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NU community mourns loss of instructor to stroke

■ The family and consumer sciences professor is remembered for helping others and living what he taught.

BY JESSICA FARGEN
Staff writer

Eileen Curry remembers Herb Lingren as a former colleague who opened up his arms to her when she was preparing to undergo brain surgery a year ago.



Lingren

UNL professor John DeFrain remembers Lingren as the steady man who has been just down the hall from him for the last 18 years.

Lingren, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln family and consumer sciences professor, died of a stroke early Wednesday after nearly 20 years at the university. He was 65 years old.

Some friends will remember him as a man who lived the strong ideals of marriage and family that he taught.

Others will remember the man down the hall always willing to listen.

"Whenever you get frustrated or feel crazy or feel like the system is going nuts, you can always walk down the hall to Herb's office and say 'Oh crud,'" DeFrain said.

"He'd look up and be working on some project and push his chair back and smile and fold his hands on his stomach and just kind of nod his head and let you kind of vent.

"He just kind of holds things together. He was one of those souls."

Lingren's death at BryanLGH Memorial Hospital East was a shock to family and friends who prayed for him to hang on to his life after his stroke, said DeFrain, a professor of family and consumer sciences.

Lingren, who was also a Cooperative Extension family scientist, did not always measure his success in awards

and grants, but in helping families during the 1980s farm crisis and teaching families how to cope, DeFrain said.

"I would guess that if you asked him what his greatest project was he would say having a wonderful spouse and wonderful children," DeFrain said.

Lingren's immediate family — his wife, Janet, and four children — was the center of Lingren's life, but sometimes he extended that family.

A year ago, Lingren and his wife shared their family experiences with Curry, who had been diagnosed with a terminal brain tumor. The Lingrens went through a similar tragedy with their own son, who also survived brain surgery, and were there to counsel Curry, who taught with Lingren for six years.

"He didn't just teach it; he lived it," Curry said. "You don't separate teaching and therapy, and being a father and being a husband. It's together. It all belongs together."

Georgia Stevens, an associate professor of family and consumer sciences at UNL, had worked with Lingren in Cooperative Extension for the past 10 years.

Much of Lingren's most valuable work was outside of the classroom, she said. Lingren prepared resource materials and training for teachers, child-care providers and ministers.

And that work did not go unnoticed, she said. "I really do remember just the numbers of community people and truly professionals who looked to Herb as mentor," Stevens said.

Another thing Stevens remembered was Lingren's signature red jacket with "Keeping Families First" written on the back — a slogan he lived everyday of his life.

"It was a day-brightener," she said. "But Herb was a day-brightener, too."

Services by the Metcalf Funeral Home will be held at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at the First Methodist Church, 50th and St. Paul streets. Burial will be in Gowrie, Iowa, at 4 p.m.

Lingren is survived by his wife, Janet; and four adult children: Diana, of Lincoln; Mark, and wife, Dorothy, of Carmichael, Calif.; Bruce, of Lincoln, and Sharon Meschi, of Mereno Valley, Calif.

Help needed for hurricane victims

From staff reports

Empty collection bins so far are the result of UNL's Rescue Relief Drive for the survivors of Hurricane Mitch.

A week into the collection, few items have been deposited, but people at UNL have another week to help.

University of Nebraska Environmental Resource Center, Amnesty International, Ecology Now and other student groups are sponsoring the effort.

Collections bins are in the Nebraska and Nebraska East unions

and will be sent to Nicaragua and Honduras this month.

Co-director of the UNERC, Graham Johnson, said all material goods will be accepted.

"We're hoping that the general public, and especially UNL students, will go down to the Salvation Army and pick up clothing, blankets; nothing will be turned away."

Hurricanes, floods and mud slides from a collapsed volcano have left about 10,000 people dead and about 15,000 either dead or missing in Nicaragua and Honduras. The civil infrastructure, including roads, houses

and bridges, has been destroyed, along with food resources and supplies.

"The medical faculty that's gone down there tells us that the biggest problem is not disease, yet," Johnson said. "It's the lack of drinking water. Right now, people are boiling rain and gutter water."

Potable water tablets found in health food stores would be especially helpful, he said.

Canned or packaged grocery items, such as beans, rice and pasta are going to save lives, Johnson said. Collection sites will be in the unions until Nov. 20.

Fossils of previously unknown species found

WASHINGTON (AP) — It was a monster dinosaur built for catching fish, with razor teeth, a long snout and foot-long curved claws that could hook and hold the big ones.

Researchers who found the fossil of this 36-foot-long animal believe it is a previously unknown species big enough and mean enough to have dominated its world 100 million years ago.

The new species, to be called *Suchomimus tenerensis*, "was an impressive-sized beast," said Paul Sereno, a University of Chicago paleontologist who found the fossils last year in Africa.

"If you were standing next to it, your eye level would be at its knee," Sereno said at a news conference at National Geographic headquarters Thursday. "This animal was easily the size of *Tyrannosaurus rex*. And it was not fully grown."

Suchomimus apparently was a fish eater, Sereno said, but it could threaten virtually anything around it.

"With its forearms and its jaws, it would have been able to take down just about anything," Sereno said. "It was the dominant predator of its time."

The animal was generally shaped like the *T. rex*, with two large hind legs, a powerful tail, forearms and a toothy head, Sereno said in a study being published today in the journal *Science*.

But *Suchomimus* was a member of a group of animals called spinosaurids that lived in the lands that became Africa, Europe and South America between 90 million and 120 million years ago. At that time, *T. rex* was just emerging in North America.

The discovery "provides important new insights on the evolution and adaptation" of the spinosaurid group of dinosaurs, said Thomas R. Holtz Jr., a University of Maryland researcher.

The fossil was found in Niger, a central African country on the southwestern edge of the Sahara. In the dinosaur era, the area "was a lush climate that could support many different species of dinosaurs," Sereno said.

The animal's most distinctive feature is its long, pointed jaw, armed with about 100 teeth. The end of the jaw is tipped with an extra chin-like projection, called a rosette, that actually contains the largest teeth. The top and bottom teeth mesh together to securely hook prey, a design common among fish-eating animals.

"The jaw is really very much like a crocodile's," Sereno said. "It was built for snaring and swallowing."

Suchomimus' teeth also are typical of fish-eating crocodiles, lightly curved and hooked and not designed for chewing.

The animal's thumbs were about 16 inches long and tipped with 12-inch

claws curved like a sickle. The two fingers on each hand had shorter, curved claws.

"The hand is amazing," Sereno said. "It was probably ideal for fishing, for grabbing ... into those large fish."

It's not known how the newly discovered *Suchomimus* died, but it apparently was swept into a river, rolled over and over and was then buried by soil. When found in extreme desert, wind had eroded the sands that had covered it for 100 million years.

Other fossils found nearby suggest the area had been lush, with water and fish that attracted many predators.

At least four species of fish up to 6 feet long lived in the waters where *Suchomimus* hunted, Sereno said. There also were giant crocodiles.

"The most common thing we stumbled on is a very long-snouted and very large crocodile," Sereno said. "We collected a 6-foot skull."

The crocodile would have been about 50 feet long."

It is likely, he said, that the giant crocodiles and *Suchomimus* competed for the same large fish, "and I imagine the two squared off."

Soaring above were flying dinosaurs with 12-foot wing spans, poised to attack from the air with wicked teeth and claws, he said.

Fossils for those animals also were found.