



RICH'S REFLECTION

The next few months are going to be interesting! I don't ever remember a time of such uncertainty. By this spring our Horticulture undergraduate program will be part of a bigger umbrella program and the College will be restructured. From what I can tell, this is a national trend. During the past 40 years Plant Science departments have been merged at a number of universities. In most instances the mergers have not improved student recruitment or interdisciplinary collaborations. Mergers usually result

in large dysfunctional units. My B.S. and M.S. degrees were obtained from two Plant and Soil departments. Even as a student I knew that there were three distinct disciplines in my department that did not interact with each other. I did not even know the students in my department who were working with soil scientists, agronomists or turf scientists. So there are plenty of examples of unsuccessful umbrella plant science programs, and I am not aware of a merger that actually achieved the desired

results. I hope we can learn from the mistakes that others have made and try something different. We have only one opportunity to get this right, so I encourage everyone to participate in the process and express your ideas.

I think the primary problem with past reorganizations is that they were not bold enough. Usually mergers were kept to a minimum and entire departments were merged and everyone stayed in their original buildings. As a result, each department tried to protect their turf or disciplines and collabo-

ADVISING CENTER NEWS

By: Paige Thomas

There are some important dates in February for students to know about. Thanks for alerting your advisees about these.

February 1: All undergraduates at University Park Campus, regardless of semester standing, can

schedule summer, 2011 classes.

Feb. 14-Mar. 6 : Filing Period for Final Exam Conflicts

All of February: Students should apply for a College of Ag Sciences/Department of Horticulture Scholarship.

The web address to apply is: <http://agsci.psu.edu/students>. Follow links to scholarships.



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Calendar of Events:

- February 21—Submit doctoral dissertation for format review
- February 23—Submit master's thesis for format review
- February 23—Seminar (Canopy & Crop Management for Premium Wine Production)

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ration actually decreased. The current departmental structure is less of an impediment to collaboration than the geographical separation of the disciplines. I don’t know what will result from the dissolution of our disciplines, but the only way I can envision increased collaboration across disciplines is to physically move people with similar interests into the same building. I don’t know if this will work, but the type of plan suggested by the Core Council has always failed because they merge people with different interests.

Dean McPheron has initiated a very transparent process for restructuring the College. I hope you will watch his webinars and read the materials he has placed on the College website. All the information is there. He is also looking for good ideas, so please send your ideas to him. We will have a department meeting on February 9 to bring you up to date on the process and for you to provide input. In addition,

three members of our department are members of the six teams that are working through the process. So if you have ideas you want to discuss, please talk with me, Rob Crassweller, Jonathan Lynch or Dan Stearns. There are historical reasons that the College is structured the way it is today. I personally think our current structure is fine, but change is being forced on us. The co-hires with the institutes have already started to dissolve discipline strengths, the restructuring process will simply speed it up. So as you consider alternative structures for the College don’t try to protect disciplines, but try to imagine a structure that will encourage people with similar interests, but different disciplinary strengths, to cooperate with each other to develop strong teaching, research and extension programs. If we do this right, we may be able to enhance our opportunities to attract students

and external funding. If we circle the wagons we will likely destroy the College.



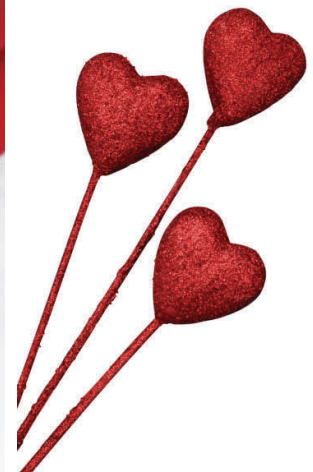
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SPRING DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

All meetings held in room 10 Tyson

FEBRUARY

Wednesday, February 9th ****HELD IN ROOM 111****

3:30 PM

MARCH

Wednesday, March 16th

2:00 PM

APRIL

Wednesday, April 13th

10:00 AM

2011

CHRISTMAS TREE SHORT COURSE

The 2011 Christmas Tree Short Course will be held February 16-17, 2011

at the Ramada Inn Conference Center in State College, PA.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Rick Bates

The Pennsylvania State University

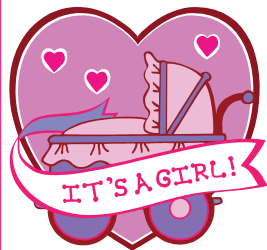
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ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 2011
AT 3:05 AM CHRIS AND ELSA
SANCHEZ WELCOMED LILLY
JOY SANCHEZ. LILLY WEIGHED
4 LBS, 14 1/2 OZ.

CONGRATULATIONS ELSA AND
CHRIS!

Visit us on the Web
horticulture.psu.edu

Department Birthdays

Phanchita Vejchasarn—Feb 11

Rich Marini—Feb 11



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