



AG SCIENCES 2009

A Monthly Newsletter for the College of Agricultural Sciences

June 2009

News in Brief

Varga Gets Advising Award

Gabriella Varga, professor of animal science and adviser for animal sciences and animal bioscience majors, was recently selected to receive the college's 2009 Excellence in Academic Advising Award.

Sponsored by the college's alumni society, the award recognizes faculty members for effectiveness in student advising, career planning and personal counseling. Candidates are recommended for the honor.

Bjornstad Wins Black Award

Ottar Bjornstad, professor of entomology, was recently chosen to receive the Alex and Jessie C. Black Award for Excellence in Research. The honor, which includes a \$1,000 cash award and a plaque, recognizes significant accomplishments in agricultural research at Penn State.

Bjornstad is recognized as one of the world's foremost theoretical ecologists. His research focuses on population ecology and population dynamics of infectious diseases and insects.

Ewing Receives Buck Award

John Ewing, assistant professor of agricultural and extension education, recently received the 2009 Roy C. Buck Faculty Award in the Agricultural Sciences for his article, "Types and Cognitive Levels of Questions Asked By Professors During College of Agriculture Class Sessions."

The award recognizes the best refereed article by an untenured faculty member in the college whose research involves the social or human sciences published in a scholarly journal in the previous two years. Ewing's article was published in the 2007 issue of the *Journal of Agricultural Education*.

Five Get Staff Laureate Awards



▲ Receiving Staff Laureate awards from Robert Steele, dean of the college (far right), were (from left): Tom Palchak, Randall Bock, Ann Magliaro Macrina, Beth Irwin and Joyce Cingel.

Five employees of the college were presented with Staff Laureate awards by Dean Robert Steele at the collegewide staff meeting May 18.

Tom Palchak, manager of University Creamery Services, received the Ambassador Award; Beth Irwin, administrative staff assistant for Information Technologies, was given the Customer Service Award; Joyce Cingel, Creamery business manager, got the Leadership Award; Ann Magliaro Macrina, project associate in Dairy and

Animal Science, received the Spirit Award; and the Trailblazer Award was given to Randall Bock, supervisor of research laboratory shops in Ag and Biological Engineering.

The Ambassador Award recognizes an advocate of the college who promotes productivity and interdisciplinary relationships and exhibits diplomacy to encourage collaboration with entities outside of the college. Tom Palchak's enthusiasm

(continued on page 2)

Commencement

▼ Robert Steele (left photo), who is stepping down after 12 years as dean of the college, was the speaker. Agroecology major Clare Wagner (right photo), the student marshal, poses with Frederick Gildow, head of the Plant Pathology Department.



Familiar Faces

QUESTION: What are your concerns about the swine flu outbreak?



Scott Diloreto, greenhouse manager, Department of Horticulture

"I'm concerned for people who have swine flu or could be exposed to it, but I'm not

concerned that I'm going to contract the disease. I think it's pretty unlikely."



Manzoor Hussain, graduate student, Department of Plant Pathology

"I know about swine flu, and I understand that because of the relationship the flu has with the body and as a zoonotic disease, it can be unpredictable. But I don't have many concerns."



Debra Clemmer, financial assistant, Department of Plant Pathology

"I'm somewhat concerned, not for myself but for my elderly parents, so I use caution

when taking them anywhere in contact with other people. For myself, I just wash my hands often."



Diane McLaughlin, professor of rural sociology and demography, Department of Ag Economics and Rural Sociology

"It looks like it is not as much of a concern as we thought, but I'm still keeping an eye on it. Older people and those with health problems really need to be concerned."



Steve Smith, head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology

"I really have no concerns. I do not see swine flu any differently

than a normal seasonal flu. I haven't worried about it."



Kim Swistock, conference coordinator, Office of Conferences and Short Courses

"I think the swine flu concerns are some-

what of an overreaction—36,000 people die from regular influenza every year."

Johnson Is Arboretum Horticulturist

Richard Johnson, former extension associate, recently accepted the position of horticulturist at the Arboretum at Penn State.

Johnson, who has baccalaureate degrees in both ornamental horticulture and in landscape architecture from Penn State, worked for 10 years in Delaware County as extension agent for horticulture and coordinator of the

county's Master Gardener program. For the past eight years he has served as the urban extension specialist for Penn State's Pesticide Education Program based at University Park.

