

Campaign aims to reduce falls on campus

In the best of circumstances, embarrassment is the worst part of a fall. The lucky ones jump quickly to their feet and hurry away, hoping nobody noticed.

But Susan Viglione has the data to show that falls can be serious, even life-threatening. She studies statistics and reports on falls

and other accidents on campus as chair of YSU's Safety Committee and associate director of the university's Department of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety.

Safety committee members decided to get more proactive about preventing falls

this season, she said, when they noticed that the number of slips and falls in the first 10 months of this year was already nearly three times the number reported in all of 2008.

"Embarrassment is the least of the problem when somebody falls. Injuries from falls can be very, very serious. They are the number one

cause of workplace injuries," Viglione said. "What we want people to understand is that, in many cases, there is something they can do to prevent a fall."

The committee is organizing an informational campaign over the next few months to spread the word about the role

of personal responsibility in preventing falls. A series of personal e-mail messages will go out to faculty, staff and students, she said, discussing personal safety measures and ideas for helping others to avoid falls.

"For example, when you notice a big puddle on the floor, don't just walk by. Put some paper towels down or put up a sign so that it's obvious there is a hazard," she explained. "You could have a part in saving another person from what could be a serious fall."

There's no question that walking can be more hazardous during the winter months, she said, even though YSU's Facilities Department does a thorough job with snow removal and ice control on the university's 145-acre campus. In fact, 14

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SLIPS AND FALLS ON CAMPUS			
	Falls	Total Accidents	Fall Percentage
2007	18	46	39%
2008	10	49	20%
2009	28	56	50%

Source: YSU Safety Committee

Student finds research success in glow sticks and flip flops

When Ryan Halicki was a little boy building castles and digging for buried treasure on the beach, he probably never imagined that his major in college would one day lead him right back to the sands.

These days, though, he's digging for a different kind of treasure—one consisting of glow sticks, flip flops and orange juice containers.

This October, Halicki, a YSU senior studying geography and telecommunications, was awarded second place at the East Lakes Division of the Association of American Geographers meeting for his research paper titled "2008 Beach Litter Excavations on San Salvador Island, the Bahamas."

The meeting at Wright State University included about 150 students from 22 universities in Ohio and Michigan. Halicki was one of 11 presenters in his category. Co-authors of the paper are YSU students Sarah Roscoe, senior integrated social studies education major, and Tracey Roscoe, junior general studies major.

The paper focuses on research the group conducted in December 2008 on San Salvador Island as part of the YSU Ba-

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YSU student Ryan Halicki stands in a hole on a beach in the Bahamas during a research trip last winter. A paper written by Halicki, Tracey Roscoe (also pictured) and Sarah Roscoe placed second at a recent meeting of the Association of American Geographers.

eUpdate exclusives

For more news about YSU, read these and other stories in eUpdate at <http://cfweb.cc.yzu.edu/marketcomm/index.cfm>.

- **YSU celebrated Arbor Day and the recently-launched Campus Beautification Initiative by planting its first two donor trees on the campus core.**
- **The JP Morgan Chase Foundation has presented YSU with a \$40,000 grant to support Students Motivated by the Arts and Learning the Three Sciences, two educational initiatives that benefit pupils in the Youngstown City Schools and other local districts.**
- **YSU Board of Trustees sets December meeting schedule.**
- **The Penguin football team had six players selected to the Missouri Valley Football Conference's 25th Year Silver Anniversary Team.**
- **Governor appoints new trustee; NAACP donates book; Professor selected to attend prestigious symposium; Student receives Ohio Nurses Association honor; YSU students and employees honored at Veterans Day ceremony.**

Youngstown STATE UNIVERSITY

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English prof's first novel features journey of medieval maidservant

YSU English professor Rebecca Barnhouse hath made her mark in the world of medieval fiction by scribing her debut novel, *The Book of the Maidservant*.

The book, published by Random House Children's Books, is set in 15th-century England and details the journey and hardships of Johanna, a servant girl to notorious medieval figure Dame Margery Kempe. While accompanying Dame Kempe on a pilgrimage to Rome, Johanna battles fear, physical suffering and abandon at the hand of her mistress. Johanna is eventually forced to find her way to Rome alone but comes to discover her ultimate destiny of redemption along the way.

