MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first edition of our Department newsletter!!! In our strategic plan we identified that communication among the various members of Plant Agriculture needed to be improved. Our Department newsletter will hopefully help us to come to know and understand more about the dynamic people that make up our new Department. I am very grateful to all of you who contributed ideas and stories to this first edition. A special "round of applause" to Deb Hilborn for spear-heading this project.

This coming year will be filled with opportunities and challenges for the Department. I am looking forward to implementing the new initiatives outlined within our Departmental Strategic Plan. These initiatives will include successful completion of the external review process of our graduate program and new course development within our graduate and undergraduate teaching programs. In addition, opportunities are being explored to enhance our research partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, particularly in the areas of biotechnology, ornamental and tree fruit production. I am doing my best to keep our faculty replacement on schedule. We are currently seeking to fill positions in oilseed agronomy, stone tree fruit breeding, turf production and management, bioinformatics, and flower production. These new faculty positions will help generate new science and new employment opportunities within our Department. Invariably, we are still facing continued financial cut-backs. I will be working closely with our Departmental advisory committee and the OMAFRA executive as we seek to find compatible solutions.

A very special welcome to all new graduate students and staff members who have joined our Department recently. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with each of you personally. As Chair, my goal is to help you succeed with your academic and career aspirations. Please feel free to drop by my office and arrange for a visit.

I hope you will enjoy this first edition of our Departmental newsletter.

SAKURA PROJECT

The Japanese flowering cherry, or "Sakura", is a symbol of Japan. For centuries, Japanese people have appreciated and praised the elegance and beauty of Sakura.

Over the decades, the numbers of business, cultural and academic exchanges, as well as individual exchanges, have grown at a tremendous rate between Ontario and Japan. It is because of this that the Consulate General of Japan in Toronto wishes to take an initiative to donate Sakura trees to a number of public locations in Ontario as a symbol of goodwill and friendship between Japan and Ontario.

Sponsored by the Consulate, the Department of Plant Agriculture will propagate Sakura trees for this project at their Vineland Campus over the next few years. The Consulate will also donate to the Department, three trees of each kind of Sakura that we propagate so that the Department can secure a source of budwood supply in the future.
We begin here, a new department...and with a new department comes the long awaited department newsletter. A place to talk about...well I guess us! And this, my friends, is the section devoted to graduate students. Their research, lives, feelings, turn-on's, turn-off's and that general lifeblood sort of thing.

However, for me, I see this as an opportunity to forget our experiments and throw down our pipettes. An attempt to tap into the imagination of Grad students—what our interests are and what we do outside of our research. I hope this section of the newsletter comes to enlighten us to the hopes, dreams and hidden talents of our department. In the immortal words of the late Alec Guinness, “you’ve taken your first step into a larger world.”

For example...my name is Jeremy and I work with Dr. Steve Bowley on transgenic heat shock protein transcription factors in alfalfa...but, I like surfing, candle lit dinners and women who aren’t afraid to cry. Not bad for a relentlessly self-improving Star Wars fan with a low-grade haircut and a penchant for remembering vast quantities of movie lines. And co-workers like to do. What are your favorite restaurants and pubs? Feel free to let me know about significant events in your cat’s life or if your band is playing at a local pub.

But for now...I’ll leave you with an oracle from the wise man who believed everything in life was full circle...I quote myself...“I quote myself.”

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Editor’s Note:
Jeremy is located in the Crop Science building in room 427 and lab 419. His office extension is 8182 and his lab extension is 8185. You may also reach Jeremy at jdberg@uoguelph.ca

Stop by and say hello to ‘Jer’, he would really like to hear from you.

So together, let’s get to know each other better and ignite the lab coat wearing, mismatched-socked stereotype of scientists in exactly the same way that fire doesn’t. Write me...and let me know more about what you, your friends and co-workers like to do.

JEAN WOLTING, GRAD SECRETARY

Jean Wolting joined the Department of Crop Science in 1989 and in 1996 became the Grad Secretary for the Department of Plant Agriculture.

Jean’s family consists of husband George, daughter Cheryl who has her MSc in Medical Biophysics and is working at Mount Sinai in Bioinformatics and is married to Sean, daughter Alisa who is in her first year as a BSc student in Biological Science at the University of Guelph (where else), son Jay who is a grade 12 student at St. James High School, and a dog named Sage that looks like a black lab with a border collie snout. Jean and family recently moved to Salem and Jean is now learning how to garden on their ½ acre lot. Jean also enjoys golf and camping in the summer and volleyball and reading in the winter.

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Editor’s Note:
Jean is located in the Bovey building in room 1105 and may be reached at ext. 6077. Stop by and say hello.
WELCOME!! NEW GRADS - SEPTEMBER 2000

