**Banned Books Week explores censorship from every angle**

**by Paul Steinmetz**

For a newspaper editor, Sam Tanenhaus is a little wishy-washy about censorship. Oh, he stands for freedom of speech and the press, and he is dismissive of those who would ban books, but one thing troubles him: He doesn’t know who is right.

Tanenhaus, the editor of The New York Times Book Review, spoke at Western Connecticut State University during Banned Books Week.

As everyday social commentary moves increasingly from discussion to drudgery, Tanenhaus said, he finds that he understands more why some people want to shut down the conversation and ideas.

“Nothing is easier than for me to tell you what all of you probably believe;” Tanenhaus told the audience of 150 in Ives Concert Hall. “What’s harder is to talk about what you stand for. I don’t know how you have that conversation. Exactly how far is too far? Whenever someone says something about me I don’t like? On the other hand, you feel censored when someone is trying to shut you down.

When it’s against you, it feels larger and manslaughter against you. And this is kind of the way our culture is going right now."

Tanenhaus discussed some of the different variations of censorship.

“The one place you should be able to say anything is here, a college campus,” he said. “I wonder, though, whether there are ideas that you are afraid to bring up in a classroom.”

A handful of students raised their hands. Most said when they talked about their belief in God, they felt professors singled them out or tried to shut down the discussion. Some said the hostility was not overt, but that students with religious beliefs knew their professors would not want to talk about it in class.

Self-censorship may be the most prevalent form of censorship, Tanenhaus said, though it may not be the worst. When we censure ourselves, Tanenhaus said, “it’s hopeful to think that maybe we’re thinking of a better way to say things.”

On the other hand, “It does sometimes seem to me that areas of discussion you’re not allowed to get into,” he said. “The way I censure myself is by trying to see it as something to understand but not a problem to solve.”

Tanenhaus also said he confronts censorship as editor of the Book Review — mostly when he is accused of that actually censors the real substance of news stories by subordinating them to a need to present all news as the outcome of competitions.

Take, for example, a recent Los Angeles Times news story. The story concerned the negotiations between Senate Republicans and the Bush administration over new rules for the handling of suspected terrorists. The story reduced the matter to a competition between the Senate Republicans and the Bush administration over new rules for the handling of suspected terrorists.

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**Today’s news: who wins?**

Professor of English Dr. Edward Hogan gave a Banned Books Week talk about “Shame Stories or Sports Story? The Hegemony of Eunuch Triumph and Defeat.” Below is his recap of his presentation.

My thesis is that, willingly or unwillingly, we have adopted the sports story as a template for news stories. Thus events are cast into a falsifying framework so that winners and losers may be presented clearly even when a story does not fit within that framework. The sports story framework is a kind of distorting lens — mostly when he is accused of... cont’d. on page 7

**Media Mentions**

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**Human genome to be focus of yearlong series**

**by Shari Hill**

Scientists can tell you that a genome contains a full set of chromosomes with all the inheritable traits of an organism. What they can’t fully explain, however, are all the non-scientific ramifications being raised by the complete mapping of the human genome — an achievement that was accomplished in 2003.

According to the Web site http://genome.gov, “The Human Genome Project (HGP) was one of the great feats of exploration in history — an inward voyage of discovery rather than an outward exploration of the planet or the cosmos; an international effort to sequence and map all the genetic information in the human genome — an accomplishment that was focus of a yearlong series at WestConn.”

The next talk will be at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 30, in Ives Concert Hall.

**Global warming would alter our local climate drastically**

In the coming decades, our winters will be short, wet and average and summers will be long and hot — like Maryland or, more on the stifling side, like South Carolina. Thomas Philbrick, a professor of biology at WestConn in Danbury, talks about biomes — all the interrelated plants, animals and animals that live in a certain climate. “You change the climate, you change the biomes,” Philbrick said.

