

SPOREPRINTS

Department of Plant Pathology & Environmental Microbiology

APRIL 2014

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

CONGRATULATIONS

R.R. Nelson Memorial Seminar Presentation

Dr. Laurence V. Madden, Distinguished Professor of Plant Protection Dept. of Plant Pathology – The Ohio State University



On Friday, April 4, 2014, **Dr. Laurence V. Madden**, Distinguished Professor of Plant Protection and Associate Chair, Epidemiology, Statistic, Biomathematics at The Ohio State University, was our honored speaker for the R.R. Nelson Memorial Seminar. Dr. Madden attended Penn State, receiving his B.S. degree in in Biology/Botany in 1975 and stayed to earn his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in plant pathology and went onto Ohio State as a research scientist. Dr. Madden is very active in the national professional organization of plant pathologists, the American Phytopathological Society (served as President 1996-1997) and was Editor-in-Chief of the scientific journal *Phytopathology*.

Dr. Gary Moorman selected as an APS Fellow for 2014

Dr. Moorman will be named a Fellow at the national meeting in August 2014 in St. Paul, Minnesota, recognizing more than 30 years of service to the profession. This is the highest honor given by the American Phytopathological Society to APS members, in recognition of meritorious contributions to the discipline of plant pathology.



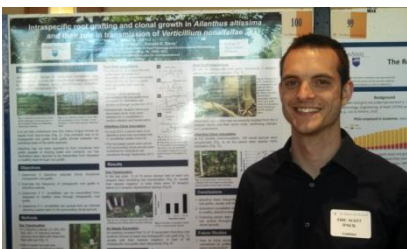
Congratulations to Eric O'Neal (2nd place in Biological Sciences Division; advised by Dr. Don Davis) and **Hunter Swisher** (2nd place in the Undergraduate Plant Related Systems Division; advised by Dr. Gretchen Kuldau; pictured left) who presented award winning posters during the **2014 Gamma Sigma Delta Research Exhibition** held March 19th.



Congratulations to Emily Pfeufer (pictured right) who received the Paul Hand Award for Graduate Student Teaching Achievement from the College of Agricultural Sciences. The award was presented by Dr. Gary Thompson during the 2014 Gamma Sigma Delta Research Exhibition Awards Ceremony on March 21st.



Kudos to all the PPEM graduate students and faculty who represented the Department while participating in the **2014 Graduate Research Exhibition** held Sunday, April 6 at the HUB. Congratulations to **ERIC O'NEAL** (pictured left) for placing Third in the Health & Life Sciences Competition with his poster entitled "Intraspecific root grafting and clonal growth in *Ailanthus altissima* and their role in transmission of *Verticillium nonalfalfae*". There were 64 poster presentations in the Health & Life Sciences category. Eric is working on his M.S. degree with Dr. Don Davis.



Also thanks to our other PPEM graduate student exhibitors including: Sarah Bardsley, Sara Atyeo, and Yueying Chen as well as the exhibition judges this year from PPEM including: Dr. Gary Moorman, Grace O'Keefe, Carla Lanze, Bastian Minkenber, Ningxiao Li, Judy Sinn, Tim McNellis, and Fred Gildow.

NOTEWORTHY NEWS...



Congratulations ... Ilse Huerta and Miguel Schevenin welcomed Maria Antonella Schevenin with love on March 18, 2014 at 12:53pm. Maria Antonella weighed 9 lb 4 oz and was 22.5 inches long.

Visiting graduate student from PMAS-Arid Agriculture University in Rawalpindi, Pakistan...

Kohola Rafique, a graduate student pursuing a Ph.D. degree in plant pathology, began her six month visit to Dr. Seogchan Kang's lab early January in 2014. Her visit is mainly supported by a fellowship from the Pakistani Higher Education Commission with some additional support coming from a USDA-AFRI training grant to Dr. Kang. During her stay, she will work on identifying *Fusarium* isolates from disease plants in Pakistan using molecular markers and will also participate in research on characterizing the role and modes of action of fungal volatiles in affecting plant growth and stress resistance.

Award for U.S. Patent for Methodology...

Penn State was awarded a U.S. patent for methodology developed by Pete Romaine, Carl Schlagnhauser and Ben Woolston for conferring transgenic traits on non-transgenic mushrooms (*Agaricus bisporus*) using a novel cultivation strategy. This new technology complements two other Penn State patents that were developed in Romaine's laboratory and exclusively licensed by a U.S. biotechnology company for the generation of transgenic mushroom germ plasm.

Journal Club...

