



BRIEFS TO AG EDUCATORS

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NEW/BEGINNING TEACHER COLUMN

by: Carol Hodes, PSU Project Associate

"Time to Pause"

It's finally here—the time of year when you can feel the pressure lifting just a little. Give yourself a pat on the back for completing the year! This is a great time to reflect on your year, what went well and what didn't, start preparing for fall, and think about what you'll do differently.

This year we were fortunate to have several contributors to the "New and Beginning Teacher" column who shared aspects of their experience. I'd like to thank our columnists: LeRoy Dreibelbis, Jr., Phil Ogline, Zach Uphold, MeeCee Baker, and Larry Way. I think they offered excellent advice and strategies for all of us regardless of age.

Please take some time for yourself and your family this summer to



recharge your batteries.

Perhaps we will see you this summer at some of the courses and programs we have

planned or at Eastern Region NAAE in Baltimore.

IN THIS ISSUE...

PAGE 2... SITES OF INTEREST

PAGE 3 .. INTRODUCING... COLLEEN INNERST,
"BEST WORKSHOP I HAVE EVER BEEN TO!"

PAGE 6... CALENDAR

A Good Problem to Have

Selinsgrove HS, Selinsgrove



Lt. to rt.: Earl Ferry & Roger Reichenbach

A visit to Selinsgrove High School's agriculture program reveals their very obvious problem that these two veteran teachers deal with annually. This popular agricultural science program is rapidly running out of space! Earl Ferry, who has been at Selinsgrove for 31 years, mentioned that their enrollments have increased about 50% in the past decade. They are no longer able to accommodate all students who want to sign up for their courses. Some of this is due to the broad appeal of their curriculum where students acquire real-world skills. The electrical/carpentry program is one of their popular courses. Recently the students built storage sheds for a class project and sold them to some of the other teachers at the school.

"Ag is going toward science with less of a production agriculture emphasis and there is science credit for the courses. If students have two years of Ag Science, they get credit for a science elective," explained Roger

(continued on page 4)



Sites of Interest

Academic Courses

Our summer 2001 brochure of courses with its listing of the eight three-week summer courses has been mailed to each of you. If yours has been misplaced, the information is also on the Center's website at su.edu/forteachers.html <http://AgExtEd.cas.psu.edu/forteachers.html>. The three-



week courses are offered through the State College Area Continuing Ed Office and Kay Partenheimer (814-865-3443) is the contact person there. The AEE graduate staff assistant is Betty Blair (814-863-3824) who can assist you with the process for graduate enrollment.

The fall 2001 schedule shows that several courses will be offered either in the evening or on Saturdays: AEE 501, Foundations of Ag and Extension Ed, will be taught at 9:30-noon on Saturdays; AEE 520, Scientific Methods, will be taught from 4:40 - 7:20 on Thursdays; AEE 597B, Advanced Data Analysis Techniques will be taught from 4:40-7:20 PM on Tuesdays; AEE 530, Teaching and Learning Ag Science will be taught Wednesdays from 4:30 - 7:30 PM; and YFE 555, Volunteer Program Management, will be taught from 6:30 to 9:30 on Monday evenings.

Forest Resources Institute for Teachers

The institute is intended for 3rd through 12th-grade teachers to help them teach a balanced environment and ecology curriculum related to Pennsylvania's forests and wildlife. The long-term objective of FRIT is to provide youth with the skills and knowledge to recognize, analyze, and make decisions relating to Pennsylvania's forest resources. FRIT, a four-day institute at Penn State's University Park Campus from June 25-28, 2001, will assist teachers in addressing the need. For more information about registration, please contact the Office of Conferences and Short Courses 814-865-8301.

IPM for Teachers

June 19-22 -This is an expansion of the successful April IPM workshop. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is part of the new Academic Standards for Environmental and Ecology in Pennsylvania and you will learn how to fit it into your curriculum. In this class, you'll learn and use basic concepts in biology, ecology, math, chemistry, and even history, sociology, and the democratic process. Contact Short Courses at 814-865-8301 to register.

Education Planet

The Education Planet website is useful for AG teachers—there are thousands of resources for teachers, lesson plans, information, maps, software, etc. From the home page, <http://www.educationplanet.com/>, the database can be searched by both keyword and grade. The keyword "Agriculture" returned a list of over 400 different items, which are categorized by type: lesson plans, websites, maps, software, books, videos, or supplies. Most of the resources are free, however some of the links lead to places where certain items must be purchased.

