Faculty and Staff Recognition

At the end of this month Sandy Spitznagle will officially be retired. She has worked in the Department of Agronomy for 46 years. She is an Agronomy Legend, has served 84 percent of the undergraduates during her time and worked with six department heads. Please join us on June 20th at the Beck Agricultural Center from 3-5 p.m. to celebrate Sandy’s many accomplishments. Thank you Sandy for your exceptional service and devotion to Purdue Agronomy.

College of Agriculture plans to grow relationship with Indian Agriculture Institutions

Several College of Agriculture faculty members, four from the Agronomy Department, traveled to India on April 29th - May 10th to establish stronger relationships with three Indian agricultural institutions.

Dr. Mitch Tuinstra, Professor of Plant Breeding and Genetics, was one of the faculty members who traveled to India. He said the group visited several different universities in Northern and Southern India but highlighted the discussions with the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bangalore; University of Horticulture Science (UHS), Bagalkot and Punjab Agriculture University (PAU). Although the College of Agriculture already has a relationship with these institutions, growing the relationship in areas of joint research, educational programs, private sector participation and joint workshops was a priority.

“Discussions are in progress to establish a joint research center with PAU,” Tuinstra said.

“PAU offers unique opportunities for Purdue researchers to work in areas of abiotic and biotic stress biology, bio and nanotechnology, advanced breeding programs, policy research on food and energy security and food and agriculture engineering. The research area of particular interest is the development of climate resilient maize genotypes based on useful traits of both temperate and tropical genotypes.”

There are others reasons to establish the joint research relationship with PAU. Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA) is located close to PAU. It is a new state-of-the-art international agricultural research and development center with a mission to bring a Second and Sustainable Green Revolution to India by developing climate resilient cultivars of wheat and maize.

Discussion of educational programs and meeting with representatives from the private sector were also tasks completed. The private sector is a leading component to the future success of Indian agriculture. The faculty members explored collaborating with many private sector partners. DuPont Pioneer and Monsanto Company have expressed interest in developing innovative educational modules to train next generation Indian plant breeders in collaboration with Purdue Research. The educational programs being explored are study abroad programs, dual degree programs and sabbatical opportunities for Purdue faculty. ICRISAT (International Crop Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropic) is also interested study abroad, research and internship possibilities with Purdue Agronomy.
**Student Highlights**

Daniel Sweeney, a junior in Plant Genetics, Breeding and Biotechnology, is highlighted in an article, “Plant Sciences Pays Dividends”, in Agricultures Magazine. The article describes the challenges of raising awareness about plant sciences to students. Read more here [https://ag.purdue.edu/agricultures/Pages/April2013/Features/Plant_Sciences.aspx#.Uae1x_WOl1F](https://ag.purdue.edu/agricultures/Pages/April2013/Features/Plant_Sciences.aspx#.Uae1x_WOl1F)

**Updates in Agronomy**

The second and third floors were painted recently, as part of the university efforts to renovate the west wing of Lilly Hall of Life Science. New windows, doors and rekeying of doors will be updated in the future.

The conference room has moved from room 2-426 to room 2-418. New TV monitors and pictures of the past ten department heads were hung in addition to the move.

Purdue Day at the State Fair is August, 9th and the Agronomy Department will have a booth. If you would like to volunteer please e-mail Sayde Uerkwitz at suerkwit@purdue.edu.

On May 30th the Agronomy Department hosted a blood drive. Over twenty people participated. The entire process of donating blood takes less than one hour and a cholesterol, blood pressure, blood type and iron check are included in the donation. The Indiana Blood Center must see 620 individuals a day to meet patient needs. Thank you to everyone who participated.

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to George and Jane Van Scoyoc on being new grandparents. Adelle Ruth Jacks was born on May 23rd around 9 a.m. She weighed 8lbs, 6 oz. Their daughter Amy and Adelle are doing fine.

Congratulations to Dan Emmert, a former grad student, and his wife Larcy on their second child.
A Look Back

Provision by
Dr. Bill McFee

Agronomy in the Sixties

The decade of the sixties was a great one for the Department. The excellent faculty that Dr. John B. Peterson (“Dr. Pete” was Head for 23 years) had hired, plus a few from the forties had matured into accomplished scientists with national and international reputations. For the first time federal grants became important sources of funds. Joe White and Phil Low won the first NSF grants received in the department for studies of clay-pesticide and clay-water interactions. Graduate enrollment expanded rapidly. Two hundred, eighty-six graduate degrees were awarded from 1960 through 1969. Involvement in international programs was strong as the Rockefeller Foundation supported graduate training at Purdue and USAID supported the institution building program at the Universidad Rural de Minas Gerais in Brazil where a number of our faculty (Kohnke, Christmas, Yahner, Spies, Bronson, and Swearingen,), worked for extended periods and Chuck Rhykerd pursued research with EMBRAPA.

In the sixties the work of Stan Barber and Al Ohlrogge settled the issue of rock phosphate versus superphosphate effectiveness in favor of superphosphate. In 1963, the record yield in the Indiana corn contests was 240 bushels/acre and the state led the nation in average corn yield. Research in the sixties included emphasis on environmental concerns such as the fate of organic pesticides, soil erosion modeling, and the creation of the Laboratory for Application of Remote Sensing (LARS). Soybean Breeding led by Al Probst was strengthened when ARS placed Jim Wilcox at Purdue and Ron Koller came on board to study soybean physiology. Protein quality in sorghum began to be studied by Bob Pickett as a result of a USAID grant, which helped to initiate the creation of the World Sorghum Collection. In 1961, 90% of the wheat in Indiana and 60% of the soft red winter wheat grown in the US had originated from the Purdue team led by Fred Patterson.

The Agronomy Club in 1962