Prior to joining Penn State, Johnson worked for many years in private landscaping practices in southern California. He coordinated Penn State's *(continued on page 3)*

Five Get Laureate Awards. . . *(continued from page 1)*

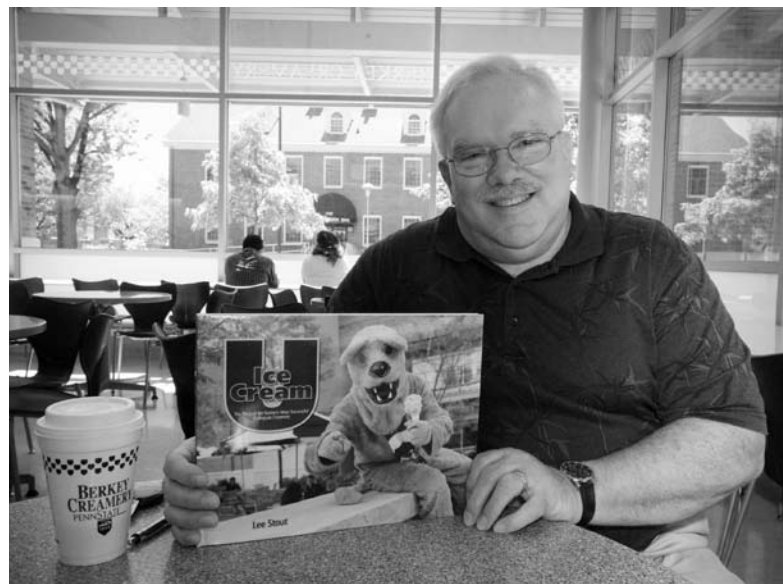
and commitment to the creamery's role in Penn State culture, education and outreach, along with a willingness to support and accommodate programs and units within the college and outside partners to promote the creamery's mission, were cited as reasons he won the award.

According to the dean's office, the recipient of the Customer Service Award, Beth Irwin, "possesses a friendly and patient demeanor with a broad clientele seeking technical support. Her virtually flawless dedication and professionalism has helped bridge the gap between members of the college and the ever-changing technology. . . ."

Joyce Cingel, the business manager of the Creamery, earned her award for being "a model for leadership." According to the dean's office, her "integrity, attention to detail and accuracy," coupled with her "outstanding personal qualities," have made her an exceptional leader.

Ann Magliaro Macrina was recognized with the Spirit Award for her encouraging, respectful and positive attitude as a laboratory supervisor, student mentor and coordinator. She earned the award because of "her ability to instill confidence and ease in students and her genuine interest in the success and well-being of her colleagues, which are qualities that create an inclusive and supportive work environment."

Randall Bock exemplifies the ingenuity, resourcefulness and awareness acknowledged by the Trailblazer Award, according to the dean's office. Promoting personnel safety at Penn State, he took the initiative to increase awareness and accessibility of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) on campus. He pioneered an educational program that has led to the installation of AEDs and the establishment of training programs in their use, first in his department and then in the college. ■



◀ Penn State University Libraries Librarian Emeritus Lee Stout takes a break during a May 15 book-signing session at the Berkey Creamery where he was promoting his "Ice Cream U: The Story of the Nation's Most Successful Collegiate Creamery."

From Dean Steele

The end of our academic year culminated with our college commencement exercises on May 16 and 17. The College of Agricultural Sciences awarded approximately 300 undergraduate and advanced degrees.

I was indeed honored to be our undergraduate commencement speaker, and incoming dean Bruce McPherson gave the commencement address at Penn State's graduate commencement ceremony.

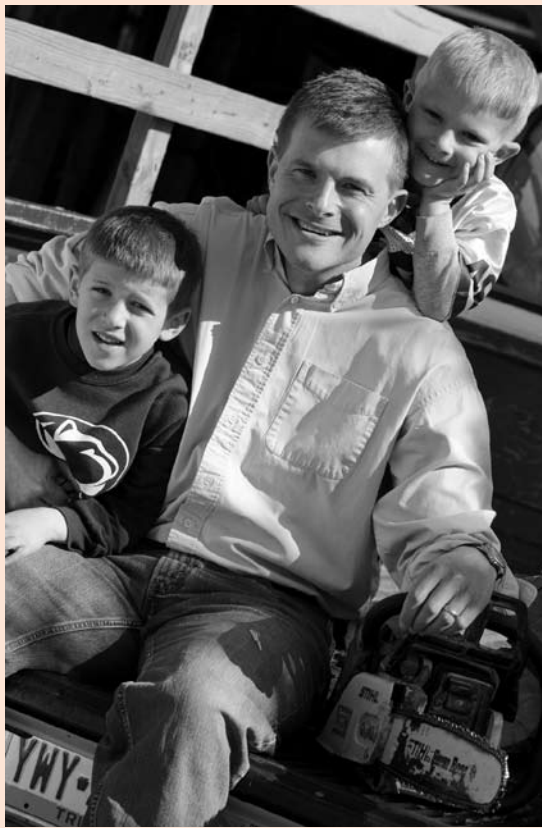
The undergraduate commencement on Saturday was followed by a brunch hosted by our college alumni society, which was attended by just under 800 graduates, their families and friends, and college personnel.

