

MOTIVATED BY SCIENCE, INSPIRED BY GOD



By Dr. Carol B. Crafts

Associate Professor of Biology

Rev. Charles V. Reichart, O.P., Professor Emeritus of Biology at Providence College, entomologist of international acclaim, and long-time member of the Rhode Island Natural History Survey, died on January 17, 1997. He is survived by his sister, Eleanor Burley, a nephew, and two nieces and will be missed by them and countless friends and colleagues in the Dominican and academic communities.

Father Reichart was born in Zanesville, Ohio to John and Nell Reichart in 1910. Graduating from Providence College in 1931, he received advanced degrees in philosophy from the Dominican House of Studies at River Forest, Ill. in 1935, and in sacred theology in 1939 from the Dominican House of Studies at Washington, D.C. His ordination as a Dominican priest in the Order of Preachers in 1938 was followed by graduate study in biology. Father Reichart received his Ph.D. from Ohio State University in 1947 and since then has been a member of the Providence College Dominican community and faculty where he chaired the Department of Natural Sciences, the Biology Department, served as pre-medical advisor and pursued his entomological research on Hemiptera. Member of Sigma Xi and other honor societies, recipient of honorary degrees, author of numerous publications, he is credited with the discovery of several new species of aquatic Hemiptera.

Despite Father Reichart's retirement from the Biology faculty in 1977, he remained active in research until only days before his death. He continued to travel worldwide, and was remarkable in his energy, fascination with and dedication to his research. His enthusiasm was inexhaustible, and he occasionally accompanied

Father Reichart's collection contains more than 30,000 pinned specimens such as these, enough to fill 143 drawers that he constructed according to the exact case dimensions used by the Smithsonian.

other faculty and students on field trips. Most often, however, he quietly and without fanfare, disappeared from the corridors and labs of Albertus Magnus Hall for a few weeks only to reappear with new specimens and photographs from his travels. His collection of thousands of insects, which resides at Providence College, will be divided and moved to the Smithsonian Institution and Yale University.

Father Reichart's contributions to biology and pre-medical education are as far-reaching and significant as are his contributions to entomology. Many Rhode Island physicians and dentists remember his stern visage in the classroom, exacting standards, and straight-forward, no-nonsense advice about preparation for the health professions. He was the founder of the Rhode Island chapter of Alpha Epsilon Delta (AED), the pre-medical honor society, and was national treasurer for AED for nearly 30 years. As Rev. Mark Nowel, O.P., the present AED advisor, notes, "At one or another time, he was teaching most of the future physicians in Rhode Island. His students knew that he was the hardest teacher they would ever have. But as tough as he was, he had such a soft heart." While he may have inspired fear in the hearts of his pre-med students, Father Reichart's friendship and guidance was sought and valued by students and faculty who looked past that gruff exterior. One recent graduate who worked in his research lab commented that he became her "surrogate grandfather while she was at PC." To faculty children he was "Dr. Bugs," and an invitation to view his collection was a special treat. As Father Nowel noted, "He was complex, honest and straightforward, loving, generous and a truly respected scientist."

His contributions to biology education were formally recognized by his faculty colleagues in the Biology Department with their establishment of the Charles V. Reichart Award, which is presented annually to a graduating senior biology major who "best exemplifies Father Reichart's dedication to the advancement of the biological sciences as evidenced by his scholarship, intellectual curiosity, disciplined perseverance and scientific integrity." The student recipient of the Reichart Award is selected on the basis of promise as a scholar in the biological sciences. In 1996, he was further honored by the establishment of a scholarship fund designed to support and strengthen research and the study of biological sciences at Providence College. Reichart was awarded the first President's Distinguished Faculty Award in September 1995. Faculty from all disciplines applauded the choice, since the award is given to a faculty member whose accomplishments have been widely recognized in his or her field of expertise and who has achieved scholarly recognition through long and dedicated service to Providence College. That was Charles V. Reichart.

