

Scientist makes no small impact

Fifteen years ago, a researcher published his findings about a molecule best known at the time for its role in depleting the ozone layer. But rather than its environmental impact, he was studying the part this molecule played in the human body. His findings, it turns out, were groundbreaking.

Tadeusz Malinski had figured out a way to measure the cellular output of nitric oxide. His discovery opened the door for developing new methods for the earlier detection and treatment of some of the leading diseases of our time, including heart disease, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

His work has had profound influence around the globe — exactly what a committee of his faculty peers was looking for when it named Malinski the 2006 choice for Distinguished Professor, the university's highest faculty honor.

Malinski, the Marvin and Ann Dilley White Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, joined the university in 2000. He works in the subfield of nanoscience, which extends existing sciences into the realm of the extremely small.

For years, researchers had suspected human cells produced nitric oxide, but only through indirect evidence, because it couldn't be measured. Malinski's breakthrough was the creation of a nanosensor that could detect the molecule, allowing researchers to study



RICK FATICA

Researcher Tadeusz Malinski is Ohio University's 53rd Distinguished Professor. Visit Ohio Today Online at www.ohio.edu/ohiotoday for a video about Malinski's groundbreaking research and a list of previous recipients of the Distinguished Professor award.

the role it plays in regulating critical body functions.

Malinski says the Distinguished Professor award is a reminder that all the hours spent in the laboratory studying very small things have significance in the bigger picture. "To be recognized by your peers," he adds, "has long been considered the highest recognition one can receive."

The Distinguished Professor award was made possible by an endowment created by alumni Edwin and Ruth

Kennedy. First given in 1959, it recognizes professors' research or other contributions to their field.

Although his research alone was enough to put Malinski over the top, the committee also was impressed by his recent decision to chair the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

"It shows he's also concerned with developing and growing this university," says David Drabold, a physics professor and the 2005 Distinguished Professor.

— David Forster

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IMAGES



Once a popular perch for campus photos, this Civil War cannon was a College Green fixture until being donated to the World War II scrap metal drive. A relative of one of the photogenic women shown here recently identified her in a letter to the alumni association. Seated fourth from the left is Birchie Jones, who attended the university in the early 1900s. The Men's Union can be seen across East Union Street on the site later used for the original Baker Center. For a link to hundreds of historic university photos and information on how to share copies of your campus images with the Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections, visit www.ohio.edu/ohiotoday.

— Mary Alice Casey



Jitterbug Club members Bethan Eynon and Patrick Miller cut the rug during a February dance at Baker University Center. See the “fun in numbers” feature below for a few quick facts about the club and the multitude of other organizations for today’s students.

'Cat Facts

Test your memory with this edition focusing on former faculty members.

- 1 Fond of playing Frisbee in the hallway, this English professor and Honors Program director founded *Sphere Magazine*.
- 2 This social activist and professor of African American studies has been the sole adviser for Gospel Voices of Faith since 1975.
- 3 After 19 years of teaching psychology, this professor accepted the role of provost.
- 4 A former Burmese Olympic soccer player and boxer, he speaks nine languages, six of them fluently.
- 5 This botany and zoology professor, one of the founding administrators and first dean of the Honors Tutorial College, also served on Athens City Council.
- 6 A professor of history and an authority on Middle East relations, he was a POW with Kurt Vonnegut during World War II.
- 7 Name the special education professor who was appointed by President Reagan to head the President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

Answers on page 9

Students having fun in numbers

350 registered student organizations exist at Ohio University, covering every interest area from politics to club sports. Here are a few facts about some of the organizations that make up that ever-growing number.

6: The number of steps in the jitterbug, the preferred dance of the Jitterbug Club. The group also offers lessons in other dance steps.

\$49,268 was the total winnings of a Game Show Appreciation Society member on “The Price is Right.”

1,000 weather forecasts are issued by the Meteorology Club each year on the Scalia Lab forecast Web site, which had **185,000** visits last year.

50 Singing Men of Ohio members aren't music majors. Heard in performances on and off campus and known for their beautiful harmonies, the **72**-member group has an impressive five-octave range.

3 and **58:** That's how many propellers and screws, respectively, go into the unmanned, helicopter-like aerial vehicle that gives the Aeromobile Club its focus.

7 members of the Women's Ultimate Frisbee team are allowed on the field at one time. The farthest Frisbee throw by a team member is **70** yards.

15 feet is the height of the biggest wave surfed by members of the Surf Club. Eighteen members traveled more than **4,500** miles to Hawaii for spring break.

700: The average number of books the Golden Key International Honour Society sends each quarter to Better World Books, a charity that assists literacy efforts in developing nations.

