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The Observer

Volume 18, Number 12 March 14, 1997

THE OBERLIN COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF NEWSPAPER

Town Meetings Communicate Ideas about the Oberlin College of the Future

Fourteen planning teams held open sessions Sunday, March 2, in Peters Hall to further the long-range planning of the College. Each Town Meeting session attracted

seven and 35 people for two-way communication. Here is a small taste of what went on at each of the gatherings.

The Arts Learning Community. This team would rather students form an identification with practicing artists than aspire only to discriminating but passive audience membership. Town Meeting topics included: deeper integration of the arts departments through collaborative projects, collegiality among faculty, an integrated curriculum—perhaps a single introductory course, and a common space.

Building the Faculty of the Future. Town Meeting participants questioned the proper mix of activities between teaching, scholarship, and service and considered the complicating notion that the faculty may have too much to do.

Building the Science Community of the Future. Questions included Can Oberlin continue to support a research-oriented science faculty into the future? Does the science division need more autonomy to deal more effectively with its problems? and What is science literacy, and is the College helping students achieve it?

Campus Space and the Oberlin Community. Topic questions were How can we use space and facilities to build community with diversity? How could we better use our existing spaces and develop new spaces to create a sense of community on campus?

The Community beyond the Campus. The team focus is on students' acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in effective social action. The group discussed how to develop the community relationships and formal institutional structures that foster such learning.

Educational Priorities and the Curriculum. The team and audience discussed senior seminars, colloquium (small-class) experience for first-year students, and strengthening the advising system.

Exploring Possibilities for Interdisciplinary Education at Oberlin. The group brainstormed on questions that included Why would we want to encourage interdisciplinary study? What are some of the challenges presented to us in the process? and What are some of the practical things we can do now to encourage interdisciplinary study and activity?

Learning and Living in a Diverse Community. The team began with the premise that diversity is not only a matter of social and moral responsibility, but also of institutional survival, and that categories of identity based in race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion will play a central role in determining the opportunities and problems of the future. Participants discussed what diversity might mean in 2010 and considered how Oberlin might achieve civil dialogue on diversity and multiculturalism.

Oberlin and Educational Access. Discussion topics included financial aid, preparatory programs, and the changing demography of the U.S. and the world. One question the group considered was What should be the function of financial aid?

Oberlin and the International

Community. Questions the team posed were What does the internationalization of Oberlin mean? Does internationalization of the curriculum mean a major or concentration, or a general change in the whole curriculum? and How should

"study away" be similar to and/or different from study at Oberlin?

Oberlin and New Educational and Informational Technologies. Discussion centered on budget planning

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PHOTOGRAPH BY LINDA GRAGHOFF

Eve Sandberg, associate professor of politics, took time from her sabbatical leave to attend the Town Meeting on Building the Faculty of the Future. Sandberg said she favored the notion that faculty must go the extra mile in their teaching, research, and service to the College, but that she was "afraid that we're running out of miles."

Trustee Meeting

Trustees Approve Koppes as A&S Dean, Vote to Finance Capital Campaign

Meeting March 6-8, the Oberlin College Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Professor of History Clayton Koppes, acting dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, as dean.

The board approved funding for Oberlin's next capital campaign, to be financed with \$7.3 million from the College endowment. Extending through fiscal year 2004-2005, the campaign

will raise money for projects and purposes still to be determined.

Trustees also approved the preliminary 1997-98 budget, which calls for tuition to rise from \$21,425 to \$22,282 and allows an average raise for faculty and Administrative and Professional Staff of 4 percent. The faculty salary pool will have available an additional 3 percent for equity or other adjustments.

Fall R&D Grants Include Those for Research on Gender and Unpaid Work, a Solar-Cell Component, and Stravinsky's Music

The General Faculty Research and Development Committee distributed \$17,458 to faculty members in this fall's round of grants-in-aid. The committee received 19 applications and funded six requests. Grant amounts ranged from \$973 to \$4360. Previous R&D distributions accorded grants Level I or Level II status, depending on the amount of money awarded. The committee has dropped that distinction.

