Wishes and predictions for a child’s future can often be way off the mark.

So it was brave of UWA’s first archivist, Christine Shervington, to dedicate an oral history of the University to her two-year-old daughter Lydia, as ‘a prospective student of the 21st century.’

That was 15 years ago and the little smock-frocked Lydia Shervington Lamb was featured in The West Australian with respected UWA graduate Erica Underwood, perusing the history, University Voices – Traces from the Past.

This year, 17-year-old Lydia has fulfilled her mother’s aspirations and followed in the footsteps of her father’s side of the family, becoming the third generation to enter UWA’s Medical School.

Lydia’s grandparents, Dr Adrian and Dr Margaret Lamb studied medicine in Scotland and migrated to WA in the 1950s. Dr Adrian Lamb taught at UWA’s medical school while Dr Margaret Lamb worked in cancer research (at UWA) until the age of 75.

Their son Alan (Lydia’s father) studied medicine at UWA, spent some time as a National Health and Medical Research Council research scientist and has recently retired as a general practitioner.

“If you count dentistry as a medical science, Lydia is actually the fourth generation to enter the medical profession. Margaret Lamb’s father was a dentist,” said Christine, who was UWA’s archivist from 1979 to 1991.

Lydia decided when she was in Year 11 at St Hilda’s that she wanted to study medicine. Her grandmother’s example was part of that decision. But Margaret Lamb didn’t live to know that Lydia was accepted into medical school. She died late last year.
“Good grief...” a friend said to me as I welcomed him to UWA from Canberra for a professional visit. “I’d forgotten how far it is to WA.”

I quietly pointed out that it is just as far from WA to Canberra ... but I am not sure the fact registered with him as he continued commenting on how he had taken most of the day to reach us.

With the new communication technologies distance and time has been revolutionised. The new edition of Professor Blainey’s famous *Tyranny of Distance* has a new, final chapter reflecting on those dramatic changes in our history.

Yet ‘mind sets’ are not so easily changed. And nor are the time-zones of the geography that constitutes a vast island continent such as ours.

Paradoxically, the issues are indeed alive again as a dimension of educational and research policies designed to deal with internationalisation.

To ensure quality and competitiveness, national policies increasingly focus on priorities, concentration, and linkages. The potential for these policies and resources to focus on a triangular axis of ‘Sydney-Canberra-Melbourne’ is great. Queensland’s ‘smart state’ strategies have broadened that focus. But outside that east coast line, an urgent challenge remains to build a regionally distributed and diversified set of research intensive universities and centres.

The current ‘mapping of science’ exercise being conducted by DEST in collaboration with the ARC, AVCC, academies and PMSEIC — will set the issue for the future squarely before us.

Our university has a proud history of creativity and achievement based on distinctiveness and a sense of identity born of a certain separateness of WA within the nation. Traditional isolation has spurred on self-reliance. A special awareness of overseas linkages has flourished in the absence of easy east-west connections.

All that needs to continue and indeed expand. The Founders of WA brilliantly anticipated the role of an excellent state university as a powerhouse for the state.

The great challenge before us a century later is to confront the potentially worsening terms of policy and investment as the Commonwealth distributes major infrastructure facilities, research centres and educational programs in ‘places’ and scholarships.

We shall need new macro strategies according to the priorities and objectives contained within the University’s Operational Priority Plan. This will ensure that WA is integral to national policy and allocations in both research and teaching.

• We must position ourselves through collaborative research programs: success in CRCs will be vital (we had no success in the last ARC round).

• As a State and a university we need to gain a greater share of Commonwealth-funded undergraduate and post-graduate places (we are desperately short of HECS places ... and we failed to gain any of the prestigious Federation Fellowships).

• Establish strategic alliances with significant external consortia involved with Innovation, Research and Development.

• Lobby strongly for a share of the hubs in technology and infrastructure to be distributed in the next decade.

• Ensure that our State Government and industries provide us with the kind of gearing support which will ensure competitive bids in public-private grants.

The has been much discussion about higher education itself being at a crossroads in the Nelson Review, with an appropriate focus on base funding, places, about HECS and efficient governance.

Equally at the crossroads is our successful place in the long-term of the future of the national knowledge culture in research and educational programs.

That will be the ultimate triumph over distance.
The French enjoyment of red wine might well be a factor in their lower rates of heart disease, when compared with other European countries.

But Australian health professionals want more than anecdotal evidence or cultural clichés. The ‘French paradox’ is under the microscope in the School of Medicine and Pharmacology, with a study aimed at shedding new light on the effects of red wine on blood pressure and cholesterol.

Research fellow Dr Trevor Mori and Professor Ian Puddey are calling for volunteers to help them with their research at Royal Perth Hospital.

But the volunteers need to fit very specific criteria. The team needs about 35 participants who have Type 2 diabetes, who are aged between 40 and 70 years, and who drink at least one or two glasses of red wine each day.

“We know a great deal about the relationship between alcohol consumption and blood pressure, but we know very little about the overall effects of red wine in particular on blood pressure, blood lipids (cholesterol) and blood glucose in people with Type 2 diabetes,” Dr Mori said.

