

VOLUME LXXXIV • NO. 37
NOVEMBER 21 - DECEMBER 5, 2003

BRIEFS

Malcolm Bourne Assumes Office

At the World Food Congress that was held in Chicago this past summer Malcolm Bourne, Professor Emeritus, FST, assumed the position of President of the International Academy of Food Science & Technology for a three year term.

He was appointed an Inaugural Fellow of the Academy in 1998. The Academy is an elected group of distinguished food scientists and technologists from around the world who serve as Fellows of the Academy. The purposes of the Academy are to:

- Identify and recognize individuals distinguished by their scientific and professional contribution to food science & technology,
- further improve international co-operation and exchange of information,
- promote food science & technology and other sciences of importance for this area,
- stimulate international education and training in food science & technology.

Dick Durst Appointed to FDA Committee

Dick Durst, has been appointed to serve for a term of three years on the Food Advisory Committee to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The Food Advisory Committee (FAC) is a technical and scientific committee that advises the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in discharging its responsibilities as they relate to issues of food safety, food science and applied nutrition, and as required, any product for which the FDA has regulatory responsibility. As stated in the FAC's Charter, "The Committee shall provide advice primarily to the Director, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, and as

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Bill Srmack Named Outstanding Employee for 2003

Bill Srmack, farm manager for the Plant Genetics Resource Unit (PGRU), was named this year's Outstanding Employee at the annual Station banquet held earlier this month. Bill is the 21st employee to be so designated. Phil Forsline, Bill's supervisor over the past 20 years, and the person who nominated him for the award, said, "Bill is, without a doubt, one of the superb employees of the Station." In addition to a plaque, Bill received a certificate for brunch for two at the Statler Hotel's Banfi's Restaurant, a \$25 gift certificate to the Cornell Campus Store, a NYSAES fleece jacket, and the coveted "Employee Recognition" parking sign. In addition, his name will be added to a plaque with the names of previous honorees. The plaque is on permanent display in the library.

Prior to coming to PGRU in 1983, Bill was employed for almost 10 years in the Department of Pomology, as it was then called. He was the first employee of the National Clonal Germplasm Repository (now PGRU) and has served as farm manager for the clonally-propagated crops at PGRU (apples, grapes and cherries) from the outset.

"Over the years, those who have worked with Bill, including myself, have seen how meticulous and conscientious he is," said Phil. "I would prefer to call him the 'Collections Manager' because his work goes well beyond managing the farm. As curator, I have been able to delegate to him many of the jobs over the past 10 years that I formerly had done as curator so that I could expand our cooperative PGRU projects. The cooperative projects with the Station are many, and Bill has had a direct hand in their success."

Phil characterizes Bill's skills in propagation (grafting and nursery maintenance) as incomparable. "Not only does he lead this effort, but he has mentored countless individuals in this area both on and off campus," Phil said. He went on to say that in the area of propagation, errors in labeling must be avoided and that Bill has made this a major priority so that PGRU can provide its customers with accurate plant material. Phil also noted that Bill has also mentored countless employees and collaborators in methods of pruning, pesticide and herbicide application and 'green thumb' skills both for grafted and seedling plants, and that he networks with individuals in all departments at the Station including project leaders and FRU. "Because of these contributions, I consider Bill a colleague and not just someone who I supervise," Phil said.

"Bill is definitely a top-notch employee, and we're very fortunate to have him with us at the PGRU," said Charles Simon, research leader at PGRU.

One component of the process for selection of the Outstanding Employee is a packet of letters of support from individuals from both within and outside the Station community.

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Anne Cobb, last year's Outstanding Employee (center), and Jim Hunter (right) present certificate to Bill Srmack.

PHOTO BY PHIL FORSLINE

(BRIEFS, continued)

needed to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs and other appropriate officials, on emerging food safety, food science, nutrition, and other food-related health issues that the FDA considers of primary importance for its food and cosmetics programs." The Committee consists of a parent committee and four subcommittees whose members are selected by the Commissioner from among authorities knowledgeable in the fields of physical sciences, biological and life sciences, food science and nutrition, risk assessment, molecular biology and other scientific and technical disciplines.

*"Ogni stagione ha
il suo frutto"*

(Every season has its own fruit)

- Old Italian Proverb -

Crafty Couple



Frances and Dick Hauf have been coming to the craft fair to sell ornaments for most of the 26 years the craft fair has been held. The couple are both 96 years old and have been married for 73 years. Mary Lou Dumbleton said that "Frances' needlework is very well done and quite beautiful, especially when you consider we're talking about 96-year-old eyes." And Frances has a 'connection' with the Station; her sister June Goodman retired from the Seed Lab.



