



# 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 2013

Editor: Hank Becker

## President's Message

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Annual Meeting of Friends of Agricultural Research – Beltsville was held May 14, 2013 in the Conference Room of Building 005, BARC-W. The keynote speaker was Dr. Joseph Spence, Director of the Beltsville Area. He talked about the opportunities Beltsville Area scientists are facing in the BA. Following Dr. Spence's presentation there was a very good discussion. Dr. Spence's summary will be presented below.

During the rest of the meeting, I gave a Power Point presentation on the various aspects FAR-B is



**Collene Harding receives the 2013 Vernon G. Pursel Student Scientific Achievement Award from President Jim Anderson.**

doing to help the BA. Some of these items are covered in different section of this News Letter and can be seen on our web site: [www.far-b.org](http://www.far-b.org). One of the highlights was presenting the **Vernon G. Pursel Student Scientific Achievement Award** to Ms. Collene Harding, from the Charles Harper Flowers High School. The title of her project was 'The Effects of Rye and Vetch on Biomass and Nitrogen Intake.' Ms. Harding will be attending the University of Pittsburg, majoring in Chemistry. Her mentor was Dr.

Dean Hively, Hydrology and Remote Sensing Laboratory. Dr. Hively is an outstanding mentor. He was the mentor of last year's winner, as well as the mentor for one of this year's second place winners. FAR-B congratulates Dr. Hively for his outstanding development of young scientists. A huge thank you to Adrienne, Catherine, Mary and Terri for managing the reception area for the last 10 years! Each event gets better and better! We could not do this without each of you.

The beginning of 2013 has been busy for FAR-B. We started the new year with the decision to fund five student interns for the summer of 2013. The following scientists or laboratories have been awarded interns, funded by FAR-B: Jo Anne Crouch, Systematic Mycology; Susan Meyer, Nematology; Matt Greenstone, Invasive Insects; Dave Guthrie, Animal Biotech; and one in SEL. These SY's were selected by the Area Office. FAR-B has also funded support for the Beltsville Area's Diversity Task Force, details of this are found below. Again this year, FAR-B is operating on a negative budget--we are spending more than we are taking in with dues and donations. We cannot continue to do so for many more years, but the BOD's felt that BARC really needs our help now.



### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL APPLICATION

Personal Membership.....	\$30
Patron Membership.....	\$100
Sustaining Membership .....	\$500 (or above)
Associate Membership .....	\$15

Make checks payable to: **FAR-B, Inc.**

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FAR-B had special judges in the Montgomery and Prince Georges Middle School Science Fairs held on March 16 and 9, respectively. We presented 18 special Certificates and Target gift card Awards for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, (\$30, \$20 & \$10, respectively), in each of three categories (Biology, Environmental Science, and microbiology and health). FAR-B thanks the judges who gave up their Saturdays to participate in this event.

On March 20, 2013, I had the honor of submitting FAR-B's written testimony to the U.S. House and Senate Subcommittees on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations. FAR-B whole heartedly gives Jim Butcher a **BIG THANK YOU** for putting so much hard work and insightfulness into this document. Darwin Murrell also deserves a great deal of credit for developing this document that can be found on our website [www.far-b.org/testimony.html](http://www.far-b.org/testimony.html). This year's testimony had to be submitted by March 20, 2013, but the President's budget was not yet released. Because of this, we supported the research agenda submitted in 2013. We also requested funds to remodel Bldg 307. In addition to submitting the testimony to Appropriations Committee's, FAR-B also sent copies to all the members of Maryland Delegation (two Senators and eight Representatives).

Dr. James Smith left the Board of Directors of FAR-B to pursue writing a history of nutrient and vitamin research done at the Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center. He will be spending a great deal of time in the National Agricultural Library. Jim, the Board of Directors and the membership of FAR-B, THANK YOU for the years of dedicated service you gave to FAR-B.

We have a new member of the Board of Directors, Dr. Richard Parry, a former member of the National Program Staff of ARS. Welcome aboard Dick. FAR-B is looking for others to join the BOD's. If you are interested, please contact a

Board member, found on our website.

In closing, I want to encourage all who haven't already sent in their FAR-B dues, to please do so. We desperately need your support.

