

# Resources

PENNSTATE



College of  
Agricultural  
Sciences

News from Ecosystem Science and Management | Forests • Soils • Water • Wildlife and Fish • Wood

Summer/Fall 2014

## Department Debuts at the Great American Outdoor Show

Careers in the Outdoors. That was the tagline for our exhibit at the Great American Outdoor Show, February 1 - 9, 2014 at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg. Our department was one of more than 1,000 exhibitors including guides and outfitters, hunting and fishing retailers, state agencies, and many more.

Student and alumni volunteers, along with faculty and staff support, made it possible for us to have an active presence at this 79-hour event (except for a few hours when February weather nixed travel plans).



Samantha Pedder '11 and W F S senior Teddy Fisher shared information and resources at our Great American Outdoor Show booth.

A continuously running video of 30 images—students and alumni “in the field” interspersed with scenic images—helped us “draw folks in.” Various forestry tools, tree cookies, and wildlife pelts were on hand to generate interest and conversation. We had give-aways, including wooden nickels and bookmarks, and candy! And, of course, we had information about our degree programs.

We talked with a great variety of folks—parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, grade-school children, teachers, and more. We hope these conversations will lead to students enrolling in one of our degree programs in the future. ■

## Engaging with Youth at NASP

The 2014 Pennsylvania National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) State Tournament was held at Penn State University Park in the Multi-Sports Facility on March 14, 2014. The tournament hosted 1,019 participants (470 girls and 549 boys) in grades 4 through 12 from 41 Pennsylvania schools.

Our department staffed an interactive exhibit at this event for archers and their family members to enjoy—and learn from—during their time in the arena. Our “ecosystems prize

Outstanding Alumni Nominations are due September 30. See page 19.

wheel” featured questions from five categories: forests, soils, wildlife, water, and fish. Participants were also challenged to identify eight preserved fish specimens—reference materials were provided for their use. We also had on hand, of course, information about our academic degree programs. Maybe we will recruit a student or two! ■



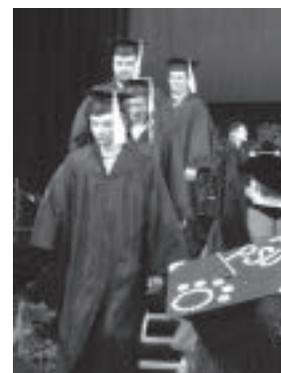
Our interactive exhibit kept NASP Tournament participants engaged while they waited for their turn to compete.

## Commencement

Spring 2014 commencement was held Sunday, May 11. Wildlife and Fisheries Science student Nicholas Moore served as college marshal, having achieved the highest grade-point average of approximately 500 graduates of the College of Agricultural Sciences. Moore earned an associate degree in Wildlife Technology at Penn State DuBois in spring 2012.

Where are our graduates going?

Eight of 10 spring 2014 Forest Science graduates completed our college’s senior exit survey. Six of the eight had employment lined up, one planned to complete a second baccalaureate degree, and one was seeking employment. All three of the Wood Products graduating seniors completed the exit survey; two were employed and one was accepted in a graduate program. Only 10 of the 31 Wildlife and Fisheries Science graduates completed the survey; two were accepted into a graduate program, two were seeking acceptance into a graduate program, eight were employed, and two were seeking employment. ■



## Career Fair 2014

Our sixth annual Career Fair was held on Friday, February 14, in the atrium of the Forest Resources Building. Fourteen exhibitors registered but two (Huber Engineered Woods and Westervelt Renewable Energy) required air travel and had to cancel due to weather. Fortunately, Westervelt representatives were able to visit us in April instead.

We thank our exhibitors for their interest in our programs and students:

- Bartlett Tree Experts
- Centre Wildlife Care
- Gutchess Lumber
- Huber Engineered Woods
- Industrial Timber and Lumber
- Peace Corps
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Shaver's Creek Environmental Center
- The Davey Tree Expert Co., Inc.
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Raystown Lake
- U.S. Forest Service, Allegheny National Forest
- Westervelt Renewable Energy

We plan to continue this annual event, and later this fall will begin accepting exhibitor registrations for ESM Career Fair 2015.

In addition, exhibitors, students, and recent graduates have the opportunity to participate in the College of Ag Sciences' Career Day on October 21, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. in the Bryce Jordan Center. For information and exhibitor registration, go to <http://agsci.psu.edu/students/events/ag-career-day>. ■



Representatives from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service attended our ESM Career Fair for the first time this spring.



Our students have had the opportunity to visit with Pennsylvania DCNR representatives all six years.

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This publication is available in alternative media on request.

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**Interview with  
Mike Messina**  
Head, Department of Ecosystem  
Science and Management

**Q:** What's new in the department?

**MM:** We hired two tenure-track faculty members. David Miller started in January 2013 as assistant professor of wildlife population ecology. Dave will teach W F S 446, Wildlife and Fisheries Population Dynamics, W F S 447W, Wildlife Management, and a future graduate course. His research thrusts are developing approaches for dynamic species distribution modeling to determine how land-use change and climate change affect wildlife populations, and developing tools to make model-based predictions useful for management.

Michael Sheriff, assistant professor of mammalogy and ecology, started in August 2013. He was a post-doc at the University of Alaska studying how seasonal differences in snow cover affect population dynamics of the snowshoe hare. The techniques used there can be applied here. He is studying the effect of climate change on wild animals, including changes in synchrony between the normal seasonal cycles of animals and their environment, and response to rapid environmental changes. Michael is teaching W F S 408 Mammalogy, W F S 409 Mammalogy Lab, and co-teaching FOR/W F S 430, Conservation Biology. He will also start a graduate course.

**Q:** The College of Agricultural Sciences is in the midst of strategic planning. What has that meant for the department?

**MM:** We wrote our plan for 2014 to 2019 and I have helped with the college's plan. The process was unifying, a common reason for our new department to discuss our shared future in detail.

We set goals around our three major responsibilities to the Commonwealth: education, research and Extension.

In undergraduate education, we're currently focusing on program assessment. Are students meeting the learning goals and objectives of our programs? If not, how can we improve the outcome? Our work thus far has been awarded exemplary status in a recent review by the Penn State Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence. Our assessment plans for both our undergraduate majors are posted on the Institute's website as examples of well-written plans.

**Q:** Do you test a full suite of skills at the end of a forestry student's college career?

**MM:** We recently developed a new course, FOR 400, Senior Forest Practicum, that reinforces and tests students' ability to integrate knowledge, skills and abilities retained from earlier coursework. Competencies tested for students in our Forest Management option, for example, include material from required courses in dendrology and silvics, forest measurements, GPS, GIS and remote sensing, forest and fire ecology, statistical analysis of forest-related data, silviculture, and forest economics. Instructors introduce the project and evaluate the students orally, or through a report or in-class presentation.

I think the message will filter down from the seniors to the younger students that they should take their courses seriously because they'll have to apply that knowledge again. We're responding to a mandate from the University and societal pressures to ensure that students are truly learning something.

**Q:** How about goals for research and Extension?

**MM:** We will ensure our research addresses timely issues of importance to Pennsylvania and beyond. We are a land-grant university with an obligation to society, so we must ensure that all aspects of our research are addressing important problems. We are also aware that, as a large research university, we must conduct both basic research to advance science and applied research to solve problems.

The main thrust of our Extension programs is to involve Extension more in teaching and research, and vice versa—to better marry the three parts together.

**Q:** Renewal of the program accreditation with the Society of American Foresters is coming up. How are you preparing?

**MM:** We're planning for a visit from SAF in April 2015 when they will fact-check our self-study that we're writing now. Just the process of preparing for that, and then listening to the visiting team report back before they leave, is valuable.

We value the fact that we have an accredited degree. It's important for attracting qualified students and it's important to the world that an outside party has visited us, reviewed what we're doing, and has said 'keep doing it with our blessing.' They will be interested in talking to our alumni and stakeholders, so I hope some of those people will volunteer to meet the visitation team next spring. ■

*“Working on the college’s strategic plan has been a unifying process, a common reason for our new department to discuss our shared future in detail.”*

## Find Us on Facebook and Twitter!

We created a Twitter account for the department this past spring. Our Twitter username is @PSUecosystems and we share information, in 140-character snippets, about the various disciplines in our department (soil, water, wildlife, fish and forests).

Our current hashtags are #PSUforestry, #PSUwildlife and #PSUsoils.

Our Twitter account is aptly managed by administrative staff assistant Dana Grove. She has also breathed new life into our department's Facebook page, Penn State Ecosystem Science and Management.

Our Facebook page includes posts about our student clubs (i.e. SAF, Woodsmen Team, TWS, Soil Judging), "Throwback Thursday" posts featuring old black and white photos from the archives with captions written by Department Head Mike Messina, and a periodic highlight (on most Mondays) of one of our current students.



