

### Message From the Department Head



The 2007-2008 academic year has drawn to a close. We bid farewell to another group of graduating students. We wish all 7 B.S., 10 M.S. students and 7 Ph.D. candidates who graduated from PSES this spring the very best in the next phase of their lives.

At our Spring Graduation Celebration and Awards Ceremony on April 29th, we recognized graduating students and honored our nominees and winners of college and university awards. I am very pleased to tell you we had an exceptional list of faculty, staff and student nominees. Our Outstanding Student nominees were Sophomore Julie Hilland,

Junior Erin Morra and Senior Jenny Knerr. Our other nominees were Dayna Willis for Managerial Staff, Deb Holstad in the Classified Exempt category for her excellent work as our Budget Specialist and Anita Falen in the Scientific Staff Category for her work in Paul McDaniel's pedology program. Nilsa Bosque-Perez was our nominee for CALS Outstanding Advisor for her work with graduate students in entomology. Matt Morra was our nominee for the R.M. Wade Excellence in Teaching Award for his superbly organized and up-to-date lectures and his interactions with students. Please join me in thanking and congratulating all these people who have contributed so much to the success of PSES.

The university also recognized the following PSES employees for longevity of service to the institution: Deron Beck, Deb Holstad, Babu Srinivasan, Lisa Washburn Johnson (5 years), Vladimir Borek (15 years), Joyce Ashcraft, Jim Davis, Mary Jo Frazier (20 years), Lorie Ewing and Cally Matsuoka (25 years).

Since our last newsletter we have had several people retire or leave for other employment

opportunities. Dennis Schotzko retired after 34 years working in entomology on campus. Marie Dennis, Technical Aide for Shree Singh in Kimberly retired this year.

Lana Unger has been hired by Nilsa Bosque-Perez to replace Dennis Schotzko. PSES also has 11 additional faculty searches under way.

I visited Chiayi University in Taiwan May 15-25 to expand student exchanges and develop collaborative research opportunities. Please see page 5 to read a brief account of my trip.

It is an exciting and challenging time for PSES as we undergo continuing changes. I want to express my appreciation to the faculty, staff and students who do excellent work in our programs. I also want to acknowledge our gratitude to our alumni and other supporters. Of particular note are our departmental advisory committee, volunteers who serve on search committees, and donors. Their contributions are vital to our success.

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Send suggestions and questions to  
lisaw@uidaho.edu

## Club News....

### Soil Stewards:

The Soil Stewards, a student-run organic farm still has Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares available! Pecks (for families of 2-3 people) sell for \$300, and bushels (for families of 3-4 people) sell for \$400. The CSA program runs for 20 weeks (June 26th—November 6th). Contact Ashley at [soilstewards.csa@gmail.com](mailto:soilstewards.csa@gmail.com) for more details or to sign-up. For those interested in joining the Soil Stewards and to learn more about organic and sustainable agriculture, please visit <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~soilstewards/>.

### Plant & Soil Science Club:

The Plant & Soil Science Club is open to any UI student interested in plants and/or soils. The club participates in numerous activities including growing various types of plants for fall and spring sales, going on field trips, hearing guest speakers, and participating in service projects, community service projects at the Garden Creek Ranch and for local charities, discussing career choices and internship opportunities, and traveling to different parts to the Pacific NW for field trips. Contact Esther Buck at [buck0280@vandals.uidaho.edu](mailto:buck0280@vandals.uidaho.edu) if you are interested in joining.

## Retirements & New Hires....

**Dennis Schotzko** retired on April 30, 2008 after 34 years. He worked under Nilsa Bosque-Perez as a Research Support Scientist III in the Division of Entomology. His replacement is **Lana Unger**, a 1995 M.S. graduate in Entomology. Congratulations to both!

**Marie Dennis** retired on February 29, 2008. She worked in Kimberly for Shree Singh as a Technical Aide in his bean breeding program.



## Awards

**Lydia Clayton** received a first place award of \$200 in Research for the GPSA Expo. She has also received a grant from the Student Grants Program in the amount of \$3000 for a 'Green Manure Crops for Improving Soil Quality in Organic Vegetable Production in Northern Idaho', which will be conducted on the Soil Stewards Organic Farm. **Libbie Oram** received second place overall for her GPSA for her presentation titled 'Selenium Speciation in Rhizosphere Soils and *Aster eatonii* Roots: Implications for Plant Uptake', **Karen Vaughan** received second place in the Graduate Presentation Category for her presentation titled 'Mass Balance of Soil Evolution on Basaltic Cinder Cones at Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, Idaho', and **Leigh Winowiecki** received third place for the presentation titled 'Local Soil Knowledge and Its Use in Cooperative Allocations in the Foothill Region of the Talamanca Mountains, Cabécar Indigenous Territory, Costa Rica'. **CALS** was also given an award for the highest volunteer judge participation rate by its faculty or instructional/research staff. An award of \$250 will be transferred to both COGS and CALS with the stipulation that the college use these funds for an award to one graduate-level student sometime during the 2008-2009 academic year.

Plant Science undergraduate **Erik Zavala** won the Washington-North Idaho Seed Association Scholarship for \$2300, the University of Idaho Multicultural Scholarship and the Washington Apple Education Foundation scholarship for \$2000.

Undergraduate **Adam Blalock** was awarded \$2000 by the Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association for scholarly efforts.

**Robert Zemetra** was presented with the highest honor the Western Society of Weed Science can bestow on a nonmember, the WWSW Honorary Member Award this spring, while graduate student **Lydia Clayton** received first place in the grad student paper contest for her presentation "Using Brassicaceae Seedmeals as a Bioherbicide in Fresh Carrot Production".

