

Message From the Department Head



The spring semester is underway. Classes are going well, but running a bit behind schedule in some cases due to weather. We have had more snow than Moscow has seen in decades. The university was closed for two consecutive days. This was a unique event. Now, only a few weeks later, there are indications that spring is coming to the Palouse. The snow is melting, but slowly enough to avoid the risk of flooding. We have hopes of avoiding a repetition of the situation we saw in 1996. Flocks of robins are eating berries and optimistically hopping around on cold, wet grass during the warm part of the day. The first crocuses and

hopes for warmer weather have emerged.

We are preparing for the CALS Awards Banquet that will take place on April 21. Once again, we have excellent nominees for the awards recognition. These names are listed on page 3. Several other faculty and staff have received major recognition for their efforts, as you will see reported throughout the newsletter. Preparations for graduation will begin shortly. We will once again have a departmental reception for our graduates from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29th in the Ag Biotech Interaction Court. University Commencement will be held on Saturday, May 10th. We look forward to seeing parents and friends of our soon-to-be alumni.

We are working with other departments and the college to expand and diversify opportunities for students. Conversations are underway to link the U of I to universities in 14 countries around the world. Graduating senior Mary Barstow recently returned from Taiwan. She enjoyed the experience and offers a brief account of her time in Taiwan in this newsletter. We are developing new recruiting materials to inform

prospective students of these and other changes relating to international study.

PSES is continuing to deal with the impact of faculty and staff departures. We have several searches to refill staff positions underway and we are in the process of conducting 11 searches to fill faculty positions. A brief summary of the status of the faculty searches is as follows: **Closed searches with plans for interviews**—Potato Plant Pathology, Aberdeen; Potato Post-Harvest Physiology, Kimberly; Microbial Physiology, Moscow; Research and Extension Entomology, Twin Falls; Soil Physics, Moscow; **Searches closing this spring**—Urban Horticulture, Moscow; **Searches earlier in the process**—Plant Molecular Biology, Moscow; Cropping Systems Agronomy, Aberdeen; Forages, Idaho Falls; Plant Pathology, Twin Falls; Plant Pathology, Moscow.

I sincerely thank Dayna Willis and the members of our search committees for their efforts on this important task. We look forward to refilling our ranks so we can better meet the needs of students and our diverse clientele.

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Send suggestions and questions to
lisaw@uidaho.edu

Club News....

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 activities. Major activities include growing poinsettias and bedding plants for fund raising projects, community service projects at the Garden Creek Ranch and for local charities, discussing career choices and internship opportunities, and traveling to different parts of the Pacific NW for field trips.

Spring 2008 Events & Activities: **St. Patrick’s Day Sale, Monday, 3/17, 10 am—2 pm** in the Commons in front of the bank. PSSC will be selling house plants and the GSA will be selling cut green Chrysanthemums. **4/25-27, Spring Trip:** the Japanese Gardens in Portland, Oregon, including the Chinese Gardens, Rose Gardens, World Forestry Center and others, time permitting. All cost paid by club excluding a couple of lunches. More info coming soon. **5/1-5/3—Spring Sale:** annuals, perennials, vegetables, hanging baskets, patio pots and specialty baskets will be sold. Planting party for spring sale to be announced at a later date. Club T-shirts, long or short sleeved will be arriving shortly! Meetings for PSSC held Thursdays at 5:30 in the 6th St. Greenhouse. Contact Esther Buck at buck0280@vandals.uidaho.edu if you are interested in joining.

Soil Stewards:

For those interested in joining the Soil Stewards and to learn more about organic and sustainable agriculture, please visit <http://stuorgs.uidaho.edu/~soilstewards/>.

May Graduates

Congratulations to our May Graduates!

Doctor of Philosophy

Ryan Hanavan (Entomology) Leigh Winowiecki (Soil Science)
 Mariangie Ramos (Entomology) Karen Vaughn (Soil & Land Resources)
 Ruth Dahlquist (Entomology) Greg Blaser (Plant Science) Ken Puliafico (Entomology)

Master of Science

Mark Cole (Entomology) Robert Brown (Soil Science) Seth Gersdorf (Plant Science)
 Laura Hooper (Plant Science) Reuben McLean (Plant Science) Matthew West (Plant Science)
 Jack Robertson (Soil & Land Resources) Deron Beck (Plant Science)
 Travis Ulrich (Entomology) Jeff Neufeld (Entomology)

Bachelor of Science

Mary Barstow (Hort & Crop Science) Robert Cox (Crop Science)
 Jesse Dahl (Hort & Crop Science) Andrea Dickerson (Hort & Crop Science)
 Anne (Jenny) Knerr (Hort & Crop Science) Rod Sprague (Entomology)



Congratulations!

Marc Klowden, Professor of Entomology, has been selected to receive the ESA Distinguished Achievement Award in Teaching.

“Babu” Rajagopalbabu Srinivasan, Research Support Scientist for Juan Alvarez has won the John Henry Comstock Graduate Student Award for the Entomological Society of America.

Dr. Esmaeil “Essie” Fallahi, Professor & Director of the PSES Pomology Program, was presented with the Governor’s Award of Excellence in Agriculture—Innovation/Discovery and Marketing by Governor Butch Otter during the Larry Branen AgSummit Conference in Boise on February 12, 2008.

Sanford Eigenbrode, Professor & Entomology Division Chair, has been invited to present a lecture on the chemical ecology of virus-vector-plant interactions at the Oklahoma EPSCoR meeting, March 6-7, 2008.

Juan Alvarez, Assoc. Professor of Entomology, has been invited to participate in the Plant Virus Ecology Network Workshop that will take place in East Lansing Michigan on March 18-21, 2008. **Juan** was also invited to be the keynote speaker to the Latin American Potato Association Congress which will take place in Mar del Plata, Argentina at the end of the year. He will speak on his research relating to “Virus infection effects on the biology of aphids”.