You can read our Twitter and Facebook posts even if you do not have your own social media accounts: click on the Twitter icon on our homepage, <http://ecosystems.psu.edu/>. ■



## Second Biannual Pennsylvania Forest Fest Celebrated in Fall 2013



Three bands, more than 30 exhibitors, and scheduled activities throughout the day drew more than 1,000 visitors to the second biannual Pennsylvania Forest Fest hosted by our department and Penn State Extension. The event took place on Sunday, September 15, 2013, in the H.O. Smith Botanic Gardens at The Arboretum at Penn State and provided an opportunity for participants of all ages to learn about forests.

Activities included bird walks, tree ID walks, an oak savanna burn walking tour, bird banding demos, Wood Miser demos, soil/water infiltration demos, tree climbing for kids, and much more.

For many photos and a list of sponsors who made the event possible, please visit <http://ecosystems.psu.edu/pa-forest-fest>.

We hope to see you at the next Pennsylvania Forest Fest in 2015! ■

## Share Your Story on Twitter

Use Twitter? We need your help to spread the word about Penn State's Forest Ecosystem Management, Wildlife and Fisheries Science, and Soil Science programs! Connect with us (<https://twitter.com/PSUecosystems>) by using the hashtags #PSUforestry, #PSUwildlife or #PSUsoils to get people excited about careers in the sustainable management of natural resources.

### Why should I share my story?

Our alumni and their friends and family are an important part of the Penn State story. Sharing your photos, videos and links is a great way to show prospective students what they can achieve with a degree in Forest Ecosystem Management, Wildlife and Fisheries Science, or Soil Science. It also gives them an idea of our department's culture—something we're very proud of. We will consolidate all the tweets we receive on the respective major's web page.

### What kinds of tweets should I share?

#PSUforestry, #PSUwildlife and #PSUsoils tweets should be interesting, informative, relevant to your experience at Penn State—and no more than 140 characters, of course. Tell us about what you are doing and share your experiences and networks, too. For example, you could tweet about:

- Your forestry, wildlife and soil projects
- Animal and plant sightings
- Conferences
- Field activities
- Networks and group information
- Reunions and events ■

## WCO Grove Scholarship Plaque Now Hangs in Forest Resources Building

Next time you visit the Forest Resources Building, please take a moment to visit the plaque honoring WCO David L. Grove and the passion and dedication he brought to his work as a wildlife conservation officer. The plaque now hangs in the building atrium.

In fall 2012 we held a plaque dedication ceremony for the WCO David L. Grove Memorial Scholarship. Grove graduated in 2004 with a B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science. He was killed in the line of duty as a Wildlife Conservation Officer on November 11, 2010.

The plaque is a tangible reminder of WCO Grove, his passion for his work, and the scholarship in his honor that helps current and future students realize their dreams to work in the field of wildlife conservation. ■



## Faculty Profile: Margaret Brittingham

### Professor of Wildlife Resources, Extension Wildlife Specialist

When Margaret Brittingham first discovered the world of birds, she was struck by the diversity of species and the distinct differences in bird communities across seasons and habitat types. In college, she had been a pre-med and classics student and then after graduating worked in a physiology lab, when her co-workers introduced her to bird-watching.

“I took an adult education class and absolutely loved it,” says Brittingham, who teaches ornithology and also shares her love and fascination of birds through Extension and outreach programs.

“I felt like studying birds was something I would have done to begin with if I had known it existed as a career. I like the scientific and ecological questions one can ask using birds as a model. Working with birds allows me to conduct science while working outdoors, which is also really important to me.”

Now, as Brittingham and her graduate students use birds to study potential ecological changes occurring in the forests of northcentral Pennsylvania in relation to drilling for Marcellus Shale natural gas, those stark differences among birds are really important.

“Birds are great indicators of habitat quality,” says Brittingham. The types and abundance of species matters—not just the presence or absence of birds.

Pennsylvania’s northcentral forests are one of the last remaining large pieces of eastern deciduous forest. During the spring breeding season they bustle with bird movement and songs. Seventy percent of those species are neotropical migrant songbirds, there just for spring and summer, and they need large swaths of undisturbed forest because that tends to mean fewer predators like squirrels, bluejays, and raccoons, explains Brittingham.

“They are insect-eating

**Hometown:** Nashville, Tennessee

**Alma Mater:**

Vanderbilt University

(B.A. 1977, classical studies)

University of Wisconsin-Madison

(B.S. 1979, M.S. 1981 and Ph.D. 1987,  
in wildlife ecology)

**Specialty:** Avian ecology, avian response to oil and gas exploration and development

**Time at Penn State:** 25 years



**Favorite book about birds:** *Kingbird Highway: The Biggest Year in the Life of an Extreme Birder* by Ken Kaufman. “It’s a book about finding yourself and passions, following your dreams and building a career on what you love.”

**Favorite book:** *Sand County Almanac*, by Aldo Leopold, father of wildlife management, and founder of the UW department where Brittingham studied.

**Favorite time to watch birds:** “During the breeding season, intensely watching a bird’s behavior when it is protecting a nest. You can learn a lot about them by watching their subtle behavior.”

**Favorite bird species:** “Black-capped chickadee: I spent a lot of time watching them when working on my dissertation. In winter other birds form flocks with chickadees as their leaders. They are adept at finding food and surviving extreme winter temperatures. They are tiny but tough with complex social interactions.”



machines,” says Brittingham—very useful at keeping insect damage in check within these forests, an important source of hardwood trees for the timber industry. Six species of warblers can be feeding in the same tree at different heights.

“We’re getting that insect control service from these birds free-of-charge. In late summer, they will travel back to Central and South America for winter and include scarlet tanagers, blue-headed vireos, warblers like ovenbirds and thrushes like Swainson’s thrush.”

Brittingham’s research is in progress, but preliminary results suggest that bird species typically associated with people such as robins, bluejays, mourning doves, and brown-headed cowbirds are becoming more common within the forest where pads and pipelines are present. The increase in bird species more commonly seen in suburban areas may signal an important change in the composition of species and loss of habitat for the neotropical migrant songbirds that rely on large tracts of undisturbed forest.

“So far, we have not detected major declines in neotropical migrant songbirds but what we’re seeing is initial change,” says Brittingham. “If all development stopped right now, that would



The field crew at Tiadagton State Forest in May 2014 (left to right): Annamarie Saenger (non-student), Jackson Martini '14; Margaret Brittingham; Lillie Langlois, Ph.D. candidate, and Russell Winter, SUNY ESF undergraduate and son of Warren Winter '82g.

probably be all the change we would see. However, if we're only at 10 or 20 percent of gas drilling development and we have the potential for 80 to 90 percent more, we should use these results as an early warning that changes are occurring and we need to plan future development to protect these forest-dependent species. The good news is that we're still at a relatively early stage in gas development so with planning it's possible to mitigate negative effects."

That is why monitoring programs, management and policy measures to consolidate disturbance and minimize fragmentation of those large tracts of public land are important.

## Partner Profile: USDA Agricultural Research Service ARS and ESM Turn Science into Tools for Foresters and Farmers

Boots-on-the-ground foresters making daily management decisions in recent winters may have noticed their boots sinking into soft or muddy ground instead of stepping firmly upon the frozen earth of the forest floor. Average low temperatures during the winter season are rising, which means dealing with muddier conditions for winter-time work in the woods is among the ways in which Pennsylvania's foresters may have to adapt to a warming climate.

There are many other effects, including the further spread of invasive pests like the hemlock woolly adelgid, a northward shift in suitable habitat for tree species and the potential of forests to contribute to the mitigation of climate change.

A new initiative—the USDA Regional Climate Hub in the Northeast—draws on the research related to climate change and already underway within the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management and among other Penn State researchers to develop climate science tools that will help foresters and farmers make day-to-day land management decisions.

The emphasis is on public land because the large remaining swaths of intact forests are publicly held and managed by Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

"The agencies are looking at ways to reduce the fragmentation by consolidating development, and they are trying to set aside areas where no development can occur. In the long run the ability to designate areas off-limits to development will become even more important. These large tracts of forest are not only the home to neotropical migrant songbirds but provide other extremely important ecological services such as protecting water quality and reducing the negative effects of climate change."

