



# AG SCIENCES 2009

A Monthly Newsletter for the College of Agricultural Sciences

March 2009

## News in Brief

### Students Get Farm Show Scholarships

Eleven students in the college were among 23 who were awarded scholarships by the Pennsylvania Farm Show Scholarship Foundation during the show this year. Since 1993, the foundation has awarded scholarships to young people who are registered in a post-secondary educational institution and who have exhibited livestock at the Farm Show. Since 2005, the college has matched the Farm Show scholarship money awarded to students enrolled in the college. The amount of this year's scholarship is \$3,750, bringing the total with the matching program to \$7,500.

For more, visit the Web at <http://live.psu.edu/story/37151>.

### Managing Money in Tough Times

Penn State Cooperative Extension is teaming up with other land-grant universities to help people manage money through tough times with a Web site that harnesses the knowledge of financial experts across the country.

The extension site, "Financial Security: Managing Money in Tough Times," can be found at [http://www.extension.org/financial\\_crisis](http://www.extension.org/financial_crisis).

### Garden Plots Available

The Sustainable Agriculture Club and the Center for Sustainability are opening an organic community garden for the 2009 season. The garden is located off Porter Road near Lubrano Park, with 10-by-15-foot plots available for a \$20 membership fee.

Students, faculty and community members may participate. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until the garden is full, or until March 7. For an application visit <http://www.clubs.psu.edu/up/sac/communitygarden.html/online>.

## Frederick Gildow Is Named Head of the Plant Pathology Department

Frederick Gildow, professor in Penn State's Department of Plant Pathology, has been named head of the department, effective immediately. He succeeds Barbara Christ, who assumed the post of senior associate dean in the college in January.

"Fred Gildow is the embodiment of the land-grant scholar," says Robert Steele, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences. "Over the past 25 years, his research has generated knowledge that has placed him at the forefront in combating major plant-disease outbreaks in Pennsylvania and nationally, and his skill in the classroom has led to his recognition as one of our finest teachers. We're delighted to have someone of his experience and caliber to lead the Plant Pathology Department."

Gildow received his bachelor's degree in zoology and master's degree in botany from Ohio University and his doctor-

ate in plant pathology from Cornell University. From 1980 to 1983, he was assistant professor of plant pathology at the University of California at Berkeley.

He joined the Penn State faculty as assistant professor of plant pathology in 1983, advanced to associate professor in 1989 and achieved the rank of full professor in 1998.

Gildow's research focuses on plant virology and insect transmission of plant viruses, with an emphasis on virus transmission by aphids. During the early 1990s, he collaborated with Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture scientists to tackle an emerging tomato spotted wilt virus epidemic in vegetable and ornamental greenhouses.

More recently, he worked with state and federal agriculture officials to identify the primary aphid vectors of plum pox

*(continued on page 3)*



▲ Frederick Gildow

## Familiar Faces

**QUESTION:** What's your biggest concern about the downturn in the economy?



**Herb Cole, professor emeritus of plant pathology**

"The future of the United States. I think the county is in a most difficult situation. We're currently a debtor nation

and we will be struggling to survive if we do not deal with the problems that we're facing now."



**James Howell, program coordinator, Toxicology, Immunology and Infectious Disease majors**

"In the short term, I'm most concerned about students being able to get

placements and good positions where they can start their careers."



**Sharon Pishak, research support assistant in horticulture**

"My biggest concern is how it's going to affect me in a couple of years as far as retirement. And

I also worry about how it's going to affect my adult children and their jobs in the next few years."



**Sherry Taylor, staff assistant in agricultural and extension education**

"My biggest concern is the loss of jobs and how it's going to affect everyday Americans and

being able to find employment—not only becoming unemployed but being able to gain employment."



**Kathryn Brasier, assistant professor of rural sociology**

"Impacts on families—especially those that are already on the edge, falling further into poverty."



**Haijun "Daniel" Wu, graduate student in agricultural engineering**

"I hope after graduation that I can find a job and at least work here for a couple of years and

then go back to China. But now, with the economy crushed, no company is waiting to take international students."

## Extension Gets 'Keeping Pa. Growing' Award from PDA at the Farm Show

Penn State Cooperative Extension was recognized with the state's "Keeping Pennsylvania Growing" award at the recent 2009 Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg.

Extension was one of five award recipients, which included Hanover Shoe Farms, H & J Weinberg Food Bank, the Swain School, and Rice Fruit Company. Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Dennis Wolff said the awards emphasize how the agriculture industry is incorporating cutting-edge technologies and the many ways agribusinesses are infusing the state's economy with jobs and capital investments while contributing to a safe food supply.