For this first novel, Barnhouse drew inspiration from a book she teaches regularly in her classes. *The Book of Margery Kempe* is the first autobiography written in English and the source of life for Dame Margery.

"Margery Kempe was a famous 15th-century holy woman—or crazy woman, depending on your point of view—who didn't treat her servant girl very well," said Barnhouse. "With this book [*Maidservant*], I decided it was time to give the girl a chance to speak."

And speak Johanna does. Medieval-style.

"I've always been frustrated with books today that set medieval kids in a modern light," Barnhouse explained. "I really wanted to show what a true medieval child's life would have been like back then, not what it would be like today."

Aside from this novel, Barnhouse has

four other scholarly books on the Middle Ages to her name and has found her passion in writing on medieval topics. The two main factors responsible for this calling: Tolkien and calligraphy.

"I started reading Tolkien in 8th grade, and his use of Old English got me interested in the linguistic aspects of the Middle Ages," she explained. Feeding off of this language from books, Barnhouse later came to study Old Norse, Old French, Old and Middle English and Gothic languages in graduate school. "It was fascinating to see how Tolkien had used some of those languages. I'd get a flash of recognition when I'd come across a word and realize I'd already encountered it in Tolkien's works."

Barnhouse began trying her hand at calligraphy around the same time she

became a Tolkien fan, learning how broad-edged pens and ink were used to form strokes and letters. She explained that this knowledge of hand-lettering helped her to be able to distinguish and interpret medieval manuscripts later in college.

Keeping in the realm of historical fiction, Barnhouse's second novel, *The Coming of the Dragon*, is scheduled for release October 2010, and will focus on another peripheral character from a medieval story—this time, from the legend of *Beowulf*. She said, "It's what I like to do—take a medieval text, pick a different main character for it, and tell a new story from that person's point of view." ■



Rebecca Barnhouse

Faculty & Staff

Send items for "Faculty & Staff" to
Cynthia Vinarsky at cevinarsky@ysu.edu.

Yogendra M. Panta, assistant professor of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering, was invited to present on "Fluid Power Initiatives in Research and Teaching at Youngstown State University" at the educational program of National Fluid Power Association Industry and Economic Outlook Conference in August. Co-authors of the presentation materials were **Hazel Marie** and **Shawn Kim** from the Department of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering. Panta was accompanied by his graduate student, Wei Lin.

Jake Protivnak, assistant professor of Counseling, made two presentations at the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision national conference in San Diego in October. The presentations were titled, "Finding the Right Slices of the Counselor Education Pie: Balancing Teaching, Scholarship, and Service for Pre-Tenured Faculty" and "The Development of Counseling Skills and Relational Competencies for Pre-Tenured Counselor Educators: How Supportive is the Academy

of Junior Counseling Faculty Engaging in Direct Counseling Practice?"

Melodie Provencher, administrative assistant in the Office of Student Life and adjunct faculty member in the Department of English, presented a paper, "Sacred Texts, Entitlement and the Meaning of 'Indigenous' in Merchant, Jhabvala and Ivory's *Shakespeare Wallah*," at the 2009 Ohio Valley Shakespeare Conference in October in Athens, Ohio.

Becky Varian, coordinator at the Center for Student Progress, presented "Understanding and Overcoming Math Anxiety" at the Ohio First Year Experience Conference in October at the University of Cincinnati.

Jim Andrews, professor of Physics & Astronomy, co-authored the paper "Continuous melt processing of all-polymer distributed feedback lasers" with research from Case Western Reserve University's Departments of Physics and Macromolecular Science and Engineering. The paper appeared in the Oct. 28 issue of

the *Journal of Materials Chemistry*.

Valerie O'Dell, assistant professor of Nursing; **Susan Lisko**, assistant professor of Nursing; **Kimberly Serroka**, associate professor of Nursing; and **Nancy Wagner**, assistant professor of Nursing, disseminated their doctoral research findings entitled "Evaluation of Scenario Simulation on Nursing Students' Critical Thinking Abilities and Student Satisfaction as it Relates to Learning Style" in an oral presentation at the Nursing Research Symposium sponsored by Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing held at YSU on Oct. 7.

Diane Barnes, associate professor of History, presented a paper titled, "Did Frederick Douglass Fail? John Brown and the Righteous Use of Violence," at the 150th Commemoration of John Brown's Raid: A Sesquicentennial Commemoration, at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in Harpers Ferry, W. Va.