Father Reichart's 5-part series, "The Aquatic Hemiptera of Rhode Island," is available through the RINHS Publications Listing. ▼

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Dr. Carol B. Crafts



Rev. Robert J. Hennessey, O.P., prior of the college's Dominican community, officiates the transfer of Father Reichart's insect collection to the Smithsonian. In the background are Dr. Michael Zavada, chair and associate professor of biology; Dr. David Furth of the Smithsonian; College President Rev. Philip A. Smith, O.P.; and Marc Epstein, also of the Smithsonian.

LEGACY IMMORTALIZED IN SMITHSONIAN

Rev. Charles V. Reichart, O.P., professor emeritus of biology at the time of his death last January, spent more than 50 years teaching biology and conducting field research all over the world. His research took him to numerous countries and every continent except Antarctica.

He amassed an irreplaceable collection of more than 30,000 specimens and 20,000 species from the insect group hemiptera ("true bugs") and aquatic ("water bugs") specimens from the eastern and western hemispheres, including a few species rarely found in other private or museum collections.

Recently, the Providence College Dominican community authorized the donation of the rare insect collection, 143 drawers of preserved

"This is an extraordinary honor for Providence

College and Father Reichart. He spent many

years of his life in a building called Albertus

Magnus Hall, and like Albertus Magnus, Father

Reichart found the imprint of God throughout

His creation."

Rev. Philip A. Smith, O.P.

College President



Rev. Charles V. Reichart, O.P. collects specimens during a summer expedition to Utah in 1985.

"Science has its roots in religion. The study of form, function, and the interrelationship of cells, tissues, organs, and organisms by a biologist may give insight into the nature of the Creator. It is no surprise that a spiritual man like Father Reichart would be so fascinated and dedicated to revealing the intricacies of life to friends, students, and colleagues, and its connection to spirituality."

Dr. Michael Zavada

Department of Biology Chair

specimens, to the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History, in accordance with the wishes of the late renowned Dominican scientist. Father Reichart's contribution is considered a valuable acquisition that fills in gaps in the museum's natural history holdings.

Representatives from the Smithsonian participated in a brief ceremony held in Sowa Hall on May 12, transferring Father Reichart's collection to the nation's premier museum.

The significance of Father Reichart's contribution to the Smithsonian Institution was further noted in articles that appeared in *The Providence Journal-Bulletin* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

— Debra Hazian

"Our collections are built on these kinds of donated collections. This is a major contribution."

Marc Epstein

Collections Specialist, Entomology Department,
Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution



Father Reichart (far right) poses with fellow scientists in Mesa Verde, Colo., July 25, 1952.



Dr. David Furth of the Smithsonian points out interesting specimens in Father Reichart's collection to Rev. Mark Nowel, O.P., assistant professor of biology, and Prior Robert J. Hennessey, O.P.

"This collection will fill a lot of gaps in our holdings, not only from Rhode Island, but from all parts of the country and the world. It contains specimens that represent parts of the world, such as Africa and Europe, where we have few or no specimens... many of the places where Father Reichart collected his specimens are habitats that have been destroyed or grossly altered."

Dr. David Furth

Collections Manager, Entomology Department, Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

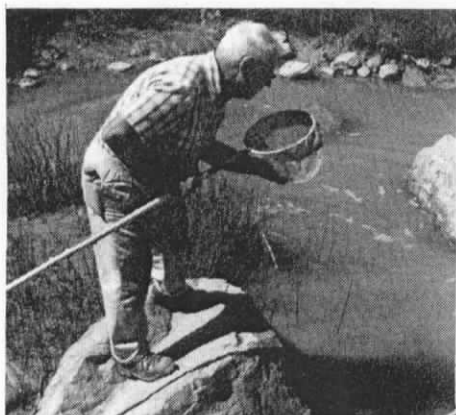
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VOLUME 4 NUMBER 16

THE NEWSPAPER FOR PROVIDENCE COLLEGE May 9, 1997

PC to donate rare entomology collection of renowned Dominican scientist to Smithsonian



The late Rev. Charles Reichart, O.P. examines a specimen during a 1985 expedition to Utah.