"These awards were designed to encompass Pennsylvania organizations that each offer different, yet equally significant, contributions toward improving and growing every aspect of agriculture—from production and food safety to education and service," said Wolff. "Pennsylvania is fortunate to be home to such a wide-ranging group

that is so committed to improving and growing our state's number one industry."

Daney Jackson, director of Penn State Cooperative Extension, said the award is, in part, an acknowledgement of extension's contributions to making Farm Show a success. "The efforts by our faculty and staff over the years have made it possible for Cooperative Extension to be recognized for this partnership award by the Agriculture Department," he said. "It's an appreciation of our commitment to agriculture and our leadership at the local, state and regional level."

Penn State Cooperative Extension is a strong partner with the Department of Agriculture and a significant, often behind-the-scenes, supporter of the Pennsylvania Farm Show. During the Farm Show, extension helps host exhibits, activities and contests; coordinates competitive exhibits; prepares students and adults for competitions; helps with publicity; and teaches visitors about agriculture, family living and consumer sciences. ■

## Whiting Center Creates Indigenous Knowledge Endowment at Penn State

Penn State has received \$50,000 from the Marjorie Grant Whiting Center for Humanity, Arts and the Environment to create the Marjorie Grant Whiting Endowment for the Advancement of Indigenous Knowledge.

According to Ladislaus Semali and Audrey Maretzki, co-directors of the University's Interinstitutional Consortium for Indigenous Knowledge (ICIK), earnings from the endowment will be used to develop interdisciplinary courses; fund indigenous-knowledge-related research, education and outreach efforts of faculty and graduate students; and support visiting scholars and lectures.

The consortium is a collaborative initiative of the College of Education and the College of Agricultural Sciences. Maretzki, professor emeritus of food science and nutrition, says the Whiting Endowment has been established at Penn State because of ICIK's efforts to illustrate

the synergy between academic and indigenous knowledge systems and to enhance communication and collaboration between local communities and the academy.

Indigenous knowledge is an emerging area of study that focuses on place-specific ways of knowing, seeing and thinking that may reflect many generations of observation, experimentation and innovation in everything from agriculture, animal husbandry and child-rearing practices to education, medicine and natural-resource management.

Penn State is part of a global network of more than 20 indigenous knowledge resource centers and is the only center currently active in the United States. Deanna Behring, director of the college's Office of International Programs, where the Whiting endowment will be housed, notes that a Penn State faculty committee will advise on the use of endowment earnings. ■

## From Dean Steele

The month of February brought us snowy, cold weather and a budget proposal for the commonwealth and Penn State from Governor Rendell. The budget that the governor proposed to Pennsylvania's General Assembly, for the seventh year in a row, presents a major challenge for all university lines, including the agricultural research and agricultural extension funding lines.

The proposal calls for a 6 percent cut in our base research, extension and teaching budgets. It is true that governors propose budgets and the General Assembly is the body that finally passes and sends the bill to the governor for final approval; however, given the exceptionally uncertain economic times we find ourselves in, it is difficult to imagine that the situation will improve before it gets even worse.

Although any cut is a challenge, all one needs to do is read the newspapers and see how many states and universities are in much worse shape than we are here at Penn State.

As I write this column (President's Day), President Obama is about to sign the stimulus bill, which will result in significant funds for Pennsylvania. A word of caution, however, is that these funds are ONE-TIME funds and will do little if anything to help our base budget situation at Penn State. With the passage of the stimulus bill, the Congress will get to work formulating and passing a budget bill for the current fiscal year and prepare to go to work on the budget bill for the next fiscal year soon after President Obama presents his FY09/10 budget proposal.

There is much to do in the months ahead, and we in the college and at Penn State are hard at work to build support in the Legislature for our programs. We will need your help in having the university and its advocates speaking with one strong and effective voice. We will keep you posted on developments as they occur, both at the state and federal levels.

Finally, the current student-recruitment season is in full swing, and once again, our college numbers at this juncture continue to be strong. Many thanks to those of you at University Park, in our county extension offices and elsewhere for your great work in helping us to make our young people aware of the exciting programs in our college and the exciting job and career opportunities that await them. ■



**Name:** Robert Snyder (goes by Bob).

**Hometown:** Hagerstown, Md. "I grew up 10 miles west of Hagerstown, in the village of Fairview, near the Conococheague Creek."

