



THE FAR-B NEWS

Dedicated to promoting the research and education programs of the BELTSVILLE AREA, Beltsville, MD

Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville, Incorporated P.O. Box 1061, Beltsville, MD 20704-1061

JUNE 2016

Editor: Hank Becker

President's Message

The FAR-B annual membership meeting was held May 10 on the Beltsville campus. The large turnout of FAR-B members and Beltsville employees heard presentations by Dr. Sally Schneider, ARS Deputy Administrator for Natural Resources and Sustainable Agricultural Systems and Dr. Dariusz Swietlik, Director, ARS Northeast Area. Dr. Schneider discussed the "ARS Grand Challenge" that has a goal of "Transforming Agriculture to Deliver a 20% Increase in Quality Food Availability at 20% Lower Environment Impact by 2025. Her slide presentation outlined the roles of the ARS Design, Definition, Planning, and Research Implementation Teams in attempting to achieve this goal. Dr. Swietlik discussed "The Status of Beltsville and the Northeast Area." Following Drs. Schneider and Swietlik presentations, I gave a brief report of FAR-B's financial status and recent activities.

As I planned for the annual meeting, I compiled a list of activities that FAR-B was involved in during the past 12 months. Although I may have overlooked some, I think I came up with a rather complete listing of projects. Most of the projects have been described in some detail in this or the January 2016 newsletter, but it is interesting to see them in one list.

An annual activity of FAR-B is the submission of written testimony to the U.S. Congress supporting the Beltsville programs and facilities. In March 2016, FAR-B Board of Director members Jim Butcher, Darwin Murrell, Essex Finney and Jim Anderson prepared testimony that was submitted to the Senate and House of Representatives Subcommittees on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. Copies of the testimony were also provided to all members of the Maryland congressional delegation. This year's testimony called for an annual appropriation to address long-delayed essential maintenance and repairs to Beltsville facilities. It also called for support of funding increases to enhance four of the Center's research programs identified in the President's Fiscal Year 2017 budget. The specific programs includ-

ed: Resilient Crops that Respond and Adapt to Climate Change; Reduce Vulnerability of Agro-Ecosystems to Climate Change; Combatting Antimicrobial Resistance; and Safe and Abundant Water Supplies.

Also, during the past year FAR-B provided funds to support four high school interns to work with scientists in the BARC and BHNRC. In addition to funding interns, at the annual Beltsville Poster Day, FAR-B recognized three high school interns for their outstanding research projects and awarded them cash prizes. Rachel Blume was awarded the *Vernon G Pursel Student Scientific Achievement Award* for her 1st place poster. In addition to a certificate, the award included a \$300 check. Second and third place winners were Asha Pawar and Nicholas Randolph, who received \$200 and \$100 prizes respectively. FAR-B was also pleased to provide a ca-



Paul Sebesta, Acting Associate Northeast Area Director and Allan Stoner, FARB President, present recipient Rachel Blume with the 2016 Vern Pursel award for her poster entitled: "The Effectiveness of Remote Sensing on the Prediction of biomass of Wintertime Cover Crops." Rachel goes to Herbert Flowers High School. Her Mentor is Dean Hively with Hydrology and Remotes Sensing.

tered lunch to all Poster Day participants and guests.

A particularly exciting event that FAR-B was involved in during the past 12 months was the ceremony, lunch and symposium associated with the American Chemical Society designation of BARC as a National Historic Chemical Landmark for its 41 year role in the discovery, isolation and understanding of the role of the

pigment containing protein that they named phytochrome. FAR-B contributed financially and to the planning of the event. We were particularly pleased that Karl Norris, the last surviving member of the team of scientists involved in the original research on phytochrome and a member of FAR-B, was present and spoke at the official ceremony and subsequent symposium. Among many others, the official ceremony was attended by Dr. Chavonda Jacobs –Young, ARS Administrator; Mr. Joseph Bartenfelder, Maryland Secretary of Agriculture; Mr. Rushern Baker III, County Executive, Prince Georges County; and Dr. Pat Confalone, Chair, American Chemical Society Board of Directors.

