Cosmic sleuths’ routine sky surveillance reveals celestial discovery

By CAROL CLARK

When most people look into the sky on a clear, moonless night, they just see a bunch of stars. Horace Dale sees individuals. “Each star has its own personality, that’s for sure,” says Dale, an astronomer and physics research associate.

He’s particularly fond of one that was previously listed in the General Star Catalog as GSC 4014-1629. This past fall, Dale and students in his advanced astronomy class were the first to discover that it is a variable star — one that changes its luminosity over short periods of time. In layman’s terms: It twinkles. And we’re talking a true twinkle, as opposed to the false twinkle-effect that the Earth’s atmosphere gives stars. “It’s cosmic detective work,” Dale says of the find. “You have to understand the nature of light.”

A little luck also helps. Dale freely admits that the discovery probably wouldn’t have happened if he hadn’t dozed off. “That was kind of serendipitous,” he says. The idea was to set up a routine lab exercise for his students to study a known variable star. It’s a time-consuming lab procedure to measure changes in a star’s brightness. A full variable star...probably wouldn’t have happened if you didn’t have an idea of what you’re looking for.

Dale says of the find. “You have to understand the nature of light.”

Oxford works to return a forest trail to its roots

By KIM URQUHART

When Erik Oliver ‘93C–’93G was a boy growing up at Oxford College, he enjoyed roaming the woods west of campus, exploring the 1.5-mile Hearn Nature Trail. Yet Oliver, now special assistant to the dean for strategic initiatives, recalls that, until recently, visibility in the woods was often limited to 30 feet. Non-native plant species had overgrown an estimated 85 percent of the forest floor, the lesser-used parts of the trail engulfed by the likes of Chinese privet and Elaeagnus.

Despite the best efforts of biology and botany classes to clear sections of the woods annually, without a sustained effort the areas continued to succumb to invasives.

Now Oliver is championing the Hearn Nature Trail restoration with the help of students, faculty and staff. “I remember how beautiful these woods were when I was a kid,” says Oliver, the son of emeritus professor Hoyt Oliver. He recalls how the late Professor Curry Haynes, who led the trail’s construction in 1978 with funds from a memorial gift to the college, continued personally to maintain the trail well into his retirement.

Since the project restoration began in 2006, more than 100 students have joined Oliver, biology faculty Elise Carter and Theodosia Wade, and facilities management staff to clear approximately eight acres of invasives.
NEW ONLINE AT EMORY
www.photo.emory.edu
www.video.emory.edu

Emory University Photo and Video, part of Emory Creative Group, now has an online presence that showcases its best-of collection of images documenting the life of the University. Featured here are slideshows ranging from Commencement 2008 to the campus visit of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama. Videos of students, faculty and special events provide a sampling of the department’s increased multimedia offerings. Check back often: Portions of the Web site are still under construction.

http://compass.emory.edu

Project Compass is Emory’s enterprise-wide initiative that will, over a two-year period, replace the separate University and Healthcare accounting systems (PAS and CODA) with a feature-rich solution: PeopleSoft Financials version 9.0. Learn more about informational meetings, training sessions, and updates as the project moves forward on the new Project Compass Web site, which includes information such as how to contact team leaders and the project’s timeline.

ABOUT US

Emory Report serves as an informative, lively and comprehensive resource for news and events of vital interest to staff and faculty. The weekly publication highlights the Emory community’s accomplishments, endeavors and aspirations that reflect the University’s identity and strategic vision. Visit us online at www.emory.edu/EMORY_REPORT.

EMORY PROFILE: Monica Capra

Monica Capra is a pioneer in the emerging field of neuroeconomics, probing decision-making at both the behavioral and neural levels.

By CAROL CLARK

Monica Capra, assistant professor of economics, decided on her career when she was about 13 years old and hyperinflation rocked her homeland of Bolivia.

Hunger was not a problem for Capra. Her family lived in the capital La Paz, where her mother was a historian and her father was an engineer who held various political appointments over the years, including ambassador to Mexico.

“I didn’t personally suffer, but I could see the effects,” Capra says of the inflation, which rose to a phenomenal rate of 25,000 percent by 1985.

