Extension Educators Help Consumers Weather Economic Storms
For the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2009 promises to be a year of challenges. Like the nation—and many other countries around the globe—we are confronted by a difficult economic climate, involving budget cuts, hiring freezes, and the need to, once again, do more with less.

Despite the many obstacles, however, we remain committed to fulfilling our land-grant mission of addressing clients’ needs through research, teaching, and outreach. And one of the most critical needs currently facing most American families involves finances, a subject our Extension faculty have been helping people with for many years. The lead story in this issue of Momentum highlights just a few of the many personal finance programs we offer to help Maryland residents cope with current financial difficulties while planning for the future.

The magazine also highlights a community gardens program that is helping Baltimore residents save money by growing some of their own food, while simultaneously beautifying their environment. And articles on a dynamic soils exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History and a unique undergraduate exchange program with several Asian universities, along with alumni updates and more, round out this issue.

So as you can see, we continue to address today’s agricultural, environmental, and societal issues while anticipating future challenges and seeking answers to questions yet unasked. Tough times or not, I believe that in the words of President Barack Obama, “Yes, we can.”
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Describing the experience as “the biggest academic challenge of my life,” entomology professor Dr. Michael Ma took a sabbatical leave at the National Academy of Sciences in 2007 to be the study director of a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation project on “Emerging Agriculture Technologies to Help Africa.” Ma coordinated an expert committee of eleven scientists charged with identifying emerging innovations in science and technology that have the potential to improve agricultural productivity in the region. Sometimes, Ma admits, he thought the goal would never be accomplished. But it was. In 2008 the committee published a report that identifies 60 technologies that significantly help farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, including 18 that are recommended for immediate development and further exploration. Ma is optimistic about the impact of the committee’s work and the commitment of the foundation. “Bill Gates has already committed $304 million to initiate his African Agriculture Program, and it’s just a down payment, with more investment to come,” Ma says. “I believe these investments will make a major difference in advancing agricultural sciences.”

To download an eight-page brief of the report, Emerging Technologies to Benefit Farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, read some of the chapters online, or purchase the complete publication, go to http://dels.nas.edu/ag_technologies/report.shtml

## Multi-Disciplinary Team Receives Award for Distance Ed Work

A multidisciplinary team in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) was recognized at the University of Maryland’s 2008 International Awards Ceremony in November. Dr. Mark Varner, Animal and Avian Sciences, Dr. Robert Hill, Environmental Science and Technology, Dale Johnson, Maryland Cooperative Extension, and Brad Paleg, Information and Educational Technologies, received the Landmark Award in honor of their exceptional long-term achievements in support of international life at the university.

International team member, Dr. Pavel Sorokin, a professor of agribusiness management at Moscow State Agro-Engineering University, was also named in the award.

Several members of the team have been involved in teaching their Russian counterparts to use distance education technology since 1999. More recently the team developed and implemented a multi-faceted program incorporating distance education technology and subject matter expertise that has helped build the technological capacity of several Russian universities, modernized the curriculum, and created a distance learning center (RDLC). This center is located at Stavropol State Agrarian University in a region with few opportunities for continuing education. In addition to AGNR and Stavropol State Agrarian University, the project involves four institutes, the Ministry of Agriculture in Stavropol Region, practicing veterinarians, a U.S. non-governmental organization, and small businesses and farmers in the North Caucasus region of Russia. Participants’ efforts have garnered national recognition for innovation and—through video-teleconference—brought world-known veterinary experts to a province far from Moscow.

## Steve Cohan Receives PLANET Trailblazer Award

Dr. Steve Cohan of the Department of Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture has been named a “PLANET Trailblazer” by the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), an international association serving lawn care professionals, landscape management contractors, design/build/installation professionals, and
interior plantscapers. Cohan joins an elite group of dedicated professionals who were nominated by their peers for making significant and long-term contributions to the green industry.

The Trailblazer program initially recognized industry individuals who were successful in their respective businesses. Each Trailblazer sets aside a full day each year to provide on-site mentoring to another PLANET green industry service provider member. This in-depth, personalized networking and mentoring program is a unique way for emerging and established companies to gain insight and advice on developing and growing their businesses.

More recently, the program was expanded to include educators who have developed successful programs in the field. Interested faculty will visit Trailblazers’ campuses and learn about these programs first hand. Cohan, who was recognized in the October 2008 issue of PLANET News and will be mentioned in the 2009 Trailblazer brochure, has already met with one individual from a new program at West Virginia University.

**One Step Closer to a One-Size-Fits-All AI Vaccine**

Led by Dr. Daniel Perez of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, a team of scientists has developed the component of a universal influenza vaccine for animals that may help prevent or delay another human flu pandemic.

This vaccine component can be used to immunize both birds and mammals from dangerous forms of the flu, including the highly lethal H5N1 avian influenza strain. It can be used to vaccinate wild and domestic birds or other species, thus reducing the spread of flu viruses among these populations and decreasing the chance that deadly new human flu strains will spring from these animal reservoirs.

Perez and his team isolated genes from the H9N2 virus—another avian influenza that can infect both birds and mammals—to make up a “backbone” that consists of internal genes common to other flu strains. This backbone can be used as a starting point from which to quickly create other live, weakened flu vaccines. “We can attach any surface proteins to this backbone to make a vaccine specific for almost any another influenza virus,” Perez says.

Most currently used vaccines offer protection for a specific animal species against a small range of virus strains. These vaccines take a long time to make (about six months for a vaccine tailored for humans) and they generally cannot be shared between species.

“We now have a vaccine that works in many animal species and can protect against any type of influenza that we want,” Perez said. “In the case of pandemic influenza, a vaccine from this backbone could be deployed much faster than one specifically tailored to humans because the vaccine would be already available for other animals. All we would have to do is modify it. We wouldn’t have to make it from scratch.”

Perez and his team have already shown that a vaccine consisting of a weakened form of the H9N2 virus is capable of protecting chickens, their eggs, and mice against two other lethal forms of the flu virus, including the highly lethal H5N1 avian flu. This vaccine could be administered to immunize wild and domestic birds against avian flu to minimize spread to
humans. Next the researchers will test the vaccine in other mammals like pigs and ferrets—good models for the human immune system.

**Bonnie Braun Named First Endowed Chair of Health Literacy Center**

Dr. Bonnie Braun has been named the first Herschel S. Horowitz Endowed Chair in Health Literacy at the University of Maryland’s School of Public Health. In this role, Braun will help lay the foundation for the Horowitz Center—the first academic center for health literacy in the United States—overseeing the creation of a strategic plan and the implementation of priority research, service, and education activities in the burgeoning field of health literacy.

Braun is an associate professor in the School of Public Health’s Department of Family Science and a state family policy specialist with the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, which makes her well suited to her new responsibilities, according to Dr. Cheng-i Wei, dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. “Our educational mission in the college and in Extension is to provide students and other clientele with research-based, unbiased knowledge that they can use to make sound judgments regarding their health and well-being” says Wei. “Bonnie’s work with the Horowitz Center will reflect and complement that mission.”

Dr. Nick Place, MCE associate director, agrees. “Bonnie recognizes and appreciates collaboration and the development of partnerships,” he says. “Her efforts in Extension at Maryland as well as previous work in Virginia and Minnesota give her plenty of experience to build upon, helping prepare her for this position.”

Braun is a nationally recognized researcher in the fields of family health and health policy who has written more than a hundred articles and received numerous awards for her work. She earned her Ph.D. in Family Consumer Sciences Education from the University of Missouri, and recently served as the president of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and as co-director of the Maryland Family Policy Impact Seminar.

**College Hosts International “Green Dialogues” Symposium**

On October 28, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources hosted an international symposium focused on the urgent issues related to sustainable landscape design, management, and cross-cultural landscape education that promote green concepts and practices. Coordinated by Drs. Shenglin (in photo below) Chang and Sonja Duempelmann (in photo on next page) of the Department of Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture (PSLA), “Green Dialogues Across Cultures” was an international and interdisciplinary collaboration among the department’s Landscape Architecture and Landscape Management programs and two university departments in Taiwan: the Department of Landscape Architecture at Chung Yuan Christian University and the Graduate Institute of Building and Planning at National Taiwan University.

Fourteen Taiwanese students and Dr. Chao-Ching Yu, chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture at Chung Yuan Christian University, participated in the conference, along with PSLA faculty and students. Following an opening address by PSLA chair Dr. William Kenworthy, faculty and students from
the participating institutions shared their expertise and experiences on issues involving landscape architecture and environmental planning in Asia, Europe, and the United States, as well as sustainable practices in the Chesapeake Bay region.

New Website Makes College the Place to Go for Info on Rural/Community Development

The Maryland Rural Enterprise Development Center (MREDC) is now the place for the agricultural and natural resources community to go for valuable information thanks to the creation of a new website: mredc.umd.edu. The website was formally introduced at the Maryland Ag Commission meeting on Feb 11.