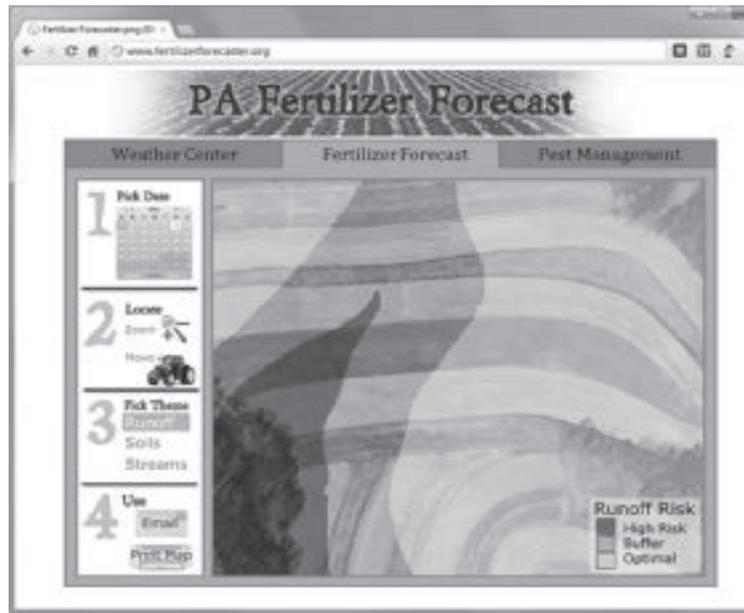
"I hope that the research my graduate students and I are doing will help to determine the types of changes occurring with development and can be used along with other research and monitoring data to develop policies and planning about the level of gas development that can be sustained while ensuring that the ecological services provided by these forests are maintained."

In debate about the economic value of drilling for Marcellus Shale gas, it is important to remember the economic value of the ecosystem services provided by healthy forests, notes Brittingham. These are often left out of the equation.

Brittingham's research has been supported by The Heinz Endowments, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission. ■

"We'll work with Penn State to reach out to farmers and foresters to identify the priority management needs with regard to weather adaptation and long-term climate change mitigation, through Penn State Extension," says Peter Kleinman, adjunct associate professor of soil science and research leader for the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Research Service's Pasture Systems and Watershed Management Research Unit on the Penn State campus.

***"We'll work with Penn State to reach out to farmers and foresters to identify the priority management needs with regard to weather adaptation and long-term climate change mitigation."***



Farmers will be able to log into a website, or a smart phone app, enter their coordinates into the Fertilizer Forecaster and receive one of three recommendations: don't apply, apply with some risk, or apply without risk.

The Climate Hub initiative between Penn State and USDA-ARS will tie in with ESM researchers working on climate change including Elizabeth Boyer (associate professor of water resources); Tyler Wagner (adjunct associate professor of fisheries ecology); Matthew Hurteau (assistant professor of forest resources); Laura Leites (assistant professor of quantitative forest ecology); Margot Wilkinson Kaye (associate professor of forest ecology); Marc McDill (associate professor of forest management); Jason Kaye (associate professor of soil biogeochemistry); and with Armen Kemanian (assistant professor of production systems and modeling in the Department of Plant Science.)

The initiative also reflects the long-standing relationship between ARS and the soil science faculty members who are now part of ESM.

USDA-ARS has had a research presence at Penn State University Park since it established the Pasture Lab in 1937 to be the focal point for forage crop research among 12 northeast states, and the Northeast Watershed Unit in 1966, as part of the ARS' watershed research program. Those two merged in 1992.

"Our most robust and longest relationships are with what are now the Plant Science and ESM departments," says Kleinman. ARS research focuses on managing perennial forage crops—a natural link to plant science—and water resources management, especially in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

"The fit there is very strong with ESM," says Kleinman. "We definitely try to make our work as relevant and applied to local issues as we can."

The Fertilizer Forecaster, another example, is a new tool scheduled to be available by early 2015 to advise farmers in four critical watersheds on where and when to apply fertilizer or manure to their fields. For many years, the Penn State Agronomy Guide has advised how much fertilizer or manure to apply, based on measurements from tests of farm soil.

The Fertilizer Forecaster combines weather forecasting and hydrology models with soil mapping to predict whether the applied nutrients—nitrogen and phosphorus in particular—will wash into the root zone where they are needed to feed the crop or will wash away from it and ultimately into creeks, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, all ecosystems hampered with an overload of nutrients.

Farmers will be able to log into a website, or a smart phone app, enter their coordinates into the Fertilizer

Forecaster and receive one of three recommendations: don't apply, apply with some risk, or apply without risk.

Those recommendations rely upon the farmer's calculation of the proper amount of nutrient—whether fertilizer or manure—to apply according to the needs of the crop and soil, and the Forecaster's prediction based on the weather and the farm's landscape, says Patrick Drohan, project director and associate professor of pedology. Drohan is working with Kleinman, project co-director Anthony Buda (USDA-ARS research hydrologist), Henry Lin (professor of hydropedology/soil hydrology), Ray Bryant (adjunct professor of agronomy), Doug Beegle (distinguished professor of soil science) and Doug Miller (associate professor of geography) in four prototype watersheds: Conewago Creek in southeast Pennsylvania, Spring Creek near the University Park campus, Anderson Creek near Clearfield and a watershed known as WD38 and Mahantango Creek.

The Forecaster team also includes scientists from other areas of Penn State, state agencies and federal departments like the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The project's large scale requires a wide range of expertise and represents an intense amount of data collection and data processing, says Drohan. That scope is made possible by the ESM-ARS partnership and reflects a trend in ecosystem science and management toward solutions that match the scope and complexity of ecological problems—like nutrient overload in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

"It will hopefully be a game-changer," says Kleinman, of the Fertilizer Forecaster. "There's an expectation that agriculture will reduce its load of fertilizer nutrients and we use nutrient management as the principal tool to achieve that objective," says Kleinman. Farmers understand the strategy, but need tactical day-to-day advice. "They say: 'You're telling us how much to put out there, but not telling us when and where.'" ■

## Alumni Profile: Lisa Jo Spencer

### 2009 Forest Science

Lisa Jo Spencer, a 2009 Forest Science graduate, spent the first 10 weeks of her Peace Corps experience in Mozambique taking a crash course in Portuguese. Spencer and her husband, Daniel, a 2009 B.S. graduate in Math, entered the Corps together in September 2011 and immediately plunged into learning the language. They lived with a woman and her 16-year-old daughter and learned “immersion-style”—out of the necessity to understand and be understood.

When Spencer arrived, she knew three words: “me,” “no” and “chicken.”

“I had to go from there to nearly fluent in 10 weeks. We all did,” she says.



Lisa Jo Spencer's Peace Corps work in Mozambique was “the best job imaginable.”

Those first 10 weeks only partially prepared her for her mission: teaching English to a class of more than 50 eighth-grade students, most of whom did not fluently speak Portuguese, the national language. Mozambique, on Africa's southeast coast, has been ranked one of the world's least developed countries since a nearly two-decade civil war ended in 1992.

Most of Spencer's students were most comfortable speaking their local, or tribal language, either Chewa or Ngunge, and she had had no training in either one.

Spencer—who discovered her love of teaching while working in environmental education at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center—found it ineffective to explain a lot in Portuguese, so instead used some of the immersion techniques that had helped her learn that language. The English words for colors, for example, were easy to teach without involving Portuguese. So were a lot of nouns and verbs.

Explaining grammar and verb conjugation, however, was tricky.

“These kids were good, quiet, willing to learn and respectful,” says Spencer. Public education in Mozambique ends at seventh grade, so her eighth-graders and their parents were paying a good amount of money for the students to attend school. Her students ranged in ages from their teens into their 20s.

“Between their enthusiasm and my enthusiasm, we all tried really hard,” says Spencer. “There were little great moments,

day-by-day. A kid says something so spot-on, or someone aces a test even when everyone else fails it, and I know I taught it to one person. It was a series of amazing moments.”

After graduating in 2009, Spencer spent nine months teaching environmental education at Shaver's Creek—presenting programs for families and for school groups, particularly fifth- and sixth-graders who spend a week at Outdoor School in the fall or spring, learning about nature. She would walk them through water studies, teach them about plants, animals and clean air. The goal is to draw students in and impart an appreciation and stewardship ethic toward nature.

“I always wanted to work in a profession in which I'm helping people on a daily basis. I feel teaching exemplifies this. It's one of those helping professions,” says Spencer. “It was the best job imaginable. I always wanted to live abroad, to learn another language and to really integrate into another culture, not just visit.”

Dan was assigned to teach math and she was assigned to teach English in Zobue, a small town on the border of Mozambique and Malawi. They spent 27 months there, until November 2013.

She had never been to Africa. Both of their temporary homes—the one belonging to their host family during training and their rented home while teaching—had electricity, but no running water.

She adjusted and learned to wash dishes in an inch of water and wash clothes in two inches—and to carry a 50-pound bucket of water on her head while walking from the well to the house.

“The weight of the bucket goes down your spinal column and is supported by your legs,” says Spencer, adding it was manageable for a five-minute walk during the wet season, but not for a 15-minute walk in the dry season when they had to travel farther for water. Then, they hired a neighbor to carry the water.

