

### ADVISING CENTER NEWS

By Paige Thomas

The Department of Horticulture Scholarship Committee met on Tuesday, May 20th to make scholarship award recommendations for the 2008-2009 academic year. The committee awarded \$140,587 to undergraduate students in the department. Thanks to all the faculty who helped with this process by completing the recommendation forms that shared their opinions about individual Horticulture and Landscape Contracting students. The faculty comments were very helpful. Thanks to Rich Arteca, Martin McGann, Kathy Kelley and Paige Thomas who attended the meeting on May 20th. And a BIG THANKS goes to Erika Stover who helped organize materials the committee needed for the meeting.

### Rise and Shine!

Everyone seemed to enjoy the potluck breakfast we had in Headhouse 1 last summer. It was a good time to meet, and find out who the good cooks in the department are! So, we're having another one on June 20 at 8:30. The sign up sheet is at Erika's desk in the office, stop by to sign up! Tracey H, Tiffany S, and Rich M - we're looking forward to your casseroles!

### SAVE THE DATE...

After 30 years with the department Kenny Myers will be retiring on July 18. Please mark your calendars to join the department celebrating Kenny's retirement on Friday, July 11, more details to come.



### Cellar Market

The Cellar Market is now open for the season. Stop by and see what the Market has to offer. Open on Wednesdays from 12:00 to 5:30 p.m.

### Calendar of Events

#### June 8-10

- 50th Annual Mushroom Short course

#### June 13

- submit doctoral thesis for format review

#### June 14

- Flag Day



#### June 15

- Father's Day

#### June 16

- Submit master's thesis for format review

#### June 19

- Late Drop - Deadline

#### June 20

- Activate intent to graduate on eLion  
 - First Day of Summer  
 - Department Breakfast

#### June 23-26

- Bug Camp for Kids

#### June 27

- Withdrawal deadline  
 - Classes end, 1st six week session  
 - pass doctoral defense

#### June 28-29

- Study days

#### June 29

- Arrival Day - new students, 2nd six week session

#### June 30

- Final Exams, 1st six week session

## Rich's Reflection...

Each spring I attend the NCAC-4 meeting. This is a North Central regional project for Horticulture Department heads and we have an administrative advisor just like other regional projects. We meet on a different campus each year for a day and a half to discuss issues of concern to all of us. Attending this meeting has given me a broader perspective of how things are done at other universities and we often get a tour of the host department's facilities. One department was recently reviewed and the review team indicated that there was too little communication between the department head and the department, so he now sends out a memo every Friday to tell the department what he did during the week. I don't want to get that detailed, but since nobody in the department really knows what I do, I thought I would write a monthly column in this newsletter to let you know some of the things I am involved with.

Some interesting topics were discussed at the NCAC-4 meeting and a couple of trends seem to be emerging for Land Grant Universities that you might want to be aware of. First, there is a trend toward hiring all faculty on 9-month appointments. In some cases, the appointments of tenured faculty are being converted to 9-months with a 20% salary reduction. Sometimes the change is voluntary, but sometimes not. At one university there is an expectation that faculty members on 9-month appointments will work 11 months and they are expected to generate the other 20% of their salary. In other words, the university expects people to earn salary for 11 months, but the university will only pay them for 9 months. Another trend is toward merging departments to form a "division". This usually occurs when a series of budget cuts have prevented departments from making new hires. Through attrition the departments become relatively small, so they are merged to create a critical mass. However, there are situations where moderate sized departments were merged in an attempt to enhance interdisciplinary cooperation. Most of these divisions are too large for one department head to adequately manage (50 to 70 faculty members). In some cases associate heads help out, but in other cases things just fall through the cracks. Combining departments creates real problems for a few years, especially when faculty are located in more than one building. Simply combining people from different cultures and with limited common interests is not enough to encourage collaborative work. Most of us feel that few barriers exist that prevent members of different departments from working together, so merging departments does little to encourage interdisciplinary cooperation.

Two final issues are common to all of our departments. First, student enrollment in the Plant Sciences continues to decline. We have discussed this issue previously, but no one has found a way to reverse the trend. For many years, there has been a program at the University of Minnesota Arboretum for K-6 grade to teach kids about science and ecology using plants. This seems like a great way to introduce kids to plants, but the department head at U of M indicated that as far as he knows none of their students participated in the program when they were children. The final item we discussed was the lack of attendance at departmental seminars. Interestingly, this seems to be a wide-spread problem, but no one had a good solution. During the next few weeks we will try to develop a strategy for improving attendance. Over a cup of coffee, Marvin Pritts at Cornell University, and I agreed that we would cover the expenses of sending a graduate student to each other's department once a year to present a seminar – this should be a great experience for the students and for the departments.

