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# PLP News

The Newsletter of  
the Plant Pathology  
Department  
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March 1999

## Biohistory: Plants, Plagues, and People Raison d'être



by Dr. F. William Zettler



This text, co-authored by Carlye Baker, was specifically written for students enrolled in PLP 2000 (Plants, Plagues, and People). As stated in the preface, the book derives its name "biohistory" from the manner in which it integrates biology with history. In doing so, it combines the basic principles of such scientific fields as biochemistry, genetics, botany, plant and human medicine, archaeology, and ecology into a coherent historical and biological whole. Photosynthetic organisms are particularly emphasized because, as the ultimate providers of our food, the oxygen we breathe, and even our fossil fuels, they provide the foundations for all life on Earth as we humans know it -- biologically and historically.

Originally known as Plant Diseases and Human Affairs, PLP 2000 was designed to accommodate the need for lower division courses in IFAS. There are no prerequisites for this 3-credit course, and it is designed for students that are not majoring in biology and might oth-

erwise have no exposure to classes in the College of Agriculture. (According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, only about 1.4% of college freshmen nationwide enroll in Agriculture.) The first class was taught during the Spring Semester of 1990 to a total of 7 students. Two years later, Carlye joined me. PLP 2000 is now being offered twice a year (Spring and Summer B) with enrollments per class ranging from 100 to 175 students per semester. In addition, Carlye will be offering this as an IFAS Distance-learning class on the Internet this Fall. PLP 2000 is listed in the undergraduate catalogue as meeting General Education requirements for both Biology (B) and Humanities (H).

When I first taught this course nine years ago, I had visions of using a simplified plant pathology text such as the one by Gail Schuman, entitled *Plant Diseases: Their Biology and Social Impact*, which appeared in print in 1991. By then, however, it was painfully obvious that a traditional approach in teaching plant pathology would not attract the high enrollments necessary to justify my teaching a 2000-level course. Cornell University's George Hudler and Entomology's Don Hall, meanwhile, were (and still are)

teaching to classrooms packed with several hundred students in their respective courses (Magical Mushrooms, Mischievous Molds and The Insects) but their subject matter is much more appealing to lay audiences than ours. (Exploding watermelons can pique curiosity -- but not for long, and most students find the Byzantine life cycle of the wheat rust fungus stupefyingly boring.) Making the situation even worse, of course, is that virtually none of the students enrolled in PLP 2000 have ever had botany, a prerequisite for PLP 3002 (Fundamentals of Plant Pathology), nor do many have any first-hand experience in agriculture. Obviously, to survive, PLP 2000 had to take a different approach.

Ernest Hiebert helped turn things around (and inadvertently planted the seeds for our book) by loaning me a copy of *Famine on the Wind*. This fascinating work was written by a pair of Canadian authors, G. L. Carefoot and E. R. Spratt, who presented a sociologically oriented overview of some of the more spectacular diseases of plants. Although this book, published in 1967 and long out of print, failed to address the problem of teaching plant pathology to an

audience with little or no practical knowledge of botany or agriculture, it provided a unique insight as to how we might bridge the great chasm that exists between our discipline and the outside world.

A second factor that prompted Carlye and I to write such a book was the apparent need, as expressed to us by one of the textbook editors of the Prentice-Hall Publishing Company, for more palatable biology texts for non-majors. According to him, most conventional biology texts now on the market were so detailed (and expensive) that they were deterring students from getting into this field, especially if their training in the high schools was deficient. Market research showed a potential demand for more user friendly, sociologically-oriented biology texts. For example, Robert Hazen, a professor at the Carnegie Institute and co-author of the article, *Science Matters: Achieving Scientific Literacy*, described currently used biology books as being "daunting and boring" and suggested that they actually impede many students from acquiring the "knowledge they will someday need to combat disease, create new materials and shape our environment in marvelous ways."

Another problem is that most biology texts give scant attention to the subject of disease, and when the subject is broached, it is generally in reference to those bedeviling humans, rather than plants. (Three of 12 biology books we surveyed in 1995 did not even list "disease" in their indexes.) To be sure, as Randall Rowe put it in *Phytopathology News*, "There is a general lack of appreciation of plant pathology by the public."

