Chatham Forensics Club sponsors
Casino & Murder Mystery Night

Murder Mystery is an annual campus wide event that is sponsored by Chatham's Forensic Club. This year's Murder Mystery night kicked off the spring semester and was a complete hit with almost one hundred people in attendance. The night included music, friends, food, and a murder! The event centered around a roaring 1920's theme that took place in Welker which was transformed into the "Chatham Casino". There were a number of gambling tables including Blackjack, Craps, and Let it Ride. Those who came had the option of gambling the night away, participating in the murder mystery fun, or simply enjoying the 1920's music and themed food.

Submitted by Megan White

M.S. Biology Program at Chatham

The Master of Science in Biology program began in the fall of 2002 with a starting class of four students, including Holly Perri (B.S. Biology '02, M.S. Biology '03) who is currently finishing her Ph.D. in Biomedical Informatics at the University of Pittsburgh. The non-thesis option was added in 2007. Other graduates of this program have gone on to other doctoral programs, medical school, law school, physician assistant programs and to research jobs with government agencies and universities. Our own Mary Beth Davison and Kevin McDade are graduates of the Chatham MS program.

Why pursue an MS degree? Many students want additional time to complete prerequisites or to bring up their grades before applying for other degrees. By taking the accelerated, non-thesis track, you have 'something to show' for your year of work, apart from an expanded transcript. Some students who were active participants in sports or other activities as undergraduates never had time to devote to their studies, and want to show they can handle graduate-level work. Still others are uncertain as to what path they want to follow, and use the time to explore their options.

Admission to the program requires a minimum 3.0 GPA, completion of a degree in biology (or the equivalent), and strong letters of recommendation. Qualified undergraduates at Chatham can apply for early admission to the program and start taking courses in their senior year. However, while we are happy to have you with us for the extended time, it is often in the best interest of a student to apply for a masters at another university to be exposed to different faculty and surroundings. For more information, stop by or email Dr. Lisa Lambert, the program director.
TJ Meehan, PhD, Biology

Old, dead things are the coolest! My higher degrees are in vertebrate paleontology—I study old, dead mammal bones and associated fossils that are about 30 million years old, as well as climatic cycles and convergent evolution over large time spans. I went to the University of Kansas for my graduate degrees, and though I moved quite a bit East to Pittsburgh, I find that I haven’t left rocks and fossils of the Pennsylvanian Period (Age of Coal & Amphibians). I went to Oregon State as an undergrad, and if you love mountains, cold but lovely beaches, shadows and tall trees, and basalt rock, Oregon is a fabulous state.

I started the cadaver lab at Chatham five years ago, so of course, I teach several anatomy classes. I also teach evolution, first year science, Maymester Frisbee throwing, and hopefully, geology starting next year. Other courses I’ve taught are comparative anatomy, physiology, and human evolution. Student tutorial projects have included looking for hair traces in fossil carnivore dung, comparative anatomy of bird neck muscles, vertebrate behavioral studies (such as at the National Aviary), and working off campus in other scientists’ labs.

For fun and exercise, I still play the team sport of ultimate Frisbee (with players who remain young); I was fortunate enough to play at two UPA National Tournaments in recent years (Go ICU—Iron City Ultimate!). If I get out in the snow more, I’m going to become decent at snowboarding one year. Traveling and scuba diving are some of my more relaxing pastimes (except for that time in France when I was 15 metres up in a tree…).

Duquesne University celebrates Darwin Day every year with a special lecture. This year there are a series of talks going on from Jan through April (http://www.sepa.duq.edu/darwin/talks.html). Darwin’s 200th Birthday will occur on February 12, and it will be the 150th Anniversary of the first publication of On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life. TJ Meehan usually takes a few students—this year most talks occur on a Friday at Duquesne and are being repeated at the Carnegie Museum. The ones in early February are Darwinian Medicine: A New Approach to Health & Disease by Paul Sherman of Cornell University. It’s at the Pappert Lecture Hall, Bayer Learning Center, Duquesne University, Friday Feb 6 at 3pm and again Saturday at the Carnegie Museum of Art Theater Feb 7 at 1pm. Another talk is The Ascent of Darwin: Commemorating the Origin of Species by Janet Browne at the Carnegie Music Hall on Monday February 9 (time not listed as of Jan 23rd). TJ will likely go to the Saturday and Monday talks (and perhaps some of the later ones)—if anyone is interested in carpooling or has questions, stop by Buhl 226A or email tmeehan@chatham.edu.
Mary Beth Davison is a biology lab instructor, primarily teaching anatomy and neuroanatomy, plus COR 115 Labs. Mary Beth recently obtained her Master’s of Biology from Chatham University. She is currently completing her Master’s in Education researching study skills utilized by graduate students studying gross anatomy.

In addition to teaching labs, Mary Beth serves as the Safety Officer for Buhl. Her duties range from maintaining the student safety contracts each semester, to general lab safety, equipment inventory, and first aid kit inventory and resupplying. Accumulation, handing and proper disposal of hazardous waste is everyone’s responsibility, while being monitored by Mary Beth. Presenting “Safety First”, Buhl bulletin boards sport “Safety Corners” with highlights of a variety of safety issues is another one of her duties.