“We have chosen to work with diabetic volunteers because they already have an increased risk of heart disease. They are predisposed to high blood pressure, they have higher blood sugar levels and higher clotting levels.

“They also tend to have higher levels of the so-called bad cholesterol,” he said. “And they are the people who stand to benefit the most from this research. To our knowledge, this is the first study of its kind in the world.”

It is the most recent in a series of studies by Dr Mori and Professor Puddey into diabetes and methods of complementing drug treatment for Type 2 diabetes by targeting nutrition and lifestyle factors.

They have previously examined and shown benefits of a combination of fish in the diet and aerobic exercise, and the purified marine omega 3 fatty acids, EPA and DHA.

Dr Mori said there were suggestions that red wine had a lesser effect on blood pressure than other alcohol. “This is possibly because of a protective factor offered by the high levels of vasodilator and antioxidant flavonoids in red wine.

“We know from test tube studies that this is the case, but we don’t know if translates into human studies.”

He said the trial would establish the balance of potential beneficial or adverse effects of the regular consumption of red wine for diabetic patients.

The research is supported by the Australian Health Management Group Medical Research Fund, with help from the Australian Wine Research Institute and the Orlando Wyndham Group.

While some people might think it’s a hoot to take part in a study that requires you to drink two glasses of red wine every day, it is proving difficult to get the right volunteers and the researchers are still recruiting.

Volunteers would have their blood pressure and cholesterol monitored, over periods of four weeks, during which they would drink moderate amounts of red wine, red wine in which the alcohol had been removed, and water.

If you fit the bill or know somebody who could volunteer, please call research nurse Di Dunbar at RPH on 9224 0242.
New medical technology developed in UWA’s School of Physics has scooped the pool in awards for commercialisation.

UWA spin-out company Inner Vision Biometrics (IVB) was awarded two prizes at the recent Commercialisation Forum and Fair of Ideas held in Sydney. Organised by Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia (KCA) and supported by the Federal Department of Education, Science and Training under the Backing Australia’s Ability initiative, this event showcased more than 200 commercialisation projects from Australian universities and research institutions.

IVB was founded in 2000 following several years of intensive research activity in the School of Physics. Led by Associate Professor Tim St Pierre, the research group has developed a non-invasive, patented technique of imaging the liver using Magnetic Resonance Imaging machines.

Physicists Tim St Pierre (left), Paul Clark (right) and Wanida Chua-Anusorn celebrate their win with Office of Industry and Innovation’s Andrew Beveridge

Professor Robyn Owens, UWA’s Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), explained that the breakthrough identified by the research team offered significant benefits.

“The breakthrough can assist clinicians in the early detection of diseases characterised by liver iron overload such as hemochromatosis, thalassemia and hepatitis C. The current technique to measure liver iron levels requires a needle biopsy, which is both painful for the patient, not representative or particularly accurate, and carries significant health risks.

“The University is immensely proud of what has been achieved so far, and has high expectations for the future of IVB. The combination of a high quality research team, strong intellectual property coupled with a ‘hands-on’ investor will help to ensure the long-term success of the venture,” Professor Owens said.

“As with all our research groups undertaking commercialisation projects, the Office of Industry and Innovation (OII) has worked very closely with the IVB team. From developing the required investor memoranda and business plans, to approaching venture capital organisations, OII assisted IVB every step of the way.”

Director of OII and Vice-Chair of KCA, Dr Andy Sierakowski said that KCA was a key industry organisation in the field of technology commercialisation: “For IVB to receive two awards in what was a highly competitive field is an excellent result. It confirms that Western Australia is capable of producing high-technology, growth-oriented companies that are central to the knowledge economy.”

It confirms that Western Australia is capable of producing high-technology, growth-oriented companies"
Teaching from the foundations up

There is more to turning a bright graduate into a great teacher than just making a teaching position available.

This is why universities provide training in foundations of university teaching for new academics. But, until recently, foundations programs were conceived and offered in isolation, albeit at a rapidly increasing rate, at individual institutions.

UWA’s Dr Allan Goody, a lecturer in higher education development from the Organisation and Staff Development Services, and a colleague, Dr Janice Orrell, from Flinders University, recently convened a national meeting for education developers who facilitate foundations programs.

Dr Goody and Dr Orrell, whose foundations programs are very similar, put together a colloquium on the pedagogy, impact and logistics of these programs. Held at Flinders University last month, it attracted 45 academics from 29 universities, including four from New Zealand and one from Canada.

Dr Goody said that despite the growth of foundations programs, there had been little reference between universities, regarding inclusions or collaboration in the development of resources. “Evaluation of their impact on education quality have remained largely within the single institutions.”

A central concern at the colloquium was the likely position that the imminent Nelson Report may have on the initial preparation of academics for their teaching roles.

Another was how to engage different disciplines in the development and delivery of such programs to account for diverse cultural contexts and demands.

Also significant was the issue of which staff should be targeted by foundations programs.

The concept of the higher degree graduate winning a continuing position and being mentored into a new role is not the prevailing norm. It is more likely that academics experience long periods of sessional employment as tutors before achieving a continuing appointment. By this time, many teaching habits have been ‘caught’ on the job.

There was also the question of in-service for experienced staff, who are taking on new responsibilities, knowledge and skills with teaching on-line, off-shore teaching and supervising learning in workplaces. These emerging demands provide challenges to foundations programs.

A consensus was reached that little could be decided pending the release of the Nelson Report. Conclusions will be drawn after its release.

A forum to follow up these issues will be run by Allan Goody and Janice Orrell at this year’s HERDSA conference in Christchurch.

High quality lowers the odds

UWA Press continues to produce high quality books which are continually shortlisted for awards.

The latest on the short lists are three non-fiction publications and a children’s book.

Bitter Victory: the death of the HMAS Sydney by Wes Olson, is one of three books shortlisted from 18 nominations for the Frank Brooze Memorial Maritime History Book Prize.

Frank Brooze was a highly-respected professor of history at UWA who died in 2001. His passion for and internationally-recognised expertise in maritime history is remembered with this prize, sponsored by the Australian Association for Maritime History and the Australian National Maritime Museum.

The Western Australian Premier’s Book Awards always have UWA Press books shortlisted. This year, they are Verticordia: The Turner of Hearts by Elizabeth George and Margaret Pieroni, and Blood Sweat and Welfare by Mary Anne Jebb, vying for the non-fiction award. Verticordia is also shortlisted in the Scholarly Reference Category for the TREAT awards (The Australian’s awards for excellence in educational publishing).

In the children’s book section, Mark Greenwood and Frané Lessac’s The Legend of Moondyne Joe is up for a prize.
One of UWA's top physics students is enjoying studying German.

“Much as I love science, especially astro-physics and particle physics, studying German is great. It's such a change, reading and writing about plays and films,” said Alison Fowler.

“The reason I’m studying German is that there are so many great German physicists and I want to be able to read their work and talk to them in their own language,” she said.

But before she spends time in Germany, Alison is off to Durham, England, next month, after winning a place at the annual Particle Physics and Astronomy International Undergraduate Summer School.

This is the third consecutive year in which one of the School of Physics' students has been chosen to attend the exclusive summer school. It is also the third time that the UWA student has been the only representative from Australia.

Only 24 students are invited: 12 from the UK and 12 international students. For five weeks, the summer school brings together these young adults who are seriously considering a career in either astronomy or particle physics. Two weeks of concentrated lectures are followed by supervised work on a project with a leading physicist.

The students will then visit CERN, the European Centre or Research in Particle Physics, in Geneva. CERN was the birthplace of the World Wide Web. “I'm hoping the summer school will help me to make a decision about my future direction in physics because, right now, I'm not sure whether I want to follow astro-physics or particle physics,” Alison said.

Head of the School of Physics, Professor Ian McArthur congratulated Alison and thanked her for keeping up the School's fine record.

While most of her expenses will be paid, Alison has to find part of the airfare herself and is looking for sponsors to help her get to the summer school. If you can help or have any suggestions for her, contact Alison at fowlea01@tartarus.uwa.edu.au

Although the war in Iraq has ended, George W Bush’s war on terrorism is on-going — and fine arts lecturer Paul Trinidad has created an avenue for teenagers to express their thoughts and feelings about war, conflict and terrorism, through the preferred vehicle of their generation, the electronic media.

“Back in March, the Minister for Education, Alan Carpenter was calling for high school students to stay at school and not to join anti-war protests during school hours. I responded to that call and worked on this project, which I’ve called the Horrors of War, getting it ready to take off at the start of this new school term. As it pans out, it is too late to offer to high school students as an alternative to joining sometimes illegal protests against the horrors of war in Iraq,” Mr Trinidad said. “But, with the on-going threat of the war against terrorism, this project is still valid.”

He has set up a virtual gallery which gives high school students the opportunity to produce and exhibit work reflecting their anti-war sentiments in an electronic alternative.
EXPOing the University

Ever had a neighbour or friend ask: “But what do you really do at University?”

Here’s your chance to show them. UWA’s EXPO 2003 is on Sunday August 31 and work is already under way to show off the campus and its faculties to their best advantage.

Every year, after each Open Day or EXPO, the organisers ask for feedback, then use those ideas to make the next event even better.

UWA public affairs project manager and EXPO co-ordinator, Ian Lilburne, is already counting down the weeks until EXPO, with lists of preparations that would be daunting without the help and enthusiasm of a great organising committee.

This year, EXPO will widen its target from school leavers and their parents, to people interested in pursuing postgraduate studies.

“This means there will be an information session aimed specifically at prospective postgraduate students,” Ian said. “There will also be repeats of the information sessions for prospective undergraduates, to give visitors more opportunities to attend them.”

The information sessions, which attracted very positive feedback last year, will be complemented by displays on research activities and courses, and some general events, including sports and musical and cultural performances, aimed at giving visitors a taste of the UWA campus experience.