During the past 12 months, FAR-B supported financially numerous programs organized by the Beltsville Diversity Taskforce. These included numerous special emphasis diversity programs open to all Beltsville employees; a two month Hispanic Serving Institutions Learning Experience for 40 undergraduate and graduate students from across the country; and the Student Discovery Garden that hosted over 800 students from the Beltsville area.

In addition to the above activities, FAR-B continues to assist Beltsville management, laboratories and other units in organizing and hosting meetings, workshops, etc. For example, during the past year FAR-B provided financial support for the Northeast Area Council of Office Professional Team Building Workshop and assisted the National Germplasm Laboratory host a committee meeting involving scientists from across the country involved in plant germplasm quarantine issues.

Although not in direct support of specific Beltsville programs, FAR-B was active in the area of community outreach. For the 8th year we contributed financial support and teaching assistance for the week-long visit of the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation Mobile Science Laboratory to the Beltsville Academy where over 700 K-5 students were exposed to presentations on agriculture, farm animals and crops. All students in grades 3 -5 also acted as food scientists as they investigated properties of some of their favorite candies using a chemical test that bubbles and fizzes. In addition, the budding scientists learned about developing and testing research hypotheses. Also, in the area of community outreach, FAR-B provided judges and cash prizes for students participating in the Prince Georges and Montgomery county middle school annual science fairs.

Candy Science

Beltsville Academy Student Posters
Representing Grades K-5

 Smartheads A few bubbles	 Soft Patch Kids A lot of bubbles	 Starburst A few bubbles	 Gum Drop They have a few bubbles	 Dixie oral They have a lot of bubbles	 Life Savers acid is an ingredient NO
They do have acid	They do have acid	Yes they do have acid	They do have acid	They do have acid	no bubbles
They do have skin left on surface	They do have skin left on surface	They do have skin left on surface	They don't have skin left on surface	They don't have skin left on surface	They don't have skin left on surface
They do have oil and wax	They do have oil and wax	They do have oil and wax	They don't have oil or wax	They don't have oil or wax	They don't have oil and wax

This student poster stems from an ongoing partnership among the Beltsville Academy, FAR-B, and the Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agricultural Research Center. The purpose of this partnership is to bring agricultural science to a mostly Hispanic and minority student population grades K-5. Grades 3-5 participated in the lesson "Candy Science Investigations." Students acted as food scientists as they investigated properties of some of their favorite candies using a chemical test that bubbles and fizzes.

Developing a list of projects that FAR-B was involved in during the past year made me realize the impact that FAR-B was able to make with a limited financial commitment, the input of our 11 member Board of Directors listed on the back page, and a small number of volunteers. Without question, Beltsville research and area school programs got a large bang for our buck. It is hard to imagine a more competent and dedicated group than our current Board members who are willing to spend time and energy to help Beltsville programs and educating young people about science and agriculture. They all deserve a very special vote of thanks.

This brings me to two final points that are problems that are looming on the horizon for FAR-B. First, FAR-B's membership is aging and we are experiencing difficulties recruiting new patron, personal and associate members. A part of this is the declining number of scientists and support staff at Beltsville and fewer retirees over recent years, thus a continually declining number of people in the pool to draw members from. Any help that you can provide in recruiting people in the Patron, Personal and Associate member-

ship categories would be helpful to FAR-B to continue to assist the Beltsville programs. A second problem is that most of the members of the Board of Directors have served a considerable length of time and we find it difficult to identify people who are willing to replace them on the Board. We cannot expect our current Board members to serve forever. A part of the problem is that many retirees seem to increasingly move from the area and many choose to serve as Beltsville volunteers or collaborators and thus are not available to serve on the FAR-B Board. Thus, we are very interested in learning of anyone who would be interested in serving on the Board. We meet ten times a year for about two hours, thus the commitment of time is not great, but the rewards are significant.

