased bone density in the hip and spine, suggesting that the HBM gene is in a pathway that senses mechanical loading and creates stronger bones," Recker said. "If we can pharmacologically mimic the effects of the HBM gene, we will have an exciting new approach to prevent and treat osteoporosis."

Osteoporosis affects nearly half of all women over 75 years

of age. Those afflicted have an increased risk for bone fractures. It's estimated that in the U.S. more than \$14 billion annually is spent caring for people with the disease.

In a scientific session devoted to the genetics of bone mineral density and osteoporosis, Creighton's Dr. Mark Johnson reported that the research team had identified 14 genes in the HBM gene region — none of which have been described previously as having a role in bone biology.

Using Genome Therapeutics' physical mapping, DNA sequencing and gene discovery technologies, the team completely sequenced and identified all of the genes in the HBM region. Johnson said studies are in progress to confirm the identity and biology of the HBM gene. Patent applications have been filed jointly by Creighton University and Genome Therapeutics.

"We are now seeing the benefits of a true partnership between a world-class academic research center and an industrial-scale genomics company," said Robert J. Hennessey, chairman, president and CEO of Genome Therapeutics.

"We are convinced that this HBM gene program represents one of the most promising genetic approaches to developing novel treatments for osteoporosis."

Photo by Kent Sievers



Dr. Robert R. Recker

“The greatness of a person is not to be found in brick and stone, but in the texture and colors that come alive in others because of him.”

Cardinal John Henry Newman, 1801-1890, English theologian and writer



Reprinted with permission from the Omaha World-Herald.

Cardinal John Henry Newman's above quote aptly applies to the Rev. Richard D. McGloin, S.J., for whom Creighton's newest residence hall is named. Fr. McGloin, a residence hall advisor for more than 45 years, has provided a guiding hand, a listening ear and a loving heart to generations of Creighton students.

CREIGHTON'S NEWEST RESIDENCE HALL

By Rick Davis

More than 270 students, 81 private bathrooms, approximately 500 computer and cable television connections and one basement coffee house with an Old Market flavor.

Welcome to McGloin Hall, Creighton's newest residence hall.

The 90,000-square-foot facility opened to students this past August. It is named after Creighton Jesuit and longtime residence hall advisor the Rev. Richard D. McGloin, S.J.

McGloin Hall joins Swanson, Kiewit, Deglman and Gallagher residence halls as Creighton's on-campus housing options. McGloin is the first residence hall built on campus since Kiewit opened in 1966 as a hall for women.

The coed McGloin Hall is located across from the Ahmanson School of Law and the Lied Education Center for the Arts on the east end of campus. Its 81 suite-style rooms are home to some 270 Creighton

sophomores and three Jesuits.

McGloin Hall was developed in an effort to reduce the number of students living in Swanson Hall. With more than 140,000 square feet of space, Swanson is Creighton's largest residence hall. It housed some 700 students before its renovation began this summer.

"We wanted to get Swanson's population down to 450 to 500 students," said Richard Rossi, associate vice president for student services and residence life. "So we needed a place for 200 to 250 students."

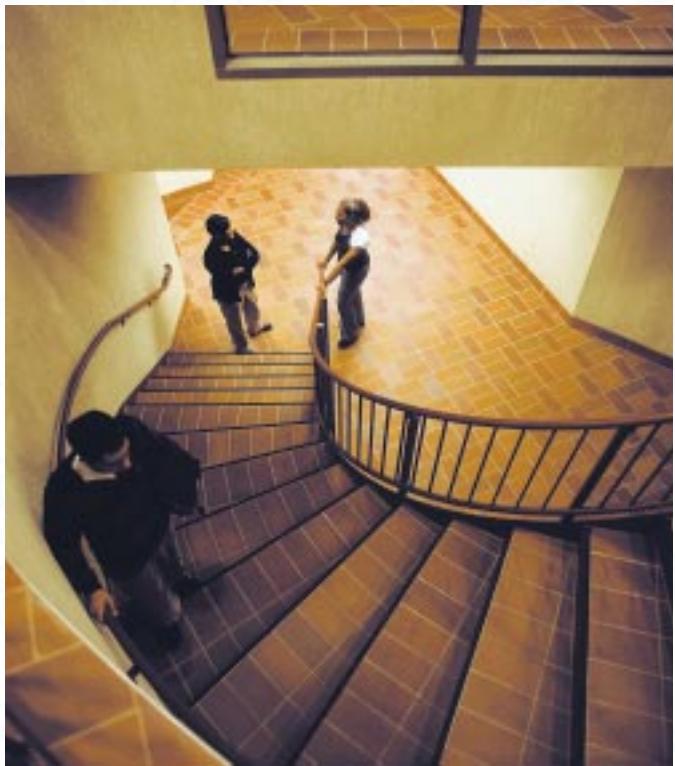
Planning for McGloin Hall began in earnest in 1996.

It originally was to be located on the west end of campus, near Gallagher Hall. But, in focus groups, students lobbied for larger suite-style rooms, which required a larger piece of ground than the west end of campus provided.

Ground was broken at the current site in April 1997. The Wareham Building, which housed public relations and human resources, and Creighton's child care center were razed, and those services were relocated to make room for McGloin.

The project architect, Holland-Basham, and the construction firm, Peter Kiewit Sons, Inc., had to curve the building's contour to avoid underground utilities at the site — hence its unique, bent shape.

The hall honors Fr. McGloin, a residence hall advisor at



A spiral staircase joins the lobby with the lower level.

Photo by Gary Gerdung



Photo by Gary Gerdung

The 90,000-square-foot McGloin Hall opened to students this fall. The first residence hall to open on campus in more than 30 years, McGloin is home to some 270 sophomores.



The majority of the rooms in McGloin Hall are four-person, two-bedroom suites. A shared living room area allows students to relax, study or visit with friends, while maintaining the privacy of those in either of the bedrooms.

Creighton for more than 45 years. (He currently lives in Swanson.) An endowed scholarship fund also has been established in his name through more than \$1 million in gifts from Creighton alumni and friends.

McGloin Hall's suite-style rooms are not your typical residence hall rooms. The majority are four-person, two-bedroom suites. (There are a few one-person suites for resident advisors and Jesuits.)

The suites include a living room and bathroom, with shower, providing four students with 600 square feet of living space. By comparison, a typical room in Kiewit Hall offers two students 192 square feet of space.

Each bedroom in McGloin features a walk-in closet, two beds and connections for telephone and computer hook-ups. Computer-compatible desks, with dresser drawers, a dresser and chairs also are provided.

The hall's 152 female students live on the first, third and fifth floors. McGloin's

MILESTONES IN CREIGHTON RESIDENCE LIVING

• 1906 — St. John's Hall, Creighton's first residence hall, was built at 25th and California streets to house a large number of out-of-town students. The hall consisted of 66 single rooms and five double rooms.

• 1933 and 1934 — St. John's Hall was remodeled and renamed Wareham Hall. It became freshman quarters in 1934 with the completion of Dowling Hall, a facility for upperclassmen located on the southeast corner of 25th and California streets. In her 1937 book *The Creighton University: Its Story*, Clare McDermott wrote that the two halls resembled a "modern club rather than an institutional dormitory"



A room in Wareham Hall, one of Creighton's first residence halls. The rooms were considered "a model for college dormitories in the Middle West."

Photos courtesy of Creighton University Reinert Alumni Library Archives

and offered tenants "all the comforts of home." Large recreation rooms were equipped with radios, lounges, billiard



Dowling Hall students pack up and leave for home in May 1951. Dowling, located at the southeast corner of 25th and California streets, was a hall for upper-classmen.

tables and a ping-pong table. A cafeteria on the first floor of Wareham provided "wholesome and expertly prepared food at most reasonable rates" and, she added, assured students "a well-balanced diet, usually unobtainable at off-campus restaurants." The rooms were described as "a model for college dormitories in the Middle West." Each room included "a private lavatory, individual study desks



Photo by Gary Gerdling

In McGloin Hall's lobby, students can stretch out on new couches and chairs, pick up their mail or work in the computer room. The lobby also offers a small chapel.



