



April 2001, Volume IX, Issue 8

NEW/BEGINNING TEACHER COLUMN

by: *MeeCee Baker, Agricultural Educator*

Mentoring Program Expanded



Thank you to the PAAE Board for voting to expand the mentoring program. Beginning this

spring, an educational seminar will be presented one hour prior to each PAAE regional meeting. The focus for spring 2001 will be forming and utilizing advisory committees. While the program is targeted to rookie teachers and their mentors, all are welcome to attend. Who doesn't need help in working with advisory groups? Plan to attend this worthwhile new program.

In addition, PAAE has purchased New Teacher Handbooks (published by the National FFA) for all first year teachers. The booklet will be presented during these regional seminars. Thanks again to our professional association. By the way, the seminar is free!

New and experienced teachers alike need assistance in showcasing (marketing) our programs. I have listed a few hints which may help you in this arena.

1. Have Chapter President prepare a monthly update for Board of

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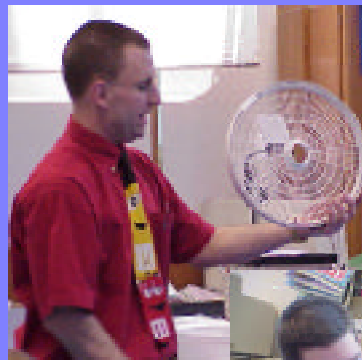
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A 4-Fold Program

Central Columbia HS, Bloomsburg



Doug Brown is preparing students for a Food Hydration Lab.

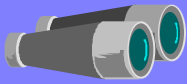
Curt Turner is working individually with students on their SAE books.



How does an agricultural education program with 1 teacher and 20 students evolve into a program with 2 teachers and 182 students in less than 10 years? According to Doug Brown and Curt Turner of Central Columbia High School, it's about "diversification of curriculum and coursework which allows for the blending of students with different environments, economic status and genders." Doug admits, "this is not a new concept, but it works with our program. We have taken ideas and concepts from other successful programs within the state and nation and applied them with our students and community in mind."

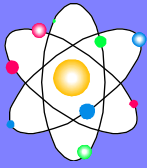
Both teachers rave about the importance of an aggressive

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Sites of Interest

The Atoms Family



It's not quite Halloween, but the Atoms Family offers information on all aspects of energy and is presented in an easy-to-use and entertaining way for students in middle school through high school. For instance, students can add layers of insulation to see how it affects the inside temperature of the Mummy's Tomb. Six unsavory characters, including Igor, the Mummy, and the Phantom, explain the rules of electrical safety. Visit the Phantom's Portrait Parlor to learn about Phases of Matter and Mighty Molecules. At The Wolf Man's Ghostly Graveyard, explore the concepts of fuel conservation and energy transfer, or visit Dracula's Library, where the ever-popular vampire explains the properties of light waves and particles.

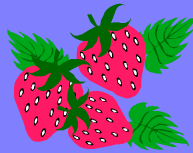
Students can navigate internal pages by using the character buttons at the bottom of each page or go back to the main page. Each section of the site has a menu of activities on its main page.

The Atoms Family is just one of the resources you can find at <http://www.miamisci.org/> which is the Miami Museum of Science website.

Foodborne Illness Education

USDA has consolidated links to selected websites on its Foodborne Illness Information Education Center found at <http://www.nalusda.gov/fnic/foodborne/fbindex/index.htm>

Among the topics you will find are food irradiation,



foodborne pathogens, food safety resources for educators, and animal health and food safety on the farm. Each link on the main page leads to many other websites that have been selected for their educational value.

Attention NAAE Members: Applications are needed for the following NAAE Awards:

- Outstanding Young Member
- Outstanding AG ED Member
- Outstanding AG ED Program
- Postsecondary All-Star Team
- Ideas Unlimited

Nominations are needed for the following:

- Outstanding Cooperation Award
- Outstanding Service Citation
- Honorary Life Membership

Applications are available from <http://www.teamaged.org> or contact Gerald Reichard for copies.

