

# Station News

A PROGRESS REPORT for staff  
and Friends of America's first Agricultural Experiment Station

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## **Departmental News**

**NEW RETAINING WALL IN NEW HAVEN** by Mr. Richard Cecarelli. The installation of the retaining wall on Huntington Street has been completed! Thanks to the extremely cooperative weather this fall we



spread the last load of bark mulch the week of November 13<sup>th</sup>. The final dimensions of the wall are 250 linear feet with a height of two feet. Three courses of blocks and one course of



capstones are what give the wall its height. The wall consists of 480 wall blocks and 200 capstones. The wall blocks measure 8" high, 18" long, are 12"



deep and weigh 81 pounds each! The block used is the Diamond Pro series straight face type with a "gray flash" color ( a blend of charcoal and natural color) made by Grinnell.

The major phase of the project was the preparation of the site before the installation of the blocks could begin. A large amount of material needed to be excavated behind where the wall was going to be placed so that a drainage pipe could be installed along the entire length of the wall and a thick layer of ¾" processed stone could be added to serve as a solid base. The excavation process also created the space needed behind the wall for the placement of ¾" crushed stone to stabilize the wall. 25 tons of ¾" processed stone and 40 tons of ¾" crushed stone were used during the wall installation.



The next phase of the project could now begin. The bank was reshaped based on the final wall height to provide a more favorable growing area for the plant material. One hundred Siberian Carpet Cypress (*Microbiota decussata*) were used to replace the old Junipers that had been growing on the hillside. Then, approximately 40

**A LOOK BACK** by Ms. Joan Bravo. I have started to index *Frontiers of Plant Science* into a searchable database. Some historical notes of interest from *Frontiers* and other station publications will be included in each *Station News*. If you have written for *Frontiers* and have suggestions on key words for your articles, please let me know and I will be happy to include them. Once the database is complete, you will be notified. Below is a brief notation of the establishment of each of the main departments within the station. Department names have changed and have been combined during the history of The Station.

#### *124 YEARS AGO*

In 1882, Yale asked The Station to move, since they needed more room. The land at our current location was purchased from the estate of Eli Whitney Jr., for the Experiment Station and the 1<sup>st</sup> laboratory building was built for **Chemistry** and is currently the Osborne Library.

#### *120 YEARS AGO*

In 1886, The Station moved into basic research. Johnson hired Osborne, his son-in-law. Osborne established the 2<sup>nd</sup> department eventually becoming **Biochemistry**.

#### *118 YEARS AGO*

In 1888, Roland Thaxter, the first appointee under the Hatch Act, set up the 3<sup>rd</sup> department called **Mycology**.

yards of pine bark mulch were used to finish the area.

Additional plants will be planted in the spring to enhance the Microbiota. These will include different types of flowering trees or shrubs to create a more interesting appearance throughout the year. Spring bulbs and herbaceous perennials may also be used to enhance the area.

#### *112 YEARS AGO*

In 1894, W.H. Britton arrived as a botanist. After becoming the State entomologist, he set up the 4<sup>th</sup> department, **Entomology**. This was also the year the first greenhouse was built.

#### *105 YEARS AGO*

In 1901, Walter Mulford arrived and set up the 5<sup>th</sup> department of **Forestry**.

#### *101 YEARS AGO*

In 1905, E.M. East arrived from Illinois and set up the 6<sup>th</sup> department **Agronomy** later becoming **Genetics**.

#### *85 YEARS AGO*

In 1921, the **Tobacco Substation** was established as the 7<sup>th</sup> department. H. Chapman was made director until 1923 when Slate was promoted to director of both stations.

#### *30 YEARS AGO*

In 1965, the Tobacco Substation in Windsor was renamed the **Valley Laboratory**

#### *10 YEARS AGO*

On **January 31, 1996**, the newly renovated **Donald F. Jones Auditorium** was re-dedicated. The project took 2 years to make renovations of 7,500 square feet for 180-seat auditorium, laboratories, and garage space. The project brought the facilities up to code for fire, life safety, and handicapped accessibility.

On **November 21, 1996**, the Valley Laboratory had a new digital telephone system in operation.

## **Administration**

DR. LOUIS A. MAGNARELLI gave a presentation at the International Agronomy Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana on research programs at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (November 13); As Chairman, conducted a meeting of the Legislative Invasive Plants Council in Hartford (November 21); and Greeted members of the Garden Club Gardening School in Jones Auditorium and spoke about crops/biodiesel research (November 28).

## **Analytical Chemistry**

DR. DAVID STILWELL hosted a committee meeting of the Connecticut Community Gardens Association (November 14).

DR. BRIAN EITZER attended the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry Annual Meeting, in Montreal, Canada (November 5-8) and has been appointed to a three-year term on the Editorial Review Board of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry.

DR. MARYJANE INCORVIA MATTINA hosted six staff members from the Connecticut Department of Public Health on a tour of Analytical Chemistry. The DPH is in the planning stages for a new laboratory facility in Rocky Hill and staff members are visiting several facilities around the state for input (November 28) and spoke to the Quinnipiac Chapter of Sigma Xi on "Analytical Chemistry at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station." (50 attendees, students, faculty, and others) (November 29).