On Monday, November 10, Dean Susan Henry met with faculty and staff at the Experiment Station. She assured the audience of her "admiration" for the work done at the Station, and the "hard work and dedication" exemplified by so many employees. Dean Henry laid out the process for selecting a successor to Director Jim Hunter, who is stepping down as of January 1. She hopes to have the position filled by early summer. She addressed budget problems facing the College at Geneva and Ithaca, and sought input and questions from the crowd. Dean Henry said she saw opportunities in the challenges we face, and anticipates "Future achievements that will equal if not surpass your past achievements."

A Big Surprise Thank You



Station Club hosted a surprise thank-you luncheon for outgoing president Gemma Osborne (right) on Thursday November 19. She has been president for the past four years and is succeeded as president by Amy Andersen (left). Gemma was presented with several gifts including a bouquet of roses, a basket of various items and a gift certificate for a massage. Apparently believing that this move will result in a surplus of spare time, Gemma has agreed to be the new vice president of Station Club.

Hot News for Hot chocolate Drinkers

There's another reason now to enjoy hot cocoa on a cold winter's night in front of a cozy fire. Consider it a health drink.

Beyond the froth, cocoa teems with antioxidants that prevent cancer, Cornell University food scientists say. Comparing the chemical anti-cancer activity in beverages known to contain antioxidants, they have found that cocoa has nearly twice the antioxidants of red wine and up to three times those found in green tea.

Their finding will be published Dec. 3 in the American Chemical Society's *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry*, a peer-reviewed publication.

Scientists have long known that cocoa contains antioxidants, but no one knew just how plentiful they were compared with those in red wine and green tea.

Cornell researchers, led by Chang Y. (Cy) Lee, chairman of the Department of Food Science and Technology at the Experiment Station in Geneva, N.Y., say the reason that cocoa leads the other drinks is its high content of

compounds called phenolic phytochemicals, or flavonoids, indicating the presence of known antioxidants that can stave off cancer, heart disease and other ailments. They discovered that there are 611 milligrams of the phenolic compound gallic acid equivalents (GAE) and 564 milligrams of the flavonoid epicatechin equivalents (ECE) in a single serving of cocoa. Examining a glass of red wine, the researchers found 340 milligrams of GAE and 163 milligrams of ECE. In a cup of green tea, they found 165 milligrams of GAE and 47 milligrams of ECE.

"If I had made a prediction before conducting the tests, I would have picked green tea as having the most antioxidant activity," said Lee. "When we compared one serving of each beverage, the cocoa turned out to be the highest in antioxidant activity, and that was surprising to me. Phenolic compounds protect plants against insects and pathogens, and they remain active even after food processing. A decade ago food scientists did not know that phenolics had an important role in human health," says Lee.

Lee and his colleagues used two chemical tests that measured how well the cocoa compounds scavenge for free radicals -- agents that cause cancer, heart disease and other diseases.

In the paper, the researchers discuss eating chocolate bars instead of drinking cocoa. "Although a bar of chocolate exhibits strong antioxidant activity, the health benefits are still controversial because of the saturated fats present," the researchers write. They explain that cocoa has about one-third of a gram of fat per one-cup serving, compared with eight grams of fat in a standard-size 40-gram chocolate bar.

Faced with the confusing prospect of drinking red wine or green tea or cocoa, Lee suggests enjoying all three during different parts of the day. "Personally, I would drink hot cocoa in the morning, green tea in the afternoon and a glass of red wine in the evening. That's a good combination," he says.

The research paper is titled "Cocoa Has More Phenolic Phytochemicals and a Higher Antioxidant Capacity than Teas and Red Wine." Lee's collaborators are his former graduate student, Ki Won Lee; Hyong Joo Lee, a professor at Seoul National University, South Korea; and Young Jun Kim, a post-doctoral researcher at Cornell. The research was funded in part by the BioGreen 21 Program, Rural Development Administration, Republic of South Korea.

Blaine Friedlander

(EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR, continued)

Here are a few excerpts from some of those letters:

- "Bill is the consummate professional. His work ethic is exemplary, and his attitude is always positive and reinforcing – even on a bad day. I am always impressed by how caring and concerned he is about his staff and coworkers. He is always ready to 'step in' and lend a hand when needed' – and a lot of times without even being asked."

- "Bill will check the pressure in your car tires, move furniture around the unit, collect grape leaves for the Whale Watch and even deliver our used flags to a member of the American legion to be disposed of properly."

- "As you are aware, Bill has nearly 30 years at the Experiment Station. When he retires, (which I hope as not too soon!), he will have left an impressive legacy of work that both supports conservation and breeding of crops of importance to New York State."

- "Bill is a caring, generous, funny, sympathetic and intelligent person, who is a delight to work with. Furthermore, he has honesty, integrity, and morality – three characteristics in all too short supply these days. It is an honor to know him, and he is well deserving of the Outstanding Employee Award."

