

Briefs for Ag Educators

The Center for Professional Personnel Development

Service Learning Project in Philadelphia

By: Erik Kelling, AEE MS Degree Candidate

During the weekend of October 18-19, sixty-five lucky individuals had an opportunity to make a difference in the health of the environment, while beautifying a section of Philadelphia. The individuals took part in a service learning project at the Cobbs Creek Environmental Center which is comprised of approximately three hundred acres in West Philadelphia. Participants included students enrolled in *AEE 311/497A – Developing Youth Leadership*, student members of the Penn State MANRS (Minorities in Agriculture and Natural Resources) chapter,

Collegiate FFA members, Junior MANRS members, graduate students and faculty members from Agricultural and Extension Education. This project was funded through a College of Agricultural Sciences Seed grant that was secured by Drs. Tracy Hoover and Nicole Webster.

Upon our arrival at the environmental center, we were given a brief historical background and tour of the facility. The staff then outlined the day's activities and split us into three teams. The three activities that were to be performed were: digging trenches for erosion control, working
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Students learning to identify invasive plants which need to be removed from the area.

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New & Beginning Teacher Column

By: Krista Pontius, PAEE President

"I like it, I love it...I want some more of it?????"

After student teaching, this line from Tim McGraw's song was the title of my article about my student teaching experience. I couldn't have asked for a more fulfilling opportunity than the one that I received at Twin Valley with Ron Frederick. I left student teaching big ideas and big plans. I was going to paint Pennsylvania National Blue and Corn Gold with my big ideas. Then...the real world! No one will ever forget the obstacles and challenges of their first year of

teaching. However, I have some good news...it gets better!

After you dig through the mound of paperwork and learn to balance your busy career, you will begin to appreciate the profession. Agriculture teachers are cut from a different mold. They are sincere, dedicated, hard-working individuals who simply have the students' best interest in mind. I promise that you will not find another profession where your peers will be so willing to lend a helping hand.

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Sites of Interest

Agricultural Website; New Tool for PA Classrooms Launched

Secretaries Wolff and Phillips team up for innovative educational resource.

At the launch for a website that will become a key educational tool for Pennsylvania students, Agriculture Secretary Dennis C Wolff, Education Secretary Vicki Philips and Manheim Township sixth grader Alexandra Wenger unveiled Marketplaceforthemind.com, created by the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Governor Rendell, who was not able to attend due to a scheduling conflict, commented on the site. "If Pennsylvania is to continue to be an agricultural leader, we must begin to be an educational leader as well. The Departments of Education and Agriculture worked together to make this project a reality to meet a demonstrated need for high quality information about agriculture, particularly Pennsylvania agriculture," Governor Rendell said. " This innovative project will help our teachers as they highlight the importance of agriculture both as a driving economic force in the Commonwealth, and as rich part of our heritage."

The site will provide teachers in Pennsylvania with convenient access to agricultural educational materials aligned to current Pennsylvania teaching standards for use in their classrooms. The site will also provide students, the general public, agricultural community and government officials with up-to-date

agricultural educational resources, event listings and useful information to enhance their understanding and appreciation of Pennsylvania agriculture. Pennsylvania will be the only state in the national with a website of this type.

The website is an exceptional educational resource for educators and students and marks the beginning of a new approach to education in and about agriculture in the Commonwealth. It will provide the agricultural community access to details on low-interest loans, technical information and industry programming. The general public will benefit from up-to-date agricultural information, event listings and current issues in agriculture.

<http://www.marketplaceforthemind.com>

Garfield Celebrate FFA

In the spirit of fun and "cool things to know and tell", don't miss the appearance of world-renowned Garfield the Cat on the National FFA website along with a 75th anniversary salute by former FFA member and Garfield creator Jim Davis:

<http://www.ffa.org/convention/>. Jim was a member and president of the Fairmount FFA Chapter in Indiana.

He graciously provided the special artwork of Garfield to help FFA celebrate its diamond anniversary. And no, that's not an "official" FFA jacket being worn by Garfield...



Welcome to Marketplace for the Mind, a unique, educational resource created by The PA Department of Agriculture in cooperation with The PA Dept. of Education. Here you'll find a bounty of current agricultural educational materials aligned to Pennsylvania's Academic Standards, as well as, a wide variety of useful information on PA Agriculture and Agribusiness!"

Agricultural Education – Main Agenda Item

By: Dennis Scanlon, Professor of Agricultural and Extension Education

President Mel Eckhaus called the Penn State Agricultural Council Meeting to order at 9:30 AM on October 21st. Following a short business session, the council moved to its main agenda item of the day...agricultural education.

Program committee chair, James Shirk, gave a brief overview of agricultural education and its existence today. The Honorable Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture, Dennis Wolff addressed the topic "Why Ag Ed is Accentral." Kari Girton, chairperson of the State Board of Education, answered the question "Where does Ag Education fit into the big picture?" Dean David Monk, for the College of Education, talked about teacher preparation at Penn State. Bob Lauffer, representative for the Pennsylvania Association of Agricultural Educators, discussed "Where we are, and where we need

to go. Bob did an excellent job discussing the "state of agricultural education" and how recent legislation at both the federal and state levels have impacted on Pennsylvania programs.

With a short break for lunch, Blannie Bowen started the afternoon session with an excellent talk on the Penn State program, with highlights including increased enrollments with Agricultural and Extension Education and also the addition of several faculty members to the department. Blannie not only include a background of the department's functions and activities, but delivered information about the challenges that may occur in the future.

The agricultural teachers within the state should be proud to have been represented by Krista Pontius, Gerald Reichard and other teachers and pre-service teachers who were in attendance.