**Job title:** Research support assistant. "Besides being lab manager, I also do field research, greenhouse research, maintain the labs, operate lab analytical instruments, microscopy, mentor grad students, supervise wage payroll assistants, place orders for lab supplies and equipment."

**Office:** 219 Tyson and labs in 213, 312 and 4 Tyson.

**Working at Penn State:** 18.5 years (more than 17 years in the Department of Horticulture).

**Spouse:** Barbara Snyder (formerly Barbara Anderson from Minot, N.D.)

**Family:** Two nieces, one nephew, two great-nephews, one great niece and one great-great-niece.

**Pets:** Two cats, Kitty Carlisle (15 years old), Caesar (12 years old) and a shih

tzu dog named Pepper (nearly 14 years old.) "We are good old friends! They kept me company while I was at home (and Barb was working) for two months before and after thyroid cancer treatment."

**Last book read:** *Ravens in Winter* and *The Trees in My Forest*, both by Bernd Heinrich.

**Favorite music currently on your iPod:** BirdJam, bird songs and other helpful facts to aid in bird identification, some classical music and some folk music.

**Favorite musician:** "I'd have to say Beethoven, but I still have a soft spot for the Moody Blues and Eric Clapton."

**All-time favorite movies:** "'African Queen' and all 10 'Star Trek' movies (good or bad, I like them all), and I'm looking forward to the May 2009 release of 'Star Trek XI.'"

**Favorite actor:** "Don't really have a favorite, but Humphrey Bogart fits the bill, as well as Jimmy Stewart, and Patrick Stewart is very versatile."

**Favorite food:** Heirloom dried beans/homemade vegetable beef stew.

**Favorite restaurant or hang-out:** "My favorite restaurant was the Gamble Mill (but I haven't tried it since the ownership changed) and the Mt. Nittany Inn."

**Hobbies:** Photography, birding, canoeing, hiking and gardening.

**Thing you are proudest of:** "My photography."

**How you relax:** "Photography is like meditation for me, and I really enjoy working with my images on Photo-shop. But I also like dining out with my wife, when we get the chance."

**Favorite part of job:** "Problem solving, and working with grad students and visiting scholars and post docs from all over the world."

**How you relax:** "Read, garden and take the dog for walks."

## Gildow Named Head of Plant Path . . . (continued from page 1)

virus—a new invasive pathogen in Pennsylvania—and verified a method of transmission through infected fruit. This research provided critical information needed to develop control strategies for plum pox, which could decimate Pennsylvania stone fruit crops, such as peaches.

Gildow teaches several undergraduate and graduate courses and is faculty advisor for the Plant Pathology minor. He won the Department of Plant Pathology Teaching Award in 2008 and the Gamma Sigma Delta Outstanding Teaching Award from the college in 2007. ■

Up and Coming...

**March 3-4.** Mid-Atlantic Specialty Crop Research Initiative workshop, Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey, Harrisburg, Pa. Contact Conferences and Short Courses, (814) 865-8301 or go to <http://conferences.cas.psu.edu>.

**March 7-8.** 4-H Horsemanship Skills Clinic, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Pat Comerford, (814) 863-3657.

**March 9-12.** Lumber Grading Conference, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Mike Powell, (814) 863-1113.

**March 14-15.** Winning Ways Quarter Horse Clinic, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Pat Comerford, (814) 863-3657.

**March 17.** Saint Patrick's Day.

**March 20-22.** Spring Judging Contest, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Dale Olver, (814) 863-3914.

**March 28-30.** Beef Exposition, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Glenn Eberly, (814) 238-2527.

**April 4.** Spring Bargain Fling, Ag Arena, UP. Contact Dale Olver, (814) 863-3914.

FACULTY/STAFF ALERTS

**Bicycle Use on Campus**

Bicycles are not permitted on any sidewalks along any campus road. Also, bicycles cannot be parked inside University buildings. A map showing approved and unapproved campus biking areas can be found on the Transportation Web site at <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/bicycles/#>. For more information, please refer to Policy SY16: Regulations for Bicycles/Mopeds/Skateboards/Scooters/In-Line Skates/Roller Skates/Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Devices at <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/SY16.html>.