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**COMMUNIQUE**

WES TERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY VOL. 9, NO. 3 NOVEMBER 2006
It’s tough to top perfection, unless you achieve it again and again. That’s what has happened with WestConn’s nursing department, which for three consecutive years has seen 100 percent of its graduates pass their national licensing exam and enter the work force.

WestConn’s nursing program is the only one in Connecticut to accomplish the feat over the past three years, according to Associate Professor of Nursing Dr. Karen Daley, who tracks test outcomes as part of her research. Daley also oversees the nursing program’s capstone course, the very demanding course seniors take during their final semester.

Dr. Barbara Piscopo, a professor and chair of the nursing department, called the recent string of student success “amazing.” Making the accomplishment even more noteworthy is that the license exam, key to the National Council Licensure Examination, or NCLEX-RN, was made more difficult in 2004, leading to declining pass rates at many other programs.

“The key to the success of our program is our faculty,” Piscopo said. “They communicate with each other. They ask and they share information from course to course. They are willing to make changes and to fine-tune the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that the students are up-to-date.”

In May, 32 nursing students completed their degrees and passed the national exam. In 2005, 27 students completed the program and passed the national test. All have gone on to jobs, helping to address a critical shortage of nurses that is impacting Connecticut and the rest of the nation.

“Interest in nursing is increasing,” said Piscopo. “We have made so much of the issue (of the nursing shortage) that students realize that nursing is an exciting profession. There are so many opportunities in the area.”

Because WestConn’s nursing program is one of the best around, competition among students is particularly fierce as they seek to secure a seat. This fall, 125 freshmen are enrolled in the nursing program, and only the best will be allowed to enter the nursing program in their sophomore year. WestConn now has 69 sophomores, 45 juniors and 27 seniors enrolled.

“You need determination and you need to study. It is demanding,” Piscopo said. But while faculty do all they can to prepare students in the classroom for their future careers, Piscopo believes it is the department’s senior capstone course that distinguishes WestConn from its competitors and prepares students for their licensing exams. In their final year, seniors must complete 135 hours of clinical work at a hospital under the direct guidance of a registered nurse. That break down to two, eight-hour shifts per week. “Everything they have learned since they were here come together,” Daley said of the capstone course. Nursing Practicum, which focuses on competency and NCLEX readiness. “They do a full load, handling as many as six patients. It increases their confidence level.”

“They practice being an R.N., they learn more responsibility and they gain more independence,” Piscopo added.

During the final semester, Daley focuses on student weaknesses in skills and knowledge that she has identified through tests given during the first semester of the senior year. The goal is to turn weaknesses into strengths and competencies, with the focus on enhancing critical-thinking and decision-making skills.

“I’ve had people say to me, ‘Wow, they can think and make decisions. They’re coming to us at a level of excellence,’” Daley said.

The final requirement for seniors is a project or paper on an ethical issue of importance to the community. Last year, seniors presented a program on the effects of methamphetamines to residential students. The presentation was so well-received, the students have been asked to return and present it to this year’s students. The nursing students also have gone to local schools to teach young students how to use 911, and they’ve gone into schools to recruit new students for the nursing program.

“Our students work very hard,” Daley said. “They know this is life and death.”

Samuel named director of Multicultural Affairs

Dr. Bryan D. Samuel has been appointed the director of Multicultural Affairs and Affirmative Action at WestConn.

Samuel has worked for the past six years at the University of Nebraska at Kearney — since 2004 as interim director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs. He was responsible for recruiting female and minority staff and students to the Kearney campus of 5,000 undergraduate and 1,000 graduate students, advising university leadership on diversity issues, and working with students. In an e-mail from Nebraska, Samuel said he applied for the job at WestConn after learning about President James W. Schmotter’s commitment to diversity. “I have been passionate about and intricately involved in, various issues along the diversity continuum for more than a decade,” Samuel said. “I was moved by President Schmotter’s identification of diversity as one of the four pillars upon which WCUS will achieve its goals. I was also impressed by WCUS’s engagement with the community. As a first-generation college graduate, I found the School of Arts and Sciences’ ‘Building a Bridge’ program, among other activities at WCUS, to be encouraging. The university’s commitment to teaching, research, outreach and diversity led me to believe it is a place where I can belong as well as assist with achieving its goals.”

