The Utah House

On Saturday November 12th SOSNR went to the Utah House. This is a sustainable house made by the USU extension office to show how a house can be made with four things in mind:
1. Energy Efficient
2. Water Efficient
3. Universal design (handicap friendly)
4. Healthy Home

Fridge (above to the left) and Oven (above to the right, behind Kelly) are put on opposite ends of the kitchen. This means that while the oven is heating up something, that something won’t be the fridge. This allows both appliances to work more efficiently without competing.

(Above) recycled glass used to make windowsills.

Photo essay by Merlyn Hall
(merlynh@cc.usu.edu)

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Professor Spotlight

Keith A Mott
Professor of Biology, Department of Biology

Where did you grow up? “I grew up in Maryland”

Where did you get your degrees? 
“A small liberal arts college for my undergraduate studies called Union College in Schenectady New York. (BS. In Biology) I took a year off to work and travel. Then I went to the University of Arizona in Tucson for my PhD in Biology.”

Why Arizona? “I wanted to go west, and there was a particular professor in Arizona that I wanted to work with.”

When did you decide and what inspired you to go into your degrees? “I first wanted to be a doctor. About half way through I realized medicine wasn’t it. But I knew I wanted to stay in research.”

After your schooling what did you do? “I went to a post doctoral program at the Carnegie Institute at Stanford for a year and a half.”

What brought you to Utah State University? “A job offer. I just wanted to stay in the west and I didn’t want to live in a big city.”

What Classes do you normally teach? “I teach BIOL 1210 Introductory to Biology and BIOL 4400 Plant Physiology.”

Why did you decide to teach? “It’s just part of being a professor; it is fun to talk about things I’m interested in to a captive audience.”

What advice do you give to your students to succeed in your classes? “Study after every lecture, don’t just go to class and not think about the material until the next lecture.”

What research are you currently involved in? “Mostly work on stomata. We are basically trying to figure out how they work. They are actually poorly understood, despite the fact they have been studied for over a hundred years.”

Have you had any interesting jobs before becoming a professor? “Every summer during college, I was a life guard.”

Hobbies & Interests:
I like to: ski, hike, and restore old British sports cars (Austin Healey’s to be exact). Besides having a family, I keep pretty busy…. I used to play tennis before I injured my knee.”

Advice to students: “Pick something you like to do and that you are good at doing. Find a way to make money at it, and then call it your career. For me the greatest thing about my job is I get paid to learn.”

Favorite Music: “Rock & Roll and/or classical, depending on my mood.”

Thoughts on Logan: “Great town and it’s a great place to live. I did not expect to be here for the twenty years that I’ve been here. It’s just getting a little too big.”

Future plans: “Retire happily! I don’t look (too) far ahead. I would like to write a textbook or popular book.”
Happy Belated Thanksgiving
(Hope it was good.)

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year 2006

"The first kiss originated when the first male reptile licked the first female reptile, implying in a subtle way that she was as succulent as the small reptile he’d had for dinner the night before."

- F. Scott Fitzgerald

If you have ideas, a question, discussion, story, poem, discovery, research, advertisement, recipe, quote, etc. to help keep the Almanac alive; please contact Helena Torgerson at heletorg@cc.usu.edu with your innovation.
(Right) Light tube brings light in from roof and disperses it into the room. Even on a cloudy day, this makes the bathroom light enough that there is no need to turn on the lights.

(Left) Glass blocks in the bathroom allow light to filtrate in between rooms making it unnecessary to turn on more lights.

(Left and Right) Fireplace put in middle of room so that heat produced is more central to entire house. Stones act as thermal mass that absorb heat and distribute heat after the fire has gone out.

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House continued from page 4

(Left) Sink has faucet that flash heats water as dispensed. No more running water, waiting for it to get hot. Doors under sink retract in to the side. This allows a wheelchair to move under the sink. Energy star dishwasher uses 33% less energy and 7 gallons per load compared to an average of 12-15 gallons.

(Below) Solar panels supplement electricity and reduce electric bill by 25%. At times the solar panels even generate more electricity than the house uses, and electricity is feed back into power grid. Utah law requires the power company to credit this electricity at retail value. (The power meter actually goes backwards.) Notice no large, bulky boxes.

Water zoning groups together plants of similar water needs. This reduces water used for plant watering. And yes, they even have some Kentucky Bluegrass. This was done to help give it the feel of an average home.

For more information about the Utah house contact:

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Overloaded

By Helena Torgerson

A semester comes, and a semester goes. We all know the college ritual of registering, going to class, doing assignments, presentations, projects, and exams. We all know the financial strain it causes and the midnight oil to burn. We all know what it feels like to be overloaded like the little truck in the picture below.

However, as that semester comes and goes, we add character to our vehicle and knowledge in the shape of new perspectives; or shall we say a new bumper or new shocks, or even a solid steel frame for the bed of the truck. Yet as we take on the heavy and nearly impossible load of class, work, and involvement, we keep on chuggin’ down the road we call life, continually adding to our experienced load balance.

I wish everyone luck to on finals and don’t get too overloaded and stressed. There is a light at the end of the tunnel, and we’re almost there. To everyone that is gurgitating... I mean graduating, best wishes to you and yours, in your future life. May we all reach for the stars and believe in ourselves.

