

1973
MT LAKE ECHOES



MOUNTAIN LAKE ECHOES

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Mountain Lakers:

It just doesn't seem possible that it is Echoes time again and like always our secretary has everything typed but this letter. Some things never change!

I want to thank all of you for the cooperation I received and for the healthy academic atmosphere that once again was generated by our faculty and students. New faculty frequently express surprise at the interest and hard work of students at Mountain Lake. It is not unusual, but certainly it is always refreshing for me to experience the very active interests of Mountain Lake students and faculty in study together. With small classes and our location, it is certainly a great way to study biology.

Perhaps we were a little too small this year. We will be looking for ways to increase our enrollment in '74 and any help or suggestions you can give will be welcomed. For next summer Jim Murray has arranged for the following courses:

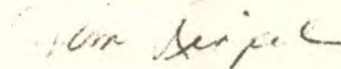
Herpetology
Invertebrate Zoology
Taxonomy of Seed Plants
General Ecology

Mammalogy
Ecological Genetics
Aquatic Ecology
Bryology

Once again thank you for a most pleasant summer. I can't recall a totally nicer group of Mt. Lakers. All the Riopels extend their best wishes and we look forward to hearing from many of you.

With all good wishes for the coming year.

Sincerely,



J. L. Riopel
Director

Plant Ecology 1973

On a dismal day in the ides of June Dr. Gary Miller gazed impatiently at the group of hetero-geniuses assembled in front of him. Before a word could escape his lips a cry arose from the back of the room. "What's that little guy doing up front?" Feigning deafness, which quickly became his custom, the long-haired ecologist forged bravely ahead with his first question "Who has had Plant Taxonomy?" A deathly silence, as dense as "swamp gas" filled the room; he gagged slightly as one lonely hand ascended. "Well", he said with forced gaiety "Why don't you all introduce yourselves and tell us of your background."

It soon became evident that the hetero-geniuses consisted of (the) breeew brothers (Richard Rhodemyre and Frank Watson), Charlie "The fern genius" Werth, Debbie (Uh...uh) Dalton, John (Don't touch me if you don't mean business") Toth, David (Go-get-her) Gussman), Dr. Susan (Mossy) Moyler, Barbara (Remember the Rhododendron Patch) Wu and lastly the Tinkle Bunny alias Bruce Williams.

Soon the class was "bogged down" in ecology with a mid-term on half of E. P. Odum's bible after a mere week; and so to fill spare moments there were oral reports and the beloved projects. Time passes quickly with 18 hour days and sleepless nights. Soon after delightful trips to the Shale Barren and Cranberry Bog, the class stumbled bleary-eyed at dawn towards North Carolina. With the energetic leadership Dr. Gary (Choo...choo) Miller the class staggered wretchedly up half of the Smokey Mountains. Finally retiring at mid-night in a Methodist Church as David Gussman played lullabies to the crews in the pews.

During the last days of the field trip, a peculiar species, endemic to only Atlantic Beach, was discovered; Fosballia parloria. Soon it became time to return to Mountain Lake; with "Fireball" Miller leading the whole trip back.

The trip and term ended in a blaze. Two all-nighters, followed by a lab exam, paper deadlines and a lecture exam, finished Plant Ecology and the class.

Ornithology

A Month in the Life...

I remember it well. It was during the summer of '73. Got there late, I did, and what did I see? Well, it was about a half dozen people with binoculars scouting the area around the Mountain Lake training camp. Looked like a full-scale operation and so it was. Led by the intrepid Dr. Johnston, fresh from a campaign in Florida a whole platoon of eager volunteers was keeping track of the "enemy" an endemic guerrilla force frequently clothed in homemade feathers.

Oh, let me introduce the members of this hardy crew. There was Lorna Cordonnier from a land to the west ("Missouri" she called it), Peggy Herring, down from Charlottesville to groove on nature, Laurie (I'll carry those net poles") Weston, Ronnie Solomon, came from the asphalt jungles of New York City to the trackless jungles of Salt Pond Mountain, Andy Kappelmann, who never stopped talking about his cedar waxwings, Randy Rutan, who withdrew from the mountain at night to a safe position in Christiansburg, Bob Colburn, our some time tactician, who reported that birds were still to be found in New Jersey, Ron Sower, our head coach, who often wore a red baseball cap as a sign of his rank, and me, John Bazzin, eager to turn my knowledge of private home construction into a career as a bird man. I should say at this point that I sincerely hope I didn't ruffle any feathers with those thumb-nail sketches of our group just presented.