Complete List of Current Grad Students

Aghare-Tabbi, Awaasi - PhD/Erickson
Ahmadzadeh, Arsheh - PhD/Lee&Tollenaar
Ajune, Margaret - PhD/
Allan, Wendy - PhD/Shelp
Auclair, Jerome - PhD/Rajcan&Boland
Beath, Michelle - MSc/Kott
Campbell, Don (loa) - PhD/Hunt
Campagne, Cindy - MSc/Proctor
Calhcart, Jason - PhD/Swanton
Chan, John - PhD/Pauls
Choffe, Kirsten - MSc/Saxena
Cloutier, Geoff - PhD/Dixon
Coventry, Jane - MSc/Kott
Cowenough, Mike - MSc/Tardif
Dan, Tereza - PhD/Saxena
de Sousa, Nancy - MSc/Swanton
Deseau, Jason - PhD/Grozinski
Diebold, Shane - MSc/Tardif
Doerksen, Trevor - MSc/Lee&Kannenberg
Drost, Roelof - MSc/Tollenaar
Dumont, Melanie - MSc/Tardif
Ego, Kevin - MSc/Swanton
Fezri, Daryoush - MSc/Thief
Friedberg, Jeremy - PhD/Bowley
Godfrey, Vicky - MSc/Plummer
Graham, Thomas - MSc/Dixon
Gutierrez, Jorge - PhD/Grodzinski
Hou, Guangyu - PhD/Rajcan&Pauls
Jame, Maria - MSc/McDonald&Bliang
Janjacek, Ken - PhD/Tollenaar
Jennifer, Jonathan - MSc/Falk
Johnstone, Melanie - MSc/Grodzinski
Jugulam, Mithila - PhD/Saxena
La Hovary, Christophe - PhD/Tardif
Larsen, Jamie - MSc/Pauls
Lee, Dan Geun - MSc/Rinker
Librande, Arend (loa) - MSc/Grozinski
Liu, Weidong - MSc/Deen
Liu, Guangyuan - MSc/O'Sullivan&Swanton
McAuley, Collette - MSc/Kott
McNaughton, Kristen - MSc/Tardif
Mihelcic, Nenad - MSc/Schaafsma
Mikula, Cindy - MSc/Dixon
Mueller, Ron (loa) - MSc/Murr
Murray, Jeremy - PhD/Pauls&Schaafsma
Park, Hongsook - MSc/Wolyn
Peever, Mike - MSc/Proctor
Primerono, Valero - PhD/Rajcan
Reinprecht, Yamilla - PhD/Pauls
Roberts, Glen - PhD/Dixon
Rolfsen, Laura - MSc/Proctor
Rupasinghe, Vasantha - PhD/Murr
Singh, Manmeet - MSc/Hunt
Skog, Lisa (loa) - PhD/Murr
Sors, Tommy - MSc/Bowley
Staepler, Michelle - MSc/Tollenaar&Lee
Stasiak, Michael - PhD/Dixon&Grodzinski
Strout, Jake - MSc/Bowley
Tamburic-Blinc, Lily - PhD/Schaafsma
Tedman, Jennifer - MSc/Pauls
Thomas, Krista - MSc/Pauls
Tsang, Elsuko - MSc/Kott&Brown
Turujja, Jasna - MSc/Falk
Viadnis, Dave - PhD/Bowley
Valentinu, Oscar - PhD/Tollenaar
van den Hauvel, Justine - PhD/Sullivan&Fisher
Velasco, JoAnne - MSc/Deen
Weir, Aron - MSc/Rajcan
Wevereld, Sean - MSc/McDonald
Xu, Xin - PhD/Bowley
Yang, Jianhui - MSc/Rinker
Zhang, Jian - PhD/Erickson
Zhao, GuNing - PhD/Schaafsma&Rajcan
Zippin, Sara - MSc/Clark
Professor Barry Micallef joined the Department of Plant Agriculture on July 1, 2000 in the Greenhouse Vegetable faculty position located at the Vineland Campus. Barry comes to us from the University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta where he was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences since 1997. Prior to the position in Lethbridge, he was an NSERC postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Biology at Queen’s University. Barry received his PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1994 in Plant Physiology and Genetics. Before that Barry received both his MSc (Horticultural Science) in 1988 and his BSc (Agr.) in 1985 from the University of Guelph. Barry’s interest in plants and horticulture was kindled from his upbringing on a market gardening farm near Milton, Ontario where they grow cabbage, cauliflower, cucumbers, squash and pumpkins, sweet corn, forced rhubarb, strawberries, and apples. You could say that Barry has now come full circle in his career.

The recent move to Vineland also included Barry’s wife Malgre, their children Amanda (6 years) and Amelia (3 years), their cat Bear (10 years) and four gerbils. Malgre and Barry actually met in Wisconsin, where Malgre also obtained a PhD in Plant Breeding and Plant Genetics. Malgre is originally from Caracas, Venezuela where she received a BSc in Biochemistry from Simon Bolivar University. In Lethbridge they were a research team and worked on some of the projects described further in this article. Recently, they bought a house in Vineland and look forward to putting down roots (finally) in the area. Some of Barry’s interests outside of research include gardening, motorcycles, learning Spanish, and sports like softball, hockey, and tennis.

Barry’s research interests include using a genetic and physiological approach for studying the role of sugars in controlling plant growth and development, and in applying this work for crop improvement. The work has demonstrated that transgenic tomatoes having an increased capacity for sucrose biosynthesis show increased flowering, up to a 30% increase in yield, and an increased harvest index. The tomatoes also grow similar to control plants supplemented with carbon dioxide, which is a common practice in greenhouse vegetable production. In part, Barry will apply such technology to greenhouse vegetable crops. He also wants to genetically improve quality characteristics of greenhouse vegetables such as sugar levels and taste. Another area that Barry hopes to tackle is the improvement of crop yield in the winter when light levels are low. His work has shown that not only is photosynthesis reduced under low light, but the transport of sugars to fruit is also affected. Such findings will ultimately be applied to the development of improved cultivars using both genetic engineering and conventional breeding methods.

Barry will be working out of the Department’s Vineland Campus and may be contacted by telephone at 905-562-4141 extension 144 or contact him by e-mail at bmicalle@uoguelph.ca
PROF. BILL DEEN

Bill and his spouse Andrea have enjoyed the opportunity to move back to the Guelph area where they grew up. With them are their three children (Jason is 9, Matthew is 7, and Daniel is 4). Bill comes from a farming background where his parents operated a farrow to finish hog operation up until three years ago. Bill, Andrea, and particularly their three children, are currently enjoying living on a broiler and beef farm owned and operated by Andrea’s parents. Andrea use to be employed by the Wellington School Board, but for the last number of years has been enjoying the challenge of home schooling their three boys. Outside of Bill’s work, family, church related activities, and other business interests, Bill enjoys a variety of sporting activities.

Bill’s office is located in room 211 of the Crop Science building. He can be contacted by telephone at (519) 824-4120 ext. 3397, or by e-mail at bdeen@uoguelph.ca
AWARDS

Prof. Calvin Chong - is one of four individuals recently named Fellows of the Eastern Region of the International Plant Propagators Society at their 49th Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Election as a Fellow of the IPPS-Eastern Region is an honour that recognizes outstanding contributions to the region and to plant propagation by research, teaching, extension or leadership in plant propagation or the horticulture industry.

Prof. K. Helen Fisher - received the “Researcher of the Year” Award from the New York Wine and Grape Foundation during the Viticulture 2000 Convention.

Prof. Neil Miles - recipient of the Award of Merit from the Niagara Peninsula Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association at their Annual Conference on February 24, 2000. This award is presented annually to a person who has made significant contributions to the tender fruit and grape industries. The award was presented in recognition of the new varieties and orchard management systems developed by Prof. Miles during his 19 years of service at Vineland Station.

- Mr. Mauricio Gonzalez R., a graduate of Chihuahua University in Mexico, has joined the “peach research team” in Vineland for six months beginning in May 2000. Mauricio is in Ontario to study management practices for the production of peaches. This information will be used for the development of a peach industry in Chihuahua State, Mexico and in his father’s orchard. During his stay at Vineland, Mr. Gonzalez will be studying under the direction of Neil Miles but also will work with Maria Derkacz and John Cline of the Department of Plant Agriculture, Ken Slingerland of OMAFRA, Karl Evans of Nabisco and local fruit growers.


CONGRATULATIONS to John, Rob and Bill.

NSERC - CONGRATULATIONS to Maria Jaime and Etsuko Yamamoto on winning NSERCs. The Department is very proud of both of you for your achievement!

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

Vasantha Rupasinghe - a PhD student in the Department of Plant Agriculture presented three posters at the 97th Annual International Conference of the American Society for Horticultural Science in Orlando, Florida, June 23 to 26, 2000.