*James Anderson, President*



**Joseph Spence addresses the Board at its Annual FAR-B Meeting in May.**

## **Area Director's Message**

Although this has certainly been a challenging year for the Beltsville Area, ARS and the entire Federal government, I think that it is a real testament to our scientists and staff that we have been able to perform at a level that is truly remarkable. I know of many Beltsville employees that are doing the jobs of more than one person and doing them well. While we all know this cannot continue indefinitely, it is a statement that speaks to the dedication and commitment of our employees that they have been able to perform at such an exceptional degree under very strenuous circumstances.

Despite the adversity we face, our scientists and our staff at all levels continue to produce some of the most exciting and impactful agricultural research found anywhere. This continues to be verified by the high degree of recognition of our scientists through RPES and the stream of recognitions that have been bestowed on our staff. This does not stop with the scientists but is apparent at all levels of the organization. I have received numerous comments about how the appearance of the research center has improved. It is not uncommon to have scientists tell me about what a great job their technician, secretary or the farm crew or facilities services are doing. I wish that we could do more to thank all of our employees during these strenuous times.

While we have been and will continue to be challenged for a while, I am convinced that the Beltsville Area is well positioned to flourish in the coming years no matter what the challenges might be. I am a firm believer in building "strength on strength" and it is clear that one of the strongest foundations in ARS exists right here in Beltsville.



## A Thank You Note from the Beltsville Area Diversity Task Force

Dear FAR-B Members,

The Beltsville Area Diversity Task Force would like to extend a sincere “*Thank you*” to your organization for its continual support of our endeavors. Our group has taken on the mission to provide support and leadership to the Beltsville Area Administration to ensure that the research mission of ARS is preformed at the highest scientific level possible. The creation and maintenance of a workforce that represents the Nation’s and surrounding community’s increasingly diverse population will ultimately aid in the achievement of that goal.

We have dramatic impact with the implementations of such programs as:

Cultural Heritage Month celebrations-- Hundreds of employees and community participants have been able to interact and learn about the diverse heritage of our workforce. Many collaborations have been fostered by these exchanges.

Continual development of the BA Student

Discovery Garden--More than 2,000 pounds of fresh produce and herbs have been donated to local food pantries and charities in line with the mission of Feds Feed Families. Additionally, more than 1,000 visitors have had the opportunity to discover what the Beltsville Area has to offer.

Development of a Hispanic Serving Institutions Summit and webinar series to focus solely on critical AR issues and funding such programs.

FAR-B members have helped make all of these endeavors successful with their constant support. We anticipate that our efforts will inspire a diverse community of future scientists to see the wealth of possibilities in Agricultural Sciences and FAR-B will be an integral part of that achievement. We applaud your dedication to promoting the importance of Agricultural Sciences through outreach and employee development. We look forward to future collaborations.

Thank you for your continual support,

**Verneta Gaskins**  
*Beltsville Area Diversity Taskforce*

We have the staff, the facilities, and the breadth of knowledge and expertise that can and will be helpful in the future. Our expertise is widespread and is strong in those areas of research that are priorities for the Department. I truly believe that over the long term, this will be more widely recognized and as resources become available, the Beltsville Area will be able to build on its firm foundation of outstanding agricultural research.

**Joseph Spence, Area Director**

## Financial Report

FAR-B continues to have a strong financial position in 2013. Thus the Board decided to use some of the reserve funds to continue Beltsville Area program support this year at the same level as in 2012. With the planned deficit, FAR-B reserves should still exceed \$50,000 at the end of the year. How-

ever, not being able to participate in the Combined Federal Campaign in the fall of 2012 will have a major impact on reserves and could limit support options in 2014. To date, operating income has been \$6,221, less than 60% of the results at this time in 2012. The main income sources are dues (\$3,929) and donations (\$2,092). Major expenses to date include funding for four student interns this summer (\$18,400), BARC Poster Day (\$1,913), middle school science fairs in Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties (\$449), and Beltsville Area Diversity Task Force programs (including the Discovery Garden) (\$424).

**Membership renewals are lagging behind last year. For those who have not yet renewed, please use the form printed on page 1 of this newsletter and send in your dues as soon as possible.**

**Richard Zimmerman, Treasurer**



## 2013 Poster Day Winners

From left: President Jim Anderson; Andrew Conchas, Allison Wallace, Collette Harding and Dr. Dean Hively (Mentor for Collette and Allison).