When Professor Emeritus of Biology Rev. Charles V. Reichart, O.P. died on January 17, the world of entomology lost a most prominent scientist and researcher. For more than 50 years, the

that spanned a distance from 375 miles above the Arctic Circle to within 1,175 miles of Antarctica. His passion was the study of insects; his particular specialty was the insect group Hemiptera, or "true bugs." His research led to the discovery of several new species.

At Father Reichart's request, prior to his death, and with the blessing of the college's Dominican prior, the rarest and most significant specimens of his extensive collection are being donated to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History. On Monday, May 12 at 5 p.m., in a special ceremony to be held in Sowa Hall, Room 233, a representative from the Smithsonian Institution will receive Father Reichart's legacy. Included in the collection are true bugs and aquatic or water bug specimens from the eastern and western hemispheres, includ-

ing a few species that are rarely found in any other private or museum collections. Father Reichart's collection, care-

Turn to Reichart, Page 3

The college community is invited to attend a special ceremony on Monday, May 12 at 5 p.m. in Sowa Hall, Room 233, at which representatives from the Smithsonian Institution will receive Father Reichart's legacy.

Dominican professor devoted his life to teaching biology and conducting field research all over the world. He visited scores of countries, traveling to locations



Alumni staff volunteers at the Pinehurst Avenue sit

Christmas in April "You gotta ha

■ Christmas in April ★ Providence properties, both residential and non-profit, both Providence residents and non-Providence residents, more than 30,000 Providence residents si

On Saturday, April 26, with the support of 100 business sponsors, some 1,000 volunteers renovated 28 Providence properties, including 16 houses and 12 nonprofit facilities in 12 Providence neighborhoods.

This is the fourth year that Christmas in April, a project adopted by the Providence College President's Council in 1994, culminated a year of planning and devoted one full day to repairing the homes of low income, disabled, or elderly residents, and nonprofit facilities. The repairs were as extensive as installing new roofs, plumbing, and electrical systems or as simple as painting and yard work.

Since 1994, when Providence College, along with a handful of Rhode Island and Massachusetts businesses founded the first Rhode Island chapter, Christmas in April ★ Providence has

Self-Study Draft Report outlined at faculty meeting;

new health care option approved

Feinstein Function Room Lunch Buffet

Please join us to wish them well!

Reichart

(Continued from Page 1)

fully assembled over many years, is an important acquisition for the Smithsonian, filling in existing gaps in their natural history collection.

Dr. David Furth, collections manager for the museum's Department of Entomology, notes that the collection "contains specimens that represent parts of the world, such as Africa and Europe, where we have few or no specimens. Much of the collection is also irreplaceable, representing a data point of what was happening at a specific point in time in a particular location. Many of the places where Father Reichart collected his specimens are habitats that have been destroyed or grossly altered."

In announcing the donation to the Smithsonian, PC President Rev. Philip A. Smith, O.P. noted that Father Reichart's vast collection of over 30,000 specimens—143 drawers of pinned specimens and several hundred vials of preserved larval specimens—"represent the breadth and depth of Father Reichart's scientific curiosity and investigative skills. It is a fitting legacy for a man who devoted his life to teaching and scientific inquiry to have his prize collection preserved in our nation's premier natural history museum, ensuring it will be shared with future generations." Also included in the donation is an extensive collection of scientific literature relating to Father Reichart's research.

Over the years, Father Reichart donated specimens from his collection to numerous individual investigators at colleges and universities in the United States and abroad, and to more than a dozen museums, including the U.S. National Museum in Washington, D.C. He was frequently asked to identify

insect specimens for other researchers and museums worldwide. He was also a prolific author, often detailing his new discoveries in scientific journals.

At an academic convocation held on campus in September 1995, Father Reichart was honored as the first recipient of the President's Distinguished Faculty Award, granted to a faculty member whose accomplishments have been widely recognized in his or her field of expertise and who has achieved this scholarly recognition through long and dedicated service to the college. In October 1996, the college established a scholarship fund in his name to support and strengthen research and biological science at Providence College.