Alan Stoner, President

Area Director's Message

In the last 4 months we witnessed significant changes and important events in the Area Office and across the entire NEA. Shortly after the February issue of FAR-B Newsletter left the printer, the Agency announced the appointment of Dr. Maureen Whalen as the new Deputy Administrator (DA) for Crop Production and Protection (CPP) in the Office of National Programs, effective February 21, 2016. Prior to that, Dr. Whalen served as an Associate Area Director of Northeast Area, the position she assumed last July. We are thankful to Dr. Whalen for her many contributions and unusual dedication to managing and advancing research programs in the Northeast Area and want to wish her many successes in her new position.

On February 23, we were welcoming Dr. Paul Sebesta to NEA for a 120-day-long detail as Acting Associate Area Director. Since joining our office, Dr. Sebesta has been executing the duties formerly performed by Dr. Whalen. He joined ARS in 2005 as the director of the USDA-ARS Kika de la Garza Subtropical Agricultural Research Center in Weslaco, TX. In 2008 he became the Director of the National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, IL, the position he currently holds. Dr. Sebesta earned his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees from Oklahoma State University. Before joining ARS, he was an Assistant Professor of Agronomy and winter wheat breeder at North Dakota State University, a project leader in the HybriTech Seed International, Inc., a Monsanto subsidiary, a unit head involved in intellectual property

management in the Texas A&M University, the Director of the University of California Desert Research and Extension Center (DREC) in El Centro California and a program Director with the National Audubon Society.

Dr. Vangimalla (VR) Reddy completed his detail as an Acting Associate Area Director on May 6. We are very thankful to him for his service, hard work and dedication, which significantly benefited NEA programs.

Dr. David Chitwood has agreed to serve in the position of Acting Associate Area Director vacated by Dr. Reddy. He assumed his responsibilities on May 8 and will continue in this capacity until July 30. After receiving a B.S. in mathematics and a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from the University of Maryland, Dr. Chitwood joined ARS in 1982 as a Research Nematologist in the Insect Physiology Laboratory in BARC. He was transferred to the Nematology Laboratory in 1989 and appointed Research Leader three years later. His 100+ publications have focused on the biochemistry of plant-parasitic nematodes and their management with naturally occurring compounds from plants; his recent activities have also involved the detection of nematodes of quarantine importance that threaten U.S. agriculture. In addition to the duties described above, Dr. Chitwood has been simultaneously serving as the Acting Research Leader for the Systematic Mycology and Microbiology Lab at BARC for the last 16 months. Dr. Chitwood currently serves as the Northeast Area representative to the Research Leaders' Advisory Council. A past president of the Society of Nematologists and the International Federation of Nematology Societies, he currently serves on the editorial boards of three scientific journals. He is a fellow of the Society of Nematologists and is one of the two ARS scientists to have been awarded fellowship status in the European Society of Nematologists.

Since my last report, NEA employees have won significant awards and recognitions. Dr. Jim Giovannoni has been recently elected to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). He is a Research Molecular Biologist and the Acting Director of the USDA-ARS Robert W. Holley Center for Agriculture and Health (RHCAH) in Ithaca, NY. Dr. Giovannoni has identified and characterized a number of genes and regulatory elements that influence fruit ripening, pigmentation, ethylene response and fruit nutritional quality. He demonstrated that changes in epigenome dy-

namics, are important in the unripe to ripe transition. Specifically, he showed that chemical demethylation is sufficient to induce ripening in very immature fruit – much earlier than can be achieved by ethylene or any other treatment.

It is noteworthy to add that four of the current five members of the NAS in ARS are working in NEA laboratories. These individuals are: De. Robert Davis in BARC, Jitender Dubey in BARC, Dr. Edward Buckler, RHCAH in Ithaca and Jim Giovannoni, RHCAH in Ithaca.

NEA employees, Ms. Martha Tomecek, Dr. Monica Santin-Duran, and other members of the Beltsville Task Force on Diversity as well as Dr. LinShu Liu from the Eastern Regional Research Center, Wyndmoor, PA won two Unsung Hero Awards for 2016 from the Organization of Professional Employees in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These employees were recognized at a presentation of award ceremony in the USDA Jamie L. Whitten Building in Washington, DC. The ceremony was attended by the Honorable Tom Vilsack; Secretary of Agriculture, the Honorable Michael Scuse, Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; Dr. Kathryn Woteki, the Undersecretary for REE, Dr. Ann Bartuska, Deputy Undersecretary for REE, Dr. Simon Liu, Associate Administrator ARS, and the other Department's officials.