From June 29 to July 28 visiting instructor in anthropology **Lynn Fisher** will be on a return trip to an Early Mesolithic site near Moosburg, Germany, that she has worked previously. There she will codirect a program of archaeological excavation, testing, and surface survey. The site contains remains of intermittent hunter-gatherer

occupations that have been preserved in peat and sand layers in a bog. The project is part of a long-term collaborative study, begun in 1992, of regional patterns of settlement and land use during the stone-age Upper Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic times. The goal of the larger project is to build a database suitable for addressing questions about regional social and economic transitions in the area. One question Fisher will pursue is How did Early Mesolithic hunter-gatherers change their use of various habitats to adjust to rapid postglacial climate change?

Daphne John will collaborate in research and coauthor a chapter on gender and unpaid work for the *Handbook of Gender Sociology*, edited by Janet Chafetz. The chapter will focus on the di-

vision of domestic labor, including child care and child rearing. It will also examine the impact of paid work on family labor, the impact of divorce on family roles, and participation in volunteer work. Included in the chapter will be cross-national comparisons of unpaid labor and family work roles. The chapter will consist of a comprehensive review of the current literature on unpaid work, emphasizing the theoretical and methodological approaches to this topic and documenting changes in roles and ideologies over time. John and her collaborator, Beth Anne Shelton, professor of sociology at the University of Texas-Arlington, will also provide a critical analysis of the research and suggest new directions for future research on unpaid labor.

"Proponents of the so-called flat

tax," says Professor of Economics **Robert Piron**, "argue that charitable giving will rise after the flat tax is instituted. The mechanism for this increase in giving [they say] is the growth in macroeconomic income caused by the reduction in marginal tax rates, and the resultant increases in saving and investment." Piron will test this conjecture in an experimental setting involving charitable giving and a simulated flat tax. He will look to see if giving will, in fact, rise for "reasonable" growth rates generated by a simulation of a flat tax less than or equal to those experienced by the U.S. economy since World War II. If the growth rates needed to stimulate increases in charitable giving are "unreasonable,"

Continued on page 3

Faculty and Staff Notes



Joanne Erwin, assistant professor of music education, gave a presentation, "Integrating Kodaly Principles into Beginning String Instruction" at the Eastern Division

meeting of the Music Educators National Conference in Baltimore March 1. She will give the same presentation and another, "Improvisational Composition for Young String Players," in Pasadena at the California Music Educators Convention, to be held April 4 and 5. • **Scott McMillin**, assistant

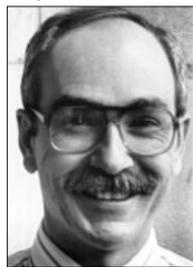
professor of English, presented a paper at the recent 25th Annual 20th-Century Literature Conference, hosted by the University of Louisville. The paper, "Reading Time: J.G. Ballard's 'Chronopolis,'" was part of a panel on literary theory and aesthetics. Another of Scott's essays, "The Best Read Naturalist?," will appear in an upcoming volume being brought out by Peter Lang Publishing: "Sharp Eyes: John Burroughs and American Nature Writing." • **Leonard Podis**, professor of expository writing and English, recently copresented a session at Cultures of Writing: Places, Spaces, and Interfaces of Writing and Writing Technologies, a national conference of English faculty held on the campus of Case Western



Reserve University (CWRU). The conference, February 28 through March 2, was sponsored by the Society for Critical Exchange. The overall title for the talk that Len and his copresenters gave was "Peer Tutoring as Alternative Culture of Writing." Len's copresenters—peer tutors in Oberlin's Expository Writing Program—were seniors Jeremiah Dyehouse and Joshua Kizner and junior Virginia Pryor. With the exception of a few CWRU graduate students, "apparently no other students attended" the conference, says Len. "While I am a biased informant, he says, "... it is fair to say that our students 'stole the show.' Many members of the audience went out of their way to offer enthusiastic praise for the students' insights, ... poise, and ... articulate presentation of material." Also on the program from the Oberlin faculty were **Anuradha Needham**, associate professor of English, and **Anna Agathangelou**, visiting instructor of women's studies. • **Rhys Price Jones** and **Richard**



Salter, professor and associate professor, respectively, of computer science, spent the week of February 27 in San Jose at the 28th meeting of the Association of Computer Machinery's Special Interest Group on Computer Science Education. For the meeting Rhys organized a session about developing large quantities of heavily interlinked curricular materials (see the CS275 and CS280 links at <http://www.cs.oberlin.edu> for Oberlin's example). During the session Rich demonstrated HtX, the HyperText Markup Language formatting system that he, Rhys, and **Fritz Ruehr**, visiting assistant professor of computer science, have developed. Several universities and colleges, including Indiana University and Rice University, already use HtX, and 18 conference participants said they were interested in using it to develop their own web materials. Rich invites potential Oberlin users of HtX to send E-mail to him at rms@cs.oberlin.edu. • The *Wellington Enterprise* interviewed institutional buyer **Richard Snodgrass** for a story about his daughter Martha that appeared in the paper's February 4 edition. A French horn player, Martha was recently selected a member of the Ohio Music Educator's Association All-State Band for the second time. Rick, a percussionist who was a music major at Baldwin-Wallace