Photo by Gary Gerdling

Students Emily Schuler and Frank Sierawski pause outside the entrance to McGloin Hall. Coed McGloin is home to 152 women, 120 men and three Jesuits.

and electric lamps, large individual closets and all the other furnishings, including mattresses, sheets, pillows, pillow slips, blankets, book cases and chairs."

- 1951 — Mary Hall, a residence hall for out-of-town freshman women, opened its doors. Mary Hall was one of several small dormitories located near campus that was converted from its original purpose as a private dwelling. Located at 520 N. 26th St., Mary Hall offered accommodations for about 22 female students and an apartment for a house-mother. Agnew Hall, at 25th and Cass streets, also housed about 40 female students in the late '50s. The building previously had been the swank Graystone Apartments. Agnew Hall was razed in 1966 to make way for Interstate highway construction.



Mary Hall, located near campus at 520 N. 26th St., was one of several houses converted into small dormitories. Mary Hall housed out-of-town freshman women.



Coeds play a game of cards in Agnew Hall. A former apartment place, Agnew Hall housed some 40 female students in the late '50s and early '60s.

- 1955 — Ground was broken on Deglman Hall in unique fashion. In an effort to save time, the Rev. Carl M. Reinert, S.J., then Creighton's president, forsook the traditional spade and clambered onto a bulldozer to turn one of the first loads of dirt. "Conservatively speaking," he quipped, "I would estimate that it would take 1,500 college presidents two weeks to dig this much dirt at a formal dedi-



The outside of McGloin Hall — with its curved shape, rounded entrance and peaked towers — is visually striking. This view is looking east.

cation." The five-story hall for men and the adjoining cafeteria-lounge (later named Mary Rogers Brandeis Hall) opened to students in 1956 at a cost of about \$1 million.

- 1961 — "A dream come true." That was how Mrs. C.W. Hamilton Jr., Creighton's dean of women at the time, described the new Gallagher Hall at 2619 California St., the first hall constructed on campus for women. After its opening, *Creighton Alumnus* proclaimed: "Kitchenettes, decor make new Gallagher Hall feminine high point of the Creighton campus." The five-story structure housed 214 women, two to a room, with no quarters below the second floor, to insure privacy.

- 1965 — Dowling Hall and part of Wareham Hall were razed to make way for Swanson Hall.



To break ground on Deglman Hall in 1955, the Rev. Carl M. Reinert, S.J., then Creighton's president, used a bulldozer to scoop the first few loads of dirt.

120 male students live on the second and fourth floors. Three Jesuits also live in the building.

One of McGloin's focal points is the coffee house on the lower level. Large windows, brick walls and the warm glow of suspended lights provide a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere. The coffee house is open to students and the public.

McGloin Hall cost about \$11 million to build and furnish. It was paid for entirely by student room fees.

McGloin is open only to sophomores — an effort to provide a bridge for these students between the traditional residence halls and apartment living.

"By junior year, most of our students are living off campus or in Kenefick (an apartment-style residence hall located a few blocks from campus)," Rossi said. "We wanted to create a hall that offered a transition."

Other McGloin features include a computer room, a large lounge area, two study areas, a laundry room, a game/vending area, offices for residence hall government and a chapel.

"The chapel is located right off the main lounge," Rossi said. "We want students to appreciate that their spiritual lives are part of their everyday lives," proof that while the residence hall is new, it remains



Construction workers at the Deglman Hall site in November 1955. The Administration Building can be seen in the background. Deglman opened to students in 1956.

- 1965 — Swanson Hall, named for Campbell Soup executive and community leader W. Clarke Swanson, opened on campus. *Creighton Alumnus* called the 10-story, block-long structure "a monument to the new era of greatness which the university has entered." The \$3.5 million hall boasted carpeted corridors and television sets in every recreation area. Dormitories at Creighton became known as residence halls.

- 1966 — Kiewit Hall, another women's residence hall, welcomed students at the beginning of second semester.



Photo by Gary Gerdling

One of the focal points of McGloin Hall is the coffee shop on the lower level. Here, students can savor a hot cup of coffee, enjoy a bowl of soup or a sandwich, study or just hang out.

Blessed by spring-like temperatures, some 300 women moved into the new facility in February of 1966 from temporary quarters at Deglman Hall and off campus. With the completion of Kiewit, Creighton now had on-campus housing for 720 women and 1,600 students in all. The 10-story hall and adjoining Becker Dining Hall, which opened a week later, were completed for \$3.5 million. The hall was named after the late Mrs. Anna Kiewit, mother of Peter Kiewit, Omaha builder and newspaper owner.

- 1975 — The remaining portion of Wareham Hall (long past its days housing students) was razed to make way for the Kiewit Physical Fitness Center.
- 1980 and 1981 — The New Central Towers and The

Construction begins on Gallagher Hall in 1960. Gallagher was the first residence hall built on campus just for women.



Palms Apartments, both located a few blocks southeast of campus, were purchased by the university. In 1995, The Palms was renamed Kenefick Hall in honor of retired Union Pacific Railroad chairman John C. Kenefick. The Towers was renamed Heider Hall this past September in honor of longtime Creighton supporters Charles and Mary Heider. Heider Hall's 84 efficiency apartments are open to professional, graduate-level and married students. Kenefick provides housing for 200 junior and senior students.

- 1998 — The Fr. Richard D. McGloin, S.J., Residence Hall opened.



Coeds packed up their boxes and moved into Kiewit Hall in February 1966. It was the last residence hall built on campus until McGloin Hall opened this fall — nearly 32 years later.



Photo by Gary Gerdling

Mandi Johnson, left, and Maggie McKain at home in their McGloin Hall bedroom. Each bedroom comes with two computer-compatible desks, a chest of drawers, two beds and outlets for computer and telephone hook-ups.



Photo by Gary Gerdling

The Rev. Thomas Schloemer, S.J., chats with students Therese Pogge, Murray Thompson and Stephanie Howard in his first-floor suite. Schloemer is one of three Jesuits who live in McGloin.

rooted in Creighton's Jesuit tradition.

Renovations at Swanson

Swanson Hall, the largest residence hall on Creighton's campus, located across from the Administration Building, is in the midst of major renovations.

This summer about half of the hall's 350 rooms were gutted and reconfigured into newly furnished four-person



Photo by Gary Gerdling

Students study in one of the lounge areas provided on every floor. The windows offer a view of McGloin Hall's neighbors, the Lied Education Center for the Arts and the Ahmanson School of Law.

suites, with bathrooms and walk-in closets. The suites take the place of three traditional rooms.

The remaining rooms will be converted into suites next summer.

The \$14.5 million project is an effort to reduce the number of students living in Swanson, which was built in 1965 with room for 700 students. When the renovation is complete, Swanson will house some 450 students. **W**

THE HOUSE ON CALIFORNIA STREET

by Bob Reilly

This June, as part of Creighton's alumni reunion weekend, a cadre of Creighton grads will assemble for a few nostalgic hours in a three-story house on Omaha's California Street.

The former home of Selman and Marie Thomas, 3019 California St. once was a home away from home for generations of Creighton students. The 84-year-old structure will celebrate 50 years in the Thomas family in 1999.

Dr. Kathryn ("Katie") Thomas, associate professor of classical languages, occupies the residence today. She was 2 years old when her family, which included an older brother and sister, moved into the house in the fall of 1949.

That same year, the Thomases began taking in student tenants to help cover the \$10,000 they paid for the place. 3019 California was one of many rooming houses that lined California and Webster streets, and continued as such for the next 34 years.

Thomas is in the process of returning the home's interior to its former glory, to the shape earliest tenants will recognize. She has torn up the carpets to reveal the natural wood floors. The red runner on the stairs has been recreated. All the walls are covered in oil cloth, the many lamps shaded, and the original woodwork polished.