The Twenty-Seventh Annual Beltsville Poster Day on April 26 was a great success. In addition to Beltsville-based scientists, the event marked the second year the competition also included scientists from the Foreign Plant Disease-Weed Science Research Unit in Frederick, MD. As in the past, high school students participated as well presenting posters from their school science projects. We are very grateful to the Friends of Agriculture Research in Beltsville (FAR-B) for their support of the event. Special thanks go to Dr. JoAnn Crouch, Poster Day Committee Chair and the other members of the Committee for their hard work and dedication that made this year's Poster Day a resounding success.

Dariusz M. Swietlik, Area Director, NEA

Financial Report

In the first half of 2016 FAR-B has an operating income of \$8,535. This included \$4,455 from dues and \$4,080 from donations made to the Combined Federal Campaign. Planned expenses for this calendar year will include support for four student interns at ARS

Beltsville laboratories (\$18,400), awards for winners of the Montgomery and Prince Georges Science Fairs (\$800), support for Henry A. Wallace Scientific Poster event held on April at the National Agricultural Library which includes prizes for the top three High School Posters (\$1,760), and support for various Beltsville laboratory program reviews (estimated at \$3,500). FAR-B projected budget deficit for 2016 is expected to be about \$15,000 when all expenditures have been made. We still have reserves held in Certificates of Deposit and in Mutual Funds of around \$100,000 which will continue support our program needs, when required. The FAR-B Board of Directors strongly believes that we can operate successfully by spending some of our reserves to better support agriculture research and outreach needs at Beltsville.

Richard Parry, Treasurer

CFC Update

FAR-B thanks the many federal employees who donated to FAR-B through the National Capital Area Combined Campaign in 2015. FAR-B received \$4080 this year. FAR-B has been approved to participate in the 2016 campaign. However, we have been alerted that FAR-B'S charity number may change.

Lew Smith, CFC

Poster Day at BARC

The 27th Annual Beltsville Poster Day was held April 27 at the National Agricultural Library. On display were 48 posters summarizing the research of Postdoctoral Research Associates, Visiting Scientists, and recently hired Research Scientists working at Beltsville and Ft. Detrick, MD. In addition, 17 posters prepared by high school students working as interns under the mentorship of Beltsville scientists were on display.

Following evaluation of the student posters by a committee of Beltsville scientists, FAR-B president Allan Stoner and Paul Sebesta, Acting Associate Director, Northeast Area presented the *Vernon G. Purcel Student Scientific Achievement Award* to Rachel Blume, for her 1st place research and poster, "The Effectiveness of Remote Sensing on the Prediction of Biomass of Wintertime Cover Crops."

Along with a certificate, Allan Stoner presented Rachel with a \$300 prize from FAR-B for her winning poster. Rachel was mentored by Dr. Dean Hively of

the Beltsville Hydrology and Remote Sensing Laboratory. By the time this newsletter is printed, Rachel will have graduated from Charles Herbert Flowers High School.

The second place winning poster was prepared by Asha Pawar, and titled “The Effect of Fungal Biocontrol, *Beauveria spp.* On Ectoparasite *Varroa destructor.*” FAR-B presented Asha a \$200 prize for her research. Asha, a senior at Eleanor Roosevelt High School, was mentored by Dr. Jay Evans of the Beltsville Bee Research Laboratory. The third place winner was Nicholas Randolph, also a student at Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Nicholas’s research was titled “Lignification in Cocoa Pods” and he was mentored by Mary Strem and Dr. Bryan Bailey of the Sustainable Perennial Crops Laboratory. His third place prize from FAR-B was \$100. A poster “Are Novel Microbes Invading Washington D.C. During the National Mall Turfgrass Renovation Project?” by Zakiya Carter, received Honorable Mention recognition.

In addition to recognizing the research of the high school students, following the awards ceremony, FAR-B provided a catered lunch for all participating scientists and guests.