The project officially known as “Building a Bridge to Improve Student Success,” helps get high school seniors ready for college. The program was developed jointly by teachers at Danbury and Bethel high schools and professors at WestConn. It cut the number of Bethel and Danbury students who need remedial classes in English and math by about half.

Samuel said he plans to build on successful programs and bring new ideas to the university to improve diversity. “During my tenure I hope to broaden the campus’s and community’s understanding and appreciation of what the office does as well as multicultural issues,” Samuel said. “It is my goal to strengthen and build upon the many partnerships and cutting-edge, innovative strategies currently in place at WCUS so that Multicultural Affairs and Affirmative Action will be a central part of all that is achieved at the university.”

Schmotter said that is what he was looking for in candidates for the job. “Bryan Samuel possesses the energy and experience that will enable him to lead WCUS on our journey from passively acknowledging the human diversity of our community to proactively valuing, celebrating and promoting it.”
Human genome to be focus of yearlong series (cont’d.)

That’s why the School of Arts and Sciences is sponsoring the yearlong series “Designer Genes: Fitting into the Genome Century” to encourage discussion about the scientific, moral and social implications of genomic science.

Two foas related to the human genome are complex in so many ways, and they are before us each day in newspapers, radio, television, magazines and around the dinner table,” said Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences Dr. Linda Vanden-Goud. “I believe it is one of the important functions of a university to provide an articulate and informed forum for ideas such as these to be publicly discussed, and I am grateful to my faculty who are willing to give their time and energy to provide our community an interesting yearlong discussion and clarification of such important subjects. We invite the community to come and share their questions and expertise as we think together about these significant topics of our common future.”

The series began with the forum “Politics, Ethics and Science of the Genomic” on Sept. 28. Associate Professor of Political Science Dr. Christopher Kukik, Adjunct Professor of Humanistic Studies the Rev. Dr. Mark Horton and Assistant Professor of Chemistry Dr. Jennifer Frederick each shared insight from their respective disciplines.

“It is important that we make this an interdisciplinary discussion from the get-go,” Frederick said, before explaining the science behind genomic research. “This kind of knowledge brings a lot of weight with it.”

Horton agreed and stated some of the often-heard objections about “playing God” by using science to change nature. “The knowledge of the human genome poses not just risks and benefits for society,” he said.

Kukk drew murmurs from the audience when he said, “There are 178 million of us who have our DNA stored in this country and we have no control over it. And there is no federal movement on genome privacy or discrimination. A lot of times the politics and economics dictate what the science can do.”

Complementing the series, WestConn classes in a wide range of academic disciplines will introduce students to the 2005 novel “Never Let Me Go” by Kazuo Ishiguro. A Time Magazine review described the book, a mystery whose lead characters find their perspective on the creative process, to be a “definitive modern novel.”

For more information about the series, call Delaney at (202) 837-8199 or visit the conference Web site at www.wcsu.edu/csufrc.

Adjunct Professor of Humanities. The Rev. Dr. Allen Horton illuminated the ethical issues related to improved understanding of the human genome.

Homo sapiens. Completed in April 2003, the HGP gave us the ability, for the first time, to read nature’s complete genetic blueprint for building a human being.

Why should non-scientists care about this accomplishment? Because it will have an effect on everything from health care and insurability to personal privacy, job security and reproduction.

Researchers from the four campuses of the Connecticut State University (CSU) System converged at the Science Building on WestConn’s Midtown campus on Oct. 14 to share their scholarship and creativity with colleagues at the 10th CSU Faculty Research Conference.