On the second floor are three bedrooms; each had been doubly occupied by tenants. Small attic rooms above had allowed for three more students. When the home was full, each room had its own set of clean towels, although the home's one and only bathroom had to be shared.

The upstairs rooms, the parlor and the dining room (where two tables once fed as many as 30) belonged to the students. The Thomas family lived downstairs, and the kitchen was off limits.

Thomas said the room charges varied through the years from \$7 to \$10 a week.

"There was no television in the place," recalls Don Curry, BSC'51. "Any entertainment was outside the house — unless you count Ben's stories."

He was referring to an older, non-student tenant, who

kept others amused with his jokes and his antics. Among other things, Ben was a sleepwalker.

"I got up one morning," recounted Curry, "and I saw this human outline in the screen door. Ben had walked right through it at night and out into California Street in his shorts."

Besides creating a home for the residents, the Thomases also provided meals to them and to as many as 20 other non-roomers. For breakfast and the evening meal, the charge was less than \$2.

"One of our regular boarders was frequently late (for breakfast)," Thomas relates, "but my father would watch for him and have his pancakes ready. You couldn't see much out our front window, then or now, but he would somehow spot him running and get his pancakes on the griddle."

Thomas and her siblings sometimes helped with the cooking, once with disastrous results.

"One day," recounts Thomas, "when a roast was planned for the dinner menu, along with the ever-present potatoes, we little angels, my brother and I, decided we would help Mother, and we set cans of corn in the unlit oven. When she later turned on the gas to preheat the oven for the roast, there was a small explosion and corn splattered all over the

kitchen, fortunately missing Mother."

That story has a follow-up. After graduating from Creighton in 1968, with a degree in Latin and German, Thomas attended graduate school in Chicago. When she returned to Omaha, she once ran into Curry. His first words were: "Aren't you the little girl who put the corn in the oven?"

In 1982, during the early years of Fr. Michael Morrison's presidency, a couple of law students became the final residents at 3019 California St. After that, the home was reclaimed by the family. Both Selman and Marie Thomas were ailing. Thomas looked after them until they died, and she keeps their memories intact by preserving the place as it was when it echoed to the sounds of roomers and boarders.



Photo by Kent Sievers

Dr. Kathryn ("Katie") Thomas holds pictures of her mother and father, Selman and Marie Thomas. Dr. Thomas was 2 years old when her parents opened a boarding house at 3019 California St. — home to generations of Creighton students.

CU Researchers Gauge The Health of the Planet

By Pamela Adams Vaughn

The Greeks had Demeter; the Romans, Ceres. The Maya claimed Alaghom-Naom. The Hindu tradition names her Ida; the Norse, Jord, and the Cheyenne, Aktunowihio. To the Ibo, in West Africa, she was Ala.

She was the earth goddess, represented and worshipped in almost every culture.

Today, at least in the developed world, Mother Nature does not seem to reign supreme. We have pushed, pried, even abused her secrets from her. By the year 2000 we may cap a century of unprecedented discovery with the mapping of human DNA.

But we're also losing species, killing coral, unleashing viruses and spewing toxins.

Have we plundered the planet to the point of its ruin — and ours? Or are we finally learning to take care of the earth?

Several Creighton researchers offer their insights, as they consult their

own "barometers" to the planet's health. They also give us a sense of how we're doing as stewards of Mother Earth.

Global warming disputed

For Dr. Art Douglas, director of Creighton's Environmental Sciences program, though we humans should take responsibility for many of Earth's current problems, one thing about which we may not need to become alarmed is global warming.

"The earth has survived warm periods before," Douglas says. "In fact, since the rise of mammals and flowering plants, warm weather has dominated the climate regime of the planet 80 percent of the time."

Douglas, an internationally renowned long-range weather forecaster, admits his theories on global warming fly in the face of those of many of his colleagues. But "long-range" is Douglas' forte, and he finds his evidence for the earth's varying

temperatures in such ancient "texts" as tree rings — and fossilized sediments from ancient seas.

"Tree rings provide useful climate records for the past 2,000 to 10,000 years," Douglas says, "while fossilized marine sediments tell of two massive worldwide extinctions of plants and animals 245 million and 66.4 million years ago. Both periods of extinction were associated with a sudden cooling of climate."

Thus, the "earth has handled extinctions, catastrophic ones, before," Douglas says, with the usual culprits being fire and the resulting darkness (often from asteroids or volcanoes) and ice (glaciations). The demise of the dinosaurs is among the best-known of these mass extinctions, an event Douglas attributes, "at least in part to a sudden cooling of the planet — a direct effect of a collision with an enormous asteroid and its resultant smoke cloud."

According to Douglas, "the earth's



Called "El Laguno del Espiritu Sanctu" or the Lake of the Holy Spirit by early Spaniards, Florida's Everglades catch first light. Target of the largest conservation project in U.S. history, at \$7.5 billion over 20 years, the Everglades may one day represent the best example of humans living in harmony with their surroundings.

own record shows that most recently, the planet has experienced 'little' ice ages at about Shakespeare's time."

To piece together the long history of the planet's climate, Douglas combs through the fossil record. The record includes tree rings (which by their distance apart show changes in growing conditions attributed to strong swings in temperature or precipitation); plant fossils (reflecting "warm weather" plants that have either advanced or receded by latitude according to the earth's temperature), as well as the records of mass extinctions that portray the sudden loss of all life forms, from dinosaurs to phytoplankton.

"The warming we are seeing now," Douglas says, "is typical after the close of a little ice age. A similar warming event occurred from 1100 to

1400 A.D. — at the time the Vikings were setting sail to Greenland and the Moors were strengthening their empire across North Africa and Spain."

The planet warms up quickly: It takes only about 50 years for the earth to warm up an average of 5 degrees, he says. When cool, the earth averages about 9 C or 46 F. During warm phases, it averages around 15 C or 58 F.

Though he takes exception to colleagues' concerns about global warming, Douglas shares their worries about the

destruction of ecosystems and the consequent loss of species.

"Much of the global warming we are experiencing now is probably natural," Douglas believes. "However, deforestation, the burning of fossil fuels and the expansion of cities have helped edge global temperatures upward.

"Some of this temperature rise is associated with an increase in CO₂ from burning processes, but some of the warming also is associated with an increase in CO₂ released from the world's oceans. The warming climate forces more CO₂ gas from the ocean.

A similar increase in both temperature and CO₂ occurred during the Climate Optimum of 5,000 to 6,000 years ago, long before humans could have had an effect on world climate.

"But with habitat destruction," he adds, "the situation (of fluctuating temperatures) is compounded. More pressure is put on species who may not be able to adapt" to such fast-changing conditions of survival.

Frogs warn of toxins

Creighton biologist Dr. Jim Platz looks not at weather but at frogs for his barometer to the earth's health ... and our job performance as Earth's stewards. Platz finds disturbing what frogs are telling us about our planet.

He cites a plethora of deformities as well as declining numbers — and the inevitable loss of species — as his chief causes for concern. A student of frogs for the past 30 years, Platz says



Frog deformities are on the rise in the U.S. today, even in so-called pristine areas.

Creighton graduate Jereme Altendorf, BS'97, enrolled at the Hilltop convinced he'd become a physician. But, thanks to environmental courses in chemistry and toxicology, Altendorf wound up completing a double major in chemistry and environmental science instead.

It's a good thing for the planet — and bad luck for major polluters. Today, Altendorf is a federal on-scene coordinator (OSC) with the Environmental Protection Agency.

In his post with the Superfund program, Altendorf is called in on "long-term multi-million dollar clean-ups, environmental emergencies and short-term hazardous waste sites in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri," he explains.

All in a day's work are anything from the recent ammonia plant explosion in Sioux City, Iowa, to oil spills in the Missouri River. His group also is responsible for resolving "drinking water problems and health issues that pose an immediate threat to the public and/or the environment," Altendorf says.

Other responsibilities include environmental planning, flood responses, earthquake response planning, large oil facility inspections, counter-terrorism training, and, most recently, meth-lab clean-ups. Emergency response work and two-year/\$6-million or less hazardous waste removals round out their list.



