



VOICES

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/npa/voices>

Advancing diversity and its unique contributions in the NPA

Crucial Conversations: Dealing with Emotions

By Jeff Schmitt
ADR Program Specialist

Crucial conversations are interactions, which sometimes occur daily, that everyone experiences. You might ask, what makes them crucial? Besides the presence of differing opinions and high stakes, crucial conversations are marked by elevated emotions. Left unchecked, these emotions may cause us to act inappropriately and unprofessionally towards one another. American journalist and author, Ambrose Bierce once said, "Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret." Consequences are detrimental.

We must first understand ourselves to improve our ability to handle these conversations. Most importantly, we need to understand our own "hot buttons," you know, the things that really get under our skin. We probably already have a good idea about those "hot buttons" and who might push them.

The authors of *Crucial Conversations* indicate that the best leaders are those of us who are able to handle these sensitive conversations in a moment's notice. It doesn't have anything to do with intellect or intelligence, but by using some key communication skills to provide sensitive information we can avoid putting the other person on the defense.

Correct me if I am wrong, when we are put on the defense during conversation, two things occur:

"Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret."

~ Ambrose Bierce

1. We usually "leave" the conversation (i.e. stop listening) to try to prepare support our position, and
2. We feel we only have two choices – a) withdraw and not address it and maybe convince ourselves that it wasn't that important anyway (silence), or, b) yield to all of our emotions and endure the ramifications of it all (emotional violence).

The consequence to all of these actions is to disengage from conversation.

However, the only way that you can continue to learn more about a situation is to continue to engage in conversation. So, if you ever feel that you are getting aggravated, frustrated or upset while in a conversation – step out of the content – and ask yourself three questions:

- What do I want for myself?
- What do I want for the other person?
- What do I want for the relationship?

These questions will take you out of the emotional state and re-engage the intellectual side of your brain so that you can actively and more effectively engage in a crucial conversation.

For more information on improving your communication skills in Crucial Conversations check out the reference book; the web at www.vitalsmarts.com; or inquire as to the next training. ■

Reference Book

Crucial Conversations – Tools for Talking When Stakes are High. 2002. K. Patterson, J. Grenny, R. McMillan, and A. Switzler

Training Opportunities

2-day Crucial Conversations training is offered through the Employee Leadership and Development Staff in AFM. Please contact **Caroline Ingles**, Section Head, 301-504-1432.

ADR Program Specialists

Jeff Schmitt (301-504-1352) and **Jan Lewis** (your NPA Representative, 301-504-1450) are Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program Specialists with the Cooperative Resolution Program (CRP) in the Office of Outreach, Diversity and Equal Opportunity (ODEO).

For more on available Cooperative Resolution Programs, please see page 4.

More Communication Challenges: Gossip at Work

As with any workplace, gossip and its negative impacts can be a problem at ARS locations.

Not everyone at a location is involved, and to those who act in a professional manner, many thanks for making your lab a better place to work. Gossip is a natural part of human communication, and may never disappear at the workplace, but for the good of all of us, it can be minimized.

Here is some information about gossip, how harmful it can be, how we all can evaluate if we are gossiping, and how to help stop others from spreading gossip.

What is gossip?

Interest in others is only natural. Empathy and concern for a co-worker, and sharing those feelings with others that also know a co-worker is common. The point at which conversation about another person becomes gossip can usually be determined by the intent of the person spreading the news, whether the content is true or not. Is it something they would say to the person's face? Is it intended to convey a positive image of an individual being discussed? Is the person's identification so critical that we can't discuss the topic without it? If the answer to any of these is No, you might be dealing with gossip. Remember, if you keep your comments about co-workers positive and considerate, you have little chance of spreading gossip.

Why do people gossip?

Clearly, people do it in self-interest, and all of us are guilty to some extent. Sharing a secret or scandalous news might elevate the one gossiping to a position of importance in a social circle. But it is done at the expense of the person being gossiped about, not for their benefit. Low self-esteem and a desire to "fit in" are frequently cited as motivations for workplace gossip. Gossiping provides a momentary feeling of superiority and control that the person probably lacks otherwise.

Why is it harmful?

While many forms of gossip are relatively innocuous, gossip has the potential to ruin lives and reputations.

Much like bullying at the playground, which was once almost accepted as a part of growing up, we are only beginning to understand how deeply harmful gossip can be, even for adults.

Some negative consequences of workplace gossip may include:

- Erosion of trust and morale.
- Growing divisiveness among employees as people "take sides."
- Hurt feelings and reputations (even leading to depression and suicide in cases).
- Lost productivity and wasted time.
- Jeopardized chances for the gossipers' advancement as they are perceived as unprofessional.
- Attrition as good employees leave the company due to the unhealthy work atmosphere.

How to stop gossip:

Before you spread news about another person, ask yourself the following:

- Is this something I would tell the person to their face?
- Will this information harm a person's reputation, even if it is true?
- Does my spreading this information do any good to anyone besides myself?

- Could I discuss this important workplace topic without including names of people involved?
- Am I spreading this news to anyone who will listen, or am I being careful that information is only going to the key people that need this information (for example, reporting to the police, management, or the EEO officer)?

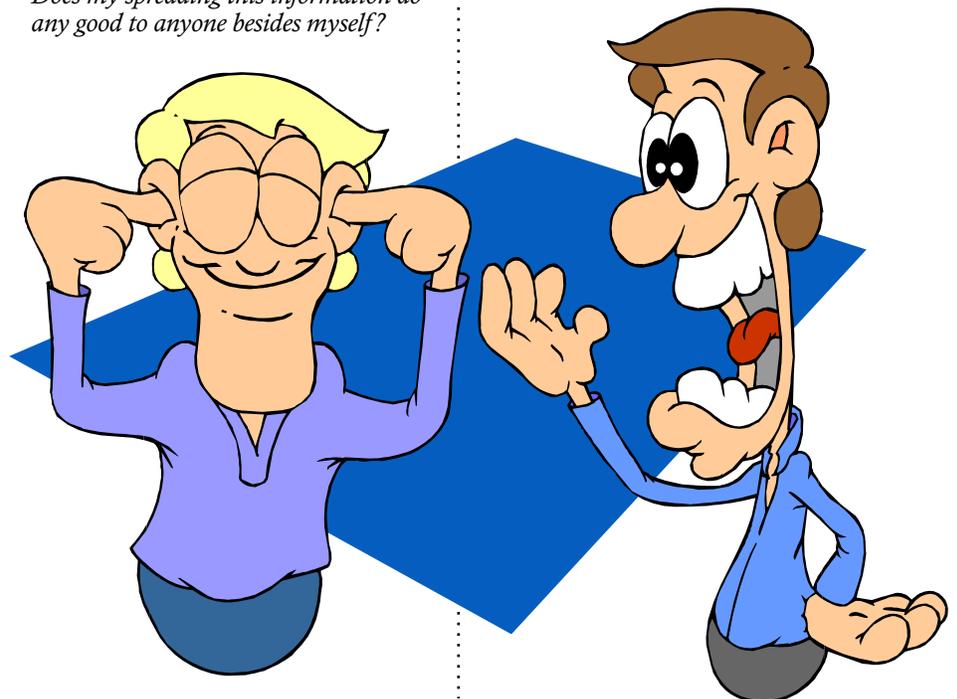
If someone starts spreading gossip to you, here are some things you can do:

- Walk away.
- Change the subject.
- Directly state, "I'm not comfortable talking about _____."
- Directly state, "I don't like talking about other people because I don't like them talking about me." That's a conversation ender for sure.

For more info:

<http://www.businessstrainingworks.com/Etiquette/Stopping-Office-Gossip.html>

http://www.businessweek.com/managing/content/nov2009/ca2009113_999372.htm ■



Northern Plains Notes

By Northern Plains Area Director Will Blackburn

Looking back on the past few issues of *VOICES*, a common thread running through each of my columns has been the US budget. This column is no different. As I write this, worrisome predictions of a government shutdown, employee furloughs, and reduced budgets continue to grab headlines. In times like this it is important to remind ourselves of our mission and that we need to be at our best.