Part of this problem, of course, is that plants are not as charismatic as animals, nor are they cuddly or as frightening. According to Lee Campbell, also publishing in *Phytopathology News*, "Plants are perceived as being more boring than other subjects." That being the case, "[Our] challenge is to divert even the smallest amount of enthusiasm

of our future scientists and leaders from the world of dinosaurs and other charismatic megafauna to the world of plants." Our neglect of plants and their diseases is a problem that's been around for a long time. According to the famed Nineteenth-Century entomologist, J. Henri Fabre,

*"History ... celebrates the battlefields whereupon we meet our death, but scorns to speak of the plowed field whereby we thrive; it knows the names of the king's bastards, but cannot tell us the origin of wheat. That is the way of human folly."*

Clearly, plant pathology deserves better recognition, especially in view of its importance now and in the past. The role that plant diseases played in causing the Irish famine, forcing the English to drink tea, enticing the ancient Romans to create gods, and instigating the Salem witch trials, are well known by all plant pathologists. But there's more -- a lot more. The book by Mary Matossian, entitled *Poisons of the Past: Molds, Epidemics, and History*, published in 1989, suggests just how under appreciated our field is. She points out, for example, that the ergot-induced Salem witch trials, much ballyhooed in our literature and history, was by no means an isolated event. Indeed, ergotism plagued Europe for centuries and, according to her, could have played a major role in the French Revolution. She also presents a credible argument that mycotoxins in granaries may have contributed greatly to the bubonic plague epidemics of the Fourteenth Century, when one-third of Europe's population perished.

Our book appears to be unlike anything else on the market. Science revolves around novel ideas and approaches, of course, but in the real world of the textbook market, we soon learned that it is the number of copies sold that counts -- period. Chapters of our text were submitted to the Prentice-Hall Company and reviewed. The initial re-

sults were extremely encouraging, but in the end, our book was considered too unusual, and thus risky, to warrant Prentice-Hall pumping in the requisite many thousands of dollars needed to develop, illustrate, advertise, and promote it. Instead, we were referred to the branch of the company dealing with custom publishing. Such books are promoted, of course, but the investment is far lower. The "Preliminary Edition" of our book hit the stands on January 1999, and the "First Edition" is scheduled for the Spring Semester of 2000. If sales are good, other additions may be forthcoming.

The book has 18 chapters, which are arranged chronologically starting with the "Big Bang" phenomenon that occurred 15 billion years ago and ending with a sneak preview of our future. It consists of three main parts. The first part (Chapters 1-5) deals with the origins of our planet, how life began, and how prokaryotes and uni- and multicelled eukaryotes came into being,



The second part (Chapters 6-11) deals with the trials and tribulations of plants, fungi, invertebrates, and vertebrates as they evolved to survive on land. The remaining seven chapters focus on human population dynamics and how demographics were (and are) affected by the many beneficial and harmful organisms that share our little planet with us. This part, which begins with the origins of agriculture, ends with a prognosis of the future of humankind. It is here where the importance of our own discipline, plant pathology, becomes most evident.

Although it is not a plant pathology text *per se*, our book brings out how important plant pathogens have been in shaping the world as we know it. For example, we discuss the importance

of crop rotation for disease control, rather than simply referring to the restoration of soil "fertility" or avoiding soil "exhaustion." Archaeologists today are finding out that many great civilizations, such as the Classic Maya and the Roman civilizations, declined primarily because their farmers were unable to produce enough food to feed everyone, a situation which led to civil unrest and chaos. Indeed, in the First Century BC, the Roman scholar Columella wrote of "exhaustion of the soil" as a major factor in the decline of Greco-Roman agriculture. Of course, having no idea that microbes caused disease in plants, the ancients were in no position to control them. PLP 2000 students, at least, are aware that plant pathogens exist and have a good appreciation of how devastating they can be. Thus, in our own unorthodox way, we believe we're making a contribution to plant pathology. Lee Campbell, one of the seven members of our Department's CSREES Review Team, lauded the instruction of PLP 2000 and Jim Kimbrough's PLP 2060 course (Molds, Mildews, Mushrooms, and Men) and pointed out that they exposed hundreds of students who otherwise would not have heard or read about plant pathology while attending the University of Florida.

Teaching PLP 2000 and writing the text has been quite a ride, but it's been fun. Now that a preliminary version of the text has been completed, we face yet additional challenges -- from competitors from within and outside of Department, who teach similar non-majors courses. Jim Kimbrough, of course, is our chief nemesis and will do anything to get students enrolled in his class -- including sautéing mushrooms for them and passing out samples of blue cheese and vintage wines. (Alas, he's also a superb teacher.) Other popular science courses for non-majors in other departments include The Insects (ENY 2040), Seeds of Change (AGG 2362), Plants in Human Affairs (BOT 2800), Man's Food (FOS 2001), Growing Fruit for Fun and

Profit (FRC 1010), Vegetable Gardening (VEC 3200), and Plants, Gardening, and You (ORH 1030). Such daunting competition notwithstanding, we are optimistic about the future of PLP 2000 (and PLP 2060) and believe both courses serve our Department and the discipline of plant pathology well.