Pass the word along to elementary teachers

The next Ag in the Classroom Teacher Workshop will be held July 15 – 21, 2001. Teachers interested in attending the workshops and receiving scholarships or other funding support are encouraged to contact their county farm bureau.

For more information or to receive a free Ag in the Classroom brochure, visit the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's website at <http://www.pfb.com/programs/aitc.html>; visit the AAFPA website at www.cas.psu.edu/docs/CASPROF/AgClassroom/agclassroom.html; or call Carol Ann Gregg, Education Coordinator at 724-458-6108.



Briefs Are On-Line

Get your *Briefs* newsletter at <http://agexted.cas.psu.edu/center.html> under newsletters.

Reminder Minutes at PA FFA Homepage

PA FFA Association Board Minutes posted online at

<http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/CASDEPT/AGED/PAffa/board.htm>.



Space Day 2001 at Penn State: A Celebration of Air and Space Research

Date: Saturday, April 21, 2001
 Time: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
 Location: Penn State University
 Park Campus in the HUB-
 Alumni Hall
 More information at [http://
 www.psu.edu/spaceday/
 spaceday/](http://www.psu.edu/spaceday/spaceday/)
 Please contact Angela Phelps at
 814-863-3608 or
 axp41@psu.edu to register.

Space Day 2001 at Penn State is a free event for all ages. During the event, you and your family can discover how Penn State researchers, scientists, and students are contributing to our understanding of:

- planet Earth and our planetary neighbors
- stars, galaxies, black holes and extra-stellar planets
- the origins, evolution, distribution and destiny of life in the universe
- effects of microgravity on the body
- changes in atmospheric composition and global climate change
- communication systems in space
- propulsion and rocket science

Also Featuring:
 —Our resident astronaut Dr. Jim Pawelczyk, who flew aboard Space Shuttle mission



STS-90, will talk about what it takes to be an astronaut and describe how the Space Shuttle gets into space by using audience volunteers to represent the Space Shuttle, external fuel tank and solid rocket boosters.

—Star Lab planetarium tours will be conducted every 30 minutes. Tickets are free but limited, and they are given on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you are bringing a group of six or more, you may be able to reserve tickets. Please contact Angela Phelps for more information.

—Giveaways for K-12 educators and students
 —Hands-on activities for the whole family

Space Day 2001 at Penn State is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Space Grant Consortium and is appropriate for all ages, including children, precollege students, higher ed students, and adults. Our event is a supplement to the National Space Day, sponsored by Lockheed Martin, which occurs on May 3. Visit the National Space Day website at <http://www.spaceday.com> to find out about more ways that you can get involved in this international celebration.

Grant Opportunity

Through Teach America, the Gateway Foundation awards online training subscriptions to schools, school districts, and other educational institutions.



Grant recipients will have unlimited access, for 12 months, to more than 250 online instructor-led courses or self-paced tutorials. Courses range from Web publishing and word processing to exploring the Internet.

Applicants for Teach America grants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a non-profit K-12 school, other non-profit educational institution, or a teacher affiliated with one of these institutions;
- Demonstrate a need for technology training;
- Submit a brief plan for using technology to enhance classroom instruction; and
- Complete an online evaluation of Teach America upon conclusion of the 12-month grant.

To apply for a Teach America grant, complete the online application form. You must include your organization's tax-exempt identification number on your application. For more information log onto <http://www.gateway.com/teachamerica/>.

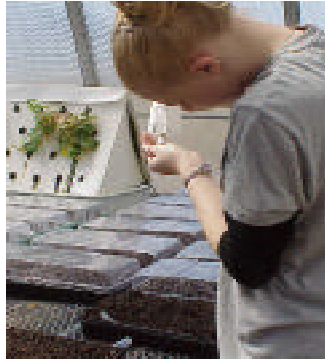
(A 4-Fold Program...con't from p. 1)

advisory committee. Their particular committee is comprised of agricultural producers, farmers, educators, business owners, politicians and agricultural agency personnel. As a result the program has gained a second teacher, a greenhouse, landscaping plots, computers and more. They are now working to expand the program by adding a second greenhouse and enhancing current curriculum.