Money had virtually no value. Capra’s mother began bartering for goods, exchanging sugar for flour or other staples. The supply of milk dried up, since farmers could not afford to produce it. “The government controlled the prices and did not allow importing,” Capra recalls.

Meanwhile, drought struck the highlands of the country. Thousands of destitute people poured into the streets of La Paz, begging for food.

Realizing that poor fiscal policies had caused the hyperinflation, Capra decided that when she grew up she would become an economist—a good one, who considers the impact of policies on people.

“The human suffering that bad economists generate can be as bad as the suffering caused by those who explicitly try to hurt people,” she says.

Her upbringing was steeped in politics and policy. After one coup d’état, her father had to go into hiding due to his political views, and the whole family lived in exile in Mexico for several years.

Her worldview was further shaped by two years of high school at Pearson College of the Pacific in Canada, part of the prestigious United World Colleges program. These unique schools bring together high school students from around the world to study a rigorous curriculum designed to foster peace and international understanding.

Capra earned a PhD in economics at the University of Virginia before joining Emory, where her research focuses on experimental and behavioral economics. She studies questions such as: Can freedom of the press help get an economy out of a poverty trap? How do moods and emotions affect social interactions? Why are adolescents more prone to taking risks than adults? Can trust be measured and, if so, what’s the best method to do so?

“In the real world, it can be difficult to establish causality,” Capra says. “The advantage that experimental economists have over natural economists is control. We can generate an experimental economy, setting the control parameters of the theoretical model, and then let people behave as they want.”

In essence, she explores how people make decisions, along with the outcomes of those decisions.

“When you observe the choices that people make by themselves, there are a lot of biases,” Capra says. Even if individuals are given new, relevant information that conflicts a prior belief, they often will not update their beliefs, she notes. “But if you put them in a group situation, where there is a market interaction and public information, they tend to behave more rationally.”

In recent years, Capra has become a pioneer in the emerging field of neuroeconomics. She has published a series of important papers in collaboration with Emory colleagues Gregory Berns, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences; Charles Noussair, professor of economics; and other researchers. By combining functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) with established economic models, they are probing decision-making at both the behavioral and neural levels.

One of their recent experiments looked at how people make decisions in terms of risk and pain, using varying degrees of electrical shocks on volunteer participants. The results suggested that some people are “extreme dreaders,” who will opt to receive a bigger shock that is administered sooner, rather than wait longer for what would probably be a lesser shock.

“We now have the tools to better understand our brains in relation to decision-making and other behaviors, and that’s a fascinating thing,” Capra says. “No one knows exactly where this is going, but I believe it’s going to change not only the discipline of economics, but all disciplines.”

Bio-diverse Bolivia

When Monica Capra tells people about her homeland, many of them are surprised to learn of Bolivia’s dramatic range of ecosystems. The country includes majestic Andean peaks, dry highland forests and dense, lowland tropical forests. The diversity of Bolivia’s animal and plant life is among the greatest in the world.
Field work: Clinic brings free care to farmworkers

Nurse Practitioner and undergraduate nursing students from Emory join dental hygiene, physical therapy and psychology students from other institutions to deliver 12 days of free health care to migrant farmworkers in south Georgia.

This is the 15th anniversary of what is known as the Farmworker Family Health Program. The group partners with Ellenton Farmworker Clinic in Colquitt, Cook, Brooks and Tift counties, examining children at the summer school every morning and going to a different farmworker camp each evening.

Judith Wold, visiting professor in the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, said cavities in teeth, low back pain and dermatological problems such as skin rashes are the primary problems they see in adults they treat. With children, it’s anemia and also cavities but “we have made a difference for the children with dental sealants on permanent teeth,” she says.

“We would like to expand the research possibilities,” Wold says, regarding the program’s future. “For the past several years we have had an MS/MPH student with us doing research on this population. This year the study centered on pesticide levels in children of migrant farmworkers.”

—Leslie King

QUESTIONS FOR ... Sasha Smith

Center for Women still sizzles in summer

The resources available through the Center for Women at Emory are abundant, including confidential drop-in counseling, information on sexual assault, harassment and other concerns, a library, massage therapy, and the Nursing Nest, a lactation space for nursing mothers. Emory Report catches up with Assistant Director for Programs Sasha Smith to find out what’s hot at the Center for Women this summer.