### Faculty, staff, and students



#### Awards:

\***Gail Harris**, from the main office, will receive on April 28<sup>th</sup> the USPS Clerical/Office Support Superior Accomplishment Award at the University of Florida.

\*Undergraduate student **Jessica Roberts** received two awards in the IFAS Scholarship and Leadership Convocation, on March 26<sup>th</sup>. She received the Florida Rural Rehabilitation Corporation Scholarship and the G.F. Weber Scholarship.

\*Graduate students **Gustavo Astua-Monge** and **Robert Kemerait Jr.** also represented our department in the same event, receiving the F.A. Wood Scholarship.

*Congratulations for your good work!!*

#### Theses and Dissertations defended:

**David Benschler**, a native of Long Island, New York, received his Bachelors of Science degree from the State University of New York in Forest Biology. David defended his Master of Science thesis, entitled "Molecular and Biological Characterization of Potyviruses in Passiflora Species", on March 17, 1999. David started on his Master's in 1994 and finished his research in July 1996. His research was funded by CBAG, and his research committee consisted of three members: Drs. Chuck Niblett, David Mitchell, and Richard Lee from Lake Alfred. Immediately following his research, David got a job as a Senior Biological Scientist working for Dr. Randy

Ploetz in Homestead, Florida. There, David worked on Fusarium wilt on banana for approximately two and a half years. Then David moved to Ithaca, New York to do research for Cornell University. David currently works with small grains and using marker-assisted selection to enhance crop quality.

#### **Sankaranarayanaier Chandramohan**

is native of Tamilnadu, India. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture from Annamalai University, and one of his Master of Science degrees in Agricultural Microbiology from Tamilnadu Agricultural University. He then pursued a Master's in Molecular Biology at Vrije Universiteit in Brussels, Belgium. Chandra defended his dissertation, entitled "Multiple-pathogen strategy for bioherbicidal control of several weeds", on March 5, 1999. He began his Ph.D. study in the fall of 1994. Chandra's research committee was composed of Drs. Charudattan, Singh, Berger, Sonoda, and Preston. Dr. Chandramohan plans to pursue a career in the United States focusing on research and development of microbial biotechnology for weeds and plant disease management

**Daniela Lopes** is a native of Brazil. Daniela obtained her Bachelor's degree in Agronomy and her Master of Science in Plant Pathology, both at the University of São Paulo, Brazil. Daniela came to UF in the fall of 1994 to pursue a Ph.D. degree in Plant Pathology under the direction of Dr. Richard Berger. She defended her dissertation entitled "Photosynthetic Competence of Bean Leaves with Rusts and Anthracnose", on March 11, 1999. Her research committee was composed of Dr. Berger, Dr. Kimbrough, Dr. Mitchell, and Dr. Boote. Dr. Lopes plans to get a post-doc position at a university and eventually wants to teach and do research.

**Gustavo Astua-Monge** is a native of Costa Rica. He obtained his Bachelor's

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degree in Agronomy at the University of Costa Rica, in 1991. From 1991 to 1993, he worked as a Teaching Assistant and Junior Research Scientist at the Plant Pathology Laboratory of the University of Costa Rica. In 1993, he obtained a fellowship from LASPAU/ FULBRIGHT and came to the United States to pursue a Master of Science degree in Plant Pathology at the University of Florida, which was completed in 1995. Upon graduation, Gustavo was granted an assistantship to continue his graduate studies towards a Doctor of Philosophy degree in our department, under the guidance of Drs. Stall and Jeff Jones (advisors), and Dr. Michael Davis (co-advisor). Other members of his research committee were Drs. Hiebert, Kistler, and Vallejos. Gustavo defended his dissertation, entitled "Genetic characterization of plant-pathogen interactions between *Xanthomonas campestris* pv. vesicatoria and tomato", on March 19, 1999. Upon completion of his Ph.D. degree, Gustavo will be joining Dr. Eduardo Vallejos's program as a postdoctoral fellow.

*Congratulations to all of you, we are proud of you and are glad that you represent the Department of Plant Pathology at the University of Florida!*

### "Survivors" of Qualifying Examinations:

**Alvaro Ureña** and **Francisco Ochoa** completed their Qualifying Exams during the month of March.

*Congratulations to both of you!!*

### General announcements

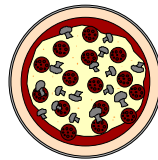
\* The University Senate approved the title of Doctor in Plant Medicine.