College, was a member of the All-State Orchestra when he was a Brecksville (Ohio) High School senior, the paper reported. "I have a feel for what Martha has gone through and for what lies ahead," he told the *Enterprise*. • **Donald Walden**, teacher of jazz saxophone, has been selected one of three 1996 Jazz Masters by Arts Midwest, an arts organization based in Minneapolis. The honor carries a \$5000 award and is given on the basis of the recipient's community leadership and innovation in the field of jazz.

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Faculty Meeting

Con Discusses Planning

Conservatory dean Karen Wolff announced at the Conservatory Faculty meeting March 11 that she has returned from her sabbatical "affirmed in the excellence of the Oberlin conservatory." Her other announcements concerned refurbishing the front entrance to the conservatory building, including the three-story window and exterior steps to the front doors; sealing the conservatory pond and filling it with water; and hosting the St. Petersburg Quartet for a year-long residency that will entail five recitals. Conservatory cochairs from six long-range-planning teams gave brief reports.

Important Archives Collection Now Available to Scholars

By **Roland Baumann**

Two great-grandchildren of Charles Grandison Finney and George Nelson Allen recently donated two collections of 19th- and 20th-century documents to the Oberlin College Archives. Ellen Woodbury MacDaniels Speers '42 and Carolyn Rudd MacDaniels Miller '47 (d.1994) gave the collections to the archives between 1992 and 1996, and they are now ready for use by Oberlin

students and research scholars interested in the social and political history of the U.S.

The gift is one of the most important acquisitions to come to the archives over the last 25 years. The more than 3500 items, dating from 1804 to 1982, include historical materials spanning five generations of five families intimately connected with the history of Oberlin College: the Allens, Finneys, Coxes, Cochranes, and MacDaniels.

The correspondence between family members illustrates intricate family connections. We now have—for the first time—a collective portrait of the main families of Oberlin's 19th-century history. We also have documentation that transcends Oberlin by reporting on important events in American history, including the Civil War.

Many of the correspondents discuss life at Oberlin College and in the community. The papers shed new light on Oberlin College in the 19th century and right before and after World War I, when the institution was going through considerable change. The collections portray Oberlin's students as adaptive, well rounded, and committed to service and learning. They also underscore the significance of individual students, the now-obscure as well as better-known Oberlinians.

In illuminating the intersections of individuals, families, and society in 19th- and early 20th-century America the letters also tell why women wanted to be educated, what it was like to be engaged in reading, and what it was like to be a member of an informed citizenry. The docu-

ments show what life was like for families that had been reared with revivalist, Victorian, and midwestern values. Besides letters and diaries, users will find postcards, photographs, and family objects.

The Allen family includes Caroline Mary Rudd Allen, Class of 1841, one of the first three women in the United States to receive a college degree. The Finney family includes Charles Grandison Finney, Oberlin's second president (1851-65) and a nationally renowned evangelist. The Cox family includes Jacob Dolson Cox, Class of 1851, College trustee from 1876 to 1900, and secretary of the interior under Ulysses S. Grant. The Cochran family includes William Cox Cochran, Class of 1869, College trustee and trea-

urer from 1901 to 1931, and son of Helen Finney Cochran Cox—the daughter of Charles Finney—and stepson of Jacob Dolson Cox. The MacDaniels family includes Laurence Howland MacDaniels '12, horticulture professor at Cornell University, director of agriculture for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency in Lebanon, Syria, and Albania, and husband of Francis Ermina Cochran MacDaniels, a volunteer for many social causes.

Roland Baumann is College archivist. A document describing the Cochran and MacDaniels collections in more detail is available at http://www.oberlin.edu/~archive/WWW_files/cochran_newsnote.html.



Donor Ellen Woodbury MacDaniels Speers is the granddaughter of William Cox Cochran, shown here with his family. Speers's mother, Frances Ermina Cochran, later MacDaniels, has her arms around her father.