Weed Guides

A CD titled "A Weed Key" and a book titled "Manual for Weeds of the Northeast" are available from Penn State's media sales catalogue. The Weed Key and Identification System has a search system and database for 180 weed species found in the Northeastern United States. There is also a glossary of 100 terms. The software is only for a MacIntosh. The "Manual for Weeds of the Northeast" is a book that accompanies the CD, but can also be a good addition to your library with or without the CD. They can be ordered at <http://www.cde.psu.edu/MediaSales/latest/ag022702.html> or by calling 800-770-2111.

Introducing... Colleen Innerst

Colleen Innerst wanted something more than just working in the agricultural industry. She wanted to make the elusive difference.



So, she decided to commute three hours a day to attend courses at Penn State to obtain her teaching certificate in agricultural education. Not only was Colleen attending college, but she also assisted her husband with the family's dairy farm. Through careful time management and a driving force to make a difference in the lives of young people, Colleen received her teaching certificate in the spring of 2000.

Shortly after graduation Colleen received a position at Big Spring High School. And her goal of wanting to make a difference in the lives of young people was becoming a reality. In the past year, Colleen has taught a variety of agricultural subjects, but feels her strengths are in the animal science areas. In order to meet the needs of the students, Colleen also teaches welding, small animal pet care, fish and wildlife, agricultural technology, plant and soil sciences, and horticulture.

When asked about what she likes most about being at Big Spring High School as an agricultural educator, she commented, "I am blessed to have Vicki Lantz as my teaching partner. Vicki has been a great help to me and I have learned a lot from her." Colleen then went on to talk about her students. "Many of my students have ties to agriculture in one way or another. Although many of them are not from farms, they work on farms or grandma has a farm or the neighbor farms. It makes teaching a lot of fun when the students can relate to the class materials."

Colleen keeps one quote in mind and she shares it frequently with her students, especially at 7:45 AM on a Monday morning – "It's all good." She went on to explain that, "no matter your problems are or what they seem to be – It's all good! We are so blessed and so many times we focus on the bad when really in most people's lives the really big things that matter are all good!"

By just spending a few minutes with Colleen Innerst one begins to look at life with enthusiasm and excitement. By focusing on the good, she is able to reach her goal that she originally set out to do – to make a positive difference in the lives of young people.

"Best Workshop I Have Ever Been To!"

At last month's IPM for Teachers workshop held at IU 15 in Summerdale, fourteen teachers and several extension agents received many resources and learned how to



implement this portion of the new standards for Environment and Ecology. One of the teachers noted, "this was the best workshop I've ever been to." Many of the IPM materials used for this workshop have been included on the website of the PA IPM program at <http://paipm.cas.psu.edu> under the links "Resources" and "School IPM." Materials are being developed that link classroom activities with specific sections of the Standards for Environment and Ecology in Pennsylvania and these are gradually being added to the website. The IPM workshop was conducted and co-sponsored by the PA IPM program and co-sponsored by The Center for Professional Personnel Development. The Center hopes to plan more IPM workshops in the future.



Educators from science and agriculture departments attended the workshop.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS.....

- 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 Conference) 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.....

- 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)

(A Good Problem to Have...con't from p. 1)

Reichenbach, a 26-year veteran of the program. A second factor is the "baby boom echo" which will bring a larger than normal 9th grade class to the high school in 2001-2002 and there is continued growth expected at the elementary level. The school growth factor may enable the program to become more selective in the future.

The third factor in this program's success is that Earl and Roger are very student centered and focused on active learning. Earl teaches horticulture, which includes landscape, and this has been a popular course over the years. The

students made their first attempt at the landscape exhibit competition at this year's Farm Show and they placed fifth. Selinsgrove FFA also has placed first in the window exhibit competition three times in the past several years. The chapter looks forward to the Beaver Fair, where many students show animals each year.

Of course, one of the more substantial changes both Earl and Roger have seen over the years is the increasing proportion of non-farm students, which brings a different awareness in the students and a more diverse array of SAE programs

and off-farm coops. Students also can opt to prepare for the Certified Pesticide Applicator exam, which is a help to the students who go directly into the workforce from high school since they can graduate with an added credential.

Another theme has been their collaborative work with other facets of the school. Earl and Roger enjoy cooperating with the math and science teachers, who often arrange for their students to use the agriculture facilities for projects. Their main goal is for students to leave their program with better skills and a good sense of themselves.

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