Mary Beth graduated with a BS in Biology from Waynesburg College, completing a year externship at Elyria Memorial Hospital School of Medical Technology and receiving her certification as MT(ASCP)H with a specialty in Hematology. After a long career working as a hospital laboratory section supervisor in Hematology at the Blood Bank at Suburban General and later Divine Providence Hospital, Mary Beth managed a Physician Office Laboratory (POL) for a reproductive endocrinology practice.

Leaving healthcare behind, but realizing its impact on her life and society, Mary Beth was a medical instructor at Bidwell Training Center. Her students became medical claims processors and medical coders. At Bidwell, Mary Beth taught Human Anatomy and Physiology, Pathology of Diseases, Medical Claims processing, and Healthcare Communications, along with some basic computers applications. Coming to Chatham was a fulfillment of a long aspiration to teach on a higher level. Mary Beth believes that Chatham is a great place to learn and a great place to teach.

Mary Beth Davison, M.S. Biology

Meet the Faculty & Staff: Biology (continued)

Lisa Lambert, PhD, Genetics

Dr. Lisa Lambert is originally from Fort Mitchell, KY. She received her BS in Biology (magna cum laude) from Furman University in 1980, where she was a member of the College Bowl Team and served as president of the University Social Activities Board. She went on to get her Ph.D. in Genetics at Indiana University (Bloomington) in 1985. She taught genetics at IU that summer, then began at Chatham in the fall. Dr. Lambert has served in the past as department chair (Biology), division chair (Natural Sciences), and associate dean (Academic Affairs). She was also the faculty ‘shepherd’ for the Buhl Hall renovation project. She is currently the director for the MS Biology program. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Project Kaleidoscope, and the American Society for Microbiology. At Chatham she has taught nearly 20 different courses including genetics, biostatistics, bioinformatics, and developmental biology. Her hobbies include bridge, computer games, and crochet. She is married to Dr. Michael Lambert of the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center, and they have two children, two cats, and one rabbit.

Dr. Lisa Lambert is originally from Fort Mitchell, KY. She received her BS in Biology (magna cum laude) from Furman University in 1980, where she was a member of the College Bowl Team and served as president of the University Social Activities Board. She went on to get her Ph.D. in Genetics at Indiana University (Bloomington) in 1985. She taught genetics at IU that summer, then began at Chatham in the fall. Dr. Lambert has served in the past as department chair (Biology), division chair (Natural Sciences), and associate dean (Academic Affairs). She was also the faculty ‘shepherd’ for the Buhl Hall renovation project. She is currently the director for the MS Biology program. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Project Kaleidoscope, and the American Society for Microbiology. At Chatham she has taught nearly 20 different courses including genetics, biostatistics, bioinformatics, and developmental biology. Her hobbies include bridge, computer games, and crochet. She is married to Dr. Michael Lambert of the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center, and they have two children, two cats, and one rabbit.
Dr. Nancy Gift was born and raised in Lexington, Ky, daughter of an economics professor. Dr. Gift thought about majoring in math in college, but didn’t like being one of a handful of women and wanted to get outside more, so she switched to biology. She received her A.B. in biology at Harvard, in plant systematics, and then a master’s in weed science from the University of Kentucky and a Ph.D. in weed science from Cornell. While at Cornell she also worked, holding short-term jobs in apple harvest research, forestry, veterinary epidemiology (statistics), and agricultural extension. Dr. Gift’s first daughter (now 9) was born when she and her husband were finishing their Ph.D.’s, and her second daughter (now 6) was born at their apartment in Chicago, where she taught part-time and her husband did a postdoc. They lived 2 blocks south of the Obama family, on the same street. She came to Chatham in 2005, and her husband joined the ecology and evolution faculty at Pitt the same summer. They live in O’Hara with a cat, Tiggy, and have a graveyard full of pet chickens in the backyard (killed by a fox).

Ms. Mary Whitney, University Sustainability Coordinator at Chatham University.

Ms. Whitney has spent the last decade in environmental education, working primarily with citizens, teachers and their students. As sustainability coordinator for Chatham’s campuses, she leads collaboration on sustainability practices at the university and works to help Chatham meet its carbon neutrality goals.

Ms. Whitney teaches ENV116, Global Environmental Challenges, and ENV/POL 425 environmental policy. She occasionally teaches COR203 Environmental Citizenship.

Ms. Whitney is one of the founders of GEM, the Green Education movement, a professional support and education organization for environmental education practitioners in Pittsburgh. She has a Master of Public Policy and Management from the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh, and is a graduate of Chatham College for Women at Chatham University.

