

# STATION NEWS

New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva, New York

VOLUME LXXXVI • NO. 22  
NOV. 11 - Dec. 2, 2005

## BRIEFS

### Cornell Gets High Marks for Workers Over 50

AARP magazine recently rated Cornell fifth on their annual hot list of the 50 best employers for workers over 50. Each of the employers was evaluated on their performance on a range of work force practices and policies beneficial to older workers. The five key criteria were: Recruiting, Training and Development, Health Benefits, Pension Plans and Alternative Work Arrangements. The five criteria were rated from (1) worse to (5) best, and calculated along with other qualities to arrive at each employer's overall ranking. Cornell was rated 5 for each of the five criteria. Under the heading "Wow Factors" the magazine says: "This Ivy League university allows employees and retirees to enroll – gratis – in up to six credits of coursework each semester. For employees interested in more casual learning, the extramural study program offers noncredit courses on everything from gardening to bird watching – also free. Plus, retirees can enroll in a comprehensive 'Wellness Program,' which includes gym membership and classes for just \$168 a year.

### Operation Merry Christmas

Operation Merry Christmas Collections will begin sometime next week. Along with the usual need for hats, mittens, gloves and scarves for younger children, there is a special need for these items this year for teenagers. When you are out shopping, please think of them as well. As always, we are also accepting monetary donations to help with holiday meals, and will be collecting hardy canned meals, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, and boxes of oatmeal that consist of single serving packets. There is always a demand for these items. Collection boxes will be located in each building early next week. Further information will be shared when the boxes are in place.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Jim Ballerstein Named Outstanding Employee for 2005

Jim Ballerstein, research support specialist in the department of Horticultural Sciences, was named the Outstanding Employee for 2005 at the Annual Station Banquet, which was held on Friday November 4. Jim is the 23rd employee to be so honored.

"It was a real pleasure to see Jim receive the award on Friday night. He certainly deserved it," said Steve Reiners, Jim's supervisor. "About a year after I came to Geneva, I mentioned to Jim that I would like to nominate him for the award, but he made me promise that I wouldn't do it because he would be uncomfortable being the center of attention."

Steve went on to say that over the past few years he had numerous people ask him why he hadn't nominated Jim. "Finally, I figured the heck with the promise, let's put his name in," he said. "Once I started the ball rolling, I found that many people wanted to write a letter for Jim - not only faculty, support specialists and administrative staff here at the Station, but also CCE educators and seed and processing company reps. There were more than 20 letters in total, and all focused on his hard work, cooperation and willingness to help, and always with a smile. I have been extremely lucky to be able to work with Jim these past 11 years - he is a wonderful friend and colleague."

"It is an honor to be able to announce this year's Employee of the Year," said Tom Burr when it came time to make the introduction. "I want to thank Amy Andersen and the committee that worked so hard to select the recipient. As indicated in the letters, there are many deserving persons at the Station that contribute so much to our daily work environment, and to our stature as a world leader in food and agriculture."

Tom shared several excerpts from the letters supporting Jim's nomination. Some of these were:

- "He goes out of his way to help others."
- "His knowledge and expertise is legendary."
- "He is the consummate team player."
- "He is the go-to-guy for others at Station."
- "He has gained the respect of colleagues worldwide."
- "One of the first to volunteer at functions such as Whale Watch, Fun on Farm, Empire Farm Days, and Bring Your Child To Work Day."



*Cheryl TenEyck, last year's Outstanding Employee, was reluctant to surrender the VIP parking sign to Jim Ballerstein.*

*(Continued on page 2)*



(BALERSTEIN, *continued*)

- “He has established one of the best vegetable variety evaluation programs in the country and has taken it upon himself to develop variety evaluations for the ordinary crops of New York, such as sweet potato, okra, and ornamental cotton.”
- “His trials may be one of the most important contributions by Cornell to the processing vegetable industry.”
- “Seed growers, processors and growers wait anxiously for his yearly report, and provide significant funding to support that work.”

At this point Tom said, “By now you have probably guessed the identity of this year’s awardee - a person who truly exemplifies the kind of individual that not only makes the Station a great place to work, but advances our standing as an academic institution. I am very pleased to announce this year’s outstanding employee, Jim Balerstein.”