\* A new station wagon was ordered to replace the one that we lost last year.

\* A request was submitted for the new faculty member to replace Dr. Kistler, who is leaving us.

\* "Alternative Career Paths for Graduate Students" is the fourth and final seminar in the Professional Development Seminar Series co-sponsored by the Graduate School and Named Presidential Fellows.

It will be held on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 12:00-1:30 p.m. in JWRU 286. There is no registration and pizza will be served following the seminar as part of Graduate Student Appreciation Week. This seminar will highlight non-traditional career options appropriate for students in master's or doctoral degree programs. The featured panelists will be Julie Dodd, Professor of Journalism (academia); Rick Mills, Alachua County (government); Dan Evans, Caribbean Conservation Corporation (nonprofit); and Steven Dee, Andersen Consulting (business). Each panel member will speak for about 15 minutes and the time remaining will be open for Q&A. Flyers will be mailed to departments but it is also available in PDF on the student Web page. Handouts from the last seminar on grant writing are also available online. If you have any questions, you can contact Ms. Linda Vivian at 392-8525.



\* The 1999 Graduate Student Forum will be held on the second floor of the Reitz Union on Friday, April 2, 1999, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

\* The University of Florida, IFAS, Dept. of Microbiology and Cell Sciences, Burroughs Wellcome, and American Society for Microbiology present a seminar series/workshop on Bioinformatics, which will be held from April 5 to 9, 1999. Professor Kenneth E. Rudd, from the Dept. of Biochem. & Mol. Biol., Univ.



of Miami School of Medicine, will be giving the lectures and



teaching the course. The schedule for the program is:

- April 5, Monday, 4 to 5 p.m.: "Targeted functional genomics and proteomics of *Escherichia coli*: post-sequence gene characterization on a moderate scale."
- April 6, Tuesday, 8 to 9 p.m.: "Microbial genome sequences: gold mines or land mines?"
- April 7 to April 9, Wednesday to Friday, 9 a.m. – noon: Hands-on Bioinformatics Workshop.
- April 7 to April 9, 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.: Group discussions.

All of the lectures will be held on Rm. 1044, Microbiol. & Cell Sc. Bldg. (# 981) Museum Rd.

The workshop will be held at the College of Veterinary Medicine, in the Veterinary Academic Building, 2015 SW 16<sup>th</sup> Ave., Rm. V1-110, Library Reading Rm. Computer Lab. Due to limited space, early registration for the workshop is required. For registration please contact Linda Parsons at 392.1906 or email: [linda@micro.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:linda@micro.ifas.ufl.edu)

\* On April 14<sup>th</sup>, the department is expecting 3 professors and 8 graduate students from the University of Bonn, Germany. Briefs talks about their research will be given by the visiting graduate students and by 6 or 8 graduate students from this department.



\* The Sixth Biennial Meeting of the Florida Phytopathological Society will be held in Fifield Hall all day on May 4 and in the morning of May 5, 1999. Sessions will involve Bacteriology, Mycology, Virology, Soil-Borne Diseases, Foliar Diseases, New and Resurgent Diseases, Molecular Plant Pathology and Graduate Paper Competition Session. If you are interested in participating in the Graduate Student Competition, you can send an abstract by April 16, 1999, to Dr. Tim

Schubert, Division of Plant Industry, Campus Mail. If you have further questions, you can contact him at 372.3505 or Dr. Richard Raid at 561.9963062 ext. 147 or suncom 250.1147. The size and format of the abstracts are the same of those for the APS meetings.

\* If you are interested in participating in the PMCB Workshop, which will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 1999, you will need to send your abstracts by April 16<sup>th</sup>. Abstracts should include a title in all capital letters, the author/authors name(s), presenter's name, and be not greater than 150 words, single-spaced, and in 10 pt. Times New Roman font. Send your abstracts to: PMCB Workshop Committee, c/o Program Assistant, PMCB Program, P.O. Box 110690, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, 32611. Only one abstract on disk or emailed to PMCB will be accepted. Do not fax your abstract!

\* For those who will be taking their Qualifying Exams: Gail Harris reminds us that when the Graduate School receives notice that a student has taken and passed his or her Qualifying Exam (Admission to Candidacy), the student's registration is changed from PLP 7979 to PLP 7980. The student's classification is also changed from 8AG to 9AG automatically. She asks all of the students to let her know as soon as we know that we are going to qualify during a semester so that she can make a note to change our registration and make sure that we are added to the correct grade sheet.

### Important dates

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>**, Friday: Last day to submit signed Master's theses to the Graduate School, 168 Grinter Hall.

