



# RICH'S REFLECTION

I am on the way home from the ASHS meeting in Hawaii. This is my first trip to Hawaii and the big island of Kona is not what I expected. The resort area where the meeting was held looks like a tropical paradise and in many ways looks similar to the Disney resort in Florida. But outside the resort area, this side of the island is mostly black volcanic rock with little vegetation. I think registration for the meeting was fairly good, but attendance at many sessions was light because people were attending tours every day. One of the major topics of discussion in the hallways, and at the administrator's workshop, was department mergers. I spoke with at least five faculty members at other universities who indicated that their provosts suggested that their college should have only six departments – does that sound familiar? At several universities department mergers will involve as many as five different departments being merged

into one. For some of these departments they are having trouble finding someone who is willing to chair those large departments. In most cases the departments were simply merged with little previous planning and the early results are not good. I think Oregon State University is probably doing the best job of merging departments. Several years ago they had dissolved the Entomology department and placed those faculty members in the departments with the commodities they worked on. They had also brought their county agents into the departments as tenure track faculty members. So the reorganization involved merging Horticulture with Crops and Soils and Plant Pathology to form a division. They have been planning this merger for about 15 months. When they merge they have a division director plus two associate directors. They won't know for a few years if this merger was successful, but the faculty members are less

than enthusiastic about the reorganization.

Over the past 40 years I have seen many horticulture departments merge with other departments. Usually the departments were downsized through attrition to the point that they no longer had strong disciplines and the merger gave them enough critical mass to justify a department head. When the merger involved just crops and horticulture, the new unit was usually called "Horticulture and Crops Sciences"; when the merger involved more disciplines the new department was usually called "Plant Science". These new departments have enough members to justify a full-time administrator, but they are simply a collection of weak departments, and there is little interaction between disciplines. Rather than working together to build a new department, the faculty members usually simply circle the wagons in an attempt to protect the little they have left of their

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**Calendar of Events:**

*Oct 3—Deadline for fall graduate upload draft of dissertation to eTD site*

*Oct 5—Deadline for fall graduate upload draft of master's thesis to eTD site*

*Oct 10—Deadline for fall graduate to pass final doctoral defense*

*Oct 15 & 16—Hort Show 2011*

*Oct 18—Ag Career Day*

*Oct 31—Halloween*

## Rich's Reflection (cont. from Page 1)

discipline. There are few examples of successful department mergers and I hope we can learn from the mistakes of others.

Although I don't understand the rationale for the core council's recommendations, I am optimistic that we can develop a unified department with the folks who work with agronomic crops. Hopefully we can identify some new areas to develop programs that we cannot currently have. The reason I am optimistic is because we still have the disciplinary strength to offer some of the best undergraduate and extension programs in the country, so maybe we can look beyond our disciplines and identify new areas of common interest that can bridge the two disciplines. It would be quite an achievement to be the first merger involving Horticulture that is successful.

We can learn from the mistakes that other universities have made. First, there needs to be quite a bit of planning before the merger occurs. We need several face-to-face meetings with the two departments, possibly a retreat or two and several meetings with the College administration. We should have started this process last summer, but if we begin soon after the Board of Trustees approves the plan we should be able to accomplish most of what we need to do. The two departments will have to develop new departmental governance policies and documents and determine how to redistribute resources fairly. I don't think there is money to move people, but it will be difficult to develop a unified department without moving some people. Finally, we will have to identify some new areas of research and possibly teaching that will

bridge the two disciplines so we have something in common. I am a bit disappointed in the development of our Plant Science major. This was **the** time to develop some new courses and possibly a new option or minor with elements that all four disciplines have in common. But it looks like the committee decided to maintain the current curriculum nearly unchanged, so the only change is the name of the major and the addition of a cap-stone course. I believe we lost the only real opportunity to develop a unique curriculum to attract new students with a interests that may not align with traditional agriculture. The next couple of years will be challenging, but the potential opportunities are great if we can identify some unique programs we can develop together that would not be possible to develop as individual departments.

## FALL DEPARTMENT MEETINGS

All meetings held in Room 10 Tyson

### OCTOBER

Wednesday, October 12  
4 pm

### NOVEMBER

Thursday, November 17  
10 am

### DECEMBER

Wednesday, December 14  
2 pm

A photograph of a wooden bowl filled with fresh vegetables, including a red tomato, green beans, and leafy greens. The background is a textured, brownish surface. Overlaid on the image is text in various colors and fonts.

**VISIT THE CELLAR MARKET**  
**EVERY WEDNESDAY**  
**12:00 PM - 5:00 PM**  
**HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT VEGGIE CELLAR**  
**ALL PRODUCE GROWN LOCALLY IN THE HIGH TUNNELS AND FIELDS AT THE PENN STATE HORTICULTURE FARM**  
**ROCK SPRINGS, PA**  
**ITEMS INCLUDE FRESH FRUITS, VEGETABLES, HERBS, AND CUT FLOWERS**

# Remaining 2011 Holidays

The Office of Human Resources announces the remaining 2011 holiday schedule.

## Thanksgiving Day

The Thanksgiving Day holiday will be on Thursday, November 24, 2011.