### First Place Winner

**Collette Harding**

Charles Herbert Flowers High School

**Mentor:** Dr. Dean Hively, ANRI

**Poster Title:** *The Effects of Rye and Vetch on Biomass and Nitrogen Intake*

### Second Place Winners

**Allison Wallace**

Charles Herbert Flowers High School

**Mentor:** Dr. Dean Hively, ANRI

**Poster Title:** *The Effects of Species, Growing Degree Days, and Soil Nitrogen Content on the Growth of Small Grains Used as Winter Cover Crops*

**Andrew Conchas**

James Hubert Blake High School

**Mentor:** Dr. Gloria Solano-Aguilar, BHNRC

**Poster Title:** *The Effect of Milk Fat Versus Vegetable Oil on the Intestinal Microbiota of Juvenile Pigs Fed and Isocaloric Low-Fat or High-Fat Diet*

## IN MEMORIAM

### T.C. Tso

Far-B member and long time ARS tobacco expert, T.C. Tso was a senior scientist who died at the age of 95 of heart disease on April 9 at his home in Silver Spring. Tso joined USDA tobacco research in Beltsville in 1962 and became laboratory director in the late 1960's. He joined ARS in 1952 and retired in 1983. He was a leader in laying the founda-

tion of organic metabolism of phytochemistry: the roles of organic compounds—such as sugars, organic acids, amino acids, sterols and polyphenols—in plants, and their metabolism in the plants. His research findings have broad applications. For example, he developed a group of fatty acid compounds that are widely used in the fruit and flower industries for thinning purposes. Much of his work supports medical and nutritional uses of tobacco plant constituents. In the early 1990s, Tso played a

key role in establishing a scientific team that helped re-solve a major wheat trade issue between the US and China, resulting in increased US wheat exports to China. During his tenure, he developed a method of removing harmful proteins from the tobacco leaf.

He was the author of many scholarly articles and books. After retiring from USDA in 1984 he worked as an independent consultant for USDA and the tobacco companies until 2005. He founded the non-profit institute of International Development and Education in Agriculture and Life Sciences (IDEALS) in 1984 and was the executive director of the organization until 1997.

Tien Chioh Tso was born in Hubel Province, China. He graduated in 1941 from the University of Nanking where he also received his Masters Degree in agricultural chemistry in 1944. He served in the Chinese Military before moving to the US. He received a doctorate in tobacco biochemistry sciences from Pennsylvania State University in 1946 and became a US citizen in the early 1960s.

Tso received several professional honors, including the USDA Superior Service Award in 2005. In 2002, he was inducted into the ARS Hall of Fame.

His survivors include his wife of 63 years, Margaret Lu Tso of Silver Spring; two children Bette Tso of Crownsville and Paul Tso of Atlanta, a sister Hsing Hua and two grandchildren.

## **Charles H. (Hank) Dickson**

FARB member Charles H. (Hank) Dickson, Jr. of Lanham, MD, was born on June 12, 1931 in Oak Park, IL, son of Charles H. Dickson, Sr. and Gladys Rudolph. Hank attended Ben Franklin High School, followed by Occidental College, where he was editor-in chief of the school newspaper from 1952-1953 with a scholarship. He graduated in 1954, whereupon he studied at Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy in Boston for 1 year, getting his master's degree in 1955 and moving to Washington, DC.

From 1999 to 2005 he was Executive Secretary of the Board of Directors of FAR-B. He also headed

its Community Outreach Committee, which works on various school-related activities conducted by BARC for numerous nearby schools and wrote Congressional Testimony for FARB.

In October 1957, Hank Dickson married Marilyn Kennon of Springfield, MO. She passed away in 1998 of emphysema. Hank will be buried next to her. His son Charles H. Dickson, III, lives in Laurel, MD with his wife Lisa. They have two daughters, Tabitha and Nina. His daughter Cora Dickson lives on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay in MD with her husband William Fielder. Hank is also survived by his brother Peter Dickson of Dallas, TX.