She enjoys animals and among her animal friends includes Shadow the big spoiled cat, Frances the groundhog that lives under her porch, and Cookie, a 15-year-old goldfish (now joined by Spazzy, a youngster of only 5 years).
Environmental Studies and Environmental Science Programs at Chatham

The environmental “department” at Chatham has moved homes several times during its history at Chatham, based partly on the strengths of the faculty in the field and partly on the administrative climate at the time. This fall, the environmental “department” again became part of the science department. While the environmental field is always multidisciplinary, typically majors in this area must choose a focus on science, policy, or, depending on availability, writing. Right now, we have majors in environmental studies, which arose from the old environmental policy track, and both B.A. and B.S. degrees in environmental science. We hope to revise environmental literature, both to complement the nature writing focus of the M.F.A. program and to reflect Chatham’s strong history of environmental writing. In addition, an environmental minor is being revised, and whether this should be subject-focused, like the majors, or universal, like it has been, has not yet been settled.

Tutorials in environmental studies have historically ranged from environmental economics to environmental policy analyses. Currently, we have a number of environmental studies majors taking advantage of Chatham’s strong (but small!) GIS program to learn a marketable skill and engage in original research for their tutorials. Tutorials in environmental science have included wetland ecology, phytoremediation of heavy metals, and detection of organic compounds ranging from PBDE’s to DDT in plants, household dust, and children’s toys.

Of course, environmental scholarship at Chatham always touches upon Rachel Carson, and Mary Kostalos’ brainchild, the Rachel Carson Institute, which began in 1989. As acting director of RCI, I am often asked what RCI does. Given my own background in agricultural extension, I use the analogy that RCI does environmental extension. Like an agricultural extension educator, I read environmental research papers and try to keep up with what is going on in the field; I then can disseminate this information to the wider public in a form which is less technical and more easily applicable to daily life. However, whereas the agricultural extension educator typically has a geographic area to cover, RCI’s reach is less clearly defined, and the scope depends on available funding and other factors. I wrote articles last year for Midwifery Today, Western Pennsylvania History Magazine, the Rachel Carson Homestead Newsletter. This April my book, A Weed by Any Other Name, will be released by Beacon Press. This book has a lot of basic weed science information, but should be readable by the suburban and urban public who generally have no access to research on weed science. Writing, therefore, is how I focus my efforts within RCI.

The Sustainability Coordinator, Mary Whitney’s position, is separate from RCI in the university structure. Mary will write about that for the next installment in Environmental Mysteries in Chatham education.

Submitted by Dr. Nancy Gift
Health Professions Symposium

There will be a Panel Discussion and Networking Reception from 6:30 pm—8:00 pm on Thursday, February 26, 2009 in the Welker Room, Laughlin Music Hall. If you have ever considered a career as a Physician, Physical Therapist, Veterinarian, Physician Assistant, Occupational Therapist, Dentist, Nursing, Public Health, Counseling Psychology, then this is a symposium you shouldn’t miss. Join us for a networking event designed for those thinking about or aspiring to healthcare careers. Gather important information regarding prerequisites for professional school and planning a successful career in specific health fields. Please RSVP no later than Thursday, February 19, 2009 by contacting Dr. Kelly Weixel by email kweixel@chatham.edu This event is sponsored by Academic Affairs, the PACE Center, and the Pre-Health Professional Program.

Meet our newest Adjunct:

Dr. Patrick Sullivan is a lifelong Pittsburgh native, growing up in the suburb of Mt. Lebanon and now living there with his wife, Chrissa, and two girls, Peyton and Zoey. After graduating high school locally, he attended John Carroll University where he obtained his BS with a biology major and a minor in Spanish. While maintaining his goal of practicing primary care medicine, he then attended Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Sullivan completed an internship program and an internal medicine residency at Ohio Valley Medical Center in Wheeling, West Virginia. Following his residency and prior to starting his practice, Dr. Sullivan taught classes at Sewickley Hospital’s nursing school and LaRoche college. He continues to teach anticipating the start of his medical practice.

Exercise Science Society

This organization is open to all members of the Chatham Community. However, to be considered an active member an individual must attend at least half the meeting and or events held within each semester. Meetings will be held every 2nd Thursday of each Month in the HHPL (Health and Human Performance Laboratory) located in the AFC, just past the dance studio.

SAVE THE DATES:

- February 5th, 11:30am in HHPL: Meet and Greet: Nominations will be taken at this event for officers. Executive Board nominations will include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Coordinator. Cookies provided.
- February 12th, 11:30am in HHPL come cast your vote for the nominees!

Upcoming Science Events/Dates:

- Feb. 5: Exercise Science Society Meet & Greet Event, 11:30 AM in HHPL of the AFC
- Feb. 12: Darwin Day (Darwin’s 200th birthday) and voting for Exercise Science Society at 11:30 AM in HHPL of the AFC
- Feb. 16 Deadline for nominations for Chemistry Society officers
- Feb. 26: Health Professions Symposium
- Mar. 17 Pi day/Buhl Olympics party 4-6pm in the Buhl atrium

COMING NEXT ISSUE: Learn about the Chemistry Program!

Editor: Dr. Christy Heid To suggest articles for future issues or for general inquiries, please contact cheid@chatham.edu