Golf Course Management

Greenskeeping Revised Edition was designed as a training guide for new employees of golf courses. However, it can also be used by students planning to work on a golf course or by students who just want to learn more about golf course management.

The first few chapters of the book explores how golf got started, how the game is played, and the layout of a golf course. This information can help new or prospective greensworkers begin to understand why certain work is done in certain

ways on a gold course. Later chapters cover mowing practices, watering, fertilizing, and general maintenance and repair of equipment. Each chapter should be studied in detail before the supervisor or teacher demonstrates the task. Prospective greensworkers should be certain that they thoroughly learn one task before beginning to learn another one.

For more information call 814-865-6713 and ask about the *Greenskeeping* book.



*Councils Mission:
To enhance the effectiveness of the College of Agricultural Sciences in planning and implementing its research, teaching, and cooperative extension responsibilities.*



*Timothy Mauk,
agricultural teacher at
Columbia-Montour
AVTS, critiqued the first
edition*

Pennsylvania Governor's School for Ag Sciences

By: Ketja Curley, PGSAS Assistant Director



Students taking part in the hands-on learning opportunities at the Governor's School.

It goes without saying that Ag Science teachers play an invaluable role in shaping the future of agriculture in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and beyond. Many students who participate in the state's agriculture programs will go on to become influential agricultural leaders. In support of your efforts as an Ag Science teacher to develop these leaders, the State established the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Agricultural Sciences (PGSAS) in 1986, a familiar fact for those of you already aware of PGSAS.

PGSAS is a five-week, intensive program for selected high school sophomores and juniors throughout the State. It provides a unique blend of hands-on learning in classes, field trips, and research and social opportunities. Together these opportunities provide students with a unique and exciting chance to explore the breadth of the agricultural sciences.

As an Ag Science teacher, you will have recently received a package of information about PGSAS. In the months to come, we encourage you to make an effort to share that information with the outstanding students in your classes. PGSAS is searching for those students who have demonstrated exceptional ability in the sciences and who have a high interest in food, agriculture, and/or the natural resource sciences. As an Ag Science teacher, you are in a great position to know who these students are and tell them about this opportunity.

This spring, 64 students will be chosen from across the state to participate in PGSAS 2004. To be one of the 64, the student's application must combine a strong academic transcript, strong teacher and counselor recommendations, and carefully written essays. The most difficult of the three is the essay section.

If you are assisting students to complete their applications, encourage them to carefully write their essays. The essays play a significant role in selecting students. Essays must provide a sense of personal voice--that is, they should provide a clear sense of who the student is and evidence of a strong interest in the agricultural sciences. Additionally, like many things in life, it helps to be creative.

PGSAS will be held from June 27 to July 31, 2004. The deadline for this year's applications is Monday, February 2, 2004. If you or your students have questions about the application procedure, please feel free to contact me, Ketja Curley, PGSAS Assistant Director at 814-863-3943 or ketja@psu.edu, or visit www.pgse.org.

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in a riparian forest and removing invasive plants from the streamside. The groups broke for lunch around noon and were fortunate enough to meet the founder of Cobb's Creek, Mrs. Carole Williams-Green. Mrs. Green shared the history of the center and thanked us for our participation. After lunch the entire

group assisted in planting one hundred and twenty native trees in a designated section of the center. The students also had the opportunity to visit historical sites in center city Philadelphia. The day was a complete success and we look forward to working with the Cobbs Creek Environmental Center in the future.



Jessica Landis, Laura Bennett and Larry Smith work with other volunteers to clean weeds from along the streamside.

New & Beginning Teacher Column continued from page 1

Everyone in Pennsylvania wants you to be successful, because when Pennsylvania Agricultural Education does well, it makes all of us look good.

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Association of Agricultural Educators, I would like to wish you the best of luck during your first year and welcome you to our profession!

Announcements

Brian Oberholtzer, Pennsylvania FFA Eastern Region State Vice-President, was injured in a four-wheeling accident on Sunday, October 12th. He was at Lehigh Valley Hospital where he underwent surgery on to fix some of his broken bones. Brian suffered a slight concussion, a broken femur, a chipped elbow and cracked ribs. He is doing well after surgery but will have a long rode to complete recovery.

Cards and letters wishing him a speedy recovery can be sent to his home address at: Brian Oberholtzer, 3961 Division Highway, East Earl, PA 17519



Jodi (Chadwick) Hoover, Fort Cherry Agricultural educator, was married on October 18, 2003. Congratulations!



We're on the Web!
See us at:
<http://agexted.cas.psu.edu>

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Calendar – (items underlined are due dates)

November 13...PAAE Eastern Region Mtg., Twin Valley HS, 5:30 PM

November 13...Keystone Applications due to Regional Coordinators

November 14-15...Keystone Application Judging, Bedford, 6:00 PM

November 14...New and Beginning Teacher Workshop Registration due to Krista Pontius or Tracy Hoover.

November 15...Membership Dues and Rosters due to Penny Brammer

November 21-22...Ag-Ed Teacher CDE Forum, Penn Manor HS, 6:00 PM (Deb Seib

November 21-22...New and Beginning Teacher Workshop, Grantville (K. Pontius & T. Hoover)

December 1...Program of Work and Budget due for National Chapter Award Progr:
(C. Day)

December 5...PA FFA Board Mtg., 301A Ag Admin. – PSU, 6:30PM

December 9-13...NAAE Convention, Orlando, FL

December 11-14...ACTE Convention, Orlando, FL

December 12...Last Day of Classes for PSU Fall Semester

December 15...Reconfirm Entries for Farm Show Market Swine, Steers and Lambs

December 29...PYFA Executive Board Mtg., Willow Valley, Lancaster

January 10-17...PA Farm Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg