

Women botanists – rarer than blue-green algae

By LUIS VERANO
Of the Emerald

Billion-year-old fossils and a satellite photograph of Baja, Cal., line Barbara Javor's office, representing the field aspects of her unusual specialization.

One of the few women field researchers in phycology, the branch of botany that researches algae, Javor works with Biology Prof. Richard Castenholz under a National Science Foundation grant.

Javor, a doctoral candidate, says Castenholz's encouragement is a major reason for her involvement.

"Most women, however, don't find that kind of support," she says.

Few women are involved in her research field, Javor says, because of the travel, outdoor work and other field activities not usually expected of women.

The odds are still against women in science, Javor says, explaining that even though there are more women in the field than before, they don't receive the recognition they deserve.

"The key positions are still occupied by men, even if one takes into consideration the proportions," Javor says.

University statistics back up that contention. Women hold three of the 42 biology professors positions.

"This department may be an extreme example," she adds, "but I think it reflects the reality"

The abundance of male professors makes them more visible as role models for students, she says, which results in a tacit consensus that men are more qualified. That understanding is reflected in hiring.

But Javor says she has avoided many sex-related problems, partly due to encouragement from her advisor, and partly because her research is highly specialized.

Her study of photosynthetic microorganisms requires her participation in several branches of science and classifies her as a microbiogeologist.

"People tend to accept the ideas of qualified specialists regardless of sex," she says.

Appropriately, the objects of her research reflect some sobering social realities of male-female competition, Javor says.

Unlike modern algae, the blue-green algae Javor researches are sexless and were a dominant organism for seven-eighths of the history of life.

Her efforts to understand the changes blue-green algae have undergone have taken Javor into another traditionally male-dominated environment with unexpected results. She spends much of her time in Mexico's Baja California, one of the few places where blue-green algae survive.

Javor has travelled the Baja road 12 times since 1975, and says the dangers she finds in Baja are not caused by men, but by nature.

Javor says she has even found a job in this "supposedly macho stronghold."

A Mexican firm, "Exportadora de Sal," the largest solar salt producer in the world, has asked her to become its consultant and biologist.



University doctoral candidate Barbara Javor has embarked on a unique career in phycology – a branch of botany that specializes in algae.

"Getting good jobs is not always as easy as that for women in the states," says Javor who says she will be the only person, man or woman, with a Ph.D. in the 4,000 square miles between Ensenada and La Paz. "It's a little like being the only Ph.D. in the Sahara," she jokes, "but it is still an honor."

The honor has not come easily. Besides facing the academic loads and the dangers of travelling and working in the field, other obstacles have vexed Javor's endurance.

In 1975 she suffered a major setback when someone published an article about the original topic of her dissertation and she had to start again.

Another setback came this summer after the fifteen-hundred mile return trip from Baja. She took a bucket with her samples and experiments to her lab before going home to rest. The next day she found the bucket had been emptied.

"Someone thought it was trash. I rushed to the dump but it was impossible to find anything. It was 'adios research,' my work for the summer gone just like that."

"I would be satisfied if I, as a woman, could make a significant contribution to the future of science," she says. "I don't find it necessary to be the one to 'crack the big egg,' so long as my efforts are recognized."

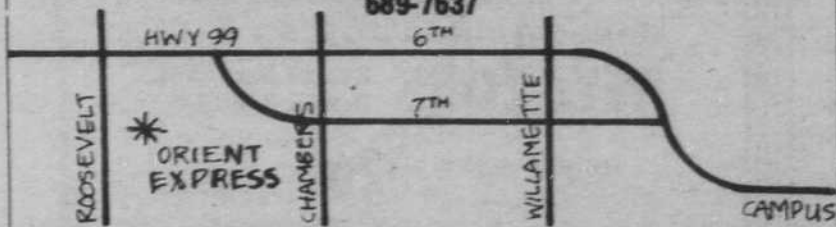
ORIENT EXPRESS

Take out; Eat in

Hours: Tue-Thurs 11:30-8:30 pm
Friday 11:30-10 pm
Saturday 2 pm-10 pm

Closed Sunday & Monday

located Hwy 99N at Roosevelt, next to DJ's
689-7637



emu Recreation Center

FOOSBALL TOURNAMENT

5:00 P.M.

TODAY!

RECREATION CENTER

Draw for your partner!

DOUBLE ELIMINATION

\$2.00 entry/person

(use your own quarters to play)

cash prizes!

'Iron Duchess' helps disabled

By JEANNIFER GREENLEAF
Of the Emerald

Organizations for the handicapped have not met the needs of disabled women, the founders of one of three West Coast organizations for disabled women said Wednesday.

Iron Duchess founders Janet McConel and Jan Eisenbeisz told a YMCA Women-Speak lecture that they formed the group in April 1977 because other agencies weren't meeting the special needs of handicapped women.

"Women are a minority among the disabled," McConel said. "We can join existing organizations, but it is hard to get into leadership positions."

McConel estimates that about one-third of the handicapped are women.

Most literature and discussion about handicapped persons focuses on men, according to Eisenbeisz. The Iron Duchess is currently distributing booklets on disabled women's sexuality to nursing homes and rehabilitation centers. Eisenbeisz also holds

sexuality workshops for the handicapped.

The Iron Duchess serves as a referral service for disabled women where women can call to discuss problems they are having with an agency, to get information because they are newly disabled or just to talk, Eisenbeisz said.

McConel's special project is making the women's movement more accessible to handicapped women. She and Eisenbeisz were instrumental in getting the National Organization for Women to pass a resolution calling for accessibility to meetings and events.

McConel said that architectural barriers, transportation problems and a lack of interpreters for the deaf and blind prevent women from full participation in the women's movement.

The Iron Duchess is currently working on a pamphlet that will give organizations information on being accessible to the handicapped.

Eisenbeisz specializes in civil rights of handicapped persons. As an employee of the University's Affirmative Action office and a member of the Eugene

Commission for the Rights of the Handicapped, she is well-versed in laws covering the disabled.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prevents employers who receive federal funds from discriminating against the handicapped. Eisenbeisz said that the disabled need to be educated about their rights, especially since the most important sections of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act weren't implemented until last year.

"The accessibility laws are only a year old. We are at the beginning of an era of accessibility," McConel said.

"It is no longer up to us to prove discrimination," Eisenbeisz said, "with the new laws the burden of proof falls on the employers."

At the University classes are required to be accessible to disabled persons at least once a year. If a handicapped person wished to take a class that is inaccessible, the class may be moved, Eisenbeisz said.

Interested persons should contact Jan Eisenbeisz at the Affirmative Action office or the organization's office at 345 River Rd., phone 689-0837.



PRE HOLLY DAY SALE

Dresses	Reg. 48.00	Now 28.99
Sweaters	Reg. 23.00	Now 16.99
Jeans	Reg. 25.00	Now 19.99
Shirts	Reg. 20.00	Now 12.99

Great Christmas Savings Now!

Holly's J

880 East 13th