A Note from the Department Head

Indiana winters can never be fully predicted but this year winter has certainly been interesting, with the Purdue campus, having several feet of snow, many class closings and some pretty frigid temperatures. We are all eager to see a glimpse of warmer weather, with the hope of having spring just around the corner.

Congratulations to 36 of our undergraduate students for being recognized with fall 2013 semester honors. These students took at least six credit hours, maintained a 3.5 GPA for the semester and had at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA. I am excited about their academic success and their very bright future.

In addition to the accomplishments of our undergraduates, two of our graduate students, Elizabeth Trybula and Heather Pasley, both in the environmental science and engineering interdisciplinary graduate program, were named Borlaug Fellows following a competitive application process. The U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security program housed in the Purdue University Global Food Security Center, is intended to train a new generation of interdisciplinary scientists in global food security. Trybula will conduct her research in South Africa and Pasley will conduct her research in Kenya. Congratulations Elizabeth and Heather!

These student success stories are possible because of the excellence of our faculty and staff. Sherry Fulk-Bringman is a perfect example of this excellence. Sherry was recognized as a Purdue University Momentum Maker. Our students and alumni have a special appreciation for Sherry. She works with many of our students and is often one of the first people they meet as a freshman. Her dedication to our students is why she is a momentum maker!

Another member of the agronomy family that is making a difference is Dr. Mitch Tuinstra. Mitch has been appointed as the scientific director of the plant sciences research and education initiative that is part of the Purdue Moves program. I could tell you more but I will let Mitch do that. A video about his position is on the agronomy homepage at www.ag.purdue.edu/agry.

I would like to recognize Dr. Herb Ohm for his many years of service to the agronomy department. Herb retired after 41 years as a distinguished professor working in many aspects of plant breeding and genetics with a focus on small grains. He has left a tremendous legacy with his research and education accomplishments and the key role he has had in Purdue Agronomy being one of the top programs across the world. A retirement celebration is being planned, look for more information in future newsletters.

Hopefully the next time you receive the Bulletin Board, the weather will be more favorable and I will be able to highlight more great success stories.

All the best,

Joe
Purdue Agronomy professor makes big move with Purdue Moves plant science initiative

Purdue University professor of plant breeding and genetics Mitch Tuinstra has been appointed scientific director of the plant sciences research and education initiative that is part of the university’s Purdue Moves program. The initiative, announced in September, is among 10 targeted programs designed to develop more research and educational opportunities for students and broaden Purdue's global impact. Learn more and watch a video about the Purdue Moves plant science initiative here: www.ag.purdue.edu/aganswers/Pages/archive.aspx?story=491#.UvpOc_ldXmd

College of Agriculture professors make strides with sorghum

Purdue University researchers have confirmed the long-held hypothesis that sorghum deters insects from feeding on its leaves by releasing hydrogen cyanide. Mitch Tuinstra and Brian Dilkes found that insects preferred the leaves of a mutant sorghum plant with an abnormally slow release of cyanide to those of a wild-type sorghum plant with a normal cyanide-release rate. Fall army worms fed on the leaves of the mutant sorghum even though the leaves contained similar levels of dhurrin - the chemical compound responsible for synthesizing hydrogen cyanide - as those in normal sorghum plants. Find out more here: www.ag.purdue.edu/aganswers/Pages/archive.aspx?story=464#.UvpPVPlldXmd

Dr. Herb Ohm Retires

After 41 years as a professor and advisor in the Purdue Agronomy Department, Dr. Herb Ohm retired in December. Herb was part of many world recognized research opportunities. He worked in many aspects of plant breeding and genetics with a focus on small grains. Herb strived to build relationships with many international small grains research programs, which helped grow the diversity of the agronomy department. During his time at Purdue he advised and mentored 65 graduate students, many of which have had notable careers. In 2004 he was named a distinguished professor of agronomy and from 2009-2010 served as interim department head of the Purdue Agronomy Department.

Agronomy staff member recognized as a Purdue Momentum Maker

Many agronomy students and alumni have a special appreciation for Sherry Fulk-Bringman. She works with over 160 students in AGRY 255 / AGRY 270 each semester as the coordinator in the Soils Resource Center. She also is involved with the Agronomy Club and Agronomy Ambassadors. She is a great example of a momentum maker. View the full interview here: www.purdue.edu/momentummakers/2014_01/bringman.html
Bulletin Board

Student Recognitions

Many agronomy students recognized with semester honors

- Lori Nussbaum, SCRS
- Martha Kille, SCRM
- Jada Powlen, TURF
- Uday Mitsuyasu, PLGB
- Matthew Shafer, TUSM
- Daniel Sweeney, PLGB
- Cody Hornaday, CPSC
- Michael Samm, SHSC
- Matthew Dudley, TUSM
- Rachel Sim, SCRS
- Jing Wang, SHSC
- Arthur Franke, SUAS

- Elizabeth McGaughey, SUAS
- Kathryn Graf, SUAS
- Aaron Dunajeski, PGBB
- Lucas Krizon, SUAS
- Michael Busche, PGBB
- Hailey Edmondson, PGBB
- Quentin Sengers, SHSC
- Houston Miller, SUAS
- Valerie Cross, PGBB
- Nicholas Rohlf, SUAS
- Baily Altman, SUAS
- Angelina Sii, SCRS