The Spencers' assignment ended in late November, and they took a few weeks to travel throughout

South Africa. She and Dan are expecting a baby girl in late July, and living this summer in her hometown of Mountaintop, near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. In September, they plan to move to California, where Dan is beginning a Ph.D. program in statistics at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Spencer plans to spend the next year at home, caring for their daughter—who will be named Lua, a Portuguese name, to honor their Peace Corps experience—and then to return to work teaching environmental education. ■



### News Briefs

Three of our Soil Science graduate students were recognized in November 2013 at the Tri-Societies International Meeting (American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, and the Soil Science Society of America) in Tampa, Florida. **Katie Webber** won first place for an oral presentation titled “Lime and plant system response to time and phosphorus amendments in an Andisol of the Andean Highlands of Ecuador.” **Emily Duncan** took second place for her oral presentation titled, “Pathways of nitrogen loss following manure application: water and air quality trade-offs.” **Lauren Vitko** took first place in the pedology division of the poster competition for her poster titled “Soil and Topographic Influences on Spatiotemporal Patterns of Saturated Zones.”

**Emily Hill**, administrative support assistant in our Graduate Studies Office, terminated her employment with Penn State effective August 5, 2013. Her work in our unit since April 2000 included administrative support for the Forest Science faculty, the Goddard Chair, the National Park Service staff, and most recently our graduate programs.

W F S senior **Allison Causey** was selected to receive Penn State’s Laurel Haven Endowment Scholarship in fall 2013 for her demonstrated commitment to conservation education.

Extension specialists **Sanford Smith** and **Bryan Swistock** received awards in the Innovative Program category at the Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals banquet in Pittsburgh in September 2013. Smith and colleague Jennifer Fetter, Extension educator in Dauphin County, were recognized for their first-ever Dive Deeper Youth Water Educator’s Summit, and Swistock and colleague Jim Clark, Extension educator in McKean County, were recognized for their effort to assist private water supply owners interpret water test reports related to pre-gas-well drilling.

In November 2013, **Margaret Brittingham**, professor of wildlife resources and Extension wildlife specialist, and **Bryan Swistock**, Extension associate and water resources coordinator, were honored for 25 years of service at Penn State.

**Sara Mueller**, W F S senior, received the third place award in the category of “Animal Science and Natural Resources” at the College of Agricultural Sciences’ Undergraduate Research Exposition in March 2014. Her poster was titled, “Foraging habits of *Etheostoma caeruleum* (rainbow darter) to determine dietary variability.”

**Margot Kaye** was promoted to associate professor of forest ecology, effective July 1, 2014. ■

### Donley Gift to Support Entrepreneurship & Innovation Program



Programs that develop and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in Penn State’s College of Agricultural Sciences will receive a boost as a result of a gift from a Forest Science alumnus and his wife.

William and Margaret Donley, of Pittsburgh, targeted their \$50,000 gift to an existing endowment that provides programmatic support for the college’s Entrepreneurship & Innovation Program.

This initiative includes entrepreneurship-focused courses, the Ag Springboard undergraduate student business plan competition and the Research Applications for Innovation grant program for faculty. Proceeds from the endowment can be used to cover expenses related to scholarly activities for faculty and students, staff support, travel and other needs.

With the world becoming a more fast-paced, competitive and complicated place, the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Program is a timely and critical initiative, noted William Donley. “Maggie and I have both benefited from our Penn State experiences, and we feel strongly that this support will help the College of Agricultural Sciences remain a world-class institution for generations to come,” he said.

William Donley graduated from the College of Agricultural Sciences in 1978 with a bachelor’s degree in Forest Science before earning a master’s of Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh’s Executive MBA program. He had a 31-year career in senior management with extensive experience in global materials and services businesses.

He worked for nearly 20 years with Koppers Co. and its spin-off, Koppers Industries, where he gained management experience in sales, procurement, operations, strategic planning and division management.

In 2005, as president of RailWorks’ products and services group, Donley led a management buyout to form Tangent Rail, a Pittsburgh railroad industry service company. He was president and CEO of Tangent until it was sold in 2010, after which he retired.

Donley is chairman of the Entrepreneurship & Innovation Program advisory board and serves as a judge for the Ag Springboard student business plan competition. He received the Forest Resources Outstanding Alumnus Award in 2011.

Margaret Donley is a 1979 Penn State graduate with a bachelor’s degree in German from the College of Liberal Arts and a minor in International Business. As a student, she was a cheerleader and a member of Parmi Nous Society and Delta Delta Delta sorority. ■

### Diefenbach Receives Caesar Kleberg Award



Duane R. Diefenbach, adjunct professor of wildlife ecology and leader, PA Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, received the Caesar Kleberg Award for Excellence in Applied Wildlife Research at The Wildlife Society Annual Conference that took place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in October 2013.

Diefenbach embodies the vision of this award with his sustained, high-quality research that has

direct application to high-priority needs in wildlife research, management and conservation. As unit leader and adjunct professor, he conducts research, teaches and supervises graduate students. His expertise and experience span multiple disciplines and taxa, from white-tailed deer and turkey to grassland songbirds and Allegheny woodrats. The emphasis of his research is on the estimation of population parameters. Results from his research are regularly incorporated into population management or monitoring strategies and inform additional research that enables managers to better monitor and manage wildlife populations. While much of his work has focused on game species in the northeastern United States, it has also included research on declining and sensitive species. His knowledge and expertise are increasingly recognized and sought after at both national and international levels.

Diefenbach is skilled at bringing together a variety of clientele to address research issues and translate results into management applications. He is willing to tackle complex and controversial research questions while staying true to the scientific process. A primary example is his extensive work on white-tailed deer populations and harvest management in Pennsylvania, a controversial subject. His work has contributed significantly to the scientific foundation and defendability of the state's deer management program, and interagency response plan for managing Chronic Wasting Disease, and development of habitat quality metrics, among other aspects. Diefenbach has a well-deserved reputation for excellence in academic and conservation arenas for his research, which has won him many professional awards throughout his career. (TWS news release, Oct. 25, 2013) ■

### Scholarship Milestones

Thanks to many generous donors, our department is able to award more than \$120,000 annually to students in our forestry, wildlife/fisheries and wood products programs.

The following departmental scholarships achieved milestones of continuous support in recent years:

- 2013 – Robert Bliss Scholarship – 25 years
- John and Nancy Steimer Scholarship – 25 years

- 2012 – Joan and Malcolm Stehman Scholarship in Wood Products – 10 years
- William Allison Ritchey Scholarship in Forest Resources – 15 years
- Orpha Kelly Rapp and Jesse Rossiter Rapp '15 Prize for Academic Excellence – 20 years
- Irvin C. Reigner Scholarship – 20 years
- School of Forest Resources Scholarship – 40 years
- 2010 – Danzer Group Scholarship in Wood Products – 10 years
- Keith A. Davies Memorial Scholarship – 20 years
- Roger W. Latham Memorial Graduate Award – 30 years ■

### Faculty and Staff Awards

The following award winners were recognized at our department's annual spring picnic hosted by Tau Phi Delta fraternity on Tuesday, April 15, 2014. Our undergraduate students submit nominations and vote, and the final selection is made by a panel of representatives from our department's student organizations.

**Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Assistant Award**  
Courtney Davis, M.S. candidate in Ecology

**Outstanding Undergraduate Advising Award**  
David Miller, assistant professor of wildlife population ecology

**Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award**  
Julian Avery, instructor in wildlife resources  
and Eric Zenner, associate professor of silviculture ■

### Retirements

**Timothy G. Pierson** retired on March 31, 2014, after nearly 28 years of service. He served McKean, Potter, Elk, and Cameron counties as Extension educator and forester and he was an affiliate assistant professor in our department. His areas of focus included forest health, forest sustainability, silviculture training, forest management planning, forest ecology, deer management planning, private landowner education, forest industry education, youth education, and forest industry Extension in Warren and Forest counties.

**Lysle Sherwin** came to Penn State in August 1998 after a 24-year career as executive director of Loyalhanna Watershed Association in southwestern Pennsylvania. At Penn State he served as associate director and then director of the Center for Watershed Stewardship. Affiliated with this position, he also served as an instructor in our unit as well as in the Department of Landscape Architecture. Sherwin retired August 5, 2013.

**Linda Spangler** retired on December 31, 2013 after 32 years of service at Penn State. In July 2008 she moved into the position as administrative assistant in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences. When our College of Agricultural Sciences was restructured effective July 2012, Spangler took on the role of administrative manager in our department and remained in that role until retirement. ■

## Hands-on Experience

“Finding chainsaw work that provides real experience for the students as well as meaningful service is always in the back of my mind,” explains **Mike Powell**, instructor of FOR 228, Chainsaw Safety, Maintenance, and Operation in Forest Management, a one-credit elective course.

