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## Agronomy & Horticulture Newsletter, January 13, 2012

Kathy Schindler

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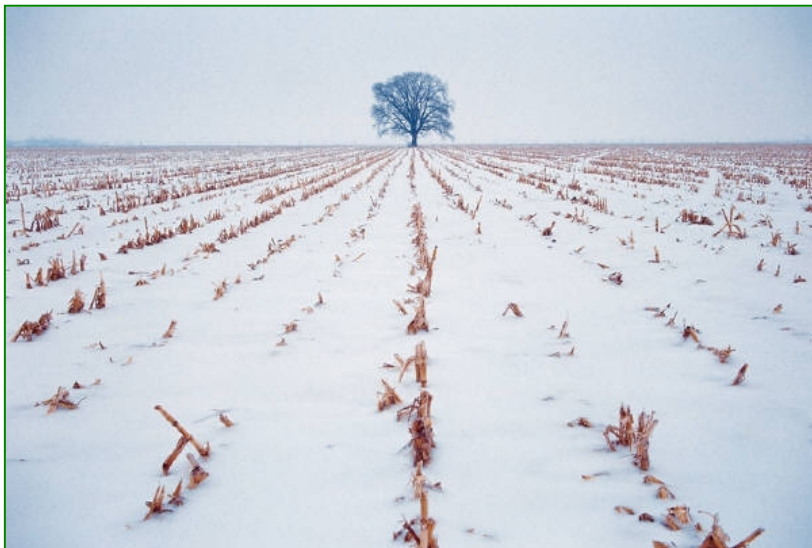
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*Happy New Year to all our employees, students and friends! Many Nebraska corn fields are snow covered like the one pictured above.*

### Shafer Honored with Retirement Reception

Everyone is invited to a retirement reception for Sam Shafer, Facilities Coordinator for the UNL Agronomy and Horticulture Department. After 19 years of working for the department, Sam is retiring and has plans to spend more time with his family. A reception will be held Friday, Jan. 27, 2012, from 3:30–5 p.m., in the Cottonwood Room, Nebraska East Union.

### Green Plans Two Informational Sessions

IANR Vice Chancellor Ronnie Green has invited all faculty and staff to two open sessions at the Nebraska East Union (NEU) this spring.

The first event is on Monday, Jan. 23, at 3 p.m., NEU, when there will be a session to discuss international efforts, opportunities, and collaboration in Brazil with faculty, staff, and students at the University of Sao Paulo-ESALQ. Potential collaboration opportunities exist in food science and technology, plant and animal sciences, bioenergy, and water resources management.

The second event is Friday, Feb. 10, 2–4 p.m., NEU. This will be the IANR ALL HANDS session for the spring semester, which focuses on the major progress that IANR is making (including updates on the IANR to 2025 effort). There will be a cookies and ice cream reception beginning at 2 p.m. with the session formally starting at 2:30 p.m.

### Mark the Date!

**Jan. 13:** Dept. Seminar “An Industry Perspective in Plant Breeding – Graduate Student Training and Where is the Industry Going?” with Clint Turnbull, Monsanto, 3:30 p.m., refreshments at 3 p.m.

**Jan. 15-18:** Plant & Animal Genome XX Conference, San Diego, Calif.

**Jan. 16:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Offices closed & no classes held.

**Jan. 16:** Nominations due for Holling Family Teaching Excellence Award.

**Jan. 17:** Crop Production Clinic in Ainsworth.

**Jan. 17:** Heuermann Lecture with Stewart Brand, 7 p.m., Hardin Hall, refreshments following.

**Jan. 18:** Crop Production Clinic in Norfolk.

**Jan. 19:** Crop Production Clinic in Fremont.

**Jan. 19:** UNL Agronomy Club Chili Cook-off, 11 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Come eat for \$4 at the Nebraska East Union or enter your own chili to compete for a \$30 first place prize. Deadline to enter is Jan. 17. E-mail [agro.chilicookoff@gmail.com](mailto:agro.chilicookoff@gmail.com).

**Jan. 20:** Dept. Seminar, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, “Changes in Aggregate Protected Soil Organic Matter After Conversion from No-Till to Conservation Deep Tillage” with Ana Wingeyer. Refreshments precede the seminar at 3 p.m.