MREDC was established by the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) to serve these communities through programming and support. The need for such an effort was identified through a series of statewide listening sessions and documented in a Maryland Agriculture Commission report to the Governor. Specifically, MREDC’s mission is to:

1. Serve as a portal for educational and outreach resources in marketing and business development planning;
2. Assist entrepreneurs in agriculture and natural resources enterprises in developing new marketing plans and opportunities;
3. Serve as a launching pad to a wide variety of web-based university, community, and professional resources for developing profitable, sustainable businesses;
4. Provide new and next-generation farmers with access to training, mentoring and business development resources; and
5. Provide continuing education and networking opportunities for agricultural support agency personnel, Extension staff, and agricultural economic development specialists statewide.

“Agricultural and natural resources businesses and the people who run them are facing challenges today involving finances, changing land-use patterns, government regulations, and more,” says Dr. Nick Place, associate AGNR dean and associate director of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE). “The college and MCE are dedicated to helping agricultural and natural resources enterprises prosper, and we anticipate that the MREDC will be a keystone in the college’s Economic and Community Development Initiative and will serve as a model for similar efforts elsewhere. The launching of the website is just the first step.”

The website contains podcasts, video presentations, webinars and other resources, including regional contacts and supporting agencies that will enable Extension faculty to expand their programming resources. “Our hope is that our faculty will contribute their expertise, publicize events, post interactive presentations, and otherwise use this website to assist their clients with such issues as entrepreneurship, business development, alternative enterprises, intergenerational transfer of businesses,” says regional Extension marketing specialist Ginger Myers.
Extension Educators Help Consumers Weather Economic Storms

By Pam Townsend

Illustrations by Kerry Clark
Recession, economic downturn, or something in between. When it comes to American consumers, the terminology really doesn’t matter. All they know is that they’re hurting financially and looking for answers. Fortunately, faculty and staff with the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE) are prepared to help them address a wide range of financial issues, including credit and debt management, planning for the future, and strategies for living on less.

Some of these Extension financial experts have been through situations like this before, situations that led to the development of “Living on a Reduced Income,” a program to help Maryland residents—especially those that had been laid off—cope with a reduced cash flow by evaluating and altering their spending. Given the current economic climate, programs such as this are proving just as critical for today’s consumers.

MCE family and consumer sciences (FCS) faculty around the state teach classes for corporations and state and local government agencies; train officials and their staff; present workshops on military installations; and distribute publications on a variety of timely topics.

Partnering with the Maryland Cash Campaign, for example, FCS faculty developed a Financial Counseling Program that involves training agency staff and counselors from community organizations. The goal: to prepare participants to more effectively help their clients—low-income families struggling with money management problems caused by financial illiteracy and limited resources—stabilize their financial situation.

Two different sessions are offered, each lasting two and a half days. Basic training sessions cover such topics as values and goals, financial statements, record keeping, budgeting, acquiring and managing debt, and insurance. The advanced training focuses on more complex issues as tax management, housing, retirement and estate planning, and counseling techniques.

“The Financial Counseling Program fills a critical need for those who assist Maryland residents with their finances,” says Dr. Jinhee Kim, associate professor and Extension family finance specialist.
“According to a follow-up survey, every single participant felt that the training dealt with important needs for them personally and professionally, as well as for their clientele. And more than 8 in 10 said they will use the information to make changes in the way they counsel and educate their clients.”

**Planning Now for Later**

By causing consumers to focus increasingly on immediate financial concerns, today’s bleak economy appears to be limiting their ability to think about or plan for their financial future. According to the 2008 Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) Retirement Confidence Survey, only 5 out of 100 workers think saving or planning for retirement is the most pressing financial issue facing Americans today, and fewer than half say they or their spouse even tried to calculate how much money they will need for a comfortable retirement.

“These are very sobering statistics,” says FCS educator Crystal Terhune. “Retirement is no longer the ‘three legged-stool’ that we once learned about (Social Security, pension, and savings). The responsibility lies on each of us to continually evaluate our individual situations and to plan for adequate savings for our futures. You can’t expect employers or anyone else to plan your future for you.”

FCS educators recognize that workplace financial education is needed as more employees find themselves responsible for their own retirement planning. They also realize that one of the barriers to participation in supplemental retirement programs is a lack of basic money management skills. Their solution? A program called “Your Financial Check-Up” that grew out of a partnership between FCS finance educators and the Maryland Supplemental Retirement Plan (MSRP) in 2002.

Your Financial Check-Up is offered as the first presentation of a full-day training session, at which MSRP staff also provide an overview of state supplemental retirement plans, retirement and investment basics, and enrollment and fund allocation information. The goal is to help participants increase their current level of financial knowledge, assess their current fiscal health, identify key strategies that will incorporate retirement planning into their personal financial plans, and feel empowered to make informed financial choices.

Between 2002 and 2008 Your Financial Check-Up was presented more than 100 times at 14 MSRP training locations across the state, reaching 2,000 state employees from hundreds of agencies, such
The Financial Counseling Program fills a critical need for those who assist Maryland residents with their finances.”

—Dr. Jinhee Kim

FCS finance educators provide education and information on a variety of financial management topics, including but not limited to:

- Financial goal setting
- Organizing financial records
- Developing a spending plan
- Managing credit and reducing debt
- Shopping for insurance
- Basic saving and investing strategies
- Protecting against identity theft
- Retirement planning

As hospitals, community colleges, universities, health departments, and prisons. The 2008 end-of-class evaluations indicated that the attendees intended to improve their money management skills by making simple behavior changes; for example, nearly 7 in 10 intended to pay more than the minimum on their credit cards in order to decrease their debt and 6 in 10 intended to review their credit reports, establish home filing systems, or develop a spending plan.

Given recent economic turmoil, Your Financial Check-up has been adapted and presented to many other audiences, such as county library staff, church and community groups, Housing Authority clients, and employees losing jobs due to plant closures and overall downsizing. “Everyone is being affected in some way by the state of our current economy,” says Terhune. “People feel a real need for financial education right now. It’s a teachable moment, and we’re glad we have something to offer that will make a real difference in people’s lives.”

Focusing on Future Consumers

While helping adult consumers cope with current financial woes and plan for the future, Extension educators are also helping children get a head start on managing personal finances.

“The Financial Counseling Program fills a critical need for those who assist Maryland residents with their finances.”

—Dr. Jinhee Kim

In October 2006, for example, Megan O’Neil-Haight, family, youth and communities financial educator, partnered with author Sam X. Renick and the It’s Habit Co., Inc., a small business specializing in the financial literacy education of young children, their parents, and educators, to establish a “Parents and Teachers as Wealth Coaches” pilot project. The goals: to teach elementary schoolchildren what saving means, what goals are and how to work toward them, and why saving money is a good habit to start when you are young.

With funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the State Farm and Nationwide insurance companies, Renick helped O’Neil-Haight deliver the program to children ages 3 to 11 at assemblies at 23 public, private, and parochial schools and Head Start centers across Maryland’s Lower Eastern Shore. They encouraged students to make saving a habit while incorporating elements of reading, writing, analytical thinking, and character development.

“I’d tell young people that I work for the University of Maryland and therefore I was there to give them some ‘college knowledge,’” says O’Neil-Haight. “They loved the thought that they were in a college class. Once we finished reading the story and reinforcing concepts like not wasting; saving for emergencies; creating savings goals and sticking to them; and gaining financial freedom in their lives. I’d ask how many of the students want to go to college... and the hands
“It’s easier to raise a whole child than to fix a broken adult.”
—Megan O’Neil-Haight

Based on the pilot’s success, the Parents and Teachers as Wealth Coaches program has been adapted to sustain its reach beyond the initial grant funding. O’Neil-Haight now delivers in-school programs using MCE-developed activities and book illustrations of characters. In addition to training young people in classrooms, assemblies, summer camps, after-school programs, and 4-H club meetings, she also has shared the program at statewide professional organization meetings and several national conferences. In October 2008 the program was nominated for recognition by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Chairman’s Award standards.

Since its inception, the Parents and Teachers as Wealth Coaches effort has directly reached over 6,000 children and 362 teachers in school-based settings and has indirectly reached upwards of 8,500 parents. According to pre- and post-program data, students have demonstrated measurable and significant changes in all areas examined. They have increased their:

- knowledge of what saving means;
- belief that people choose how to use money;
- acknowledgement that people set goals for saving money and that working toward a goal is sometimes challenging;
- belief that they may get into a habit of saving that will last their whole life and that saving and reading are great habits; and
- belief that they themselves can save a lot of money

Parents have received take-home materials to continue financial discussions within the family, including children’s books, educational music CD’s, a family guide to encouraging children to make a habit of saving money, coloring books, and classroom-to-home activities worksheets.

Training the Trainers

Recognizing that Extension alone cannot meet the public’s great need for financial information and guidance, FCS faculty employ Extension’s “train the trainer” approach. Each year, a group of FCS finance experts led by Dr. Kim organize and conduct a Personal Finance Seminar for Professionals—an event attendees have called “the most important financial conference for professionals in the mid-Atlantic.”

Focusing on timely, critical consumer-spending issues, the seminar is designed for counselors, educators, analysts, and other personal finance professionals from public, private, or not-for-profit organizations, including all branches of the military.
“Our goal is to provide participants with an opportunity to learn about current major issues and trends confronting personal finance professionals and their clients from a roster of dynamic local and national speakers,” says Kim. “We also want attendees to have the opportunity to network with their peers and browse through exhibits offering a host of resources and information.”