Emory Report: The Center for Women houses one of the largest and most diverse collections of books relevant to gender issues on campus. Which book is on your summer must-read list?

Smith: We have books by women and for women, from fiction to specific topics. I recently just read “Eat Pray Love” by Elizabeth Gilbert. It took forever because it was always being checked out from our library. So I was wondering what is this rave about? It’s not what I expected and I feel like it was a very good summer read. I connected with the character. Themes in the book are about finding work-life balance, which is one of the main themes here on campus now.

ER: The Center for Women offers an onsite wellness program with licensed massage therapists. What’s the best part about getting a massage through the Center’s massage therapy program?

Smith: It’s really nice in the middle or the end of the day, to not have to go somewhere far, and get a relaxing massage at a very reasonable price, $1 minute. This year we started offering walk-in appointments, which have increased the use of massage therapy at the Center. Our therapists are requested at special events like Staff Fest and to visit other units, like Yerkes, who might not be able to make it to the Center during the day.

ER: What do you enjoy most about your work?

Smith: Working with students and being able help them shape and think critically about their feminist theory and putting it into practice. I love being a mentor. Another piece of my job I really like are the programs that help people, like the financial seminar and the women’s health and wellness programs, where we have a professionals in specific fields who can answer detailed questions on specific topics.
Cancer program helps children

Children whose parents have been diagnosed with cancer can get support through a new program at the Emory Winship Cancer Institute.

CLIMB—Children’s Lives. Include Moments of Bravery, works to enable children ages 6 to 13 to express their feel-
ings of sadness, fear, anger or anxiety through the lens of a par-
ents’ cancer diagnosis.

The next CLIMB program begins Aug. 19, and will run from 6 to 7:30 p.m. every Tuesday for six weeks.

“This program focuses on the children, and how they can express themselves and learn more about what a cancer diagnosis means,” says CLIMB’s director Rebecca Sizemore, a social worker at Emory Winship.

Participants’ parents don’t have to be Emory patients.

For information, contact Sizemore at 404-778-5926 or rebecca.sizemore@emory-healthcare.org.

Accreditation for research programs

Emory has received ac-
creditation from the Associa-
tion for the Accreditation of
Human Research Protection
Programs Inc., which accred-
its biomedical or behavioral
and social sciences research
programs involving human par-
ticipants.

“Accreditation is important to Emory because it validates our efforts to provide a safe and ethical environment for the conduct of human re-
search,” says David L. Wynn, vice president for research administration.

AAHRPP’s standards exceed federal regulations by requiring organizations to address conflict of interest, to provide community outreach and education and to apply the same stringent protec-
tions to all research involving human participants.

Biostatisticians probe steroid use in baseball

The Emory team’s analysis of the Mitchell report contrasted with non-doping peers, Emory biostat-
istics found. The research-
er’s findings were presented at the recent Society for American
Baseball Research meeting.

The Emory team’s analysis represents the first attempt to quantify the overall effect of per-
formance-enhancing drug (PED) abuse on offensive performance in baseball.

Using information from the 409-page Mitchell Report, Rol-
ins School of Public Health fac-
ulty members Brian Schmotzer and Patrick Kilgo, in collabora-
tion with graduate student Jeff Switchen, created a database to track various statistics. The team then modeled the effect

of PED use on offensive perfor-
manoe among those players men-
tioned in the Mitchell report com-
pared to all other players from the steroid era, adjusting for age.

What they found was a sig-
nificant and large increase in the standardized win total of PED-accused players. Among PED-ac-
used users, they estimate that they have an additional 7 percent to 12 percent advantage in achieving an offensive win total over non-PED-accused users. This effect is significant and substantial per-
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Campus to make more lifesaving ‘firsts’ possible

Three years ago, Marc Baskett lay dying at Grady Memorial Hospital. A catastrophic car accident had left him in a coma, and his parents prepared for the worst. But that was before their Emory doctors told them about PROTECT — a clinical trial that treats traumatic brain injury (TBI) with natural progesterone.