Alan Stoner, President

Diversity Task Force Update

Hispanic Interns

Verneta Gaskins, director of the Beltsville Diversity Taskforce has announced that thirty-eight (38) Latino-American interns are expected this summer, all are matched with mentors. They come from seven institutions of graduate education. Most will start on June 6, the remaining half-dozen on June 20.

“We have 38 students from 10 different universities throughout Texas, Puerto Rico, New Mexico, California and Florida that will be participating. BARC will host the bulk of the interns (34 students) and BHNRC will host 4. We have more than 20 scientists from 12 different labs set to mentor the students participating in the learning experience,” she says.

Women’s History Project

At the National Agricultural Library in March, presenter/ curator, Emily Marsh discussed a project that she had developed--a national online exhibit related to the Bureau of Home Economics. The Bureau of

Home Economics was a pioneering unit in the USDA for several reasons. It was the first major unit to have been headed by a woman: Louise Stanley, Ph.D. It focused on topics of central concern to women, as defined by the cultural norms of the early twentieth century: sewing, kitchen design and features, time spent on housework, children's clothing, and food preparation and preservation. Lastly, it took a then novel approach to its work: it strove to first understand what its primary audience needed within its broad mandate and then shaped its specific programs around those needs. The exhibit can be seen at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/ipd/apronsandkitchens/>

**Verneta Gaskins, Diversity Task Force
Plant Pathologist, USDA-ARS**

Growing A Pizza

Ask a group of kids where pizza comes from, and you will hear Dominos, Papa Johns, Little Caesars, Pizza Hut, Three Brothers, Ledo Pizza, and of course the supermarket.

Enter the pizza-perfect educational opportunity to grow pizza-ingredient plants within the NEA Beltsville Diversity Taskforce’s Student Discovery Garden.

Although the pizza garden only takes up half of the “nutrition” plot (amidst the other 6 plots), it will



From left to right: Karen Williams, National Germplasm Resources Lab; Matt Greenstone, Invasive Insect Biocontrol & Behavior Lab; Ed Clark, Invasive Insect Biocontrol & Behavior Lab; Maria Hult, Nematology Lab; Sue Mischke, Sustainable Perennial Crops Lab; Mary Ann Guaragna, retired from the National Arboretum; Lew Ziska, Crop Systems and Global Change Lab and SDG Founder; Ann Simpkins, Sustainable Perennial Crops Lab, and SDG Manager and Coordinator.

be utilized as yet another education resource for visiting school groups.

A companion “Growing a Pizza” picture book was created describing how the ingredients become a pizza, from planting wheat and tomato seeds to growing, harvesting, and processing those ingredients into the corresponding crust and sauce. Even feed for the cow and cheese making process is shown. Plus the extra spices and toppings to make the perfect pizza are also pictured. The book makes an excellent teaching tool using the garden itself as the real-life backdrop.

The so-called “pizza garden” will also be used as a segue to talk about the other 6 plots – Container; Bioenergy; Pollinator; Native Food Crops of the Americas; African American Heritage; and the new Sustainable plot; plus the other teaching stations, including the herbs and spices area; weather station; mushroom logs; and aquaponics system -- think fish topping...anchovies, anyone?

As in past years, the Student Discovery Garden managers – Ann Simpkins and Martha Tomecek – donate the harvested produce to the Saint Camillus Church Pantry in Silver Spring, MD. Who knows, maybe this year they’ll donate an actual pizza!

Jay H. Green, MS, RDN
Engagement, Outreach & Visitor Programs

IN MEMORIAM

Robert W. Goth

Dr. Robert W. Goth, retired Research Plant Pathologist, USDA, ARS passed away on Friday, March 11, 2016. Bob started his career with ARS in 1961 as a Research Plant Pathologist in the Bean and Pea Investigations Unit at BARC. In 1968, he transferred to the Potato Investigations unit in Beltsville and subsequently to the former Vegetable Laboratory. Bob retired on December 31, 1999, after 44 years of government service including four and a half years of military credit. Bob grew up on a dairy farm in Phillips, WI. He served in the U.S. Army during WWII and the Korean conflict and utilized the ‘GI Bill’ to graduate from the University of Wisconsin at Superior in 1954 with a B.S. degree in biology. He entered graduate school at the University of Minneso-

ta where he earned a M.S. degree in 1957 and a Ph.D. degree in 1961 in plant pathology.

