



Joe McIntyre/staff photographer

Political science professor Henry Steck teaches his Foundations of Democracy class Tuesday at SUNY Cortland.

## Professor marks 50th year

### Henry Steck has taught at SUNY Cortland since 1963

By MATT LEADER  
Staff Reporter

mleader@cortlandstandardnews.net

Though Henry Steck claims that he has “lost track” of just how old he is, he is perfectly sure of just how long he has been a professor at SUNY Cortland.

He started in 1963, when the college was still colloquially known as the Normal School to the locals. That same year, Jim Thorpe was inducted as a member of the first class of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, The Beatles released their first album, “Please Please Me,” and George Wallace was sworn in as the governor of Alabama, promising “segregation now; segregation tomorrow; segregation forever.”

Over the course of his 50 years, Steck has seen more than a few changes come to the SUNY Cortland campus, and has arrived at more than a few conclusions about what going to college is all about.

“You learn what you want to learn,” Steck said of the opportunities that college provides. “You can stay up all night thinking or drinking. You’re confronted in the classroom with different types of intellectual demands.”

The political science professor said that today, students and parents alike are too focused on the question, “What can I do with this (degree or major)?”

“All the things that broaden you as a person, they don’t have,” Steck said. “I would tell them what my father told me: ‘You’re going to live until you’re 80, what’s the rush?’”

Steck then recounted a kernel of wisdom, gleaned from his days as an undergraduate at Kenyon College in Ohio in the 1950s.

“There’s one thing I regret about my undergraduate career,” said Steck. “I didn’t take the Shakespeare class.”

Steck admitted that over the years, he has become less formal, going from a daily suit and tie

during the early days of his employment to his current, more laid back suspenders and button down look.

The increased informality is not confined to his dress, however.

He credits the cultural changes of the ’60’s and ’70’s with bringing students and faculty into closer interaction in and out of the classroom.

He recounted memories of evenings at the Hollywood Restaurant on Groton Avenue, and heated debates over politics and the War in Vietnam that sometimes ended in near fistfights.

When asked to tell his proudest moment from the last 50 years, Steck took a moment of thoughtful contemplation.

“If there were two or three things that I could take away, that I could feel good about, one of them would be that my generation built the SUNY system,” said Steck, who has served on countless committees centered on everything from international education efforts to long-term strategic planning. “I’ve taken a lot of pleasure in helping develop this institution.”

Still going strong and teaching a full schedule of classes, Steck said that, although he plans to retire at some point, he is at a loss as to when that might be.

“I don’t know when,” said Steck, adding that he is helping to support his grandchildren who are in college.

When he finally does retire, there are many things that he will miss. During the course of the interview, no less than five students approached Steck, either asking for directions to a class, inquiring about upcoming study abroad programs, of which Steck has an extensive knowledge, or

just to say hello after a summer away from campus.

“I like the students, and I’ll definitely miss them when I go,” Steck said. “It’s a cliché that being around them (students) keeps you younger, but I think that there’s a lot of truth in that.”

Steck said that leaving the constant interaction with his colleagues will be a difficult step to take.

“That’s the thing I will really miss if I retire,” Steck said. “I’ve had really good friends and colleagues. Even if I only know of a professor, I say to myself, ‘I’m really glad I’m at a college where that person is.’ It’s great being at a place where there’s community and good friendship.”

Steck’s sentiments were mirrored by his colleagues in the Political Science Department.

“He’s been a mentor,” said Mary McGuire, an assistant professor of political science who started at SUNY Cortland in 2001. “He’s a person you can always talk to.”

“I think he gives the students a taste of what its like to be at a small liberal arts college,” McGuire continued, adding that Steck and his wife aren’t adverse to having students over for dinner at the end of the semester. “If he ever retires, it would be a loss to the college.”

Steck said that he was never one to “plan ahead” his life, and that he always favored “going with the flow.”

In retrospect, that philosophy seems to be paying dividends.

“Being an academic, it’s a great life,” Steck said. “I would say I could not do better than this.”

“He’s been a mentor. He’s a person you can always talk to.”

— Mary McGuire

Assistant political science professor

## City woman pleads guilty in meth case

By SARAH BULLOCK  
Staff Reporter

sbullocc@cortlandstandardnews.net

A city woman pleaded guilty and was sentenced Tuesday in Cortland County Court for her part in operating a Cortlandville meth lab.

Catherine A. Glave, 29, of 4309 North Homer Ave., pleaded guilty to third-degree unlawful manufacture of methamphetamine and criminal use of drug paraphernalia, felonies, in exchange for 2 1/2 years in jail and 1 1/2 years of post-release supervision.

Glave could have been sentenced to a total of 5 years in prison and 2 years of post-release supervision.

Glave admitted to having lab equipment and ingredients used to make meth, including plastic bottles, pseudoephedrine and Coleman fuel, on June 28 at 143 Penguin Drive, as well as three glass pipes used to smoke controlled substances.

Glave lived at the home with Arvin L. Strauf, then 51, and Arvin L. Strauf Jr., then 19, where five one-pot meth labs were found, according to the Cortland County Sheriff’s Department.