Powell shared two examples of work that his students completed this past spring.

Lake Perez, at the Stone Valley Recreation Area, has been empty since 2008. A small forest of aspen has grown up along the eastern shoreline. Six students and Powell cut down all of these trees to provide clear viewing across the lake, unobstructed boating, and fish habitat. (To create habitat, the trees were not cut completely off so they would remain in one location).

Jo Hays Vista, a popular stop on top of Pine Grove Mountain along Route 26, was in need of clearing to maintain the view. **Mark Potter**, Rothrock State Forest district forester and 1993 Forest Science graduate, asked if Penn State’s SAF student chapter was interested in the work as a service project. The SAF students were interested, but with winter weather continuing past spring break and disrupting plans, the task was handed off to the FOR 228 students.

“This was as real as it gets,” said Powell, “with slope, snow, ice, and especially wind.” ■



Students spent a total of 33 hours clearing the view at Jo Hays Vista on Rothrock State Forest.



## TWS Students Host Northeast Student Conclave

Penn State’s student chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) hosted the TWS Northeast Student Conclave, a professional development weekend, at Seven Mountains Scout Camp in Spring Mills, Pennsylvania, March 28-30. A total of 165 students from 15 universities attended the event.



Students attending conclave had the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops.



Students attending conclave had the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops, ranging from GPS technologies, to searching for local reptiles and amphibians, learning to catch birds of prey with bal-chatri traps, and gaining hands-on experience with deer at Penn State’s deer research facility.

## TWS Student Chapter Wins Awards



W F S seniors **Elyse McMahon** (left) and **Sara Mueller** (right) proudly display the awards that The Wildlife Society Student Chapter received at the spring 2014 Ag Ball: Outstanding Fundraising and Outstanding Alumni Engagement.

### Mammalogy Lab Poster Session

Students enrolled in the two sections of Mammalogy Lab (W F S 409) this spring had a new assignment: Each created a poster about a Pennsylvania mammal of choice and exhibited the poster at a reception for middle school students.

Course instructor **Michael Sheriff**, assistant professor of mammalogy and ecology, required the following poster components: biology of the mammal, conservation and management concerns, and a recent scientific study examining the mammal. The 24 students enrolled in the course prepared the content and layout, and then had the posters professionally printed.

Sheriff connected with Steve McAnanich, sixth- and seventh-grade science teacher at Park Forest Middle School in State College, and arranged for middle schoolers to attend one of two poster sessions. About 55 students visited on April 23 and about 65 visited on April 24. The posters, along with specimens from the department's mammal collection, were exhibited in the atrium of the Forest Resources Building. Our students staffed their posters, shared information, and answered questions.

It was a win-win event: The learning opportunity tied in nicely with the middle schoolers' current lessons in natural history. The W F S students became "experts" on their mammal of choice, and gained valuable communications experience. ■



Mammalogy students created informational posters about Pennsylvania mammals of their choice and exhibited them at a reception for middle school students.



### George Award



**Todd "Teddy" Fisher**, who graduated with a B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science in May, was honored with the John L. George Student Conservation Award in spring 2014. Fisher was engaged in professional activity and public service throughout his undergraduate career.

The John L. George Award recognizes an undergraduate student who has committed himself/herself to public service on behalf of the conservation of natural resources, particularly regarding the necessity of protecting and maintaining healthy habitats for wildlife and plants.

Dr. George was the driving force behind the establishment of the Wildlife and Fisheries Science program at Penn State. In 1963, he was appointed as the first wildlife faculty member in our department (then the School of Forest Resources), and worked tirelessly for the expansion of the program into a full academic major, a dream that became reality in 1981.

Fisher found employment with the Penn State Deer Research Center in his freshman year. There he assisted with plant palatability studies and with research using biomarkers to study a vaccine. He learned a lot about white-tailed deer in general, which opened up the door to a summer internship at Mainframe Whitetails, a captive white-tailed deer farm in New York in summer 2012.

In spring 2012 he was a camp counselor at Outdoor School, a weeklong program for fifth- and sixth-graders sponsored by Shaver's Creek Environmental Center.

In summer 2013, Fisher was an intern with the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education's Wildlife Leadership Academy for high school youth ages 14-17. He was invited to stay on board during the academic year and was promoted to program coordinator of the white-tailed deer segment of the academy.

Fisher joined The Wildlife Society student chapter at Penn State in his freshman year and served as Professional Development Chair in his junior and senior years. As part of this spring's Northeast Student Conclave hosted by the chapter, he helped lead a workshop on chemical immobilization of white-tailed deer.

Fisher is a certified interpretive guide, a certified hunter safety education instructor, and a certified chronic wasting disease technician. He has also mentored three first-time hunters, and through the Penn State Fly Fishing program he has mentored first-time minority anglers.

He volunteered many hours to staff our department's booth at the Great American Outdoor Show in Harrisburg this past spring.

He is currently working as a park management technician with the National Capital Park and Planning Commission in Montgomery County, Maryland. He assists the Department of Parks with implementing its white-tailed deer management plan throughout 35,000 acres of parkland in the county. ■

### SAF Quiz Bowl Winners



Forest Science students (left to right) **Adam Wentzel**, **Andrew Teets**, and **Nicholas Wingerter** won the Quiz Bowl at the SAF Allegheny Section Winter 2014 meeting in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. All three earned Forest Technology degrees at Penn State Mont Alto and will complete their baccalaureate degrees this summer.

### Latham Award



**B. Wren Patton** received the Latham Award in 2013. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Ecology, investigating how fish behavioral flexibility and decision-making is influenced under stress. She is interested in the effects of an individual's stress physiology, and also in the effects of environmental stressors such as ocean acidification.

"In addition to her research expertise, Wren has a passion for making science more accessible to others," comments her adviser Victoria Braithwaite, professor

of fisheries and biology. "She is a wonderful mentor for the undergraduate students working on independent study projects in my lab—she helps promote their interests and helps them truly learn from their experiences."

Patton actively communicates and spreads her enthusiasm for biology and science. She has visited third-grade classrooms to show and tell about different parts of fish anatomy that allow fish to live in an aquatic environment. She was the volunteer coordinator for Pennsylvania Forest Fest 2013. She is an active participant in the Graduate Women in Science network, and she has attended scientific meetings where she has won awards for her presentations.

The Roger M. Latham Memorial Graduate Award, created in 1981, memorializes Dr. Roger M. Latham (1914–1979), who devoted his career to promoting conservation and management of renewable natural resources. Latham was well known as an author and the outdoor editor at the *Pittsburgh Press*, a lecturer, a photographer, a naturalist, a teacher, and a resource conservationist.

The Latham Award is given annually to an outstanding full-time graduate student advised by a Wildlife and Fisheries Science faculty member. ■

### Outstanding Senior



Our faculty, staff and students recognized **Sara Mueller** as the Outstanding Senior for 2014. Mueller graduated in May 2014 with a B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science and a minor in International Agriculture.

Mueller was a College of Ag Sciences Ag Advocate for three years and served as the undergraduate representative on our alumni group board for two years. She was active in the student chapter of The

Wildlife Society (TWS) since her freshman year and served as president in her senior year. She led the 2014 TWS Northeast Student Conclave—a major undertaking that received excellent reviews. In spring 2014, The Wildlife Society student chapter received awards for Outstanding Fundraising and Outstanding Alumni Engagement—also a testament to Mueller's leadership and hard work.

Mueller volunteered for our Extension wildlife field days, Arbor days, and other outreach efforts including staffing our department's booth at Great American Outdoor Show for many hours in February 2014.

In addition to all her extracurricular activities, Sara was a Schreyer Honors student and completed a thesis on the foraging behavior of the rainbow darter. In spring 2013 she studied abroad at Lincoln University in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Each spring, our faculty, staff and students are invited to nominate candidates for the Outstanding Senior award. The criteria for the award are service to the department, academic performance, service to the University and society, and professional promise and experience. ■

### Rapp Prize



The Orpha Kelly Rapp and Jesse Rossiter Rapp '15 Prize for Academic Excellence is given each spring to the senior in our department with the highest grade-point average. Elizabeth Rapp Tukey endowed the award in memory of her father Jesse Rossiter Rapp (Class of 1915) and mother Orpha Kelly Rapp.

This year's Rapp prize was awarded to **Nicholas Moore**. He completed the A.S. degree in Wildlife Technology at Penn State DuBois in spring 2012, and this spring he completed the B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science, Wildlife option.

While at DuBois, Moore was vice president and president of the ECO Club, a member of the Green Team, and an intern at the Elk County Visitor Center.