## December/ January Holidays

This year, December 25th will fall on a Sunday, as will January 1st, 2012. The official University holidays, therefore, will be December 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30; and Monday, January 2.

University policies provide, however, that if a holiday falls on an employee's regularly scheduled day off, the employee receives another day off with pay to be used at another time. Thus, employees who normally do not work Sundays will receive a compensatory day off for the December 25 holiday.

Friday, December 23 is not a University holiday and offices ordinarily would be open that day. However, in order to provide a generally more desirable and efficient application of time off, University offices and facilities except for essential services will be closed for this day as well. Therefore, the University will be closed from the end of normal operations on Thursday, December 22, and will reopen on Tuesday, January 3.

The compensatory day earned for the Sunday, December 25 holiday will be used for the work absences on December 23 because of University offices and facilities not being open. This day closed, however, will not be an official University holiday. Employees in essential services who qualify for compensatory days but who must work December 23 will still have

their compensatory day off for use at a later time.

Information about paycheck distribution will be announced at a later date.

Questions regarding this holiday schedule should be directed to the Human Resource Services office at 814-863-3452.



## 98<sup>th</sup> Annual



# Penn State Horticulture Show



October 15 & 16, 2011  
9am-6pm  
Snider Ag Arena, PSU Campus



Images from the 2010 Horticulture Show



For Sale:  
Trees, Shrubs, Perennials, & House Plants  
Fresh Produce  
Cider  
Mums



Designed and Constructed by the Penn State Horticulture Club  
<http://sites.google.com/site/psuhortshow/>

# New Process for Wage Payroll Hires

Wage employees will begin completing new hire paperwork in our office effective October 3, 2011. This change in procedure will allow the HR office to monitor the consistency and completion of all new hire forms and ensure that I9's are entered into the electronic E-Verify system within the required three federal business days.

Prior to or within 3 working days of their employment date, you will be responsible for sending the wage employee(s) to our office (307 Agricultural Administration Building) along with their I-9 documents, a voided check or savings account number for their salary deposit, PSU ID number, office address, supervisor name, and their start date. We will have them complete all necessary forms (I9, employment application, intellectual property agreement, worker's compensation forms, drug free workplace form, affirmative action form, background check forms {if applicable}, W4, and Salary Deposit). If an employee is an alien authorized to work, they will still need to make an appointment with Fred Monsell (non-students) or Jamie Vaughn (students) in 424 or 410 Boucke Building to complete their I9 before coming to our office to do the remaining paperwork.

Our office will keep the original forms and will send a copy of the front page of the I9 and the employment application with the employee to take back to your office. At that time, someone within your unit will enter the WAPP which will be submitted to our office for approval. Your office will still be responsible for updating and terminating wage appointments as necessary and collecting and entering wage time cards onto a WAGC.

Returning wage employees should also be sent to our office to complete an updated I9. This includes anyone that will be returning to work following a four month or greater break in service, anyone

who auto-terminated in the system due to their appointment ending, or anyone for which a wage termination was processed. At that time, we will also have the employee review the forms that are currently on file for them and have them make updates as necessary.

**Starting 10-3-11, please send new and returning employees to Christina BEFORE they start working for you. She will need to make sure they have the following:**

- The new hire sheet completed by both the employee and supervisor(start date needs to be within 3 business days of completed I-9)
- PSU ID #
- I-9 Documents
- Checking/Savings account #s

The employee will then be sent across the street to Human Resources to complete the rest of their necessary paperwork. After they return with their copy of the completed I-9, their employment can begin. Please remember, it is illegal to have an employee working before the proper paperwork is complete.



## LANDSCAPE CONTRACTING POLO SHIRTS

\$7.00

Landscape Contracting Sizes: Small, Large, X Large

\*\*Please come to 102 Tyson for purchase\*\*



## **CHANGES IN KEYS/PARKING OFFICE**

**(115 AG ADMIN)**

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

**OFFICE WILL ONLY BE OPEN MONDAYS (1:30-3PM)  
AND FRIDAYS (9-10:30AM) UNTIL JAN 3, 2012!**

## Pictures of Arrangements that Floral Arranging Students Made



Orchid Display



Buffet at the Nittany Lion Inn



# Congratulations!



**Khwan (Patompong) Sangwilai has passed his comprehensive exam. His advisor is Jonathan Lynch.**

**Molly Hanlon has passed her candidacy exam. Her advisor is Kathleen Brown.**

**Landscape Contracting senior Jenna Hicks has been selected as one of ten Internship Award winners by the Ag Alumni Society. She is being honored for her 2011 summer internship at Longwood Gardens. Jenna also completed an internship at Disney last year. 83 applicants vied for the award, which has a monetary value of \$750. Jenna received a bonus amount due to the high quality of her application packet. If you see Jenna in the studios or hallways, be sure to congratulate her for a job well-done.**

## Articles of Interest

The first one ([http://lawnandlandscape.texterity.com/lawnandlandscape/201109?sub\\_id=do3kvNjOXwUJ&folio=82#pg82](http://lawnandlandscape.texterity.com/lawnandlandscape/201109?sub_id=do3kvNjOXwUJ&folio=82#pg82)) is from a lawn and landscape magazine about Horticulture departments with statistics from Penn State and comments from Dr. Marini.