When it came time for Bill to speak at the banquet, he thanked Phil Forsline for being a "great supervisor," and expressed his gratitude to all those who wrote letters on his behalf. "I want to especially thank the people that I work with," he said. "I've discovered it's easy to look good when you work with great people, and I truly do work with great people."

J. Ogrodnick

CALENDAR of EVENTS

NOV. 21 - DEC. 5, 2003

MEETINGS

CHAIRS' & DIRECTORS' MEETING

Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2003
Time: 3 PM
Place: 348 Morrison Hall

SEMINARS

Plant Path

Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2003
Time: 3:30 PM (Coffee at 3 PM)
Place: Room A133, Barton Lab
Speaker: Dr. George Abawi, Geneva
Subject: Cornell's soil health project: Implications for disease and pest control strategies

Food Science

Date: Wednesday, December 3, 2003
Time: 4 PM
Place: FST Conference Room, second floor
Speaker: Dr. Desen Zheng, Geneva
Subject: Modification of the Flavonoid Pathways in Raspberries.

Hort Science

Date: Monday, November 24, 2003
Time: 11 AM
Place: Jordan Hall Staff Room
Speaker: Dr. Cornelius Barry, Ithaca
Subject: Genetic Determinants of Ethylene Signaling Specificity and Ripening Time in Tomato

Date: Monday, December 1, 2003
Time: 11 AM
Place: To be announced
Speaker: Dr. Marcia Eames, Ithaca
Subject: The Art of Horticulture: A New Student-Focused Course that Melds Plants, Art, and Human Well-Being

Entomology

Date: Thursday, December 4, 2003
Time: 10:30 AM
Place: Room 310 Barton Lab, Coffee w/speaker at 10:15 AM
Speaker: Dr. Charles Vincent, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, St-Jan-sur-Richelieu, Quebec
Subject: Hits and misses in research on insect pests of Quebec

FITNESS

Aerobics

Date: Mon. & Fri.
Time: 12:10 - 1 PM
Place: Sawdust Cafe

Taekardio

Date: Mon. & Wed.
Time: 12:10 - 1 PM
Place: Jordan Hall Auditorium

SPECIAL NOTE

Taekardio for Wednesday, November 26 has been cancelled.

CLASSIFIED

FOR RENT: One bedroom apartment. Quiet and private. \$450. includes heat, water, electric and trash removal. Available December 1, 2003 Call 789-3392 or e-mail kad2@cornell.edu.

FOR SALE: 1996 Chevy Blazer 4x4 LS - excellent condition, well maintained. Power brakes, windows, seat, door locks. 108,000 miles. \$6,500.00. Email Pat Mahoney at pmm19 or call x2234.

FOR RENT: 4 bedroom house with 1-1/2 baths at 160, N. Main St., Geneva. \$500 plus utilities. One year lease. No pets. References and deposit are required. If interested, please call Virginia at 789-3831 or kw22@cornell.edu.

FOR SALE: 1989 Buick Century. (Please disregard this ad after November 26, 2003.) 4WD, V6 3.3L, automatic, 104K miles, air conditioning, cruise control, power steering, locks, seat, and windows (1 rear window not working). New muffler and front brakes, runs great. Asking: \$900 or BO. Contact: Diego Genovese at x2368, 781-9135, e-mail: dbg25@cornell.edu.

FOR RENT: Furnished apartment at 10 North Main Street (across from the hospital). Rent is \$225 per month and includes utilities. Contact Mrs. Mame Chachia at 789-1837 or jwb2@cornell.edu.

FOR RENT: Spacious 1 bedroom apartment, furnished, ground floor, behind main house, separate entrance, private, country setting, suitable for one or two adults. Available December 1st. \$450/month includes all utilities, reverse osmosis drinking water, Sat. TV, DSL. 4.5 miles north of The Station. Call (315) 548-4018 after 5:30pm or e-mail hs16@cornell.edu.

FOR RENT: One bedroom furnished apartment beginning December 1, 2003. \$450., includes water, heat, electric and trash removal. Security deposit required. Call 789-3392 or e-mail cevangel22@yahoo.com or e-mail kl46@cornell.edu.

Happy Thanksgiving



Get a'leg - up on this years New Year's resolution! Mmm, all those wonderful dinners, the cookies and pies, not to mention Aunt Bertha's fruit cake!!!! With three BIG holidays coming up soon this client may change his mind!

FOR SALE: Airofit exercise glider with electronic speed/distance meter. Very good condition. \$25. Call Art at x2341.

It's easy to run an ad in Station News and they're FREE! Just e-mail your information to Donna Boyce at dmb62@cornell.edu. Don't forget, every ad must have a Station e-mail address or phone number.



**SAVE THE DATE
 RED CROSS
 BLOOD DRIVE**

**Monday,
 December 1, 2003
 9 AM - 2:30 PM
 Jordan Hall Auditorium**