- David Kittle, SUAS
- Cameron Hardin, APMT
- John Hettinga, SCRS
- Alex Helms, SUAS
- Jeremy Logrono, PLGB
- Andrew Katz, PLGB
- Aaron Powers, SCRS
- Andrew Wilhelm, TURF
- Allison Streeter, APMT
- Cora Carter, IAGR
- Laura Muntzinger, SCRM
- Russell Pitts, CPSC

Congratulations to Heather Pasley and Elizabeth Trybula on being named Borlaug Fellows. Find the full list of fellows here: [www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/food/borlaugfellows/Fellows/index.php](http://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/food/borlaugfellows/Fellows/index.php)

Borlaug Fellows

ACS Grad Student Award

Michael Mashtare was awarded the ACS Environmental Chemistry Graduate Student Award.

Andrews Blosser Travel Grant

Saerom Park and Youn Choi, both ESE-AGRY Ph.D. students received the Andrews Blosser Environmental Travel Grant to present at the 20th World Congress of Soil Science June 8-13 in Jeju Korea.
Working in international outreach and agricultural development is something a Purdue Agronomy alumna has wanted to do since she was a child. Her degree from Purdue has allowed her to live that dream. Adrianne Huber, BS ’12, majored in international agronomy. She grew up on a hog farm in south eastern Pennsylvania. Although her agriculture influence started on the family farm, she also had a passion for international mission work.

“I always had a desire to work internationally,” Huber said. “I can remember writing a paper in first grade about what I wanted to be when I grew up. I wrote about working in agriculture, teaching and doing something internationally. That is exactly what I am doing.”

Huber works as a missionary for Eastern Mennonite Missions. She is one of five people who are stationed in Guinea Bissau Africa.

“I live in Catel, a very small village in Guinea Bissau. Out of the five missionaries I am the only person teaching agriculture. Our goal is to teach and train the residents of the village the work we do. Right now I have three local interns working with me to learn conservation and other agriculture practices. I will also conduct training seminars with the locals.”

When it was time for Huber to attend college she was drawn to Purdue for many reasons, one being the international agronomy major.

“During my college search I found that many agriculture colleges don’t offer an international major. When I found that Purdue did, I knew I had to visit. Once I toured the agronomy department I felt very welcome and appreciated the family atmosphere. I was also drawn to the international population on the Purdue campus. I felt like the major had everything I wanted and Purdue offered many opportunities other colleges didn’t.”

Dr. George Van Scoyoc, Huber’s academic advisor, said the international agronomy major is very important for students who have a passion like Adrianne.

“Some students who learn early that their passion lies in international work can find the international agronomy major is the right fit for them. In the major they focus on training, obtaining international experiences and developing international expertise. This major has brought a number of outstanding graduates to this campus. The students have the passion and the course work structures their future success.”

Completing her bachelor’s degree in three years, Huber felt her senior year came very quickly. She had to decide what her future was going to look like. She looked into attending graduate school, but decided to pursue employment.

“I called Eastern Mennonite Missions to hear their stories,” Huber said. “I wanted to know more about mission work and thought this would be a great place to start. During this conversation I had the opportunity
to explain my passion. By the end they encouraged me to apply to an open position they had. I never thought I would end up in Africa, but I am glad I did.”

In addition to her outreach work, she also works very closely with women in the village.

“Women in Catel don’t have a lot of free time to learn new practices. I will spend time with them by participating in their daily activities. These moments are a great time to build relationships and teach. These moments can transpire into great success. I was invited to help start a women’s community garden. Each woman would get their own plot and raise a variety of plants. Through this I am planning an array of training seminars.”

Although Huber does not live on U.S. soil, she still keeps in touch with the Purdue Agronomy Department.

“The relationships I built at Purdue are very important to me and I want to keep them strong. Experience is the only thing that can really prepare you to live in a new culture, but my degree from Purdue made me ready to accept the new experiences.”

Van Scoyoc added that he had no doubt Huber was ready for international work.

“Adrienne took many opportunities during her time as an undergraduate to be involved with international work. She traveled to Mexico as a freshman, Uganda twice before graduating and was heavily involved with international groups on campus. Her degree in international agronomy prepared her for the agronomic portion of her mission work.”

Agronomy alumni recognized at Famous Purdue Agriculture Alumni Fish Fry

William E. Kuhn was recognized with a certificate of distinction at the Purdue Ag Alumni Fish Fry. Kuhn received his B.S. in agronomy in 1968. After earning his M.S. and Ph.D. he began his stunning career with Pioneer Hi-Bred International.
Purdue Agriculture Alumni Fish Fry offered networking opportunities before and after the program

The Purdue Agriculture Alumni Fish Fry was held on February 2nd at the Indiana State Fairgrounds. Many alumni of the College of Agriculture have been to the fish fry at least once. This year attendees were able to network with exhibitors before and after the program. Purdue Agronomy was able to highlight many accomplishments including the Soils Team recent win and three videos recently developed. The Why I am videos take a look into the passion that drive our faculty members in their research, education and extension work. This year nearly 1,500 people attended the event. Mark your calendars for February 7, 2015 to attend the Famous Purdue Ag Alumni Fish Fry.

Plant Sciences Social held at Lafayette Brewing Company; offered social and educational discussion
New Arrivals

Welcome Elaina Casteel

Elaina Ruenell Casteel was born January 30th at 7:17 a.m. She was 7 lbs. 4 oz. and 19 inches long. It was a quick labor, except for the last stretch. Thus, she was in nicu for three and a half days but recovered wonderfully. She eats & sleeps like a champ! Congratulations to the Casteel's on their new bundle of joy.

Welcome Josephine West

Josephine (Josie) West was born February 4th. After 19 hours of labor she arrived at 3:14 a.m. weighing in at 7 lbs. 4 oz. and 19 3/4 inches long. Congratulations to Alicia and Dan on their new addition, as well as Grandpa Terry and Grandma Diana.
In Loving Memory

Dave Kniola Passes at 60

David A. Kniola, 60, of Lafayette, passed away at 11:30 a.m. on December 31, 2013 at IU Health Arnett Hospital. He was born January 9, 1953 in Michigan City, Ind., he was the son of Valeria (Jasniewski-Marciniak) Kniola of Trail Creek, Ind. and the late Max A. Kniola. David attended Indiana, Ball State and Purdue Universities. He was a turf specialist and greenhouse manager at Purdue University for 30 years.

David enjoyed volleyball, walleyball, cycling, softball and horseback riding. He was an avid lover of dogs and had rescued many. He loved golf and was the former superintendent at Long Beach Country Club. He loved landscaping and gardening.

Surviving with his mother are his siblings, Debbie Irk (husband, Tom) and Mark Kniola (wife, Cindy) both of Michigan City, Ind. and Jeff Kniola (wife, Pat) of Fishers, Ind.; three nieces, Jennifer Kmitta (husband, Andy), Amber Wanke (husband, Matt) and Katy Kniola; four nephews, Michael Irk (wife, Brier), Adam Kniola, Matt Kniola and Carson Kniola; and several aunts, uncles, friends, Biology students and colleagues. He was preceded in death by his grandparents.

John Yergler Passes at 65

John Yergler, 65, of Fishers, Ind., passed away on December 3, 2012. John was born in Bluffton, Ind. on January 24, 1947 to parents, Robert E. and Carolyn J. (Baumgartner) Yergler. He was a graduate of Stranahan High School and earned his undergraduate degree from Florida Atlantic University. He was awarded the M.S. degree in agronomy from Purdue University under the direction of Dr. Pete Bauman in 1981. During his career, John worked in various capacities for Eli Lilly including Team Leader, Auditor in Toxicology and as a FDA Compliance Trainer. John loved baseball and was a huge Cubs fan. He also loved music, traveling and was very artistic. He was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and The Society of Quality Assurance, where he was a past president of the Board of Directors. John is survived by his wife, Margaret Yergler.
It is fun to discover that the use of “telelecture technique” in AGRY410 was noteworthy for the annual report 37 years ago. Computer simulation of photosynthesis was being introduced in AGRY 105. The Ph.D. requirement for a foreign language was dropped. The Department had 106 graduate, 83 domestic and 23 foreign students. Important research results reported included Ohm and Shaner work on slow leaf rusting in wheat; Koller and Nafziger work on partitioning photosynthetic products in soybeans; discovery of uncoupled water in Palygor-skite by Serna, VanScoyoc, and Ahlrichs. The December, 1976 and May 1977 graduates included such renowned individuals as Gebisa Ejeta (M.S., Axtell), Darrell Norton (M.S., Franzmeier), Gary Steinhardt (Ph.D., Franzmeier), Jack Fenwick (Ph.D., Blair) and Eileen Kladivko, (M.S., Nelson). The report listed research grants awarded that exceeded $5000. Recipients included Ohlrogge (3), Patterson, Swearingin, Shaal, Low, Barber, Axtell, Sommers (3), Lechtenberg, McFee, Wiersma, Swartzendruber, Nelson, Mannering and Glover. Important new instrumentation included the Varian AA-6D, Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer and a new Perkin-Elmer 180 IR Spectrophotometer enabling some interdepartmental work with Etzel and Diamond in CE and Hem in the College of Pharmacy. That was the year Extension initiated the 4-H Plant Science Jamboree, coordinated by B J Hankins, became more involved in interagency committee work on non-point pollution control, and published “Irrigation of Field Crops in Indiana” (ID 119, J V Mannering, E Carson and R Wheaton). The National Weather Service–established the Midwest Environmental Service Center in the agronomy department with Walt Stirm in charge. Faculty changes that year included the loss of Koert Lessman to become Head at New Mexico State and the additions of Assistant Professors Gary Steinhardt and George VanScoyoc. It was a good year under the leadership of Department Head Marvin Phillips, Dean Richard Kohls and Associate Deans Hilst, Diesslin,