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Agronomy & Horticulture Newsletter, September 5, 2012

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University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Department of Agronomy and Horticulture

Agronomy and Horticulture Newsletter

September 5, 2012

Students win awards at 2012 North Central Weed Science Society Contest

Eleven UNL students competed in the 2012 North Central Weed Science Society Summer Contest, held at Larned, KS on Aug. 9. The contest consisted of a written problem solving test, weed identification, team sprayer calibration section, unknown herbicide identification and individual problem solving sections.

Participating Agronomy and DPH Graduate Students included Cody Creech, Laura Dotterer, Connor Ferguson, Chad Hermelbracht, Dori Ostantowski, Kenny Roche, Evan Sonderegger and Rodrigo Werle. Agronomy Undergraduate Students included Renato Marques, Leo Perez and Greg Rentschler.

The following awards were won: 3rd place Overall Graduate Team (Dotterer, Ostantowski, Roche and Werle), 1st place in the Team Sprayer Calibration Section (Dotterer, Ostantowski, Roche and Werle), 3rd place Overall Individual Undergraduate (Rentschler) and 3rd place Overall Undergraduate Team (Perez, Marques and Rentschler).

Let's congratulate these students on the time and work they put into preparing for this contest. Advisors are Lowell Sandell and Greg Kruger.

Staff Advisory Committee Promotes Awards

Outstanding Employee Award available

The Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) will be providing information in the upcoming issues of this newsletter about employee awards available at UNL. The IANR Outstanding Employee Award (OEA) recognizes employees who on an ongoing basis go above and beyond their job responsibilities. It is available to managerial/professional and office/service staff and awarded four times a year in March, June, September, and December. Each recipient of the OEA Award will receive $750, a certificate, lapel pin, letter from the UNL Vice President/IANR Vice Chancellor, and recognition in the "Leading Object" newsletter. To review the nomination form, see additional information and rules as well as the past recipients list, go to ianrhome.unl.edu/web/ianr/oea. Please consider nominating a deserving employee in the Agronomy and Horticulture Department for this award. The next nomination deadline is Nov. 1.

Mark Your Calendars!

Sept. 5: Biotechnology/Life Sciences Seminar Series, Dr. Brian A. Larkins, E103 Beadle Center, Reception 3:30 p.m., Seminar 4 p.m.

Sept. 7: Yeutter Distinguished Visiting Professor Lecture Series, William J. Davey, Hamann Auditorium, College of Law, 3:40 p.m.

Sept. 11: Chancellors State of the Union Speech, Awards Recognition and university-wide picnic, Lied Center.

Sept. 12: Big Idea Seminar–Visual Resources and Scenic Landscapes, James Palmer, Reception 3:30 p.m., Seminar 4–5 p.m., Nebraska East Union (NEU)

Sept. 20: Wellness on Wheels, 150 Keim, 7–9 a.m.

Oct. 4: CASNR Career Fair, NEU, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. This is part of a 3-day Career Fair Oct. 2–4, 2012.

Oct. 15–16: UNL Fall Break. No classes but offices are open.

Oct. 21–25: ASA, CSSA, SSSA Annual Meetings, Cincinnati, Ohio. Registration runs June 19–Sept. 12. Details at www.acsmeetings.org.

Nov. 7: SAC Meeting, 10:30 a.m., 279 PLSH.

Nov. 22–25: Thanksgiving Break.

Dec. 10: Agronomy & Horticulture holiday luncheon, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m., NEU.

Dec. 14–15: UNL Graduation.

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SAC Considers HR Evaluation Forms

The Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) met on August 29, with all members present! John Dillingham came as our guest representing Human Resources (HR) to help us more thoroughly understand the evaluation process.

Samples of evaluation forms used at three other universities were provided by Mike Livingston for our review. John gave a brief history of the current evaluation process and mentioned that IANR has another form, which our department does not use that he will provide for our review. He also mentioned that IANR is in the midst of redesigning the evaluation process and forms, but that is not expected to be completed for three to five years. Lengthy discussion was held about the forms and other concerns surrounding the evaluation process and ways to make it fair and equitable. Even within our department, multiple forms are being used. SAC members are going to review the forms provided and the IANR form and come to the next meeting ready for further discussion.

Susan Thomas brought a listing of many awards that are available for employees, including a list showing which departmental employees have received these awards in the past. She will be providing brief explanations of the various awards and their requirements and deadlines as an ongoing addition to the newsletter. Historically there have been some intradepartmental awards with small cash amounts attached; the department head will be asked about possibly reinstating the funds for this type of award.
A subcommittee of SAC, with some faculty members added, would be in charge of making these awards.

Aaron has redesigned the staff directory web page to include spaces for a picture and job titles (including area). He will be contacting staff about getting updated pictures and information as many of the current pictures are quite old. New pictures can be taken in the Goodding if staff members do not have an up-to-date picture they want used.

A digital suggestion box has been added to the departmental website's main faculty/staff page http://agronomy.unl.edu/facultystaff. Submissions are confidential; you may include your name and contact info, but none is automatically collected. Suggestions will go to the Ombudsman who will pass them along to the appropriate recipients.

Other items: Cheryl reported that the directory boards in Keim are in the process of being produced and are expected to be ready soon. The non-functioning kiosk has been removed from the lobby of Plant Sciences Hall. Problems with the currently posted emergency maps were pointed out and will be brought to TJ's attention. The next SAC meeting was scheduled for Nov. 7, 10:30 a.m.

Please watch for a new SAC webpage that will soon be available and will contain the SAC's full meeting minutes.

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Dec. 17: IANR Staff Holiday Luncheon, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., NEU.

Dec. 24, 2012–Jan. 2, 2013: UNL Holiday closedown.

Jan. 8–10, 2013: Nebraska Turf Conference, LaVista Conference Center.

Feb. 18–19, 2013: Nebraska Great Plains Conference, Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln.

Feb. 28–March 2, 2013: Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Forum and Trade Show, Holiday Inn, Kearney.

In the News

Dr. Walt Schacht was featured in the Daily Nebraskan in an article about his year in Africa. www.dailynebraskan.com/news/unl-agronomy-professor-investigates-changing-african-landscape-1.2753423#.UD511KA2fzh.

Department Head **Roch Gaussoin** was featured in a Lincoln Journal Star article about how lush lawns ever become the norm in what early explorers described as the Great American Desert. See: journalstar.com/special-section/drought/why-did-we-start-putting-in-lawns/article_d3d1ce1b-79c3-59c9-a5d9-abe2fab3eb07.html.

Kim Todd was featured on Channel 10/11 news Tuesday on how the drought prevents fall colors and drives trees into early dormancy. See: http://www.1011now.com/home/headlines/Drought--168559086.html.

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News for and about Graduate Students

Congratulations to the following graduate students who were awarded fellowships for the 2012–2013 academic year from CASNR/ARD.

Milton E. Mohr Fellowship–Laura Snell, advised by John Guretzky.

Shear-Miles Fellowship–Christina Bavougian, advised by Paul Read and Tadele Radesse Kumssa, advised by P.S. Baenziger.

Al Moseman Fellowship–Mon-Ray Shao, advised by Sally Mackenzie.

Hardin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship–Malachy Campbell, advised by Greg Kruger and Harkamal Walia.

Widaman Distinguished Graduate Assistant Award–Scott Dworak, advised by Roch Gaussoin, Dante Placido, advised by Harkamal Walia, and Christopher Proctor, advised by Zac Reicher.

Graduate students are welcomed back to school at a reception on Aug. 17.

Wellness on Wheels coming Sept. 20

The UNL Wellness Department will be bringing the Wellness on Wheels program to East Campus on Thursday, Sept. 20 at 150 Keim Hall. This will be an opportunity to receive free health screenings, with the exception of blood profiles that cost $25, and learn about healthy living. Visit one or all of the booths. There will also be a chance to win prizes. You can attend at any time between the hours of 7 and 9 a.m. RSVP by Sept. 10 to Erin at ebauer2@unl.edu or Aaron afranco2@unl.edu if you are interested.

We will need at least 10 participants in order for the event to take place, so we encourage everyone from the department to take advantage of this great opportunity.

World's best blueberry pancakes

We would like to thank Pancake Chef Les Korte for the homemade blueberry pancakes he provided the department in August. They were absolutely delicious. The blueberries were homegrown from his garden. You will often find fresh vegetables from his garden in the 202 Keim kitchen area. Les is a Research Technologist in the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, working with the soybean research group, and has spent many years serving the department. Thanks again Les!

Read to lead study trip

Dr. Paul Read, Professor of Agronomy and Horticulture, will be leading a group of UNL undergraduates and graduates on an Agriculture and Natural Resources Tour to Australia, Dec. 25–Jan. 14, 2013 for AGRI 310. This two-week program introduces participants to agriculture on the island of Tasmania and explores how farming practices intersect with wildlife preservation and conservation. Highlights include visiting a lavender farm, forest tree nursery, berry farm, dairy and Tasmania's forests on the Tahune Forest Airwalk. For details, contact Dr. Read at 2-5136.

News from the HAPPI Business Center

Transportation reminders and updates

The annual ASA/CSSA/SSSA conference is coming up soon. Here are a couple of reminders for your trip:

1. Travel Authorizations are due a minimum of two weeks prior to travel.
2. Please get an itemized receipt for each meal and remind your students to do the same.
3. Tip reimbursements are capped at 20 percent.
4. If travelers share a room or expenses they need to turn in their reimbursement requests at the same time.
5. The Office Professionals and the HAPPI Business Center are available to help make travel arrangements and answer your travel questions.

Leave Requests May be Linked to Calendars

When approving leave requests, approvers can add the leave as a reminder to their own calendars. Updated functionality now allows additional options, such as the reminder to be placed within the actual time on the approver's calendar.

Office Pros news and updates

Fran Benne

Please welcome Fran Benne as a new Office Associate in the Department of Agronomy & Horticulture. Fran started working with the Office Pros in 279 PLSH on Aug. 13, 2012.

Prior to coming to work for the university, she worked as an Art Director/Graphic Designer at Snitily Carr, an advertising agency here in Lincoln. Fran earned her bachelor's degree in journalism in the advertising sequence from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

Away from the office, Fran enjoys running, gardening, boating, fishing and hunting. She also is involved with the Extension Master Gardener program. She lives in Lincoln with her husband Jeff, daughter Sawyer and stepson Jared. Fran is originally from Arapahoe, Nebraska.

Celebrating 150 years

The Morrill Act brought into being Land-Grant Universities, making education more affordable to all people, educating them in agriculture, home economics, mechanical arts, and other professions practical at the time. Join in the many activities scheduled for the week of Sept. 23–29, celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Morrill Act. Check online at landgrant.unl.edu for a schedule of events and updates.

Lost Cart Sought

The Office Professionals are currently seeking a gray cart that was lost at the end of July. If you know where this cart is, please return it to 279 PLSH or contact Kathy Schindler, kschindler1@unl.edu, so she can retrieve it.

Newsletter Details

To submit news or announcements for the Agronomy & Horticulture newsletter, please contact Fran Benne, fbenne2@unl.edu, or Kathy Schindler, kschindler1@unl.edu.

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