Prof. Art Schaafsma - invited speaker at the American Chemical Society Annual meeting: Mycotoxin Symposium, August 21-23 held in Washington.
- hosting the workshop: Excellence in Insects and Disease Management on August 29 and 30 and November 20 and 21.

SABBATICALS

Prof. Judy Strommer - on sabbatical for the next two semesters. Judy will be spending the majority of her time in the laboratory of Dr. Anton Gerats, Rijksuniversiteit, Gent, Belgium working on molecular genetics of pigmentation and novel methods of gene identification and isolation. Prof. Strommer will also spend a bit of time in Strasbourg, France and Trento, Italy learning about wine chemistry and current molecular analyses of grape anthocyanin pigments.

PUBLICATIONS

Prof. Barry Micallef will be featured in the September 2000 issue of the Greenhouse Canada magazine. The article is on Barry’s proposed research in the greenhouse vegetable program.

Don’t forget to get your news into the next issue.
VISITING SCIENTISTS

Prof. Majid Aghaalikhani - from April to October 2000. Prof. Aghaalikhani is an assistant professor in the University of Tarbiat Modarres in Iran. He has conducted some research on common bean (water stress), mungbean (plant arrangement and density), forage sorghum (split application of nitrogen fertilizer), and corn (corn-pigweed competition) in recent years in Iran. Majid is working under the supervision of Prof. Thys Tollenaar and co-working with the weeds lab studying the “effects of light quality and PPFD on the rate of development and dry matter distribution of redroot pigweed” in a controlled environment condition (growth cabinet).

Prof. Fritz Elango - from September 2000 to February 2001. On sabbatical leave with Prof. Danny Lee Rinker. Prof. Elango is from EARTH, a university located in the tropics of Costa Rica and received his MSc from the University of Guelph. His primary activity will be to learn the art and science of mushroom cultivation. One of EARTH’s goals is to re-cycle the enormous volume of agricultural wastes—some he hopes into mushrooms. Fritz will be presenting several seminars this semester on his research and the uniqueness of the teaching environment at EARTH.

Prof. Harry Swartz - from September 1, 2000 to February 28, 2001. On sabbatical leave with Prof. A Sullivan. Prof. Swartz is an associate professor of Horticulture at the University of Maryland at College Park. Harry is head of the Maryland/ Rutgers/Virginia Polytechnic Institute/University of Wisconsin River Falls Bramble Breeding Program and head breeder of Five Acres Breeding (strawberries and ribes) of Davon Crest Farms of Hurlock, MD. Harry is here to investigate diploidy selection in bramble crosses using the flow cytometer at Guelph, specifically to investigate the success of unreduced gametes (pollen) in tetraploid x diploid crosses of (raspberry x blackberry) x raspberry.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS to David Llewellyn and Jennifer Hobson, both University of Guelph graduates, who will be getting married this September 30th in Caledon.

COMING EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH & FARM MACHINERY SHOW - September 19 to 23, 2000 in Wellington County. Next year it will be held in the Ottawa area and then they hope to be in the Guelph area for the 2002 show. Check them out at www.ipm2000.on.ca

NORFOLK COUNTY FAIR & HORSE SHOW -- October 3 to 9, 2000 in Simcoe. Contact Alan McKeown at amckeown@uoguelph.ca if you would like to volunteer for the event. Check them out at www.norfair.com

CANADIAN GREENHOUSE CONFERENCE 2000 - October 4 and 5, 2000 at the University of Guelph. Contact Mike Dixon via email at mdixon@evb.uoguelph.ca if you would like to volunteer for the event. Check them out at www.canadiangreenhouseconference.com


Do you have something that you would like to announce in the next issue?
Plum Pox Virus (PPV) or Sharka is considered the most serious virus disease of stone fruits and perhaps the most difficult to control. It causes chlorotic ring spots on fruit and leaves, and under severe conditions, the fruit is disfigured or may drop from the trees prematurely. Peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots and almonds are susceptible to the “D” strain found in Canada and the US, but cherries are not. The virus is spread locally within orchards by aphids and over long distances by vegetative propagules such as budwood or nursery trees. PPV was unknown in North America until discovered in Pennsylvania in October 1999. As a result, a Canadian task force was formed in November with the mandate to advise the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) on procedures and actions to be taken. Neil Miles chaired the task force which also included Wendy McFadden-Smith of Plant Agriculture and Annette Nassuth of the Department of Botany.

In June 2000, four positive trees were found at three Niagara orchards containing imported ‘Fantasia’ nectarine trees. As a result, surveying was expanded to include areas surrounding these positive trees and, when additional positive trees were located, all of Ontario and the rest of Canada. To date, more than 35,000 leaf samples have been taken from susceptible orchards in Ontario and sent to CFIA laboratories in Sidney, BC, Nepean, ON, and Charlottetown, PEI, for analyses. Of these, 479 samples from 22 sites in Niagara and one in southwestern Ontario tested positive.

One orchard site has been located where “hundreds” of positive trees were found and visual symptoms were observed. Unfortunately, this site served as a source of budwood from 1992 to 1997 for the propagation of ‘Vulcan’ and ‘Vinegold’ processing peach trees. These varieties were introduced in 1994 from the Department’s Vineland Research Centre and today are major processing varieties. Thus “thousands” of potentially infected trees unknowingly were distributed to fruit growers in Niagara and southwestern Ontario between 1994 and 1999.

It is unknown how PPV entered Canada. The speculation that it came with trees imported from US has largely been disproved. It is known that the Vineland Research Centre was not the source of the virus because budwood of the breeding selections that later became ‘Vulcan’ and ‘Vinegold’ was clean when it left the station.

The current situation is extremely serious to the tender fruit industry because the disease is much more widely spread than originally believed. The Department will play a major role in assisting both CFIA and the industry as they proceed to resolve this problem. Vineland’s facilities will be used by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for preliminary preparation of the 60,000 additional leaf samples that will be sent to CFIA laboratories for testing yet this year. Scientists at Vineland are important resources to the industry and CFIA in making the decisions of how to formulate plans to proceed with eradicating Plum Pox. They will have an even greater role in providing the resources of plant materials and technology needed by the tender fruit industry as it moves toward rebuilding in the aftermath of PPV.
PLANT AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT TWICE BLESSED WITH 2!! LIBRARIANS

by Judy Wanner

Plant Agriculture faculty and students have two librarians looking after their information interests. Beth Thomsett-Scott and Judy Wanner are working together to ensure that the Department has information services both on and off campus. Both are University of Guelph agricultural subject specialists.

The Academic Liaison Team (ALT) was initiated in 1997 to develop a closer working relationship between the library and University departments. Beth is part of this team and is responsible for all of the OAC departments. Judy is working with Plant Agriculture at the Vineland Campus and will be expanding the horticultural information service there.