Emory is the only place in the world where this extraordinary work — the first successful new treatment for TBI developed in decades — is being done. Thanks to basic and clinical research at Emory’s Woodruff Health Sciences Center, Marc was home with his family just seven weeks after the accident — happy, healthy and grateful to be alive.

Stories like Marc’s are what make our donors passionate about supporting WHSC — and why we’re confident about our ambitious new fundraising campaign being launched this fall. Our donors get a great return on their investment by supporting groundbreaking advances with unlimited potential to save and improve lives not only here in Atlanta, but also throughout the nation and the world.

You might wonder what makes donors choose WHSC over other health institutions they could support. What differentiates us from other academic medical centers, health systems, universities and research institutes? Very simply, it’s the synergy among our research, education and clinical missions; among our departments and disciplines; and among people of varying backgrounds and talents that makes us a model academic health sciences and services center. Our interdisciplinary programs assure that discoveries in the lab are translated into practical health applications and delivered to people in need by some of the best and brightest health professionals in the country.

In sum, we work together across the breadth of health sciences and services in ways that other institutions can’t or won’t — resulting time and again in innovative “firsts” like the study that saved Marc Baskett’s life.

Many examples illustrate the breakthroughs that result from our team approach. Emory was the first place in the country to offer 3-D breast mammography — a new technology that reduces missed lesions by 40 percent. We’re also the lead of three centers nationwide using stem cells from a patient’s own bone marrow to regenerate heart muscle and improve its function after a heart attack. Deep brain stimulation — pioneered here at Emory — is giving people with severe clinical depression a new lease on life. And our Yerkes National Primate Research Center was the first in the world to develop a transgenic nonhuman primate model for neurodegenerative diseases — allowing us to more effectively study the devastating effects of Huntington’s Disease.

Remarkable advances like these, resulting from interdisciplinary alignment and collaboration across departments, schools, centers, our health system, and the University, are what make WHSC unique as a true academic health center. When our campaign launches in September, we want all of our supporters to know about these and other innovations so that they can join us as we continue transforming health and healing … together.”

Fred Sanfilippo is executive vice president for health affairs, CEO of the Woodruff Health Sciences Center and chairman of Emory Healthcare.

WoodPEC to change fees, offer payroll deductions

By KIM URQUHART

The Woodruff Physical Education Center is implementing a new membership program for faculty and staff. The new fee structure will be available as a new payment option to University employees. Also at this time, the yearly membership fee will increase to $180.

Employees have until July 31 to join or renew at the current rate of $120 — no matter when their yearly membership expires. “We’re trying to be as customer service-oriented as possible,” says Assistant Director of Athletics Meg Ahrens.

The fee increase is driven by the increased costs to maintain the facility, which includes an Olympic-sized pool, tennis courts, tracks, fitness equipment, basketball and volleyball courts, and a variety of intramural and recreational programming, explains Tim O’Donnell, Clyde Partin Sr. Director of Athletics and Recreation. “Unfortunately WoodPEC is not immune to an increase in operating costs. While we understand that this rate increase is a change to the price of a yearly membership, our rates still fall well below those of comparable fitness facilities,” Downes says. Importantly, he says, “we will be able to maintain this fee for at least four years.”

Payroll deduction will not be mandatory. Ahrens says, but simply adds an affordable and convenient option for members. For now payroll deduction is available to University employees only, but is likely to be extended to Emory Healthcare in the future.

To sign up for this option, visit the membership office to authorize the monthly payroll deduction of $15. Fees will continue to be deducted until the member proactively cancels their membership. Members preferring to pay a lump sum can continue to do so, at the membership office via cash or check, or with a credit card at www.wpec.emory.edu.

Despite the fee increase, WoodPEC is still the best bet in town, says Ahrens. “In terms of cost, we are the cheapest of the three fitness center options available to Emory employees and compared to other fitness options near Emory, our facility is the largest, we have the most space available. Our Fitness Education classes, while they are an additional cost, are a great benefit, and our location, for the majority of people who work and teach classes here, is convenient.”

Scene in an Emory parking deck

The views of the Atlanta skyline and Emory campus from the top of the Michael Street Parking Deck set the stage for Fish & Bicycle Theater’s performance of “The Adventures of Jesitha and Andronikis: The Search for Love!”