And according to follow-up evaluations, she and her colleagues have achieved their goal. “I have been coming since 2003; I really love this conference,” wrote one participant last year. “Each year this has been an excellent conference with high-quality, interesting speakers and resources,” noted another.

Given the current economy, Kim expects the conference—scheduled for May 13 through 15—to be particularly popular this year. Topics will include retirement planning, foreclosures, major purchases (like cars), financing college education, and more—all viewed within the context of a slow national and global economy. Details about the conference are available at www.money.umd.edu

Editor’s note: For more information on financial topics, check out MCE’s online publications at http://extension.umd.edu/publications/Category.cfm?ID=A.
Everyone is getting soil savvy at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, and faculty at the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources’ Department of Environmental Science and Technology (ENST) have something to do with it. Drs. Delvin Fanning, Brian Needelman, Martin Rabenhorst, Richard Weismiller, and Ray Weil helped develop and design a unique soil exhibit—Dig It! The Secrets of Soil—which opened last summer and will run through this year.

Designed to advance public understanding of the diversity, complexity, and importance of soils in daily life, the 5,000-square-foot exhibit transports visitors on a journey through the physical and biological characteristics of soils, the processes that transform rocks to soils, the uses and benefits of soils, the global links of soils to air, water and climate, and the influence of soils on culture. "Most people think about soil as the plowed zone where crops or ornamental plants are grown, with little grasp of what the real soil profile is or how it functions," says Rabenhorst. "This exhibit will help people realize that at the living convergence of geological materials, plants, animals, water and air, is this amazing material called soil."

Work on the exhibit began long before it opened to the public. Needelman served on the Soil Science Society of America’s Smithsonian Soils Exhibit Design Committee and the Smithsonian Institution’s Soils Exhibit Extended Advisory Team, reviewing, editing, and contributing to exhibit scripts and ideas. He and his colleagues also examined the drawings and draft exhibits and provided feedback on how to improve the appearance of the displays. “The exhibit’s organizers especially wanted to make sure that the soil/geologic column and the soil profiles were realistic in appearance, showing appropriate horizons, colors, and structure,” Rabenhorst explains.

The result: a comprehensive exhibit that features seven major displays, each highlighting a different aspect of soils. For example, the “Get Soil Savvy!” display uses dramatic images and video to explore the importance of soils in land management and conservation. In the “Matters of Life and Death Theater,” visitors can enjoy an edgy detective video story about the micro- and macroscopic soil food web. A “Chef’s Challenge” kitchen features two flamboyant “soil chefs” who create very different soils from the same ingredients, while in “Sizing Up Soils,” visitors can get the dirt on soils through an array of fun activity and exhibition stations. They can also activate two soil “breathalyzers” (infrared gas analyzers) and detect the amount of carbon dioxide produced by soil organisms in two very different environments.

Despite the work involved in making Dig It! a reality, all four professors agree that it was time well spent and believe that their efforts will ultimately pay off in the form of many new soil-savvy fans. “This exhibit is getting thousands of kids pumped up about soils,” enthuses Needelman. “And probably quite a few adults, too.”
Some Baltimore residents are learning to appreciate the value of a vacant or abandoned lot, a small space between buildings, or an underused area in a public park. There—on common ground and with common intentions—they are joining together to develop gardens for the benefit of all. Most of these gardens are arranged with dedicated plots for families or individuals, while some also have common plots where everyone can share in the preparing, planting, selection, cultivation, growth, harvest and enjoyment of the plot.

In other places and other times such gardens have been called liberty gardens, victory gardens, leisure gardens, garden colonies, allotments, or simply nothing at all. Today, they are most often referred to as “community gardens” or sometimes “neighborhood gardens.”

No matter what they’re called, these city oases serve as a sanctuary for members of the community where they can raise food, relax, create, recreate, learn about life, share ideas, or swap squashes and tomatoes. Some of these people, feeling trapped by their urban environment, want to improve their surroundings by creating a place of natural beauty. Others garden with the intention of assuming the primary responsibility for their family’s nutrition and health.

But urban garden lovers aren’t going it alone. The University of Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE) started organiz-
ing community gardens in Baltimore City public parks during the late 1970s. Now, city residents can adopt an abandoned lot and improve it with a garden by contacting the city’s Adopt-a-lot program. Thanks to the support of the Urban Agriculture Program at MCE’s Baltimore City office, the program has blossomed and now includes more than 30 community gardens throughout the city.

“Baltimore City has a dynamic group of Extension educators who collaborate as a team to meet the urban gardening needs of residents in four city districts,” says Manami Brown, city Extension director and 4-H youth development educator. “For example, the 4-H Youth Development Program has joined efforts with the Urban Agriculture, EFNEP, and Master Gardener programs to provide training for youth in gardening and entrepreneurship skills.”

One of the oldest of the city’s community gardens is the Carmine Avenue Community Garden. A showcase of a vegetable garden, it also includes a small pond, a butterfly garden, and flowering plants, as well as raised beds with a wide variety of small fruits in addition to vegetables.

Local resident Cristina Kirkland serves as volunteer garden leader with support from neighborhood residents. Originally from the Philippines, Kirkland learned many of her gardening skills from her father who was an agronomist there. She shares her knowledge by planting ethnic vegetables, including string green beans, amaranth, and sesame in the garden and teaching children and neighbors about gardening. “Gardening is a very fulfilling activity, and teaching kids and adults how to grow beautiful and nutritious plants is extremely satisfying,” Kirkland explains.

*Editor’s note—Josue Lopez is the Urban Agriculture Educator and Master Gardener Program Coordinator in Baltimore City and County. Josue is original from Puerto Rico and started in MCE three years ago. He was a science teacher in Boston and has experience in International Extension Systems. Josue holds a Ph. D. in Agricultural Extension Education from Penn State University.*
programs with universities in China, Taiwan, and India have grown tremendously in the last two years, with benefits not only for faculty, but also for students on both sides of the globe.

The University of Maryland (UM) has long recruited students from other countries, and young adults from around the world are a fixture on the College Park campus. But perhaps no other college has devoted more attention on international recruitment and exchange programs—especially with Asian universities—than the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR). The college’s
2+2 Equals UM Degree

For example, AGNR has become the first college at the University of Maryland to implement a “2+2” transfer program. Following two years of study at a foreign university, participating students transfer to Maryland where they complete their education and earn a bachelor’s degree.

While visiting with University of Maryland President Dan Mote in 2004, then-President of China Agricultural University (CAU) Chen inquired if AGNR would be interested in developing a 2+2 program with CAU. They agreed that providing undergraduate students the opportunity to interact with and get to know undergraduates from different cultures would be advantageous for students from both the United States and China and began developing a memorandum of understanding to institute such a program.

CAU in Beijing is the first foreign university to partner with Maryland in this exciting venture. AGNR dean, Dr. Cheng-i Wei, and Dr. Ray Miller, director of the college’s Office of International Programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources (IPAN), met with CAU students on a trip to China, where they presented an overview of UM and AGNR programs. Eighteen students subsequently applied to participate in the 2+2 program in a highly competitive process. Nine—chosen by UM administrators because of their grades and English language scores—arrived in College Park last August.

Food science major Haoying Wang is one of the participants. She applied for the program because of UM’s good reputation and because she wanted to experience life as a U.S. undergraduate student. “I think there is a big difference between undergraduate and graduate study in the United States,” she says. “Compared to international graduate students, international undergraduates have more chances to participate in some Americanized activities and can get to know the culture better. So far, I have had a challenging and exciting time here. There are a lot of opportunities for us, and people here are really nice.”

According to Dean Wei, “The UM chapter of the Chinese Student and Scholar Association (CSSA) has been helpful in assisting the students with locating housing, and giving advice on such subjects as culture shock and when to seek class help. Most U.S. science classes are taught in the inquiry-based model in which students perform hands-on experiments and develop critical reasoning skills.” This is a very different style of teaching than in China where most classes are in the stand-up-and-deliver mode.

Based on the success of the 2+2 program so far, AGNR administrators are currently discussing similar
arrangements with Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University (NWAFU) in Yangling, China, and National Taiwan University, that country’s leading agricultural university. Wei hopes that students from NWAFU will enroll at Maryland this year.

And, building on the video conferencing experience developed to deliver continuing education workshops to Russia, Wei and the UM Office of International Programs have secured initial Taiwan government financing to offer graduate courses on the environment and nutritional genomics using this technology. Drs. Bruce James of the Department of Environmental Science and Technology and Wen-Hsing Cheng of the Department of Nutrition and Food Science will lead these courses to be co-taught with colleagues at National Taiwan University beginning in fall 2009.

**Vet Med Crosses Borders**

AGNR’s opportunities for students from abroad aren’t limited to Chinese. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Siba Samal, associate dean and professor of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine (VMRCVM), for example, relationships have been strengthened with Indian veterinary colleges, including Haryana Agricultural University’s Veterinary College and Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University.

In the past two years, three students from these colleges have completed short-term exchanges with AGNR. While here, they focused on learning about DNA sequencing and animal disease treatments that are not yet common in India. They have been impressed with the quality of medicine and level of technology used in the small animal hospitals that they have visited, saying that even their veterinary college did not have some of the equipment that is fairly routine for most urban U.S. veterinary hospitals.