While a member of ARS's Communications and Data Services Division, he became manager of a new Microcomputer Technology Center, about the same time that IBM PC's were exploding exponentially everywhere. When that division disbanded, he moved to the Hydrology Laboratory where---for some 10 years---he helped staff members deal with problems such as collecting, entering, and analyzing scientific data while utilizing the best electronic technology available. He also made sure the laboratory's training needs regarding new hardware and software were creatively met either in-house or out-house.

He retired from the USDA in January, 1995 after 35 years of federal service. In the late 1960s Hank joined the DC Chapter of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and served as editor of its newsletter. In the 1990s and 2000s he volunteered as a special awards judge for the chapter at metro DC area science fairs. From 2002 to 2004, Hank was also special awards judge for the ACM at the INTEL International Science and Engineering Fair.

For several years in the 1990s and 2000s, Hank was a volunteer for The Science and Engineering Apprentice Program (SEAP), sponsored by American Society for Engineering Education and the Department of Defense, an 8-week summer program for high school students. At the end of the summer, the SEAP students are required to present their research. Hank's role as convener was to facilitate their presentations at George Washington University. In 1994 he received an award as the Hydrology Laboratory's mentor for the High School/Tech program designed to provide summer job experiences

in a high-tech environment to students with physical disabilities.

### **Milton Ouye**

Dr. Milton T. Ouye of Bowie, Md. passed away on Saturday, March 12, 2011. Ouye worked for more than 30 years at the Department of Agriculture in Beltsville, Md. He had a Bachelor of Science in Biology/Chemistry and a Ph.D. in Entomology. He was the National Program Leader for Biological Controls. His specialty was the Mediterranean Fruit Fly and other exotic invasive pest.

He was the son of the late Hamaichi and Teruko Ouye of Kealia, Kauai, Hawaii. He is survived by his loving wife of 28 years, Rachel Ann and children Franklin Clark, Roxana Clark, Steven Clark (Cathy) and Louis Clark (Jennifer). He is preceded in death by his late wife Laurel G. and survived by their children Gene Ouye (Vicky), Karen Dallas (Brian), Glen Ouye and Laurene Galango (Al). He is also survived by thirteen grandchildren: Natasha Berry (Jesse), Candice Levin (Brandon), Tara Clark, Frankie Clark, Steven Clark, Joseph Clark, Alison Clark, Nicholas Clark, Michael Dallas (Selena), William Dallas, Jennifer Galango, Madeline Ouye and Emily Dallas; four great-grandchildren: Louie Berry, Savannah Leigh Corey, Madeline Alice Levin and Nicholas Dallas. A Memorial Service was held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 19, 2011 at Holy Trinity Church, 13106 Annapolis Road, Bowie, MD 20720.

### **Charles Frederick Cohen**

Charles Frederick Cohn of Upper Marlboro died on April 10, 2013 at the age of 82 after a short illness. He was born in Los Angeles to Merritt Cohen and Ethel Sheftall Cohen. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Morehouse College in 1952 and did a 2 year tour of duty in the US Army and then completed his MS in science at Howard University. This led to a career in entomology at the

USDA from which he retired in 1985.

Survivors include his daughters Lisa Cuthbert and Leita Watts; son Anthony Cohen; grandsons Paul and Jonathan Cuthbert and Jason Watts; several cousins including Ursuline Dickey; former wives Shirley Cohen, Joan Foster and Sherry Ventura.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing to Morehouse College.

### **Harry Herlich**

Dr. Harry Herlich of Deerfield Beach, FL and formerly of Greenbelt, MD, died on January 2, 2013. Herlich was a former Institute Director of the Animal Parasitology Institute at BARC in the 1980s and a distinguished ruminant parasitologist. He was 87 years old and died near his retirement home in Florida.

He is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Charlotte (Ashman); beloved daughters Myra Lewis and Helen Herlich; beloved sons William (Marie) Herlich and Steven (Nancy) Herlich; grandfather of Jessica, Sara, Michael, Joseph (Stephanie) and Adam; step-grandfather of Nicole and Jessica; great-grandfather of Julia, Sophia, and Jordan.

Service and interment were held at Arlington National Cemetery. Expressions of sympathy may be made in the form of a donation to Hospice By the Sea (1531 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton, FL, 33486-3395) in Harry's memory.