Dr. Goth is a well-known plant pathologist who creatively developed methods to identify, isolate, and detect a variety of bacterial, fungal, and viral pathogens of horticultural crops in a research effort to develop and evaluate host resistance to a number of these plant pathogens. Among his many research achievements, the following have had the most impact: discovery and identification of sources of resistance to the devastating watermelon blotch bacterium; identification of bacterium causing pepper fruit rot; discovery of new fungal pathogens of beans; co-discovery of the presence of A2 strain of *Phytophthora infestans*, the cause of potato late blight; development of late blight resistant potato germplasm that has survived the challenging new strains of *P. infestans*; development of a detached leaf method to assay foliar pathogens of tomato and potato; demonstration of *Fusarium proliferatum* as the source of the mycotoxin fumonisin in rye; and demonstration that UV-B irradiation inhibits Carla virus infection and that the Carla virus PVS is not transmitted via true potato seed.

Dr. Goth has coauthored over 159 publications and participated in the release of several potato varieties. As the administrator for 78 specific cooperative agreements and grants with 14 universities within the last 8 years of his career, he administered over \$2 million to university researchers on Verticillium wilt, bacterial wilt, bacterial ring rot, early blight, silver scurf and scab. He has been active in the American Phytopathology Society (APS), Potomac Division of APS, and the Potato Association of America (PAA). As a member of Potomac Division of APS since 1962, he served as its program chair, secretary-treasurer, vice-president, and president. As a member of the PAA since 1967, he served as director, secretary-treasurer, vice-chairperson, and chairperson of its pathology section. He was selected as an Honorary Life Member of PAA in 1993 for his outstanding research efforts in the development of disease-resistant potatoes. He received the North American Seed Potato Researcher of the Year Award in 1993 from the National Potato Council for research in evaluating and improving disease resistance in potato varieties. In March 1998, he was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the Potomac Division APS for contributions to the science of plant pathology. In August 1998, Dr. Goth was awarded the

Northeastern States Agricultural Experiment Station Directors Award for Regional Research Excellence for outstanding cooperation among federal and state programs in evaluating and developing new cultivars to sustain economic potato production in the Northeast Region. He was also a member of Gamma Sigma Delta, Gamma Alpha, and Sigma Xi.

Jack Lewis

Jack Allen Lewis passed away on May 4, 2015, after a long struggle with multiple sclerosis (MS). In spite of his difficulties with MS late in his career, Lewis was an accomplished soil scientist with USDA ARS in Beltsville, MD. He was a member of the Soil Borne Diseases Laboratory (SBDL) and its successor, the Biocontrol of Plant Diseases Laboratory (BPD), until he retired in 1999 after 34 years of service. He joined the USDA laboratory, headed by George C. Papavizas, in 1965. Jack's professional career in soil microbiology started at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, where he earned a Ph.D. degree under his major advisor, Robert L. Starkey, in the Department of Agricultural Microbiology. He also earned a B.S. degree from Brooklyn College in 1960 and an M.S. degree from the University of Connecticut in 1962.

Lewis worked as a team leader and team member, responsible for basic and applied research with emphasis on the ecology of biological control agents, including fungi, bacteria, and actinomycetes and their interrelationships with soilborne plant pathogens in integrated pest management systems. The objectives of his research also included the development of delivery systems for introduction into agricultural ecosystems or as seed treatments with formulated biocontrol agents.