The key messages EXPO is designed to communicate are quality, flexibility, diversity, innovation, excitement, challenge, fun and value.

Get your ideas together, ready for June 12.

The closing date for information on all the displays is June 12, so all staff should now be actively involved in preparation of that information. If you are not as yet involved and would like to be, find out from your Faculty office who your EXPO representative is, or call Ian Lilburne on 9380 7302.

The most popular displays, and consequently, those that send visitors away with the best impressions of UWA, are always the most interactive ones, like the suturing lessons (by the Medical School) at CTEC last year, the digital re-imaging of visitors’ features into the Mona Lisa (by Fine Arts), at the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, and the hands-on solving of a murder mystery (by Palynology) in the geography building.

The EXPO poster should be available later this month, followed by bumper stickers. The mail room is franking all outgoing mail with an EXPO promotional stamp, and the EXPO Website should soon be up and running at www.expo.uwa.edu.au

The weekend before EXPO, The West Australian will include an EXPO program in its Saturday edition. But the website will eventually have more detailed information about all the displays and events than the newspaper insert.

The public are about to be alerted, but don’t be alarmed. Just be prepared.

reactions to the idea of conflict and the horrors of war. It is on the website of the Faculty of Architecture Landscape and Visual Arts at http://www.alva.uwa.edu.au/gallery/

Linking in with one of the student projects of last year, Seven Deadly Sins, Mr Trinidad says this on-line project will run for seven weeks and participating students can win one of seven limited edition artists book for their schools.

“Of course, their work will also be exhibited in the virtual gallery for the world to see,” he said.

Students are asked to submit imagery or text, which might be a collage from a newspaper, their original images, even the contents of a student’s pockets along with a handprint, placed onto a scanner (reminiscent of the procedures following arrest after taking part in an illegal protest). As long as the idea and the submission is original and it conveys a message about war, terrorism or conflict, it will be considered.

UWA staff members are asked to spread the word at their children’s high schools and refer to the website or call Paul Trinidad on 9380 7177 for submission details.
Workplace bullying

“I just want it to stop!”

Bullying is not something that is confined to the schoolyard.

Recent press reports on bullying from the schoolyard to the workplace remind us all that, unfortunately, it rears its ugly head in almost every aspect of life. UWA is no exception and the University is committed to addressing the problem.

Bullying may include one or a combination of the following:

• abuse, insulting or offensive language by one of more persons to another or others;
• behaviour or language that frightens, humiliates, belittles or degrades, including criticism that is delivered with much yelling and screaming;
• inappropriate comments about a person’s appearance, lifestyle or their family;
• teasing or regularly making someone the brunt of pranks or practical jokes;
• interfering with a person’s personal effects or work equipment;
• physical assault or threats;
• organisational behaviour that undermines, treats less favourably or dis-empowers others, for example, overloading a person with work and setting timelines that are difficult to achieve, setting tasks that are beyond a person’s skills level, deliberately denying access to information, consultation or resources, or unfair treatment in relation to accessing workplace entitlements such as leave or training.


It pointed out that, while people may have been silent about bullying behaviours observed or experienced in the past, they are less willing to be so today. Employers, too, are recognising the cost of ignoring this behaviour, through staff turnovers, provision of employee counselling and lost work time.

Individual effects of bullying can be both psychological (increased stress levels, insecurity and loss of trust) and physical (tiredness, headaches and lost work time from illness). These impacts are not confined to the target of the behaviour but can also affect others in the workplace. Together they can reduce organisational productivity. Indeed, the combination of increased turnover, the need for sometimes complex grievance resolution processes, access to employee assistance support and, occasionally, litigation, can dramatically escalate the dollar costs of bullying behaviour.


If you are a manager concerned by behaviours you have seen or if you are a staff member who has experienced bullying it is important to act as soon as possible.

The first and best step is to start talking. Staff need to discuss openly what they believe to be reasonable expectations and standards for individual behaviour.

Staff members who have been the target of bullying behaviours and need support are encouraged to access the University’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) either through Davidson Trahaire (9382 8100) or the University Counselling Service (9380 2423). Managers who need advice on dealing with difficult people should contact Human Resources but may also access the Employee Assistance Program.
An historic anniversary for the University was celebrated quietly at UWA’s Albany Centre.

Verna Rowbotham, the daughter of founding Professor Alexander Ross, visited the Centre to mark the 90th anniversary of the first lecture delivered at UWA — by her father.

Professor Ross gave the first lecture — Mathematics — at 9am on Monday March 31, 1913 in the Irwin Street buildings in Perth. The day before, he and Professor Dakin had swept the sawdust from the new buildings, in readiness for the first day of business for the new University.

The Professor of Mathematics and Physics came to UWA from Glasgow after working in Germany. His expertise was in radiation and he had corresponded with Marie Curie.

Mrs Rowbotham, who lives in Albany, remembered both her father’s academic career at UWA and his love of Albany and the south coast, as Albany Centre director Barbara Black gave her a tour of the UWA facility.