Arvin Strauf and Glave were charged with third-degree unlawful manufacture of methamphetamine, first-degree criminal use of drug paraphernalia, and unlawful disposal of methamphetamine laboratory material, as well as criminal possession of precursors of methamphetamine and third-degree criminal possession of a weapon, for possessing a switch blade, all felonies, after the incident.

Strauf Jr. was charged with third-degree unlawful manufacturing of methamphetamine and unlawful disposal of methamphetamine laboratory material, and criminal possession of precursors of methamphetamine, all felonies.

Arvin L. Strauf’s and Arvin L. Strauf Jr.’s cases are still pending, said Assistant District Attorney Eliza Filipowski.

At sentencing, Glave said she alone was responsible for making meth.

“I’m responsible for it by myself,” she said.

But Glave admitted under oath that she had been living at the residence with the Straufs and they were home when a probation officer found the meth after Filipowski questioned her.

In April, Arvin L. Strauf was charged with third-degree unlawful manufacture of methamphetamine and first-degree criminally using drug paraphernalia, felonies; as well as third-degree aggravated unlicensed operation of a vehicle, after county Sheriff’s officers found meth-making ingredients in a car he was driving in Cortlandville.

Glave and Arvin L. Strauf Jr. were also in the car when Strauf was pulled over, said Filipowski.

Glave had requested that she be released before sentencing to see her small children, but Ames refused, noting that if she were arrested while out her guilty plea would stand but the District Attorney’s Office would not be bound by its plea agreement and the maximum sentence could be imposed.

Sentencing was scheduled for Oct. 1.

## County officials to meet on proposed landfill deal with Onondaga County

Cortland County officials are planning to meet in coming days to plan a public meeting on the proposal to accept Onondaga County incinerator ash at the Cortland County Landfill.

Cortland County Solid Waste Committee Chair John Troy (D-1st Ward) said he hopes to meet with Legislature Chair Mike Park (R-Homer) and Highway Superintendent Don Chambers Thursday to start planning a meeting on the ash-for-trash proposal.

Troy expects a special meeting of the Solid Waste Committee will be scheduled during an evening slot in a week or two.

The purpose of the meeting would be to inform the public what is in the ash, what the process of accepting ash will entail and also to hash out the various environmental studies that will be required.

County officials hope to potentially make about \$1 million yearly in the deal by accepting about 90,000 tons of incinerator ash in return for sending county trash to be incinerated in Onondaga County.

But Troy stresses that the actual monetary figures will not be known until the contract is worked out and a price for the ash negotiated.

He expects a contract would be signed late November or early December. The county plans to have a transfer station operational by June 2015.

A resolution to start the process of creating a transfer station at the landfill by authorizing about \$240,000 in engineering services, was pulled from last week’s Legislative agenda and Troy admitted he was moving too quickly by proceeding with the plans prior to public feedback.

— Catherine Wilde

## Homer lays out plan that guides school development

By TYRONE L. HEPPARD  
Staff Reporter

theppard@cortlandstandardnews.net

HOMER — Superintendent of Schools Nancy Ruscio outlined the district’s plans to create a unified education system in the upcoming school year at the Board of Education meeting Tuesday night.

Ruscio presented the Homer School District Management Plan, or CDS Plan, to the general public and members of the board while describing its purpose and highlighting the district’s goals.

She said it is, “a yearly plan that really guides the work for our five-year strategic plan,” Ruscio said. “We take all those items that we plan to complete within five years and break them down into chunks that we know we can complete in a single year.”

She added this year was the second year of the overall five-year strategic plan.

ship council was created to ensure students were presented with an achievable curriculum and that they have the support and tools necessary for success.

Ruscio said this year the council will begin training on how to improve student achievement starting Sept. 18.

She added the district also wants to make sure the curriculum is posted online so it is accessible to parents and the public.

Another goal of the strategic plan is to create a unified system of instruction by expanding on an idea called the “co-teaching model,” which has been described as a way to help students who have different styles of learning by teachers in different areas working together.

“This is about ensuring that all of our students — at risk, special education — all students get access to the same education as every other child,” Ruscio said.

Ruscio said a procedural manual

for special education was produced in 2012 and will be implemented this year. It will be presented to the council and necessary members of the district staff to figure out how to incorporate it into the curriculum while they continue to monitor and review the co-teaching model as it continues to be applied in the district.

Also incorporated in the CDS Plan is an objective to “create and maintain the necessary facilities to foster student’s success while protecting and enhancing the community’s investment in the facilities.”

Ruscio said part of this would be accomplished with the implementation of the district’s proposed capital project, a plan to upgrade and renovate buildings in the district, discussed briefly at the last board meeting on Aug. 13.

“We have started the SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review) process,” Ruscio said. “We hope at our second meeting in September that we’ll be able to move forward with

that and have a public vote on a capital project in January.”

Ruscio has not disclosed the cost of the project.

She closed her presentation with the student life objective of the CDS Plan, which focuses on character education, or the development of positive human qualities, in students.

She said she wants the district to work more closely with organizations who can help foster this in the community.

“We want to create a partnership document that says they will embody those principles,” Ruscio said. “That really was what this partnership initiative was about: to continue to broaden and strengthen our partnerships both with parents and the community.”

More detailed information about the Homer CDS Plan can be found on the Homer school district’s website at [www.homercentral.org/District/boe](http://www.homercentral.org/District/boe). The next board meeting is scheduled for Sept. 10.