The engagement got off to a flying start. The members of Operation Ornithology rapidly developed superb neck muscles and lost track of their feet as they delved into the world of birds. Joyous cries of "It's a bird, it's a plane, it's...splat...a mess. Loan me your handkerchief for a minuter," echoed from the mansions of green. The members of the party frequently sortied into forest and field in search of their elusive prey. For instance the yellow-breasted chat. "He's there...and there and there and there." How could one bird be in four places at once? How could he make all those noises? Dr. Johnston, are you sure the sun's not too hot for you?

And then there were thenests. And Lorna. "Lorna", you'd say in great excitement, "I just found a catbird nest." "That's great", she'd answer, "It's been an off day." "You don't mean it." "Yup, only found five new nests today." But even Lorna couldn't crack the secret of the wood pewees and least flycatchers. For weeks these birds were rumored to actually build nests. No one really believed this until Dr. Johnston pulled off the coup of the summer. He went out and actually found a least flycatcher nest. I'm convinced that they were really mice artfully camouflaged as least flycatchers but I'll not publish this without further information. Anyway, the young mice, er, least flycatchers were so amazed that we'd discovered them that they popped right out of the nest. And we never did find a wood pewee nest.

Well, the operation was a great success. I don't mean to brag but we bettered the class of 1972 in all respects: more nests found, more territorial males found, etc. In fact, we did better than the classes of 1972, 1970, 1968 and 1966 combined. I am perfectly aware, of course, that Ornithology was not taught in those years but the many fine naturalists at the Station with all sorts of free time on their hands were unable to better our showing. We stand on our record.

John Bazuin (with pointers
from Ron Sower)

P.S. How do you remember that Alcedinidae is the family of kingfishers? Easy, just remember that "Lou Alcindor is the king of basketball."

What was Experimental Morphogenesis?

"Pull on the Ropes me hardeys
water your decks with brine....anon"

Have you ever seen a five legged newt? Well the folks in ole'doc Dent's class have, and they lived to tell the tale. Experimental morph was quite a course and who could forget those long lonely nights spent making microscaples that you could never get Doctor Dent to say were

sharp enough. And if God were to work a thousand years he would have a hard time in making any thing as hard to remove as a vitillin membrane, hmm... where are my Inox number five tweezers.

What was experimental morph, it was climbing up Mount Rodgers and telling jokes, it was chasing frogs out in Riopel pond at midnight. It was staying up all night trying to get ready for a seminar that you knew next to nothing about and then giving it like you knew what you were doing, only to be interrupted by the clear calm voice of Doctor Dent (James Norman Dent if you read a lot of reprints) telling you "no, that's not quite right."

Mostly for the crew in the class it was learning how much biology we were suppose to know but didn't. After all anybody should be able to repeat the forty bones of the vertebrae head and any competent embryologist should be able to tell you where they came from and how they arose. Well this writer still can't and someday maybe after I take the course three or four times I'll realize that its far more important to pay attention in the seminar than to try and learn all those damn bones (and if the character with the carbide lamp could only be persuaded to extinguish it outside maybe we won't throw him in the lake in a lead gunny sack).....anon.

The Ballad of C.R. Bell and the Duplicating Machine

On a Saturday morning, just the other day

C.R. Bell went down to duplicate in a most peculiar way.

He went into the office, said Mary Ann on the Door

but one of them alcoholic duplicating machines, he never had seen before..

He stepped up to the ditto machine, and put his stencil on,

he turned the crank, the sheet was blank and he said, "What's going on".

He said to the director, explain to me that thing,

I've pushed the knob and turned the crank, it ain't printing a goldurn thing.

Capt'n Jim went to the office and looked with experienced eye,

he pushed the knob and turned the crank, and said "I don't know why".

For about an hour they turned the crank on the small ditto machine,

and though they turned the knob and wet the sponge, not a word was to be seen.

A student he came walking by and said to C.R. Bell,

I see just what your problem is and for five bucks I will tell.

The problem is quiet simple, as any one can see,

your stencil is on backwards - that's five bucks you owe me.