What Can Your Librarians Do For You?

Library Orientation

There have been major changes in the University library catalogue, information resources, and the library building. Note the wide aisles (no more dodging pillars) and the new carpet (good-bye duct tape). There is also a new and improved Data Resource Centre in the lower level (statistics, data sets and more, supported by the Tri-University Group) and a new Learning Commons on the main floor to assist students with writing and study skills. Come on in and take a tour of the new facilities or take a virtual tour from the new library Web page.

Education and Research Services

Liaison librarians are ready to assist faculty and students with literature searches and help set up current awareness profiles. One-on-one, small group or large class assistance, and library instruction are available. There are many new databases and electronic resources to support research and teaching. Fine tune your search strategies - talk to a librarian.

Collection Building

Work with your librarians to build the strong library collection you want to support your academic and research program. We welcome suggestions for purchases (books, journals, databases etc.). The library has streamlined the book order process in the past year through the use of approval plans and hopes to produce a Web based “new book list” soon. Suggestions can be sent to Beth at ethomset@uoguelph.ca or Judy at jwanner@uoguelph.ca

Communication

Library liaison is all about communication. Beth has recently sent out the newsletter “Library Liaison Notes” to OAC faculty (it’s green—you can’t miss it) and a grad student edition is on the way. Changes to the library and new services are described in detail. Please contact us if further information is needed.

Beth and Judy are also part of a library survey development team. Graduate students were surveyed this summer and focus groups and a faculty survey are planned for this fall. We expect the surveys to tell us how the library is doing and how our services can be further improved. Let us hear from you.
WEB SIGHTS

by Judy Wanner and Jeremy Friedberg

Google

www.google.com

The name may be strange but the results from this popular Internet search engine are fast and relevant. Developed in 1998 by two Stanford University students, it has set a record for search engines by indexing more than a billion Web pages and now logs nearly 40 million queries a day.

The developer’s goal was to build the ultimate search engine to provide on-target results at top speed. Google’s uncluttered design with lots of white space promotes very fast downloading. Results pop up in less than a second.

Web page relevance is achieved by retrieval based on word placement and headlines combined with a ranking system that measures the number and quality of other Web pages pointing to it. This ensures the best results appear first.

Use www.google.com for fast, relevant results. It’s even multilingual!

What’s the name all about? Google was named after googol, the term for a 1 followed by 100 zeros.

PROTOCOLS ONLINE

A great site for all types of experimental protocols collected from labs from all over the world

www.protocol-online.net

PRIMER 3

An excellent site to design PCR primers. It’s a no hassle algorithm that gives you the best primer set and disregards all the junk www.genome.wi.mit.edu/cgi-bin/primer/primer3 www.cgi

HORTICULTURE MERGER

As of July 1, 2000, Cornell University’s Department of Fruit and Vegetable Science & Department of Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture have merged to become the Department of Horticulture. Visit their Web site at www.hort.cornell.edu

VARIETY CLUB NEWS

Brewery Tour - being looked into. More information will follow.

Thanksgiving Food Drive - boxes for non-perishable food donations will be placed in Crop & Bovey buildings during October to support the local food bank.

Halloween Coffee Break - Tuesday, October 31, with a pumpkin carving contest judged on the day of the coffee break.

Bake Sale - sometime in November. Donated baked goods created by the Variety Club and people in the Department will be sold to raise money for activities, such as the Christmas Party.

Christmas Party - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8th - keep this date open. More information will follow.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JEREMY FRIEDBERG for winning the Department of Plant Agriculture VARIETY CLUB logo contest (above).

LET’S HAVE SOME FUN!

???
Complete the Sequence: OTTFSS
What is the next letter?

???
SPOOKED
What non plural word has five consonants in a row?

???
The day before yesterday, Alan was 27. Next year he will be 30, how?

???

Answers in the December newsletter. If you have some teasers that you would like to submit send me an e-mail with the teaser and the answer.

SUPPORT ‘YOUR’ VARIETY CLUB - GET INVOLVED!!
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As we near the festive season and with the end of our fall semester, I could not help but to reflect upon the many, many individuals who have contributed so much to the success of the Department over this past year. It has been very exciting to see the high level of commitment of our staff, graduate students and faculty. One recent example of note, was our very successful United Way Campaign. As a Department, we surpassed our original fund raising goal of $8,205 by approximately 14%. We were one of the few Departments to achieve this accomplishment. Congratulations to all who supported the campaign and special accolades to those who campaigned actively.

Over the past year we have welcomed 26 new graduate students to the Department. Our graduate student activities and their involvement within the Department will continue to be a high priority as we move into the new year. Significant progress has also been made with our research partnership with Agriculture Canada. I look forward to finalizing this agreement which will enhance our research opportunities through collaboration with the Agriculture Canada scientists. As well, we are in the final stages of working toward a joint degree offered in applied horticulture with Niagara College and the Niagara Parks Commission. I hope to have this prepared for presentation to Senate within the next semester.

Dr. Manish Raizada, our newest faculty member, will be joining us on January 1st. He will be located in room 316 in the Crop Science building. The Search Committee for the Turf Grass Agronomy position will be interviewing candidates in January and early February of this coming year. In addition, the tree fruit breeding position will be advertised in the new year followed by the bioinformatics and soybean agronomy positions. I also hope to announce our first millennium chair position. With these positions, will come opportunities for permanent and contractual employment within our Department.

One of the most important activities in the life of our Department is our Christmas party. It is a rare opportunity when we can all come together. A special thank you to all of the members of our Variety Club Committee for the great Christmas party! And a special congratulations to all award winners!!! For the first time the Christmas party officially “sold out.” This is truly an amazing feat and says a lot about our Department. So...as the festive season is upon us, on behalf of my family, Josee, Ana, Stephanie and Lesley-Anne, we wish all of you a safe and happy holiday season.
And now to the long awaited second installment of the department newsletter grad-student section or...my outlet for creative writing. In the last installment, I wrote about peering into the lives of Plant Ag Grad Students outside their academic world, sharing our talents and getting better acquainted. Well, needless to say not much came across my desk. I guess it just means I'll need to be a little more proactive. At any rate, while that work is underway and this section of the newsletter continues to evolve, this issue and others to follow will also serve as an information outlet. Providing Grad Students with ideas and opinions of Grad Student life outside of academia. Again, I encourage you to share your own ideas and opinions, as well, I'm just curious. So in this edition of the newsletter, I have rigorously compiled information, from several anonymous sources, about the best of Guelph nightlife. And for those of you who never go out at night, and I know you are out there, remember, these are our opinions and may not necessarily reflect the opinions of the department. Ha Ha!

So, without any further ado, allow me to present recommendations of Guelph nightlife entitled, The Stout Review. Today's episode: 'The nachos that I couldn't finish.'