Lewis' research achievements are documented in more than 125 peer-reviewed original research and review articles and numerous abstracts. During his 34 years of service with ARS, he was a leader or participant in team research to investigate biological, chemical, and integrated approaches for control of soilborne diseases of economic crops. He performed extensive research on the biology and ecology of numerous pathogens. His contributions with the biocontrol fungi, *Trichoderma* and *Gliocladium*, and especially the potential for their use in innovative formulation technology, represent outstanding accomplishments in this specialized area of research. He was a team member

in the development of *GlioGard* and *SoilGard* by private industry. As a member of this team, he received an ARS Technology Transfer Award for the research on this work in cooperation with a private firm in 1991, a certificate of merit for superior performance in conducting and reporting research on delivery systems of biocontrol agents and on novel biocontrol agents in 1991, and a Federal Laboratory Consortium Award on delivery system development in 1992. He was awarded three U.S. Patent Office awards for formulation inventions in 1987, 1990, and 1991. This work led to a first in the field for the registration by the U.S. EPA for a commercial formulation to control soilborne plant pathogens.

Lewis was a member of APS serving on the Biological Control Committee. As a member of the APS Potomac Division, he served on the Program, Auditing, and Awards Committees. He was also a member of the International Organization for Biological Control of Noxious Animals and Plants and the Society for Controlled Release of Bioactive Materials. He worked with the North Central Regional Project on Biological Control of Soilborne Plant Pathogens in Integrated Crop Management as secretary, vice chair, and chair, the Eastern Research Conference on the Ecology of Root- Infecting Microorganisms, and the International Workshop on *Trichoderma* and *Gliocladium*. Lewis worked cooperatively with scientists in Pakistan, Japan, Mexico, and Israel. These projects were sponsored by USAID PL-480 in Pakistan, U.S.-Israel BSF and BARD, and O.I.C.D. in Mexico. He served as a regional editor for the journal *Soil Biology and Biochemistry*.

Jack Meiners

FARB member Jack P. Meiners, 96, a plant pathologist retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Research Center at Beltsville, MD died April 24, 2016, after a brief illness. He had lived in Silver Spring, MD since 1958.

Dr. Meiners, who joined the USDA's ARS in 1946, came to the Beltsville Research Center in 1958 to help manage research for the national program of breeding and diseases of cereal crops. Beginning in 1965 he assumed a similar position for the ARS national program of research on all crop plants. In 1970 he was appointed leader of ARS national program of research on the breeding and diseases of beans, peas and other edible legumes. With the reorganization of

ARS in 1972, he was appointed Chairman of the Plant Protection Institute at the Center, administering research on plant insect pests and diseases. He left this position in 1974 to engage in research on bean diseases, which he continued until his retirement in 1980.

Prior to coming to Beltsville, Dr. Meiners researched grass and wheat diseases at a USDA research facility in Pullman, WA, for which he was given a Superior Service Award by the USDA.

Dr. Meiners was born and raised in Walla Walla, WA. He received a bachelor's degree in agronomy and a doctorate in plant pathology from Washington State University and, before joining USDA, he was a Professor of Plant Pathology at the university. Following retirement in 1980, Dr. Meiners consulted on agricultural research in various locations in Africa, Asia, and South America. During his career, he authored some 75 scientific papers.

Robert Gilbert Yeck

Robert Gilbert Yeck was born on December 6, 1920 in LaValle, WI. Dr. Yeck grew up mainly on a farm

tending on animals, crops, and keeping farm equipment operational. One of his early jobs was a machinist. Dr. Yeck served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in the Pacific during World War II. He remained a reservist in The U.S. Air Force retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Dr. Yeck graduated from Reedsburg Wisconsin High School and received a B.S. Agriculture degree from the University of Wisconsin

He began his career with the USDA in 1948 while in Wisconsin. He was later a research director for the USDA at the University of Missouri. While at Missouri he completed his education by being awarded a M.S. in Agricultural Engineering degree and a Ph.D. In 1960 Dr. Yeck was transferred to Beltsville, MD and in 1971 was Chief of the ARS Livestock Engineering and Farm Structures Research Branch.

He retired in 1980 from the USDA as a senior staff scientist. During the next eight years Dr. Yeck, was a visiting professor in the Agricultural Engineering Department at the University of Maryland. He taught courses and supervised the farm plan exchanged program before retiring in 1988.



Left to right: Jim Anderson, Richard Parry, Dave Chitwood, Dick Zimmerman, David Kuykendall, Essex Finney, Allan Stoner, Hank Becker, Jim Butcher and Lew Smith (absent at time of photo: K. Darwin Murrell.)

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