After Jim was introduced, Cheryl Ten Eyck, last year’s Outstanding Employee, joined Station Club President Amy Andersen to make some presentations to the honoree.

“Jim, you have given so much to the Station, now it’s time for us to give something back to you,” Amy said as she handed him several pumpkins, squash, cucumbers and a sweet potato.

In a more serious vein, Jim was presented with an Outstanding Employee certificate mounted on a plaque, a gift certificate for brunch for two at the Statler Hotel’s Banfi’s restaurant, a \$25 gift card from the Cornell Campus Store, a gift certificate worth \$20 toward any Station Club merchandise, and of course the coveted Employee Recognition Parking Sign.

“We have many wonderful people working at Geneva, but I can think of few who are more deserving of this honor than Jim,” Steve Reiners said reflecting on the evening’s activities. “For nearly 20 years he has proven himself to be a caring and thoughtful individual who not only demonstrates excellence in his job, but is a true advocate for all the good things that occur at the Station.”

*J. Ogrodnick*

## Station Banquet 2005

The following is the text of Station Club President Amy Andersen’s after dinner remarks. Amy served as emcee of the after dinner program at this year’s Annual Banquet.

Welcome, everyone and what a great night and a GREAT turn-out! I’d like to welcome everyone to the Annual Station Club Banquet. I’m Amy Andersen and I will be your emcee for the evening. I would first like to thank the Department Chairs and Unit Leaders for offering subsidies towards everyone’s dinners. We all appreciate it!

It’s amazing to look back and see what we have accomplished this past year: Harvey Hoch assumed the Department Chairmanship of Plant Pathology; Olga Padilla - Zakour, Phillip Griffiths and Courtney Weber were promoted to Associate Professor; Thomas Henick-Kling was promoted to Full Professor; Randy Worobo became the Director of Undergraduate Education at the Station; David Gadoury was given an adjunct appointment at the Norwegian Crop Research Institute; Mike Hoffman became the Associate Dean of CALS and the Director of the Ithaca Experiment Station; Harvey Reissig became Director of the Pesticide Management Education Program for CALS; Pat Mahoney became the HR Manager; Lou Ann Rago became the Administrative Assistant in Hort Science and last, but certainly not least, Tom Burr became the new Director of the Experiment Station here in Geneva!

To all of you, our sincere congratulations!

We’ve also welcomed Cherie Quay to Human Resources, Pat Madalena to Environmental Health & Safety, and Joanne Schessl to the Administrative Service Center. Bob Seem is now helping to market and develop the tenant pool for the Ag Tech Park, and Julie Kikkert has gone on to take the position of Extension Vegetable Specialist with Ontario County Cooperative Extension.

The following students received their Ph.Ds:

From Food Science and Technology: Hsiao-Wei (Cathy) Wen, Chantanawarangoon (Tang) Sasitorn and Jaruk Srikiatden

From Horticultural Sciences: Katy Martin Rainey

From Plant Pathology: Stella Zitter and Megan Kennelly

From Entomology: Paul Robbins and Kris Silver

and Heather Melidossian, Plant Pathology, received her Masters

Several awards were received by our Graduate Students and Faculty—too many to enumerate here in fact. These awards are tangible evidence of the extraordinary work that goes on here at the Station!

President Lehman and his wife visited the Station; and many of our faculty members and legislators spent the day at the Economic and Emerging Opportunities Colloquium at the Belhurst.

We’ve mourned the loss of our beloved colleagues and friends—Dr. Edward Glass, Sherrill Gibbs, Dorothy Lynch, Ben Shelton and Tom DeYulio.

And we’ve welcomed the birth of five future scientists—Allison Waldron, Juliana Plate, Julia Durst, Luke Weber, and a son to Brad Rosell and his girlfriend, who is so new that I don’t even know his name yet.

Even though we work hard, we’ve also managed to let our hair down and have some fun at the Bowling Party, Bike and Walk to Work Week, Art Show and Spring Dinner, Golf Tournament, Barton Lab Chili Cook-off—complete with BEAN-O! Whale Watch, Empire Farms Days, Fun on the Farm, Earth Day, Arbor Day, Bring a Child to Work Day.....and who could forget the opportunity to take a shot at their favorite supervisor at the dunking booth at the Station Picnic?