At University Park, Moore was a member of the Penn State student chapter of The Wildlife Society and several honor societies. He was also the first recipient of the WCO David L. Grove Memorial Scholarship.

Moore plans to pursue a career in wildlife conservation or environmental education. ■



## President's Message

In the wildland fire community, and in the military, it's called "situational awareness." Loosely defined, the term describes a dynamic process of observing conditions, applying experience and knowledge gained from what has happened, and planning for what may happen in the future based on forecasts and anticipated events. The concept integrates the variables of time, place and experience in an attempt to understand a subject and see the big picture surrounding it.

Let's consider our situational awareness as Penn State alumni, specifically in the context of the Forest Resources Alumni Group—again, within the variables of time, place, and experience.

As alumni, we have shared experiences preparing for and beginning natural resource careers at Penn State: the "old" Ferguson Building or the "new" Forest Resources Building; the "old" Creamery or the "new" Berkey Creamery; Happy Valley; classmates; friendships; Centre County; Nittany Lion football; and the sum of people and places that combined to make our shared Penn State experience. That's the past.

There's a connection from then to the present, and what's happening now in our department. I've been fortunate to have been able to meet some current students—and I find them to be motivated, eager to learn, and ready to advance through academic preparation to practice in their fields of professional interest. There is a dynamic interaction between students and faculty and staff that generates a positive environment in natural resources education at Penn State. That's the present.

As alumni, we have an ability to influence what the future may be. Coming back to the situational awareness concept, I encourage you to take an interest in the department. There are opportunities to do so by attending Forest Resources Alumni Group events and serving on our board of directors, by engaging with the student chapters of The Wildlife Society and the Society of American Foresters, by participating in the ESM Career Fair, or even by attending College of Ag Sciences Alumni Society events such as the annual AgLive tailgate because you may run into our undergraduate students there as well.

Please be attentive and proactive to recruit students interested in natural resource careers to Penn State. Future graduates who are knowledgeable and well-prepared to fill natural resources jobs is a great outcome to anticipate. If you have a chance to hire Penn State graduates in your business or organization, please give them consideration.

Best wishes, 814-432-3187 (office)  
**Howard Wurzbacher '79 FORSC** hwurzbacher@pa.gov

## Spring 2014 Election Results

The spring 2014 election results are as follows, based on 95 ballots cast: **Joseph E. Barnard '60, '63g** and **Stephen E. Fairweather '74, '82g** have each been elected to a first three-year term, and **Rachel R. Reyna '98g** and **Howard G. Wurzbacher, Jr. '79** have each been elected to a second term.

Thank you to board members **Alex Day '67** (who also served as vice president) and **Ralph Heilig '58** who each completed two terms of service (six years total) on the board.

Thank you also to **Sara Mueller** who served as undergraduate student representative for the past two years and to **Dan Lawler** who served as graduate student representative for the past year. We welcome Forest Ecosystem Management senior **Timothy Ackerman** as our undergraduate student rep, and **David Muñoz, M.S.** candidate in Wildlife and Fisheries Science, as our graduate student rep.

Howard Wurzbacher continues as president and the board will elect a new vice president at its August 2014 meeting.

A board of directors listing is available online at [ecosystems.psu.edu/alumni/about/board](http://ecosystems.psu.edu/alumni/about/board). ■

## Celebrating 75 Years

On April 11, 2014, alumni gathered at Penn State University Park to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Forest Resources Alumni Group.

The morning included an hour-long tour of The Arboretum at Penn State, followed by lunch in the Forest Resources Building. After-lunch speakers took us back in time, with an opportunity to reminisce about past coursework and professors.

Al Traverse, curator of the Penn State Herbarium and professor emeritus of palynology and biology, talked about the general history and purpose of herbaria, and about the Penn State Herbarium, which now includes the entire Forestry School herbarium that came to University Park from Mont Alto in 2010.



**Michael Kusko '69, '74g** examines an herbarium specimen.

**Chuck Ray**, associate professor of wood products operations, introduced us to his work of cataloging multiple collections of wood samples (more than 2,000 species of wood) that have been stored at Penn State for more than a century.

The evening's banquet, at which we honored our four 2014 Outstanding Alumni, took place at Toftrees Resort and Conference Center. It was the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting of our Forest Resources Alumni Group, which was officially established as an affiliate program group of Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences in 1993.

Prior to 1993 we assembled as the Penn State Mont Alto Forestry Alumni Association, which was organized in 1939 by Penn State forestry alumni and Mont Alto forestry graduates—75 years ago!

The following is reprinted from *Forestry Education in Pennsylvania*, edited by Henry Clepper '21 and published in 1957 by the Penn State Mont Alto Forestry Association:

### An Alumni Association Organized

In the spring of 1939 a group of ten foresters drew up a proposal for a formal alumni association. Seven were Penn State alumni; three were Mont Alto graduates.

We, the undersigned forestry alumni of the Pennsylvania State College and the old Mont Alto Forestry School, desiring to promote and maintain standards of forestry and forestry education in the United States, and particularly in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and to provide for professional fellowship and solidarity among the forestry alumni of the institutions named above, do signify, by the appearance of our names below, our interest in the formation of an organization to be known as The Penn State-Mont Alto Forestry Alumni Association.

*Signed* Henry Clepper, Mont Alto, 1921  
Frank C. Craighead, Penn State, 1912  
W. U. Garstka, Penn State, 1929  
Albert G. Hall, Penn State, 1933  
Joseph Kaylor, Mont Alto, 1927  
William P. Kramer, Mont Alto 1919  
Earl W. Loveridge, Penn State, 1912  
Robert Moore, Penn State, 1922  
Walter J. Quick, Jr., Penn State 1944  
Ira T. Yarnall, Penn State, 1910

Action on this proposal quickly followed.

In June 1939 a reunion was held at Mont Alto, the tenth anniversary reunion of the class of 1933, the first class to enter Penn State in 1929 after the merger of the two schools. In this class were men who originally had intended to go to Mont Alto and men who had intended to go to Penn State. Because this class formed a link between the two schools, the members acted on the statement previously drawn up by the ten alumni. They organized the Alumni Association, and elected officers who were instructed to draw up bylaws, propose a program of objectives, and circularize the bylaws and program among the alumni for their consideration.

In choosing the officers, the organizers apportioned them as follows: one alumnus of old Penn State before the merger, one from the old Mont Alto school, and one from the new consolidated school. They were:

Earl W. Loveridge, chairman; Penn State, 1912  
Henry Clepper, vice chairman; Mont Alto, 1921  
Albert G. Hall, secretary-treasurer; Penn State, 1933.

Then, as now, membership in the Association is open to any graduate of the old Mont Alto school, to any graduate in forestry of Penn State, to anyone who finished the ranger course at Penn State, or to anyone who has completed graduate work in forestry at Penn State. To belong to the Association it is not necessary that one be actively engaged in forestry; it is desirable, however, that one have an interest in forestry and particularly in forestry education in Pennsylvania. ■

## 2014 Outstanding Alumni

Each year the Forest Resources Alumni Group honors up to four Outstanding Alumni and at most one Outstanding Recent Alum at our April banquet. These individuals are recognized for professional achievement, excellence, impact and recognition; service to the profession, to the department, and to the community; and demonstration of high personal and professional standards.



Our Outstanding Alumni for 2014 are, left to right, with Department Head Mike Messina '79 (far left): **Roy A. Siefert '76**, **Warren E. Frayer '61**, and **Robert L. Berg '76**. Also pictured is **Richard A. "Skeeter" Werner '58** who was unable to attend the banquet to receive his award in person.

Biosketches of all of our Outstanding Alumni are available online at <http://ecosystems.psu.edu/alumni/awards>

Nominations are due annually by September 30. Nomination forms are also available online. ■

## Seeking 1970s Trophy Ax

William Paisley, a 1969 WVU graduate, is trying to track down the Tri-State Woodsmen Meet double-bit trophy ax from the 1970s. Apparently Penn State was the last winner of this trophy ax; the exact year is uncertain. The ax has brass plaques tacked onto the handle with the winners' names from several years.

Paisley wants to make a replica of the ax so that it can be displayed at WVU. He will cover all costs related to making and shipping the replica.

**Craig Houghton** at Mont Alto, **Mike Powell** at University Park, and Tau Phi Delta fraternity have looked for the ax and have come up empty-handed.

Have you seen this ax or have any idea where it might be? If so, please contact Ellen Manno at 814-863-0362 or [exr2@psu.edu](mailto:exr2@psu.edu) and she will pass along the information to Mr. Paisley. Thank you! ■

## 1950s

**Paul “Sunshine” Shogren**, 1951, Oakland, MD. ”In May 2014 I became 85 and a 75-year Scout veteran. Still active in Scouts. Even wrote a history of Troop 1, Oakland—it being 90 years old (first charter is dated 1922) entitled *The Game Continues* (the game of Scouting, that is). Other volunteer activities include county forestry board, thrift shop, veteran organizations and church.”