## In Memorium.....

**James William "Bill" Chaney** died on August 15, 2005. Bill was issued an honorary Dr. of Science degree on May 10, 1985 for his contribution to the seed industry world wide. He also received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in 1949, after serving in the Marine Corps for five years (three of them in the South Pacific Islands during World War I). He was the president of several seed organizations, his picture appearing on the Seed World Magazine cover page in August 1978. Bill's contributions to the seed industry will be sorely missed.

## Awards (cont.):

The **U of I Soil Judging Team** competed in the National Soil Judging Contest held this April in Narragansett, Rhode Island. We enjoyed unseasonably sunny, warm weather while investigating soils formed in glacial, dunal wind-blown, and alluvial parent materials across the Ocean State. At one site we even examined subaqueous soil cores that formed under 2 meters of water in Ninigret Pond. Graduating senior, **Brooke Knutzen**, placed 10th out of over 80 participants from 21 colleges and universities nationwide. **Blake Hodgins**, **Emmy Jurkowska**, **Willow Falcon**, and **Matt Smith** were integral to the success of the U of I team in the group and individual judging events. The most Common soil described while in Rhode Island was Dystrudept that is characterized by the presence of cambic horizon, udic soil moisture regime, and low base saturation. A couple Spodosols and several Entisols were also identified in low lying moist habitats, outwash plains, and one of the last remaining kame terraces in Rhode Island. The students and professors were surprised by the amount of forested, undeveloped areas in Rhode Island. With approximately 1 million people inhabiting an area the size of Latah County, many of us were expecting an urban soil landscape. The U of I Soil Judges would like to thank everyone who was supportive of our efforts to participate in this valuable event, especially, CALS, PSES, and the Soil Science and Land Resources Division.



(The **photo** shows the students on a drumlin describing a shallow Dystrudept formed in carboniferous metasediments on the island of Jamestown.)

## Dates to Remember

### June 3, 2008—Kentucky Bluegrass Field Tour—

Chris Ramsey farm near Worley, ID.

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.—following

The tour the group will car pool to the downy brome sites near Rockford, WA.

Contact: Janice Reed @208-885-5041 or  
jreed@uidaho.edu, www.ag.uidaho.edu/  
bluegrass.

**June 6, 2008**—Last day to turn in theses/dissertations w/out registering for summer session

**June 25, 2008**—**Canola, Rapeseed & Mustard Field Day** -  
contact: jbrown@uidaho.edu

**August 25, 2008**—Fall 2008 Semester begins



## Visit to National Chiayi University, Taiwan

A group of six CALS students, four faculty, including Bob Tripepi, C.T. Liu (retired) and myself, arrived in Taipei on May 16, 2008. We spent three days in the city exploring Taiwanese culture and cuisine. The National Palace Museum had excellent materials representing Chinese culture from the Neolithic Age through all the dynasties. The night markets were fascinating, with booths offering a wide variety of foods, including snake, and other products ranging from traditional scoops for making tea to gaudy t-shirts. The ornate temples and beautifully landscaped parks were also among the highlights of this portion of the trip.



**A night market scene in Taipei**

On May 19th, we took a commuter train south to Chiayi to visit National Chiayi University (NCYU). This leisurely paced trip allowed us to see a great deal of the northern half of Taiwan's west coast. The area is densely populated, but one thing that stood out was how even very small patches of land were used to grow rice, fruits and vegetables. In one case a small triangle of land adjacent to a large factory had perhaps a quarter acre of rice that was beginning to head out.

Our hosts at NCYU were gracious and generous. The students stayed in dorms and got to know a number of Taiwanese peers. Faculty members were given rooms in guest houses. We were exceptionally well fed. We started the day with Taiwanese breakfasts of soy milk, pastries, rice porridge and their traditional equivalent of an Egg McMuffin. Lunches and dinners emphasized excellent seafood in multi-course meals, but each meal also included other meats, e.g. Peking duck, ham, lamb and beef, and a selection of fruits and vegetables. Our hosts' knowledge of the specialties of each restaurant exposed us to many delicious new foods.



**National Palace Museum, Taipei**

We had a busy schedule of meetings on campus and excursions to agricultural endeavors. We met with the faculties of several units to learn about work with the indigenous peoples of Taiwan, the university research in animal science, aquaculture, entomology, food sciences, horticulture, microbiology, and biotechnology. Our trips included opportunities to see tilapia, eels, sea bass and other species of fish in intensive aquaculture, orchid variety development and mass

Chiayi University (cont.)

production for sale, a commercial dairy and the National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium. We explored possibilities for collaborative research efforts and expanded exchange programs for students. You may recall Mary Barstow's letter in the previous newsletter recounting a few highlights from her six month stay at NCYU, and two NCYU students will attend UI this fall. There is a great potential for mutually beneficial cooperation between UI and NCYU.



We returned to Taipei on May 24th by the High Speed Rail **Chiang Kai-shek Memorial, Taipei** (bullet train) that reached speeds of 299 kilometers (185 miles) per hour. That afternoon we went to the farmer's market. Produce was a minor component of this market. Live plants, including hundreds of varieties of orchids, lilies and garden plants dominated one section. Another section held hundreds of booths selling paintings, rugs, mats, etc. After that a simple dinner of pork dumplings from a street vendor ended the day for most of us. We had time for a short walk in the city on May 25th, then began the long trip home. All-in-all, it was a great experience that expanded our horizons. We all expressed a desire to return and several NCYU faculty members have plans to visit the University of Idaho.

Dr. James Johnson, Department Head  
PSES



CALS group visiting Moth Orchid production greenhouses in Chiayi