Creighton alumnus Jereme Altendorf, BS'97, now with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, handles a sample of petroleum and septic waste found at a site in Altoona, Iowa. The vapors from the sludge, combined with the confined space of the trench, require Altendorf to wear a respirator.

amphibians are uniquely capable of reflecting the status of their environment. For one, frogs "cross back and forth between two worlds, land and water," giving us a special picture of the status of both habitats.

For another, amphibian skin is "quite permeable and very vascular," he says. Such skin allows for the uptake of drinking water and, in many species, is an important site of oxygen uptake. Finally, as adults, all frogs become "carnivorous," and many begin to feed on invertebrates, especially insects. Because they move from a herbivorous diet to a carnivorous one, they experience both food chains (plants and animals) in their lives. These traits give them many ways to register environmental toxins.

Today, biologists are seeing in U.S. frog populations deformities that include missing limbs or limbs growing out of backs or stomachs. "These are not mutations," Platz explains.

"They're developmental anomalies, brought on by environmentally caused 'insults' such as agricultural and industrial toxins and pollutants. These block or alter normal development in embryos.

"Frog development, then, is sensitive to chemicals in much the same



This tiny tropical gem, P. vaillanti, basks for a moment in the early morning sun. His counterparts around the world are among the first to register environmental toxins, making amphibians unique barometers to the earth's health.

way that human development is. It is not unlike what the world saw in the 1960s when pregnant women were taking thalidomide." (The drug achieved unprecedented notoriety 30 years ago, notes a *Journal of the American Medical Association* article, because of a wave of birth defects among children born to women who took thalidomide during pregnancy as a treatment for morning sickness.)

If the natural environment is becoming this toxic for frogs, even in some so-called pristine areas, what does it bode for us, Platz wonders.

Loss of species — even species not yet discovered — is another concern for Platz. "This summer, I drove 1,900 miles through much of the less traveled parts of Arizona and found 25 frogs. Several years ago, when I did my dissertation, I could easily find lots of ponds with 50 frogs at each site." Americans are worried about species loss in the tropics, Platz says,

Photo courtesy of Jereme Altendorf

which is a very real concern. But loss of biodiversity is occurring right in our own backyards. In some parts of the U.S., Platz says, "we are doing 'salvage biology,' that is, we're working to identify and formally describing new species before they become extinct."

Platz believes we must change our world view — and our lifestyles — before we can restore the health of the planet. "Our industrial lifestyle is very primitive — and dangerous. We now have pesticides loose in the world that affect brain development as well as our endocrine systems. Several of these pesticides are now known as endocrine disrupters. Our brain development and endocrine systems have a major impact on our sexual development. Can the earth sustain this — and can we?"

"Or, put another way, the real question is, 'Should the earth be required to sustain this — and will it?'"

'Cult of consumerism questioned'

For Creighton's Dr. Charlie Harper,

environmental sociologist, the world's rapidly growing human population is his chief cause for concern, especially when coupled with a growing worldwide goal of achieving a Euro-American lifestyle of voracious consumption.

Harper is a student of numbers, attitudes, and of the pressure on people to change and to resist change. When he looks at worldwide trends among groups of people, he gets worried for the welfare of us all.

Before examining human population, Harper cautions readers to look at all the facts. The human population worldwide is slowing its rate of growth, when compared to the planet's growth rate in the early 1970s as Paul Erlich wrote his startling *Population Bomb*. Some countries, like the U.S. and those in Europe, are growing more slowly or even losing population.

However, Harper says, the population base is so large — and that base is so young overall — that even a slower growth rate produces increases like

these: Six billion people on the planet now, with up to 11 billion projected by the close of the next century.

Harper says that how those 11 billion will live is a compelling question. "When you consider that the planet can only support about 2 billion people living an American lifestyle of high consumption, you have to wonder what a sustainable lifestyle will be for most of the planet's people."

"It won't be an American lifestyle, that's for sure," Harper says. "One average middle class American lives in a way that has the impact of up to 12 people in the rest of the world."

At the root of our culture — and our problem, Harper believes — is an indefatigable belief that "consumer goods will make us happy." And it's a lesson we're teaching the rest of the world, Harper says.

"Poverty is certainly no virtue, but none of the world's religions teaches that having things for their own sake is good," Harper says. "But in America we've developed a moral stance that consumption is good."



Photo by AP Wide World Photos

Tokyo's famous Amoyoko market place bears a crush of half a million holiday shoppers. Set to weigh in with 11 billion people in the next century, the earth can only support 2 billion living a high-consumer lifestyle.



Dr. Mary Ann Vinton readies Creighton's new greenhouse, near the Reinert Alumni Library, for students.

We've grown up in a culture that's hard to resist, but we're paying for it with the earth ... and with our well-being."

Harper believes that we can't address the earth's environmental problems without addressing issues of social and economic justice. "We're starting to realize our economic interdependence — and we may start to see our relatedness in other ways. It'd be very difficult to maintain America and Europe as islands of affluence in a sea of mostly miserable people with frustrated expectations."

People have long argued the "carrying capacity" of the earth, Harper says, that is, how many people the earth can sustain. "The answer seems to be that there is no physically objective carrying capacity. Rather, the

important question is, 'Under what kind of conditions do we want to live?'

Harper asks, "Could we live in a large population that has an authoritarian government and metes out food?

"Humans around the world consume about 40 percent of the earth's biological product," Harper says. "The other 60 percent of the product is used to maintain the natural world.

"Now, if our population grows and everyone wants to live like a Euro-American, can we appropriate 60 percent of the earth's product, leaving only 40 percent to maintain the earth?"

Harper believes that, when the argument is presented this way, "people are pretty rational. We also

have our technology to support us and to enable us to live more lightly on the earth."

What prevents us from making these decisions to "live more lightly" are "our economic interests," Harper adds, "or what we understand them to be. Because business is doing quite well under the current system, it may be tempted to frighten us into not changing our patterns of production and consumption."

Invasion of exotics

For botanist Dr. Mary Ann Vinton, measuring the health of the earth is as easy as a walk through America's grasslands, that is, if you know what you're searching for.

Creighton's Nebraska Sandhills-born biologist says her field work has enabled her to check several barometers she uses to mark the earth's health. Her findings, for one, include a sizeable increase in exotic — or non-native — plant species in America's wild places.

Why worry about a few extra smooth brome plants, or a blooming field of sweet clover (both exotics to Nebraska's grasslands)? To Vinton, their presence in such numbers indicates that there's no natural predator to keep their growth in check. And that's bad for native plants.

It also means much more. "Vegetation forms the whole basis for other species," Vinton explains. "So, if you're losing your native plants, you're losing the animals that depend on them, including the plant-pollinator relationships. That's a loss that reverberates through the earth's 'web of life.'"

But Vinton also sees some things turning around in our struggle to save the planet.

"Today, there's much more interest in environmentally sustainable agriculture," Vinton says, with a great deal of research being conducted on polycultures. This means developing a variety of native species for higher crop productivity — and replacing field after field of the same plant with

mixed crops of healthy natives.

"My dream for agriculture," says Vinton, "is for consumers to develop more of a taste for grass-fed beef, that is, cattle that are fed on native plants." Vinton believes this would be good for producers, good for consumers and good for the environment. How?

"First, it would mean that much of the land being used to grow grain for cattle in feedlots could instead be used to support native grass pastures," Vinton says. "Second, feedlot run-off is becoming a big problem, with the pollution from the feedlots getting into lakes, streams and our groundwater. Fed native grass, cattle would be kept on the range, bypassing the polluted feedlot system."

Cattle also would be healthier themselves," Vinton says, "as the incidence of *E. coli* 01H57:E7 is reduced in animals kept on a grass diet." Also lower in fat, range-fed beef is better for consumers' hearts and general health.

