Nancy Ann Neudauer loves mathematics as well as recreational activities such as sail racing, skiing, snorkeling and traveling abroad.

Mathematics professor defies stereotypes

BY WANDA LAUKKANEN | Nancy Ann Neudauer races sail boats across oceans, snorkels in tropical climates, skis in the Alps and loves traveling — which is probably far from the antiquated stereotype of a mathematician.

Yet mathematics is also a passion of Neudauer’s, and one that has enabled her to travel to faraway places. She is an associate professor of mathematics at Pacific University, who traveled to South Africa in December and January.

For three weeks, Neudauer worked with some 55 graduate students from throughout Africa in a program sponsored by the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS). Part of her work was also sponsored by a Fulbright grant.

Her specialty is matroids, graph theory and discrete mathematics. Matroids are abstract notions of algebraic dependence, linear independence and geometric dependence. They are useful in optimization problems, particularly on networks, like those that arise in high-tech fields, she said.

Neudauer grew up in Milwaukee, Wisc., and, as an undergraduate, majored not in math, but in insurance, actuarial science and risk management at the University of Wisconsin. Mathematics was somewhat an afterthought, she said. She applied to law school and had visited several schools before being drawn to mathematics.

“I don’t think mathematics is something we choose,” she said. “I think it chooses us.”

Neudauer went on to earn a master’s degree in mathematics, then a doctorate in math with minors in business and law, all at the University of Wisconsin.

At Pacific, she teaches a variety of courses to undergraduates and is also involved in many different workshops, conferences, seminars and other events. She has been a visiting scholar, both locally and internationally.
Projects, programs win Board of Trustee approval

Investments in new programs, enhancements to campuses and new projects are among the items approved at the March meeting of the Pacific University Board of Trustees.

In a communication sent to all Pacific faculty, staff and students, university president Lesley Hallick summarized the board’s actions. She noted the university is expecting a modest growth in enrollment for the 2014-15 school year. The College of Business, which launches its first full year of graduate programs in Hillsboro, is expected to see the most student growth on a percentage basis. Enrollment in the College of Health Professions programs is projected to be about 4 percent with the College of Arts & Sciences projecting a growth of 1.4 percent.

New programs to be offered this fall include a bachelor of music therapy degree at the Forest Grove Campus and a master of social work degree at the Eugene Campus.

New sports opportunities for students will be offered in the fall. These include a varsity women’s rowing program, which will be Pacific’s 24th varsity sport. Junior varsity programs will be also offered in baseball, softball, and men’s and women’s basketball.

Enhancements to campuses are also on the horizon, funded in large part by this year’s bond financing:

These include the new residence hall currently in construction at the Forest Grove Campus that opens in the fall. New offices and classrooms for the College of Business and the School of Healthcare Administration and Leadership programs are now open in the Intermodal Transit Facility in Hillsboro.

A roof over the seating area of Lincoln Park Stadium will be constructed this year, funded partially by generous philanthropic gifts and from refinancing bonds. The University Center in Forest Grove is also scheduled for a refresh.

Neudauer: Outdoor hobbies include racing sailboats

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Her three weeks in Cape Town, South Africa, were part of the AIMS program that offers master’s degrees for African students from across the continent to enable them to continue training in math and the sciences at universities around the world.

“The students are just phenomenal, just so inspirational,” said Neudauer, noting that students came from a variety locations, big cities as well as small villages.

“All have a four-year degree in mathematics or physics or computer science,” she said. “I thought I could bring something to them,” she said, “but instead they brought something to me in some sense – a cross-cultural experience. They were grateful to be there.

“It was so refreshing to see they were so eager to learn; they never complained of having too much work or not understanding something.”

She also said students were very motivated. “They were very respectful. They came to class dressed well … their attitude was they were there to learn. They were focused and attentive in class, respectful of me and my time.”

The African experience, she said, was also intense, partly because students and faculty all lived in the same building as the classrooms and dining area. The faculty ate meals with the students and often, she said, she worked in the computer lab late at night with the students.

“The hope for this is that it prepares them for PhD programs … preparing them with the mathematical reasoning and computer skills to really be competitive in Europe, Canada, the U.S., even African graduate schools,” she said.