**Outstanding Office Professional Award**

The Penn State Educational Office Professionals is seeking nominations for the 2009 Outstanding Office Professional Award. The award annually recognizes administrative support employees who have provided exceptional meritorious service on behalf of Penn State, and could present an additional

opportunity this year to thank them in light of overall budget constraints. The recipient will be recognized at PSEOP's annual reception to be held in May and will be presented with a \$200 cash award, a gift, a framed certificate and a one-year membership in PSEOP. Two honorable mentions also will be selected; each will receive a \$50 cash award, a framed certificate and a one-year membership in PSEOP. All current Penn State office support staff (except officers and board members of PSEOP) with a minimum of three years of full-time university service, or three years participation as a wage-payroll employee, are eligible. Nominees will be evaluated on professionalism, initiative, leadership skills, self-improvement and volunteerism. Nomination forms can be found at the PSEOP Web page at [http://www.psu.edu/org/PSEOP/oopa\\_type.pdf](http://www.psu.edu/org/PSEOP/oopa_type.pdf). Nominations are due no later than March 31. For more information, contact Shelby Hoy at (814) 863-1864 or [slh4@psu.edu](mailto:slh4@psu.edu).

ON THE MOVE

**New Faces**

**Katherine Ellis**, associate extension educator in Adams County.

**Kevin Harvatine**, assistant professor in dairy and animal science.

**Matthew Mercer**, assistant extension educator in Lancaster County.

**James Remcheck**, extension program educator in Adams County.

**Chanda Ritchey**, administrative support assistant level 1 in Clarion County.

**Michelle Stewart**, administrative support assistant level 2 in Clarion County.

**Partings**

**Susan Giachero**, extension educator in Berks County.

**Katheryn Lesser**, assistant extension educator in Adams County.

**Jill Oettinger**, associate extension educator in Union County.

**Erika Stover**, administrative support assistant level 2 in horticulture.

**Tammy Zeigler**, senior sales-room attendant in the Berkey Creamery.

**Promotions**

**Frederick Gildow**, department head in plant pathology.

**Wendall Landis**, complex manager in dairy and animal science.

MORE ABOUT US

**Births**

Madelyn Robitaille Brown was born on Aug. 24, 2008, to **Nicole Robitaille Brown**, assistant professor of wood chemistry, and husband **Stephen Brown**, a research engineer in the University's Applied Research Laboratory.

Ainslee Mae Bruce was born on June 15, 2008, to **Jacklyn Bruce**, associate professor of agricultural and extension education, and husband, **Danny Bruce**, a doctoral candidate in Pathobiology.

Eli Patrick Rushton was born on July 4, 2008, to **Mya Rushton**, 4-H Teen Program Manager, and **Geoff Rushton**, assistant news bureau manager with University Relations.

**Deaths**

**Walter Johnson**, associate professor of forest products from 1973 until his retirement in 1992, died Jan. 1 at the age of 79.

**Richard D. Schein**, professor emeritus of plant pathology from 1955 until his retirement in 1985, died Jan. 3 at the age of 81.

**C. Marshall Ritter**, professor emeritus of pomology from 1952 until his retirement in 1983, died Jan. 3 at the age of 85.

**Noteworthy**

**Jan Scholl**, associate professor of agricultural and extension education, received the Family and Consumer Science Scholarship in Honor of Helen Bell from the Pennsylvania Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. The award is named in recognition of Bell, a Penn State professor emerita of home management extension. The scholarship will provide support to complete historical research on Martha Van Rensselaer, the earliest extension family and consumer science educator.

Scholl and **Patreese Ingram**, associate professor of agricultural and extension education, presented a paper at the 13th World Conference in Education of the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction in Antalya, Turkey.

Their paper, "Exploring Clothing from Cultures Around the World," was a 4-H clothing curriculum to increase understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures.

**John Floros**, professor and head of the Food Science Department, was appointed to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Science Board. The board advises the FDA's commissioner and other officials on complex and technical issues as well as emerging issues within the scientific community, industry and academia. Additionally, the board will provide advice to the agency on keeping pace with technical and scientific evolutions in the fields of regulatory science, on formulating an appropriate research agenda and on upgrading its scientific and research facilities to keep pace with these changes. Floros' term will run through 2013.

**Sanford Smith**, lecturer in the School of Forest Resources, was elected to a two-year term on the national board of the Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals (ANREP) representing the northeastern U.S. region. He will serve on the planning committee for the 2010 national ANREP meeting in Fairbanks, Alaska. Smith also was one of 30 individuals selected to participate in a National 4-H Think Tank on "Re-connecting Youth to Nature." The meeting, sponsored by USDA, was held at the Biosphere 2 near Tucson, Ariz.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901, Tel 814-865-4700/V, 814-863-1150/TTY.