In ARS, Dr. Knipling is taking steps to address the budgetary challenges we face now and in the foreseeable future. In order to meet those challenges, Dr. Knipling has proposed that the administrative support functions within Area Offices and Headquarters be restructured into two or more service centers. These service centers will initially be "virtual" starting October 1st of this year, in that employees will not be physically relocated until the service centers are identified and ready for occupancy.

As you can imagine, restructuring of this magnitude involves a great deal of planning, some cost, and considerable uncertainty among employees who will be affected. At this time, the existing configuration of eight Area Offices will continue for the foreseeable future. I will do my best to keep Area employees aware of decisions regarding this restructuring as information becomes available.

Intern / Apprentice Awards

On a brighter note, seven college students will have the opportunity to work as interns and two high school students to work as apprentices this summer in NPA labs in the Area Co-Funded Internship/Apprenticeship program. As in past years the competition for funding was stiff. Scientists selected to serve as intern mentors are: Dr. Lili Qi, Dr. Ben Green, Dr. Erin Espeland, Dr. Mindy Spiehs, Dr. Kimberly Webb, Dr. Jerry Zhu, and Dr. Liwang Ma. Dr. John Hendrickson and Dr. Leah Whigham were selected to mentor apprentices.

The American Indian Internship

Program, which had supported 43 internships between 2005 and 2010 through cooperative agreements with United Tribes Technical College and the University of Arizona, has expired, and the decision was made by the ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity and Equal Opportunity (ODEO) to not seek new agreements. The ARS ODEO had generously funded that program, with additional support provided by the Area Office and participating locations.

Many of those students have since gone on to continue their education or have embarked on careers. Certainly the internships and associated mentoring by scientists and technicians gave these students an extraordinary hands-on experiential learning opportunity. Many thanks to all of the scientists, technicians, and staff who helped make the internship experience memorable for those interns.

NPA Awards of Excellence

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge everyone who was selected to receive NPA Awards of Excellence, which are presented biannually to recognize outstanding achievements which have contributed significantly to the mission of the NPA and the Agricultural Research Service:

Scientific Support: *Dan LeCain, Plant Physiologist, Rangeland Resources Research, Fort Collins*

Office Professional: *Louise Dalton, Secretary, Office of the Director, Fort Collins*

Information Technology: *Joseph Duchene, Information Technology Specialist, National Center for Genetic Resource Preservation, Fort Collins*

Administrative Management Support: *NPA Files Management Team, Lisa Baete, Realty Specialist, Fort Collins; Linda Parnell, Secretary, Clay Center; Kimberly Swanson, Secretary, Fargo; Connie Wooten, Program Support Assistant, Fargo*

Safety, Health, and Environmental: *James Adrianos, Facility Operations*

Specialist, Arthropod-borne Animal Diseases Research, Manhattan

EEO/Diversity: *NPA Diversity Task Force, for building community among NPA locations and identifying future directions for expanding diversity outcomes in the NPA (this went to current and former members of the task force):*

Francisco Calderon, Soil Scientist, Akron, CO; Eduardo Casas, Geneticist, Clay Center; Carol Chitko-McKown, Microbiologist, Clay Center; Dave Dierig, Research Leader, Fort Collins; John Gaskin, Research Leader, Sidney; Heather Gossel, Information Technology Specialist, Fort Collins; JoAnne Gresens, Safety & Occupational Health Specialist, Manhattan; Bill Kemp, Center Director, Fargo; Barbara King, Equal Employment Specialist, Fort Collins;



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2150 Centre Avenue, Building D, Suite 300
 Fort Collins, CO 80526
 970-492-7057
 Executive Editor: Barbara King
 Production Editor: Bethany Redlin

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Notes...

Continued from page 3

Kristine Nichols, Microbiologist, Mandan; Mark Petersen, Research Leader, Miles City; Theresa Pitts-Singer, Entomologist, Logan; Beth Redlin, Technical Information Specialist, Sidney; Kurt Rosentrater, Agricultural Engineer, Brookings; Sue Sorum, Administrative Officer, Grand Forks; Kathi White, Human Resources and Outreach Coordinator, Fort Collins; Kevin Dahl, IT Specialist, Sidney; Diona Austill, Program Support Assistant, Miles City; Dana Blumenthal, Ecologist, Fort Collins; Holly Johnson, Rangeland Management Specialist, Mandan; Gautam Sarath, Molecular Biologist, Lincoln, and Dave Schneider, Technician, Brookings.

In closing I want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank each of you for your contributions, and working together, I am confident that we will continue the fine traditions that have defined ARS as an outstanding scientific organization. ■

Alternative Dispute Services Available from CRP

*By Jeff Schmitt
 ADR Program Specialist*

Cooperative Resolution Program provides Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services to the REE Mission Area. All services are voluntary and confidential. Besides Mediation, the most well-known ADR service, CRP offers Conflict Coaching, Facilitated Dialogue, Facilitation / Group Intervention and Training.

Conflict Coaching is a process to enhance the skills, knowledge and competencies of employees in managing interpersonal conflict while working one-on-one with a CRP ADR Specialist.

Facilitated Dialogue is a structured conversation between two or more parties involved in a conflict, orchestrated by a neutral third party (facilitator).

Facilitation / Group Intervention is a

group process designed to address difficult team communications and damaging group dynamics, resolve conflict issues, and guide the team to develop conflict management strategies to self-monitor and address future conflict in a positive, collaborative way.

Training in communication and conflict management has quickly become a supporting mainstay in our program and we've seen a significant increase in requests for training. Some of the newer training modules include: Respectful Workplace, Making Change Work For You, Generations: Collaborating Conversations, Performance Feedback, Why Diversity Matters, Workplace Communication: From Collision to Collaboration. We also continue to offer customized training based on the needs of the requesting group. ■

Where in the NPA?

This air-displacement plethysmograph (say that three times!) or hands-free "Bod Pod" creates a vacuum to easily and accurately measure body volume. That info is used by researchers to help estimate body density and composition and ultimately the nutritional status of the participant. Where is this "pod cave" located?

(Answer on page 19)

Show your own location pride! Share your pictures of scenic landmarks, fun festivities or occupational oddities that make your location uniquely you!

Please e-mail your pictures (with captions) to

Beth Redlin at:

Beth.Redlin@ars.usda.gov

or to Barbara King at:

Barbara.King@ars.usda.gov



Staying Relevant by Reaching Out

By Barbara King, Area Office

This issue of *VOICES* includes a range of reviews, an amazing story of one family's commitment to helping others, a perspectives section with three stories about working in ARS, reminders about the pitfalls of gossip, kudos and some sobering news in NPA Notes, crucial conversations, and how some locations use food to "lighten up" (it really works!). I think, and I'm confident all readers will agree, that the stories contained in this issue illustrate some incredible personal narratives of individuals who followed their dreams, jumped at opportunities, and generally found the energy and time to take chances, get involved, and live full lives.