## Happy Birthday



Arthur Gover	June 3
Eric Nord	June 4
Jonathan Lynch	June 6
Quanying Du	June 9
James Burridge	June 10
Diane Rudy	June 15
Jay Holcomb	June 17
Matt Kinkade	June 30



**Elsa Sanchez** has been awarded promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.

**Dave Sanford**, Associate Professor of Horticulture at Berks campus has received "Outstanding Advising Award" and "Outstanding Service Award" for his work at Berks campus.

**Beth Mathie** successfully passed her thesis defense on May 14, she is advised by Jay Holcomb.

**Kevin Mueller**, Ph.D. candidate in Ecology, for his notification of the NSF grant "The influence of tree species on soil organic matter dynamics in temperate forests." Kevin is co-advised by David Eissenstat and Kate Freeman (Geosciences)

**Taryn Bauerle**, Ph.D. 2007 Horticulture, for her upcoming new position as Assistant Professor in Horticulture at Cornell University in Ithica, NY.

**Jonathan Phillips**, MS 2005 Horticulture, was awarded the 2007 Kenneth Post Award for Graduate Research in Floriculture for his paper entitled "interest in Value-added Planters: Consumer Preference and Current Grower and Retailer Perceptions" in HortTechnology 17(2):238-246. Jonathan was advised by Jay Holcomb and Kathy Kelley

## ***From the Climate Committee***

Hello everyone. The Climate Committee met recently to discuss ideas to make the atmosphere in the department even better. Some ideas we're going forward with are below.

### **Giving Back to the Community**

There are people in our community who are struggling with the high price of food. We'd like to kick off the summer months by starting a quarterly food collection to donate to the State College Food Bank. Starting next week, boxes for items will be placed in the mail room. Then during the week of June 16 we'll deliver the box to the Food Bank. Items that are in need include creamed soups, laundry soap, bath/hand soap, tomato soup and tomato products (sauce, paste, diced tomatoes, etc.), canned green beans or peas, boxed cereals, granulated sugar and/or sugar supplements (no confectioner's sugar), mayonnaise/salad dressing such as Miracle Whip, and coffee (regular and decaf). Also, with the July 4th holiday coming up soon condiments like ketchup and mustard, powdered lemonade, baked beans, marshmallows, paper plates, napkins, plastic silverware, plastic or paper tablecloths and chips are also needed. Grocery store gift cards (any denomination) are also welcome. For fun, this month, we'll have separate boxes in which to place your items based on whether you work with edible crops (e.g., vegetables or fruit), or non-edibles (e.g., green industry). If you don't fall in either category you can pick which box you would like to contribute to. On June 16, we'll weigh the items and announce the winning team in the next newsletter.

### **Lights Out**

One idea that we'd like to pursue is doing our part to save energy and the planet by turning off lights when not needed. You may have noticed lights off in the rest rooms and mailroom. On most occasions, the light from the windows is sufficient. So, if you notice the lights on in these rooms, please turn them off. To take this idea a step further you might consider turning off the lights in your office when you head to the rest room or mailroom.

### **Go Spikes!**

We're also planning an evening at a Spikes baseball game on July 18. We did this a couple of years ago and had a great time. It was well attended, we had a great time and the Spikes won. Erika will send out more details about this later.

### **Something's Cooking!**

On August 29th, we're planning a "welcome back" lunch-time barbecue, so mark your calendars. Watch for details in the newsletter as plans develop.

### **Free Morning Break on Hold for the Summer**

The monthly department Social Hour has been going on for awhile. These will be discontinued briefly for the summer, and resume in September so we can catch up on what happened during the summer. Once a month the department provides a free light breakfast in the basement lunch room for members of the department. It's a great time to meet up with colleagues while enjoying juice and a bagel.

### **Wednesday Lunches...**

For those of you looking for alternatives during your lunch break, every Wednesday this summer, the Bryce Jordan Center holds its summer cookout from 11am to 2pm, rain or shine. Costs range from \$2 for individual items to \$8 for "all you can eat"