According to Dr. Bettye Walters, director of the VMRCVM Center for Public and Corporate Veterinary Medicine, who mentors these students, “The cultural awareness these students gain is as important as the increased knowledge in the veterinary field that they acquire. For example, the students spoke of how much they enjoyed trying new foods at various restaurants and how impressed they were that the traffic here was so ‘orderly’ and that we didn’t use our car horns nearly as much as they do in major cities in India.”

Jessica Pizzillo, a fourth-year VMRCVM student who traveled to India in December to learn about animal care in the developing world, says the experience is equally valuable for American students studying abroad. “Traveling to another country gives us an opportunity to see animal diseases like foot and mouth disease that we would never see in the United States and to observe medicine practiced in a way that is very different from what we have ever experienced,” she says.

Adds Miller: “Stepping outside of their own cultures to live and study in a foreign country may influence these students’ education and career choices, launch lifelong pursuits, increase cultural tolerance and understanding, and facilitate lasting friendships.”
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) is also discussing lending its expertise in developing Cooperative Extension capabilities with China’s Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University (NWAFU). Although Extension exists in China, it is administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, rather than through the university system. Communicating research to farmers has not been done consistently throughout China and provincial governments have not used Extension to help farmers increase agricultural productivity or combat hunger and poverty in China.

Maryland Extension specialists Susan Schoenian and David Martin visited NWAFU in October 2008 to assess the potential for a goat and sheep program and apple production. Susan visited Fuping County in China, where there are more dairy goats than in all of the United States. The demand for goat products is low but Susan sees opportunities for a UM–NWAFU collaboration that could train NWAFU professors and graduate students to work directly with farmers, and teach the farmers how to improve goat farm productivity and farm management.

China is the largest apple producer in the world, and the area near NWAFU is the largest apple juice producer. AGNR might provide advice on apple production systems, program evaluation, treating apple tree diseases, and improving irrigation and pruning techniques.
AGNR Scholarship Honors Memory of Outstanding Professor

One of the world’s leading agricultural economists, Dr. Bruce Gardner was an unassuming man. University System of Maryland Chancellor Brit Kirwan describes him as a person with “a towering intellect, but also a very down-to-earth, gentle manner.” Twice becoming chair of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics (AREC), Gardner died last March from multiple myeloma. To honor his memory and rich legacy of teaching, his wife, Mary Ann Gardner, established the Bruce L. Gardner Memorial Fellowship Fund last year with an initial gift of $40,000.

Since the endowed fund was created, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) has received numerous contributions, growing it to nearly $50,000. Dean Cheng-i Wei says the department has received checks from many of Gardner’s former students with letters expressing their gratitude for Gardner’s influence on their lives and careers. “The primary impact of this gift is it will enable the department to better recruit the best graduate students,” says current AREC chair, Dr. Lars Olson.

Dean Wei adds, “The prestige of Bruce Gardner’s presence on the faculty helped make the department a world-class institution.” A distinguished university professor whose career at Maryland spanned 27 years, he served as AREC chair from 2000 to 2003 and interim AGNR dean from 2003 to 2005. In July 2007, he began a second term as chair of AREC. Having served on the Council of Economic Advisors under Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter and as assistant secretary of agriculture for economics under President George H. W. Bush, Gardner’s “unusual combination of policy expertise and work ethic inspired generations of students and faculty,” says former AREC chair Dr. Ted McConnell. Many in the department agree that Gardner was a magnet for attracting top faculty and students. “We’ve seen a great increase in undergraduate enrollment numbers with majors in our department having more than doubled,” says Dr. Marc Nerlove, a close friend and faculty member.

Nerlove describes Gardner as “quintessentially an applied economist. He never lost sight of real world problems and conundrums in agricultural policy. This motivated his work on agricultural policy, U.S. agricultural productivity, and agricultural development here and abroad. It was in this spirit and understanding that he inspired the faculty and students of my department.”

(MAAnotes $5,000 to AGNR’s Green Building

Three members of the Maryland Arborist Association (MAA) were on hand at the VIP breakfast prior to the AGNR Open House at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center’s (CMREC) Clarksville Facility in October 2008 to present a check for $5,000 to Dean Cheng-i Wei (in photo below). The association’s representatives on hand, from left to right, included Frank Dudek of Carroll Tree Service, who serves as the political liaison for MAA; Bob Mead of Mead Tree and Turf Care, a member of MAA’s Board of Directors; and MAA President Nick Valentine of Lewis Tree.

Stanton Gill, regional Maryland Cooperative Extension specialist in the areas of nursery and greenhouse management who works routinely with MAA, was also at the AGNR Open House VIP breakfast and helped coordinate a variety of exhibits and activities throughout the day.

Attendance at the 2008 Open House reached nearly 3,000.

Mark your Calendar now for the 2009 AGNR Open House at CMREC, Saturday, October 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Your help is needed...

The gentleman holding the horse lead is Dr. Thomas B. Symons 1902, for whom Symons Hall was named. Symons served as dean of the College of Agriculture, director of both the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service, president of the University of Maryland, and member of the Board of Regents. Most importantly, he was a teacher and agriculturalist as evidenced in this photo.

If you can identify the gentlemen on the right and/or the horse and possibly the location, a copy of Edwin Remsberg’s book “A Georgic Odyssey” will be yours. AGNR Alumnus Will Godwin ’63 is Dr. Symons’ grandson and shared this photograph from family archives.

Please contact Gail Yeiser at gyeiser@umd.edu 301-405-2434. Thanks!
Family, that’s what AGNR is all about, and with the recent barrage of holiday letters coming to our homes, it was wonderful to hear from so many of our alums throughout the holiday season.

As you can see in our alumni updates, some people time things just right, and indeed a future Terp ushered in the New Year in Washington County! Other families are enjoying second generation Terps starting AGNR careers… and never let it be said that AGNR retirees aren’t valuable resources that can still work circles around many of us. Many of our AGNR alumni family are doing so many things in their careers and as volunteers, and we wanted to recognize a few of them in this issue.

Of course, we are always saddened at the passing of fellow alumni, former faculty members, and friends. Take a moment to read about some of the remarkable individuals that have touched so many lives.

As always, we would like to share your news with other alumni and friends of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Please take a moment to share your latest news either by using the form on the next page or by emailing me directly. We are proud of your professional accomplishments and involvement in your communities. We are also pleased to share your personal milestones with your fellow alumni. Photographs—digital or hard copy—are always welcome.

We hope to hear from you and share our AGNR Terrapin Pride with others. We also hope you’ll be able to join us at some of the upcoming events listed at the left.

Have a great spring and GO TERPS!!

Gail Poffenberger Yeiser
Assistant to the Dean for Alumni and External Relations
AGNR Alumni - Good to Hear from You!

Name:  First______________________ Middle___________________ Last _______________________

Maiden or Name at time of Graduation: _____________________________________________________

Degree(s) and years of graduations and majors/specialties _____________________________________

Current professional specialty: ____________________________________________________________

Current Volunteer Roles__________________________________________________________________

Home Address: ________________________________________________________________________

City____________________________   State ________________________  Zip____________________

(is this a new address within the past 6 months?) ___yes   ___no

Home Email: __________________________________________________________________________

Employer: ____________________________________________________________________________

Job Title______________________________________________________________________________

Business Address_______________________________________________________________________

City____________________________   State ________________________  Zip____________________

Business Email: _______________________________________________________________________

(May we include this on the AGNR and Friends List Serve? ___yes   ___no)

Phones:  ________________ home   ________________ business   ____________ mobile

News or information that you would like to share with other alumni or Dean Wei:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Please complete this page, detach and return to:

Gail P. Yeiser
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
1104 Symons Hall
College Park, MD  20742
FAX:  301-314-9146     Email:  gyeiser@umd.edu
Alumni, Faculty, and Friends Remembered

While we are saddened at the passing of the following individuals, we note with great pride and admiration the many contributions they have made throughout their lives. The career paths are varied and the accomplishments far reaching. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources may have been their alma mater, their place of employment, or both. The college is truly enriched by these relationships.

Conrad H. Liden ’42 & ’49, an Eastern Shore native, avid outdoorsman, and expert marksman, died of complications associated with congestive heart failure on October 28 at the Collington Episcopal Life Care Community near Mitchellville where he and his wife had lived for the past three years. He was 87 years old.

Liden earned a B.S. degree in vocational agriculture at the University of Maryland in 1942 and spent a year as a vocational agriculture (vo-ag) teacher at Ridgely in his native Caroline County. He then served with the U.S. Army during World War II.

Liden returned to the university as a graduate student and instructor in agronomy, receiving an M.S. degree in 1949. He continued as an agronomy faculty member and student advisor until 1952 when he began a two-year assignment in Ecuador under a U.S. technical aid contract. He was named an honorary professor by the University of Quito in Ecuador.

Following this assignment Liden did graduate work at Cornell University in 1957-58. His program at Cornell involved a three-month trip around the world to observe agricultural policy in several countries. Upon returning to Maryland, he was assigned as an administrative assistant to the dean in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources from 1958 to 77.