As Dr. Blackburn notes in his column, budgets are tight and promise to get tighter as this fiscal year winds down and the next one begins. Despite these budget concerns and uncertainties, expectations about cultural transformation and workforce diversification remain in place. Without a diverse workforce, we face the real prospect of losing relevancy in an ever-increasing

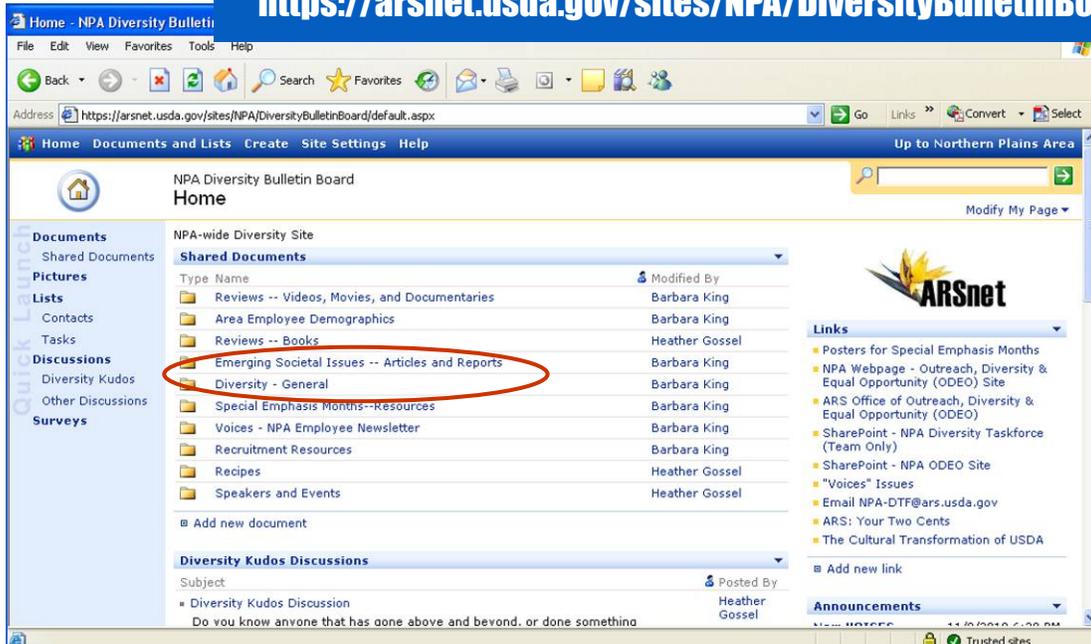
diverse world. Additionally, organizations that thrive are those that have men and women from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives who know how to relate to people who do not have their same backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Diversity challenges for NPA are large, especially as budget predictions are anything but rosy. For instance, the NPA remains predominantly white (92%) and male (59%). Many of the occupations are dominated by one gender, and as a result, grades often reflect gender dominance. For instance, 58% of all women are in grades 1-8 compared to just 23% of all men, and 45% of all men are in grades 13-15 compared to 10% of all women. Despite a recent executive order by President Obama, the ratio of employees with disabilities in the NPA is declining. On a very positive note, two employees at Fargo have been recognized for their efforts in recruiting employees with disabilities: the USDA-ARS RRVARC has been selected to receive the 2010 Employer of the Year Award by the Metro Area Mayor's

Committee for People with Disabilities "For achievement in improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities." John Johnson (Administrative Officer) took the lead in this endeavor. Also, Dr. Nancy Shappell worked very closely with the Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Service to secure an intern. This program helps train people with disabilities for employment.

In order to meet the expectations of a more diverse workforce, NPA will need to ramp up our efforts in reaching out to under-represented groups. One way of doing so is to actively recruit students from under-represented groups for SCEP appointments and conversions. While NPA has recruited and converted very promising SCEP students to permanent positions, we have not used SCEP appointments to reach out to minority students. We can do better, and I'm confident that working together and actively finding ways to tap into minority populations, our profile will change and we will benefit from the synergy that comes from a diversity of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. ■

<https://arsnet.usda.gov/sites/NPA/DiversityBulletinBoard/>



New Postings on the NPA Bulletin Board

There are several new articles posted to the NPA Diversity Bulletin Board including:

"Different Race, Different Recession American Indian Unemployment in 2010," an Issue Brief from the Economic Policy Institute

"Diversity as a Strategic Advantage" in Bloomberg Businessweek

The Bulletin Board is a SharePoint website so you will be asked for your e-mail user name - usually *arsnet.firstname.lastname* - and password when entering the site.

Perspectives (inside ARS and out)

• Special Feature •

What is life like outside ARS?

What is life like when you're both inside AND out?

How would you encourage Middle School girls to consider ag science as a career? And are you ready for all the questions?

Discover new perspectives on life inside and outside ARS in this special "Perspectives" section of VOICES.

Which is Greener?

A new employee compares life both inside and outside of ARS.

Pages 6-7

Juggling Jobs

An ARS employee swaps hats in her dual roles as student and technician.

Page 8

The Inside Scoop

An all-female panel of scientists generated lots of questions from Middle School students. Find out what they learned through their participation.

Pages 9-10

So Who Has the Greener Pastures? An Interview with Scott McVey

By Carol Chitko-McKown, Clay Center, NE and Scott McVey, Manhattan, KS

It's human nature to assume that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, but most of us don't get to test out all of the pastures! Scott McVey, Research Leader of the Arthropod-Borne Animal Diseases Research Unit as of January 2nd of this year, is one of those rare individuals who has "tasted the grass" in academia, industry, and most recently, government service.

Dr. McVey received his DVM degree from the University of Tennessee in 1980 then spent the next three years in a dairy practice in East Tennessee. He earned the PhD degree in Veterinary Microbiology from Texas A&M University in 1986, then joined the faculty at Kansas State University in 1986 as an Assistant Professor of Immunology. He was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in 1992. While at Kansas State University, Dr. McVey directed the Clinical Immunology and Flow Cytometry service laboratories, and was course coordinator for immunology while also teaching significant portions of infectious disease courses to undergraduate, graduate and veterinary students. In late 1995, Dr. McVey joined Rhone Merieux as a Production Animal Scientist working in developmental research in veterinary biological products and diagnostics. In January of 1998, he joined Pfizer Bioprocess Research as a Senior Research Investigator and his most recent position there was Director of Laboratory Sciences, Biologicals Development of Pfizer Animal Health in Lincoln, NE (through April 2006). Dr. McVey then returned to academia at the University of Nebraska, where he was Professor of Clinical Microbiology and Director of the Veterinary Diagnostic Center where he supervised diagnostic bacteriology and taught bacteriology in the University of Nebraska-Iowa State University joint program for veterinary medicine.

I sent Dr. McVey the following questions and asked him to relate to us in his own words, the differences between and similarities among academia, industry, and government service. What follows are his responses:

What do you think of federal service so far?

So far this has been very interesting. I struggle to find time to get completely engaged on the science and research – always a balance with training, administrative duties, etc. It is always a challenge to learn the new "system" and how the ARS does business. But it has been fun.

What caused you to move from academia to industry to academia and then ARS?

Opportunities. I never have had a career plan map. So, basically what has happened is that as windows of opportunity have opened, I have jumped. The landings have been pleasant so far.

What is most different in ARS from Industry and Academia?

In all of these settings I have been involved with laboratory and project management. The goals are a bit different though. In academia my experiences have been a mixture of service/diagnostic with applied and basic research. The goals were to 1) provide quality diagnostic case work and support for clinicians, and 2) lead and participate in collaborative research programs associated with infectious diseases. In industry the goal was usually to test a product concept as efficiently and quickly as possible. This included process development and validation of quality assurance methods.

Continued next page →

Greener Pastures... *Continued from page 6*

Efficiency and robustness were important goals of the work. It was a challenge to take a good idea with proof of concept and develop the appropriate clinical models, manufacturing processes and supporting laboratory assays to end up with a successful commercial product.

All of these efforts depend on the ability to investigate and solve problems using sound scientific methods, but I have always enjoyed the research component the most. That is why the RL position at ABADRU was very interesting to me. Development of diagnostic and intervention strategies for Rift Valley Fever Virus or Blue Tongue Virus or other diseases requires investigation of some very basic questions in immunology, virology and entomology.

What is most similar?

Team approaches are most successful in all of these organizations. No one person achieves very much working alone. In industry I had the blessing of working with chemists, engineers, physicians, veterinarians, microbiologists, marketing experts, legal professionals, etc.

One similarity between accredited diagnostic and industry laboratories was that both of these environments operate in a very heavily regulated environment. Both required very strict validation and standard operation procedures. Working in these regulated and controlled environments is challenging – but I am thankful for the opportunity to learn good laboratory practice procedures (literally and figuratively). Even though basic research does not require many of these formal practices, there is still a responsibility to follow responsible guidelines. Working in these environments has provided me with many learning opportunities. In industry I had the opportunity to work on global issues and problems. That is another aspect of the ABADRU mission I find exciting.

Working for ARS reminds me very much of working for a large, international corporation. There is a definite matrix chain of command (one has many bosses) and a form and procedure for everything.

What do you miss the most? What do you think is better?