The CSU Faculty Research Conference offered 29 panels featuring 82 presentations showcasing the research pursuits of faculty members and doctoral candidates from Western, Southern, Central and Eastern Connecticut state universities. Faculty panelists represented some 20 academic disciplines, spanning diverse fields such as education, nursing, psychology, mathematics, chemistry, biology, engineering, management, communication, history and English.

Poster exhibits in the Science Building Atium featured findings from 20 faculty research projects.

Associate Professor of Nursing Dr. Colleen Delaney, one of five WestConn co-chairs of the organizing committee, observed the conference’s title, “Advancing Scholarship Across Disciplines,” underscored the rich diversity of research topics covered during the one-day event. In addition to reports on traditional scientific investigations, she noted the conference program ran the gamut from innovative learning activities to musical performance and landscape painting.

“One of the great things about this conference is that it provides an opportunity to celebrate research spanning many different academic disciplines,” Delaney said.

In his welcoming remarks, WestConn President James W. Schmotter told participants the conference “eloquently demonstrated the importance of scholar research at CSU institutions and debunked the popular misconception that university scholarship and teaching are mutually exclusive activities.

“Because of our missions, we are not Research-One universities — but make no mistake, we do excellent scholarship here,” Schmotter noted. “Across the system, our scholarship informs our teaching and thus enriches the instruction our students receive. I believe that teaching and scholarship complement each other.”

The close interaction between research and instruction emerged as a recurring theme throughout the day as presenters described how they have brought graduate and undergraduate students into their research and artistic work. Reviewing his recent studies in tropical biodiversity, CSU and WestConn Professor of Biology Dr. Tom Philbrick credited student research assistants for their contributions to his pioneering field studies investigating the biology, taxonomy and evolution of aquatic plant species in the Americas. Associate Professor of Art Marjorie Portnow, offering a landscape artist’s personal perspective on the creative process, emphasized the lesson of patience in painting on location. One seeks to pass on to her students at WestConn.

“Nature has such a wonderful way of making you have a dialogue,” Portnow said. “I think of painting outdoors very much like a personal relationship, getting to know the one over and over until gradually the site reveals itself to you.”

Speaking at a nursing panel, WestConn Associate Professor of Nursing Dr. Karen Daley and Assistant Professor of Nursing Joan Palladino described how 10 students who accompanied them to Germany learned first-hand from medical officers and staff at Bamstein Air Base about emerging practices in the treatment of injured soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

“An exciting part of your evidence-based practice in nursing and trauma is coming out of this war,” Palladino said. “It made me think about my own practice, and it provided a clinically focused exercise that I would discuss with my students after each experience.”

A lively spirit of inquiry inspired conference presentations in fields ranging from genetic research to poetry. WestConn Assistant Professor of Chemistry Dr. Jennifer Frederick provided an overview of her continuing quest to develop genetic tools designed to explore temperature sensitivity in non-mammals. Joining colleagues from CSU and WCSU, WestConn Associate Professor of English Dr. Brian Clements, coordinator of the Master of Fine Arts in Professional Writing program, proposed a textual framework defining the emerging literary genre of prose poetry. Among the less traditional presentations of the conference was live performance of Curtis Hughes’ contemporary chamber music work “Narrative X” by a four-member trio including Professor of Music David Smith on marimba, Adjunct Professor of Music Judith Smith on cello, and Associate Professor of Music Dr. Marjorie Callaghan on horn.

In a forum on “Technology and Globalization,” WestConn Professor of Management Dr. Fred Maidment recalled the lessons he learned from a recent visit to Anderson, Indiana.

“Anderson used to be a big-time General Motors town, and it’s now very involved in GM production,” Maidment said. “They’re all gone now, and the buildings have been bulldozed if you think these companies are coming back, you’re dead wrong — there aren’t any buildings for them to come back to.

“There are great benefits to globalization, but there are also burdens, and the burdens need to be shared,” he added. “We need to learn to do this better.”