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Spotlight

Hi-Tech, Hi-Touch in the Office of Career Services

"I actually have a lot of fun in what I do," says Lanna Hagge, director of the Office of Career Services for 21 years. What she does is oversee a staff of four regular employees and nine student career assistants; interviews employers; runs a jobs phonathon to locate summer-job leads; and, she says, "sit at [dining-hall] tables and snag people" for whom she has a specific employment tip. Personally advising about 700 students in the course of a year, she also participates in regional gatherings that bring together employers with seniors graduating from selective liberal-arts colleges, including Oberlin. Hagge cofounded both the college consortium (Selective Liberal Arts Consortium—SLAC) and the job fairs (Senior Interview Days) in 1986.

"Staffing is a very important part of my role," says Hagge, who says she puts together a staff "different from me . . . not a clone of Lanna." She regards such staffing as another level of diversity. "We don't have cookie-cutter students, so [the diversity] effectively serves the students."

Serving the students is not only the office mandate—it's the office mantra: what all the regular employees say they enjoy most about their work. (*Student career assistants may agree, but were not interviewed for this article.*—Ed.)

Perry Boyle is in his ninth and last year as director of the Longman Business Initiatives Program, which was established 10 years ago to help students pursue careers in the for-profit sector. "I came here to work with students," says the former management consultant, adding that he's been "gloriously rewarded."

"I've been allowed to participate in office changes which I consider important: computerization, individualization of student services, and providing an opportunity for alumni participation."

In the last few years almost all the career information of the office—how to interview, write a resume, and become a pre-medical or pre-law student, for examples—has been put on line. But the whole office still counsels students one on one, Boyle observes proudly. He spends about 60 percent of his time in face-to-face



Perry Boyle, Wendy Smith Heun, Delores Whitney, Brenda Snell, and Lanna Hagge keep the Office of Career Services going full tilt.

or telephone contact with students and about 15 percent of his time talking to employers ("sweet talking," he says) about internships they might offer Oberlin students. One of the legacies that Boyle will leave Oberlin and 24 other selective schools is Barterbase, a database of employers planning to hire liberal-arts graduates in the near future. Boyle established Barterbase—and the Liberal Arts Career Network, the 25-school consortium that participates in it—in 1994. (See "Oberlin's Career-Information Resources Have Become Richer" in the October 12, 1996, issue.)

Administrative Assistant Brenda Snell works with Boyle to create for students customized printouts of appropriate job leads from Barterbase. But that's just one of her duties in the office library. Snell calls the career office a "hi-tech mom-and-pop organization." On the technology side, Snell has contributed a database she devised for Senior Interview Days so that students can print out relevant information for themselves rather than ask Snell to do it for them. On the mom-and-pop side, Snell says the most important part of her work is pointing students in the right direction to find information and helping them to find their "level of comfort."

thesis, a means of using solvents such as water above their boiling point by maintaining a high pressure above the liquid. The other project is to make molecules that contain a copper, indium, and sulfur core that can be used as a precursor for films of copper indium disulfide, a material used for solar cells. The molecule will be volatilized and heated over a substrate to grow thin films. Stoll will study the relationship between the composition and structure of the molecule and how that relates to the film grown.

For a chapter on female authorship in the early republic—commissioned for "The History of the Book in America," a volume funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities—Professor of English **Sandra Zagarell** will conduct five days of archival research at the American Antiquarian Society, in Worcester, Massachusetts. For four days in the summer she will meet with her coauthor, Joanne Dobson, associate professor of English at Fordham University, to write the first draft of the essay.

"Some want to see what's on the shelves; others want to ask questions," says Snell, who accommodates both approaches. She says she enjoys "cruising the [career] library to see how students are doing." What she likes best, she says, is "talking with the students." She especially enjoys seeing them find out that the alumni-referral system works. "It's like opening a present," she says. Oberlin students have an amazing amount of talent and experiences and "wonderful ideas about what they're going to do and how they'll do it," Snell says. "Even with workaday jobs, they know they'll make a difference." Snell worked in Oberlin's Office of Purchasing and Auxiliary Services for a year before joining career services in July 1995. She worked with the management information system (MIS) of a local hospital for eight years before that.