We also helped out our international neighbors with the “Emergency Relief for Tsunami Survivors” collection, (raising \$1,049); we extended a helping hand to our southern neighbors with the “Hurricane Katrina Relief Effort” collection, (raising \$1,422.78); and donated to our local neighbors with Operation Merry Christmas and the Emergency Food

*(Continued on page 3)*





(BRIEFS, continued)

### Open Enrollment

Now is the time to review program choices and make changes in endowed health and dental coverage.

We do not have the new rates and final changes from the NYS Department of Civil Service, so contract college faculty and staff covered under the Empire Plan or one of the alternative HMO plans must wait a bit longer. As soon as the rates are released, the Empire Plan will commence its version of open enrollment called the Option Transfer period.

It's also time to re-enroll in Select Benefits. If you have not taken advantage of the tax break that is the core benefit in Select Benefits, you may want to take a fresh look. Federal regulators have relaxed the rules on how much time participants have to use their tax-favored account balances. This makes the accounts easier to use and less risky. If you have health or dependent child care expenses and you are not using Select Benefits, you are passing up an opportunity to save money by paying less in taxes.

The easiest way to sign up for Select Benefits and to perform some changes in the endowed (only) health plans is to use eOpen Enroll, a web program you can access at work or at home. Using eOpen Enroll, participants are assured we have the changes you submitted. You will get an instant confirmation of your submission. Here's the address. <http://eessentials.ohr.cornell.edu>

Call Benefit Services 255-3936 with questions or for more information.



Wlodek and Eva B. were among those who danced to the after dinner music of "Unbalanced" featuring the Station's very own Nestor Ortiz.

Drive for the Geneva Center of Concern.

I would now like to take a moment to thank Amy Brooks for all of her help with the Banquet preparations and for being a super person to bounce ideas off of. She has been such a BIG help! Thank you to Rixana Petoldt for helping with the set-up today. Thank you, also, to Kristen Ondik for her patience, guidance and assistance. Because of their help, the Banquet has turned out to be a great success.

On your program, you will see listed this year's Station Club Officers, Reps and Special Chairs. A very special thank you goes out to each of them for all that they do throughout the year to make Station Club the great organization that it is. Please give them a round of applause!

At this point, Amy turned the program over to Tom Burr for introduction of the Outstanding Employee (See lead story on page one), which was followed by dancing to the music of 'Unbalanced' featuring our very own Nestor Ortiz.

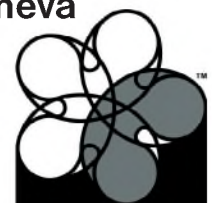


**"I am one."  
One in nine Americans has  
chronic kidney disease.  
"Are you?"**

If you have high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney disease, you are at risk. Contact the National Kidney Foundation at (585) 697-0874 for more information and free screening.

The NKF of Upstate New York is offering a **Free KIDNEY SCREENING**

**Saturday, November 19, 2005  
Presbyterian Church of Geneva  
24 Park Place, Geneva**



National Kidney Foundation

**KEEP**

KIDNEY EARLY EVALUATION PROGRAM

You should attend if you are—18 years or older and have a parent, grandparent, brother or sister with diabetes, high blood pressure or kidney disease, or if you have high blood pressure or diabetes

For More Information, Call Eileen at 315-787-4580 or Harvey at x2332



**CALENDAR of EVENTS**  
NOV. 11 - DEC 2, 2005

**MEETINGS**

**CHAIRS' MEETING**

**Date:** Tuesday, November 15, 2005  
**Time:** 9:00 AM  
**Place:** Director's Office

**CHAIRS & UNIT LEADERS**

**Date:** Thursday, November 17, 2005  
**Time:** 1:30 PM  
**Place:** FST Room 251

**SEMINARS**

**ENTOMOLOGY**

**Date:** Tuesday, November 22, 2005  
**Time:** 10:30 AM, cookies & coffee at 10:15  
**Place:** Room 310 Barton Lab Conference Room, Barton Lab  
**Speaker:** Andre Kesler, Ithaca  
**Subject:** Plant-Insect Interactions in the Era of Consolidation in Biological Sciences: A Solanaceae Example

**FOOD SCIENCE**

**Date:** Wednesday, November 16, 2005  
**Time:** 11 AM  
**Place:** Food Science Conference Room  
**Speaker:** Katherine Kittel, Geneva  
**Subject:** Using Gas Chromatography Olfactometry to Measure Odorant-Specific Sensory Deficits