The second one ([http://articles.philly.com/2011-08-01/news/29829680\\_1\\_horticulture-professional-gardening-longtime-gardener](http://articles.philly.com/2011-08-01/news/29829680_1_horticulture-professional-gardening-longtime-gardener)) is from philly.com and discusses how a new trend of people looking into Horticulture as a career change.

## Be Ready When Inclement Weather Strikes

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Winter is just around the corner, and with it comes the potential for severe weather. When weather causes a delay at University Park, employees who perform nonessential services are to report at the announced time. Classes and activities that begin before the announced delay time are canceled.

Those classes or activities beginning at or after the announced delay time will be held as originally scheduled. For example, a two-hour delay until 10 a.m. due to snow or ice would mean that all classes that begin before 10 a.m. are canceled and will not be held. Classes beginning at 10 a.m. or later will continue on their regular schedule.

If weather causes the cancellation of classes, employees who perform essential duties are expected to report as normal. Those employees performing nonessential services should not report to work during the time of the cancellation. Employees should clarify their status as essential or non-essential with their supervisors before inclement weather strikes.

For information on inclement weather, the Penn State community should check WPSU-FM and Penn State Live -- the official sources for weather-related delay or cancellation advisories at Penn State's University Park campus. In addition, advisories will be sent directly to cell phones, email, the Penn State Facebook page and Twitter via PSUTXT.

To subscribe to PSUTXT, visit <http://>

[live.psu.edu/psutxt](http://live.psu.edu/psutxt) online. Once there, faculty, staff and students should click on the link to login via WebAccess. Existing users then can link their PSUTXT accounts to their Penn State access account ID, and new users can use the form to create a new account.

Members of the community who do not have a Penn State access account can use the public form at <http://live.psu.edu/psutxt> to login or create a new account.

Subscribers can select multiple campuses for which they want to receive alerts, and can include both a cell phone number and an email address for notifications. Both phone numbers and email addresses must be validated through the signup process for the subscription to be activated.

PSUTXT alerts for all Penn State campuses also are sent to Twitter. To follow PSUTXT on Twitter, visit <http://www.twitter.com/psutxt> online.

Operating status at Penn State Altoona and Penn State DuBois also will be aired on WPSU, which broadcasts in those regions. All other campus locations should identify their preferred method of communication before inclement weather strikes.

WPSU, which airs 24-hour programming, can be heard at 91.5 FM in State College, Bellefonte, Lock Haven and surrounding areas, and 90.1 FM in northern Pennsylvania counties. The station also is at <http://>

[wpsu.org/](http://wpsu.org/) and a complete list of station frequencies can be found at <http://wpsu.org/about/coverage> online. Closings are listed at <http://wpsu.org/closings> online.

When notified, WPSU will begin its live broadcasting earlier than the usual start time of 5 a.m., and will interrupt regularly scheduled programming to give periodic updates throughout the day or night.

In addition to WPSU, information also will be promptly and prominently issued online at Penn State Live -- <http://live.psu.edu> -- assuming that power and Internet connectivity are not adversely affected by the weather.

Although classes may be delayed or canceled, the University Park campus never really closes. There are nearly 14,000 students on campus that require meals and warm lodging, and there are critical research projects that require constant attention, as well as livestock that must be fed, watered and sheltered.

Because of this, it is critical that Penn State effectively maintain services that affect safety and health when snow blankets the area. University Police and other emergency services remain operational around the clock regardless of the weather, as do guest services at both The Nittany Lion Inn and The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel.

To read more on this story, please visit <http://live.psu.edu/story/55329>.

# Thesis Office Calendar—Fall 2011, Spring, Summer, and Fall 2012

The following deadlines are for theses and dissertations only. Students writing master's papers should contact their departments for deadlines.

<b>Deadlines by semester</b>	<b>FA2011</b>	<b>SP2012</b>	<b>SU2012</b>	<b>FA2012</b>
activate intent to graduate on eLion	9/5	1/23	6/15	9/10
submit doctoral dissertation for format review	10/3	2/20	6/8	10/1
submit master's thesis for format review	10/5	2/22	6/11	10/3
pass doctoral defense*	10/10	3/5	6/22	10/8
submit final thesis or dissertation & supporting materials	11/21	4/9	7/16	11/19

\*Questions about the doctoral defense should be directed to Graduate Enrollment Services (814-865-1795). Contact department for information about master's defense.

Commencement Date	12/17	5/6	8/11	12/22
Time	4:00 pm	5:00 pm	2:30 pm	4:00 pm
Location	Eisenhower Auditorium	Bryce Jordan Ctr	Bryce Jordan Ctr	Eisenhower Auditorium



This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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## Department Birthdays

Oct 1—Dan Stearns  
 Oct 8—Luke McCormack  
 Oct 12—Kathy Demchak  
 Oct 14—Erik Ohlson  
 Oct 18—Dave Eissenstat  
 Oct 19—David Sanford  
 Oct 20—Tiffany Shultz  
 Oct 31—Lauren Seiler