The week before she started teaching, Neudauer took time driving to take in the sights around South Africa, one of the many countries she has visited. She has also journeyed to Europe, New Zealand, Australia and the South Seas.

In addition to mathematics, Neudauer’s hobbies include racing sailboats.

As a student at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, which sits on four lakes, she learned how to sail, then became an instructor for both sailing and windsurfing for six years. Among her achievements is a 21-day trip from Tahiti to Hawai’i on a sailboat.

Neudauer will take a year-long sabbatical next year and, for part of that time, she will be the visiting mathematician at the Mathematical Association of America’s office in Washington, D.C. In that role, she will contribute to the advancement of K-16 mathematics education and hopes to establish programs to get high school teachers more involved in research.

She also plans to go to several conferences and hopes to visit two AIMS centers on the African continent.
DENISE GIESBERS, Pacific Information Center, received the Bonita C. Jacobs Transfer Champion Award at the National Institute For Study of Transfer Students Conference in February. The award is given to an individual who has demonstrated exceptional advocacy and leadership in the development and implementation of transfer-focused activities that make a significant contribution to the improvement of transfer student success.

JOHN HAYES, Center for a Sustainable Society, and DEKE GUNDERSEN, Environmental Studies, have been appointed to the Forest Grove Sustainability Commission, a new committee tasked with guiding future Forest Grove city policies.

DIJANA IHAS, Music, visited Tumwater (Wash.) High School’s orchestra class in February for two days to instruct students, introduce string instrument techniques, help lead sectional lessons and conduct private lessons. She also spoke to world history and English classes about her experiences as a musician in Sarajevo, Bosnia.

BLAIR LONSBERRY, Optometry, was quoted in an article tackling the subject, “Is It Time To Change CE?” in the February issue of Optometric Management. He advocated interactive, small group, case study-based approaches to adult learning.

DAWN SALGADO, Psychology, is one of six faculty nationally who have been awarded the 2014 Regional Faculty Advisor Award from the Psi Chi Honors Society, an international psychology honors organization. The student-nominated award is presented to one faculty adviser in each of six regions. She received the Western Region Award, which includes faculty from college and universities in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and New Zealand. She receives a $500 award and a commemorative plaque.

She plans to donate $55 from the award back to Pacific’s local chapter to pay for lifetime membership for an eligible student who may be unable to join due to financial reasons.

TAL SANDERS and MATHEW ZREBSKI, Theatre, are both involved in production of the play, The Giver, to be presented by Oregon Children’s Theatre April 26 through May 18. Zrebski is directing the play, and Sanders is designing the sets. Sanders also designed sets for the play, The Motherfucker with the Hat, which was shown at Portland’s Artists Repertory Theatre through March.

SHARE YOUR NEWS | Is there a staff or faculty member you would like to see profiled? Do you have a presentation, publication or other professional achievement to share? Send your ideas to news@pacificu.edu.

Pacific University staff and faculty members had the highest rate of donating money to university funds in the Northwest Conference for the 2012-13 fiscal year, according to Meredith Brynteson, assistant director of annual giving.

The Northwest Conference is comprised of nine private colleges in Oregon and Washington.

As of March 3, staff and faculty giving was at 44 percent, said Brynteson, adding that the university’s goal is 70 percent by June 30.

Brynteson meets with staff and faculty members representing each university department monthly to encourage giving by employees. Donations may be made to any one of the many different funds the university has in existence.

“Any donation amount is appreciated and counts toward our participation percentage,” said Brynteson. “I believe that giving to Pacific University allows me to personally help the students that I interact with each day receive a great education and to receive that education as affordably as possible.”

