

## Features

# Dr. Boerner attends Oxford round table

by Radosav 'Backo' Babic  
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Brevard College Business professor Barbara Boerner had a unique and prestigious privilege of attending the Oxford Round Table in Oxford, England during the period of March 22-29 this year.

Along with 40 academics from various corners of the World, she presented a paper on "Ethics: the convolution of values."

Not only did professor Boerner have a chance to present her own work, titled "Instilling ethics in a multi-national corporation," but was able to hear presentations of other Oxford Round Table members with professional backgrounds in journalism, medical education, philosophy, psychology, psychiatry, law and many other fields.

Each member received a letter of invitation in early October of last year, after being nominated to join the discussion due to another previously successfully delivered presentation.

Even though it is rather difficult to summarize the main points and ideas in just a few sentences, Professor Boerner briefly

described the major concept of her paper, by saying, "This paper explores the power of drive as a form of intrinsic motivation and the dependency of a worker's moral status upon the worker's perception of how much an organization needs him."

"As the moral status develops, workers gain autonomy through empowerment. Empowerment leads to the cultural development of an organization, and ultimately to a synergy of blended traditions and experiences. Organizational culture in the 21st century global market needs to be performance-related within a flexible culture that encourages interaction and interconnection of attitudes and organizational support systems. From such interaction, evolves a positive organization that lives a code of ethics."

The most stimulating thing intellectually to Boerner was the fact that each member had a chance to hear each others' presentation and reflect on it during discussion times, as well as during social gatherings later on.

Opining on this very "hot topic" of Ethics from individuals with very diverse backgrounds was a very thrilling and educational experience in itself.

What made this round table so distinguished wasn't only well-experienced and educated participants and the excellent ideas and opinions presented, but the location, as well.

Oxford University, with a rich tradition and history that started back in 1239, is one of the oldest and most prestigious educational institutions in the world.

"As I reflected in the ancient walls of Lincoln College at Oxford, I thought how fortunate I was to have this experience and to be able to share ideas and questions from colleagues of different cultures and professions," boerner said.

"I also thought that it is important to share with colleagues and students our experiences and to provide models for that which we teach our students. I returned to Brevard College intellectually refreshed, energized by time to reflect and the aesthetics of a centuries-old educational endeavor," told us Professor Boerner after returning back to the States.

She also had a chance to spend a day in London, located only one hour away from Oxford, and visit one colleague whom she met at a similar conference in Athens, Greece, during the summer of 2008.

## Students work with Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute

by Ryan Fiffick  
Staff Writer

On Saturday, two B.C. students, Greg Woods and I, began a volunteer cooperative with the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute (PARI). Greg and I spent most of the day wiring a classroom/conference room with Ethernet cable, preparing another classroom for a Brevard Middle School student visit to PARI, disconnecting, moving and rewiring a massive power junction box (bigger than most refrigerators), and helping to organize hundreds of pieces of computer equipment. Christi Whitworth, PARI's environmental educator, guided us through our day of service along with a Lenix user's group from Greenville, SC. The conversations between volunteers alone made the service worthwhile as these users of open-source software readily shared their expertise, greatly expanding my understanding of several alternative computer operating systems!

The institute itself is a de-classified NASA satellite tracking station that was obtained by its president, Don Kline, and opened as a not-for-profit foundation dedicated to providing hands-on education and research opportunities for a broad cross-section of users in science, technology, engineering and math.

When visitors to the site first step on campus they are nearly always impressed by it's size and intricacy, declaring, "Wow! I had no idea this place was here! This is amazing!" They are more correct than they think. PARI uses two 26-meter in diameter radio telescopes to generate images of deep space that humans cannot discern with optical scopes.

PARI works with universities and research stations all over the world including the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, NASA, and is currently involved with research and educational programs at several campuses within the University of North Carolina system. A

major near-term initiative is to formalize these relationships and extend their benefits to all 16 UNC campuses by becoming a recognized UNC Center. As BC student involvement at PARI increases, so to will a myriad of hands-on learning opportunities and access to research projects at the cutting edge of science. Just as important, however, we have an opportunity to help build the relationship between both PARI and the college and to make both institutions better able to educate students for the technologically intensive future that awaits them.

The institute's proximity to Brevard College makes it an ideal opportunity for any student interested in the sciences to gain real-world experience and exposure to extraordinarily advanced methods in computation and astro-physics research. Many more opportunities abound in the coming semesters. To learn more about PARI and how to become involved, send me an e-mail at [fifficra@brevard.edu](mailto:fifficra@brevard.edu).