CSU System Chancellor Dr. David G. Carter, who sat in on the globalization panel, observed afterwards that the conference plays a critical role in promoting research activities throughout the CSU System.

“There is no substitute for having faculty share their expertise with one another, and having this type of intellectual discourse that stimulates all of us,” Carter said. “It’s helpful for us as faculty members, and for me as chancellor — it’s a win-win situation for everyone.”

In addition to Delaney, WestConn co-chairs of the conference organizing committee were Associate Professor of Management Dr. Richard Bandettini, Professor of Astronomy Dr. Dennis Davson, Professor of Education Dr. Margaret Mount and WestConn Coordinator of University Events Helen Masterson.

For more information about the conference, call Delaney at (202) 837-8199 or visit the conference Web site at www.wcsu.edu/csufrc.

For more information about the series, call Kukik at (202) 837-8199 or Frederick at (203) 837-3065.

HCSU System Chancellor Dr. David G. Carter talks with faculty during the poster presentations portion of the CSU Faculty Research Conference, which was hosted this year by WestConn.

by Robert Taylor
Agreement eases way for music teachers

by Paul Steinmetz

The presidents of WestConn and Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC) recently signed an agreement that will make life easier for students who want to teach music.

Music teachers are in high demand and positions often are difficult to fill because of a shortage in the field. With the new agreement, students at the community college who follow a schedule of classes worked out by the two schools will be able to transfer all their credits from NVCC to WestConn in the music education program. WestConn and NVCC are the only public schools in Connecticut that offer a comprehensive two-year music programs.

WestConn estimates that its Bachelor of Science in Music Education program supplies 70 to 80 percent of the music teachers for Connecticut’s public school systems. Teachers for Connecticut’s public schools supplies 70 to 80 percent of the music teachers for Connecticut’s public schools.

“We are excited,” said Dr. Wesley Ball, WestConn’s B.S. in Music Education coordinator. “It is similar to other agreements between the two schools that allow nursing and business management students to start at NVCC and finish at WestConn. Such partnerships often benefit nontraditional students returning to the classroom after a stint in the workforce, or students who must work many hours while attending school.

Dr. Lynne Clark, WestConn dean of the School of Professional Studies, said transferring students now will be able to concentrate more on their education and less on the mechanics of the move.

“The transfer agreement will provide a seamless transition for NVCC’s music students into WestConn’s music education program,” Clark said. She credited the work of NVCC music faculty member Richard Gard and Dr. Wesley Ball, WestConn’s B.S. in Music Education coordinator, for working out the agreement by making the necessary curriculum changes to “ensure the success of NVCC music students in WCU’s music education program.”

Gard worked two years on the project. “It builds my program because it gives my students a destination,” he said. NVCC has one of the most comprehensive two-year music programs in the state. It is the only program of its kind in the state.

In Connecticut that offers a complete course catalog for a music major, including four semesters of music theory, four semesters of ear training, conducting, chorus, gospel choir, concert band, jazz and guitar ensemble.

NVCC students who follow the new agreement will be able to transfer 70 to 74 credits to WestConn.

WestConn estimates that its Bachelor of Science in Music Education program supplies 70 to 80 percent of the music teachers for Connecticut’s public school systems.

NVCC students who complete the necessary credits also must pass a performance audition required of all juniors in WestConn’s Bachelor of Science in Music Education degree program.

For more information, call Ball at (203) 837-8829.
WestConn theatre arts’ ‘The Full Monty’: Come see for yourself

by Sherri Hill

Theater-goers who attend WestConn’s production of ‘The Full Monty’ this month certainly will experience exactly what this play named after a British slang expression means: “the whole thing.” The whole thing, of course, is an ambitious and lively production featuring WestConn’s talented theatre arts students who can sing, act and dance with the best of them.

But will audiences get to see anything else? That’s something you’ll have to come and see for yourself.