2 swords are used by the Kumdo Club: Shinai, which is a bamboo sword, and Bokken, a wooden replica of a Samurai sword. The club has **14** members.

— Breanne Smith

Personally speaking

Rick Fritica



Meet Patricia Ann McKinnis, BSS '05, recently one of 15 semifinalists in the “Today” show’s “Anchor for Today Sweepstakes.” She hopes to use the master’s degree in communication and development studies she’ll earn in June to improve communication between hospital patients and staff.

Name: *Patricia Ann McKinnis* Age: *49 1/2*

Occupation: *graduate student, mother, grandmother, job seeker actor, student of life*

How she starts her day: *Saying some colorful words to my cat, Buddy Boy. He wakes me up (too early) each morning by trying to pull my rings off my fingers with his teeth.*

How she'll put her education to use: *My education is already opening doors that previously would have stayed closed to me.*

Favorite work of fiction: *Anything by Tom Robbins*

Most likely spot to find her on campus: *Women's Studies computer lab*

Her advice to today's freshmen: *Think BIG! Life has something in mind for you that you cannot possibly imagine.*

Her 15 minutes of fame: *Five minutes of fame on the 'Today Show' - I still have 10 minutes left! I can't wait!*

Favorite way to unwind: *Hot bath, good book... aah!*

A person she couldn't have made it through school without: *Those who DIDN'T believe in me! I wanted to prove them wrong.*

Family: *5 resilient grown-up children, 2 beautiful grandchildren, 2 bad cats*

Nazi Germany: in fact, in fiction

In one, propaganda pamphlets fall from the sky. In the other, international justice falls upon Nazi war criminals. With different focus and form, two Ohio University authors explore the effects of Nazi Germany — Kevin Haworth in “The Discontinuity of Small Things” and Norman Goda in “Tales from Spandau: Nazi Criminals and the Cold War.”



Set in Denmark, Haworth's novel balances detail with a sparse tone to depict life under Nazi occupation. Daily annoyances, such as an overabundance of poorly translated German pamphlets, and drastic situations, including kidnappings, illustrate the realities of life in a country that endured three years of occupation.

Haworth, a visiting English professor, found inspiration for the book in a photo exhibit of Danish resistance. His book earned the Samuel Goldberg and Sons Foundation Prize for Jewish Fiction by an Emerging Writer and was runner-up for the first Dayton Literary Peace Prize, the only such award in the United States.

The nonfiction work “Tales from Spandau” takes a political look at the Nuremberg trial at which Adolf Hitler's closest associates were convicted and sentenced to serve in West Berlin's Spandau Prison. Goda argues that Spandau became a focal point for controversy between the Allies and the Soviet Union.

Goda, chair of the history department, was recruited as a Congressional consultant in 2001 for the declassification of World War II documents. By “pure luck,” he found himself handling more than 10,000 pages on Rudolf Hess.

“Tales from Spandau” earned good reviews from *The Chicago-Sun Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* among others.

— Laura Yates

Four sports lose varsity status

Director of Athletics Kirby Hocutt announced at an emotional press conference in January that four sports programs would lose varsity status this spring.

The elimination of men's indoor and outdoor track and field (counted as two sports), men's swimming and diving, and women's lacrosse reduced the number of varsity sports to 16. The lacrosse team elected to disband before the spring season so players could maintain eligibility if they transferred to another school.

The university had the second-largest program in the Mid-American Conference in terms of sports offered; however, its athletics budget ranks in the bottom half of the MAC. Ohio is the eighth school now in the conference to have eliminated sports programs since 1999.

In addition to financial implications, the quality of the student-athlete experience and compliance with Title IX were factors in the decision, Hocutt said.

"Our financial situation has prohibited us from providing the level of experience that we as an administration and our university expect," he said. "We have not met our goal of compliance with Title IX. We are not in the financial position to add a women's program, and therefore must take alternative measures to continue our commitment to compliance."

Swimming and diving became a varsity sport for men in 1935, while track and field has competed since the early 1900s. The women's lacrosse program was reinstated in 1999 after competing from the late 1960s through 1982.

Eighty-seven student-athletes were affected by the decision. Those who plan to stay at Ohio will continue to receive grants-in-aid for a period equal to their remaining eligibility. Ohio Athletics is assisting those who plan to transfer.

"We have made an extremely difficult decision that will place us in the very best position to be successful in the future," Hocutt said. "If we don't make these tough decisions now, we would place our entire program at risk."