With trepidation, the three of us visited several; actually, it was more like all of the Pubs in Guelph...albeit not in one evening. In our humble opinions the Albion Hotel is worth a repeat visit. In addition to being a historical landmark, built before Guelph was even established, this pub has a resident ghost and provides many beers on tap including the all-important Guinness. Even more importantly, they serve nachos. Hot, gooey nachos, pretty much the staple in my diet. I rarely go to a pub that doesn't serve nachos since they make me so happy. Call me what you will, or perhaps not, the Albion has been a traditional Graduate Student hang out for years. So we recommend you give it a try.

For all those Plant Agriculture Grad Students who have just completed, or are about to complete, writing your comprehensive exams, remember the immortal words of Dr. Rumack, "I just want to wish you good luck...we are all counting on you!"

I wish I could say the same for ter break and honestly, get out of the lab for a bit 'cause the University actually does close over the holidays. Until we meet again...

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Editor's Note:

Jeremy is located in the Crop Science building in room 427 and lab 419. His office extension is 8182 and his lab extension is 8185. You may also reach Jeremy at jdberg@uoguelph.ca

Stop by and say hello to 'Jer', he would really like to hear from you, really.

The Stout Review?
O.A.C. GRADUATE AWARDS - 2000

CONGRATULATIONS!

JOANNA GILS - Jack Atkin Graduate Scholarship in Horticultural Science
CINDY CAMPEAU - Ball Scholarship
   - Soden Memorial Scholarship in Agriculture
NANCY DE SOUSA - Bandeen Memorial Scholarship
INGVAR BJORNSON - Bullick Scholarship in Food Grain Research
JEREMY MURRAY - Dr. G.W. Friars Scholarship
MARIA JAIME - Hoskins Scholarship
DAE GEUN LEE - Hoskins Scholarship
CINDY MIKULA - H.L. Hutt Memorial Scholarship
TEREZA DAN - Major General La Fleche Memorial Scholarship
SEAN WESTVELD - Manton Memorial Award
HEATHER SHEARER - McConkey Scholarship
   - Mary Edmunds Williams Scholarship
ARON WEIR - Ted McGrail Memorial Scholarship
JUSTINE VANDEN HEUVEL - Ronald C. Moyer Scholarship
   - Silas Smith Memorial Graduate Scholarship
   - Mary Edmunds Williams Scholarship
ARDESHIR AHMADZADEH - Pride Brand Seeds (Pride 5) Scholarship
KRISTEN CHOFFE - Soden Memorial Scholarship in Agriculture
JANE COVENTRY - Soden Memorial Scholarship in Agriculture
MIKE COWBROUGH - Soden Memorial Scholarship in Agriculture
GUANGYUN HOU - Soybean Research Scholarship
JASON DEVEAU - Tommy Thompson Scholarship
WENDY ALLAN - Mary Edmunds Williams Scholarship
JASON CATHCART - Mary Edmunds Williams Scholarship
JUAN SHANG - Mary Edmunds Williams Scholarship
GUIYING ZHAO - Mary Edmunds Williams Scholarship

The Department of Plant Agriculture faculty, staff and students would like to congratulate all of you on the awards that you have won.
Beth Livingstone joined the Department of Crop Science in 1984 and became the Undergraduate Secretary in 1999 for the Department of Plant Agriculture. Beth finds being the undergrad secretary very rewarding and enjoys the interaction that she has with the students. Beth has always been very interested in student activities and was involved in setting up the Midwest Tour with Rick Upfold for the undergrads. Beth's "claim to fame," besides her work with our undergrads, is as the undisputed champion of the Special Occasion/Office Decorating competition (that is, if there was a competition). Decorating her office is Beth's way of brightening up the building and hopefully helping everyone get into the holiday spirit.

On a personal level, Beth is single with a very spoiled 11 year old cat named Taffy, who allows Beth to live with her! Beth's passion is traveling. Along with her sister, she is slowly working her way through the Caribbean Islands. Beth is hoping to win the lottery soon so that she will be able to retire on one of the islands. Good luck on this one Beth!

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**Seminar: Strategies for Landing a Faculty Position, Commentary by Tommy Sors**

The ‘Strategies for Landing a Faculty Position’ seminar, given primarily by Clarence Swanton and supported by a brief statement from Al Sullivan, was a great success. The information provided by both speakers gave the audience an in-depth view of the systems and approaches the Department of Plant Agriculture uses to elect candidates for a faculty position. A follow-up discussion between the attending members of the seminar enhanced the experience by providing a more detailed account of the requirements necessary for individuals to become faculty. The difference between the U.S. and Canadian systems was mentioned. Moreover, the particularities of character, knowledge, and experience of potential candidates was discussed.

This was one of a series of Professional Development seminars that will be available in the future. Next semester, the ‘Strategies for Landing an Industry Position’ seminar will be presented. Although the main speaker has not been decided yet, it is anticipated that the seminar will be as informative as this one.

Please, stay tuned for more updates on the Professional Development seminar series.
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

UNDERGRAD REPRESENTATIVE: Kevin Falls. Kevin is a member of the Plant Agriculture Teaching Committee and is in his fourth year working towards an honours degree in B.Sc. Agr. (Agronomy). Kevin is available to speak to undergrad students about questions, problems or concerns they may have. You can reach Kevin at tel: 519-826-6161, and email at fallsiek@hotmail.com (preferred) or kfalls@uoguelph.ca

GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVES: M.Sc. Rep - Tommy Sors. In conjunction with Jeremy Friedberg, Ph.D. rep, Tommy is a liaison between the grad students and the faculty. He can be approached by any student in the department who feels the need to voice her/his problems or concerns. He also sits on the Graduate Committee where matters concerning the graduate calendar, examinations, curriculum, and other related topics are discussed. Tommy can be found in the Crop Science building in room 421 and lab 419, tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 6092, and email at tsors@plant.uoguelph.ca

Ph.D. Rep - Jeremy Friedberg. As with Tommy Sors, Jeremy is a liaison between the grad students and the faculty. He can be approached by any student in the department who feels the need to voice her/his problems or concerns. Jeremy also sits on the Graduate Committee. Jeremy can be found in the Crop Science building in room 427 and lab 419, tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 8182, and email at jdberg@uoguelph.ca

Merry Christmas

Feliz Navidad

Buone Feste

Glückliche Weihnachten

S Novym Godom

Boldog Karácsonyi Unnepeket!

ЧАСТАЛЫҚХ КАНИКУЛ

Zalige Kerstmis

Wesołych Świąt

Joyeuses Fêtes!

Boas Festas de Natal e un feliz ano novo!

Maliyayang Pasko

Gelukkig Kerstmis en Nieuwjaar!