Lydia Clayton, M.S. Graduate Student studying under **DonnThill**, won first place in the graduate student oral presentation contest at the Spring 2008 Western Society of Weed Science meetings.

Congratulations to the following CALS Awards Nominees! Outstanding Instructor **Mat Morra**; Outstanding Advisor, **Nilsa Bosque-Perez**; Outstanding Managerial Staff, **Dayna Willis**; Outstanding Office Support Staff, **Deborah Holstad**; Outstanding Scientific Staff, **Anita Falen**; Outstanding Senior, **Anne (Jenny) Knerr**; Outstanding Junior, **Erin Morra**; & Outstanding Sophomore **Julie Hilland**.

Retirements

Marie Dennis, Technical Aide for Shree Singh at the Kimberly Research & Extension Center will be retiring this spring after many years of service.

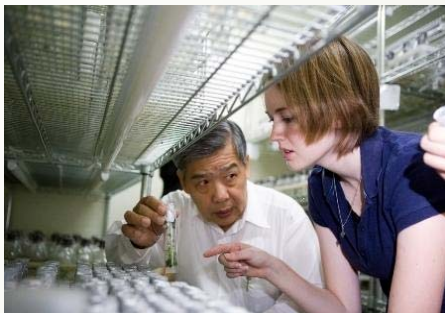
Dennis Schotzko will be retiring on April 30, 2008. Dennis is a Research Support Scientist III working under Nilsa Bosque-Perez in the Entomology Division.

In Memorium.....

Dr. Robert Romanko, Parma Research & Extension Center, passed away on December 9, 2007. He will be missed by his colleagues and PSES.

A Semester at National Chiayi University, Taiwan: Memoirs of a Graduating Senior

Not many people from Idaho get the opportunity to eat ice cream while wearing a t-shirt outside in the middle of December, nor do many of the same people have the opportunity to study horticulture in Taiwan.



Orchids in tissue culture vials.

When the Dutch discovered Taiwan in the 1400s, they name it "Ihla Formosa", the Beautiful Island. After a short five months I found this to be a very appropriate name. Taiwan is not only exquisitely beautiful in landscape, but is also a rich agricultural haven where farmers can grow everything from pineapples and papayas to peanuts and potatoes (and of course, plenty of rice).

National Chiayi University (NCYU) is a new school resulting from two old schools that were merged only six years ago. The President of the University is an Idaho alumnus who received his Master's Degree in Forestry. Because this is a new school, I was one of the first seven exchange students, the other six were male Forestry students from France. This translates into my being not only the first Caucasian woman on the campus, but the first student from the United States. Taiwan places a premium on pale complexions, using bleaching cream in their lotions, so for the first time in my life I found myself thankful for my British genes that do not tan. It was a new experience for me, being in the minority.

I am finishing my degree in Crop Science at the University of Idaho, but chose to study horticulture at NCYU because more of the classes were taught in English than the Crop Science courses. NCYU is also famous for its orchid production and has patents on many famous cultivars. Even though horticulture isn't my area of study, my advisors helped set up several field trips to local farms and research facilities so I could see more crop science industries. I was able to see rice, native herbs, vegetables, citrus, persimmon, mushroom, pineapple, bamboo, jujubes, wax apples, papaya, tea, and coffee industries in addition to several flower industries. I also visited many beautiful temples during these trips. I never thought I would find a school that takes care of its students the way UI CALS does, but NCYU comes pretty close. I received a scholarship to pay for my expenses, and in return I taught a few English classes. These were some of the most entertaining hours of my week that taught me as much about America as it did about Taiwan.

I learned a lot in my tissue culture and photosynthesis classes (taught in English), but



Orchids, the beautiful finished product from the original tissue culture.

Semester at NCYU (cont.)

(cont.) I learned even more outside the classroom with my Taiwanese friends. Every night there are night markets that line the streets selling inexpensive clothes and shoes and all kinds of crafts and knick-knacks and jewelry, but the thing I liked most was the food. Never in my life did I think I would come back home to the U.S. and have cravings for BBQ squid or stinky tofu. The people of Taiwan eat a lot of food that Americans wouldn't even consider, such as pig intestine soup, boiled shark fin, deep-fried duck heads, fried chicken feet and rooster crops and testicles. It is better to eat first and then ask what the translation is. Surprisingly though, I never had any digestive troubles and absolutely loved all of the food I ate there. The most difficult decision of my day was usually if I should have fresh pineapple, guava, or papaya for breakfast (about two cups of fresh chopped fruit for \$0.50 US).

The people of Taiwan are the friendliest, most open and hospitable people you will ever meet. I made several friends that I plan to go back and visit soon. Great faculty that were willing to do anything to make my experience worthwhile, wonderful students and friends, delicious food, and a landscape that is as rich in Beauty as it is agriculturally diverse made last semester one that I will never forget.

Mary Barstow



Dates to Remember

3/24/08 – Advising for Fall 2008 begins

3/28/08 – Last day to withdraw & Vandal Friday

3/31/08 – Registration for Summer 08 begins

4/4/08 – Vandal Transfer Day

4/14/08 – Registration for Fall 08 begins

4/21/08 – CALS Award Banquet

4/28 – 5/2/08 – No Exam Week

4/29/08 – 12-1 p.m. – PSES May Commencement Luncheon, Ag Biotech Interaction Court

5/5-5/9/08 – Finals Week

5/9/08 – Last Day to apply for 08 Summer/Fall graduation

5/10/08 – Spring 2008 Commencement

6/25/08—The Canola, Rapeseed & Mustard Field Day, Parker Farm, Moscow: <http://www.ag.uidaho.edu/brassica/>