So now you've heard the story, that's'' all there is to tell

Don't get your bass on ackwords and be like C.R. Bell.

anon

Entomology

The Mountain Lake 150 or Don't Crush That Bug, Hand Me a Net

You know something? There sure are a lot of bugs out there. They may even take over but we did our best to keep them down. "We" in this case is Mac Kerfoot, the caveman, Laurie Weston, Of Kalamazoo (Kalamazoo?) College fame, Eileen Weber, New York City's answer to the blues at Mountain Lake, Andy Kappelmann, the spokesman for the group, Anne Lindsey, trying to find out what made all those chewing noises in her plants, Rick Reisman, trying to find out what made all those chewing noises in his boat, Jeff Reider, who sung his way into the heart of Dr. Byers, Bob Tufty, who attempted to apply bugs to the Watergate hearings, Dot Chappell, who audited the course especially to get a chance to watch the rest of us race to 150, myself, John Bazuin, who developed a bad case of "net elbow", and Dr. Byers, that mystery man from Lawrence, Kansas who worked tirelessly to instill in all of us at least a million words we'd never heard of before. Also, I suppose we should include Dr. Bell, Mr. Horsebiscuit, who tangled us in a web of surprises and planted wild notions in our heads.

The class was exceptionally energetic in the pursuit of the illusory 150; climbing the highest mountains and plumbing the bowels of the earth in hopes of find another family (well, another ten families) to add to their burgeoning collections. On one occasion Dr. Byers led several members of the class on a midnight ecology trip designed to impress upon one and all the importance of billboards and store fronts in the natural order of things. They turned out to be paradises for the collection of bugs of all sorts and we had a unique opportunity to listen to the music of the finely tuned engines (chug, chug, chug) of cars owned by many of the citizens of Pembroke who, in turn, had a month's gossip about those weird people with nets and jars and stuff sucking bugs or something off store windows late at nights.

As the semester progressed those cheery smiles changed to weary smiles (well, sort of smiles) and getting that 150 seemed a little less easy than climbing Mt. Everest. We were, you might say, climbing Mt. Byers. But all was forgotten for about four hours during a party the class threw to celebrate itself. Dr. Byers and special guest, mystic Dr. Riopel combined to put on an ESP show that was truly dazzling to the multitude gathered at their feet. I guess we were gathered at their feet pretty much because they were the only ones still on their feet. That set the stage for the last few days of the semester, which featured three tests (requiring a knowledge of ESP to do well on) and that good old collection. But Dr. Byers took care of our needs and then departed for Kansas again (who was that man in the green Dart?).

Comparative Endocrinology

When Dr. Frye arrived on the mountain only to find out that only one student had arrived to take "that hormone course", he was all set to repack and flee to civilization. Fortunately, there was a rumor circulating that a certain "Miss Minnesota" was somewhere in the state and might casually drop in to spend a leisurely 5 weeks learning how to clean up chicken crap and other related things. Well, as it turned out, the other student did show and to make a long story short, two budding Biologists(?) spent a thoroughly interesting and enjoyable 5 weeks with one of the best teachers either of us has ever had.

In the lab across the hall, things began to disappear slowly and accumulate in the Endocrinology Lab. Steve Brown could sometimes be heard to say affectionately, "Bet those little bastards took it! (whatever it was)" and Pat would reply (equally as affectionate), "Just wait until I get Mike back in school!" Seriously, without all of their generous help, we never would have made it.

While, Dr. Frye taught the course, his whole family really helped out tremendously. Between the snakes in the bed (thanks Elisa!) and the missing bobcat (one for you Ms. Frye) and also Alice's delightful conversations, the whole semester never lost its momentum. As for Dr. Frye's wit....we'll let that pass for now. (Phew!)

Another delightful aspect about the semester was Dr. Burn's extremely interesting talk on sex reversal. (Can they really screw up those 'possums like that?) Seriously, we really appreciated the talk tremendously!

Just one more word to you, Dr. Frye, Karen and I both would like to thank you for telling us about Armpitin. We are both now happily flunking and having fun back at college! It does wonders for your moral(e). Thanks again!



Pure corn...



Dear Mom: we work very hard here. I hope I can last the summer.



Really, Tom, it's simple. I'll explain again. The rocks alternate with layers of mortar.



Pure hustle



We have long, tiring field trips.



Now Ilene, I'll just sit here to make sure that cigarette don't get on the ground...



...and the lunches are just awful.



Now Rich, sedges really are interesting...



Hello, I live at the Station. Can we be friends?

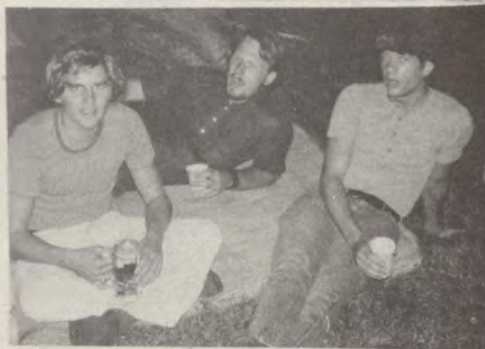


René, now forget Tommy; I'm here now.



Gary, just one more...





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