**April 21<sup>st</sup>**, Wednesday: All classes end.

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>**, Thursday- Friday: Examination reading days-no classes.

**April 24<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>**, Thursday-Friday: Final examinations

**April 26<sup>th</sup>**, Monday: Last day to submit signed original bound dissertations, abstracts and final examination reports and signed original bound theses and abstracts to the Editorial Office, 168 Grinter Hall.

**May 1<sup>st</sup>**, Saturday: Commencement.



### Friday's coffee break

The labs in charge of the coffee break for the month of April are:



April 2<sup>nd</sup> – Dr. Gabriel's lab  
 April 9<sup>th</sup> – Dr. Jones's lab  
 April 16<sup>th</sup> – Dr. Kistler's lab  
 April 23<sup>rd</sup> – Drs. Kimbrough's and Kucharek's labs  
 April 30<sup>th</sup> – Drs. Pring's and Chourey's labs

Remember that on April 30<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating the "birthdays of the month".

### Birthdays of the month

Francisco Ochoa	4/1
Dean Gabriel	4/1
Adrian Berry	4/6
R. Charudattan	4/7
Jay Gideon	4/8
Yanming Yang	4/11
Christina Fulford	4/13
Kimberly Storch	4/23
Jennifer Klein	4/26



*Happy birthday to you all!!*

Seminars that might be worth checking out

### Agronomy

(Thursdays 4 p.m., G086 McCarty)

\*April 1: Nadia Douglas. Nitrogen Uptake by Plants and Movement in Soil in 'Tifton 85' Bermudagrass Hay Fields. MS research results.

\*April 8: Todd Neel. The Ecology of an Invasive Wetland Species, *Solanum tampicense*. MS research results.

### Entomology and Nematology

(Thursdays 3:30 p.m., Room 1031 Ent./Nem.)

\*April 1: Dr. Betty Forster, Fort Lauderdale REC. Behavioral and Morphometric Analysis of Polymorphism in the Florida Harvester Ant.

\*April 8: Dr. Marta Wayne, Zoology Dept., UF. Evolutionary Quantitative Genetics of Ovariole Number in *Drosophila melanogaster*.

\*April 15: Dr. Mark Benedict, CDC. Genetic and Molecular Studies of Malaria Vectors at CDC.

### Horticultural Sciences

(Mondays 4:05 p.m., 2316 Fifield)

\*April 5: Melanie Tremelling. Nitrate and Iron Reductase Activity in Three *Vaccinium* Species.

\*April 12: Elio Jovovich. Effect of Plant Density and Shoot Pruning on Fruit Yield and Quality of Greenhouse Sweet Pepper.

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\*April 19: Wendy Wilber. Effect of Nitrogen Fertilizer on Growth and Fruiting of Oriental Persimmon.

### Microbiology and Cell Science

(Mondays 4 p.m., 1042 MCSB)

\*April 5: Dr. Kenneth Rudd, U. of Miami. Targeted Functional Genomics and Proteomics of *Escherichia coli*: Post-Sequence Gene Characterization on a Moderate Scale.

\*April 19: Dr. John Paul, U. of South Florida. Lysogeny and other Microbial Gene Transfer Systems in the Marine Environment.

### Former graduate students

Ms. **Tammy Plyler**, a native of Statesville, North Carolina, obtained her Bachelor's degree in Biology (major) and Music (minor) at Wake Forest University, N.C., in 1995. Upon graduation, Tammy came to Gainesville in order to pursue a Masters of Science degree in Plant Pathology. Here, she worked under the guidance of Dr. Corby Kistler, and in 1997, she defended her thesis entitled: "Genetic diversity studies on *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *canariensis* and the development of a polymerase chain reaction technique for its detection". The high quality of her work was recognized and her thesis was chosen as the best thesis of IFAS in that year!

Only two weeks after her graduation, Tammy started her new job as a Biological Scientist in Dr. Eduardo Vallejos's lab, at the Horticultural Sciences Department of UF. Her interests are still related to Plant Pathology and Genetics. She and others in her lab are trying to clone the "I" gene of *Phaseolus vulgaris*, which confers resistance to bean common mosaic virus, through chromosome walking.

When asked about the future, Tammy mentions that at this point she is uncertain about going back to graduate school, since she is happy with her job with Dr. Vallejos. Besides, she adds that she still wants to get some more lab experience in order to be able to narrow down her interests for the future. In addition, she is now concerned about some major changes in her life. She is going to get married to a Ph.D. student of our department, Bob Harveson, this coming June, and the preparations for the wedding and the expectations about the married life have been very exciting and time consuming.

