

The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources **News**



The Rubenstein School News, published monthly from October through May, is one of the school's primary vehicles for keeping students, faculty, and staff informed. We publish news and highlight coming events, student activities, and natural resources employment opportunities. Copies are available in the Aiken Center lobby and the Student Resource Area (336 Aiken) in the Dean's office. <http://www.uvm.edu/envnr>

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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

- International Dinner and Nina Roberts
- The Rubenstein School in Action
- RSENR/SUNY Adirondack Course
- Graduate Research
- Green Flash
- Undergrad Internship
- and more

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An International Evening

By Sara Lovitz and Erin Copeland

On February 26, 2004, about 80 students, faculty, and staff partook in an evening of international excellence organized by The Rubenstein School Diversity Task Force. The evening began with a delicious buffet filled with treats from a variety of countries. Once all were pleasantly full (after 2-3 servings!), the event continued with three Rubenstein School student presentations.

Senior Cynthia McCreight, spoke about her study abroad experience with the School for International Training (SIT) program entitled, "Health, Development, and Society," in Kenya and Tanzania. She discussed what it was like to live on the edge of one of the most densely populated slums in Nairobi, deconstructing all preconceived images of Africa. The students questioned their roles as white foreigners wondering how they would attempt to solve the global issues that they were surrounded by. Cynthia also spoke about her rural coastal village homestay, where she and others learned traditional Swahili dance. As she continued her journey into Tanzania, she demonstrated the transition of colors and environments through her photos.

Cynthia was able to participate in many of the traditional experiences of Tanzanian and Kenyan life, that as a tourist she would not have been able to discover. For her independent study she researched the impacts of pesticides on flower farms. Cynthia summed up her semester abroad experience with the statement – "everyday was an adventure."

Graduate student Karen Fligger was the second speaker of the evening, presenting on her experience as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nicaragua, where she lived for 27 months from 1998-2000. Karen taught environmental education for students, as well as environmental training sessions for teachers. She began by providing a brief history of Nicaragua as a "country of revolution," highlighting the Sandanista movement and Iran-Contra Affair. Nicaragua has also had its fair share of natural disasters, including Hurricane Mitch which cut off two-thirds of the country from the capital. Karen captured her experience with the phrase "brazos abiertos" or "open arms;" Nicaragua is a country with amazing culture and fantastic people. Diriamba, the city Karen lived in, is known for its patron saint festival, honoring San Sebastian, which
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Dr. Nina Roberts Presents for Ecosystem Health Seminar Series

By Julie Roberts

Dr. Nina Roberts, of the National Park Service, visited The Rubenstein School on February 26, 2004, and gave a presentation entitled, "Virgin Islands National Park: Balancing Recreational Use with Preservation: Issues and Conflicts." I had the opportunity to attend her presentation and then met with her, one on one, the next morning. Nina is a very interesting person. The best way to describe her is "full of character." She is professional and nurturing, both great qualities in her line of employment. Nina currently works for the National Park Service as an Education and Outreach Specialist with the Natural Resources Information Division.

To be an "outreach specialist," and

be good at it, personality must play an equal role with knowledge. In this particular presentation, Nina spoke of the conflicts that arose when a new general management plan for the park on St. John was discussed and introduced. One of the examples she gave that I particularly enjoyed and could relate to, was the determination by specialists that the mangrove trees that the St. Johnians tied their boats to were in danger. The effects of these mangrove trees dying could potentially be catastrophic to the ecosystem of the island, scientists warned. Therefore, a management plan was discussed where St. Johnians would be given moorings for their boats in the harbor, in an attempt to wean the residents off of tying their boats to the mangrove trees.

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Focus On Internships:

Jared Nunery, Environmental Science, Senior

Last summer from May 19 to August 20, 2003, I was in Southeast Alaska. I was working for the Fish and



Wildlife Department of the Sitka Ranger District, in the Tongass National Forest. Our primary work dealt with the salmon populations, focusing strongly on the Coho salmon populations. The job itself varied quite drastically, incorporating

everything from habitat restoration, mark and recapture population estimates, stream hydrologic and biologic surveys, and many more different aspects of the world of fisheries. On the side we would also participate in other small wildlife surveys working with the wildlife biologists of the Sitka Ranger District (SRD). Each trip would begin by either flying or boating out to our field camps, as this is the only means of travel in Southeast Alaska. From camp we would then hike, ATV, boat, drive on logging roads, or helicopter out to our work sites. Due to

the remoteness of the work sites and the highest brown bear density per square mile in the world, backcountry camping was strongly discouraged; however, with the constantly changing weather of Southeast Alaska it was always a possibility to be stranded for a night.

After completing my internship and returning to school I realized just how much I learned this past summer. I was able to actually apply all the skills that I have been taught in my classes and labs so far at UVM to a real world project, working in a truly wild environment. In particular I was able to apply a lot of the knowledge that I had gained in my Environmental Science 201 class, Restoration Ecology, towards several real life restoration projects, working with large woody debris and pool complexities. I believe that this summer internship is the most valuable learning experience I have had since beginning college, and has truly strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the environmental science



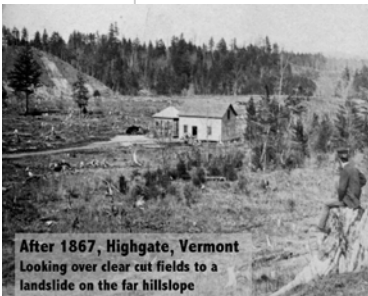
Jared using a Price AA flow meter (Gurly Meter) to measure stream velocity at USGS monitoring site.

Landscape Change Program

By Paul Biermans

After 6 months of work, we are ready to launch the new *Landscape Change Program* web page. It can be found at <http://www.uvm.edu/perkins/landscape/>

The *Landscape Change Program* is a digital archive of Vermont images that documents landscape change over time using historical imagery paired where and when we can with modern images of the same sites. We now have more than 2000 images in the archive representing many towns throughout the state. Our search engine allows you to find images using any combination of keywords, location, or date. The work



After 1867, Highgate, Vermont
Looking over clear cut fields to a landslide on the far hillslope

you see has been supported by grants from both the National Science Foundation and the Lintilhac Foundation.

We are continuing to work with schools and historical societies to collect Vermont images. The newly developed web software allows anyone to submit an image and image description making this truly a community archive. If you have any interesting images of Vermont landscapes, give it a try! Submit your image from the program web page and in a few days, it too will be part of

the archive.

We hope that the site will be both interesting and useful to you. If you teach, please consider using the site in your classes, having students both search for and upload images. If you have a collection of images, please consider uploading them or be in touch with us and we may be able to help with scanning. We also have computers, scanners, GPS units and digital cameras that can be lent for the purpose of acquiring images for the program.

If you need help with imagery or want to know more about getting involved in the project, please contact any of the project staff via either the project email glcp@uvm.edu or our personal emails. Jens Hilke (project coordinator, jhilke@uvm.edu), Christine Massey (museum education specialist, cmassey@uvm.edu), or Paul Bierman (Professor, pbierman@uvm.edu).

Please spread word of the archive. The more people who get involved, the richer and more useful the image archive will become!



Log School House, Teacher and Scholars, Underhill, Vt., near Mansfield Mt.