The WestConn theatre arts department will stage “The Full Monty” for three weekends in November. With the exception of a 7:30 p.m. curtain on Opening Night, Thursday, Nov. 2, the performances will be at 8 p.m. on Nov. 3 – 4, 9 – 11 and 16 – 18 in the Berkshire Theatre in Berkshire Hall on the Midtown campus. Tickets will be $20 for adults, and $15 for senior citizens. WestConn’s production of “The Full Monty” remains faithful to the Broadway production, featuring a half-dozen laid-off steelworkers in search of another way to earn a living. They come up with is well, something to be seen!

The cast will include Sean Josephs, of Bridgewater, as Jerry Lukowski, Adam Schoefield-Booth, of Shelton, as Nathan Lukowski; Rachel Caffee, of Torrington, as Pam Lukowski; Tyler James, of Danbury, as Teddy Slaughter; Joshua Wagner of Roxbury, as Roscoe, by Dave Bukatsky; Sarah Ahearn, of Norwalk, as Georgie Bukatsky; Andrea Jimenez, of North Salem, N.Y., as Vicki Nichols, Patrick Laffin, of Hamden, as Malcolm MacGregor; Jennifer Billingley, of Somers, N.Y., as Molly MacGregor; Matt Bagley, of Windsor, as Ethan Girard; Jerrial Young, of West Haven, as Noah “Horse” Simmons; Stephanie Caprio, of Bethel, as Jeanette Burmeister; Shawn Turner, of Shelton, as Buddy “Keno” Walsh; Anthony Depoto, of Danbury, as Reg Wilinghby; Frank Beaudy, of Oakville, as Tony Giordano, Melissa Hagman, of New Fairfield, as Estelle Genovese; Kayla Koscheck, of Newtown, as Susan Hershey; Holly LaBasso, of Wolcott, as Joanie Lish; and Drew Petrella, of North Branford, as Minister.

“The Full Monty” is produced by Sal Trapani; Pam McDaniel will direct. The WCSU Orchestra will be conducted by Dr. Koryoe Anim-Wright, vice president of the Office for Institutional Advancement at (203) 837-8298.

The Annual Golden Circle Luncheon was held on Saturday, Oct. 21, during Homecoming Week. A contingent including President James W. Schmotter, Vice President for Institutional Advancement Dr. Koryoe Anim-Wright, alumni, friends and others gathered at the Alumni & Friends Circle near Old Main for the Alumni & Friends Circle Golden Circle Luncheon.

The annual rededication ceremony for the Alumni & Friends Circle near Old Main on the Midtown campus was the first activity of the day on Saturday, Oct. 21, during Homecoming Week. A contingent including President James W. Schmotter, Vice President for Institutional Advancement Dr. Koryoe Anim-Wright, alumni, friends and others gathered at the Alumni & Friends Circle near Old Main for the Alumni & Friends Circle rededication ceremony.

The Alumni & Friends Circle provides a wonderful opportunity to honor your loved ones and fund your favorite programs and activities at WestConn,” Anim-Wright said.

The Alumni & Friends Circle began in 1999. Soon after, many of the benches and trees in the immediate area were sold, and purchase opportunities were expanded to encompass other areas on both the Midtown and Westside campuses.

The Alumni & Friends Circle continues to grow with addition of new bricks, bench

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In 1999, the Alumni & Friends Circle was established to honor students and faculty who made a difference at WestConn. Each bench purchased honors a loved one in loving memory or celebrates a special occasion.

“The Alumni & Friends Circle provides a wonderful opportunity to honor your loved ones and fund your favorite programs and activities at WestConn,” Anim-Wright said.

The Alumni & Friends Circle began in 1999. Soon after, many of the benches and trees in the immediate area were sold, and purchase opportunities were expanded to encompass other areas on both the Midtown and Westside campuses.

Purchasing a brick, tree, bench or light post provides the opportunity to celebrate a loved one’s accomplishments or honor their memory for years to come.