She said her mother had arrived in Perth several months after her father and that they had married the next day (August 1913) in the new University’s lecture theatre, with the wedding reception in the physics laboratory.

Professor Ross and his wife were both originally from Glasgow and used to escape Perth’s heat by spending every summer in Albany and Denmark.

During the summer, Professor Ross would give lectures (forerunners of UWA Extension and the Albany Centre!) and Mrs Rowbotham remembers attending one on x-rays in the Empire Theatre, which is now a nightclub in Albany.

He retired to Albany in 1950. His daughter had, in the meantime, completed a degree in science at UWA, enrolling in 1938, the University’s 25th year of operation.

The war put a halt to her plans to do fisheries research and, after the war, she was asked by Methodist Ladies’ College to become a biology teacher.

After half an hour of training, she took up the position and stayed for 23 years, until she too retired to Albany.

Professor Ross is remembered at UWA with the Ross Lecture Theatre in the Physics building. The other seven inaugural professors — Dakin (biology), Whitfeld (mining and engineering and first vice-chancellor), Woolnough (geology), Willsmore (chemistry), Shann (history and economics), Murdoch (English) and Paterson (agriculture) — are also remembered with lecture theatres or memorial lectures and prizes.
A simple party trick encapsulates the theory behind Associate Professor Geoff Cooper’s new book, The (Intelligent) Student’s Guide to Learning at University.

On one page is a random grouping of letters: uyo ont teh dïl ryt ubt nac tey tif yma

The author asks his readers to try to memorise it. On the following page, the groups of letters have been rearranged into recognisable words: try can but you yet not the may fit lid. Associate Professor Cooper points out how it is easier to learn and memorise the list if it can be understood.

The next page rearranges the words into a sentence: the lid may not fit yet, you can but try. It then becomes clear how much easier it is to learn something that makes sense.

“This is what makes this book different from other study skills books that simply try to teach students tricks of the trade. They don’t have a central focus on what learning is all about. This guide is aimed at helping students to understand how we learn things and how they can become active, independent and self-directed learners, with transferable skills and attitudes for life-long learning,” Associate Professor Cooper said.

He is senior learning and research skills advisor in Student Services and the book is the result of 10 years work.

“It started as a series of pamphlets, each of which has become a chapter in the book. My workshops with students and the book have fed each other over the years,” he said.

Associate Professor Cooper acknowledged his debt to other researchers in the field of student learning, including John Biggs, Noel Entwistle, Ference Marton, Paul Ramsden and Roger Saljo.

“My original material has all been heavily revised and the book now includes lots of comments from students on learning strategies. The students are from the Targeted Students Program, which provides support for undergraduate students from non-traditional schools and backgrounds,” Associate Professor Cooper said.

Chapters in the book often begin with a few questions and an invitation to think about particular issues before starting to read. Reflection is a major part of successful learning.

In his conclusion, he encourages students to engage fully in university life. “The more you (sensibly!) involve yourself with university life, the more you will benefit from it” he writes, quoting an observation by McInnis (First Year on Campus, 1995) that “the poorer performers were clearly less sociable.”

The (Intelligent) Student’s Guide to Learning at University is available from the Co-Op Bookshop for $25. It has been distributed across Australia by Common Ground Publishing. Copies are also available for reference and borrowing from the Research Skills Services collection at Student Services.

Teaching how to learn

Associate Professor Geoff Cooper’s students, Olimpia Caligiuri, Gra Morris-Thomas and Gigi Zhu say they have found the guidelines useful

The day of Prosh dawned fine and warm this year.

But you never know how the weather will turn in Albany! UWA Albany Centre students decided to be prepared for anything and turned out to sell The Chest Infection on the streets of Albany wearing snorkel, mask and flippers.

The small student contingent started the day with a formal breakfast on the roundabout at the southern city’s busiest intersection, then went on to raise about $900 selling the Prosh publication.

The rural students’ efforts were much appreciated as the Prosh total headed towards $94,000, more than $1,000 more than was raised last year.

About 3,000 students joined in the fun to raise money for the Holyoake Foundation, to help the children of drug- or alcohol-addicted parents, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which will use the funds to buy defibrillators for premature babies.
Psychologist Stephan Lewandowsky is afraid of heights. A tall bridge or building can bring him out in a sweat.

But put him 10,000 feet in the air in a glider and he’s in heaven.

“I’ve never had any fear of height in a glider,” said Professor Lewandowsky, UWA academic and chief flying instructor for the Narrogin Gliding Club, who takes to the air over the wheatbelt every second or third weekend.

Gilding has been his passion since he was 29. “I was a late starter. You can take gliding lessons at the age of 14 and fly solo at 15.”

He is one of up to 300 active glider pilots in WA who make the most of the hot air over the wheatbelt in summer, and ride the thermals for hours at a time.

“It totally clears the head. When I’m up there, I’m not thinking about academia, the University, my mortgage, anything. It’s pure freedom and joy!”

Professor Lewandowsky then goes on to talk about competition gilding, where you need to make a decision every 10 seconds. He came third in his class of glider in the state championships last season.