### **Mark Bohning**

Mark Bohning, a Plant Germplasm Program Specialist with the USDA-ARS National Germplasm Resources Laboratory in Beltsville died on June 13 at St. Agnes Hospital, Baltimore from multiple organ failure. Mark had been having some ongoing medical problems for awhile, although his sudden passing at age 53 is tragic and shocking to his many friends and colleagues.

Mark was a Plant Germplasm Program Specialist with NGRL where he worked on a variety of projects to support the US National Plant Germplasm

System. He was the primary liaison between ARS and our 42 Crop Germplasm Committees (CGC) and travelled to many CGC meetings over the years. He participated in the Apple CGC teleconference on Friday May 3--his last CGC meeting as it was one his favorite committees with which to interact. He also helped assign Plant Introduction numbers for the NPGS and was always willing to help sites load data into GRIN (Germplasm Resources Information Network), generate reports for ARS, and generally help users understand the system. He would toil quietly and without complaint to help enter many germplasm requests that were received as emails into GRIN. He could always be counted on for assistance using his wealth of knowledge. He was always willing to help out in any way he could, without fanfare or need for recognition.

Few ARS employees knew the history, and had breadth of knowledge, of the NPGS and GRIN as well as Mark; he literally grew up with the system. He began working for ARS in 1980 while he was still an undergraduate student at the University of Maryland. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Horticulture from the University of Maryland in 1982 and 1985, respectively. He spent his entire career at BARC, almost all of it in NGRL.

Mark knew so many people associated with our genetic resource collections--from the curators and gene bank staffs, to stakeholders and colleagues in other USDA agencies, to the CGC Chairs, to a great many of the public and private sector members of the 42 CGCs.

### **Robert Bordner Rathbone**

Bob Rathbone was director of information at ARS in the 1960s and a long-time Maryland resident, moving to the area in 1950 with a job at the USDA, ARS Information Division. A resident of Asbury Methodist Village in Gaithersburg, MD, Bob died of cancer on March 5, 2013, at age 93. He was surrounded by family. Bob was chairman of the University of Maryland's Dept of Information and Publications. Born and raised in Manhat-

tan, KS, he was introduced to journalism as a boy, spending summers working on a small weekly newspaper, and graduated from Kansas State University in 1942 in journalism. He served in the US Navy, as a Lieutenant aboard a destroyer during WWII and after that, he went from newspapering to a career in agricultural journalism and positions in higher education.

He was the husband of the late Maxine Ewing and Ann Eastwood, and is survived by his daughters Susan Schriver and Mary Ann Bates, and son Bob Rathbone; seven grandchildren, and nine great grandchildren. He will be interred at Rock Creek Cemetery, with a private service, and donations may be made in Bob's name to the Salvation Army or the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

### **Joseph Francis Skelsey**

On November 25, 2012 at Inova Alexandria Hospital. He as predeceased by his loving wife, Alice Fulton Skelsey and brother Michael Smigiel-ski Shea. He is survived by his children, Anne Tipton Skelsey Helvey, Joseph Fulton Skelsey, Jr., Henry Fulton Skelsey and William Carl Skelsey; their spouses Gregg Allen Helvey, Susan Cassidy Skelsey, Susan Warner Skelsey, and Maral Kibarian Skelsey; siblings, Hedwiga Joan Fiumara and Gertrude Restighini; and grandchildren, Gregg Fulton Helvey, Joseph Tipton Helvey, Henry Fulton Skelsey, Jr., William Michael Skelsey, Charles Randolph Skelsey, Katherine Cassidy Skelsey, Nicholas Joseph Skelsey, Anna Katherine Skelsey, Charlotte Rose Kibarian Skelsey and William Frederick Kibarian Skelsey.

A visitation will be held from 9:30 a.m. until the Funeral Service begins at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, December 3, 2012 at Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home, 9902 Braddock Road, Fairfax, VA. Interment will follow at Fairfax Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Boston College, "In Memory of Joseph Skelsey - Financial Aid", Cadigan Alumni Center, 140 Commonwealth Avenue, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, or online at: [www.bc.edu](http://www.bc.edu).

## FAR-B BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Left to right: Dick Parry, Jim Anderson, Hank Becker, Darwin Murrell, Dick Zimmerman, Jim Mowder, Allan Stoner, Jim Butcher and Dave Chitwood.

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### BELTSVILLE AREA

Area Director: Joseph Spence

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