Vinton also sees another good sign among her barometers to the earth's health: the growth in restoration and conservation biology. "We're discovering ways to restore damaged ecosystems and to save those that are still pristine. We're finally learning some of the complexities of ecosystem repair

and management. And the planet is the ultimate beneficiary."

Tracking the super-class: the insects

While Vinton watches the grasslands for signs of environmental health, Creighton's Dr. Ted Burk observes the insects.

The entomologist, behaviorist and former chair of biology is so concerned about the state of the earth's health that he is using his current sabbatical to serve as a conservation biologist.

Burk is concerned that many members of the insect population — the largest class of animals on earth — may slip out of existence before they're even classified. "Only two sites in the world have really catalogued invertebrates, and both are in the U.S.," Burk says. Given that two-thirds of all living



Photo courtesy of Chris Hiemstra

University of Wyoming graduate student and alumnus Chris Hiemstra measures snow redistribution in the Medicine Bow Mountains near treeline.

University of Wyoming graduate student Chris Hiemstra, BS'96, says that Creighton enabled him to bring together his love of biology, chemistry and atmospheric science through the Environmental Science degree.

Supported in his studies at the University of Wyoming by the Andrew Mellon Foundation, Hiemstra will write his master's thesis on

"Wind Redistribution of Snow at Treeline in the Medicine Bow Mountains, Wyoming."

"Snow redistribution can be important..." Hiemstra says, "because snow can influence water distribution, solar reflection, chemical inputs, rock weathering rates, soil development, decomposition rates, animal habitat, plant growing season length, and plant species distributions."

"It's exciting to be doing something that few people are doing currently," Hiemstra says. "The work is both challenging and rewarding."

Hiemstra says he's also honored to be contributing to what people are learning about their world. "The great part about being a graduate student is exploring things for the sake of knowing about them."



An oil spill wreaks havoc for baby sea lions in the waters off Uruguay's Atlantic Coast.

Graduate Teaching Instructor Denise Lani Pascual, BS'96, is completing her requirements for a master's degree in public health at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

Her thesis focuses on the effects of nutrient cycling on successional patterns of phytoplankton in nearby Ford Lake. "An impoundment of the Huron River," Pascual says, "Ford Lake has been plagued by substantial blue-green blooms ... that form thick paint-like slicks during the late summer."

She is fascinated with the algae themselves. "I find it curious and amazing that a little aquatic alga would produce potent hepatotoxic and neurotoxins capable of causing human sickness and even death."

When she came to Creighton, Pascual says she was focused on becoming a physician. But the need to satisfy a biology requirement forced her to enroll in a Marine and Freshwater Ecology course. That course would change her life.

Today, Pascual says she is driven by "two basic goals: to continue to learn more about the aquatic environment and to teach what I have learned. I feel an urgency to inspire people to take an active role in preserving and bettering their environment."



Creighton alumna Denise Lani Pascual, a graduate student at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, focuses on the effects of nutrient cycling on successional patterns of phytoplankton in a nearby lake. Many of these algae can produce powerful toxins, capable of causing human sickness and even death.

Photo by Bill Wood, University of Michigan Photo Services

things are invertebrates (and about 80 percent of invertebrates are insects), the task is crucial, he believes.

During his sabbatical, the Oxford University trained biologist will help the Nature Conservancy to develop an inventory of invertebrates for Nebraska.

Burk says the inventory is a good place to start to watch the health of the earth, as scientists concern themselves with the status of species. "If you don't know what you've got, counted it or watched it over time, you don't know what's in trouble."

Burk will concentrate his efforts on Nebraska's butterflies, an indicator species — one more barometer to the earth's health. Indicators not only reveal information about their own status, Burk says, but also reflect the



Butterflies not only reveal information about their own status, says Creighton's Dr. Ted Burk, but also reflect the status of other species.

Photo by Kent Sievers

status of other species.

What is this inventory already showing? "In Nebraska, we're seeing a lot of different species of butterflies, but not as many individuals as we should have." What our environment is doing — or what we are doing to the environment — to lower these numbers is the question.

Watching — and listening to — insects from his own backyard gives Burk insight. "When developers recently paved over two nearby farms," Burk says, the impact on the environment was obvious. Both lots had been wooded and had wetlands, Burk says, and one of them was a "corridor" between two west Omaha parks and, therefore, "a really key piece of land."

"Every year, I have heard chorus frogs calling in the spring from the wetlands, and one year I had true katydids in a tree in my backyard," katydids that had used the woods and Burk's yard as corridors to other habitats.

After the lots were paved, Burk says, "I didn't have a katydid the rest of the summer and probably won't again. I certainly will not hear any more chorus frogs next spring."

To the Creighton scientist, the loss of these small songsters represents a much larger problem, the increasing fragmentation of the natural world. That fact probably explains the falling numbers of individuals within species.

"Population increases and decreases are natural," Burk says. "But when a population declined or even disappeared from a location, the area used to be recolonized from surrounding areas.

"Now, with development and fragmentation, that recolonization may never occur, so a temporary decline becomes a permanent loss."

Burk says the question becomes for ecologists, how can we preserve as much as possible of our natural heritage in a world that is becoming increasingly fragmented and disconnected biologically?

"We are in a race between good trends and bad," Burk believes. "Which ones will win?" Burk sees some positive things happening to our environment — nationally, internationally, and even locally, as people become increasingly aware of the importance of their natural world. He also finds it heartening to see "more and more (of these) areas preserved and actively managed." And he believes we can use technology to lighten our impact on the earth.

But negative indicators are showing on Burk's barometers, too, especially unbridled urban sprawl and the fragmentation of natural areas. "If we don't stop the negative, we're going to live in a world of cabbage butterflies, pigeons and rats, a world that's sanitized, homogenized and devoid of nature."

Coral, mangroves register changes

To limnologist Dr. John Schalles,

the world of water reveals a great deal about the current health of the earth.

And there's some good news among these barometers to the earth's health, Schalles finds.

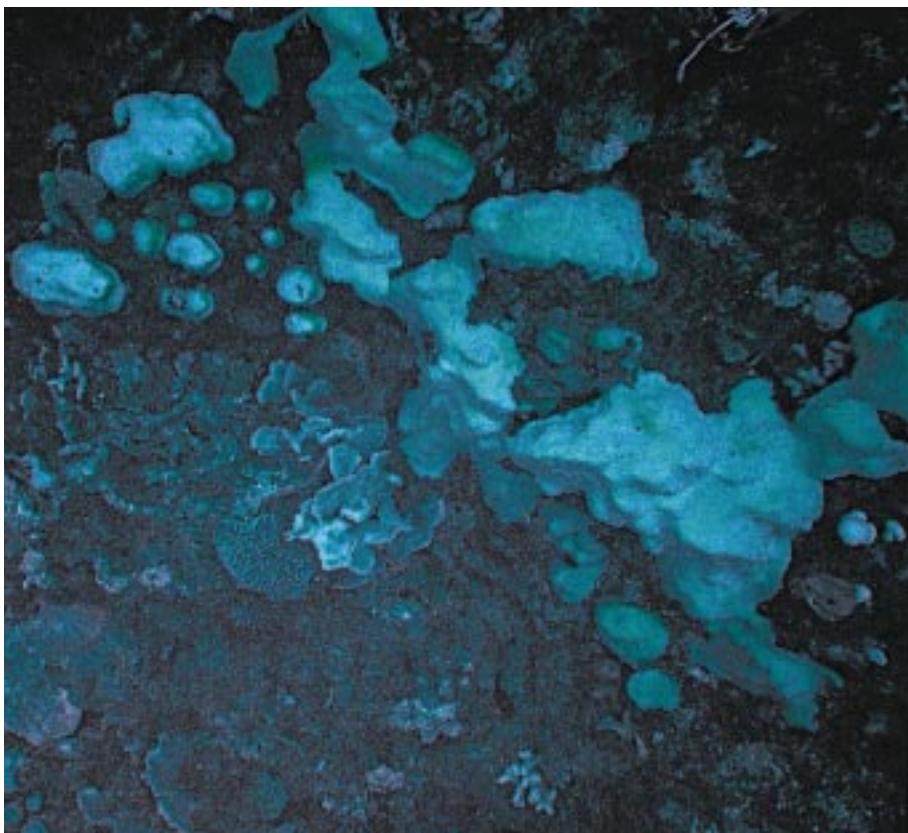
For example, the Ohio River is the story of a healthy comeback from what once was a sewage-laden, toxic dumping ground.