Sara Ateyo, Rob Harey and Chris Smyth started holding a Journal Club meeting for the PPEM department this semester. For the spring semester, meetings are held every Thursday in Buckhout 207A from 9:00 AM until 10:00 AM. They take turns choosing journal articles relating to the fields of plant pathology and environmental microbiology each week. The purpose of the club is to discuss and critically analyze papers relevant to their field of study. They hope this club continues to grow in the following semesters. Everyone is welcome to join, and suggestions on how to improve are always welcome. If you have any questions, please email Chris Smyth at cws187@psu.edu.

Twitter & Facebook Accounts...

The Penn State Plant Pathology Association has created a new facebook page, as well as a twitter page. All content posted to the twitter page is automatically posted to the facebook page, so everyone gets the same information. Both pages are run by Christopher Smyth (cws187@psu.edu). If you have any announcements, pictures, or news articles that you would like to be publicized by the PPA, please send the information to Chris, or to the PPA President, Sarah Bardsley (sjb328@psu.edu). Both social media sites can be linked at...

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pennstate.plantpathology?fref=ts>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PSUPlantPath>

Shutterfly.com account... Kristi Fenstermacher has created a website (<https://psupathgrad.shutterfly.com>) with the intention to gather pictures related to PPEM. As of now, Kristi and Ilse are able to post to the account, however anyone would be able – but they will need to create a shutterfly account. Anyone who has nice photos are invited to either send to Kristi or Ilse or try to post to the website.

Dr. Carolee Bull presented a mentoring workshop “**How to be Your Own Best Mentor**” on March 25th – which was open to all students, post-docs, faculty and staff. Dr. Bull, Plant Pathologist is with the USDA-ARS in Salina, CA. She discussed how to define and teach yourself the knowledge and skills to be successful in your career. In addition, Dr. Bull was PPEM's guest seminar speaker on March 24th.

Welcome....Dr. Cristina Rosa, Assistant Professor, Plant Virology

Cristina joined the department in January. She obtained a B.S. at the Università di Firenze, Italy, a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology at the University of California, Davis and worked as a post-doc scholar in Plant Pathology at UC Davis, and the Entomology Dept. here at Penn State. Dr. Rosa will research and study the complex interaction between plant viruses and other microbes, plants, and insect vectors in agricultural and natural ecosystems.



NOTEWORTHY NEWS CONTINUED...

Carnation Leaf Cutting Fundraiser... The PPA has taken over the job of producing carnation leaf pieces for the *Fusarium* community. Carnation leaf pieces are the preferred substrate for growing *Fusarium*, and the Fusarium Research Center (FRC) was the only source for them. When Jean Juba retired in 2011, carnation leaf production was no longer possible, but the PPA, under the guidance of PhD student Kristi Fenstermacher, has taken over the job. It's not always easy, but thankfully Roxanne Lease automate the watering, so for most of the year Kristi just has to visit them occasionally to clip buds and promote leaf growth. This may be the only job where poor performance is rewarded with a tiny, fragrant bouquet. In February, Kristi makes cutting to replace old plants, and by March there are thousands of leaves that need to be harvested and chopped into tiny pieces shortly after. After dying, the leaf pieces are irradiated at an on-campus radiation facility. Cutting up leaves was the biggest logistical hurdle because it is incredibly time-consuming and perhaps somewhat boring for one person. Fortunately, we have an active graduate student group willing to help cut up leaves as a fundraiser. The PPA just had its second "Carnation Leaf Cutting Party" which had many people stopping to ask what they were doing. With a large group, the PPA can do in one day what would have taken weeks. Having company makes such tedious work fairly enjoyable. We sell cans with 15 dried grams of leaves (enough for at least 400 plates) for \$150 and the PPA has made over \$750 from the proceeds so far. There are many other FRC services still on hiatus, but for the time being, the PPA is providing an important service to our department and the *Fusarium* community – even if we look kind of crazy doing it.

-- Kristi Fenstermacher



Additional Reminders.... Any items that are newsworthy – Department-related (faculty/staff/student) events, awards, publications, trips... please send to Lori for inclusion on the website and in SPOREPRINTS. Photos from these events are appreciated, whenever possible.

UPCOMING EVENTS...

- May 2 Classes End
- May 5-9 Final Exams
- May 9-11 Commencement
- May 12 Classes Begin – May semester
- May 13 Faculty meeting at 1pm
- May 14 Staff meeting at 9am
- May 18 Registration Deadline – (First six-week session)
- May 20 Dept. Photo – Ferguson Bldg (Steps)

Name this Disease and Casual Agent...

If you are interested in competing, send both the common name of this disease and its causal agent to Sandy in an e-mail with "SporePrints Contest" on the subject line. Only contestants who submit entries with both answers correct will be considered winners. Winners will be determined and their names posted on the Mailroom bulletin board one week after SporePrints is distributed. At the Dept. Award Ceremony (winter 2014), the individual with the most wins, will receive recognition and a travel award. **Here's an easy on perennial rye turf.**