“To be a good glider pilot, you need to be familiar with Global Positioning Systems, radio procedures and meteorology. You also need to have an interest in aviation. But it’s better than flying a plane.

“The challenge is to make use of the weather to cover distances at high speed. It’s a sport, like sailing.”

To learn how to gild, it costs about $80 for 25 minutes for the first lesson. “After that, if you come down to the club every weekend, you will probably be able to fly solo in about two months. But it takes 10 years to become an expert.”

Professor Lewandowsky sometimes flies for up to six hours at a time, in his own glider, for pure enjoyment. But he also teaches gliding, flying in a two-seater for much shorter periods. He has taken about 1,000 flights as an instructor.

He says the members of the five gliding clubs in WA come from a complete cross-section of society. “But I suspect we have a few more engineers than we would just by chance.”

Anybody can learn to gild. Then it costs about $27 an hour to hire a glider, about a quarter of the cost of leasing a plane for joyriding. Or you can buy your own, as Professor Lewandowsky has. “I’ve seen gliders advertised for under $10,000 and really, there’s no upper limit. You could spend $250,000 if you wanted to!”

Is it dangerous? “I’d say it is as safe as other pastimes generally considered risky, like rock climbing and scuba diving.

“I’ve worked out, on the accident statistics, that, if you could ride your glider to work every day, you could commute for 400 years before you had to worry about your life!”

If you’d like to try gilding or just find out more about it, call Steve Lewandowsky on 9380 3231 or at lewan@psy.uwa.edu.au
In this still new 21st century, how best should we expend our scant resources — not just money, but our energies and passion — to improve the life chances of our most precious commodity, our children, our future human capital?

In reviewing the available data on child and youth health, development and well being in Australia over the past 30 years, we are faced with some unpalatable and rather frightening statistics. There are very few indicators of child and youth outcomes that are improving and many are worsening.

While Australian death rates in childhood are very low, it is the alarming rise in rates of complex illnesses, mental health and behaviour problems, educational difficulties, drug and substance abuse, and juvenile crime that must now engage and worry us. These increases in rates have occurred over the past 30 years in Australia and in many developed countries. They coincide with marked changes in the social fabric, in the way we now live, work, and socially interact. Whilst many of these changes have been beneficial and many children and young people are managing very well in modern Australia, many others are struggling. We are observing an increasing proportion of families who are finding it difficult to bring up children and to enable them to develop the essential characteristics of resilience, social and intellectual capacity.

One in five teenagers in Australia has a mental health problem that interferes with their daily lives, 12 per cent of primary school children have depression, behaviour problems or educational difficulties, 30 per cent of Australian children develop allergic asthma by age 10 years, an unacceptable (and not accurately measurable) number of children are abused and neglected, are homeless or in care, 15 per cent of 12 year old males AND FEMALES report hazardous drinking in the previous month. The marked increases in violent crimes are also in both males and females, many of these drug related. There has been an increase in the proportion of children classified as obese, and at the other end of the spectrum, a rising proportion of young girls (and even now young men) have eating disorders and are unhappy with how they look. Many of these problems also lead directly in to self harm and suicides.

Research on many of these problems suggest that there are some common pathways which means that effective early prevention may reduce a broad range of problems. For example, addressing risk and protective factors to enhance mental health also improve educational outcomes and reduce crime in young people.

Getting it right early is so much better than the expensive and less effective treatments. Today’s social and environmental influences are far more powerful in child and adolescent health and mental health than are the drugs or therapies we have at our disposal to treat them.

Why are current policies and practices not working? One hears comments all the time such as “all the money spent on Aboriginal health and we haven’t seen any improvement in health status” or “expenditure on mental health but no results”. If you look at the causal pathways to most mental health and other child and youth problems then it is obvious that current interventions are too late and will not effect improvements in outcomes. It is only by acknowledging the factors early in these pathways and avoiding them, that we will be able to reduce these tragedies and improve the life chances for young people.

Can anyone give me any evidence that incarceration of juveniles reduces juvenile crime? Most evidence points to non-rehabilitative detention actually increasing it, particularly in Indigenous children. And how can you ‘treat’ suicide when the child is already dead?

So prevention is the name of the game. It is the focus of all that we do at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. But as researchers, we have to work smarter, more efficiently and more collaboratively. That’s why we’ve spearheaded the formation of the new Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth as a national effort to facilitate the generation and translation of knowledge to enhance the well being and life chances of children and young people.

Our messages – based on the best data and evidence — will be for all levels of government and non-government organizations, for parents, schools, for practitioners and communities. We owe it to parents to give them the most important information about early development and the importance of the early years of a child’s life for their future health, mental health and capacity. Then they will be able to make informed choices for their families, lobby governments themselves about what is important for their children’s futures and collectively start to turn around these statistics. Nothing is more important for Australia right now.

So perhaps rather than ‘The Last Word’, the prevention message is the first and most important one.
Research Grants & Contracts

DITR: AUSTRALINDUSTRY — TECHNOLOGY DIFFUSION PROGRAM
Dr Timothy St Pierre, Physics: ‘Magnetic and structural properties of cobalt nanoparticle dispersions’ — $12,000 (2003).