And fish are once again swimming in England's storied Thames.

Lake Erie, which in the 1960s was a eutrophic mess, with massive overgrowths of algae, today is much improved, although certain heavy industrial contaminants like mercury remain a problem.

Schalles says treatment of sewage, better mining practices and restoration of mining land, especially in the Appalachians, have all contributed to better rivers and lakes.

One mystery, however, that is baffling scientists around the world, including Schalles, is coral reef bleaching, a coral damaging event that



Bleaching, a phenomenon on the rise in the world's seas, can kill coral as their vital symbiont, the algae, desert them.

Photo courtesy of Dr. John Schalles

occurs when resident algae leave their animal colony homes, the corals. This ends a relationship that is vital to the coral, Schalles says. Rising sea temperatures seem to precipitate this bleaching; scientists suspect a root cause is global warming.

But Schalles is not so sure. "Coral bleaching is a change we've seen in just the last 15 years." Schalles, who has been tracking reefs in pristine Caribbean settings, suspects land development also might be a major culprit, bringing more nutrient rich run-off and sediments into the oceans and giving rise to an over-abundance of algae. "Reefs live in a delicate balance," says the Creighton scientist. "Too many algae in seawater can hurt the algae in the corals by shading the coral from sunlight. Non-friendly algae can also overgrow the reef surfaces, and sediments settle on them, further cutting off light."

Other indicators to the earth's health that Schalles is tracking include dried up rivers and loss of mangrove

trees. "More rivers of the world are drying up before they reach the sea," he says, giving added weight to the belief that wars in the next few decades may indeed be fought over water. "The Colorado River rarely makes it to the Sea of Cortez anymore — and most often ends in a dry river bed." It's a familiar battle to Schalles, as America's and the world's rivers are over-drafted for irrigation.

Schalles says the tropical mangroves — ancient, salt-tolerant trees that protect coastlines from storms and offer havens for wildlife — are struggling for survival. "The shrimp industry and other development interests are destroying the mangroves — and replacing them with non-sustainable shrimp-raising ponds and other construction," Schalles says. "This causes pollution, health problems, shoreline erosion and increased storm damage."

For Schalles, however, the fate of the Everglades, America's stunning "River of Grass," may be a classic

example of humans learning to live in harmony with nature. "We're about to spend more money (on the Everglades) than we have ever spent for any conservation project. We have 8- to 10-million people, with all of their water requirements, living near this massive, beautiful wetland (in south Florida).

"This is an interesting test case for humans and wildlife, living in harmony, that we should all be watching."

Have we plundered the planet to the point of its ruin? Probably not — not yet, Creighton scholars seem to be saying. Their glimpses of the earth's health, by dint of their research, are necessarily fragmented: a fossilized twig, a twist of coral, a waving plant, a dappled frog, a missing butterfly, a statistic.

Put together, however, they may tell a story. It may be a story about Earth's keepers moving toward mindfulness. Are we finally learning to take care of the earth?

Perhaps. ■

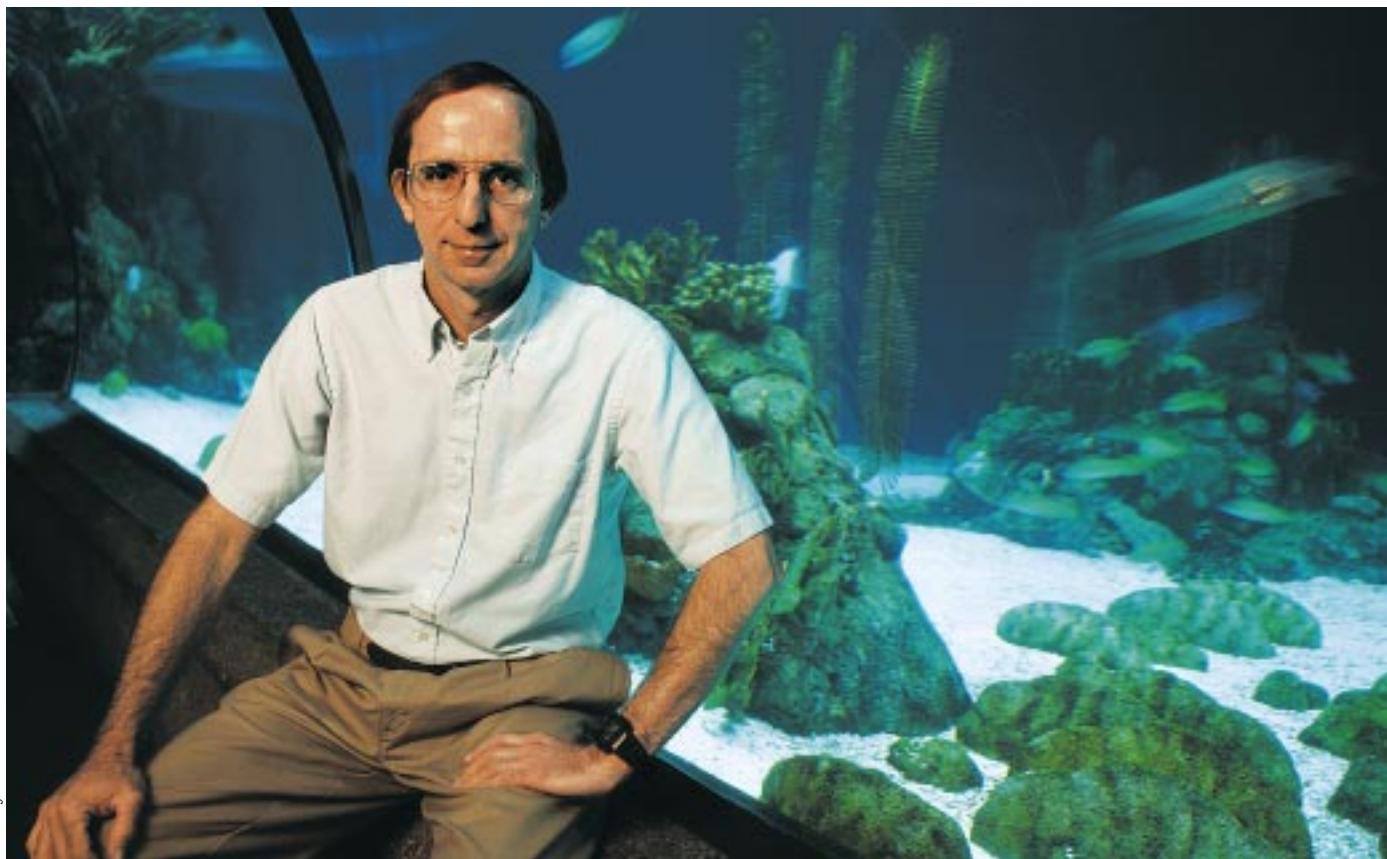


Photo by Kent Stevens

To Dr. John Schalles, the world of water reveals a great deal about the health of the planet.

God on the Web



Photo by Don Doll, S.J.

Taken in Wyoming's Bighorn Mountains, this photo appears in Week 3 of Creighton's new online retreat accompanied by the following Scripture passage: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

By Eileen Wirth

"As Jesuit, Creighton participates in the tradition of the Society of Jesus which provides an integrating vision of the world that arises out of a knowledge and love of Jesus Christ. ...

"Members of the Creighton community are challenged to reflect on transcendent values, including their

relationship with God, in an atmosphere of freedom of inquiry, belief and religious worship."

— Creighton University Mission Statement

Every week about 2,000 people throughout international cyberspace "retreat" to their

computers to spend a few minutes a day contemplating the meaning of God in their lives.