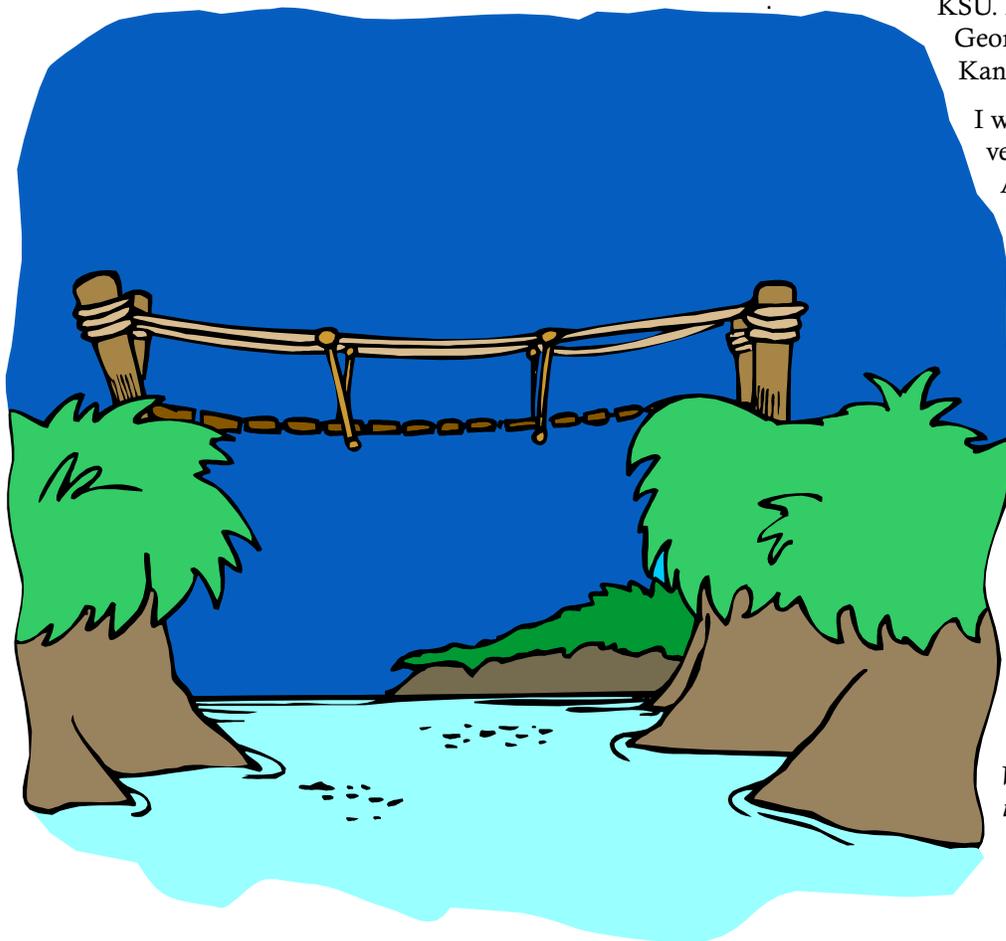
I have enjoyed all of the opportunities I have experienced – absolutely no regrets. It is good to return to Manhattan and KSU. I have worked in Tennessee, Texas, Kansas, Georgia, Connecticut, Nebraska and now back to Kansas. All have been great.

I will miss the class room and getting to know veterinary and graduate students very well. Although, I will have some opportunity for that here in Kansas.

Please add any amusing anecdotes (I know you have plenty).

I thought it was amusing that I was asked to “swear allegiance to the constitution and the President and defend from all enemies.....” on the first day. It reminded me of a day when I was 18 years old and being inducted in to the US Army. Then I remembered they cut off all of my hair and proceeded to yell at me very frequently. I got a little nervous when I remembered those experiences. But so far that has not yet happened.

Welcome to ARS Dr. McVey! We hope you enjoy the ride. ■



Juggling Hats

By Ellen Klinger, Logan, UT

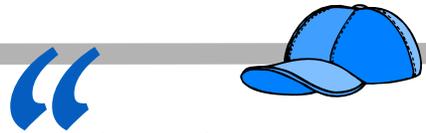
Every weekday, I wear my ARS technician "hat." I do tasks that many of you, the people reading this article, do as well. I calibrate incubators. I organize data. I help run experiments. However, for part of almost every day, I take off my technician hat and don a different one. I'm currently also pursuing a PhD, so my other hat is that of a student. These two hats are sometimes not the easiest to switch between.

As a technician, in a permanent, full-time job, I feel "young." I am the youngest technician working in my lab (I'm in my early 30s), have never been married, and have no children. While some co-workers are busy raising children and some are nearing retirement, I have no similar looming familial or financial responsibilities. Although I see myself as a mature woman in my workplace with responsibilities and capabilities equivalent to those of co-workers, I sometimes feel that others consider me a youngster or somehow inexperienced in life because of my familial status.

On the other hand, when I put my student hat on, I suddenly feel "old." I am on a campus amongst many 19-25 year olds. My clothes aren't the latest fashion, and, due to a severe lack of free time, are usually wrinkled. Recently I dropped my gloves on the ground and didn't even notice; a fellow student picked them up for me, alerting me to my oblivious behavior.

On another occasion in the library, I couldn't figure out a computer book reservation system, and, after having two librarians help me, my elbow accidentally nudged my binder so that it fell to the floor, making perhaps the loudest noise I ever thought a binder could make. In essence, I felt very "uncool." My actions allowed others to perceive me as absentminded and

clumsy, but they did not take note of my drive, determination, and sincerity for learning and achieving my goals.



As a technician, in a permanent, full-time job, I feel "young." I am the youngest technician working in my lab (I'm in my early 30s), have never been married, and have no children.

On the other hand, when I put my student hat on, I suddenly feel "old." I am on a campus amongst many 19-25 year olds. My clothes aren't the latest fashion, and, due to a severe lack of free time, are usually wrinkled.

Wearing multiple hats definitely takes a lot of my time and patience, and I try to perform both my duties to the fullest extent of my abilities. In my ARS workplace I am more settled and confident. However, there is one thing for which I lack patience, and that is the offhand way that students in general are

categorized into a distinct "class." Think about how you might describe an undergraduate or graduate student. Who are they? What is their life like? Now, think about how you might describe a laboratory technician or a scientist. How do your perceptions of those types of people compare? Now consider that this person is one and the same.

I'm willing to bet that one of the differences many of you may have considered, either directly or indirectly, is a difference in maturity. The ages of the two people you had envisioned may have been different, which helped shape this perception; or if the ages didn't differ too much, there is a maturity difference between the two parties. A student, by definition, is someone who immerses themselves in an area in order to gain a better knowledge of that area, with the intent of becoming somewhat of an expert. A technician is defined more as someone who is already skilled in a specific area and can produce results using this expertise.

My take-home point is to bring awareness to the fact that people often place others into stereotyped categories based on their livelihoods. It is quite socially acceptable to make jokes about students eating pizza late at night, goofing around on the internet, and being irresponsible. It is socially accepted because, for the visible majority, perhaps it is true.

However, when one of my professors makes a comment to my class about how "graduate students are unreliable on class attendance before spring break," it bothers me. I know I am present in class, and I know that I have been present in my job. And I'd like it to be acknowledged that underneath the hat I'm currently wearing, my hair is tangled from all the switching I have to do. ■

Women in Ag Science Panel

Editor's Note: The following article by reporter Louisa Barber was printed in the March 23, 2011 edition of the Sidney Herald, Sidney, MT. It is reprinted here with permission. The article describes the "Women in Science" panel organized by the Sidney, MT ARS location and Sidney Middle School science staff in commemoration of National Women's History Month, National Agriculture Week and National Women in Science Week. The audience was 6th through 8th grade girls.

When it comes to choosing a career path, it helps to discover what you enjoy, first, and maybe even what you're good at. It's what Sidney Middle School students were told by some of the female scientists last week in recognition of National Agriculture Week, who discussed their work and how they became interested in Agricultural Science as a career.