**Jan. 23–25:** Nebraska Green Expo, Mid-America Center, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

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## Schacht Returns from Fellowship in Namibia

By Walt Schacht



I received a Fulbright Fellowship to join the faculty in the Departments of Agriculture and Nature Conservation at the Polytechnic of Namibia in Windhoek, Namibia from January to December 2011. I conducted research and developed grant proposals focusing on interactions of perennial plants (woody plants and grasses) and soil water that influence bush encroachment on semi-arid grasslands and savannas. This research addresses the critical concern of bush encroachment in southern Africa and deals with many of the same questions that we are researching in the Nebraska Sandhills. I also taught three undergraduate courses in range science, natural resource management, and research methodology at the Polytechnic of Namibia. The Polytech has a student population of about 13,000 and offers diplomas, B.S., and M.S. degrees in most of the major disciplines, including agriculture and nature conservation.

My wife, Carol, traveled to Namibia with me and consulted the Rector (President) and upper administration of the Polytech in team building, strategic planning, and talent identification. We both thoroughly enjoyed being engaged in a growing and dynamic educational institution that recognizes its leadership role in developing the future of Namibia and southern Africa.

Namibia itself is a fascinating country with a diversity of ecosystems, wildlife, and people. Namibia has a unique and successful approach to managing and marketing their natural resources geared towards ecotourism and trophy hunting. This approach makes “Africa” accessible to visitors (mostly Europeans and South Africans)—we took advantage of it and made numerous trips through Namibia.

## Interviews Set for Department Position

The department is interviewing candidates for a **Weed Management Specialist** (50 percent research/50 percent extension faculty position in Agronomy and Horticulture). Below are details for the candidate seminars.

- January 23: Dr. Amit Jahla; Seminar 9–10 a.m., Rm. 150 Keim, 1:15–2 p.m. visit with faculty 279M PLSH;
- January 27: Mr. Sam Wortman; Seminar 9:30–10:30 a.m. Rm. 150 Keim, 10:45–11:45 a.m. visit with faculty 279M PLSH;
- January 30: Dr. Rakesh Godara; Seminar 9–10 a.m., Rm. 150 Keim, 10:15–11:15 a.m. visit with faculty 279M PLSH; and
- February 1: Dr. Avishek Datta, Seminar 10–11 a.m., Rm 150 Keim, 11:15–noon visit with faculty 279M PLSH.

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**Jan. 23:** IANR Discussion & Information Session on international efforts in Brazil with the University of Sao Paula-ESALQ, 3 p.m., Nebraska East Union (NEU).

**Jan. 26:** Orientation session for UNL's new email system, Outlook 2010, 11 a.m., NEU.

**Jan. 27:** Retirement Reception for Sam Shafer, 3:30–5 p.m. Nebraska East Union. Everyone is invited!

**Jan. 27, 2012:** Department Seminar, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, “Organellar Influences on Sorghum Phenotypes: Evaluating the Potential for Breeding the Epigenome” with Roberto De la Rosa. Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**Jan. 30:** Orientation session for UNL's new email system, Outlook 2010, 11 a.m., NEU.

**Jan. 29–Feb. 3:** Society of Range Mgt. 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Spokane, Wash.

**Feb. 3:** Department Seminar “It takes a Village to Teach Pesticide Safety,” with Clyde Ogg, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim. Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**Feb. 6–9:** Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) Annual meeting, Hilton Waikoloa Village, Waikoloa, HI.

**Feb. 10:** IANR All Hands session, 2–4 p.m., Nebraska East Union.

**Feb. 10:** Dept. Seminar “Positive Effects of Strong Rooting in Irrigated Corn Which Better Utilizes Soil & Water Resources” with Mike Peterson, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**Feb. 17:** Dept. Seminar “In Search of the Holy Grail: Annual Bluegrass Control in Turf,” with Zac Reicher, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

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## 'Backyard Farmer' ratings reach all-time high

Ratings for "Backyard Farmer," reached an all-time high last May.

"Backyard Farmer" is a popular public television garden show that airs from April through mid-September each year.

According to Brad Mills, the show's producer, May sweeps reached 23,500 households across the state. The show had averaged 14,000 households since 2007.

The show features a panel of experts who provide research-based answers to gardening questions about insect pests, fruits and vegetables, turf and landscape design. Several Department of Agronomy & Horticulture faculty members serve on the panel or provide special features to the show. For more information, visit the website at <http://byf.unl.edu/>.



Host Kim Todd (above center in red), is joined by UNL Extension faculty (counter clockwise) Fred Baxendale, Amy Timmerman, Sarah Browning, Jim Kalisch, Dennis Ferraro, Zac Reicher, and Roch Gaussoin. Also helping with the show but not pictured above are Loren Giesler, Elizabeth Killinger, and Lowell Sandell.