With just a few keystrokes, secretaries at Creighton, retirees in Wisconsin, monks in Europe, teachers in the Philippines and business people in Omaha who would never otherwise

The Daily Reflections Page

The Collaborative Ministry Office also offers a Daily Reflections Page which can be found at:

<http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/daily.html>

Each day, a Creighton faculty or staff member offers a personal reflection on the meaning of that day's Scripture readings at Mass. The reflections are linked to the Daily Readings Texts online and to the e-mail address of each author so readers can respond directly to him or her.



At the Daily Reflections Page found on the Collaborative Ministry Office's website, Creighton faculty and staff offer personal reflections on the day's Scripture readings.

On All Saints Day, Maria Teresa Gaston of the Creighton Center for Service and Justice described a weekend in which her family's plans for a visit from Grandma were changed by illness. Instead of visiting the Old Market, they stayed home and improvised activities.

"That night I gave thanks for the interruptions. Thank you for the blessings of a visit from 'Nani,' for sabbath-days and liturgical cycles to help us pause and remember the essentials in life. ... Lord, draw us often to contemplate your face, to savor the love you have lavished on us, to keep alive the vision of 'people from every nation, race, tribe and language' led by the Lamb to the springs of living water and shouting victory to our God!"

On All Souls Day, Thomas Shanahan, S.J., of the Theology Department and rector of the Jesuit community, shared a joyful reminiscence about his late friend, Kelly.

"God indeed is good to us, and we know that goodness in the people that He sends into our lives as a source of life and beauty for us. We remember today brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, grandparents, dear friends (like Kelly), and all those people who have touched our lives in a special way. ... What a great opportunity the feast day provides for us. To acknowledge the goodness we recognize in the people we knew and we continue to know is to acknowledge God's ongoing care and concern for us as a people and as individuals. Let us take the opportunity in a special way today to remember people, like Kelly, who touched our lives and are now with God in heaven. Let's remember to be grateful."

complete the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius are immersing themselves in the mysteries of God's infinite love for people and what it means to be in a relationship with God and others.

With a few more keystrokes, many are converting a hauntingly evocative photo into their computer screen's "wallpaper" for the week to help them meditate on what they've just read.

It's part of Creighton's Weekly Online Retreat in Everyday Life which is drawing expressions of thanks and praise from people around the globe and may be the only service of its type on the Internet.

It's also just one of the innovative ways that the Collaborative Ministry Office and Jesuits at Creighton and elsewhere and their colleagues are using technology to bring people closer to God. The office also sponsors a Daily Reflections Page (see box) based on the readings for Mass. In addition, individual Jesuits and Jesuit institutions have their own websites (see box).

According to Andy Alexander, S.J., vice president for University Ministry, his office began using the Internet to promote spiritual growth during Lent as a service to Creighton employees, nearly all of whom have easy access to personal computers.

"We started a daily reflections page on the (Mass) readings of the day," he said. "It was getting 200 to 300 'hits' per day. We realized that we have tremendous potential here. We've long offered talks, weekend retreats and office hours retreats, but there are still hundreds of people around Creighton who can't participate. But they all have P.C.s on their desks."

This fall, Alexander and his associate in the Collaborative Ministry Office, Maureen Waldron, developed the 33-week online retreat and began the massive task of writing and designing materials for the Web.

Design of the Retreat

The online retreat offers instruction, Scripture readings, spiritual guidance, prayer, meditation and opportunities for sharing. Each week's theme builds

on the previous week's topic of reflection. Participants are urged to focus on this theme at odd moments throughout their day.

Materials are located at the following address:

[http://www.creighton.edu/
CollaborativeMinistry/
cmo-retreat.html](http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/cmo-retreat.html) or can be accessed

**"We will begin
to grow in the
relationship with God
... simply reflecting
upon our own story."**

— Week 1, opening reflection

through a link on Creighton's home page (www.creighton.edu).

There are instructions for getting started and answers to frequently asked questions (see box, page 24). There also are tips for "making this Retreat on your own" and for making it with a group.

Retreat materials center on the great themes of the Spiritual Exercises expressed in simple, concrete terms

and examples drawn from daily life. Take, for example, the opening reflection of the first week of the retreat.

"This is the first week of a 33-week journey. We begin at the beginning – our story. Prayer is about our relationship with God. We will begin to grow in the relationship with God in the midst of our everyday lives this week by simply reflecting upon our own story. There may be times we will want to take a period for prayer to reflect upon our story this week. What is most important, however, is that we begin by letting this reflection become the background of our week."

This introduction is accompanied by a photo by Don Doll, S.J., of a modern "madonna" – a mother caressing her infant.

Doll's renowned photos appear weekly to illustrate each theme and lead people to contemplation. Not all are warm and comforting like the "madonna." A week focusing on the "Disorder of Sin," for example, features a picture of a devastated village in Bosnia which Doll visited last spring.

Each photo carries a Scripture passage to make it a prayer, Waldron said.

"There's something about an image which is so powerful," said Alexander. "These images are evocative of emotion and feeling. They can help draw



Creighton's 33-week Online Retreat in Everyday Life can be started at any time. The retreats from the previous weeks are available online.

people into the experience (of the retreat) more deeply. It's fairly powerful to think that a thousand people all over have the same image in their consciousness."

There's also a weekly "Guidepost for the Journey" by Larry Gillick, S.J., director of the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality and a long-time popular columnist for the *Creightonian*. The Guideposts offer down-to-earth (often humorous) reflections on the theme of the week and the human condition.

The first week, for example, Gillick

Jesuits on the Web



Want to know more about the Jesuits at Creighton? Type <http://www.creighton.edu> and click on this icon.

More than 120 individual Jesuits have their own home pages including a number at Creighton.

Notable Creighton Jesuit sites include Don Doll's which can be found at: <http://magis.creighton.edu>

This site features numerous examples of his photography and his reflections on their meaning in his life.

Doll credited Ray Bucko, S.J., of Lemoyne University in Syracuse, N.Y., for developing and maintaining a massive Jesuit home page which includes information on major Jesuit ministries worldwide. These include links to Jesuit universities and high schools, retreat centers,

spirituality and other topics. The address is: <http://web.lemyoene.edu/-bucko/jesuit.html>

Doll said he has helped a number of Jesuits around the world with their home pages or computer problems including Jon Cortina, S.J., of El Salvador. Cortina was absent the night most of the members of his community were killed by the government.

Doll recommended two books to those seeking Catholic sites on the Internet:

- *Catholicism on the Web* by Thomas C. Fox
- *Catholics on the Internet* by Brother John Raymond.

wrote that knowing and doing what is good for us are two different things and that humans often resist the latter.

"The first guidepost then is this: Do not expect, look for or demand progress. Enjoy and live the process, even though as with physical exercise, you might not like doing them every day. ... We allow God to give the increase, the insights, the progress."

In reflecting on God's faithful presence in human life, Gillick wrote that:

"God does not create us and then set us on the earth as so many abandoned milk jugs or degenerating cars. God tends to us as the beloved and labors upon and around us for our soul's purpose. God wants only, then, that we experience infinite love being revealed within our finite experiences and our reception of that love in our lives."