A 1931 graduate of the college, Father Reichart was ordained to the priesthood in 1938. He received an advanced degree in philosophy in 1935 from the Dominican House of Studies in River Forest, Ill., and received a degree in sacred theology in 1939 from the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. He received his master of science degree in 1945 from Ohio State University and his Ph.D. in biology from Ohio State University in 1947.

Father Reichart joined the PC faculty in 1942 and served as the chair of the natural sciences department from 1948 to 1955, chair of the biology department from 1955 to 1970, and as the advisor to students preparing to enter the health professions. He was also listed in numerous biographical directories, including *Leaders in American Science*, *American Men of Science*, *Community Leaders of America*, and *Outstanding Educators of America*.

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gram from 1982 to 1989.

Smithsonian is new home for local collection

By ELLIOT KRIEGER
Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE — Most of us squish them or swat them or spray them.

But the Rev. Charles V. Reichart studied them, wrote about them, collected them. It might even be said that the late Father Reichart had a passion for bugs.

During his 50-year academic career, Father Reichart traveled the world — to Europe, to Africa, to the Arctic — in pursuit of rare species of insects. His research led him to discover several species.

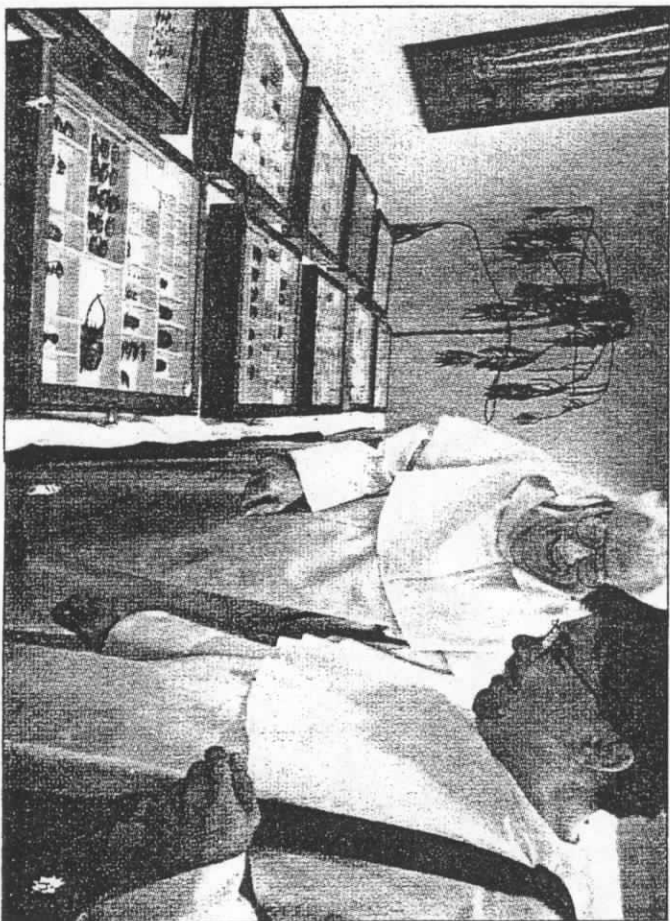
At the time of his death last January at age 86, his collection of insects included over 30,000 specimens — enough pinned insects to fill 143 drawers and enough preserved larval specimens to fill hundreds of bottles.

Whether in his baseball caps or bottle caps, bugs or art of the baroque, every collection deserves a good home.

So like the Fricks and the Whitneys and the Gettys before him, Father Reichart dreamed that his collection would live on after his death, preserved and displayed in a museum.

And it will. Providence College, from which Father Reichart graduated in 1931 and where he began teaching in 1942, yesterday followed Father Reichart's request and donated the rarest specimens in his collection to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History.

"It is a fitting legacy for a man who devoted his life to teaching and scientific inquiry to have his prize



BOXES OF BUGS:

The Reverends Justin Hennessey, left, and Father Charles Reichart, at Providence College yesterday.