Tammy has always been a very active person. During her years in our department she was vice president of the graduate students for the school year of 1996-1997, and a member of the PLP News in its first year of existence. She has also been involved in other activities. Tammy is a member of the Genetics Committee of the APS, and will be the co-chair in a Symposium/Colloquium on Plant Disease Resistance, which will be held in the APS meeting of the year 2000 in New Orleans.

Besides working with the interface plant pathology-genetics and spending time with her fiancé Bob, Tammy enjoys playing the piano, which she has studied for almost 14 years. As a new hobby, she has been learning how to play the guitar since last December. Tammy also is a sports-lover, and although she comments that basketball is her favorite sport to watch, she used to play softball, representing our department in competitions within UF.

If you want to know more about Tammy's work in her Masters, you can check the May's issue of Phytopathology, which will publish part of her thesis's results. Another manuscript that she prepared was already submitted to

the journal Plant Pathology, and is being reviewed.

If you want to contact Tammy, you can do so through the e-mail address: [tplyler@gnv.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:tplyler@gnv.ifas.ufl.edu)

### Who is Who in our Department



#### The Front Office Staff

We sometimes forget what keeps everything running smoothly so we can get our work done. Well, this month our who's who interview focuses on the women who keep the department organized and who help us with our questions, the ladies who just keep our department together in general- **Gail Harris, Karen Owens and Laretta Rahmes.**

**Gail Harris** has worked in the Department of Plant Pathology since June 1995. She came to the department after working for a short time at the Health Center and after working in Valdosta for the Dean of the College of Business. Her duties here are similar to her work in Valdosta. Gail mostly works with the students of our department. Many of us have asked for her help in our scheduling, registering and general academic advice. She is the person who is willing to help fix any problems or find someone who can. Working closely with Dr. Zettler, she keeps student courses in order and helps with the prospective graduate students. Gail also works with any special projects that come up for the department, such as keeping the search for a new faculty member organized. Her favorite part of her job is the interaction she has with the students, even though we may try to drive her crazy with requests! Gail recently moved into a new home and spends most of her free time redecorating and cleaning the yard. She



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also reads for relaxation and walks 3-5 miles four times a week! Her daughter, Karen, is a student at UF and Gail enjoys spending time outside of work with her.

**Karen Owens** has worked in the department for almost two years now and many of you may recognize her as the patient lady who was recently doing the departmental inventory. Karen also answers the phones, sends faxes and e-mails, and does typing for the department. She most enjoys greeting new people in the department and those who just call in. She came to Plant Pathology from the College of Dentistry and April 18<sup>th</sup> will begin her third year here. Outside of work, Karen spends time with her family. Karen and her husband go boating and fishing with her two children, one 11-year-old boy and one 9-year-old girl. Her other hobbies include reading and crocheting. She plans to go to Virginia in June for her nephew's graduation.

**Lauretta Rahmes** was born and raised on Long Island, New York, and has worked in the plant pathology department for 14 ½ years. She is in charge of the payroll processing for the department as well as the academic reporting. She also works with the travel aspects and she says her favorite part of working here is meeting the new people who come in. Lauretta has two children, a 13-year-old boy and an 18-year-old boy. She has a very active life outside of work and enjoys several outdoor activities, including camping, fishing, boating and, now that the weather is warming up, canoeing. She also enjoys working in her yard and has recently taken up roller blading. Lauretta recently took up scuba diving with her husband and son. She and her family once took a 10-week trip to see the U.S. and her favorite part was the Glacier National Park in Montana.

Did you know that...

- Gail has a nine-month-old registered German Shepherd named Gwen who likes taking walks with her.
- Gail was once an avid hunter/jumper horse rider and even taught the sport!
- Karen grew up in Madison, Wisconsin.
- Karen collects cows and even has a cow backpack from Switzerland.
- Lauretta came to visit a friend who lived on Marathon Key and while she was visiting, she met the man who lived across the street. That man is now her husband and the reason why she moved from New York to Florida!
- Lauretta was a majorette in high school and was also president of her 4-H Horse Club.



### Visiting Scientists and/or post-docs

**Guohong Cai** is a Masters of Science student working under Dr. Raymond Schneider's guidance in the Department of Plant Pathology at Louisiana State University. The focus of Guohong's work is the population genetics of *Fusarium* spp. Dr. Schneider has been working with *Fusarium* in his lab for the past ten years. His lab has also recently been working on pathogens of soybean, which is a new field for them.