Delores Whitney is the first person most people hear when they call, or see when they come in to the career-services office. When she started working for the College as the receptionist in the admissions office in 1969, Whitney thought she "was only going to stay [at Oberlin] a few years." She's been the administrative assistant in career services for about 20 years. Although

Whitney, too, participates in the computerized activities of the office—besides doing word processing on her computer, she uses Meeting Maker to schedule the many office appointments and FileMaker Pro to add to an office database—she likes talking with people best. "I'm a people person," she says. Besides her other duties Whitney schedules rooms, arranges refreshments, orders audiovisual equipment, handles mail and bills, orders supplies, and makes staff travel arrangements.

Career Advisor Wendy Smith Heun is the newest person in the office, there since September. She spent the previous four years at Case Western Reserve University in its career-services office, and 10 years before that in Cleveland helping dual-career couples find employment after, or in anticipation of, relocation. Coming to Oberlin has been, she says, "a good move" for her. "I'm very happy; I like the environment of this office. Some places get too caught up in numbers, but Oberlin keeps a focus on students, establishing rapport and connection." She likes to interest students in internships that will give them relevant work experience and build their confidence, and finds Oberlin students ripe for her advice on the matter. One of her duties is to develop internships in the nonprofit sector, for which she is working with the Center for Service and Learning.

Smith Heun says she likes the variety of her work, which involves writing, giving presentations, developing the service program, and searching the World Wide Web for resources her student clients can use. Skills she enjoys teaching students are doing telephone interviews and breaking down the find-a-job task into small manageable chores to make the process less overwhelming. She also likes demonstrating how students have the power with their résumés to control how they present themselves to employers.

What will the future expect from the Office of Career Services? Hagge anticipates a continuing combination of hi-tech and hi-touch.

R&D Grants . . .

Continued from page 1

or significantly larger than historical U.S. growth rates, then the forecast cannot be confirmed. If such growth rates are less than 3 percent, the forecast cannot be disconfirmed. If such growth rates are less than 2 percent, the forecast is confirmed.

Assistant Professor of Music Theory **Lynne Rogers** will use her grant to visit the Library of Congress, where she will study the musical manuscripts of Igor Stravinsky's late works. She expects the manuscripts, generally early versions of the published works, to reveal the composer's compositional procedure for creating harmony, a problematic aspect of his late music.

Sarah Stoll, assistant professor of chemistry, will do laboratory work in Oxford, England, this summer. The work will be a continuation of what she is doing now with her honors students. One project will be to make new magnetic materials using hydrothermal syn-

Town Meetings . . .

Continued from page 1

to keep current with developing technology, increased access to technology for students, and a high degree of computer literacy for all graduating students.

The Residential College Experience. Participants discussed living and eating off campus for juniors and seniors; considered dinner programming; performances, theater, speakers, music, dance, cartoons, and films during mealtimes; and questioned whether program houses foster community or fragmentation.

Sports and Oberlin's Future. The value of sports, according to the team, is in addressing the needs of a person for wholeness and a sense of physical and mental well-being. The Town Meeting included talk about club sports, the attitude toward athletics on campus, and retention of coaches.

Supporting Student Initiatives and Associational Activities. The team has worked from the understand-

ing that students' cocurricular activities are a necessary and important complement to their academic work. Town Meeting suggestions included: consider the success of student organizations and think of ways to integrate the experiences students have there into academic programs; reform student senate; and develop cross-community dialogue.

For Planning Teams membership see <http://www.oberlin.edu/~wwwcomm/planning/teamroster.html>.

Letter

Opus is a Penguin

Concerning the lead sentence in "New Administrative Computing Systems Are Dubbed OPUS" in the February 28 *Observer*: The cartoon character Opus is a penguin. I'm a die-hard, long-time Bloom County fan, and I can show you the series of cartoons about his going to Antarctica to find his mother.

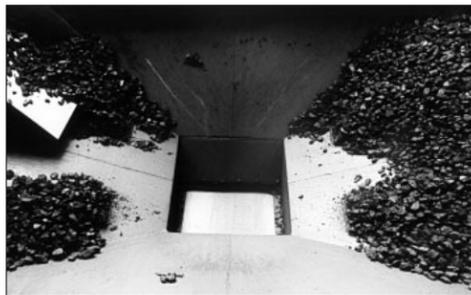
James Anderson,
Computer Systems Manager

Observations



We use two semi-trucks of coal a day to heat our buildings during the winter. The unloading coal hopper (top middle) feeds into a conveyor (top). The coal that fuels the fire that heats the steam that warms our buildings comes from low-sulfur-coal strip mines in southern Ohio.