DR. CHRISTINA ROBB spoke at the Eastern Analytical Symposium in New Jersey (November 14).

## **Biochemistry and Genetics**

DR. RICHARD PETERSON attended the Annual Meeting of Sigma Xi as voting delegate for the Quinnipiac Chapter in Detroit, Michigan (November 2-5); spoke to six-grade students from Spring Glen School about how plants capture light energy for photosynthesis (November 29); and discussed CAM photosynthesis with Dominique Gilbert of the Yale Forestry School (November 30).

DR. NEIL SCHULTES hosted science teachers from Lyman Hall on a laboratory tour (November 6) and delivered a lecture "Genetically Modified Plants and Agriculture" to the Quinnipiac Sigma XI chapter at Quinnipiac University, Hamden, CT (November 16).

DR. NEIL MCHALE taught a minicourse on "Basic Botany for Gardeners" for the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut at the Jones Auditorium (November 28).

## **Entomology**

MR. IRA KETTLE attended the Backyard Beekeeper's meeting, as requested by Serge Boyce Public Relations, in Weston (120 attendees) (October 31) and presented a presentation on the importance of Honey Bees and had a live Honey Bee display; and had a question and answer period at the meeting of the Friends of Harkness in Waterford (30 attendees) (November 6).

MS. ROSE HISKES gave a talk on 'Pests of the Garden' to the Windsor Garden Club in Windsor (20 attendees) (November 13), participated in a Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group symposium planning committee meeting in Windsor (November 20), participated in a Connecticut Tree Protective Association workshop planning committee in New Haven (November 21) and along with DR. TODD MERVOSH who gave a talk on "Invasive Plants" to sixth year certificate education students at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven (23 teachers with 100 students each) (November 30).

DR. CHRIS T. MAIER reported on surveys for exotic moths in Connecticut while attending the Annual New England, New York, and Canadian Fruit Pest Management Workshop in Burlington, VT (October 24-

25) and presented a display on checkered beetles of Connecticut and introduced new entomological literature at a meeting of the Connecticut Entomological Society in Jones Auditorium (November 17).

DR. VICTORIA SMITH . October 24-26 2006—participated in a meeting of the National Plant Board Phytophthora ramorum Working Group, held at the Maryland Department of Agriculture in Annapolis, MD (approximately 40 participants) (October 24-26) and participated in the Eastern Region Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey Meeting, held at the Sheraton in Raleigh, NC (approximately 200 participants) (November 13-16).

DR. KIRBY C. STAFFORD, III spoke to Lyman Hall teachers on a tour of the Station about activities and research in the Department of Entomology (November 6); interviewed by Dana Whalen at WTIC-radio about adult tick activity during the mild fall season (November 27); presented a talk entitled “Current trends with acaricides for targeted tick control” in a symposium on vector control at the annual meeting of the Society for Vector Ecology in Anchorage, Alaska (approximately 125 attendees) (September 30); presented a talk entitled “Controversies and public acceptance of strategies for the prevention of Lyme disease” in a symposium on vector control and public engagement at the annual meeting of the Society for Vector Ecology in Anchorage, Alaska (approximately 100 attendees) (October 3); spoke on ticks and Lyme disease at the Guilford Senior Citizens Center in Guilford (approximate 13 attendees) (October 13); and participated in the Southern New England Beekeeper Assembly in New Haven, CT (November 18).

DR. KIMBERLY A. STONER presented information on Organic Land Care and Community Farming to the annual meeting of the Connecticut Northeast Organic Farming Association at the Jones Auditorium, New Haven (60 attendees) (November 4).

## **Forestry and Horticulture**

### **Lockwood Farm**

#### **Plant Pathology and Ecology**

DR. SANDRA L. ANAGNOSTAKIS gave a talk entitled “History of chestnut restoration in Connecticut” at the Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation in New Haven (32 attendees) (November 11); spoke about “Canker diseases of trees” to a Botany class from Quinnipiac University in Jenkins (12 attendees) (Nov. 13); with MS. PAMELA SLETTEN, and was interviewed by Laurie Sanders (who used to work at the Station) for a National Public Radio program to be produced by MA Public Radio, they discussed chestnut as a food crop (at Lockwood Farm) and techniques for growing chestnut trees (November 27).

DR. SHARON M. DOUGLAS discussed the role of the Plant Disease Information Office and methods to add plant pathology to the high school science curriculum with teachers from Lyman Hall (6 attendees) (November 6); gave a presentation entitled “Introduction to plant pathology” to a Botany class from Quinnipiac University in Jenkins (12 attendees) (November 13); gave a presentation entitled “Environmentally friendly methods for managing plant diseases” to the Garden Club of Madison (65 attendees) (November 14); and discussed plant pathology and the role of the Plant Disease Information Office with sixth-graders from Spring Glen Elementary School (40 attendees) (November 29).

