It seems like 2014 went by fast. Each year is filled with exciting announcements, cutting edge discoveries and of course good food, friendship and fellowship. As the semester comes to a close and we approach the holiday season, I would like to take a moment and thank the faculty, staff, students and alumni for supporting the department and making it an outstanding piece of Purdue.

This newsletter continues to tell the story of student and faculty success such as undergraduate participation in the Students in Agronomy, Soils and Environmental Sciences that is held each year at the American Society for Agronomy annual meeting. The students were outstanding competitors and several were elected to leadership roles in the national organization. This leadership starts with our faculty being role models such as Dr. Sylvie Brouder with her selection to serve on the EPA science advisory board. This is an indication of excellence in their scientific discipline as well as the leadership Purdue Agronomy faculty provide regionally, nationally and internationally.

While we are serious about our science, we also enjoy getting together outside of the workplace. The graduate students and faculty had a great evening together tasting 11 different chili recipes and numerous desserts at the annual Chili Cook-Off! You will see some pictures and highlights further on in the newsletter.

You will also see an award Ken Sheeringa received. He is highlighted because of his extraordinary service but also as a reminder to us of the dedication of our staff. They are a key part of this department and without their expertise we would not be one of the top Agronomy Departments in the world.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season and I am looking forward to being able to tell more success stories in 2015.

Boiler Up!

Joe
The Purdue Agronomy Club attended the annual Students in Agronomy, Soils and Environmental Sciences (SASES) meetings in Long Beach, California. Many members competed in various competitions and were elected to leadership roles within the national organization.

- **Bailey Altman, Taylor Sigman** and **Michaela Turner** placed fourth in the poster contest.
- **Cody Hornaday**, placed second in the speech contest.
- **Alex Helms, Carl Joern, Cody Hornaday** and **Valerie Cross** were on the Quiz Bowl Team. The team placed first. (Pictured above)
- **Alex Helms, Carl Joern, Joe Atha, Kole Kamman** and **Cody Hornaday** competed in the inaugural crops contest.
- **Kerri Swingley** placed second and **Valerie Cross** placed third in the Visual Presentation Contest.
- **Kole Kamman** and **Livia Rebeirio** were the selected voting delegates for the club.
- **Michaela Turner** was elected Corresponding Secretary
- **Kerri Swingley, Taylor Sigman** and **Jamie Hans** will serve as National Contest Committee Chairwomen.

Scott Beck, vice president of Beck’s Hybrids, stands with the 2014 Beck Foundation Scholarship recipients. The scholarship is awarded to the top overall freshman, sophomore and junior in Purdue Agronomy. The recipients are (from left) Michael Busche (junior), Kathryn Graf (sophomore) and Hailey Edmondson (freshman).

**Alex Renaud reflects on his visit to India**

When given the opportunity to travel to India to work on heat tolerance in maize, I leaped at the prospect. I was excited by the potential for professional development and the chance to experience a different culture. My visit was part of the Heat Tolerant Maize for Asia (HTMA) collaborative project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development Feed the Future Initiative.

The project supports graduate students in plant breeding to learn about and contribute to completing initiative objectives. HTMA is a public-private partnership (PPP) led by CIMMYT-Asia. Partners include Purdue University, Pioneer Hi-Bred and other seed companies and public sector maize programs in South Asia. To read the full story visit: [www.blog.cimmyt.org/student-reflection-my-visit-to-cimmyt-hyderabad-india/](http://www.blog.cimmyt.org/student-reflection-my-visit-to-cimmyt-hyderabad-india/)
Agronomy student places third in pedology competition

Minerva Dorantes placed third in the oral competition at the 2014 SSSA Pedology Student Presentation Competition for her paper entitled "A Semi-Automated Model to Improve Positional Accuracy of Soil Survey Pedons of Indiana." Her accomplishment was recognized with a certificate and cash prize of $50.

Chili Cook-Off Competition

Every year our graduate students organize the Annual Chili Cook-off and the participants compete for the title of Chili Champion. Peter Kovacs has claimed the title for the fourth year in a row. Trevor Frank placed second and Darrell Schulze placed third. Shaylyn Wiarda dominated the dessert portion of the competition for the second year in a row. Amanda Cichosz placed second, and Brad Thada was third.

Faculty and Staff

SSSA Soil Science Education Award goes to a Purdue Agronomy Faculty member

Darrell Schulze received the Soil Science Education Award from the Soil Science Society of America at the annual meeting in Long Beach, California.

Faculty member joins EPA's Science Advisory Board

Sylvie Brouder, has been invited to join the Environmental Protection Agency’s chartered Science Advisory Board. Her term will run through September 2017. The Science Advisory Board is charged to review the quality and relevance of the scientific and technical information being used by the EPA or proposed as the basis for Agency regulations; review EPA research programs and plans; provide science advice as requested by the EPA Administrator, and advise the agency on broad scientific matters.
Faculty and Staff Cont.

25 years of service recognized

Ken Scheeringa has been recognized for 25 years of service as Site Operator of the National Atmospheric Deposition Program - station IN41. IN41 is one of hundreds of stations across the USA that collects weekly samples of rainfall for chemical analysis. Ken usually makes visits every Tuesday to the ACRE weather station to change out the white collection bucket and the rainfall strip chart. The station was installed in 1982 and he has been the operator since 1989. Ken measures 25 years as changing buckets over 1,200 times and traveling 16,000 miles between campus and ACRE - which is 3,000 miles short of traveling around the globe. Unlike a globe trip, he saw the same scenery.

Welcome to Purdue Agronomy

Purdue Agronomy welcomes Bonnie Kauffman to the department. She started as a teaching staff secretary on November 17. Bonnie spent the majority of her career at Purdue working in the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, but most recently was a secretary in Discovery Park.

Welcome to the Agronomy family

Congratulations to George and Jane Van Scoyoc on the arrival of their newest grandchild. Knox Van Scoyoc was born on November 17 at 7:48 a.m. weighing 7 pounds and 9 ounces. Clearly happy grandparents!