## Welcome to our new Computer Technician



Please welcome Warren Werner to the department as our new microcomputer support associate. Warren started before the winter break and has been training with Information Services (I.S.) and Alan Walker.

Warren previously worked as an I.S. Tech/LAN administrator at Tenneco Automotive in Seward. He attended Concordia University in Seward and Concordia University in River Forest, Ill. where he studied computer science, communications, and commercial art. He graduated from Wall High School, Wall, S.D., and is the son of the Rev. John and Martha Werner.

His hobbies include amateur radio, photography, computers, electronics, movies, anime (Japanese animation), cars/trucks/motorcycles and music (listening & playing). He plays guitar, trumpet and piano and likes a variety of music (especially blues and rock). Warren enjoys shooting sports particularly pistol and rifle target shooting. He is currently serving on the board of directors of the Lincoln Amateur Radio Club.

Warren can be reached at 402-890-5648, [wwerner2@unl.edu](mailto:wwerner2@unl.edu), or in 368 PLSH.

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**Feb. 24:** Dept. Seminar "Look What is Blowing into Nebraska: Pesticide Application Technology Research at the WCREC," Greg Kruger, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**March 1–3:** 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Nebraska Winery & Grape Growers Forum & Trade Show, Kearney Holiday Inn, Kearney, Neb.

**March 2:** Dept. Seminar "Precision Farming Technologies for the Determination of Soil Water and Nitrogen Interactions Across Nebraska Landscapes" with Tim Shaver, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, refreshments at 3 p.m.

**March 9:** Dept. Seminar "Trends, Limits and Outlook of Turfgrass Genetic Resources" with Keenan Amundsen, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**March 16:** Dept. Seminar "Grazing Strategies and Rangeland Health in the Nebraska Sandhills" with Jerry Volesky, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**March 18–25:** Spring Break, UNL offices are open but no classes.

**March 30:** Dept. Seminar "Seed Enhancement – Principles & Practice," presented by John Eastin, Kamterter Products LLC, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**April 3:** Plant Breeding Symposium, 8 a.m.–5 p.m., Nebraska East Union.

**April 6:** Dept. Seminar: "Nebraska Crop Improvement Association – Past to Present!" with Steve Knox, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**April 13:** Dept. Seminar: "Bush Encroachment in Namibia, Southern Africa" with Dr. Walt Schacht, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

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## Live Healthy Neb. Challenge starts Jan. 23

Three new teams have been formed within the department for the Live Healthy Nebraska 100-Day Challenge. The program runs from Jan. 23–May 1, 2012, and the objective is to increase wellness, exercise, and good eating habits of our employees. Participating individuals record the minutes of their daily activities and exercises. These activities may include jogging, walking, playing the Wii, housework, etc.). To read or learn more about the program, see the website at <http://livehealthynebraska.org>.

## Heuermann Series offers Food for Thought

Biotechnology's role in agriculture to help feed the world and meet the challenges of climate change is the topic when Stewart Brand, a recognized voice in environmental issues since the 1960s, delivers the fourth Heuermann Lecture. Brand will speak Tuesday, Jan. 17, at 7 p.m. in Hardin Hall, 33<sup>rd</sup> & Holdrege, Lincoln, on "Green Ag Biotech." A reception will follow his speech.

The Heuermann Series focuses on providing security in the areas of food, natural resources, and renewable energy, and securing the sustainability of rural communities. The sessions are open to the public and made possible through a gift from B. Keith and Norma Heuermann of Phillips, Neb. For more information, see the announcement at <http://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/ianrnews/740/4441>.

## Sympathy offered to Jeanette Gorz family

The department extends our sincere sympathy to the family of Mrs. Jeanette Gorz. Mrs. Gorz passed away Friday, Dec. 30, 2011, and funeral services were Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2012, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 510 South 33<sup>rd</sup> St., Lincoln. Mrs. Gorz is the wife of Dr. Herman Gorz, faculty emeriti at the Department of Agronomy & Horticulture. Memorials may be made to the church. To send sympathy cards to Dr. Gorz, please contact the department office or check the Lincoln phonebook for his address.

## Sympathy extended to Donald Janssen family

Our sympathy goes out to the family of Donald E. Janssen, who passed away Dec. 11, 2011 in Lincoln, Neb. Funeral services were Dec. 15 at Grace Lutheran Church in Lincoln. Don earned a BS in Agronomy and an MS in Horticulture and Forestry at UNL. He was an extension educator in Horticulture with the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service. Memorials may be made to NETV and/or the Lincoln Food Bank.

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**April 17:** CASNR Week Lunch on the Lawn, 11 a.m.–1 p.m., NEU.

**April 20:** Dept. Seminar: "Food, Farm and Fitness: Agricultural Productivity, Nutrition and Health in Ethiopia" with Dr. Martha Mamo, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, Refreshments at 3 p.m.

**April 27:** Department Seminar "Sclerotinia Resistance in Soybean: The Impossible Dream?" with George Graef, 3:30 p.m., 150 Keim, refreshments at 3 p.m.

**May 4–5:** Graduation.

## Orientation Sessions Set on Email Change

Orientation sessions for UNL's new email system, Outlook 2010, begin this month. There are two sessions on East Campus that both start at 11 a.m.: 1) Jan. 26 and 2) Jan. 30. The orientations are free and open to all faculty and staff.

The sessions discuss the basic tasks for mail, calendar and contacts. There will also be an orientation to use Lync for instant messaging. A Question & Answer (Q&A) session will follow to ask questions about specific features used in Lotus Notes and how to accomplish these tasks using Outlook. For more information about the migration, visit the Office 365 Email Migration home page at <http://is.unl.edu/emailhome>.



## Information For and About Graduate Students

Every year The Nature Conservancy awards up to five graduate students with a Weaver grant award. The program provides direct grants of \$1,000 to graduate students whose research is focused on the ecology and conservation of Great Plains biodiversity. This grant was started in 1995 with an endowment fund established by Ron and Judy Parks. For more information, contact Mardell Jasnowski at the Eastern Nebraska Project Office in Aurora at 402-694-4191 or [mjasnowski@tnc.org](mailto:mjasnowski@tnc.org).

Applications are being accepted for the 2012 Gerald O. Mott Award. This award recognizes top-notch graduate students pursuing advanced degrees in crop science disciplines. Two \$2,500 scholarships will be offered. Application materials should include a CV, letter of recommendation from the advisor, and a student's statement of achievement and activities in the areas of academics, research and teaching contributions, leadership accomplishments, service activities and personal qualifications. These materials should be sent to Marlene Busse, [mbusse1@unl.edu](mailto:mbusse1@unl.edu), by noon on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2012.

There is an opportunity for UNL graduate students to attend a Marker-Assisted Plant Breeding short course June 5-8, 2012, at the University of Minnesota. Students may be able to earn independent study credit through UNL. For more information, contact Dr. Aaron Lorenz, 472-5361, or [alorenz2@unl.edu](mailto:alorenz2@unl.edu).

## A Word from Your Office Professionals

UNL's Mileage Reimbursement rate on or after Jan. 1, 2012, will remain the same at \$.555 per mile, according to Marc Chauche, assistant vice chancellor for Financial Services. UNL adheres to the federal mileage reimbursement rate.

The Offices Associates can help faculty and lecturers with classes and events throughout the semester. This includes organizing courses on Blackboard, arranging meetings and field days, creating or helping create presentations, planning lunches, making travel arrangements, and ordering supplies. Contact Kathy Schindler, 2-1508, [kschindler1@unl.edu](mailto:kschindler1@unl.edu), for assistance or more information.



## In the News

- ❖ Assistant turf grass and genetics professor Keenan Amundsen and graduate student Scott Dworak were featured in the UNL and IANR news for their work using robotic helicopters to conduct aerial crop research. To see the entire article, see: <http://ianrnews.unl.edu/static/1112091.shtml>.
- ❖ Professor Ken Cassman and post doc Patricio Grassini were highlighted in the Today@UNL news for their research showing that Nebraska's irrigated corn is highly efficient when using energy, water and fertilizer. To read more on their research, see the website at: <http://newsroom.unl.edu/announce/todayatunl/870/5265>.

## W-2s Are in Firefly

Benefit-eligible employees, who have access to Firefly, can see their 2011 W-2s via that online system. Grad Students, non-benefit temporary workers and student workers will only have access to their printed 2011 W-2 which they will receive via the US mail in the upcoming weeks.

## Check for Funding

Visit UNL's Office of Sponsored Programs website for funding announcements at <http://www.unl.edu/research/sp1/> under "Funding Opportunities." These announcements are compiled from funding opportunities offered by federal funding agencies, private foundations, and additional entities. To subscribe to Funding Announcements, contact Nathan Meier (472-1808 or [nmeier2@unl.edu](mailto:nmeier2@unl.edu)).