Bricks cost $100 each. Trees are $500 and thus far, two-dozen have been dedicated. Benches, like the first one dedicated on the Westside campus this year, are $1,000. Light posts can be purchased for $2,500.

A focal point of the Alumni & Friends Circle is the bronze seal at its center. The $5,000 medallion was purchased by the Alumni Association in 2001.

For more information about purchasing an item in the Alumni & Friends Circle, call Director of Institutional Advancement Michael Corsillo at (203) 837-6419.
Psychology lecture to explore what we crave and why

Dr. Debra Zellner, professor of psychology at Montclair State University, will explore how individual experience and cultural context shape personal preferences in a “PsychMatters” lecture at noon on Wednesday, Nov. 8, in the Student Center Theater.

Zellner’s talk, “Context Affects Goodness and Degree of Preference,” will draw from her research into the ways in which gender, culture and other factors determine the foods that men and women crave or avoid in various countries.

Her comparative studies of groups in the United States, Spain and Egypt — which received national attention in the whimsically titled article “The Science of Scrumptious,” published in the September 2005 issue of Psychology Today — confirmed marked differences in the prevalence and intensity of cravings for such commonly desired foods as chocolate, French fries and cola drinks. Zellner found “restrained eaters,” such as diet-conscious women in the United States, showed a far higher prevalence of cravings for chocolate and similar foods in such sugars and other women in Spain who reported fewer dietary taboos.

Zellner’s research has offered fresh perspectives on how life experiences, product presentation and other factors can influence personal taste and preferences. Recent studies have explored why some coffee and beer drinkers switch their loyalty and preference to premium brands, while others remain content with their inexpensive “everyday” favorites even as they enjoy an occasional premium drink.

She also teamed up with Paul Durlach of the Army Research Institute to study how the color of a beverage affects whether consumers find that product refreshing and enjoyable.

Also as part of the “PsychMatters” series, the psychology department will sponsor the third annual WestConn Psychology Day from 1 to 4 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 15, in Warner Hall.

The event affords an opportunity for WestConn psychology students to present the results of their original empirical research projects to members of the university and general community. Admission will be free and open to the public.

For more information about this series, call the psychology department at (203) 837-8476.

Weather Center Conference

About 150 meteorology enthusiasts gathered in the Science Building Oct. 7 for the First Tri-State Weather Conference presented by the Meteorology program at WestConn. The event featured poster presentations outlining research by instructors and meteorologists and a dozen speakers, including Paul J. Kocin, an author famous for his work in The Weather Channel, and Dr. Louis W. Uccellini, director of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction. Kocin began the conference with a description of his work on a new measurement scale for bad weather that takes into account how much snow is in the area, that affects how many people. The Northeast Snowfall Impact Scale gives scientists a new tool to compare historic storms. Kocin also shared details of the night of Dec. 5, 2005, when he was on the job at The Weather Channel. He described the weather map that night, which is a system with unilaterally well-defined edges was quickly developing. “Pressure was going down like a rock,” Kocin said. “The temperature was 47 in Western CT, and 33 in New London.” He turned to the audience of weather lovers and said joyfully: “That was heaven in earth. Oh, except for the people who actually lived there.”

Hispanic Heritage Month

Community activist Felipe Luciano (pictured) discussed “Multiculturalism in America: Where Do We Go From Here?” at Hispanic Heritage Month event in October. Luciano’s talk was one of several activities celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. Other events included ethnic food offerings for “A Taste of Latin America,” presentations about the Global Academy in Puerto Rico, Hispanic Heritage Awareness Day in New York’s Spanish Harlem and a “Day of the Dead” altar from Nov. 1 – 3 in Warner Hall.

Solar viewings featured in observatory program

Afternoon telescope observations of the sun have marked the debut this fall of public viewings at the Science Building Observatory on WestConn’s Midtown campus. The observatory will present the continuing series of evening programs at the WCSU Observatory and Planetarium on the Science Building.