Their stories aren't as one may expect. In fact, it took a long while for some to discover what they really wanted to pursue. Take, for instance, Dr. Erin Espeland, plant ecologist, USDA-ARS, who first studied music in college, or Dr. Greta Gramig, agronomist, North Dakota State University-Fargo, who studied art but acquired a taste for gardening from her grandfather. She became interested in plant medicines and returned to school to learn about plants.

Then there is Dr. Tatyana Rand, ecologist, USDA-ARS, who double majored in English and biology. She credited having exceptional teachers who inspired her to pursue her interests. She focuses now on conservation biology – fancy language that means studying ways to manage the agriculture system to make food but do it in a sustainable way and ensure that way is good for the environment.

"If you like learning, this is a way to learn new things," she said, adding that a career in science allows one to be creative and to focus on one's ideas.

Deb Waters, biological science technician and containment coordinator, USDA-ARS, grew up in Glendive, MT in the shadow of the rugged badlands of Makoshika State Park. After marrying and farming with her husband, Waters went to school at Dawson Community College for science and discovered that, "This is what I want. This is what I love." She transferred to MSU and earned bachelor's and master's degrees. Today, she enjoys what she does, as she does a "multitude of jobs."

"You're always learning, and if you stop learning, you're going to be tired of your job. I don't ever want to be tired of my job," she said.

For more than 30 years, Joyce Eckhoff, agronomist, MSU -Eastern Agricultural Research Center, has made a career of science. A plant breeder, Eckhoff said she enjoys the challenges of agricultural research, especially with a population explosion and shrinking farmland. "Everyone's involved in agriculture, and it's an important part of life," she said.

TheCan Caesar, microbiologist, USDA-ARS, a native of Vietnam, discovered an interest for microbiology when her father suggested a career in science after first pursuing a career in political science.

"Don't give up if you start something and it doesn't work out," she said, suggesting students speak with professionals who can give guidance. Caesar encouraged them to work hard and be motivated to do what they want. "Nothing is easy," she said. "You have to work hard. There is no other way." ■

Another Perspective On the Same Event...

Editor's Note: Following are comments from the participants, teachers, and other organizers of the Women in Ag Science Panel held at the Sidney (MT) Middle School.

Panelist Erin Espeland, Sidney ARS:

It was a great opportunity. And I was amazed at all the questions.

Panelist Tatyana Rand, Sidney ARS:

I thought it went really well. I know I learned a lot from my colleagues about how they got to be where they are and the many varied channels they took to get there. I was also pleased that the girls were really engaged. They asked a lot of questions and had their hands up to the very end. And they weren't afraid to ask bold questions like the one on evolution.

Panelist TheCan Caesar, Sidney ARS:

I really enjoyed it and was surprised by all the questions the students had, but I was also a little concerned that so many seemed interested in science, but afraid of math.

Panelist Greta Gramig, NDSU-Fargo, ND:

I was truly surprised by the level of enthusiasm the girls had for listening to our stories but especially for asking questions. Science is all about asking questions, after all, and the young ladies in the audience seemed to possess a great deal of native curiosity. I was troubled by the math aversion, but it didn't exactly surprise me. I hope we conveyed to them that there are a lot of interesting fulfilling jobs for women in science and you shouldn't be deterred by having to study a little math or by having to work hard. Hopefully we convinced some of these girls that working hard on ANY academic pursuit will pay off in the end. Also, there were some tricky questions about whether one has to "believe" in evolution to be a scientist and I hope that our responses demonstrated open-mindedness and the idea that the world of science is open to people of all beliefs.

Continued next page →

Another Perspective... *continued from page 9*

Panelist Joyce Eckhoff, MSU-Sidney:

I enjoyed it very much. The girls were obviously interested judging by all their questions. I also think it was interesting for them to see a panel of all women scientists who also all worked in agriculture. Even in our rural community, I don't think many of them had really thought about agriculture as a scientific field, much less one open to women.

Mark Halvorsen and Janet Safty McDonald, Sidney Science Teachers:

We were really happy with the way it turned out. We felt bad about cutting it short at the end as there were still quite a few hands in the air. The questions were really good. While we had asked the students to come prepared with questions, we ran out of time to follow-up with them, so we were both surprised and pleased that they continued to come up with thoughtful questions through-

out. I think just the different talks from the different panel members sparked a lot of questions on their own.

Jill Miller, a Sidney ARS Organizer:

The girls asked a lot of questions. They wanted to know how science was related to different subjects and if they crossed-over to others, what classes to take, time management between sports and studies, how to start building their familiarity in a specific field, and many others.

The panelists did a great job of encouraging students to take science and math classes, make choices related to what is important to them and their future, volunteer for science related organizations and businesses, and most importantly to not become discouraged and to be prepared for change.

M. Halvorsen and J. Safty McDonald:

(It went so well that) we are just wondering if it might work out to do something similar for the guys since we had to juggle schedules to split the boys and girls up for different activities. It worked fine, but we would like to offer something similar to the boys at some time, even later this spring.

Beth Redlin, a Sidney ARS Organizer:

I wasn't able to attend the actual event so was surprised to learn afterward that the school had separated out the girls from the boys. Neither we nor the panel had asked for, nor expected that, when we proposed having the panel, but it might have helped account for all the questions the girls asked afterward. Regardless, we've let them know that we're happy to set up something for the boys, too. Fostering interest in science careers is obviously of importance to us regardless of gender. ■



Women in Ag Science Panelists

Participants on the March 19th panel included, from left: Dr. Joyce Eckhoff, Agronomist with Montana State University's Eastern Ag Research Center, Sidney, MT; Dr. TheCan Caesar, Microbiologist, Sidney, MT ARS; Deb Waters, Biological Science Technician, Sidney, MT ARS; Dr. Tatyana Rand, Entomologist, Sidney, MT ARS; Dr. Greta Gramig, Agronomist and Assistant Professor with North Dakota State University-Fargo, and Dr. Erin Espeland, Plant Ecologist, Sidney, MT ARS.

*Photo Courtesy of
The Sidney Herald, Sidney, MT*

Charity Begins at Home in Manhattan, Kansas

By Floyd Dowell, Manhattan, KS

I grew up on a farm in northern Oklahoma, but was born in Kathmandu, Nepal, where my father was stationed with the Foreign Ag Service. At an early age, I began developing an interest in the agriculture of developing countries. I've always been interested in mechanics and agriculture, so choosing a career in Agricultural Engineering was an ideal fit for me. In 1988, after getting degrees at Oklahoma State University and the University of Illinois, I joined the Agricultural Research Service in Dawson, GA. The chance to do engineering research related to agriculture was a strong attraction for me.

My wife, Gayle, and I married in 1985 and we have always been active in "hands-on" charity work. We have served with Habitat for Humanity and various other service missions in the U.S. and abroad.

We transferred to the ARS lab in Manhattan, KS, in 1995, where we learned about Tractors for Our Daily Bread. This group was started in 1989 by a Kansas State University Nigerian student, Chris Akhimien, and provides agricultural support to orphanages, universities, and other missions in developing countries, and was a perfect fit for my background in agriculture and

"... the group restructured to eliminate all overhead costs. That was when my family became more actively involved and now runs the organization. We are a small, donor-supported groupAll work is coordinated from my house..."

engineering. Since then, we have shipped about 35 tractors as well as other agricultural equipment to Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Ghana, Belize, Laos, and Mexico. With that, we also provide basic training and long-term support as needed. At one time, we were a larger



ARS Center for Grain and Animal Health Research employees helping to repackage 40,000 Kids Against Hunger meals from boxes into shipping barrels in preparation for shipment to an orphanage in Zimbabwe. Pictured from left to right are Dan Brabec, Tom Shanower and Deb Beasterfeld.



Christine Dowell (in blue shirt) at orphanage school in Zimbabwe in 2010.

"Many kids are way behind in school because of terrible situations prior to them coming to the orphanage. Christine was helping some of the kids with their reading skills. These are all orphans that live at this orphanage, and some are HIV positive. Most would likely not survive without this orphanage as there is no welfare or institutional orphanages in Zimbabwe."