Our graduates are indeed "society ready," and we are proud of their achievements. It's hard to believe, but we are already looking ahead to our fall class of freshmen, with stable college enrollments expected.

I know that the summer brings on an array of activities that college personnel become heavily engaged in, including field work, demonstrations, fair preparations and much more. I hope that you find some time to kick back and relax with friends and family as well during the coming summer months.

As my tenure as dean of this great college draws to a close, I can't help but think back over the years to the great folks who helped make my time as dean so enjoyable. Yes, it was challenging and frustrating at times, but those days were far outnumbered by the ones that moved our college to higher success and achievement.

I would like to take this opportunity in my last column as dean to give a sincere THANKYOU for all that you do for our college and university. It has been a privilege and pleasure to serve as your dean for these past 12 years, and I wish each of you the very best in the years ahead. ■



Name: Burt Staniar

Hometown: Born in Moosup, Conn., grew up in Princeton, N.J.

Job title: Assistant professor of equine science. "I teach and conduct research in the areas of equine nutrition and metabolic regulation as they relate to reproduction, growth and athletic production."

Office: 316 Agricultural Sciences and Industries Building

Working at Penn State: Almost two years

Spouse: Stephanie

Children: Will (six), Matthew (four), and Molly (about five months). "Will and Matthew are already big Penn

State fans. Molly will be, too, but she has not quite gotten to articulating that passion."

Pets: Mojo, a Rhodesian ridgeback. "He has been with me longer than anyone and seems to wonder where the rest of the family came from and why he does not get all the attention anymore." Zoe, a bijon poodle mix. "She does not sound very tough, but I think she is the real farm dog." And Phoebe, "the cat that no one but us ever sees."

Last book read: "Atlas Shrugged." "I'm reading it for the second time in an attempt to really understand."

CD currently in your car's player: A mix of bluegrass and classic rock.

Favorite musician: Oscar Peterson

All-time favorite movie: Heaven's Gate

Favorite actor: Peter Sellers

Favorite food: Rib roast and Yorkshire pudding

Favorite restaurant or hang-out: Spats Café and Speakeasy

Hobbies: Cutting wood, working outside, riding horses

Little-known claim to fame: "I once ate a 4-pound hamburger (The Mammoth Burger)."

Thing you are proudest of: My family

How you relax: Reading, listening to music, cutting wood

Favorite part of job: "Learning something new every day."

Johnson . . . *(continued from page 2)*

exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show from 1991 through 2007.

According to Kim Steiner, director of the arboretum, Johnson will be responsible for providing curatorial and maintenance oversight to the arboretum's plant collections and gardens, organizing and coordinating the volunteer program and working with extension and resident education faculty to facilitate their use of

the arboretum for educational programs. His office will be located in the Overlook Pavilion within the botanic gardens.

"We are very fortunate in this hire," said Steiner. "Rick brings exceptional qualifications and abilities to this position, and I am certain he will help further our goal of becoming one of the nation's finest university arboreta and botanic gardens." ■

Up and Coming...

June 2-3. 17th Annual Rural Health Conference, Penn State Conference Center Hotel. Contact Office of Conferences and Short Courses, (814) 865-8301.

June 4-6. Special Olympics—Equestrian, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Hope Bratton, (814) 404-0253.

June 4. Food Defense—Prevention Planning for Food Processors, 252 Food Science Building, UP. Contact Office of Conferences and Short Courses, (814) 865-8301.

June 9-10. FFA Activities Week, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Phil Hoy, (814) 863-7872.

June 12-14. Keystone Sheep Sale, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Lori Hubbard, (814) 865-5893.

July 4. Independence Day holiday.