The show begins just below the sixth level of the parking deck. A guide leads the audience from scene to scene in a loop around the deck.

“We really wanted to take the audience on an adventure and make it an immersive experience for everybody,” says Nathan Green ’08C, who directed the epic adventure tale that attracted about 250 spectators during its June run.

“We’re about telling a good story and having a good time,” says. Green, a Theater Studies major who graduated from Emory’s Film & Television major.

“We’re about telling a good story and having a good time,” says Nathan Green ’08C.

“This is the second such show presented by co-founder Green’s fledgling theater company. “We’re into creating traveling spectacles that are environmentally staged,” he says. Green, a Theater Studies major who graduated from Emory in May, will soon serve as a directing intern at the Actors Studio’s Theatre of Louisville.

SNAPSHOT

EMORY REPORT
JULY 7, 2008

By KIM URQUHART

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—Kim Urquhart
Discovery

HEARMe radio partnership speaks to refugee health

By CAROL CLARK

When Hussien Mohamed's 82-year-old mother developed a cataract, he took her to an Atlanta physician for treatment. But she wouldn't go through with it. "She said, 'No, no, no! He's not going to touch my eyeball.' I will die with my original eyes," Mohamed recalls. "I've asked every friend and family member to talk to her, and she still refuses." 

Mohamed and his mother came to the United States as refugees from Somalia. In 1998, he founded Sagal Radio in Atlanta. The station, a partner of Emory's Office of University-Community Partnerships, broadcasts every weekend on AM 1420 in English, as well as Somali, Swahili and Amharic.

Mohamed hopes that a new radio program devoted to the Somali community, HEARMe, will help his mother and some of the other 17,000 East Africans in Georgia to overcome language and cultural barriers to keep improving their quality of life.

The program, called HEARMe, or Health Education via Airwaves for Refugees, is funded by a grant from the Benton Foundation, as part of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's New Routes to Community Health philanthropic portfolio.

"A lot of East African refugees don't know about preventative health. The only time they take care of themselves is when they are sick and have to go to the hospital," says Mohamed, who is a program coordinator for OUCP, in addition to serving as director of Sagal Radio and holding a "day job" as a translator and case worker for World Relief.

"The elders, especially, don't have much trust in doctors," he adds. The best way to reach them, he says, is by getting local medical and religious leaders who speak their languages on the air, along with information about the new program and ongoing health treatments, and can share their stories.

"You don't need a passport to do global health — the global community is right here in Atlanta," says Sam Marie Engle, senior associate director of OUCP, explaining the rationale behind HEARMe.

Sagal Radio has provided Emory students and faculty ways to serve the local refugee community. Engle says, HEARMe will offer another platform to expand that involvement — particularly for the schools of nursing and public health and the journalism department.

The full line-up of weekend HEARMe programming, set to debut in August, will feature experts along with real people who are dealing with everyday challenges, including home safety, family planning, navigating the healthcare system, mental illness, nutrition, obesity and diabetes.

A feature called "Coffee Shop Chat" will air the conversations of East African men who gather at a local café to discuss politics, along with policies affecting their health and well-being. "Elders will focus on the personal stories of older men and women, while "Youth Speak" will give local high school students from the East African community a chance to report on health issues important to teens.

Quantum dots deliver gene silencers better

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Emory and University of Washington scientists recently reported one of the first applications of nanotechnology known as quantum dots to drug delivery.

They described a method for introducing gene-silencing tools made of RNA into cells that is 10 to 20 times more effective than existing methods.

Smuggling genetic material in the form of RNA into cells potentially could be used to treat conditions ranging from breast cancer to deteriorating eyesight.

The discovery that short pieces of RNA can silence a stretch of genetic code, a process known as RNA interference, earned a Nobel Prize in 2006, but applying the technique has been difficult.

"Our work helps to overcome the longstanding barrier in the field: how to achieve high silencing efficiency with low toxicity," co-author and Emory/Georgia Tech bioengineer Shuming Nie says.

Nie’s postdoctoral fellow Maksym Yezhelyev, a cancer expert Ruth O’Regan and Nie’s postdoctoral fellow Lifeng Qian and assistant professor Xiaohu Gao at the University of Washington. Their results were published online in the June 21 issue of the American Chemical Society.