~ Floyd Dowell

group housed at the Living Word Church in Manhattan, KS. In about 1998, the group restructured to eliminate all overhead costs. That was when my family became more actively involved and now runs the organization. We are a small, donor-supported group and the main participants are my family and Rev. Gerald Martin from Clay Center. All

work is coordinated from my house and, with no overhead costs, in order to directly support overhauling and supporting tractors. Most tractors are overhauled by North Central Kansas Technical College (NCKTC) in Beloit.

Continued next page →

Charity... *Continued from page 11*

There they graciously rebuild one tractor a year for only the cost of the parts. Dale Goheen and Steve Dibbern at NCKTC have been avid supporters of our group since the beginning.

I travel about once a year, often with my family, to visit various projects and investigate other groups who have requested support. Last year we spent several weeks in Zimbabwe at an orphanage that we have provided agricultural support to since about 1998. My 15-year-old daughter (Christine) and wife helped teach kids at the local school and my 17-year-old daughter (Kayla) helped in the medical clinic. My time was spent assisting with various farm issues such as helping to repair equipment and helping with the grain harvest and storage. We have worked with this orphanage long enough that we know many of the kids personally. Last year we sent a container of food aid, medical supplies, and agriculture equipment to the orphanage. As illustrated by the photos, many ARS employees at the Center for Grain & Animal Health Research helped pack food for this shipment, on their own time. We also plan to send 180,000 meals later this year since food continues to be in short supply.

The past few years we have expanded our charity to provide funds for drilling wells in remote villages and upgrading water systems in a hospital. We provided tuition for orphans and children of lepers who can't work and constructed a study house where kids can study after dark in a remote village where most houses lack electricity. We also purchased seed and fertilizer for farmers and constructed grain storage facilities. We feel like our small ministry is reaching some of the world's most vulnerable populations, and we anticipate continuing our work for many years to come. ■

Floyd Dowell and daughter Kayla (now 17) at an orphanage in Tanzania in 2009.

"This was started by a local woman that saw the need for an orphanage and started taking in kids even though she had no funding. My wife and 2 daughters first met the lady and kids when we visited in 2008 while I was there working on a malaria project, and we started supporting them at that time. Most of these kids lost their parents to AIDS or malaria."

~ Floyd Dowell



Christine Dowell in 2010 driving a tractor we donated to a Zimbabwe orphanage in about 1998.

"We continue to provide some of their agricultural support. This tractor is used almost daily on their farm, and we were doing some basic maintenance on this trip. We had helped set up a grain storage system for them during this trip in 2010 so their grain would be protected from the rats and insect that can consume over half their harvested crop." ~ Floyd Dowell



Annual 'Day of Caring' Includes Fargo ARS Employees

By Richard Sonju, Fargo, ND

Each year the NPA Red River Valley Agricultural Research Center (RRVARC) has participated in the community outreach event called the Day of Caring. The Day of Caring is a United Way sponsored event that helps area senior citizens and individuals with disabilities with fall cleanup projects. This was the 19th annual Day of Caring for the Cass/Clay County community and the RRVARC's 10th or 11th. This year 1335 volunteers from 96 businesses helped 447 seniors and people with disabilities. The Center mobilized 11 volunteers making up 2 teams helping a total of 4 senior ladies. The teams this year were a good mix of the Center's talents including a brand new technician, the administrative officer, established technicians, younger scientists as well as those nearing retirement, and this year even one newly retired sunflower scientist and former DAOC chair Larry Charlet.

To give one a feel for what happens I will share my team's experience from this fall's Day of Caring 2010. Please note experiences may vary. The day started with a noon meal. In the past the United Way has put together a rally with all the community/business volunteers in one place gaining perspec-



From front to back, Theresa Gross, Dr. Larry Charlet (retired Sunflower Entomologist and former DAOC chair), and Grant Herges repair the caulking on the steps of a senior's home as part of the Day of Caring community outreach event held annually in Fargo, ND and Moorhead, MN. ARS employees helped with repairs on the homes of four seniors. Other ARS participants included Richard Sonju, John Johnson, Dr. Gerald Seiler, Dr. Joe Rinehart, Camille Brown, Mary Osenga, Marcia Hagen, and Dawn Feltus.

“ Each time we visit a senior's home is not only an opportunity to make a small personal connection, but also a way in which ARS becomes a visible part of the community. ”

tive and building momentum for the effort about to be put forth, but instead of the rally this year the teams were encouraged to eat out together. We went to Buffalo Wild Wings; it was a valuable experience in cohesion as we have two separate buildings in Fargo and one in East Grand Forks and rarely do we mix company outside of work. We ordered,

chatted, and ate with a few commenting how ordering hot wings may not have been the ideal choice before an afternoon of moderately vigorous labor. After eating we parted company and went to our respective assignments.

My team of 5 headed for Moorhead, MN, to begin our work. Grant painted the garage door trim, Marcia and myself mopped the kitchen and laundry room floors, and Larry and Theresa performed some tub cleaning in multiple bathrooms, jobs that were tough on the knees of our assigned senior Olive. Olive mentioned that she wasn't used to "just sitting around while others were cleaning her home," but one got the sense she was a bit tickled about the help all the same. Actually Olive is quite mobile and lucid as is usually the case with the seniors requesting help from the United Way. In fact the seniors often make comments that make you wonder if they feel mildly uncomfortable about asking for help. I think they recognize they are in relatively good health for their age and know too many of their peers in tougher situations. Of course, the negative sentiment about asking for help is soundly rejected by the volun-

teers and replaced by approbation and encouragement about our willingness to help; it is, in fact, an opportunity many of us look forward to. After completing our tasks Olive was quick to bring out the coffee and homemade donuts complete with a dipping bowl of sugar. Whereupon around the table she told us about her small grandchildren and her daughter who makes quilts. Marcia, one of the volunteers, who is a breast cancer survivor, was happily surprised to know exactly who Olive's daughter was – she was the chemo nurse assigned to be by her side for the 4 hours of her first infusion. This is the type of connection that is often made through this event – personal and though brief, meaningful.

After completing the first assignment the team debated about the best way to arrive at the home of our second assigned senior; do we follow MapQuest directions which are theoretically simple to follow but insensitive to road construction concerns, or do we map a new route accounting for construction? After following the car in front of me I arrived at the home of Constance.

Continued next page →

Day of Caring...

Continued from page 13

Some of us were a little worried we were a bit overstaffed for the "simple" job of removing and replacing caulking along the front sidewalk and steps. We had no need to be concerned as the job was surprisingly consuming and took a good amount of muscle power to remove the old stuff (we wanted to do a better job than whoever performed the duty last year and make sure the caulking lasted). While the guys were working out front, the ladies were removing the back patio door/window for cleaning. The patio window had not been removed in over six years because of its weight and bulkiness; by the end of the job the windows were visibly cleaner and clearer. By the sound of it the ladies were having a good time helping Constance. Out front the steps and sidewalk looked a bit more professional though our messy hands looked anything but. Constance came out and gave us all a round of her homemade

chocolate chip oatmeal cookies, which were good enough to require a second round. We said our goodbyes and parted ways. It was a satisfying day all in all and very typical of what I've experienced the past three years. Overwhelmingly, the experience is good; good for the volunteers, the seniors, the community, and ARS. Each time we visit a senior's home is not only an opportunity to make a small personal connection, but also a way in which ARS becomes a visible part of the community. Initiatives like the Peoples Garden demonstrate this shift from being an organization quietly working for the people, to being a more open and communicative public institution that demonstrates value not only to stakeholders but the communities we are a part of as well. Often people recognize the USDA, but they don't always know much if anything about the ARS. When I tell people

where I work they often assume I work for the University. I have to clarify that I work for the government and of course ultimately for them. Locally people recognize the red or blue roofed buildings of the ARS, though too often they don't realize the quality research being performed essentially for the protection and sustainability of America's food supply. There are few better ways to promote this aspect of the ARS than at the individual level which opportunities such as Day of Caring afford. Last year we received multiple thank you letters from our assigned senior Virginia. Virginia was grateful not only for the work done, but the people who provided it; she went so far as to provide an honorarium which had to be diverted back to the United Way. Putting faces to the name ARS through community outreach like the Day of Caring is one of the best ways to educate those we proudly serve. ■

USDA National Observances

January

Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday

February

Black History Month

March

National Women's History Month

April

Take Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day (ARS)

May

Asian American / Pacific Islander Heritage Month

June

National Gay and Lesbian Pride Month

September 15 - October 15

National Hispanic Heritage Month

October

National Disability Awareness Month

November

National American Indian Heritage Month



SPECIAL OBSERVANCE: Performer Johnny Johnston presented an oral history of African Americans from slavery through the civil rights movement in recognition of Black History Month. He sang several songs, giving the story behind the song and its links to historical events. His presentation was sponsored by the NPA Area Office. Other federal employees on the NRRC campus also attended.