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL: DISCOVERY PROJECTS
Prof David Badcock and E/Prof John Ross, Psychology: ‘How the human visual system uses pattern information to organise motion’ — $194,000 (2003-05).
Prof Gillian Rhodes, Psychology: ‘Applying the psychologist’s microelectrode to high-level vision: what face after-effects can tell us about face processing’ — $649,000 (2003-07).

NATIONAL HEART FOUNDATION
A/Prof Kevin Croft, Prof Ian Puddey and Dr Trevor Mori: Medicine and Pharmacology: ‘The distribution of fatty acid oxidation products in lipoproteins and atherosclerotic plaque. Identification of specific compounds as bioactive markers of disease’ — $98,887 (2003-04).

NHMRC

Dr Y. Kanagasingam, Dr Marc Tennant and Dr Mei-Ling Tay-Kearney, Ophthalmology and Visual Science and Dentistry: ‘A single digital handheld imaging device for use in both ophthalmology and dentistry’ — $430,000 (2002-04).

Dr Y. Kanagasingam, Dr Marc Tennant and Dr Mei-Ling Tay-Kearney, Ophthalmology and Visual Science and Dentistry: ‘Online healthcare system to provide specialist care to rural, remote and undeserved regions’ — $343,000 (2003-05).

NHMRC
A/Prof Kevin Croft, Prof Ian Puddey and Dr Jonathan Hodgson: Medicine and Pharmacology: ‘Gamma-tocopherol: an important dietary factor for protection against CVD’ — $315,000 (2003-05).

UWA RESEARCH GRANTS SCHEME

Continued on back page
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Monday 19 May
PLANT BIOLOGY SEMINAR
‘Physiological and morphological responses of wheat to different depths and durations of waterlogging’, Imran Malik. 4pm, Agricultural Lecture Theatre.

PERTH MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE GROUP QUZ NIGHT
The Quiz Night will be held in the Guild Tavern, questions starting at 7.30pm, excellent prizes. Tables of six persons and bookings with payment ($50 for table or $10 individual) to Talia Marsh, care of English, or Charles Acland, care of Trinity, 230 Hampden Rd, Crawley, 6009 (tel: 9423 9428).

Tuesday 20 May
PSYCHOLOGY COLLOQUIUM
‘Truisms in industrial organisational psychology: 1975 vs 2003’, Dr Roy Payne. Psychology. 11am, Rm 233, Psychology North Block.

SOIL SCIENCE AND PLANT NUTRITION SEMINAR

ANATOMY AND HUMAN BIOLOGY SEMINAR

Wednesday 21 May
CHEMISTRY SEMINAR

GEOGRAPHY SEMINAR
‘Localised poverty reduction in Vietnam’, Dr Stefanie Scott. 12noon, Geography Lecture Theatre I, Ground Floor.

Thursday 22 May
FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT
‘On Debut’. Don’t miss the new University Camerata as they perform a richly varied program of chamber orchestra works both old and new. 1.10pm, Winthrop Hall.

Friday 23 May
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING SEMINAR
‘Technical evangelism: dominance through control of industry standards’, James Plamondon, formerly of Microsoft Corporation, USA, and currently Managing Director of Patjimup Consulting and The Busselton Challenge. 11am, Seminar Room 2233, Second Floor, Social Sciences South Building.

MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR
‘Development and applications of murine cytomegalovirus foreign gene expression’, Paula Cunningham. 1pm, Room 1.1, Microbiology.

Monday 26 May
INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES/ PUBLIC LECTURE
‘The lucky country, or the white trash of Asia?’ Robyn Williams, science journalist and broadcaster. Tickets essential and limited. 6.30pm, Octagon Theatre. Tickets can be collected at Octagon Theatre box office on weekdays (12 to 4pm), tel: 9380 2440, or from UWA Visitors Centre, Central Administration weekdays (12 to 4pm), tel: 9380 2440, or from UWA Visitors Centre, Central Administration.

Tuesday 27 May
SOIL SCIENCE AND PLANT NUTRITION SEMINAR
‘The role of preferential water flow for root growth and solute leaching in clay sub-soils’, Kumar Arunachalam; ‘Trigger molecules and microbial nutrient cycling’, Frances Hoyle; ‘Colloid transport and its effect on permeability of soils’, Oagile Dikinya. 4pm, Agriculture Lecture Theatre.

Wednesday 28 May
PERTH MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE GROUP TALK
‘Aristocratic poverty and poor clare musical traditions’, Robert Curly, Edith Cowan University. 7.30pm, Room G14 Arts Building.

GEOGRAPHY SEMINAR
‘The Garden City in Western Australia’, Don Newman. 12noon, Geography Lecture Theatre I, Ground Floor.

WATER RESEARCH ENVIRONMENTAL DYNAMIC SEMINAR
‘Food, shelter — but no water?’ Prof Philip Weinstein, School of Population Health. 4pm, Blakers Lecture Theatre, Ground Floor, Mathematics Building. All welcome.

