FROM THE DEPARTMENTAL CHAIRPERSON

This is the second special edition of “Posies and Pathogens” that we have had. This one will mark a time of transition both for me personally and for the department as a whole. Effective January 1, 2004, I will be moving to the College of Agricultural Sciences as an Associate Dean. Next year will be an especially interesting and challenging one as I will spend one-half of my time with that position and the other half as the president of the Oregon State University Faculty Senate for 2004. This latter position is actually the only paid position within Faculty Senate other than that of the administrative assistant for Faculty Senate and in that role, I will serve as the primary representative of the faculty to the university administration. On January 1, 2005, I will be full-time as an associate dean. As I write, the search for a permanent new department chairperson/head for our department is underway; applications have been accepted from within faculty currently tenured as a professor at OSU and the selection process should be complete by early December. [Congratulations are now in order for Dr. Daniel J. Arp, who has been named Department Chairperson/Head effective January 1, 2004].

The transition for me will be challenging. I have been department chairperson/head of Botany and Plant Pathology since August 1, 1988 (can you believe its been over 15 years?) and leaving the day-to-day hustle and bustle of the department’s faculty and students will be difficult. I know that my new job(s) will have a host of new opportunities for interactions with faculty and staff across campus as well as off-campus. In my job as president of the Faculty Senate, I will also have a chance to interact with the student leadership at OSU. It is an especially interesting time at our university; on July 30, 2003, Edward Ray became the 14th President. We are currently finishing off a new strategic plan for the university and laying out the implementation phase for moving the institution towards becoming one of the nation’s top ten land-grant universities. Both of the Colleges that our department is in (College of Science and College of Agricultural Sciences) will be aligning their strategic plans with the university. Our department will likewise be planning for its future. Part of my decision to

You are invited to
A Dinner Party Honoring the Retirements of
Don Armstrong
Mary Powelson
Don Zobel

Saturday, May 22, 2004
Benton County Fairgrounds Auditorium
5:00 – 9:00 p.m. (dinner at 6:00 p.m.)

http://www.science.oregonstate.edu/bpp
RSVP simpsond@science.oregonstate.edu
move on to college-level administration is the opportunity that I see for contributing on a college and university-wide basis to the future of plant biology at OSU.

In my position as associate dean, many of my activities will not be all that different than they have been as a department head; I will continue to be involved in university-wide task forces and advisory groups. As associate dean, I will have direct responsibility for several departments (including Botany and Plant Pathology, Microbiology, and Statistics), two branch stations, as well as serve as liaison for the college with various graduate programs and centers. Due to the unique set of experiences that I have gained from having a position joint in Science and Agricultural Sciences (and being responsible for one joint Science-Forestry faculty member), I will be able to work easily with faculty from across all three colleges and to help build OSU’s strengths in many aspects of the life sciences. The experiences gained last year while working at the Cooperative States Research and Extension Service in Washington, D.C. will be valuable to me as I will serve also as an associate director of the Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station. I am not changing positions because I have grown tired of my current job or the people with who I work—indeed, leaving the people is the hardest part of this transition.

As BPP head emeritus, I will keep my ties to our alumni and friends that have been built over the years. I expect to see many of you on May 22, 2004 when we host an event to jointly celebrate the careers of Don Armstrong, Mary Powelson, and Don Zobel. All of them retired in late 2002 and since they continue to be active in research and teaching efforts, we haven’t been anxious to “celebrate” their transition, but I have used my “while I am still here” persuasion to have them set a date for you to plan on. Our alumni picnic on July 1, 2003 was a huge success and we hope that you will help us make the event on Saturday, May 22, 2004 for Don A., Mary and Don Z. a similar one.

This letter would not be complete without news of our family. We happily returned to Corvallis in early June and easily resumed the simplicity of life that our small city offers. I have not missed Washington D.C. or Rockville, MD for even a moment. Nor do I miss my two hours of commuting each day. Returning to my slightly overgrown garden provided me with many hours of therapy this summer. And most of all, it was wonderful to return to the proximity of our granddaughter Moira (now 16 months) and our daughters Sarah, Miriam, and Martha, and our son-in-law, Darin. Although Martha is now back as a third year student at University of California, San Diego (the fires got within two miles of where she is living), our other family is in Portland. Miriam, Darin, and Moira live conveniently in southwest and on the way to the Portland airport. Sarah is finishing her second year as pastor of the Piedmont Presbyterian Church in northeast Portland. There is no question that my new jobs will require more in-state travel and I’ll find that those to Portland will be especially fun due to having the chance to see Moira, even if only briefly.

Overall, this last year has gone well and I’ve appreciated the good health and good times that I have enjoyed. As I look to the future, I want to express my thanks to the many alumni, emeriti, and friends who have made my time as department chairperson so very rewarding. I cannot think of a job that could have been more satisfying than this one has been. Although it has been an all-consuming responsibility, it has been made very worthwhile by the efforts of the many faculty, staff, and students who have participated in the development of the department’s programs. Thank you for all that you have made possible, and will make possible in the years ahead. Take time in the weeks and months ahead to savor time with your family and friends. In the end, it will be the memories that we leave that will be the measure of our success.