The team’s method marries quantum dots, which Nie has already made famous for their light-emitting properties, with chemical sensors called “proton sponges.”

The proton sponges cloak the RNA so that it can pass through the cell membrane and then release the RNA, freeing the molecule from the endosome, a fatty bubble that surrounds incoming material. The RNA then accumulates in the cell, where it can do its gene-silencing work.

Key to the new approach is that researchers can adjust the chemical makeup of the quantum dot’s proton-sponge coating, allowing the scientists to precisely control how tightly the dots attach to the RNA.

"The fluorescent quantum dots allow scientists to watch the interfering RNA’s movements in real time, giving off light for less than a minute, while quantum dots, developed for tracking the night skies at a time. In the experiments that Nie engineered, able to watch the process for many hours to track the gene-silencing path."

This generalizable technology will have important implications in in-vivo therapeutics, which will require the use of non-toxic iron oxide and biodegradable polymeric carriers rather than quantum dots.

Quantum dots are not yet approved for use in the clinic. The authors are now transferring their techniques to parallel clinical trials, which have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. They are also working on the target cancer cells by attaching to specific markers on the cell’s surface.

DISCOVERY: Twinkle earns star a new designation

Continued from the cover

night’s worth of data must be gathered and tested beforehand for comparison purposes. Dale pulled the necessary overnighter to get it.

He chose a variable star in the constellation of Cassiopeia and aimed the observatory’s telescope at it. He attached a digital camera to the scope and set up shop in the control room below. A computer and special software allowed him to measure the changing brightness of the variable star over time, using the brightness of five nearby stars that were not variables as references for constant luminosity.

All went well until around 2 a.m., when Dale fell asleep for about 80 minutes. When he awoke, he realized that the telescope had drifted, leaving only a single reference star, GSC 4014-1524, in the field of view. One reference star was enough for his purposes, but Dale needed to pull another night at the lab, to fill in the missing minutes of data.

He later compared the data from both nights on his laptop, while sitting at home in his La-Z-Boy. His wife was in the room when Dale had his eureka moment — he saw that the reference star had slightly changed its luminosity during that brief gap in time. "I knew right away we had a variable," he recalls. "I said, "Wow! Look at this!" My wife said, 'Yeah, hon. That’s nice.'"

Dale’s students responded with more enthusiasm. "It was an incredible teaching tool," he says, explaining that he presented the students with the comparative data to use in the lab. Through their own analyses they recognized that the reference star was actually variable.

Dale and the students submitted their results to the International Variable Star Index which confirmed the discovery, and gave the star the new designation of J001528.0+602037.

Further study showed that the star is one of only 400 known Delta Scuti pulsating variables — an older star with gases rapidly expanding and contracting in both spherical and oblong shapes. The star is slightly hotter than the sun, one-and-a-half times as big, and located about 2,000 light years from Earth.

"It’s amazing to me that we can come up with all of these conclusions just through our knowledge of light," Dale says. "Light is the only thing astronomers have to work with, but when you understand the nature of light, you can literally see back in time."

Out of the billions of stars in our galaxy, only about 43,000 variable stars have been identified and classified, although many more are out there. "Is this one of those?" Dale and his astronomy students will be scoping the night skies for answers.

"It’s really important that we study them," Dale says, variably. "We can’t know how these stars have helped us learn about stellar evolution and the size of our galaxy, without the knowledge of other stars in our galaxy." Dale says. "It's the only thing that astronomers have to work with, but when you understand the nature of light, you can literally see back in time."
Seminars

Thursday, July 10
*Wounded Warrior Network.* David Feliciano, Emory surgery, presenting. 7 a.m. Emory University Hospital Auditorium. Free. 404-778-1903.

Optional Treatment for Varicose Veins Seminar. 6:30 p.m. Glenn Auditorium, Emory Crawford Long Hospital. Free. 404-778-7777.

Thursday, July 17
*Abdominal Imaging: Indications and Risks.* Diego Martin, Emory radiology, presenting. 7 a.m. Emory University Hospital Auditorium. Free. 404-778-1903.

Thursday, July 24
*Updates in Sarcoma.* Gina D’Marto, Emory oncology, presenting. 7 a.m. Emory University Hospital Auditorium. Free. 404-778-1903.