**Date:** Wednesday, November 30, 2005  
**Time:** 11 AM  
**Place:** Food Science Conference Room  
**Speaker:** Christopher Gerling, Geneva  
**Subject:** Atypical Aging Flavor Defect in White Wines: Sensory Description of Three Vintages

**HORT SCIENCE**

**Date:** Wednesday, November 16, 2005  
**Time:** 3:30 - 4:30 PM  
**Place:** Jordan Hall Staff Room, Coffee in Jordan Hall Lounge  
**Speaker:** Wojciech Pawlowski, Ithaca  
**Subject:** Genetic analysis of meiotic

(SEMINARS, continued)

prophase events in maize and Arabidopsis

**HORT SCIENCE**

**Date:** Wednesday, November 30, 2005  
**Time:** 3:30 - 4:30 PM  
**Place:** Jordan Hall Staff Room, Coffee in Jordan Hall Lounge  
**Speaker:** Lukas Mueller, Ithaca  
**Subject:** The Solanaceae Genomics Network

**PLANT PATHOLOGY**

**Date:** Tuesday, November 15, 2005  
**Time:** 3:30 PM, coffee at 3 PM  
**Place:** Barton Lab, check foyer sign for room location

**Speaker:** Wayne Wilcox, Geneva  
**Subject:** Fungal diseases of NY grapes

**Date:** Tuesday, November 29, 2005  
**Time:** 3:30 PM, coffee at 3 PM  
**Place:** Barton Lab, check foyer sign for room location

**Speaker:** Mike Savka, RIT, Rochester, NY  
**Subject:** Antagonist-based control of quorum sensing regulated virulence in the corn pathogen, *Pantoea stewartii*

**LTC**

**Date:** Thursday, November 17, 2005  
**Time:** 9 - 11:30 AM  
**Subject:** Microsoft Word Advanced, 2nd session

**Instructors:** Cheryl TenEyck and Jane Irwin

**Date:** Tuesday, November 22, 2005  
**Time:** 7:30 - 11:30 AM  
**Subject:** Open Lab  
**Facilitator:** Jane Irwin

**Date:** Friday, December 2, 2005  
**Time:** 7:30 - 11:30 AM  
**Subject:** Open Lab  
**Facilitator:** Jane Irwin

Department and Unit  
Holiday Parties  
will be held on Friday,  
December 16 beginning at  
1:00 PM



**Station Retirees**  
**Mark your calendar**  
**Holiday**  
**Buffet Lunch**  
**Geneva County Club**  
**December 7, 2005 at Noon.**

Information cards will be sent out soon.

If you are not on the mailing list to receive notices of Retiree's events and would like to be, please call Sue Dwyer at 781-0360.

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**FOR SALE:** Maytag Washer & Kenmore Dryer, electric, large capacity; Good condition, \$250 for the set. Email hak3 or phone 315-539-5216 (evenings)

**FOR SALE:** Do your Christmas shopping early! AdamsGolf golf club. GT Tight Lies, 19° strong 5, Ultralite SuperShaft™. Designed by Grafalloy. Used once for chipping practice. Cost new \$138, will sell for \$80 or B/O. Contact elg2

**FOR RENT:** One bedroom apartment, nice neighborhood, screened in porch, hardwood floors, off street parking, laundry on premises. Close to Station. \$525 + electric (includes heat, water and trash removal). Contact Nancy Long X2288

**FOR RENT:** Available in November. Two bedroom apartment, 1st floor, big kitchen, laundry hook up or laundry on premises. Nice neighborhood, off street parking, close to Station. \$650 + electric (includes heat, water and trash removal). Contact Nancy Long x2288

**FOR SALE:** Mobil home, 1978 Skyline Green Bier model 14' X 64', 2 bedroom, 1 year old furnace, dryer, refrigerator & electric stove included. Washer hook-up, screened in porch, set-up in park. Call Stan Comstock 315-531-1982

**FOR SALE:** 425 John Deere Lawn Tractor/mower, 54" hydraulic mower and front blade, wheel weights, tire chains, and a large utility cart. Excellent condition (85 hrs of total use). Listed book value is \$5,600.00. Best offer. Call George at 2374 or 585-905-0392