A Taste of the NPA

By Francesco Calderon

Do picture this: You are on vacation in Puerto Rico, driving around and enjoying the sights, beautiful people, culture, and beaches. All that sunbathing and salsa dancing makes you develop a ravenous appetite. The solution is simple, go into the nearest restaurant or hole in the wall and ask for “arroz, habichuelas y bistec encbollao” and get ready for a life-changing experience. You are going to discover new taste buds that you did not know existed.

Rice and beans are a créole staple that is prepared in different forms throughout the Caribbean, Central, and South America. It is inexpensive and nutritious stick-to-your-ribs food, that is absolutely delicious to boot. Puerto Rican rice and beans are by far the best version (Oops! I just alienated all my friends from Latin America!). The main problem with the habichuelas is that it is a highly addicting substance. You will be back to the Northern Plains from your vacation and find yourself wandering aimlessly around downtown looking for an authentic Puerto Rican restaurant, then sadly realize that the closest one is in Spanish Harlem. Here is where I do you a huge favor, and show you the path to

true happiness, much like Mr. Krabs handing the secret recipe to Plankton.

The best version of this dish is prepared by moms and grandmoms throughout the island who lovingly go through the whole process, from the procurement of fresh ingredients to the final, tender and delicious beans. Here I am going to give you the expatriate version developed by yours truly, by trial-and error (mostly error), in the basement of my graduate school housing building at Michigan State, while I was trying to fend off massive bean-craving and nostalgia attacks. It is a pretty good recipe, close to the authentic one (Oops! I just alienated my mom!).

These habichuelas are served with white rice and the meat of your choice. A slice of good avocado goes great with all this. Accompany the meal with background



music from Gilberto Santa Rosa, and change your screen saver to a picture of a beautiful white sand beach full of happy people. Life will be beautiful, right then and there.

Habichuelas guisadas. Say it to yourself, I hope you can pronounce it properly using a Puerto Rican accent, but we will leave that for another time. ■

Habichuelas Guisadas

First you need to make the sofrito, which is a mixture of sautéed vegetables that are added to the beans to make the final dish. The sofrito ingredients are:

- 1 tablespoon cooking oil*
- 1 ounce of salt pork, diced finely*
- 1 small onion chopped finely*
- 1 bell pepper, no seeds, chopped finely*

- Two fresh garlic cloves, chopped finely*
- 5 ounces of tomato sauce.*
- 1 packet of “Sazon con culantro y achiote” **

** This is a spice mix found in the Hispanic food aisle of many supermarkets. If you are a purist, you could use a mixture of ground coriander seed, annatto, and garlic powder.*

Add all the sofrito ingredients to a skillet and sauté everything until it is all well mixed and the onion is translucent. Use medium heat to avoid any caramelization. Once the sofrito is done, add a 15 oz can of dark red kidney beans and slow cook until all the flavors combine and the beans are creamy and tender. That’s it, simple.

We dare you to try these addictive, Puerto Rican-style beans for a life-changing experience!

Lighten UP!

How do you "lighten up" at work?

States' Birthdays at Building 19...

By Carol Chitko-McKown, Clay Center, NE

Employees of the US Meat Animal Research Center stationed in Building 19 were greeted by a wonderful surprise on the morning of January 29, 2010. As they plodded, perhaps half-asleep, into the lunchroom to deposit their meals in the refrigerator, they spotted several dozen gorgeous chocolate cupcakes frosted to resemble sunflowers. The first question everyone asked was – “who are they for?” The second was – “what’s the occasion?” The occasion was Kansas Statehood, and Research Geneticist Tara McDaneld – a Kansas native, had baked the goodies to celebrate. Never let it be said that Building 19 needs an excuse to eat baked goods, but having a legitimate reason to do so on a scheduled basis can only be seen as a good thing! The States’ Birthdays celebration had begun. In addition to loving to eat, the folks in Building 19 are also a diverse lot originating from all over the United States and beyond. This January, Dr. McDaneld baked us cupcakes with purple and yellow frosting (Go Wildcats!) AND bison-shaped sugar cookies. Other states’ birthdays we’ve celebrated are New Jersey (Tastykakes – favorite snack food of fictional NJ character Stephanie Plum) and South Dakota. We’re looking forward to Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska to name a few more. Need an excuse to celebrate? Look no further than your own home states! ■



Bowling, Super Bowls at Area...

By Barbara King, Area Office

Above, a camera shy shooter readies for her turn at the Area Office’s “night out” of bowling. The photo at left shows sports enthusiasts at the Area Office Super Bowl party – employees wore their favorite sports regalia, brought in their favorite super bowl snacks and vied for a super bowl trivia crown (won by Lisa Mullenax who swears she didn’t have any help!). Lisa Baete organizes monthly events for Area Office employees and family members to get together and have some “out of office” fun. Other events have included picnics and game nights. ■

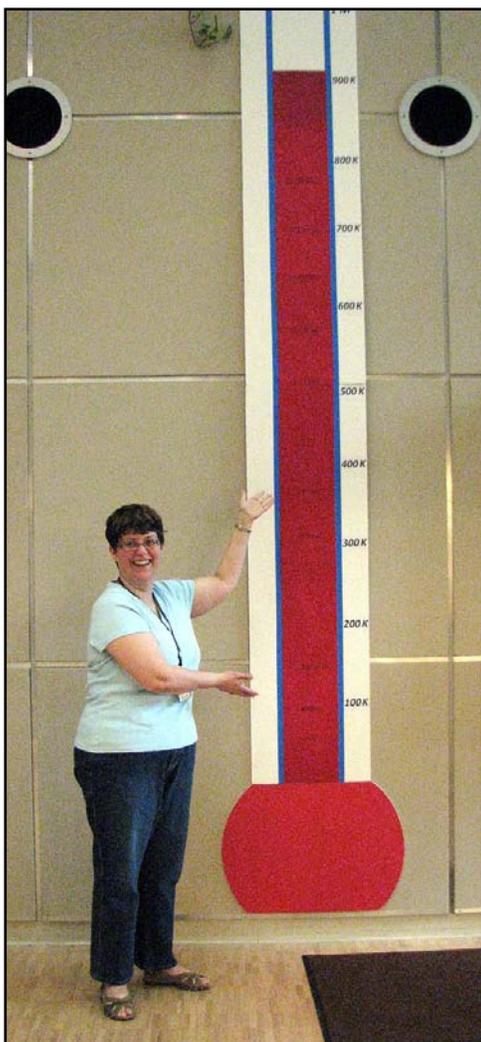


More fun ideas, next page →

Continued from page 16

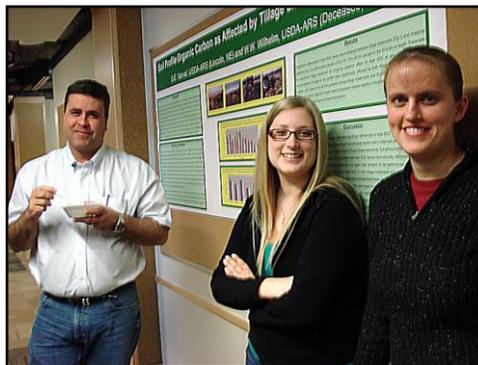
A Literal Interpretation at Grand Forks...

