Hopefully with this last cold snap we will have the majority of winter behind us. Daylight Savings time begins on March 8th, so don’t forget to turn back your clocks next week!

Our thoughts are with Steve Hague whose mother passed away in February, and with the family and friends of Jim McAfee who we lost on January 31st. Jim’s service to the department and in the turfgrass industry will leave a lasting impact. He will certainly be missed.

Our students and faculty continue to be recognized for their exemplary work and contributions. Congratulations to Dr. Ed Runge for his 50 years of membership in the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Muthu Bagavathiannan was recently named an Outstanding Reviewer by the Weed Science Society of America. Three of our students placed first, second, and third at the Soil Survey and Land Resource Workshop competition. The Aggie Turf Club represented the department at the Sports Managers Turf Association Conference in Denver, and finished strong among 75 teams at the John Deere Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition at the GCSAA Golf Industry Show in San Antonio.

Our first ever Plant Breeding Symposium was a real hit and garnered hundreds of attendees, as well as global attendance due to its live-streaming webinar. Noted speakers included Michael Gore, associate professor of molecular breeding and
genetics for nutritional quality and international professor of plant breeding and genetics at Cornell University, our own Dr. Russell Jessup, Fred Gmitter of the University of Florida, Les Kuhlman from DuPont Pioneer, and Jianming Yu, Pioneer Distinguished Chair in Maize Breeding and associate professor in the Department of Agronomy, Iowa State University. Yan Yang and Silvano Ocheya were chosen as speakers and Smit Dhakal won first place in the poster session for the graduate research competition. All three got the top award in this symposium.

The Symposium attracted attention from many Texas A&M and local news outlets. A big thank you to everyone who helped organize and staff the event.

We have a great seminar planned for Thursday, March 5 by Endang Septiningsih. It will be held at 10 a.m. in Heep 440.

We continue to work with several companies. We have had visits from Scotts/JMC team, Bayer Wheat team and visits to Climate Corp are just a few of our recent highlights.

Please read over how to create a Google Scholar profile. The steps are listed at the end of the newsletter.

Thanks to everyone for getting your information in and scheduling your annual reviews. If you haven’t turned in or scheduled your review, please do so as soon as possible. I am in Corpus Christi and Weslaco this week and Lubbock the week of March 23rd.

David
Sympathy

Please keep Dr. Steve Hague and family in your thought and prayers as they mourn the loss of his mother – Mrs. Marjorie Hague. Mrs. Hague passed away on February 18th. Funeral services were held Saturday, February 21 @ 2:00 p.m. at Auld Funeral Home in Archer City, Texas.

Please keep the family and friends of Dr. Jim McAfee in your thoughts and prayers. Dr. McAfee passed away on January 31st after a lengthy battle with pulmonary fibrosis.

James Andrew McAfee, born January 22nd, 1945 in Edinburg Texas, passed away January 31st, 2015 in Richardson, Texas. He was preceded in death by his father, Thomas Edison McAfee and mother Catheryne McAfee; sister, Nancy Adams; and nephew, John Thornton. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Kayla McAfee of Richardson, Texas; son, Thomas McAfee and wife Jewell McAfee and their sons Steffen, Dylan and Brandon, all of San Antonio; son, Alan McAfee and wife Stephanie McAfee and their son Carson, of Garland; son, Eric McAfee of Richardson, Texas; sister, Virginia “Ginny” Pittman of College Station; niece, Peggy Frisbie of Harleysville, PA; and nephew, Doug Thornton of College Station; as well as numerous other family and friends.

He received his Bachelor and Master Degrees from Texas A&M University, his PhD from Purdue University specializing in Turfgrass Sciences. He worked for 40 years in the turfgrass industry, finishing his career as an Associate Professor and Turfgrass Specialist with the Texas AgriLife Extension and Research Center in Dallas Texas. Throughout his career he received numerous awards and recognitions for his knowledge, service and contributions to his field. He was a member of numerous professional organizations, including Texas Turfgrass Association and Sports Turf Managers Association.