Links within each week's retreat materials invite participants to write their reactions and read what others have written (see box, page 25). Materials remain online so that any-

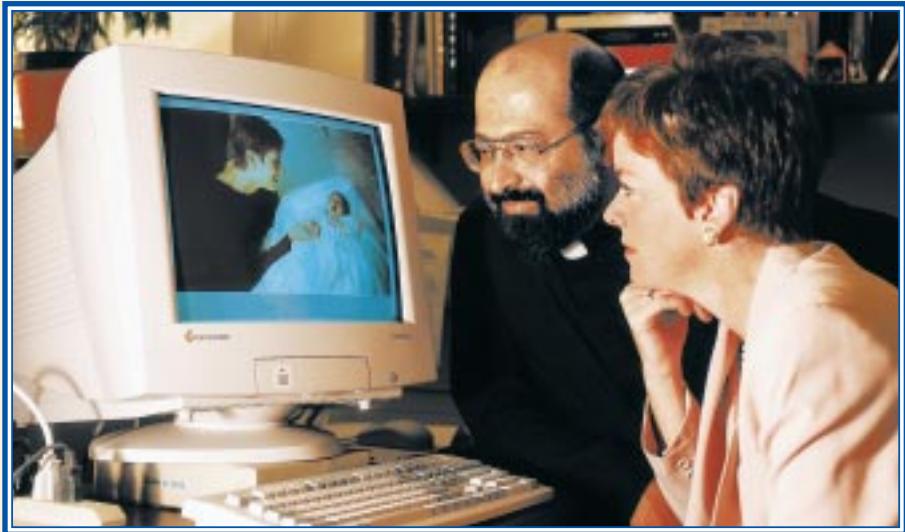


Photo by Monte Kruse, BA '83

Andy Alexander, S.J., and Maureen Waldron of the Collaborative Ministry Office developed Creighton's online retreat and Daily Reflections Page.

one may begin the retreat at any time or catch up if he or she has missed a week or two, said Alexander.

Reactions to the Retreat

During its first eight weeks, the retreat attracted nearly 12,000 hits.

Several people interviewed said they told others about the retreat or sent copies of the photos or readings to their children or friends.

Alexander said he and Waldron have heard from a wide range of people including:

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How is it possible to make an online retreat?

According to Fr. Andy Alexander, "A retreat is a retreat from our ordinary patterns and a retreat to a 'place' where we can be more receptive to the graces God wants to offer us. This online retreat affords us the opportunity to check this site each week and receive some guidance..."

Q: What kind of patterns or exercises will I be adopting?

- Read the guide page each week
- Spend some period of time in prayer every day
- Review the graces of the week each week

Q: What if I haven't made a retreat before?

"This kind of retreat is very user friendly. The most important thing to remember is that God doesn't need much openness on our part to richly bless us. This retreat offers suggestions for prayer throughout the week, for locating what it is we desire from God, and some ways to let ourselves be open to

receiving those graces. And best of all, we'll be doing this in the midst of our busy everyday lives."

Q: I'm nervous about finding time for "prayer" each day.

"Look on this retreat as something we are going to give ourselves and expect it to be a wonderful experience. ... We may start off with 10-15 minutes. ... Perhaps the best times will just appear: right before we go to bed, over a cup of coffee."

Q: What can we look forward to happening in us because of this online retreat?

"One thing is certain: We will grow in our relationship with God. Several other graces are very possible: We will grow in an inner peace that comes from a deeper sense of God's love for us; we will grow in a freedom from some of the stuff that keeps us from being very loving or courageous in the face of difficulties; and we can hope that we will be more committed to being of service to others."

- A Jesuit teaching in a high school in the Philippines who puts copies of retreat materials on the faculty bulletin board because the teachers don't have computers.

- A woman in Scotland who enjoys the readings but found a typo in one

- A monk in Switzerland who sent his thanks

- A parish in Baltimore which is using the materials for retreat work

- A group of alumnae in Omaha who gather weekly to use the materials for faith-sharing.

"We've found that people are hungry for this," said Waldron. "People have a deep need within themselves for a relationship with God."

She said it thrills her to walk around campus and notice that many computer users have saved the week's



During its first eight weeks, the online retreat received nearly 12,000 hits. "We've found that people are hungry for this," Waldron said.

photo on their computer screens.

"While they are sitting at their desks, they can have an awareness of God all day. They can remember what prayer is about. It's about integrating spirituality into your life."

That, said several users, is what happens with them.

Linda Dunn, an academic assistant to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said she clicks onto the retreat when she checks her

e-mail every Monday morning. She returns to it sporadically throughout the week.

"This is an oasis in your day," Dunn said. "It makes you a better employee. It takes the focus of the everyday and what might give you a bad attitude and puts the focus on something spiritual. There have been times when I would feel tension coming and think I ought to pop in and read something. I read a Scripture or prayer or one of the readings. I find myself calming down."

Ann McDonald, secretary for the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, said she finds the retreat "the positive side of the Internet" which "helps people when they can't really turn anywhere else. They can turn to the Internet and find some peace."

Creighton board member Dick Kizer of Central States Health & Life Co. of Omaha said he first heard about the retreat from his wife, Maureen, who is in a prayer group which uses the materials.

"I'm checking it out occasionally," he said. "It's nice when I have a few minutes to turn on the site and get a reflection for the day."

Law Dean Larry Raful said he allows his employees to use the retreat materials during their work time because he believes that people should not separate the ordinary from the holy.

"The message of Ignatius is to take it into the work world," he said.

Alexander said he hopes that people off campus will see the retreat as "a ministry of Creighton University," while those on campus will appreciate the way that "it puts our mission and technology together in a wonderful way."

"Ignatius developed a spirituality that involved being contemplative in the midst of action," he said. "Instead of having his followers do long periods of prayer, Ignatius preferred that they find God in all things. This is a most contemporary way to help very busy people do just that." **W**

Sharing

Here are examples of some of the reactions which online retreat participants have shared with each other.

"The picture I have of myself after the last two weeks is the most unveiled I've been to myself. As I try to be more and more transparent in the key personal relationships of my life, to be completely transparent to myself before God makes so much sense. And it feels great!"

"Tears. I haven't filled up with tears, gotten that tightness in my throat and the welling up of emotion from inside for a long time. This time I felt joy. Tears of joy. How I had wanted to never again look at the serious sins of my past. Today, they tell me not only what I have done, but they remind me of the One whose death frees me from those sins."

"The picture of the village brings tears to my eyes, only when I imagine the lives of the people there. I started asking myself if I could imagine pictures of scenes around the world where I had looked but not shed a tear."

"The photos, particularly the photo of those chairs, have sustained the background for me. (One of the weeks opens with a Don Doll photo — see page 21 — of two inviting chairs in the foreground and a beautiful landscape beyond, with the text from Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.") I want to share that the retreat is changing my day and my week. It is getting easier to plug back into the reflection about the purpose of creation, and my purpose by briefly returning to sit on one of those chairs. At times, things get chaotic in my life, and from the perspective of this overview of my purpose, it all seems to make so much sense. I think I'm understanding more what 'finding God in all things' really means."



Omaha City Council Proclamation



Whereas, Dr. Lee Bevilacqua, a physician fondly known as "Doc" and whose name was synonymous with Creighton University athletics for more than three decades as the team's volunteer physician, passed away on Oct. 17, 1998, at the age of 72; and,

Whereas, Dr. Bevilacqua also served as track physician at Ak-Sar-Ben from 1972-1992, as medical director at Union Pacific Railroad for 10 years, volunteered countless hours at homeless shelters and other volunteer and community events, as well as maintaining a private practice, including delivering nearly 1,800 babies; and,

Whereas, Dr. Bevilacqua was recognized for his countless hours of service to the community in the form of several awards: 1987, the Nebraska State Lodge, Order Sons of Italy; 1988, Creighton University Hall of Fame; 1998, Missouri Valley Conference Hall of Fame, League's Award of Merit, and many, many others; and,

Whereas, Dr. Bevilacqua was best known for his extremely generous nature and his ability to relate with anyone, regardless of their backgrounds, and he was oftentimes seen as a counselor, friend, father and professor to Creighton students and his many friends; and,

Whereas, Dr. Bevilacqua's legacy will be the hundreds of lives he touched, and his memory will live forever in our hearts.

Now, Therefore, We, the City Council of the City of Omaha, do hereby proclaim November 17, 1998, as

Dr. Lee Bevilacqua Day

In Witness Whereof, we have set our hands and caused the Official Seal of the City of Omaha to be affixed this 10th Day of November, 1998.

Frank Brown, City Council President

Paul Koneck, Vice President

Stubby Anzaldo, Councilmember

Cliff Holt, Councilmember

Marc Kraft, Councilmember

Lorraine Lo, Councilmember

Lee Terry, Councilmember

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