Employees interested in making a payroll deduction to give to Pacific University can find forms online or by contacting Brynteson at meredithb@pacificu.edu. You also can make a donation online at pacificu.edu/giving.
April Birthdays

1 Amanda Dudley
1 Benjamin De Graff
1 Kathlene Postma
1 Jennifer Vollstedt
1 Heidi Schmaltz
2 Connie Taylor
2 Rachel Sanchez
2 Thwing
2 Kelly Lee
2 Lori Wampler
3 Jon-Erik Larsen
3 Jamy Borbridge
3 Dina Erickson
3 Suzanne Ahn
4 Anne Hogan
4 Jennifer Smythe
4 Emily Dueker
4 Liz Davis
4 Miguel Munoz
4 Tawny Flores
4 Eric Lambert
5 John Lockhart
5 Nicholas Fillis
5 Troy Strass
5 Elaine Coughlin
5 Sarah Jameson
6 Matthew Hunsinger
6 Suzanne
6 Byers-Connon
7 Martha Rampton
7 Heather
7 Humelbaugh
8 Bjorn Bergstrom
8 Milo Holden
8 Doug Ryan
8 Stephen Prag
9 Patricia Parker
9 Beatriz Loper
9 Amanda Stead
9 Thomas Alexander
10 Karl Kolbeck
10 Arlyn Curtis
10 Heidi Grubbs
10 Junko Iijima
10 Charles Carpenter
11 Irini Sahuon
11 Rachel Cadd
11 Kayleen Salchenberg
11 Hollie Garvin
12 Angela Towne
12 Jason Lawson
12 James Thomas III
12 Sharon Furtwanger
13 David Steinberg
13 Khei Castillo
13 Maziar Afshar
13 Travis Gregory
13 Lisa Downing
13 Harold Vreeland
14 Mike Geraci
14 Santha Zaik
14 Elena Sherbina
14 Ian Doyle
15 Roseanne Russell
15 Nathan Nebergall
15 Jennifer Wuite de Vallee
15 Brandon Holliday
15 Raymond Haji
16 Bobby Nijjar
16 Pam Kofstad
16 Karen Sellars
16 Terry O’Day
16 Tamara Tasker
16 Sarah Thomas
16 Christopher Beechwood
17 Phil Friesen
17 Anthony Dunn
17 James Fryback
18 Mary Kay Schwab Perry
18 Andrea Stewart
18 Raquel Avalos
18 Curtis Ray
18 Patrick Dunn
19 Kay Waldron
19 Thomas Blair
20 Vicki McGee
20 Sandi Miles
20 Denise Giesbers
21 Christiane Crosby
21 Maria Rodriguez
21 Olivia Mandujano
21 Travis Powers
21 Linda Hunt
21 John Lowery
22 Beth Lynn Lindstrom
23 Briggy Turner
23 Thomas Hemenway
24 Melissa Heller
24 Lisa Frech
24 Elizabeth Klinger
24 Susan Menen
24 Nancy Jessing
25 Saje Davis-Risen
25 Stephanie Stokamer
25 Bill Ray
25 Jamie Wilson
25 Brianne Riley Olivera
26 Rebecca Schulte
26 Rachel Waldron
27 Bonnie Gauer
27 Jeremy Hughes
28 Greg Borgmeyer
28 Aina Cabría Riart
29 Michael Clark
29 Mark Brist
29 Stephanie Zumwalt
29 Cassie McVetty
29 Bradley Baker
30 Tamara Duvall
30 Deborah Parsons
30 Irene Arroyo
30 Claude Vanzant
30 Teresa Perrin

44% of Pacific faculty and staff gave to Pacific University as of March 19. Your gift supports the university and our students. Consider a gift or a payroll deduction today. pacificu.edu/giving.

UNIVERSITY SENATES PLAN MEETINGS
The Staff Senate meets at 3 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, in Berglund 200 on the Forest Grove Campus. Meetings are open to all staff at Pacific University. Comments and suggestions can also be sent to staffsenate@pacificu.edu.

The Faculty Senate meets at 4 p.m. Thursday, April 24, also in Berglund 200 on the Forest Grove Campus.

LIBRARY TO HONOR PACIFIC AUTHORS
The Pacific University Library will honor faculty and staff authors published in 2013 at receptions at both the Forest Grove and Hillsboro campuses. Works of the authors will also be set up in the libraries to view. The Forest Grove Campus reception will be Tuesday, April 8, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. At the Hillsboro Campus Library, the reception takes place Wednesday, April 16, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

QUARTERLY ALL-STAFF MEETING SET
The quarterly all-staff meeting will be at 9 a.m. Wednesday, April 30, in the MPR in the University Center at the Forest Grove Campus.

The meeting will also be broadcast to staff at the Hillsboro Campus in Creighton Hall, room 518.