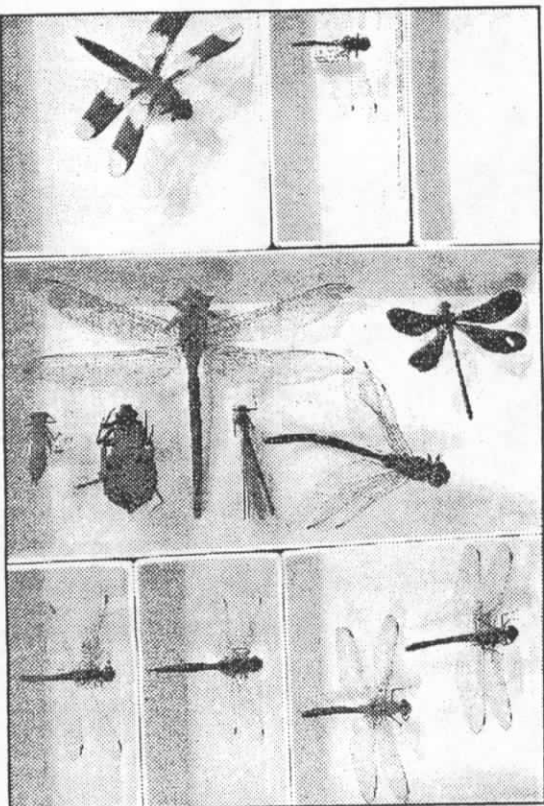
Journal-Bulletin/
CONNIE GROSCHE

collection preserved in our nation's premier natural-history museum," said the Rev. Philip A. Smith, president of the college.

On receiving the donation yesterday, David Furth, collections manager for the museum's entomology department, noted that Father Reichart's collection fills several gaps in the Smithsonian's holdings.

"It contains specimens that represent parts of the world, such as Africa and Europe, where we have few or no specimens," Furth said. He added that portions of the collection are irreplaceable, because "many of the places where Father Reichart collected his specimens are habitats that have been destroyed or grossly altered."

At the time of his death, Father Reichart was a professor emeritus of biology at Providence College, where he had served for 22 years as a department chairman.



LIKE FLIES IN AMBER, these dragonflies from the collection of the late Rev. Charles Reichart are preserved for posterity. The rarest specimens are headed for the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History.

Journal-Bulletin/CONNIE GROSCHE

Short Subjects

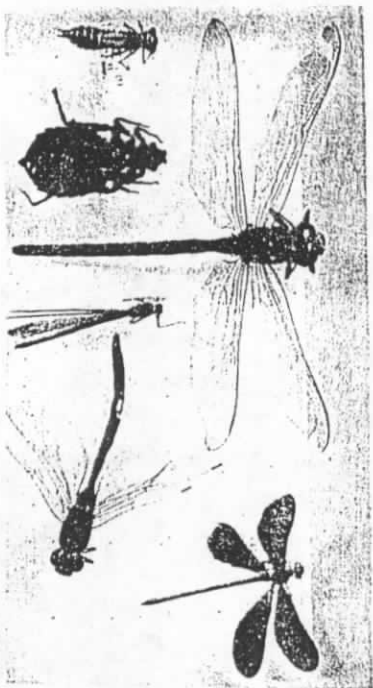
A Professor Bequeaths His Bugs

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—Many research specimens are thrown out or left to collect dust when the researcher dies. But the insects collected by a biology professor at Providence College who died in January will be made available to scientists by the Smithsonian Institution.

The 30,000 bugs were collected by the Rev. Charles V. Reichart, who asked the college to donate them to the Smithsonian's Na-

tional Museum of Natural History after he died. The gift is largely made up of specimens from the order *Hemiptera*, commonly known as "true bugs" (*right*).

Many of the specimens are from West Africa, Australia, and Indonesia, areas from which the Smithsonian has few or no samples, said David G. Furth, collections manager of the natural-history museum's department of entomology. ■



ART BY CAROL H. PROVEDEN. COURTESY OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION