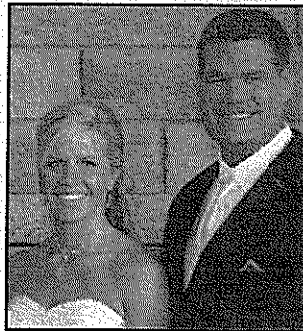


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## EDUCATION

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# VCSU instructor leaving for Africa

By Richard Schmit  
Valley City Times-Record

A global conservation and education program has selected Valley City State University professor Don Hoff to study in Namibia, Africa, and he will leave July 29.

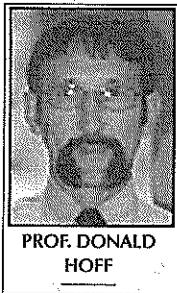
"I feel more effective and enthused as a teacher if I've been through what I'm trying to teach," says Hoff, who teaches geology. "You get more of a true feel of what's going on than you would as a pure tourist."

Hoff will research how the geology, topography and climatology of Etosha National Park

have influenced plant and animal life through a program called Project Dragonfly. The park is in the northern region of the south African nation.

He will also spend time at the Cheetah Conservation Fund's International Research and Education Centre near the town of Otjiwarongo.

Hoff is one of 21 people nationwide who will go to Namibia, each of whom has an education background.



PROF. DONALD  
HOFF

"We need to find out about what we have so we can preserve it," Hoff says. "What's scary about conservation is unless we do something within 10 to 20 years, nonhumans won't have a chance."

Group members will spend their night hours sharing what they learned during the day. Research will continue after the group returns Aug. 10. Hoff must finish his research online by mid-December.

Jamie Anzano, Project Dragonfly's director of communication, said the research will not be available to the public but participants may choose to pres-

ent at a conference at the Cincinnati Zoo.

Hoff will spend about \$4,000 for seven graduate credits through Miami (Ohio) University and for airfare. He doesn't need the credits but said they are a requirement and will keep him in the learning process.

"I couldn't pay for what I'm getting," he says, "but I wouldn't have done this if I wasn't employed at the university."

Project Dragonfly offers eight other trips, including Hoff's first choice - studying ecology in Thailand from a Buddhist perspective. "Because of the political situation they couldn't assure

we'd have safe travel," he says.

Hoff has studied and taught in Morocco, Costa Rica and the Marshall Islands, among other places, and looks forward to returning to the African savanna.

Joseph Stickler, VCSU science professor, said faculty in the department have a reputation for being world travelers. Several professors have made trips such as Hoff's, he says.

"Studying abroad is a good learning environment and an education you don't rebel against because you have to learn to survive," Stickler said.