Thursday 29 May
FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT
‘Evening Harmonies’. Mark Coughlan presents a solo piano recital featuring a selection of his favourite repertoire including works by Schubert and Liszt’s Harmonies du soir. 1.10pm, Octagon Theatre.

CHEMISTRY SEMINAR
‘Characterisation of alkaliphilic micro-organisms in industrial waste streams’, Amanda Tilbury. 5.15pm, Simmonds Lecture Theatre.

Friday 30 May
CLIMA SEMINAR
‘International collaborations in pulse pathology’, Bill MacLeod, Department of Agriculture WA. ‘Pulse disease epidemiology’, Dr Jean Galloway, Department of Agriculture WA. 4pm, CLIMA Seminar Room.

ASIAN STUDIES SEMINAR
‘The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh: India’s Hindu nationalist Trade Union Centre’, Michael Gillan. 1pm, G25 Seminar Room, Ground Floor, Social Sciences Building.

MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR
‘Cystic fibrosis, Burkholderia cepacia, and respiratory epithelium’, Joshua Fink. 1pm, Room 1.1, Microbiology.

Please supply Campus Diary entries to Joanna Thompson by May 21 for the June 2 issue. Telephone: 9380 3029 Facsimile: 9380 1162 Email: joanna.thompson@uwa.edu.au


Dr Dehong Yu, Physics: ‘A new and complete study of electron correlations: triple excitation of helium negative ions’ — $1,1908 (2003).

Dr S. M. Byrne, Psychology: ‘Factors influencing the persistence of childhood obesity’ — $19,259 (2003).


Prof K. Kirchner, Dr Marion Bogoyevitch, Dr Douglas Mckitrick and Dr Livia Hool, UWA Centre for Medical Research, Biomedical and Chemical Sciences and Medicine and Pharmacology: ‘A program to investigate mechanisms of cardiac failure’ — $225,000 (2002-04).

Dr S. M. Byrne, Psychology: ‘Factors influencing the persistence of childhood obesity’ — $5000 (2003).

NEAR NEW NEC DVD PLAYER (MP3) S-VIDEO CDR CD-RW-model NDV-23 with 1-year warranty, $230 only (price negotiable). At Retravision it’s $289. Contact 9386 6139 or yogesan@cyllene.uwa.edu.au.

WARDROBES (2), IKEA Axel wardrobe, 108 x 187 x 52cm (w x h x d), white, 3 doors, plus 3 drawers. $130. White wardrobe, 150 x 2002 x 53cm (w x h x d), 2 doors plus centre full-length mirror. Contact Jan on ext. 2826 or jduphyn@admin.uwa.edu.au.

VULCAN GAS HEATER for sale. Elite RT18. IBM/J/H output. Only used one winter, magically effective! $450 ono. Contact J. Gillett on ext. 3324.

WANTED TO RENT

HOME to SWAP or RENTAL WANTED, ACADÉMIC COUPLE with 1 child arrive Perth early July. Prefer close to UWA. Contact J. Gillett on ext. 3324.

HOUSE TO BABYSIT/RENTAL WANTED, academic couple with 2 small children arrive Perth early July. Prefer house in Bibra Lake area, but flexible (work UWA). Contact J. Gillett on ext. 3324.

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WELL PRESENTED BRICK/TILE CHARACTER HOME with plaster ceilings, polished jarrah floors, lead light windows. Formal lounge with fireplace, formal dining, two bedrooms plus study, sleep-out, 1 and a half bathroom, laundry, modernised kitchen with good quality appliances. Single garage, shed, easy-care reticulated gardens and complete security alarms. Close to lake, walking distance to shops, restaurants, hospitals, schools, university, parks and public transport. Initial lease term 1/6/03 to 1/8/03 (option for extension till 3/1/04). For enquiries and inspection contact Ramesh on 0405 056 215 or 9382 2073 (home).

NEDLANDS, Park Road, $250/week, double storey from town house with private courtyard and glorious northern/winter sun. Refurbished with terracotta tiles granite/timber look deluxe kitchen and imported live appliances. Comprising 3 bedrooms formal lounge, separate dining, 2 WC’s, air conditioning, storage room and carport. Close to transport, QEII, SCGH, CSIRO, UWA and Hampden road cafes and restaurants. Available in mid June, Contact 9386 6139 or yogesan@cyllene.uwa.edu.au.

SHENTON PARK, small modern 3 bedroom house (ducted air-con, heating, bike, all kitchen appliances) with delightful walled garden, secure undercover 2 car parking and close to UWA, CSIRO, QEII Medical Centre and major Subiaco hospitals. Ideal for visiting academics, scientists or medics, short or long term. Convenient to Subiaco theatres and restaurants, Kings Park, Lake Jualbup, Shenton Park train station and major bus routes (e.g. 97) and also to excellent primary and high schools. Bunks and/or cot etc. available for families. Available July, fully furnished from $330/week. Contact Carol Worth 9382 1674, cmworth@bigpond.com, cmworth@cyllene.uwa.edu.au.

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