Guohong received his B.Sc. in biochemistry from Wuhan University in China in 1993. He applied to several graduate schools, but since his wife was already studying at LSU, his decision to go there was not very difficult. He is currently on his second visit to our department. In both occasions, he stayed in Dr. Corby Kistler's lab studying various techniques and protocols concerning

*Fusarium* developed here in Corby's lab. Because he was only here for one week last time, we were unable to interview him, but since he will stay for one month this time, we were sure to get to know him a little better.

When not working in the lab, Guohong enjoys spending time with his wife, reading, and playing both volleyball and chess. When asked about the weather in Louisiana, he said that it is the same temperature as here, but they have much more rain. Guohong says that he enjoys the academic atmosphere in Corby's lab. He mentioned also that both Lianne and Rodney are geniuses in lab techniques for *Fusarium*, and that he feels that he had made some friends here.

*We, in the department, are certainly glad that you feel that way, Guohong.  
You are always welcome to visit us at anytime!*

### PLP monthly computer review

by Mike Mahovic and Mark Ross



With the possibility of the replacement of the aging PCs in the library, we have been looking at purchasing Apple iMacs (the Apple currently in the library has a replacement, an Apple G3, being set up for use). The reasoning behind this is an Apple's simplicity of use, compatibility with MS Office programs (and others) and, primarily, the price. It turns out that 4 iMacs could be purchased for the price of only two new Gateway machines.

iMacs are interoperable with IBM programs. Any document (for example) that you create on a PC would be able to be loaded into the Apple, manipulated and edited, while still compatible to be used on an IBM again. The Apples would

also have a smaller footprint than an IBM (would take up less desk space). Already, four new iMacs have been purchased which will be placed in the grad-student offices (no, the ones they are going in have not yet been determined). The possibility of adding similar machines to the library or other offices is still up in the air. We will wait to see how the new computers are received, how well they operate for us, as well as wait to see just what kind of funds are available for future additions before anything more is ordered. Rest assured, the two new PCs we have will not be going anywhere. Both will remain in the library for our use, as will the new G3. Once these new computers are installed, please use them! We want to see how well they work out. Let us know what you think about this, your opinions count! It would be great for the department if we could spend less money for more computers.

*Until next time,  
good computing to you all!*

### Cool Web sites

<http://www.trends.com/> is a very interesting web site, which is going to be available only until May 1<sup>st</sup>. It's worth checking out!!

Do you want to know all about proteases? So you may want to check this Homepage: [www.bi.bbsrc.ac.uk/merops/merops.htm](http://www.bi.bbsrc.ac.uk/merops/merops.htm)

If you are interested in finding some useful protocols, you may want to check the USDA homepage at: <http://research.nwfsc.noaa.gov/protocols.html>

### Leisure and Culture

The new section of the newsletter "Leisure and Culture" will bring some insight on what is happening in

Gainesville and region. We hope you all enjoy it!!

### Shows, Festivals:

\*Jelon Vieira's DanceBrazil: Blending of African-rooted Brazilian music and dance at 8 p.m., Saturday, April 3, at the Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets: \$10 public, \$5 students.

\*Bellamy Brothers: Saturday, April 3, at Twin Oaks Mansion, Silver Springs, Ocala. The day's music starts at noon. Concerts are free with paid admission to the park.

\*Teen Playwright Festival: The 1999 award winners in performance 2-6 p.m. April 3; 1-5 p.m. April 4; and 7:30-11 p.m. April 5, at the Hippodrome State Theatre. Free.

\*Spring Arts Festival: The annual Santa Fe Community College-sponsored festival is Saturday and Sunday, April 10 and 11, on NE 1<sup>st</sup> St.

\*Thirsty Ear Concert Series: Acoustic music pioneers Willie and Lobo in concert at 8 p.m. Thursday, April 15, at the Thomas Center. Admission: \$12.

\*Gamble Rogers Folk Festival: Headliners are Arlo Guthrie and Robin and Linda Williams; April 30, May 1 and 2 at the St. Augustine Amphitheater on A1A South.

### Theater:

\*"Man of La Mancha" – musical through April 3 at the Gainesville Community Playhouse, 4039 NW 16<sup>th</sup> Blvd. Wed. – Sat., 8 p.m.

\*"Jesus Christ Superstar" – "rock opera" through April 17 at the Acrosstown Repertory Theatre, 619 S. Main St. Thurs.-Sat., 8 p.m. Tickets: \$7 adults, \$5 students.

\*"Starting here, starting now": musical revue by Theatre Santa Fe is at 8 p.m., April 2-3 and April 8-10, at Santa Fe Community College auditorium, 3000 NW 83<sup>rd</sup> St. Tickets: \$4 (395-5561).

### School of music concert events:

\*April 1, 8 p.m., UMA<sup>1</sup>, Chamber singers concert, James Morrow, conductor.