In lieu of flowers, family requests contributions to be made in his memory to the McAfee Memorial Scholarship at Texas A&M University. Checks should be made payable to the Texas A&M Foundation and mailed to 401 George Bush Dr., College Station, TX 77840. Please note on your check “In memory of Dr. James A. McAfee ’67.”
Congratulations to **Dr. Edward Runge** for his 50 years of membership in the American Association for the Advancement of Science! For 20 years he served as Secretary of the Agriculture, Food and Renewable Resources section.
Congratulations to Dr. Muthu Bagavathiannan for being named an Outstanding Reviewer by the Weed Science Society of America!

Muthu Bagavathiannan, Ph.D., an assistant professor at Texas A&M University, College Station. His research focuses on the evolutionary biology of herbicide resistance in weeds and on how to develop integrated resistance management solutions. Bagavathiannan also uses simulation modeling and information technology tools to guide informed decision making by growers. He has authored or coauthored more than 25 peer-reviewed journal articles, two book chapters and three extension fact sheets, and he has presented his research at both national and international meetings. He currently serves on three WSSA committees and is WSSA's liaison to the Crop Science Society of America.

Congratulations to master’s student Smit Dhakal for receiving first place at the Texas A&M Plant Breeding Symposium poster competition!

Dhakal is working with the AgriLife Research wheat genetics program at Amarillo for his thesis research under the supervision of Dr. Shuyu Liu. Liu said they have developed a new protocol and screened a mapping population, segregating for wheat curl mite resistance, using a wheat curl mite collection maintained by Rush’s plant pathology program.
Soil Survey and Land Resource Workshop
Poster Competition Winners

First Place: Jason Ackerson
Second Place: Gregory Rouze
Third Place: Julieta Collazo
Aggie Turf Club is off to a strong start for the spring semester! The club meets every other Wednesday at 5 p.m. in Heep 440, and we have lined up some very notable speakers for this semester’s club meetings. Some of the speakers that will be joining us include Scott Abernathy (Director of Agronomy TPC Four Seasons), Johnny Walker (Bentwater Golf Club), David Doguet (BladeRunner Farms), Tom Burns (Diamond Pro, and former field manager for Ballpark in Arlington), and Allen Reed (FC Dallas).

In January, five of our Turfgrass Science students traveled to Denver, CO for the Sports Turf Managers Association Conference. In addition to educational seminars and exposure to industry opportunities following graduation, students competed in the STMA Collegiate Turf Challenge, where they placed 8th out of 32 teams (photo L to R: Andrew Keeler, Travis Browder, Corey Diaz, Chase Brister, Rodrigo Martinez).

More recently, ten of our students attended the GCSAA Golf Industry Show in San Antonio, TX. In addition to attending educational sessions, networking, and gaining valuable exposure to internship and career opportunities within the industry, students participated in the 21st Annual John Deere Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition, which saw teams from over 30 universities participate. The students represented our program well, with all 3 teams placing with very strong finishes among the 75 teams in this year’s competition. (L to R: Kevin Hejl, Rodrigo Martinez, Jordan Holmes, Garrett Parker, Jacob Boelsche, Jacob Blalock, Jacob Doucet, Corey Diaz, Hunter Townsend, and Michael Healey).

More information on Aggie Turf Club happenings and upcoming events can be found at https://turfgrassclub.tamu.edu/
Graduate students had the opportunity to showcase their work and learn about new technologies Thursday at Texas A&M's first Plant Breeding Symposium.

Three graduate students had the opportunity to give speeches on their work at the symposium, and 28 other students displayed their work on poster boards for attendees to view. Francisco Gomez, plant breeding and genetics graduate student and one of the student speakers, said the symposium was a great opportunity for students to learn more about each other’s work.

“You’ve been working on your research really hard and being able to share it with people, getting feedback and questions is always a good outlet,” Gomez said. “It’s important to learn, to explain your work to others instead of it just sitting in a box on your computer”

Gomez spoke at the symposium on his use of mechanical engineering techniques to help measure and improve the structural integrity of plants. Plant breeders use a variety of tools to do their work, and Gomez said this type of interdisciplinary research was a way to add another tool to his plant breeding toolbox.