Srecan Bozic

Sretni Bozicni Blagdani

Su-ba niwa-duwak!
Professor J. Alan Sullivan joined the Department of Crop Science (now part of the Department of Plant Agriculture) in 1976 as a Graduate Research Assistant. Al became an Assistant Professor within the Department of Horticultural Science in 1986. Al received his Ph.D. in 1985 and his M.Sc. in 1978 from the University of Guelph in the Department of Crop Science. Before that, Al received his B.Sc. Honours in 1976 from the University of Guelph in the Department of Genetics. Along with being an Associate Professor, Al was Acting Chair of the Department of Horticultural Science from 1996 to 1998, and helped to form the new Department of Plant Agriculture.

Al became Chair of the Graduate Committee in September 1999 and, along with the assistance of Jean Wolting (Grad Secretary) and Angie Trivett, has finished the documents for the review of the graduate program of OCGS. The OCGS document contains the proposal for the new graduate program in Plant Agriculture. The Graduate Committee oversees all of the administrative responsibilities of the Department’s grad students including admission, liaison, qualifying examinations, thesis defenses, awards, etc.

During the past five years, Al has been very involved with graduate studies at the University level. He Chaired the Admissions and Progress Committee for three years and was elected Chair of the Senate Board of Graduate Studies at the beginning of the current semester.

Al’s research program focuses on the breeding, genetics and physiology of strawberry and raspberry. Developing methods for the integration of wild species into cultivated species has been an emphasis for the breeding programs, and was funded by NSERC. The breeding programs have been developing cultivars with improved fruit quality for longer shelf-life, higher yields and greater disease resistance. The theme of the physiology studies has been concentrated on examining characters that contribute to yield potential and genotype by environment interactions. Al has great praise for the many talented graduate stu-

advise and the many collaborators, both on and off campus, who have been part of his program.

Al is an accomplished sailor and has been involved in racing his 18 foot catamaran for several years. He has won championships at the Belwood Lake Sailing Club in both the Open and Catamaran classes. One or both of his teenage daughters, Vicki and Katharine, are his capable crew whenever possible. He is always happy to introduce newcomers to the joys of sailing...especially on windy days. So give Al a call if you think you are up for a sailing adventure.

Al is located in office number 4222 in the Bovey building located on the Guelph Campus and may be contacted by telephone at 519-824-4120 ext. 2792 or by email at asulliva@uoguelph.ca.
Professor K. Peter Pauls joined the Department of Crop Science (now part of the Department of Plant Agriculture) in 1983 as a NSERC University Research Fellow. Peter held this position until 1987 when he became an Assistant Professor within the Department of Crop Science. Promotions to Associate Professor and Professor occurred in 1989 and 1996. Peter received his Ph.D. and M.Sc. from the University of Waterloo in the Biology Department. Before that Peter completed a B.Sc. in Chemistry and Biology at the University of Waterloo. Along with being a professor, Peter also took on the duties of Director, Guelph/Waterloo Plant Biotechnology Centre from 1987 to 1990.

Peter has served on the Undergraduate Teaching Committee of the Department for more than 10 years and was Assistant Chair of the Senate Board of Undergraduate Studies for one year. He became chair of the Plant Agriculture teaching committee in 1999.

The Undergraduate Teaching Committee is responsible for the undergraduate courses that the Department of Plant Agriculture teaches in the B.Sc. (Agr.) and B.Sc. degrees. This includes courses in Horticulture, Crop Science, Molecular Biology and Genetics, and Plant Biology. It is also responsible for the B.Sc.(Agr.) major in Horticulture and shares responsibilities for the B.Sc.(Agr.) major in Agronomy with the Department of Land Resource Science and the B.Sc. Plant Biology major with the Department of Botany and the Department of Environmental Biology. The committee plans and approves course and program changes, approves calendar changes, develops materials to promote the courses and majors, provides counseling to students, and approves graduation of the students from the majors. In the last year, the committee also compiled a list of Plant Agriculture faculty teaching responsibilities and worked towards an understanding of teaching load expectations at the University of Guelph. The committee is currently engaged in long range planning for possible new initiatives in distance education, Urban Horticulture, and Horticulture Technology. New courses in Organic Agriculture, Managed Ecosystems and Plant Molecular Genetics are currently under review by the committee. Beth Livingstone, the secretary for the committee, performs a variety of administrative functions such as scheduling courses, administering the course and teacher evaluations, classroom assignments and maintaining departmental records of Horticultural Science and Agronomy students.

Peter’s laboratory is working in various areas of plant cell biology, molecular biology, genomics, and biotechnology. It is focused on disease related and developmental phenomena that are of agricultural interest, including: identifying molecular markers for simple agronomic traits (like bacterial blight resistance) and complex traits (like oil quality) in alfalfa, field beans, soybeans and corn that can be used to select superior genotypes in plant breeding programs; developing and using transformation systems to improve the disease resistance (particularly bicide tolerance of tomato, corn and field beans; using molecular markers to evaluate relatedness of genetic material in alfalfa and canola tissue cultures undergoing embryogenesis and isolating and characterizing genes and genetic elements (like retrotransposons) that are involved in creating genetic variability during stress.

Peter is married to Ella, who works at the River Run Centre as a publicity and development manager. They have two boys, one studying Film Production at Humber College and one in grade 12. Peter takes his interest in plants home to their flower garden.

Peter works out of office #321 in the Department’s Crop Science building located on the Guelph Campus and may be contacted by telephone at 519-824-4120 ext. 2460, or by email at ppauls@plant.uoguelph.ca. Visit the lab website at http://www.plant.uoguelph.ca/research/plantbio.
**CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, ETC.**

Prof. Calvin Chong - will be presenting a seminar at the International Horticultural Trade Show & Conference at the Toronto Congress Centre on Tuesday, January 9, 2001. Dr. Chong's seminar will be on 'The magic of turning wastes into usable resources' from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Visit the CONGRESS 2001 web site at www.hort-trades.com/congress/main.html

Maria Derkacz - has been invited by the Academy of Technology and Agriculture in Bydgoszcz, Poland to be a visiting scientist in January 2001. While at the Academy, Maria has been requested to give a seminar on Fruit Production Methods in the Niagara Region. She will participate in various meetings and discuss technology transfer (mechanisms, extension staff, cooperation of extension staff with scientists, etc.)

Prof. Duane Falk and Ken Kasha attended the 8th International Barley Genetics Symposium in Adelaide, Australia held October 22 to 27, 2000. It was an excellent conference covering all aspects of barley such as quality, stresses, brewing, breeding, genetics, molecular markers, transformation, cytogenetics, tissue culture, and germ plasm. Ken chaired a workshop on In Vitro Methods. Both Duane and Ken took the opportunity to visit other labs and programs while in Australia.