\*April 5, 8 p.m., UMA, Percussion ensemble and steel drum band concert, Kenneth Broadway, director.

\*April 6, 8 p.m., UMA, Friends of music scholarship concert.

\*April 7, 8 p.m., UMA, Symphonic band concert, Matthew Sexton, conductor.

\*April 8, 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., CPA<sup>2</sup> Black Box, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival, James Paul Sain, director; Larry Austin, composer-in-residence.

\*April 8, UMA, Symphony orchestra concert, Clara Jung-Yang Shin, piano soloist; Raymond Chobaz, conductor.

\*April 9, 10 a.m., 3 p.m., and 8 p.m., CPA Black Box, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival, James Paul Sain, director; Larry Austin, composer-in-residence.

\*April 9, 7:30 p.m., 120 MUB<sup>3</sup>, student recital, Carolyn Alford, violin.

\*April 9, 8 p.m., UMA, University Jazz bands concert, Gary Langford, conductor.

\*April 10, 10 a.m., 3 p.m., and 8 p.m., CPA Black Box, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival, James Paul Sain, director; Larry Austin, composer-in-residence.

\*April 11, 3 p.m., UMA, Organ recital, Professor Rose Kirn, Willis Bodine, coordinator.

\* April 13, 8 p.m., UMA, University Choir Concert, James Morrow, conductor.

\* April 15, 16, 8 a.m. – noon, 101, 120, 121 MUB, Invitational Band Festival, Gary Smith, guest conductor.

\* April 15, 8 p.m., UMA, Wind Symphony Concert, David Waybright, conductor.

\* April 20, 8 p.m., UMA, Men's Glee Club/Women's Chorale Concert, Ronald Burrichter, conductor.

\* April 21, 8 p.m., UMA, Concert Bands Concert, Shawn Barat, Steve Burnett, Joe Hartley, Kathryn Lindberg, conductors.

<sup>1</sup>University Memorial Auditorium,

1999

<sup>2</sup>Center for the Performing Arts,<sup>3</sup>Music Building.

### Recent Publications

#### Papers:

**Coelho, L.**, D.O. Chellemi, **D.J. Mitchell**. 1999. Efficacy of solarization and cabbage amendment for the control of *Phytophthora* spp. in North Florida. *Plant Dis.* 83: 293-299.

**Ploetz, R.C.**, X. Mourichon. 1999. First report of Black Sigatoka in Florida. *Plant Dis.*, 83: 300.

**Roberts, P.D.**, R. Urs, **R.J. McGovern**. 1999. First report of aerial blight caused by *Pythium myriotylum* on tomato in Florida. *Plant Dis.*, 83: 301.

**Yang, Yanming**, E.J. Anderson. 1999. Antimicrobial activity of a porcine myeloperoxidase against plant pathogenic bacteria and fungi. *J. Appl. Microbiol.*, 86: 211-220.

Vives, M.C., L. Rubio, C. Lopez, J. Navas-Castillo, M.R. Albiach-Marti, **W.O. Dawson**, J. Guerri, R. Flores, P. Moreno. 1999. The complete genome sequence of the major

component of a mild citrus tristeza virus isolate. *J. Gen. Virol.* 80: 811-816.

Ayllon, M.A., C. Lopez, J. Navas-Castillo, M. Mawassi, **W.O. Dawson**, J. Guerri, R. Flores, P. Moreno. 1999. New defective RNAs from citrus tristeza virus: evidence for a replicase-driven template switching mechanism in their generation. *J. Gen. Virol.*, 80: 817-821.

#### Book:

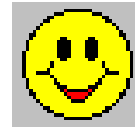
Citrus Health Management. **L.W. Timmer** and L.W. Duncan, eds. 221pp; APS Press. 1999.

#### Text in APS Homepage:

APSnet Feature, March 1 through March 31, 1999. "The most important disease of a most important fruit." Prepared by **Randy Ploetz**, Tropical Research and Education Center, University of Florida, IFAS, Homestead. You can find Dr. Ploetz's publication at <http://www.scisoc.org/feature/banana/Top/html>

New members of the  
PLP News

This month we are welcoming two new members of the news team: graduate students **Ronald French** and **Eduardo Carlos**.



Welcome on board!!

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#### Editor

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#### News Team

Adriana Castañeda  
Alvaro Ureña  
Angela Vincent  
Eduardo Carlos  
Mariadaniela Lopez  
Mark Ross  
Maureen Petersen  
Michael Mahovic  
Misty Nielsen  
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Robert Kemerait  
Ronald French  
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