Nolan Bentley, horticulture doctoral candidate and symposium poster presenter, said spreading knowledge about the plant breeding industry is important because it is a large and varied field that has a major impact on food production.

“It benefits all of us because we’re sharing what’s going on, new trends, new discoveries,” Bentley said. “What you’re seeing here is work that may have happened as soon as a week ago. This may be the first place you see an idea and so if you want to jump ahead you can come to these things and see something really interesting that spurs you on to future ideas and experiments.”

Nikhil Patil, molecular and environmental plant science doctoral candidate and symposium poster presenter, said symposiums like this allow networking opportunities.

“You get to know a lot about the different research that other people are doing and at the same time showcase your own,” Patil said. “This was the first plant breeding symposium to be held at Texas A&M and it was nice to be able to present research to fellow A&M students.”

The plant breeding symposium was also streamed live online, where it garnered viewers from as far away as South America and Europe. This gave speakers the chance to answer questions not only from people physically at the event, but also from people watching online.
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<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Seminar by Endang Septiningsih</td>
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<td>March 8</td>
<td>Daylight Savings begins</td>
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<td>March 16-18</td>
<td>Congressional Visits Day</td>
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<td>May 19-21</td>
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SEMINAR

Thursday, March 5
10:00 A.M.
ROOM 440, HEEP CENTER

Endang Septiningsih
Senior Scientist, Molecular Genetics
Plant Breeding, Genetics, and Biotechnology Division (PBGB)
International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)

"Making an impact: applying molecular tools to develop flood tolerant rice"

Sponsored by the
Department of Soil & Crop Sciences
Creating a Google Scholar Profile

The Department of Soil and Crop Sciences is requesting that all faculty set-up a Google Scholar profile in order to facilitate tracking of faculty publications. This will allow SCSC administration to download the information from your Google Scholar account rather than having to request it directly from each faculty member.

If you already have a Google Scholar profile that is publicly viewable, you do not need to do anything other than continue to curate your publications. If you do not already have a Google Scholar profile, please follow the instructions below to create your account and profile:

1. Go to: http://scholar.google.com/
2. Click “Sign in” in top right corner of website. If you do not already have a Google account that you want to use, click “Create an account” at the bottom of the page.
   a. Alternatively, you can sign in with an existing Google account and skip step 3.
3. Enter your name, username, password, etc. For your username, you can either use an existing email address (e.g., your agnet email) or you can create a new username. Click “Next step.”
4. Google may request verification of your email address by sending an email to the address used for your username. If so, verify your email address by clicking on link in the Google Email Verification to activate your account.
5. The next option is to create a public Google+ profile. You can either personalize your profile at this point or click “No thanks” to do this later (if desired).
6. If you clicked “No thanks,” you should now be at the welcome screen. Click the “Get started” button to go to the Google Scholar main screen.
7. To set-up your profile, click the “My Citations” button at the top of the website. Enter your name and any other information that would help identify your publications. Click “Next step.”
8. Google Scholar will have downloaded articles that it thinks you have authored. Click “See all articles,” select the ones that you have authored by putting a check mark in the box to the left of each publication, and click “Add.” Then click “Next step” at the bottom right of the page.
9. The next step is to select how Google Scholar updates your profile. You can either set-up your profile to automatically update your publications (recommended) or you can have them emailed to you for confirmation before updating. Once you have selected one of these options, click “Go to my profile.”
10. At this point you can view the list of articles in your Google Scholar profile. If there are still articles listed that you did not author, these can be removed by checking the box next to the article and clicking delete. If you have authored papers that are not listed, these can be added by clicking “add” and either adding them from the list of articles that were downloaded by Google Scholar or they can be added manually (see options on left of page).
11. Once your list of articles is accurate and your profile has been personalized (if desired), make your profile public by clicking the “Make it public” link next to your photo.
12. Every few months, check your Google Scholar profile to ensure that your list of publications is accurate and curate them as needed.