Fifty employees lighten up (literally) by participating in a 4-month “step challenge” called “Walk the Talk”. The goal was to take a million steps over 125 days and the purpose was to promote health and well-being of employees at the Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center. Employees received a Health Screen, personal pedometer, and six 30-minute lunchtime seminars. The large thermometer in the lobby was used to track the combined steps each week. Pictured below is Angela Scheett, a Dietitian and one of the organizers of the event. ■



Soup's On at Lincoln...

Warming up the winter months...Lincoln ARS enjoys Soup Day, a soup potluck every other Friday during the winter. ■

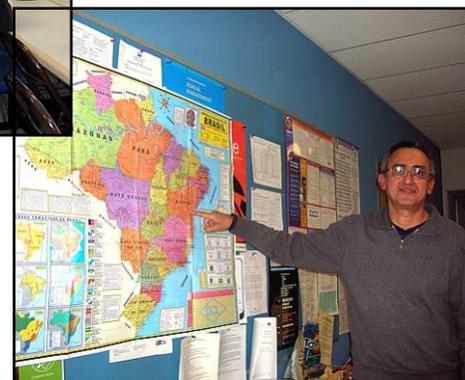


Lighten UP!



Impromptu Potlucks at Fort Collins...

Nothing says welcome like a hearty potluck meal! Here visiting Brazilian scientists and their families are welcomed to the National Center for Genetic Resources Preservation in Fort Collins, CO. ■



On the Shelf and on the Screen: Book, Video Reviews on Diversity

Editor's note: "On the Shelf and On the Screen" provides reviews of books and videos that deal with diversity as another means of learning about diversity. We invite you to contribute your recommendations for inclusion in future editions of "Voices" – simply email your recommendations with a short description to: NPA-DTF@ars.usda.gov



Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace... One School at a Time by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

Review by Craig Huntzinger, Logan, UT

Returning from an unsuccessful attempt to climb K2 in 1993, Greg Mortenson – lost, exhausted, and delirious – stumbles into a poor remote village in Pakistan's Karakoram Himalaya. Days later after the villagers nursed him back to health, he noticed the children having school outside in the cold, with no teacher, diligently writing with sticks in the dirt. He vowed at that time that he would return to build a school for them.

Back in California, Mortenson worked as a part-time nurse, while living out of his car. His obsession to build a school for the impoverished children of Korphe eventually led to the building of many schools, equipped with books and teachers, for thousands of children throughout some of the poorest areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The schools are for boys and girls, but especially for girls. As Mortenson explains:

"Once you educate the boys, they tend to leave the villages and go search for work in the cities. But the girls stay home, become leaders in the community, and pass on what they've learned. If you really want to change a culture, to empower women, improve basic

hygiene and health care, and fight high rates of infant mortality, the answer is to educate girls."

One of the themes in the book is how ignorance can provide the fertile soil for extremism and violence, and how understanding can lead to cooperation and friendships. This is not just in one culture, but the same in all of humanity.

Part of what contributed to Mortenson's success was his ability to integrate into another culture. Doors were opened by mutual respect based on trust and friendship, and the effects of this individual's efforts will continue to positively impact many others for quite some time. ■

Women Food and God: An Unexpected Path to Almost Everything by Geneen Roth

Review by Theresa Pitts-Singer, Logan, UT

My older sister passed this book along to me, and although I was reluctant to read it, I did find it worthwhile. Author Geneen Roth hosts a clinic for women with eating issues. She has spent much of her own life trying to lose weight, failing repeatedly. Through her many life journeys, however, she developed an understanding of why people use food for anything but satisfying their hunger, and she teaches people to recognize the underpinnings of their food compulsions. A lesson that hit home with me, as a diversity task force member and a person with an impressive self-esteem, is that when people verbally insult or berate us on account

of our physical or mental capacities, we believe them! Then we envision ourselves according to such unwarranted judgments, even though we would never trust these same people today. I did not enjoy the style of Roth's writing, but many of her lessons and philosophies might make you think about how you treat yourself, and that how you treat others can be (unintentionally) destructive. ■

The King's Speech directed by Tom Hooper

Review by Carol Chitko-McKown,
Clay Center, NE

Even the most wealthy, powerful people in the world deal with disabilities. The 2010 film, *The King's Speech*, which won the Academy Award for Best Picture, presents the tribulations of being a leader, and thus a public speaker, with a stammer. Colin Firth won an Academy Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of King George VI of England, and outstanding performances were also given by Helena Bonham Carter as Queen Elizabeth, and Geoffrey Rush as the speech therapist Lionel Logue. My fifteen-year-old daughter really had no desire to see a historical film, but left the theatre exclaiming, "That was an awesome story! That really happened?!" Truth is not only stranger than fiction, sometimes it is much more inspirational and interesting. Whether or not you are an anglophile or a fan of history, this film is not to be missed. ■



Contact Your NPA Diversity Task Force Members

Leadership Core:

Barbara King

NPA ODEO Program Manager
Area Office, Fort Collins, CO
970-492-7053
Barbara.King@ars.usda.gov

Theresa Pitts-Singer

Chair, Task Force
Entomologist, Logan, UT
435-797-0581
Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov

Francisco Calderon

Chair-Elect, Task Force
Soil Scientist, Akron, CO
970-345-0526
Francisco.Calderon@ars.usda.gov

Location Members:

Carol Chitko-McKown

Research Microbiologist, Clay Center, NE
(402) 762-4372
Carol.ChitkoMcKown@ars.usda.gov

John Gaskin

Research Leader, Sidney, MT
406-433-9444
John.Gaskin@ars.usda.gov

Kurt Rosentrater

Agricultural Engineer, Brookings, SD
605-693-5248
Kurt.Rosentrater@ars.usda.gov

Virginia Jin

Soil Scientist, Lincoln, NE
402-472-5137
Virginia.Jin@ars.usda.gov

Bill Kemp

Center Director, Fargo, ND
701-239-1371
William.Kemp@ars.usda.gov

Sue Sorum

Loc. Admin. Officer, Grand Forks, ND
701-795-8358
Susan.Sorum@ars.usda.gov

Kristine Nichols

Soil Microbiologist, Mandan, ND
701-667-3008
Kristine.Nichols@ars.usda.gov

Beth Redlin

Tech. Info. Specialist, Sidney, MT
406-433-9427
Beth.Redlin@ars.usda.gov

David Dierig

Res. Leader - NCGRP, Fort Collins, CO
970-495-3265 ext. 177
David.Dierig@ars.usda.gov

Mike Tilley

Research Chemist, Manhattan, KS
785-776-2759
Michael.Tilley@ars.usda.gov

Mark Petersen

Research Leader, Miles City, MT
406-874-8219
Mark.Petersen@ars.usda.gov

Area Advisory Team:

Will Blackburn

Area Director
Fort Collins, CO
970-492-7057
Will.Blackburn@ars.usda.gov

Mickey McGuire

Associate Area Director
Fort Collins, CO
970-492-7058
Michael.McGuire@ars.usda.gov

Mike Wiggett

Deputy Area Director
Fort Collins, CO
970-492-7001
Michael.Wiggett@ars.usda.gov

Kathi White

HR & Outreach Coord., Fort Collins, CO
970-492-7002
Kathi.White@ars.usda.gov

Heather Gossel

IT Specialist, Fort Collins, CO
970-492-7047
Heather.Gossel@ars.usda.gov

Where in the NPA? - Answer Key

*This "pod person" is being studied at
ARS' Human Nutrition Research Center
in Grand Forks, ND.*

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Share Your Favorite Pictures!
E-mail your photos and captions to
Barbara King or Beth Redlin (addresses
on this page).

ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity & Equal Opportunity (ODEO)

ARS ODEO Staff - *Dr. Don McLellan, Dir.*

Street Address: 1400 Independence Ave. SW,
Room 3913 South Building

Phone: (202) 720-6161
Fax: (202) 690-0109
TDD: (202) 720-3303
Complaints: (202) 720-6161
Toll Free: (800) 340-4289
Website: www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/

Cooperative Resolution Branch:

Jan Lewis (301) 504-1450
Jeff Schmitt (301) 504-1352

Recruitment Branch: (301) 504-3271