Professor of Astronomy Dr. Dennis Dawson, director of the WCSU Observatory and Planetarium, said the autumn series of solar viewings at the new Science Building Observatory are being conducted with telescopes specially designed for safe viewing of sunspots, prominences and other features of the sun’s surface.

Upcoming solar viewings will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 15, and Wednesday, Dec. 6. A highlight of the program series will be a special observation from 2 to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 8, of the rare transit of the planet Mercury across the face of the sun. The Science Building’s rooftop observation area is accessible from the main elevator at the third-floor level.

The Science Building solar observations supplement another active schedule of nighttime shows and viewings at the WCSU Observatory and Planetarium on the Westside campus. Planetarium shows this fall offer an introduction to astronomical highlights of the season, with special attention to the planets of the outer solar system.

The WCSU Planetarium will present “Exploring Autumn Skies,” at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 4, Thursday, Nov. 9, and Saturday, Nov. 18. The fall schedule will conclude with “Winter Wonders,” showing at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2, Thursday, Dec. 7, and Saturday, Dec. 16.

Each planetarium show will be followed by a two-hour period for public viewing of the evening sky with the observatory’s 20-inch computer-controlled Ritchey-Chrétien reflector telescope.

Public viewings at both the Science Building and Westside observatories will be subject to cancellation in the event of cloudy or inclement conditions. Planetarium shows will be held unless access roads become impassable due to snow or ice conditions. Admission is free for all events; donations to support operations and maintenance of the planetarium and observatory will be accepted. A complete listing of planetarium shows and observatory viewings for the current season is available at www.wcsu.edu/starwatch.

For more information, call (203) 837-8072.

Biology research seminars to explore varied themes

Research findings on themes ranging from marine ecology and tropical diversity to mammal illnesses will be featured in a series of science seminars: to be presented at WestConn during the 2006-07 academic year.

WestConn Assistant Professor of Biological and Environmental Sciences Dr. Patrice Boily will discuss “The Functional Significance of Cold-Induced Fever in Mammals” in a seminar on Wednesday, Nov. 29. Boily, who joined the WestConn faculty in August, will be making his first public research presentation on campus as part of the 2006-07 WestConn Biology Research Seminar Series, sponsored by the department of biology and environmental sciences.

His talk and other Wednesday research seminars are open to the public and are free of charge.

For more information about the series, call Assistant Professor of Biology Dr. Edwin Wong, on a topic to be announced.

Congratulations!

The WCSU American Chemical Society (ACS) Student Affiliates chapter has received an Honorable Mention award for the 2005-06 academic year. In the announcement, ACS President Dr. E. Arin Nalley wrote: “Professor Paula Secondo, faculty adviser of the chapter, deserves special commendation. Few faculty members are willing to make the great commitment of time and energy that a successful chapter requires of its advisers. It takes more than exceptional effort to be an award-winning chapter; it takes the nurturing attention of dedicated advisers. Professor Secondo’s efforts certainly represent the best in undergraduate science education and mentoring around the country.”

If you have an announcement about a recent appointment to a board, an award or other professional accomplishment you’d like to share in this section, please e-mail the information to pr@wcsu.edu.

Using a special solar-filtered telescope, visitors to the Science Building observatory can look at the sun.
**Around Campus**

Science Building wins ‘Best of 2006’ award

by Dean Gorenbeak

Towering over the campus, WestConn’s new Science Building makes a statement about the university’s commitment to excellence and academics, and people are paying attention.

The Science Building is among 40 projects in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut selected for the New York 2006 honors by a panel of experts for an annual awards program conducted by New York Construction magazine. And it is noteworthy that NPR and the Los Angeles Times disagree over who won.

The ‘60s also saw the erection of the Berlin Wall.
Inside this issue: For a newspaper editor, Sam Tanenhaus is a little wishy-washy about censorship. Oh, he is fervent for freedom of speech and the press, and he is dismissive of those who would ban books, but one thing troubles him: He doesn’t know who is right.