DR. WADE H. ELMER presented the paper “*Fusarium* species associated with declining *Spartina* in areas affected by sudden wetland dieback” and attended the Extension/Industry meeting and officiated at the NED-APS business meeting and banquets as Division President at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Division of The American Phytopathological Society in Burlington, VT (55 attendees) (November 7-9); presented a lecture on “*Fusarium* species, pathogens and problems” to a Botany class from Quinnipiac University in Jenkins (12 attendees) (November 13); and attended a proposal planning committee meeting for Sudden Wetland Dieback at the UMASS Cranberry Research Center in Wareham, MA (8 attendees) (November 17).

DR. FRANCIS J. FERRANDINO presented a talk entitled “Crop growth, ontogenic resistance and disease progress: A discussion with examples” at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Division of The American Phytopathological Society (NED-APS) in Burlington, VT (55 attendees) (November 7-9); and gave a talk entitled “How does plant growth affect epidemics?” to a Botany class from Quinnipiac University in Jenkins (12 attendees) (November 13).

DR. ROBERT E. MARRA presented a talk entitled “Single-strand conformation polymorphism (SSCP) in Ramorum Blight survey diagnostics” at the Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Division of The American Phytopathological Society (NED-APS) in Burlington, VT (55 attendees) (November 6-9); spoke on “Molecular methods in Ramorum Blight diagnostics” to a Botany class from Quinnipiac University in Jenkins (12 attendees) (November 13); helped teach tree disease diagnostics to students in the Connecticut Tree Protective Association’s Arboriculture 101 course (45 attendees) (November 15); and presented a seminar entitled “Ramorum Blight/Sudden Oak Death: Can we keep *Phytophthora ramorum* out of northeastern forests?” at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA (30 attendees) (November 28).

## **Soil and Water**

DR. THEODORE ANDREADIS presented an overview of the State Mosquito / Arbovirus Surveillance Program and West Nile virus to a group of 5 high school teachers from Lyman Hall in Wallingford CT (5 attendees) (November 6); presented a lecture entitled, West Nile Virus: an exotic, emerging mosquito-borne disease in the western hemisphere to a class of students at Post University in Waterbury, CT (Approximately 30 students and teachers) (November 8); and presented an invited talk entitled, “Arbovirus activity in Connecticut 2006: a resurgence of West Nile virus” at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Mosquito Control Association held in Saratoga Springs, NY (Approximately 150 attendees) (November 27).

DR. PHILIP ARMSTRONG presented an abstract, “Local overwintering of eastern equine encephalitis virus variants in Connecticut” at the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in Atlanta, GA (approximately 1,000 attendees) (November 12-16) and gave a lecture entitled “Responding to the West Nile virus epidemic in Connecticut” for a class on risk analysis and communication at Smith College, Northampton, MA (15 attendees) (November 30).

MR. GREGORY BUGBEE spoke to a group of 5 high school teachers from Lyman Hall in Wallingford CT about the CAES Invasive Aquatic Plant Program (5 attendees) (November 6); demonstrated soil testing to 3 students from Hamden High School who were working on a science project (3 attendees) (November 7); spoke to members of the Quaddick Lake Association on methods for controlling nuisance aquatic vegetation (Approximately 12 attendees) (November 8); spoke to the Middletown Garden Club on improving soil in the home garden (Approximately 50 attendees) (November 15); spoke at the annual meeting of the Environment Industry Council on Managing nuisance vegetation in ponds and lakes held in Southington, CT (Approximately 150 attendees) (November 21); lectured on managing athletic fields to students at a course at Southern Connecticut State University (Approximately 35 attendees) (November 27); and presented a course on Soils to the Federated Garden Club held in Jones auditorium (Approximately 50 attendees) (November 29).

DR. JOSEPH PIGNATELLO presented a talk entitled, “Effect of natural organic matter on the surface and adsorptive properties of char particles in soil in a Symposium on Biogeochemical and Biophysico-Chemical Characterizations of Soil Microsite Processes”, at the Soil Science Society of America Annual Meeting, held in Indianapolis, IN (Approximately 200 attendees) (November 12-16) and presented a poster entitled, “Summary of evidence supporting the glassy polymer sorption model for nonionic organic compounds in SOM”, at the Soil Science Society of America Annual Meeting, held in Indianapolis, IN (Approximately 600 attendees) (November 12-16).

MS. ROSLYN SELSKY attended and presented a poster entitled, “The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station invasive aquatic plant program” at the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group’s Symposium held in Wallingford (October 12) and attended the Northeast Arc Users Conference in Mystic and gave a talk entitled, “Using GIS to map invasive aquatic plants in Connecticut” (November 13-15).

## **Valley Laboratory**

DR. JOHN AHRENS had an article appear in the REAL TREE Line in November. "Reflections on weeds and shearing at the Tonry Farm" Real Tree Line 46 [4] 14-15.

## **Journal Articles Approved November 2006**

Elmer, Wade H., S. F. Covert, and K. O'Donnell. An outbreak of *Fusarium* foot and fruit rot of pumpkins within the United States. Plant Disease.

Maynard, Abigail A. The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Investigates New Specialty Crops: Beach Plums. Connecticut Weekly Agricultural Report.

Maynard, Abigail A. Specialty Fruits Provide New Opportunities for Connecticut Growers. Frontiers of Plant Science.

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