

might be contracted from a syndicated corporate source operated by a private company. For example, The Healthy Ontario website, healthontario.com, gets drug information from MediResource Inc., says Smith. For those who have not investigated where the information comes from on government sites, this could come as a surprise.

For information about SFU, visit www.sfu.ca.

Plotkin's turtles

www.amigosdelasbaulas.org

The leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) can reach a length of seven feet, making it the largest turtle in the world. Strong swimmers, they live in the open sea, but females must find a warm, welcoming beach on which to dig a nest and deposit eggs. Costa Rica is home to some of the leatherbacks' nesting beaches.

Dr. Pamela Plotkin, East Tennessee State University's assistant vice provost for Research and director of Sponsored Programs, lived in Costa Rica while she was a doctoral student and post-doctoral fellow in the 1990s, and she has returned frequently.



Over the years, Plotkin studied leatherbacks and watched the rapid development of nearby beach property. Female leatherback turtles dislike bright lights and glare, preferring dark, quiet nesting spots. In addition, hatchlings become disoriented and head toward

the light of civilization instead of entering the sea.

"Thousands of leatherbacks used to come ashore. Last year there were fewer than 50 females nesting on the beaches," Plotkin explains, "and if nothing is done, there is a high probability that the leatherback turtle will be extinct in the next few years."



In an effort to save the species, Plotkin has received a \$15,000 grant from The Leatherback Trust for a project to educate local people about the rare creatures on their shores and to convince them to take specific steps to keep the beaches darker and safer for the turtles.

Plotkin has established the project "Amigos de Las Baulas" (Spanish for "Friends of the Leatherback Turtles") for businesses, community members and tourists who live near and visit Las Baulas National Park, which contains turtle nesting areas.

Through the project and its website (www.amigosdelasbaulas.org), Plotkin hopes to educate people in the area. This year, Plotkin has targeted 60 businesses near the beaches, asking them to display material for their patrons about the leatherback turtles and the need to reduce lights. Her outreach effort asks for assistance in small ways to decrease night-time glare, such as turning off beachfront lighting during nesting season, increasing the use of motion-sensitive security lights, and even something as simple as closing window curtains in the evening.

With hard work, luck and the help of an educated public, Plotkin hopes to play a part in preventing the extinction of one of nature's treasures.

For more information, contact Plotkin at the ETSU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 423-439-6000, or e-mail plotkin@etsu.edu.

Soul Space

www.emu.edu/soulspace

By Chris Edwards

Wendy J. Miller, associate professor of spiritual formation at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, is the guiding force behind Soul Space, a section of the Eastern Mennonite University website that went up in November 2005.

"Care for the caregivers has been my calling," says Miller, whose recent work in that regard has also included assisting pastors in hurricane-ravaged Louisiana, accompanied by four seminary students on October. For over 12 years, Miller has written articles on spiritual formation for the ecumenical, Virginia-based journal, *Lectioary Homiletics*. Her new online devotionals reach not only such caregivers, but anyone clicking on via computer.

The weblink's form is based largely on the *Revised Common Lectionary*, a guide used in many Christian denominations. "I decided that rather than inventing the wheel, I would use a wheel that had been working very well through the centuries," says Miller.

Like the Lectionary, the site follows a three-year church calendar cycle. For its daily devotionals, Miller also took inspiration from "the rhythm