**PUBLICATIONS**

Maria Derkacz and John Cline were invited to publish an article in the Academy of Technology and Agriculture Journal, Poland. The article is a review on the 'Effectiveness of Irrigation Methods in Fruit Production of North American Orchards' and has just been published in the Journal Rolnictwo 45.

**VISITING SCIENTISTS**

Ms. Li Shuping - from the Liaoning Academy of Agricultural Science, in Liaoning Province of China, will be spending the next year in the Department. She is being hosted by the Cereal Breeding Program and will be located in the cereal breeding laboratory (rm 210, Crop Science building). She is a wheat breeder at the Academy with a special interest in bread making quality. She is here to pick up some breeding methodology and some screening and evaluating techniques for quality. She also has an interest in molecular marker assisted selection and transformation of cereals. Shuping may be reached at 519-824-4120 ext. 8114 or 8126.

Mr. Tian Xin Jiu - from late October 2000 to the end of April 2001. Mr. Tian is Director of the Corn Research Laboratory of Hejiang Agricultural Institute in Jiamusi, Heilongjiang Province, China. Mr. Tian is a visiting scientist in the corn breeding program. He is located in room 202 of the Crop Science building. Mr. Tian's Institute is interested in collaborating with the Department not only in corn but in other crops as well.

**AWARDS**


**ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AWARDS** - refer to STUDENTS section of newsletter.
SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS to Valerio Primomo and his wife Sotira on the birth of their baby boy, Lucas Angelo Primomo. Lucas was born on Saturday, November 4 at 8:22 p.m. and weighed 7 pounds.

CONGRATULATIONS to Qinglai Sheng and Xiu-Zhen Li on the birth of their healthy daughter, Emily, born October 31.

RETIREMENTS: Dr. Vince Souza Machado, faculty, retired August 31, 2000, and Ms. Julianna Yu retiring December 31, 2000. Both have been honoured at a Wine & Cheese Party held December 6, 2000 in the Whippletree Room.

COMING EVENTS

CONGRESS 2001 - International Horticultural Trade Show & Conference - January 9 to 11, 2001 at the Toronto Congress Centre, Toronto. Check them out at www.hort-trades.com/congress/main.html

NIAGARA PENINSULA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS' ASSOCIATION (NPF&VGA) CONVENTION - February 21 and 22, 2001 at Brock University, St. Catharines. Convention theme: “Planning...To Compete.” There is not a web site for this convention. If you would like more information you can call the Ontario Grape Growers’ Marketing Board/Ontario Tender Fruit Producers’ Marketing Board at 905-688-0990.

CANADA BLOOMS - March 14 to 18, 2001. Held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building, 222 Bremner Blvd., Toronto. Check them out at www.canadablooms.com/

The Department of Plant Agriculture will have a booth at Canada Blooms/Horticultural Happenings and will be looking for volunteers, more information to come via e-mails in the new year!!!


DIN INTERNATIONAL TURFGRASS RESEARCH CONFERENCE - July 15 to 21, 2001, Westin Harbour Castle, Toronto. For more information contact Pam Charbonneau at pcharbon@omafra.gov.on.ca or check them out at http://gti.uoguelph.ca/ITRC2001/

Wishing you a safe and enjoyable holiday season.
The Department of Plant Agriculture went into space at the end of November!

Tomatosphere is a participatory research project involving 3,000 classrooms of grades three to six students (“Tomatonauts”) across Canada. Students will have the opportunity to grow tomatoes from seeds that have traveled with Canadian Astronaut Marc Garneau in space for 11 days and compare them to tomato plants grown from seeds that stayed on Earth.

The Department of Plant Agriculture supplied NASA with 200,000 tomato seeds. To witness the launch and give a presentation to the Advanced Life Support Group at NASA was:
Dr. Mike Dixon - Project Head
Ms. Theresa Rondeau Vuk
Dr. Rickey Yada - Assist. Vice-President (Agri Food Programs)
MEST Minister Jim Wilson
MEST Deputy Minister Bryne Purchase
Dr. Ian Row - President & CEO CRESTech
Mr. Richard Worsfold - Director of Business Development, Space Systems CRESTech
Mr. Andre Bellefeuille - Director, Communications CRESTech
Dr. Robert Moses - President & CEO PCI Geomatics

Check Tomatosphere out at http://www.tomatosphere.org

“Is that a tomatosphere tomato?”
The plant we know today as the poinsettia has a long and interesting history. The fact is, that lovely plant you place in your home during the holidays was once used as a fever medicine!

Native to Central America, the plant flourished in an area of southern Mexico known as Taxco del Alarcon. The ancient Aztecs had a name for this plant found blooming in the tropical highlands during the short days of winter: cuetlaxochitl.

Not merely decorative, the Aztecs put the plant to practical use. From its bracts they extracted a purplish dye for use in textiles and cosmetics. The milky white sap, today called latex, was made into a preparation to treat fevers.

The poinsettia may have remained a regional plant for many years to come had it not been for the efforts of Joel Roberts Poinsett (1779-1851). The son of a French physician, Poinsett had attended medical school himself, but his real love in the scientific field was botany. (Mr. Poinsett later founded the institution which we know today as the Smithsonian Institution.)

Poinsett maintained his own hothouses on his Greenville, South Carolina plantations, and while visiting the Taxco area in 1828, he became enchanted by the brilliant red blooms he saw there. He immediately sent some of the plants back to South Carolina, where he began propagating the plants and sending them to friends and botanical gardens.

Among the recipients of Poinsett’s work was John Bartram of Philadelphia, who in turn gave the plant over to another friend, Robert Buist, a Pennsylvania nurseryman. Mr. Buist is thought to be the first person to have sold the plant under its botanical name, Euphorbia pulcherrima (literally, “the most beautiful Euphorbia”). Though it is thought to have become known by its more popular name of poinsettia around 1836, the origin of the name is certainly clear!
Local research into new varieties of apples has been recognized with an international award.

Earlier this month in Ohio, the Agricultural Experiment Directors of the Northeast gave its 2000 Award of Excellence to a program that is being carried out in part at the University of Guelph’s Simcoe Research Station.

In collaboration with research stations in Kentville, Nova Scotia, Summerland, British Columbia, and 21 stations in the United States, the Simcoe Research Station is evaluating new types of apples so that farmers have as much information as possible before planting them. Leading the research locally is Dr. John Cline.

“This is our industry’s crystal ball into the future,” he said. “Research orchards provide a focal point for growers and industry representatives to actually see and evaluate these new cultivars first-hand under their specific growing environments. They also provide one of the most authoritative and objective sources of information that a grower can obtain prior to planting a new orchard.”

The program, which is called Project NE-183, was started in 1995. Before then, research into new varieties was haphazard, with few research papers ever finding their way into print. Tests were rarely co-ordinated over a wide geographic area, making it difficult to perform systematic comparisons of data. This meant farmers often made a leap of faith when they committed the $10,000 per acre and six years required to establish new orchards.

“Selecting cultivars for new plantings is one of the riskiest decisions an apple grower must make,” Cline said. “Project NE-183 provides Canada access to new cultivars that would be difficult to obtain otherwise.”

Over the past five years, Cline and others have evaluated 50 varieties of apples and their potential impact on consumer preferences. Apples are rated for taste, texture, firmness, storability, yield, ability to resist disease and insects, and cost of production.

Staying on top of changing consumer preferences is key to the success of apple growers say Tom O’Neil, general manager of the Norfolk Fruit Growers’ Association. More than 400 different types of apples have been documented, he said, but only about 20 varieties are sold generally at the retail level.

“It becomes a problem because there is only so much shelf space in retail for apples,” O’Neill said. “But everyone is always looking for the newer, best thing, and that is what we want to be taking to market.”

Among the varieties Cline and his colleagues have tested is Honeycrisp, a brand developed several years ago in Minnesota. Apple growers in the local area have been producing it for three years. The jury is still out on whether it will be a hit.

“It will be interesting to see how it sells,” O’Neill said. “What it has going for it is taste. But North America is not a taste market—it’s a sight market. People tend to buy apples on the basis of their appearance.”

Specific apple varieties rise and fall in popularity. Greening, Balwin, and Wealthy were commonly grown in Norfolk many decades ago but no longer. Today, the five most popular varieties at The Apple Place on the Queensway East, in order, are Empire, Jonagold, Crispin, Cortland, and Red Delicious. Norfolk is expected to produce 1.5 million bushels of apples this year.
by Judy Wanner, Librarian

THE DATA RESOURCE CENTRE - WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

The Data Resource Centre - http://tdr.tug-libraries.on.ca - is a Tri-University initiative. The Centre acts as a central repository for a wide variety of electronic data available both in-house and through the Internet. Support is provided both in person and on-line to enable access to use of data sets including enhanced tailoring of data through mapping, graphing and spreadsheets.

The Guelph Centre, located on the lower level of the library near the Government Documents area, subscribes to data files such as those of Statistics Canada. These files include crop production statistics and the Census of Agriculture. Also offered is the use of the ESAS-Extraction System of Agricultural Statistics that provides users with commonly requested physical and financial farm data in pre-defined or custom formats. Local data files on the system include climate information from the Elora and Guelph Turfgrass Institute weather stations.

The Centre also uses the Internet to provide links to external data sources such as: North American and international commodity exchanges and marketing agency information, FAO international commodity production information, USDA data sets from the Economic Research Service, USDA agency reports, the US Census of Agriculture Reports, and the Agricultural Network Information Centre, a searchable guide to quality agricultural information. Canadian links include Aginfonet, AgriWeb Canada and Agriculture Canada’s Canadian Soil Information System to name just a few of interest to our Department.

Take a few minutes to review this service and explore the data sets offered. From the home page be sure to look at the External Data Sources that are arranged by subject grouping including Agriculture & Natural Resources and Geographic & Geospatial data. Data Resource Centre staff are available for help and consultation on a walk-in basis Monday through Friday or appointments can be booked for in-depth consultation by calling extension 6410 or 6417 or email: drc@uoguelph.ca

LIBRARY TROUBLE SHOOTING

If you have been having trouble logging on to the University Library reference databases (AGRICOLA, CAB, etc.) or electronic journals from your office or home you may need to re-set your computer web browser access. Complete instructions for doing this (it only takes a few minutes) are available on the web at http://tug.lib.uoguelph.ca/proxy. If after re-setting your access you are still having problems use the Problem Report Form at http://tug.lib.uoguelph.ca/proxy/help.html to contact the library for assistance.

When using the new library home page you may find the java format causes the text to move quicker than you would like. You have the option of using a non-java version that may be more stable on older computers. To use this version bookmark http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/indextext.html. This choice is also available at the bottom left side of the library home page.
VARIETY CLUB NEWS

Your present Variety Club Committee will be dissolved at the end of this year and a new committee formed for the year 2001.

Your Variety Club Committee 2000 would like to thank all of you for making the events this year some of the most successful ever!

Istvan Rajcan - chair
Jullianne Gerspacher - treasurer
Aron Weir - secretary
Jerome Auclair
Nancy De Sousa
Sarah Grant (left dept. mid-year)
Deborah Hilborn
Collette McAuley

With the help of: Carol Friesen, Edna Hoover, Jean Wolting and Wally Andres.

WEB SIGHTS

by Judy Wanner and Jeremy Friedberg

http://www.agrisurf.com - AgriSurf (more grain, less chaff) bills itself as the world’s largest searchable agricultural web index. All 17,331 sites it searches are hand picked by agricultural experts. Subject categories from AgriTourism to Weather are listed on the home page. The home page also offers agdownload.com, a farm software repository that contains useful software such as Weedcast, an application for forecasting weed seedling emergence. In addition to general subject searching, the site also offers the AgriSurfer http://www.agrisurfer.com, a weekly mailcast publication. This can be customized to send specific agricultural news and information to your email address. There is also an Archive http://www.agrisurfer.com/archives_agrisurfer.html of back issues that are worth reviewing. See the November 14, 1999 issue for guides to creating corn mazes, a spreadsheet on soil textures and a pointer to the USDA nematode collection among other things. While in the archives don’t miss the barnyard sounds and ag trivia section — did you know that Gerard’s 1597 Herbal was the earliest English publication describing potatoes? Finally, AgriSurf also has agricultural images for web pages, screensavers, icons, wallpaper, and other uses. Visit farmphoto.com at http://www.farmphoto.com to view the image collection. These are free photos but do take a look at their usage guidelines section before using.

http://gslc.genetics.utah.edu - the Genetics Science Learning Centre, an excellent online resource for teaching basic genetics with hands on experiments.

http://plants.usda.gov - Plants National Database, tons of information about all kinds of plants and everything about them.

http://www.sandlotscience.com/index.htm - Sandlot Science, this site has many experiments in all areas of science and teaches concepts through interactive activities. Very well done!

LET’S HAVE SOME FUN!

???
Complete the Sequence:
OTTFESS
What is the next letter?
???
Answer - “E” for eight. O=one, T=two, etc.

SPookED
What non plural word has five consonants in a row?

???
Answer - Witchcraft.

The day before yesterday, Alan was 27. Next year he will be 30, how?

???
Answer - The information was provided on January 1st. Alan’s birthday is on December 31st. He is now 28, the day before yesterday he was 27 and he will be 29 this year and 30 next year.

If you have some teasers that you would like to submit send me an e-mail with the teaser and the answer and I will put them in the March 2001 newsletter.

SUPPORT ‘YOUR’ VARIETY CLUB - GET INVOLVED!!