— From Ohio Athletics reports



Russ Prize goes to biomedical engineer

The seats, seat belts and instrument panels in your car. Artificial skin for burn victims. Personal body armor for military and emergency personnel. These are among the results of the work of biomedical engineer Yuan-Cheng "Bert" Fung, recipient of the 2007 Russ Prize.

The late Fritz Russ, BSEE '42, and HON '75, and his wife, Dolores, created the \$500,000 prize — one of the top three engineering prizes in the world — with a multimillion-dollar endowment to Ohio University in 1999. Awarded biennially by the National Academy of Engineering, the prize promotes engineering, encourages engineering education and recognizes achievement that improves the human condition.

A professor emeritus of bioengineering at the University of California, San Diego, Fung is regarded as the father of modern biomechanics. His work in human tissue engineering contributed to the development of the field of automotive safety design, and all automobile crash tests today rely on his fundamental studies about tissue response.

Also the creator of engineered blood vessels, Fung helped develop artificial skin, used to treat burns and other severe tissue injuries. His insight led to safer nonlethal weapons and

personal body armor for military forces and emergency personnel, and his principles of biomechanics improved the effectiveness and longevity of orthopedic devices, especially those used to treat ankle sprains.

Dennis Irwin, dean of the Russ College of Engineering and Technology, says the Russes wanted to create a prize comparable to the Nobel Prize — which is not awarded in the field of engineering — while also lending prestige to the Russ College. The prize is the only one of its caliber endowed at a university.

"Fritz and Dolores wanted to do something to recognize that engineering has great power to improve our lives," Irwin says. "What they did in the process was link Ohio University to a very noteworthy reward for such work."

Ohio University advises the National Academy of Engineering on the pool of Russ Prize nominees. Past recipients include the inventors of the first human heart pacemakers, kidney dialysis and biosensors that enable open-heart surgery and self-monitoring of glucose levels.

Fung, who emigrated from China in 1945, hopes his research will encourage interest in biomechanics. "My work is just turning the first page," he says. "The book is yet to be written."

— Colleen Girton

By the Way...

This time, a glimpse at interesting research and creative activity

SCALE, an astronomy-themed exhibit on display through mid-December at the Kennedy Museum of Art, helps viewers to visualize not just the universe, but also their relative place in it. Pieces range from a 10.5- by 85-foot drawing of the Milky Way (pictured below with the students who helped create it) to a telescope that shows how a grain of sand can obscure 25,000 galaxies.

This brainchild of Assistant Professor of Art John Sabraw represents a collaboration of several university partners, including the Aesthetic Technologies Lab, art students and astronomers with the Astrophysical Institute.

By highlighting cultural connections in an astronomical context, Sabraw hopes to "shatter the viewers' sense of scale, in relation to themselves, other humans and the universe."



With their spindly legs, long necks and bright plumage, flamingos are a curiosity of nature. Now a new discovery by a team of Ohio University researchers reveals an anatomical oddity that helps flamingos eat: erectile tissue.

Flamingos are known for their peculiar feeding behavior. While standing in shallow water, they bend their necks, tilt their bills upside down in the water and swish their heads from side-to-side. Their large tongue acts like a piston, sucking water into the front of the bill and then pushing it out the sides. Fringed plates on the tongue trap algae and crustaceans in the circulating water.

A 3-D view of a flamingo's head was created using a scanning technique the team developed to highlight blood vessel anatomy. The researchers noticed large oval masses of

erectile tissue located on the floor of the mouth on either side of the tongue.

"We were investigating the evolution of jaw muscles in lizards, birds and dinosaurs," says Casey Holliday, PHD '06, who served as lead author on the study. "By sheer luck we discovered something new about flamingos."



Police interrogation tactics can prompt a criminal suspect to make a false confession, says Professor of Psychology Daniel Lassiter. When police videotape these interrogations for use in trials, they focus the camera only on the suspect. Lassiter's research shows this practice can bias trial participants.

In a recent study that received coverage in *Newsweek* magazine, Lassiter and colleagues asked 21 judges and 24 law-enforcement officers to view different versions of a videotaped mock confession. They considered the version of the confession that showed only the suspect to be more voluntary than the one that showed both suspect and detective or just the detective.

New Zealand, Wisconsin and Virginia and the nonprofit Innocence Project have used Lassiter's work to push for amended regulations in law enforcement policy.

— From university reports

'Cat Facts answers

1. Edgar Whan. 2. Francine Childs. 3. James Bruning served in the role from 1981 to 1992. 4. Maung Gyi taught interpersonal communications and was an Ohio boxing coach. 5. Margaret Cohn. 6. Gifford Doxsee. 7. Elise Helsel