**Special**

Monday, July 7

Tuesday, July 8
Farmers Market. 11 a.m. Cox Hall Bridge. Free. Every Tuesday.

Thursday, July 31
*Mixing Oil and Blood: A Look at Suicide and Bahar Ghazi,* Emory surgery, presenting. 7 a.m. Emory University Hospital Auditorium. Free. 404-778-1903.

**Visual Arts**

Saturday, July 10

**Workshops**

Tuesday, July 15
Endnote Introduction Workshop: 1 p.m. 310 Woodruff Library. Free. 404-727-6663.

**Events**

‘Picking Cotton’ reveals layers of history

By MARY CATHERINE JOHNSON

For many people, the phrase ‘picking cotton’ summons images of African slaves toiling against their will on the plantations of the American South. In the Visual Arts Gallery’s exhibition ‘Picking Cotton...Mississippi to Detroit,’ VanDevender’s ‘parcels’ offer a glimpse of her life journey from a pre-Civil Rights childhood in Meridian, Miss., through her recent acceptance into the MFA program at Cranbrook Academy of Art near Detroit.

“Having been reared in Mississippi I had been told a story of the differences in people’s lives. The differences were often accentuated by class structures and appearances,” says VanDevender, who will present an artist’s talk on July 23. Making assumptions through facades proved inaccurate. Years later, in Detroit, I found a shared history with African Americans whose roots were also in the South. These discoveries sparked a sense of commonality for me.”

That shared history is also in the South. These discoveries are enshrined within VanDevender’s ‘parcels.’

‘Picking Cotton’ is on display at the Visual Arts Gallery through July 31.
Seminars

Thursday, July 10
*Wounded Warrior Network.* David Feliciano, Emory surgery, presenting. 7 a.m. Emory University Hospital Auditorium. Free. 404-778-1903.


Thursday, July 17
*Abdominal Imaging: Indications and Risks.* Diego Martin, Emory radiology, presenting. 7 a.m. Emory University Hospital Auditorium. Free. 404-778-1903.

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Visual Arts


Now Showing


Workshops

Tuesday, July 15
*Endnote Introduction Workshop.* 1 p.m. 310 Woodruff Library. Free. 404-727-6863.

Enlighten Recital Series

Emory's annual University Organist Recital Series orga- nized by University Organist Timothy Albrecht features an array of guest artists and the popular presentation of Bach's "Musical Offering" on Super- bowl Sunday with the Atlanta Bach Ensemble. Organist Melissa Plamm kicks off the 2008–09 season of free one-hour public concerts with a performance on the Casavant organ in Glenn Memorial Auditorium. Plamm received her Mas- ter of Music degree under Albrecht's tutelage at Emory and returns for the fall semester as an instructor. Plamm's recital will feature works by some of the best known composers in history such as Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) and Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847), as well as newer works by living composers Per Eben (b. 1929) and William Bolcom (b. 1938). Her program features Bolcom's 1987 composition From Gospel Preludes, "Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child"; Brahms's Choral Prelude and Fugue "O Triaqueulo, o Herzadil" (1856); Mendelssohn's Sonata Op. 65, No. 3; "Pneuma" by William Albright (1944–1998); and A Festive Voluntary: Variations on Good King Wenceslas by Eben. The season continues as one of America’s leading organists, Paul Jacobs, will perform a repertoire spanning five centuries on Emory's Jacobus Opus 45 organ in the Schwartz Center's Emerson Concert Hall.

For more information, call 404-727-6863 or visit arts.emory.edu.

By MARY CATHERINE JOHNSON

For many people, the phrase "picking cotton" summons images of African slaves toiling against their will on the plantations of the American South. In the Visual Arts Gallery's exhibition "Picking Cotton...Mississippi to Detroit," that deeply rooted con- tinues to be a shared history with African Americans whose roots were also in the South. These depictions of sameness are resonant for the viewer. The exhibit runs through July 31 at the Visual Arts Gallery (700 Peavine Creek Dr.). The artist will speak Wednesday, July 23, at 7 p.m. at the gallery. For more information, call 404-727-6315 or visit visualsarts.emory.edu.