Another group of advocates for the program is the students. One of the chapter members looks for a career in journalism and is creating chapter newsletters. In the March issue Amy Bowman explains the idea of Ag-In-The-Classroom for the Central Columbia students.

“Our FFA Chapter conducts an Ag-In-The-Classroom activity every year. This is an activity where FFA members go to local preschools and show the students different kinds of animals. We tell the students the name of the animal and what they eat and also what they need to survive. This year we visited the Wonder Years Preschool on Old Berwick Road. The students enjoyed seeing and petting the animals. The point of this activity is to get students interested in agriculture at a young age. Then when they come into the high school they will want to be part of it. They may even want to have an occupation involving

agriculture. This activity also benefits FFA members, by providing us a chance to experience what skills are needed by teacher and/or parents.”



Student sowing seeds for spring sales and experiments.

Kristen Campell, another aspiring writer, talks about the Agricultural Awareness Mini-Course, which is taught in the middle school. She reported that Mr. Turner and Mr. Brown pack up their equipment and head to the middle school to teach subjects in areas of wildlife, water quality, small animal science, food science and soil science. “It (the course) involves interactive, hands-on projects and is available for seventh and eighth graders.”

“The program is not a new invention of the ‘wheel,’ but a combination of ideas and concepts that are working and improving the program for all of the community to benefit. It’s a 4-fold program – 1) The flexibility of the scheduling; 2) The support of the administration and school officials; 3) The

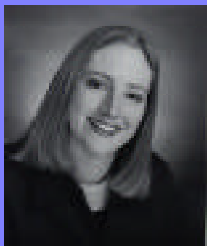
advisory council and; 4) The students,” Doug explained.

Curt provided an example about the student interested in journalism. “The student is college bound, yet he still wants to be in agriculture to explore agricultural journalism. If our curriculum were the same as 10 years ago the student would not be able to schedule the double period courses of agriculture. Now we offer independent projects and one period courses. This allows us to help meet the needs of students with different career ideas, such as the young man interested in journalism.” Curt also teaches a computer class that is required by all 9th grade students. “Even though there are students enrolled who are not interested in agriculture, we are introducing them to a side of education and careers that are related to agriculture with the use of computers.” Doug added that he is very involved with sports and being a coach has also helped to promote the program.

Overall the Central Columbia Agricultural Education Program is a model when it comes to advisory committees, administrative support, scheduling flexibility and student development. Doug Brown and Curt Turner create an environment that is more than just getting an education, it’s about finding one’s niche and turning it into a career.

Introducing...

Tabitha Jacobs



Tabitha Jacobs started teaching agriculture way before graduating

from the University of Delaware in 1999. She spent several months working for Wenger's Feed Mill in Rheems, PA. She learned skills in the areas of mill-work, laboratory testing and farm services. Tabitha was also responsible for education displays for Farm City Day.

Tabitha began her postsecondary education with a major in Animal Science, but still wanted something

more. That's when the former Dean Shippy of University of Delaware College of Agriculture and Natural Resources suggested that Tabitha combine her two loves of animals and teaching and take a second major in Agricultural Education. She took his advice and began teaching at Conrad Weiser Middle School in the fall of 1999.

"Agriculture is a lot more than just farming," commented Tabitha. "Ask any of my students, the quote is actually my motto." Tabitha takes those words to heart and has established a curriculum that provides a brief overview of forest ecosystems, plant science, soil science, microbiology, careers

and animal science. Just recently the single-person department moved into a new classroom, which has allowed for the growth of the curriculum and students' knowledge. This move allows all of the 6th and 8th grade students to pass through her classroom at some point in the academic year.

To relax and have a change of pace, Tabitha is involved in community theater productions. She has also adopted a 1-year-old puppy named Cody.