During this time, Liden organized the printing operations and publications distribution for Maryland Cooperative Extension and the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station, the outreach and research arms of the college. The result was a centralized Agricultural Duplicating Service that he headed until his retirement in 1981, having completed more than 30 years as an Extension printing specialist and faculty member in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Maryland College Park.

Following his retirement, Liden worked 11 years for the University of Maryland Police Department as a firearms instructor. His programs were adopted as a model for Maryland State Police training. He was certified by the National Rifle Association as a training counselor and shooting coach, served as a leader in the Maryland 4-H youth shooting program, and traveled throughout the United States to help organize 4-H shooting programs.

His Adelphi Bees 4-H Junior Rifle Club won the state 4-H rifle match at least six consecutive years and set several records for shooting accuracy. As a boy, he won the Caroline County marksmanship contest in competition with adults. He won a trip to the National 4-H Club Congress with his collection of Nanticoke Indian artifacts gathered in Caroline County.

During his adult years, Liden received numerous certificates of appreciation for dedicated service in connection with his marksmanship and outdoor sportsman activities. Among these was a certificate of appreciation from the National Rifle Association for six years as a guest instructor at the National Rifle and Pistol Championships, 1974-79.

Conrad Liden was born on December 31, 1920, at Federalsburg in lower Caroline County near the Idylwild Wildlife Management Area. He was the only child of Claude Liden and Roberta Harper Liden. Liden School Road, which provides a link between Highway 404 and Highway 16 East near Denton, leads to the spot where Conrad attended classes in a one-room country school house, riding to school on his pony. The road was named for his great grandfather.

Liden seemed to be a man with few close friends outside his immediate family, but his colleagues at the University of Maryland regarded him as a person with high standards and the ability to get jobs done properly.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Marjorie Higman Liden, and three married children: Margaret Neily of Adelphi, Elizabeth Cooley of Columbia, and Lawrence (Larry) Liden of Severn. There are also nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Spending considerable time on hunting and fishing trips with his dad influenced Larry’s decision to obtain a B.S. in Natural Resources Management in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Maryland. He now works as an environmental engineer with Constellation Energy.

A memorial service was held November 4 at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in College Park. Memorial gifts may be made to the Maryland 4-H Foundation, 8020 Greenmead Drive, College Park, MD 20740.

(Special thanks to T. Milton Nelson, Emeritus Extension
George C. Paffenbarger Jr. ’50 of Arden, New York, died on August 2, 2008, at Elant at Goshen, Inc., after a long battle with prostate cancer. He was 79 years old.

Paffenbarger was born on November 22, 1928, in Columbus, OH, the son of George C. and Rachel A. Paffenbarger. He earned a degree in agricultural science from the University of Maryland in 1950, followed by service in the Quartermaster Corps of the U.S. Army and a period as a farm manager in Germantown, MD.

Paffenbarger moved to Arden in 1961, and for 40 years served as manager of Arden Farms Dairy Company, a privately held farm, land, and property management company. After earning a law degree from Fordham University Law School in 1978, he also pursued a successful law practice in Monroe from 1980 to 1998.

Paffenbarger was an active contributor to and board member of many nonprofit associations, particularly those providing health-related services. He served as a member of the Board of Directors of Arden Hill Hospital, Orange Regional Medical Center, and Elant for 37 years beginning in 1968; president of the Board of Directors of Arden Hill Hospital from 1980 to 1985; president of the Orange County Hospital Association; and prominent member of the Board of Directors of Hospice of Orange and Sullivan counties. In light of his many contributions over the years to Arden Hill Hospital and Elant, a non-profit health and housing services organization, the skilled nursing facility at Elant at Goshen was named in his honor in 1985.

Paffenbarger was also deeply involved in harness racing, serving as director of Goshen Historic Track and its predecessor association for 40 years until 2003, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame for more than 30 years, director of Saratoga Harness Racing, and trustee of The Agriculture and New York State Horse Breeding Development Fund.

His interest in history was served by his membership on the Board of Trustees of Museum Village, 1970 to 1979, and he was an active member of the Orange County Historical Society since 1981. He also was a member and elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Monroe and sang in its choir for more than 45 years.

Paffenbarger is survived by his two sons, George C. Paffenbarger III, of St. Petersburg, FL, and John A. Paffenbarger of Towson, MD; his two daughters, Jeanne A. Bock of Salem, OR, and Jane P. Butler of Downingtown, PA; his sisters, Gretchen P. Minners of Bethesda, MD, and Anne Paffenbarger of New York City; and 10 grandchildren. He was predeceased in 2006 by his wife of 54 years, Jerry, and his daughter Jackie Oddi of Vidalia, GA.

A memorial service was held on August 15, 2008, at the First Presbyterian Church of Monroe, with Rev. Baron Ashfield officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to Elant Foundation (www.elant.org), 46 Harriman Drive, Goshen, NY 10924 or First Presbyterian Church of Monroe, 142 Stage Road, Monroe, NY 10950.

Stutts was born in Tuscaloosa, AL. He served in the Air Force after graduating from the University of Maryland in 1952. He received a master’s degree in agricultural economics from Maryland in 1957 and did additional graduate work in educational administration. He worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture before joining the American University (AU) staff in 1959.

Stutts briefly taught marketing and worked in the career placement office but spent most of his 28 years at AU as an administrator, primarily at the business school. He helped set up the university’s criminal justice program and served as acting dean of continuing education and the summer school. He also helped develop a program for low-income students. At the business school, Stutts helped establish an MBA program in Rome and also led efforts to present academic courses on military bases.

After retiring from AU in 1987, Stutts operated orientation programs at the University of Maryland and George Washington University for international students studying for master’s degrees in business administration. He also owned College and University Services, a business that advised students and parents on selecting colleges. He retired in 2005.

In the late 1980s, Stutts and his wife, Marilyn ’53, became legal guardians of an autistic Japanese student who had been sent by his family to study at a military school in North Carolina. The hard-luck story of the student, Chris Takaishi, was told in a Washington Post article in 2004 (http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A25978-2004Dec25?language=printer).

Stutts was able to bring Takaishi from the military school to his home, where he lived...
for a short time. He noticed that Takaishi, who was painfully withdrawn, often squinted. Stutts took him to an optometrist, who discovered that Takaishi was severely nearsighted although his condition had never been diagnosed.

Stutts then founded a program at the University of Maryland Baltimore County where Takaishi could master English and earn a high school diploma. Takaishi later studied at Montgomery College and received a bachelor's degree at the University of Maryland University College.

Through his fellow alumnus, Ed Downey ’52, Stutts found Takaishi a job as a computer keypunch technician and helped him rent a room in a house. He also arranged for him to open a bank account and learn to drive.

After Takaishi’s student visa expired, Stutts and his wife attempted to find ways for him to remain in the United States, where he had lived for 15 years and where he had spent all holidays with the Stutts family. They considered adopting him, but, at 31, Takaishi was too old. In December 2004, because of family demands and increasingly restrictive immigration laws, Takaishi was forced to return to Japan, where he lives today. He continued to communicate with Stutts and his wife by email several times a day.

Stutts was a member of Faith United Methodist Church in Rockville and raised money to battle myasthenia gravis, a chronic neuromuscular disease. He was also a lifelong supporter of the University of Maryland and was a district chairman of the Terrapin Club, which supports university athletic programs.

Survivors include his wife of 52 years, Marilyn Stutts of Potomac; four children, Robert Stutts of Baker, WV, Clifford Stutts of Tavernier, FL, David Stutts of McLean, VA, and Cynthia Quinn of Derwood; and six grandchildren.

**Dr. Dorothy Van Zandt,** retired Maryland Cooperative Extension nutrition specialist, died on November 26, 2008, in Burr Ridge, IL. She was 95 years old.

Van Zandt was born in Wilmington, DE, and graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1937. She taught home economics in a middle school in the Chicago suburbs before earning her Ph.D. in nutrition from Texas Women’s University in 1969. She worked from then until 1984 at the University of Maryland as a nutrition specialist with Maryland Cooperative Extension.

Van Zandt was preceded in death by her husband. She is survived by three children: Michael and wife Sue, Stephen, and Suellen and husband Larry; six grandchildren; and eight great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on December 6, 2008, at Hughes United Methodist Church in Wheaton, MD. Memorial contributions may be made to Kappa Kappa Gamma Scholarship Fund, Hughes United Methodist Church, or the King Bruvaert House, Burr Ridge, IL.

**Lynn T. Warman,** former Harford County agricultural agent, died on December 6, 2008, at his home at the Linden Ponds retirement community in Hingham, MA. He was 80 years old.

Warman served as Harford County’s agricultural Extension agent from 1957 until his retirement in 1985. He served as county Extension director for more than 20 years.

A native of Morgantown, WV, Warman attended West Virginia University (WVU), graduating in 1950 with a B.S. in agriculture. He served two years in the U.S. Army including a tour of duty in Korea. Following his Army service, Warman began his Extension career in Wood County, WV, earned his M.S. from WVU, and moved to Bel Air, MD, in 1957 and then to Forest Hill in 1963.