For those of you who need some stress relief here are some suggestions and stretches to do to relieve that sometimes unbearable stress.

1. Upper back stretch: sit up straight with your fingers interlaced behind your head. Keeping your shoulders down, lift your chest and bring your elbows back as far as you can and hold for 10 seconds.
2. Waist bend: reach arms over head with fingers laced together. Facing forward with shoulders down, bend to one side from the waist and hold for 20 seconds. Repeat to the other side.
3. Avoid the trap of demanding too much of yourself.
4. Accept that you can’t control every situation and learn to be flexible.
5. Eat a well-balanced diet, full of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.
6. Get plenty of sleep each night.
7. Include moderate exercise into each day to boost your energy level and improve your mood.
8. Be optimistic and think positively.
9. Make time for relaxation.
10. Learn from your mistakes.
11. Laugh and have fun, and remember it’s also okay to cry.
12. Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. They aren’t good for the body and won’t help.

Tips were taken and modified from USU, Student Wellness Center’s “Stress Management Pocket Pal.”
The 6th Annual International GIS Day at Utah State University was sponsored by the College of Natural Resources (CNR). It was held in the Atrium of the CNR as an Open House Map Gallery on November 15, 16 and 17th as part of Geography Awareness Week. Faculty, staff and students were able to view award winning posters and maps from the RS/GIS Laboratories. The Map Gallery also included maps and research posters from the Biodiversity Lab, Bioregional Planning Studio and other entries from the departments of Forest, Range and Wildlife Sciences, Environment and Society, and Watershed. USU Extension provided Information Displays and web access to sites for the Utah 4-H GIS/GPS Technology Group and the Forestry Program. Hands on computer programs for the West Nile Virus and The Utah Climate Center were provided by Rob Gillies. Doug Ramsey set up a computer for the Intermountain Region Digital Image Archive Center (IRDIAC). Wes James provided support for all of the laptops during the event. Video and DVD programs about Remote Sensing, GIS, GPS and Cartography were donated by the CNR GEOSPAtial Sciences Teaching Lab were playing from 8:00am – 5:00pm on GIS Day. We hope to include all of the Remote Sensing and GIS Technical Groups of Cache County in the November 15, 2006 GIS Day event as we have in some of the past GIS Day events.

What is GIS Day?

GIS Day is a grassroots event that formalizes the practice of geographic information systems (GIS) users and vendors of opening their doors to schools, businesses, and the general public to showcase real-world applications of this important technology. The event is principally sponsored by the National Geographic Society, the Association of American Geographers, University Consortium for Geographic Information Science, the United States Geological Survey, The Library of Congress, Sun Microsystems, Hewlett–Packard, and ESRI.

GIS Day is part of the National Geographic Society’s exciting new initiative, Geography Action, which is a year-long initiative encompassing key educational achievements such as GIS Day and Geography Awareness Week. Each year this initiative will have a different focus. The theme for 2005-2006 is “Migration: The Human Journey.” In addition to events such as GIS Day and Geography Awareness Week, there will also be many worldwide activities supporting geography action, with their goal being to engage people in learning and caring about geography.

The National Geographic Society has sponsored Geography Awareness Week since 1987 to promote geographic literacy in schools, communities, and organizations, with a focus on the education of children. GIS Day is held on the Wednesday during Geography Awareness Week. GIS Day 2005 was held on Nov. 16, 2005. GIS Day 2006 will be held on Nov. 15, 2006.

In 2005, hundreds of organizations hosted GIS Day events in countries all around the world. Be sure to read about some of them on the Success Stories page. Through the combined efforts of GIS Day participants, millions of children and adults were educated on GIS technology through geography.

GIS users and vendors are invited to join the National Geographic Society, the Association of American Geographers, the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science, the United States Geological Survey, The Library of Congress, Sun Microsystems, Hewlett–Packard, and ESRI in opening their doors for GIS Day.
EVENTS

Do your part...
Join SNC's efforts to recycle printer cartridges

SNC has teamed up with Laser Precision to recycle empty inkjet, laser, fax, and copier cartridges from the community. All you have to do is bring your empty cartridges to any of the following locations: Kinko's Copy Center, Filbies Copy Center, or Stokes Nature Center. Each cartridge that you bring in will be recycled at Laser Precision in Providence and SNC will get money for programming.

Holiday Decorating
Saturday, December 10, 10 am - noon OR 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
Ages 4 - 9, $6 for nonmembers, $4.50, for SNC members
Pre-registration is Required
Your child will make fun, festive holiday crafts with a nature theme. Handmade nature crafts make great holiday gifts! Drop off and pick up will be at the River Trail Gate.

Fresh Christmas Trees for Sale
by the Forestry Club

$20 for 7 feet and $3 per foot after 7 feet.

Trees are being sold in front of the CNR and Quinney Library. You can pay either in the Club Office or the Academic Service Center.

Parent-Tot
Friday, December 16, 10 am - 11 am
$3 for nonmembers, $2.50, for SNC members
Pre-registration is Required
Explore the wonders of the natural world with your young child as we sing songs, create crafts, and make discoveries along the river trail in this fun program with a new theme each month. Call SNC to register. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Drop by the Club Office, NR 112, for more information on upcoming events!