The Center welcomes Tabitha Jacobs to the agricultural education family and wishes her the best for her future endeavors.

USDA Toll-Free Foot-and-Mouth Disease Call Line

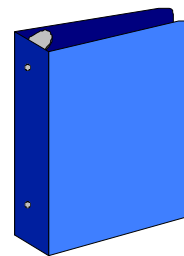
On March 16, 2001 the U.S. Department of Agriculture established a toll-free telephone center to respond to questions from the public, industry, and media regarding USDA's responses to the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Europe. The toll-free number is 1-800-601-9327.

The phone center is staffed by veterinarians and import/export experts from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service who can explain the

restrictions and regulations impacting people and products arriving at U.S. ports-of-entry from foot-and-mouth disease affected countries.

Foot-and-mouth disease is a severe, highly communicable viral disease of cattle and swine. It also affects sheep, goats, deer, and other cloven-hoofed ruminants. The United States has been free of foot-and-mouth disease since 1929.

Handbook Online



Tim Weller announced that The PA Career and Technology Education Curriculum

Resource Website contains a handbook for program planning and curriculum.

To log onto this site, complete the following steps:

Go to <http://pacatecur.org/aged/aged.htm>

Scroll down the page and click on "agriculture."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS.....

- April 6..... FFA Association Board of Directors Mtg., 301 AG Admin. Bldg., PSU, 6:30 p.m.
 April 7..... State Proficiency Evaluations, AG Admin. Bldg., PSU
 April 19..... PAAE North Central Spring Regional Mtg., Restless Oak Restaurant, McElhattan,
 6:00 p.m.
 May 18..... FFA Association Board of Directors Mtg., 301 AG Admin Bldg., PSU, 6:30 p.m.
 June 12-14 FFA Activities Week, PSU
 June 20 - 21 2000-2001 State Officer Orientation, PSU (D. Schafer)
 July 6-9 NAAE Region VI Meeting, Baltimore, MD
 July 15-19 2001 Governor's Institute for Agricultural Science Careers (PAAE Summer Con-
 ference), PSU (T. Roberson)
 July 17-18 PA Young Farmers Summer Conference, State College
 July 19 FFA Association Board Mtg., Penn Stater, 6:30 PM
 August 14-19 Ag Progress Days, Rock Springs (D. Schafer)

TEACHER DEADLINES.....

- April 15..... Dairy Showmanship Applications due to Doug Brown, Central Columbia
 May 5..... Regional Contest Quota Results due to Regional Coordinators
 May 9..... FFA Week/Entries, including full-payment, due at Penn State
 June 12..... Chapter Award Applications due at the registration desk, Activities Week, PSU
 July 1 Big E and National Convention CDE Trip Winner Registration forms due to
 VSO Office (C. Weller)

(*New/Beginning Teacher Column...con't from p. 1*)

Education and administrators.

2. Make or purchase an attractive department sign.
3. Have chapter reporters submit articles to local newspapers.
4. Construct a display featuring a randomly selected student of the month.
5. Track activities and develop an annual report; distribute freely.
6. Make radio spots for FFA Week.
7. Design a chapter web site.
8. Present programs at local civic groups.
9. Hold an open house.
10. Put student accomplishments on school announcements.

Seeking Auction Items

Kerry Richards is interested in chapter made products for the Annual PA FFA Foundation Golf Tournaments and Auctions scheduled for July 23 and August 13. Proceeds collected for the items will be distributed between the chapter and PA FFA Foundation.



For more information contact Kerry at 814-865-2134 or by email at kmh14@psu.edu.

Briefs to Ag Educators is a publication of the Center for Professional Personnel Development, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education, The Pennsylvania State University, 323 Agricultural Administration Bldg., University Park, PA 16802. Editors: Tiffany Roberson, Carol Hodes and Thomas Bruening. Phone: 814-863-7876; Fax: 814-863-4753; email Tiffany at tmr175@psu.edu

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