During his Extension career in Maryland, Warman worked to help local farmers adopt the best farming practices to increase productivity and economic value. He was instrumental in advancing participation in the Dairy Herd Improvement Association and the Soil Conservation District program. He also served on the board of the Harford County 4-H Camp for many years and worked tirelessly to encourage county youth in the 4-H program. Warman was active in both the National and Maryland Associations of County Agricultural Agents. Upon his retirement in 1985, he was instrumental in the formation of the Retired Agents Association.

After his retirement, the Warmans bought a motor home and spent their winters touring the United States, returning each spring to Forest Hill in time to plant the garden. He took great pride in his vegetable garden, small orchard, and vineyard. He enjoyed turning his grapes into wine that he shared with family and friends.

Warman and his wife were members of the Bel Air United Methodist Church for 50 years, and Warman served on the church board. He was also a member of the Bel Air Rotary Club for more than 35 years.

In 2006 the Warmans moved to the Linden Ponds retirement community in Hingham, MA, to be close to family. He is survived by wife,
Frances Jean Ward, his childhood sweetheart. The Warmans would have been married 60 years on December 26, 2008. He is also survived by his brother, James C. Warman of Auburn, AL; his son, Timothy Ward Warman of Rockville, MD; his daughter, Nancy Lynn Oddeliefson of Cohasset, MA; and five grandchildren.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, 11240 Waples Mill Road, Suite 402, Fairfax, VA 22030. The family requests that gifts be designated “research restricted” to help find a cure for the disease.

(Editor’s Note: It was learned at press time that Roscoe N. Whipp ’42, long-time Montgomery County 4-H Agricultural Extension agent, died January 21, 2009. A complete obituary citing the additional accomplishments and recognitions bestowed on Mr. Whipp will appear in the summer 2009 issue of Momentum.)

A 1942 graduate of the College of Agriculture, Roscoe N. Whipp began his career with Maryland Cooperative Extension after declining an offer to play semi-pro baseball following college. The opportunity to work with young people and agriculture as an agriculture 4-H Extension agent became his life’s passion. His legacy is seen in the institutions he built and in second- and third-generation 4-H families furthering his goals of youth development through sound agricultural programs. The Montgomery County Agricultural Center was built under his guidance as an activity center for 4-H and agricultural events.

He served as president of the Maryland Association of County Agricultural Agents and as president of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents, one of three Marylanders to hold this position.

After retiring in 1978, Whipp served as a mentor for new employees, including deans and administrators. He shared his views and passion for agriculture and Extension with university officials at every level. Whipp and his wife, Connie, were recognized by the Maryland 4-H Foundation for significant contributions, and in August 2008, Whipp received the Dean’s Medallion from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources in recognition of his lifetime of commitment. The Whipps were also loyal Terrapin Club and UM Legacy Society members.

In addition to his wife, Whipp is survived by three daughters: Sherry DeLauder of Montgomery Village, MD; Barbara Covey of Federalsburg, MD; and Arlene Plege of Gering, NE; and several grandchildren.

A memorial service was held March 14 at the Rockville United Methodist Church followed by a reception at the Montgomery County Agricultural Center in Gaithersburg.

Future Terp Rings in 2009 in Washington County

Peyton Reese Schnebly, daughter of Mark ’01 and Kasey Schnebly of Clear Spring, was the first baby born in 2009 at the Washington County Hospital. The milestone made the front page of the Hagerstown Herald-Mail and even in that first-day picture, dad Mark was wearing a Terps shirt. Other family members in the photo above are golden retrievers Riley and Sasha.

The Schneblys named their daughter after Kasey’s favorite football player, Peyton Manning, and Mark’s favorite actress, Reese Witherspoon. While watching football one day before the couple learned they were expecting, Kasey said that Peyton would make a nice name for a girl, and Mark quickly offered the middle name Reese. “It kind of stuck,” Kasey said. “We hoped we would have a girl because we couldn’t think of a good boy name.”

Schnebly grew up in the Maryland 4-H program and was active in all areas of the dairy cattle industry and judging program. He works for MidAtlantic Farm Credit as a credit analyst in Frederick. A loyal Terp fan since they started dating at Clear Spring High School, Kasey is a 2004 graduate of York College in Pennsylvania and earned her M.S. in nursing from Shenandoah University in 2007. She is a nurse practitioner for Health at Work in Hagerstown. Peyton and her parents and pets reside in Clear Spring.

Note: The Schnebly family boasts even more AGNR Terps: Uncle Brian ’99 and Aunt Heidi ’02 have recently moved to Mercersburg, PA, just over the state line from Clear Spring, MD, from Reynoldsburg, Ohio. Brian is the programs coordinator/appraisal coordinator for Youth Programs, Young Sires, DNA Testing & Marketing for the American Guernsey
Recent AGNR Grads Carving Out Careers

Amanda J. Greene '08 Nutrition and Food Science is a food technologist/technical support employee at Gamay Flavors in Alexandria, VA. She is currently working in the Research and Development Department, creating and perfecting formulations for customers’ private label products. Much of her work is in dry sauce mixes, seasoning blends, boxed dinner kits, and pouch liquid sauces. Gamay Flavors (www.gamayflavors.com) also develops concentrated cheese, butter, milk, and fruit flavors in paste, powder, and liquid forms.

An average day for Greene involves formulating a product that meets a customer’s needs, blending it in the lab, then cooking and tasting it. Based on the product’s flavor profile and functionality, the formula is “tweaked” for perfection before sending a sample to the customer for feedback. Sometimes further “tweaks” or reformulations are needed. When the customer approves, Gamay Flavors goes into large-scale production.

“My education at the University of Maryland prepared me well for this job, though I continue to learn something new every day,” says Greene. “I loved my major and now I love my job. Who would mind getting paid to eat mac & cheese all day?”

Greene grew up in a Terp family. Jennifer Woodward-Greene ’94 & ’03 and Stuart Greene ’81 were both animal sciences majors. Jennifer is currently the director of the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) National Visitor Center. Her volunteer roles include reviewing resumes, and she is active in the Lions Club and Alpha Zeta, the national honorary fraternity for agriculture. Stuart worked in the poultry and dairy units at ARS until his retirement. Jennifer and Stuart are both active 4-H volunteers with dairy- and sheep-related projects. Both Amanda and her sister Amy Greene ’08 Studio Art were active in Anne Arundel and Howard County 4-H.

Other Terps in the extended Greene Family include Uncles David Green ’64 & ’71, Entomology and Extension Education; Joe Keplinger Entomology; Grandmother Doris Greene Home Economics; cousins Matt Greene Kinesiology, Janet Harkins ’71, Education, Belinda Galbreath ’74 Library Science; and Aunt Mary Beth Greene ’85 MA Special Education. Thanks for keeping the list, Jennifer!

Chase Walker Townshend ’08 Landscape Management from the former Natural Resource Sciences Department is an account manager for James River Grounds Management (www.jrgm.com) in Glen Allen, VA, working in commercial grounds management and landscape contracting.

While in College, Townshend was an active member and past president of the UM PLANET (Professional Landcare Network*) Student Chapter. He participated as a member of the 2005–2008 Maryland teams at national PLANET competitions, which feature 25 landscape-related events such as landscape design, business management, woody plant and perennial ID, equipment operation, etc.

Townshend recently led a team of five coworkers through a complete clean up and landscape renovation of a local impoverished family’s yard and various volunteer efforts with Grove Avenue Baptist Church near his home in Richmond, VA.

Jamie Wolf ’07 is starting her second year as a loan officer for MidAtlantic Farm Credit at the East New Market, MD, branch. She notes that the branch is about five miles from her parents’ farm, allowing her to help out and put her plant science degree to good work, especially during the April-June strawberry season. At MidAtlantic, she enjoys working one on one with farmers, and participates in a variety of agricultural and community events promoting MidAtlantic Farm Credit (http://www.mafc.com/default.asp).

Wolf continues to be active in Dorchester Co. Young Farmers and the Maryland Farm Bureau and currently serves as chairperson of her county’s Young Farmers group. One of their goals for the upcoming year is to promote agricultural education in the county school system. Wolf notes that “Dorchester County does not have an agricultural sciences program in the high school; there is one horticulture class, and it has been a struggle to get the FFA chapter started and functioning. I am hoping that the Young Farmers and Farm Bureau will be able to push for more agricultural education in the coming years.” Wolf resides in East New Market, MD.

*PLANET emerged in 2005, when the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) joined forces to become a more encompassing network of green industry professionals. PLANET develops and maintains active programs for approximately 4,000 member firms in the areas of business management, government affairs, public relations, technical assistance, safety and insurance, education, and inter-industry relations with other facets of the green industry. http://www.landcarenetwork.org/cms/home.html
Congrats to AGNR Grads…Making a Difference Over Time

Downey Farms Inc., of Williamsport, MD, received recognition for 50 years of membership with the Maryland & Virginia Milk Producer’s Cooperative at the cooperative’s annual meeting and member recognition luncheon held March 28 in Ellicott City, MD. Standing (l-r): Frank Downey ’65, Maryland & Virginia President Steve Graybeal, Ryan and Jennifer Downey, Wade Downey, CEO Jay Bryant, Duean Stiles holding Emily Stiles. Seated (l-r): Carolyn Downey and Dawn Stiles. (The Harry Strite family of Williamsport, MD, was also recognized for their family’s 50 years of membership.) Other members of the AGNR extended family recognized during the annual meeting included Stanley & Barbara Riggs Stiles ’62 and Joy Rawn representing Riggs & Stiles Inc., of Berryville, VA, for their Quality Producer of the Year Award for farms in the cooperative’s Southern Marketing Area, producing more than three million pounds of milk; and retiring director Jason Myers ’73 of New Windsor, MD, was commended for his three years of service on the board at the cooperative’s 87th annual meeting held March 28 in Ellicott City.