Right: Russell "Russ" Byers and John "Jack" Chrulski are two of Oberlin's stationary engineers. Behind them is the main control board for the Number 1 and Number 2 boilers (we have five boilers). The board has been in continuous operation since October 1949, when most of the heating plant came on line.



Right: Inside the boiler furnace, temperatures can reach 2500 degrees Fahrenheit. Even though gauges tell them the state of the furnace, our engineers still look inside as often as 15 times an hour for a more immediate assessment of whether combustion is complete, checking the shape and density of the flame, fire height, and fire hue.

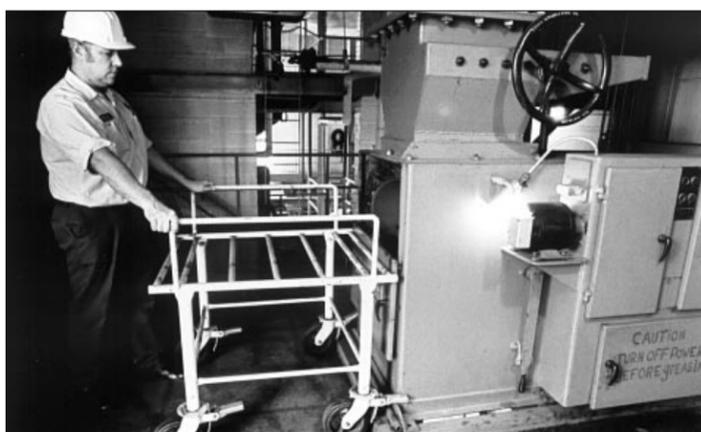
Keeping Us Warm

The occasional student may wear shorts and go barefoot outdoors during surprise days of warmth in February and March, but as we move into the last week of official winter, most of us older folks are still happy for the shelter and heat we find after our walk to work, whether from home or the parking lot.

Keeping us warm is the job of eight Oberlin College stationary engineers and a trainee. From November to Commencement, two of them are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, making sure the boilers do their jobs and knowing what to do in case they don't.

The main heating plant, in the Service Building, is not a space in which other campus employees spend much time. On this page photographer John Seyfried reveals some of the sites in the plant and introduces three of the people and some of the machines and equipment we have to thank for making us toasty.

Photographs by John Seyfried



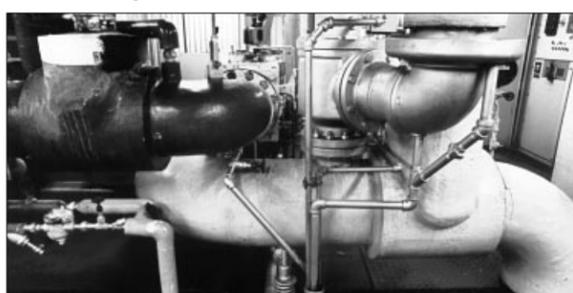
Above: College heating-plant workers not only do all the maintenance and repair on the plant's machinery and equipment, but they occasionally build equipment specific to a task. They designed and built this rolling coal-scale table to be able to service the machinery inside this cabinet more easily. Ronald Pflaum, manager of the central heating plant, shows how the table moves into place. **Right:** A piece of sculpture in the heating plant? Not exactly; it's an access hole to part of the Number 3 gas boiler. (The College also burns gas—see the *Observer* of February 16, 1996, for related story).



Immediate left: Running mechanically and by air pressure, Oberlin's control board has an advantage over electronic readouts: It keeps working through electrical-power failures. **Above:** Many of the tools the stationary engineers use to maintain and repair the boilers and other machinery date from the late 1940s and early 1950s. "They still work because all the people who've worked here over the years have taken good care of them," says Pflaum. **Left:** The onsite machine shop can be seen past the railings. Here is where the engineers can make small machine parts they need in their work.



Bottom right: The steam we create in the heating plant doesn't only heat our buildings. Since 1983 it generates electricity, too. Behind these pipes are the Terry turbine and the Westinghouse generator that make electricity and at the same time step down the steam pressure from 125 pounds per square inch (psi) to 10 or 15 psi, making it suitable for routing to campus buildings.



After the coal is reduced to ash in the furnaces, it travels by College truck to a storage spot near the athletic fields, where it is periodically hauled away by nearby cities and townships to put on roads in the winter.