July 7-9. Family and Consumer Sciences Summer Workshop 2009, 252 Food Science Building, UP. Contact Office of Conferences and Short Courses, (814) 865-8301.

FACULTY/STAFF ALERTS

Campus Pedestrian Safety

Recent events in the community have emphasized the seriousness of pedestrian safety. Penn State's approach to pedestrian safety incorporates consideration for pedestrian safety during design for new construction and projects the university's Transportation Master Plan, which encourages walking, use of public transportation, reduction in large-vehicle traffic, and the integration of new buildings and access routes.

- Safe practices require pedestrians to:
- Cross only at designated crossings/crosswalks/corners.
 - Do not use mid-block crossing.
 - Remember that automobiles have the right of way on streets unless there is a stop sign/signal/crosswalk.
 - Be defensive during peak traffic times.
 - Be aware of all directions of traffic; do not assume a vehicle will stop.

June 2009 Learning Lunch—Office Safety

Do you know who to call in an emergency? How do you handle a hostile customer? What are some basic things you can do to keep yourself safe? Rebecca Bywater, coordinator of Crime Prevention and Community Education programs with Penn State University Police, presents "Office Safety" on June 10 from noon until 1:30 p.m. in Room 115 of the 329 Building in Innovation Park at the University Park campus. Video teleconference participation is available for employees outside of the University Park campus for this event. To participate from a remote location, choose the VTC session option at the online registration. You will then be contacted by Outreach Professional Development to verify your video teleconference location and contact information.

Human Resource Development Center June Programs for Ag Sciences

Penn State's Human Resource Development Center invites you to register for one of the programs listed below and bring a colleague (your colleague does not need to register in advance). To register for these programs, go to the HRDC Web site at <http://www.ohr.psu.edu/HRDC/home.cfm>.

- "Coaching Others with Courage and Patience," presenter: Diane Brown, 9 a.m. – noon on June 3 in 431 Elliott Building.
- "Service on the Front Line," presenters: Brynn Rousselin and Patricia Shope, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. on June 10, in 431 Elliott Building.

For more information, contact the Human Resource Development Center at (814) 865-8216, or by e-mail at HRDC@psu.edu.

Ag Sciences Video Teleconference Training

The college's Information Technologies unit offers on-demand video-conference training to users and those planning to use video-conferencing. The training is usually one-on-one or in a very small group. Much of it is done via video-conference to a remote

site and targets specific issues, such as connecting to the video bridge, preparing for data sharing, setting up your system after someone borrowed your cables, using the remote control, video-conference meeting-management tips, and video-conference etiquette. Other interest areas include recording your video-conference event, how to get support and service, and troubleshooting. Units desiring to learn more about the benefits and uses of video-conferencing or set-up training should contact Ron Matason at (814) 863-2662 or by e-mail at ram5@psu.edu.

ON THE MOVE

New Faces

Thomas Denagamage, research assistant in veterinary and biomedical sciences.

Katharine Symons, administrative support assistant in horticulture.

Kristi Thompson, administrative support assistant in agricultural economics and rural sociology.

Suzanne Weltman, extension educator in Philadelphia County.

Charles White, extension associate in entomology.

Partings

Maria Navarrete-Olvera, assistant extension educator in Chester County.

Ines Walther, research assistant in veterinary and biomedical sciences.

Promotions

Sara May, coordinator in the Plant Disease Clinic in plant pathology.

Paula Morgan, administrative support coordinator in dairy and animal science.

MORE ABOUT US

Birth

Madelyn Grace Miller was born on April 1 to Dwane Miller, county extension director in Schuylkill County, and his wife, Jessica Miller.

Death

Ellen K. Garber, associate professor and assistant director of cooperative extension from 1948 until 1977, died March 21 at the age of 89.

Noteworthy

Paul Patterson, professor of poultry science, was elected to the board of directors of the Poultry Science Association Foundation as a result of his election to the World's Poultry Science Association-U.S.A. Branch committee.

Gabriella Varga, Distinguished Professor of Animal Science, received the Nutrition Professionals Award from the American Dairy Science Association for her work in dairy nutrition.

William Henning, professor emeritus of dairy and animal science, received the Extension Signal Service Award from the American Meat Science Association for his lifetime achievement in meat science extension education.

Robin Kuleck, county extension director in Elk County, has received official recognition as a Certified Financial Planner after successfully completing the requirements of the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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U.Ed. AGR 09-127 3.2M5/09acg

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