**Nelson Bevard**, 1952, Statesville, NC. Jan. 2014: “I have returned to the USA after about 40 enjoyable years in Canada. I keep in touch with **Phil Clark** and **Don Barnett**, both of ’52, and have enjoyed visiting the Mont Alto Campus numerous times in recent years.”

**Thaddeus “Ted” Yarosh**, 1952, Klamath Falls, OR. Jan. 2014: “In October 2013, I visited **Paul ‘Sunshine’ Shogren**, class of 1951. We drove to Mont Alto for a visit of the campus and faculty: **Craig Houghton**, director of the Forest Technician Program; **Beth Brantley**, professor of biology; Deb Creager, Mont Alto Alumni Secretary; and Randall Ackerman, Director of Development. Highlights of our visit were a half hour with the forestry technician students and a lunch hosted by Randall. And I found my pin oak tree! Mont Alto is so different from when Paul and I were there—Paul in 1947-48 and I a year after. It is still a beautiful campus and would that all Mont Alto alumni could pay it a visit in due course.”

**Lou Shain**, 1958, Lexington, KY. Classmate **Ralph Heilig** notified us that Shain was honored with a Centennial Tree at Penn State Mont Alto on April 26, 2014, Penn State Mont Alto Alumni Day.

## 1970s

**Marlin John “Jack” Tressler**, 1971, Westminster, DC. Mrs. Lynne Tressler sent us this news in Feb. 2014: “We retired from the bed and breakfast industry in September 2013, after owning and operating Fieldstone Farm Inn B&B for 12 years. In October, Jack was admitted to Oconoe Medical Center with pneumonia. Nine hours later he had a heart attack, and 42 hours later he was diagnosed with spinal meningitis. The journey has been long and he has been through multiple surgeries and CVA stroke. He has not been able to walk, but grows stronger each day. One of his many happy moments was watching Penn State win in four overtimes. Jack talks about people, plans, and friends at Mont Alto, but not anything I can associate with. If anyone who remembers Jack can e-mail, write, or send cards, I feel certain it would lift his spirits. Our mailing address is 186 Woodfern Rd., Westminster, SC 29693; e-mail [jaclynmeg@aol.com](mailto:jaclynmeg@aol.com).”

**Bob Fala**, 1973 and 1975g, Chapmanville, WV. Oct. 2013: “My two recent light-reading books that might interest outdoor enthusiasts are *Ramblin’ Outdoors* (2012) and *The Upland Alleghenies* (2013), both available online through McClain Printing Co., Parsons, WV, and Amazon.com.”



Three '70s alums visited our booth at the Great American Outdoor Show in Harrisburg in March 2014—left to right: **John Meehan** '73, **Doug Saylor** '75, and **Walter Kuzemchock** '76.

**Eric Carlson**, 1979, Troy, NY. Oct. 2013: “I am president and CEO of the Empire State Forest Products Association since 2010.”



**Ned Karger**, 1979, Kane, PA. Karger is one of ten Society of American Foresters (SAF) members selected to receive a 2014 Presidential Field Forester Award. The award will be presented at the SAF National Convention in Salt Lake City, UT, in October 2014 in recognition of Karger’s innovative methods and record of excellence in the practice of forest management.

Karger is currently the land manager for the Kane Hardwood Division of the Collins Pine Company, managing 118,000 acres of FSC-certified forestland in northwestern Pennsylvania. Before joining Kane Hardwood in 1983, he worked for Hammermill Paper Co., for the USFS Forestry Sciences Lab in Warren, PA, and for the USFS Allegheny National Forest.

**Howard Wurzbacher, Jr.**, 1979, Titusville, PA. Wurzbacher, current president of the Forest Resources Alumni Group, was honored with the Robert W. Bauer Service to Forestry Award at the SAF Allegheny Section meeting in Williamsport, PA, in February 2014.



Tau Phi Delta members celebrate with **Howard Wurzbacher** '79 (holding plaque).

## AlumniNews

### 1980s

**Steve Koehn**, 1983, Parkton, MD. After 30 years of state service, including the last 13 years as Director and State Forester, Koehn retired from the Maryland DNR Forest Service on June 30, 2014. He has accepted a senior executive service position with the USDA Forest Service in the State & Private Forestry mission area as Director of Cooperative Forestry.

**Brian Stanton**, 1984g, Portland, OR. **Dr. Henry Gerhold** shares this Jan. 2014 news from Brian Stanton: "My company, Greenwood Resources, was acquired by a large service management company, TIAA-CREF, last year, in part to manage their timberland investment portfolios.... I've now had to branch into teak, gmelina, and eucalyptus genetics, but my heart remains with the poplar!"

### 1990s

**Louise Murgia**, 1995, Rockville, MD. Murgia served as Interim Executive Vice President of the Society of American Foresters from September 2013 to June 2014. Murgia continues in her role as SAF's Senior Director of Field Services, a position in which she manages the Certified Forester® program, continuing forestry education, and convention support.



**Rachel Reyna**, 1998g, Etters, PA. During the SAF National Convention in Charleston, SC, in October 2013, Reyna was honored with the Young Forester Leadership Award. She is Chief of the Rural and Community Forestry Section of the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry. In this position she directs a variety of private and urban programs.

Communicating the benefits that forestland, trees and the profession of forestry bring to society at large is of paramount importance to Reyna. She is spearheading a new effort in Pennsylvania to look at modeling the benefits of private forestland in order to communicate the spectrum of values of that land, not only to landowners, but to municipal leaders and citizens as well.

She has been an SAF member since 1993 and has served in many SAF leadership positions at the national, state and local levels.

Reyna serves on our Forest Resources Alumni Group board of directors.

### 2000s

**Titus Phiri**, 2013g, Salima, Malawi. Oct. 2013: "I have been promoted to Principal Fisheries Research Officer at the Senga Bay Fisheries Research Centre."

## In Memoriam

**Thomas A. Olson**, 1940 – died February 19, 2013

**Robert W. Mezger**, 1947 – died January 9, 2014

**John J. Lavin**, 1950 – died November 13, 2013

**Paxton G. Wolfe**, 1950 – died June 12, 2013

**Stanley A. Walton**, 1951 – died March 6, 2014

**Wayne K. Murphey**, 1952 and 1953g – died December 11, 2013

**W. Charles "Chuck" Hollenbaugh**, 1958, 1961g – died December 9, 2013

**Charles Krewson III**, 1960 – died October 1, 2013

**Richard "Dick" A. Henry**, 1962 – died April 1, 2014

**James R. McClenahan**, 1963, 1964g, 1974g – died March 10, 2014

**William H. "Bill" Pawuk**, 1964 – died December 4, 2012

**Michael L. Zarichnak**, 1967 – died September 27, 2013



**Robert W. Mezger**, 1947, of Klamath Falls, OR, died January 9, 2014. After starting college at Penn State, Mezger took a leave and entered the U.S. Army Air Corps where he served as 2nd Lieutenant, 1942-1945. He completed the B.S. in Forestry in 1947 and then a master's at the University of California, Berkeley. He became a forester for the Bureau of Indian

Affairs in several locations including Grays Harbor, WA, and Lapwai, ID. In 1952 he took a position with the Klamath Indian Reservation followed by a position at the U.S. National Bank Trust Department in 1959 where he worked until he retired at age 65. In 1978 he began purchasing forest property, first with a partner through the Whiskey Creek Timber Co., and then in 2003 with family through Mezger Forest Inc. He was named the American Tree Farm Western Region Tree Farmer of the Year in 2008. He published a book in 2013, *A Forest History of Oregon's Klamath Basin 1910-1980*.



**John J. "Jack" Lavin**, 1950, of Boise, ID, died November 13, 2013. Lavin started his professional career in 1950 in Liberia, Africa, managing a rubber plantation. He returned to Philadelphia in 1952. After two years of military service, he was hired by the U.S. Forest Service and lived in nine different locations in Idaho, Washington,

DC, Wyoming, Utah and Nevada. He retired from the Forest Service in 1988 and began work with the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation through 2007. He also consulted for Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI-VOCA) in Armenia, Bolivia and Slovakia. In 1986 he received the Dept. of Agriculture's Superior Service Award for establishing positive working relationships between state and local

government entities and the Forest Service. He was a member of the Society of American Foresters and the Society of Range Management. He served on the Citizen's Advisory Council to the University of Idaho, College of Natural Resources Policy Analysis Group and the Idaho Forest Restoration Partners. (Adapted from obituary in *Idaho Statesman*, Nov. 20, 2013).