Joanne Gallagher, coordinator of YSU Counseling and Career Services, has been nominated for the 2009 Research and Publications Award from the American Association for Employment in Education, a national organization of school administrators and college career services professionals. The nomination is in recognition of her outstanding contributions serving as co-editor for the past five years of the annual *Job Search Handbook for Educators*, as well as having several articles published for the AAEE.

Sherry Linkon, professor of English, was the keynote speaker during the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Working Class Celebration Month. Her topic was on "Working Class Studies in Higher Education." She also participated in a roundtable discussion on "The Place of Theory in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the Humanities" at the International Society for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference at the University of Indiana. Also, she gave a presentation on "Teaching Working-Class Students" for Faculty Development Day at Slippery Rock University. ■



Research recognition

YSU's chemistry and biology departments, along with chemistry professor Tim Wagner, were honored during the 12th annual Research Recognition Luncheon in Kilcawley Center earlier this month. Chemistry received a Dean's Award for the department that has demonstrated superior success in obtaining external funding. Biology received a special award for encouraging undergraduate student research participation. And Wagner received a Dean's Award for the faculty member who has demonstrated superior success in obtaining external funding. YSU faculty and staff received \$11.7 million in external grants in fiscal year 2009, more than triple the amount the university garnered in 2000. Pictured from the left are YSU President David C. Sweet; Peter Kasvinsky, dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Research; Daryl Mincey, chair of the Department of Chemistry; Wagner; and Gary Walker, professor of biology. For more photos, see eUpdate

Falls

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slips and falls were reported last winter, starting with the first snowfall.

Viglione suggests taking simple precautions when walking in winter weather, such as holding on to handrails, wearing practical footwear instead of high-heeled shoes or boots on snowy sidewalks and not carrying oversized packages.

But campus falls also occur indoors when people slip on wet floors, run to answer a telephone or use a chair or table instead of a ladder – accidents that might be preventable. “I think personal responsibility is the one thing that a lot of us haven’t thought about,” she said. “It is the one variable related to accident prevention that we individually have control of.”

The safety committee is also encouraging the campus community to report hazards, such as plumbing leaks or loose handrails, by calling YSU’s Facilities and Support Services. For more information on safety issues, or to report a fall on campus, visit the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety website at <http://cc.ysu.edu/eohs>. ■

Research

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hamas Field Program. “The purpose [of the research] was to examine how vegetation affects the incorporation of debris into the sand load of the beach,” said Halicki of Hubbard.

To collect data, the group dug pits along two lines extending from the tide mark to the back wall of East Beach that had not been previously surveyed. Debris found at every 10-centimeter interval, from glow sticks to flip flops, was documented and described.

“I didn’t always have an interest in this type of geography,” Halicki explained, “but as I began taking more classes, my interests in the discipline grew and are now heavily related to geography. I attribute that to the outstanding knowledge and education offered by the geography faculty here at YSU.”

Halicki said that the research for this project has been ongoing since 2007 but took off with the Bahamas Program trip last December, which, for Halicki, was “one of the best decisions made” in his college

career.

The program takes students out of the classroom and straight to the beaches of San Salvador Island for a nine-day, hands-on experience in studying the tropical physical environment. Students are introduced to new ecosystems ranging from limestone caverns to coral reefs and are involved in Bahamian culture with limbo contests, domino tournaments and interaction with local hosts.

“The trip was great. Nothing beats conducting research in a tropical location,” Halicki said.

He will be heading back to the Bahamas again this December to conduct further research in examining debris entrapment in the coral reefs. Halicki will graduate December 2010 and plans on pursuing a master’s degree in geography with a focus on weather and climate.

For more information on the YSU Bahamas Field Program, contact Ron Shaklee at rshaklee@ysu.edu. ■



In memory...

The names of more than 60 YSU students, faculty and staff who died while on active military duty were read as part of a solemn Veteran’s Day ceremony on Nov. 10 on Veteran’s Plaza on the YSU campus. The ceremony also included a color guard, a 21-gun salute from the Marine Corps League and the playing of taps. Pictured from the left are: David Olekshuk, systems analyst; Robert Beebe, professor of educational leadership; Vernon Snyder, professor and chair of psychology; Mark Welton, network security analyst; and Tammy King, associate dean of the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services.