Owned and operated by 1,500 dairy farm families from Pennsylvania to Georgia, Maryland & Virginia is a milk marketing and processing cooperative providing consumers throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States with fresh milk and dairy products. Maryland & Virginia owns and operates three fluid processing plants: Marva Maid of Newport News, VA, Marva Maid of Landover, MD, and Maola Milk and Ice Cream Company in New Bern, NC; a manufacturing plant in Laurel, MD; and an equipment warehouse business in Frederick, MD. The cooperative is also majority owner of a second manufacturing plant, Valley Milk LLC, located in Strasburg, VA.

Compiled from materials provided by Amber DuMont, communications manager, Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative, Inc.

Mike Cantwell ’75 was named Mosquito Control Program manager by Maryland Agriculture Secretary Roger Richardson in October 2008. Cantwell is responsible for administrative and program oversight of all services provided to approximately 1.3 million residents living in 2,000 communities in 23 counties and Baltimore City. The program includes community education and outreach, larviciding, and aerial- and truck-based operations for adult mosquito control.

Cantwell began his career with the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) in 1972 while a student at the University of Maryland. He worked with the Mexican bean beetle project that sought to develop a parasite to control the beetle, which was causing damage to about 40 percent of the soybean crop at the time. He joined the mosquito control staff in 1985 in the College Park field office and moved to MDA headquarters in Annapolis in 2005.

Jerry M. Williams ’78 Ph.D. was conferred the “associate professor emeritus” title by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors in August 2008. Dr. Williams has been an associate professor of horticulture in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech since 1982. He has been an effective and compassionate teacher and advisor to more than 300 advisees, and made himself available as a personal counselor to his students. He has mentored more than 35 graduate students and five undergraduate students who have served as instructors in his indoor plants class.

Williams has held professional leadership positions including eastern regional director of the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture and chair of the Collegiate Activities Committee in the student division of the American Society of Horticultural Sciences. In 2008, he received the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Teacher Fellow Award.

Williams received his bachelor’s degree from Morgan State University, a master’s degree from Howard University and his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland.
AGNR Extended Family... 
Extending AGNR Connections

Amy Fry Leber ’53, was inducted into the National 4-H Hall of Fame posthumously in October 2008. She was 1 of 17 inductees from across the nation. Leber, who served as resource development coordinator for the Maryland 4-H Foundation, died in March 1991 at her Laytonsville, MD, home after an eight-year battle with cancer. She was 61.

Born in Rockville, MD, Leber was a graduate of Gaithersburg High School and the University of Maryland. She “bled green” from the day she was born, following in the footsteps of three older brothers who were active in the Laytsonville 4-H Club. She was involved in a relief effort during WWII utilizing her food preservation skills learned in 4-H. She was selected to participate in the International Farm Youth Exchange (IFYE) program and lived in Switzerland. Following college, she worked as an Extension 4-H agent in Howard County, 1953-55, and as a home economics teacher at Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville, 1955-58.

During 20 years of raising a family, Leber maintained close ties both with 4-H activities and professional home economics groups. She held positions of leadership with the Montgomery County Agricultural Center and the Montgomery County Fair. She was also the leader of the Laytonsville 4-H Club, influencing hundreds of lives and encouraging members with a favorite saying, “Don’t hide your light under a basket,” says Jane Griffith

Evans ’73. “It was almost impossible to hide from Amy as she encouraged us to maximize our talents and step further out of our comfort zones. She seemed to tirelessly care about the community—both local and world wide,” Evans recalls.

After serving as president of the Maryland 4-H Foundation, Leber went back to salaried work for the Cooperative Extension Service as the foundation’s first paid resource development coordinator. Based at College Park, she coordinated fundraising activities to help support Maryland’s statewide 4-H youth program and to provide out-of-state project trips and college scholarships for outstanding 4-H members. The Maryland 4-H Center at College Park, dedicated in 1989, was a crowning achievement of her accomplishments. Built at a cost of $750,000, the building was funded through private donations and a state bond bill. An entrance display in its lobby pays permanent tribute to her years of service.

Leber spearheaded the annual Maryland 4-H Foundation golf and tennis tournament, a fundraising activity held annually since 1982 at various locations. She also coordinated a 1986 fundraising gala at the Omni International Hotel in Baltimore, which raised nearly $100,000.

Friends and colleagues said Leber lived “around the clock for 4-H.” She was described as “a very persistent, quiet leader who could get anything done,” and as someone who “knew everyone from the governor on down and didn’t hesitate to call them on behalf of 4-H.”


Mrs. Leber babysat my sister and me while she was in college. She was one of the most influential individuals throughout my 4-H career, encouraging me to try new things and step beyond my 4-H local club and county programs.

Special thanks to T. Milton Nelson, Emeritus Extension communications specialist, for assistance with this update. gpy

Elroy Ralph Krestensen ’62 Ph.D., a retired Entomology faculty member with the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES), turned 87 in September 2008. Dr. Krestensen earned his B.S. and M.S. in 1949 and 1951 respectively from the University of Florida. His work at College Park included the MAES bulletin Susceptibility of the red-banded leaf roller, Argyrotaenia velutinana (Walker), to TDE.

Krestensen and Netta, his wife of 60 years, moved from Hagerstown to Bixby, OK, five years ago to be near their daughter and grandchildren.

Virginia Norton ’74, Ph.D. and retired faculty member in Nutrition and Food Science calls herself a “professional volunteer” these days, having become very active in her local community of McLean, VA.

Norton is president of the Board of the Friends of the Claude Moore Colonial Farm National Park, the only privately operated national park in the country, serving school children from Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia, as well as the general public. She is also chair of the Board for the Foundation to Preserve Medieval Arts and History, located in Alexandria. This group serves the community with European martial arts programs, “Knights in the Classroom” and “Knights to
the Rescue.” Norton notes that, “We try to aid the disadvantaged in the community while educating about the Medieval Ages through entertainment.” The martial arts program is in conjunction with TC Williams High School.

A past-president of the University of Maryland Alumni Association, Norton continues to serve on the association’s finance committee. She also serves an assistant chief election officer for Fairfax County. In her “spare time,” Norton and her husband, Charles, enjoy traveling in January and February and then returning for spring in the DC area and various alumni events on campus.

William Eugene Shaklee ‘53 Ph.D. Poultry Science is also a “professional volunteer” in his retirement. He earned his B.S. in animal husbandry and a commission as Second Lieutenant, Reserve Officer Training Corps, from Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, OK, in 1942 and his M.S. in genetics from The Iowa State College, Ames, IA, in 1948.

Shaklee is very active at Epworth Villa, a senior retirement facility in Oklahoma City, OK. He sings with the villa choir during weekly Vespers services and leads the congregational singing. He shows the Saturday night movies, participates in the monthly Activity Committee meeting, and hosts several Friday night programs. He helps with the Cherries Jubilee Marketing event, updates the Villa Veterans Notebook in the library, and alternates with two other volunteers to drive the Epworth Villa bus with 10 to 15 Villa passengers to Sunday services at Quail Springs United Methodist Church.

Shaklee and his wife, Rose Marie (Miller) Shaklee, celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary on February 24, 2008.

Ella Frazzalari Smart ’52, ’55 & ’80 Home Economics, and Education and Advanced Graduate Studies, was one of 31 former National 4-H Fellows who commemorated the 77th anniversary of the National Payne/4-H Fellowship program at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, MD, at the end of National 4-H Week, October 5–12, 2008. Smart was an assistant home demonstration agent in Maryland with a 100 percent 4-H girl assignment when she was awarded one of six National 4-H Fellowships in 1954 recognizing her outstanding achievement as a Cooperative Extension Service 4-H educator. The one-year Fellowship combined post-baccalaureate study with an informal study of the federal government and related organizations in Washington, DC. A total of 131 former 4-H’ers and Extension educators from 39 states were inducted into this national program.

Smart was instrumental in the planning of the 77th anniversary reunion and compiling biographical information for the Fellows, including her own impressive list of professional accomplishments and community involvement.

In addition to her Extension career in Prince George’s and Anne Arundel counties, she was a substitute teacher for the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, schools and volunteer coordinator for the St. Ambrose School in Cheverly. She was also a special assistant and coordinator for library services for the Archdiocese before returning to Extension when her children were grown.

Since her retirement in 1992, many AGNR and Home Economics alumni have worked with Smart as a past-president of the AGNR Alumni Chapter and a member of the University of Maryland Alumni Association’s Board of Governors and the AGNR Dean’s Leadership Council.

Smart has served as a “silent volunteer” to identify and secure donors for the Maryland 4-H Program, a member of the Board of Directors of the Patuxent 4-H Center, president of the Maryland Association of Home Economists, and Eastern Region president of the National Association of Home Economics. She assisted with the documentation for and coordination and printing of the book A Maryland Album—Quilt Making Traditions 1634-1934, and assisted with the show “Album of Quilts” sponsored by the Association for Family and Community Education. She’s been a television star and producer of the First Place Educational Program “Better Living” by Metrovision Cable in 1985.

Smart and her husband, Clarence S. Smart Jr. ’49, have four daughters: Mary Smart Denison, DVM ’80 (DVM University of Florida ’85); Leslie McGowan, Frostburg State ’81 & Bowie State ’88; Janice Thomann, RN Old Dominion University ’82 & Prince George’s Community College – RN ’93; Diane Melia ’85 & Morgan State –Masters of City and Regional Planning ’96; along with seven grandchildren. They reside in Clarksville, MD, when they’re not at the Delaware Beach.
4-H Fall Competition Wrap-Up

Last fall was a busy time, national competition-wise, for 4-H. From animals to engineering, Maryland 4-H’ers demonstrated superior skills and knowledge. See what we mean:

4-H Engineering Team Posts Wins at National Challenge

The Maryland 4-H Engineering Team posted wins during the 58th National 4-H Engineering Challenge at Lafayette, IN, in September. The seven-member team participated in individual events and as a team in the 4-H Engineering Bowl. They also attended educational workshops at Purdue University and field trips to Subaru of Indiana Automotive and Caterpillar Engine Plant. Bicycle contestants went to the Indianapolis Velodrome, an Olympic bicycle race track.

Testing their knowledge and skills against 46 other 4-H’ers from 12 states, the Maryland Team tied for third place in the Engineering Bowl competition. Olivia Wolf (Carroll County) placed first in bicycle safety and William Reece (Anne Arundel County) took top honors in small engines. Catlin Carrico (Garrett County) and Nathan Tichnell (Garrett County) each placed second in computers and lawn tractor (Learn-to-Earn), respectively.

Also breaking into the top 10 were Nathan Metz (Cecil County), who finished third in welding, Gary Pritts (Garrett County), who placed fifth in welding, and Lance Guyton (Frederick County), who placed fifth in the tractor event.

Each competition included a written exam, either a presentation or parts identification test, and a demonstration of skills component, such as welding, computer programming, or operation of a related vehicle.

Dr. David S. Ross, professor and Extension agricultural engineer in the Department of Environmental Science and Technology, served as the Maryland group coordinator and chair of the National Bicycle Safety Event. Dwayne Murphy, faculty Extension assistant for 4-H Youth Development in Baltimore County, acted as chaperone and assisted in events.

Livestock Judging Team Finishes Third at National Contest

The Maryland 4-H Livestock Judging Team capped off an impressive fall by finishing third overall at the national contest held as part of the North American International Livestock Expo in Louisville, KY. Teammates Drew Cashman, Claire Bennett, Troy Bennett, and Lukas Ziegler, all Carroll County 4-H’ers, tested their skills against 122 youth on 33 teams from across the United States and didn’t disappoint.

The team placed second in beef, third in sheep and goats, fourth in oral reasons, and eighth in swine. They initially tied for second place overall but ended up third after a tiebreaker. Two team members, Drew Cashman and Claire Bennett, were also named All-Americans. Cashman had a very consistent day and finished as the ninth high individual overall, with Bennett placing ninth in oral reasons and as twelfth high individual overall. Troy Bennett ended up ninth in beef and fourth in performance beef. Lukas Ziegler finished as the 25th high individual overall.

As one of the top three teams in the nation, Maryland has been invited to compete internationally in June at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh, Scotland. Team members will have the opportunity to compete at the show, stay on
farms in Europe, do some sightseeing, and visit agricultural farms and businesses on a variety of tours.

Maryland Dairy Judging Team Wins Brown Swiss, Places 6th

Competing against 29 teams from across the nation, Maryland placed sixth overall in the judging contest and sixth in the oral reasons event at the 87th National 4-H Dairy Cattle Judging Contest held in September in conjunction with World Dairy Expo at Madison, WI. The competition involves placing ten classes representing five dairy cattle breeds and presenting five sets of oral reasons.

Team members included Austin Schwartzbeck (Carroll County), who finished sixteenth in reasons; Caitlin Patrick (Howard County), who placed seventeenth in reasons and 28th overall; Carissa Doody (Frederick County), who placed seventeenth overall; and Katie Moser (Frederick County), who placed eleventh overall and nineteenth in reasons. They were coached by Denny Rensberg of Jefferson, MD, and Kiera Finucane with the University of Maryland.

Specific breed results were as follows:
- Ayrshire: Team (third), Katie Moser (second), and Caitlin Patrick (sixth)
- Brown Swiss: Team (first), Caitlin Patrick (seventh), and Carissa Doody (ninth)
- Guernsey: Team (fourteenth) and Katie Moser (seventeenth)
- Holstein: Team (thirteenth), Caitlin Patrick (twelfth), and Carissa Doody (nineteenth)
- Jersey: Team (seventh), Austin Schwartzbeck (thirteenth), and Carissa Doody (fifteenth)

Four Maryland Teams Earn “Top 20” Spots in Horse Events

Sixteen Maryland 4-Her’s, four volunteer coaches, and regional Extension horse specialist Kristen Wilson traveled to Louisville, KY, in November to compete in Horse Bowl, Horse Judging, Hippology, and Horse Communications competitions at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup. Competing against some 350 youth from 30 states—the largest group of registrants in the roundup’s history—all four teams excelled, bringing home top-twenty honors in multiple events.

The Horse Bowl team coached by Dr. Al Starr outsmarted most of the teams to claim the Reserve National Championship with a second-place finish overall. Ashleigh Friend (Garrett County) earned second place overall, with teammate Kaitlyn Pontuti (Baltimore County) finishing ninth place overall. Mackenzie Barnard (Howard County) and Brook Dudrow (Talbot County) also contributed to the team’s success.

The Horse Judging Team also had an incredible competition, claiming fifth place overall, eighth place in conformation classes, seventh place in performance classes, and tenth place in oral reasons. Sabrina Ginn (Cecil County) coached team members Leah Berry (Anne Arundel County), Rachel Ginn (Cecil County), Rebecca Hoffman (Carroll County), and Leigh Ann Stead (Cecil County). Rachel Ginn placed tenth in conformation classes, ninth in performance classes, tenth in oral reasons, and sixth overall.

Led by coach Darryll-Ann Buschling, the Hippology Team placed sixth overall with an eighth place finish in the written phase and sixth place in the station phase. Individual awards were also won by Elena Stojic (Montgomery County), who by placed eighth in the written phase, and Stacey Heaver (Carroll County), who finished eighth in the judging phase, seventh in the station phase, and sixth overall. Rounding out the award-winning team were Megan Levin (Baltimore County) and Colleen Slevin (Carroll County).

The Horse Communications Team, coached by Janie Dell, demonstrated and spoke eloquently against tough competition. The team demonstration duo of Megan Jordan and Ashley Newman (both from Carroll County), earned tenth place for their excellent demonstration titled “To Shoe or Not to Shoe.” Suzannah Macleod (Carroll County) intrigued the judges with her talk about horse slaughter titled “America’s Dirty Little Secret,” which earned her a thirteenth placing overall. And Kelly Nolte (Carroll County) impressed the judges with her individual demonstration about riding safety titled “Your Life Depends on It,” which earned her a 12th place finish overall.
There’s a Little Scientist in All of Us

4-H’ers Celebrate National Youth Science Day

What can a diaper, a zip-lock bag, and a half cup of water teach you about conserving water? And how can an experiment involving these three simple items help the United States keep its competitive edge in the global marketplace?

Six million 4-H’ers and their families know. On October 8, 2008, the 4-H Youth Development Program launched the first-ever National Youth Experiment as part of a larger effort to help build America’s future science, engineering, and technology workforce. On the slightly chilly day in question, an eager crowd of youth and adults gathered outside Symons Hall on the University of Maryland Campus to investigate the mysterious properties of hydrogel polymers. The experiment, billed as “Helpful Hydrogels,” is part of 4-H’s comprehensive public service campaign “One Million New Scientists. One Million New Ideas,” which supports the goal of attracting a million new youth to 4-H science, engineering, and technology programs (SET) by 2013.

Gathered around tables set up with materials for the experiment, each neophyte scientist began by cutting up a disposable diaper and placing the contents in a one-gallon zip-lock bag. Vigorously shaking the bag to separate the powder from the stuffing, each participant ended up with about one teaspoon of the powdery hydrogel polymer from the disposable diaper. Mixing the powder with a half cup of water produced a gooey, gelatinous solid, to the delight of the new young scientists. A short discussion of the properties and uses of the hydrogel polymer wrapped up the experiment.

4-H has been involved in youth science education for decades. 4-H SET programs reach more than 5 million youth with hands-on learning experiences in subjects like rocketry, robotics, bio-fuels, renewable energy, and computer science. These out-of-school opportunities are supported by more than a half million dedicated adult volunteers.

October 8, 2008 was officially designated as 4-H National Youth Science Day by Congress. For more information about 4-H’s science engineering and technology programs or to explore more 4-H environmental curricula, visit www.4-H.org. — DDJ
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