**Stanley A. Walton**, 1951, of Mechanicsburg, PA, died on March 6, 2014. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of the Korean War. He retired from the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry and was a member of the PA Forestry Association and the Society of American Foresters. (Adapted from obituary in the *Patriot-News*,

March 8, 2014). Classmate **Paul Shogren** writes, "Stan and I were part of the non-vets of our class (12 of 96). Our hometowns were close—me from Swissvale and he from Penn Hills—and we both became vets upon graduation—he Navy, me Marines."

**Wayne K. Murphey**, 1952, 1953g, of Annapolis, MD, died December 11, 2013. In addition to his undergraduate degree in Wood Utilization and Master of Forestry from Penn State, Murphy earned a Ph.D. at the University of Michigan in 1961. He was a U.S. Navy veteran; his service included the Pacific Theater September 1945 to September 1948. He received the World War II Victory Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. He worked for the U.S. Forest Service in Walla Walla, WA, in the summers of 1949 and 1951; for Koppers Company in Orrville, OH, 1953-1955; Ohio State Experiment Station in Wooster, OH, 1955-1960; Penn State as professor and associate director of the School of Forest Resources, 1960-1978; head of the Forestry Department at Texas A&M, 1978-1981; and Forest Science Technologist of Cooperative States Research Service at USDA, 1981-1985. He coauthored the book, *Wood as an Industrial Arts Material*.



**William Charles "Chuck" Hollenbaugh**, 1958, 1961g, of Missoula, MT, died December 9, 2013. "Hollenbaugh was drafted into the Army during the Korean War and was stationed in Alaska. He returned to Pennsylvania and received

his undergraduate degree in forestry, starting at the Mont Alto campus and finishing at the State College campus. He worked for four years as the regional state park supervisor with the Pennsylvania Department of Forests and Water. He continued his education at Penn State, receiving a master's degree in forest management in 1961. In 1963 he moved to Michigan and stayed in Ann Arbor for eight years, where he worked with the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. He moved to Missoula, MT, in 1971 and lived in the same home in the Rattlesnake Valley for 42 years. He taught forestry at the University of Montana for three years. Then he had a long career as a land use and recreation planner with the Bureau of Land Management, working in Salt Lake City; Salmon, Idaho; and Missoula, where one of his primary duties was the management of Garnet Ghost Town. (Adapted from *The Missoulan*, Dec. 2013).



**Richard "Dick" A. Henry**, 1962, of Chico, California, died April 1, 2014. After receiving his B.S. degree in Forestry in 1962, Henry moved to Willows, CA, where he began his career with the U.S. Forest Service on the Mendocino National Forest. He worked at many Forest Service locations, living mostly in rural California

communities. He also spent three years in the national office in Washington, DC, where he ran the Fuels Program. After that he became director of the National Advanced Resource Technology Center in Marana, AZ. There he founded the first Spanish-speaking fire program for the Latin and South Americas. In 1964 Henry was promoted to Supervisor of the Lassen National Forest; six years later he became the director of Fire and Aviation for Region 5 in California and he retired from that position in 1994. Henry loved being involved with the fire suppression community. He began as a junior member at age 14 in his home town of Point Pleasant Beach, NJ, alongside his father. (Adapted from obituary provided by Dick Henry's wife, Nancy).



**James R. McClenahen**, 1963, 1964g, 1974g, of Shreve, OH, died March 10, 2014. After completing the B.S. in Forestry in 1963, McClenahen earned a master's degree in Forestry (Silviculture) in 1964. He began work as a ranger with the U.S. Forest Service on the Daniel Boone National Forest in KY, and in 1966 was called to serve in the U.S. Army,

one year in Vietnam. After his discharge in 1968, McClenahen returned to Penn State to continue graduate studies and earned a Ph.D. in Forest Resources (Forest Ecology) in 1974. In 1972 he moved to Shreve and he began employment as a postdoctoral research associate at Ohio State University. From 1974 until his retirement in 1995, he served as assistant professor and later as associate professor in the Laboratory for Environmental Studies and Forestry Department. He conducted research on forest ecosystems and effects of air pollution on tree growth. After his retirement he served as a dual partner with Dr. Daniel Houston in Slyvancare Forestry Consultants. He was also an active partner in Hutnik, Davis, and McClenahen Consultants until 2013.



**Michael L. Zarichnak**, 1967, of Hoover, AL, died September 27, 2013. After graduation, Zarichnak served in Vietnam with the 59th "Bushwhacker" Land Clearing Company, with the Army Corps of Engineers from 1968-1971. He made his way to the South and worked as a forester for Alabama Power Company, 1975 -2011. After retiring, he

enjoyed part-time work with the Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District. He was a member of the Society of American Foresters, the International Society of Arboriculture, and he was a certified arborist. (Adapted from *The Birmingham News*, Sept. 28, 2013).

## Forest Resources

# Outstanding Alumni and Outstanding Recent Alumni Award Nomination Form

Please check one:

- Outstanding Alumni Nomination       Outstanding Recent Alumni Nomination (alumni who have graduated in previous ten years)

Date of nomination: \_\_\_\_\_ Is the nominee aware of this nomination?  yes       no

Information about the person making the nomination:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Information about the person being nominated:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation year and major: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a thorough description of the nominee relative to following selection criteria:

1. Professional achievement, excellence, impact, and recognition (and significant career advancement for Outstanding Recent Alumni nominees)
2. Service to the profession, the School of Forest Resources / Dept. of Ecosystem Science and Management, and the community
3. High personal and professional standards

*The nomination may also include a list of people who may act as references.*

Nominations are due September 30 and may be mailed to:

Forest Resources Alumni Group Awards Committee; Forest Resources Building; The Pennsylvania State University; University Park, PA 16802

*Nominations also may be submitted online at [ecosystems.psu.edu/alumni/awards](http://ecosystems.psu.edu/alumni/awards).*

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## Forest Resources Alumni Group Newsletter

### Summer/Fall 2014 Response Form

No dues are charged for membership in the Forest Resources Alumni Group. We rely on contributions to support alumni activities, including the publication of this newsletter. This newsletter is sent twice a year to more than 4,000 alumni at a cost of up to \$6,000 per issue for printing and mailing. Contributions for the Forest Resources Alumni Group should be made payable to "Penn State" and designated, in the memo section of the check or in a cover letter, for the Forest Resources Alumni Group; send to Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences Development Office, 240 Agricultural Administration, University Park, PA 16802 (or enclose it with this response form and it will be forwarded to the correct office). You will receive a receipt, and your contribution is tax deductible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class year: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I have sent a contribution for the Forest Resources Alumni Group in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences Development Office, 240 Agricultural Administration University Park, PA 16802 (or it is enclosed and will be forwarded to the correct office). The contribution is made payable to "Penn State" and designated for the Forest Resources Alumni Group.

I would like to nominate the following individuals as candidates for the Forest Resources Alumni Group Board of Directors (self-nominations are welcome):

I would like the enclosed news to be included in an upcoming newsletter. To submit news online, go to [ecosystems.psu.edu/alumni/newsletters/contribute](http://ecosystems.psu.edu/alumni/newsletters/contribute).

Mail this form to:

Ellen Manno, 114 Forest Resources Building, University Park, PA 16802

PENNS<sup>T</sup>ATE



College of  
Agricultural  
Sciences

Ecosystem Science and Management  
The Pennsylvania State University  
117 Forest Resources Building  
University Park, PA 16802

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## Calendar

**September 30** Deadline for Forest Resources Outstanding Alumni Nominations

Contact: Ellen Manno, 814-863-0362, [exr2@psu.edu](mailto:exr2@psu.edu)

**October 9** Forest Resources Alumni and Friends Reception, SAF National Convention, 7 - 9 p.m. Salt Lake City, UT.

Contact: Ellen Manno, 814-863-0362, [exr2@psu.edu](mailto:exr2@psu.edu)

**October 21** Ag Career Day, Bryce Jordan Center, University Park, PA. 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Contact: Richard Rateau, 814-865-7522, [rjr20@psu.edu](mailto:rjr20@psu.edu)

**October 28** Forest Resources Alumni and Friends Reception, TWS Annual Conference, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Pittsburgh, PA.

Contact: Ellen Manno, 814-863-0362, [exr2@psu.edu](mailto:exr2@psu.edu)

**November 29** Ag Alumni Society Tailgate, Ag Live' 14, Snider Agricultural Arena, University Park, PA.

Contact: Naomi Knaub, 814-867-1819; [nmk107@psu.edu](mailto:nmk107@psu.edu)

**February 2015** ESM Career Fair, Forest Resources Bldg., University Park, PA.

Contact: Ellen Manno, 814-863-0362; [exr2@psu.edu](mailto:exr2@psu.edu)