Sincerely,

Stella Melugin Coakley
Professor and Chairperson
coakleys@science.oregonstate.edu
Postscript
This letter was actually written in November but various events delayed the finishing of the Special Edition. So as it goes to press, my transition in office location will be well underway. I will maintain my academic home in Botany and Plant Pathology and Dianne promises to be sure that I get my mail. On November 10, with John S. Niederhauser and Anita S. Summers providing me with cover, I threw a “Celebrate Dianne” day with a brown-bag luncheon that resulted in our seminar room full and overflowing with well-wishers. We presented Dianne with a notebook of notes and letters, and the professors, emeriti and friends made a cash gift to Dianne to be used for a special trip(s). We greatly appreciate Dianne for all of the generous contributions to BPP and I will sorely miss having her smiling face outside my door! But one of the conditions of Dan Arp when he agreed to be considered for appointment as the chairperson was that Dianne would not leave with me. At the department Christmas party, the department treated me to a farewell send-off. Their generosity has resulted in two Tom Allen original paintings that will hang in my new office and remind me daily of the many people that I treasure and value from my years in BPP – remembering is helped by my own collection of notes and letters that came to me with the presentation. I would love to hear from the many alumni and friends that I’ve made over the years of authoring the “From the Department Chairperson” in Posies and Pathogens and my department e-mail address of coakleys@science.oregonstate.edu will continue to work.

Growing our Endowments

In our special edition in the fall of 2002, I described our intent to build an endowment fund in honor and memory of our alumni and friends. We needed a minimum of $10,000 in order for the account to generate earnings for us to use to support our programs. I am very pleased to let you know that we have met and passed that amount; as of November 30, 2003, the fund had reached $12,456. It is currently comprised of several sub-accounts as listed below. The rapid growth of the fund was the result of donations made in honor of Dallice Mills at the time of his retirement symposium in 2003. Donations exceeded $3600 to the Dallice I. Mills Seminar Fund, and over $842 was added to that from the silent auction of artwork donated by the department’s artists: Tom Allen (watercolor), Bill Brandt (print), Charles Leach (watercolor), David McIntire (photographs), and Kathy Merrifield (wood carving) and bid on at our Alumni Picnic.

When funds are disbursed from the earnings, an acknowledgment of the individual being honored will accompany the expenditure and we will periodically share that information with our alumni and friends through our website and newsletter. http://www.science.oregonstate.edu/bpp

Additional funds can be added to the endowment at any time.

Named Funds within the Botany and Plant Pathology Honor and Memory Endowment:

Dallice I. Mills Seminar Fund (2003): seminar speakers
Thomas C. Moore (2002): support of students
James L. Sandeno (2000): support of graduate students in plant pathology
On July 1, 2003 a Botany and Plant Pathology Alumni Reunion was held. More than 70 alumni, friends and relatives gathered for morning coffee, lunch in the Department, and an early evening picnic in Avery Park with members of the Department. Many toured the Department and Campus throughout the day. A beautiful summer day with perfect weather could not have been a better setting for catching up with old friends and colleagues. Dr. Roy Young played a key role in the organization of the event, ensuring that so many were able to attend. While many came from the Corvallis area and elsewhere in Oregon, we were delighted to welcome friends from New York, Maryland, Michigan, Washington, Kansas, California, Canada and Japan.

Attendees included: Hitoshi Kunoh, Don Armstrong and Mary Kentula, Paul Hessburg, Everett Hansen, Harold Jensen, Grace Richter, Clark and Betty Porter, Russ Ingham, Alice Churchill and John Vandenbergh, Joyce Laper, Frances Trail, Ken and Henrietta Chambers, LaRea Johnston, Richard Halse, Al and Ann Ellingboe, David McIntire, Charles and Dorothy Leach, Seiji and Naoko Ouchi, Allan Legge, Ralph Quatrano and Lee Anne King, Robert and Mrs Carr, Douglas and Arlene Ripley, Al Soeldner, Richard and Leona Converse, Chris Mundt, Tom and Donna Allen, Joanne and Craig McMicken, Dallice and Mary Mills, Les Szabo, Kevin and Ann McCluskey and children, Alisa Ashmon, Richard and Stephanie Ford, Roy and Marilyn Young, Gordon and Mrs Snow, Dianne Simpson, Phil Hamm, Stella and Jim Coakley, Bob Obermire, Marilyn Miller and George Liefermann, Edith Birky, Lynda Ciuffetti and Tom Wolpert, John Fowler and Margit Foss and Henry, Carol Rivin, Bill and Marjorie Chilcote, Bill Brandt, Dick and Willa Mae Hampton, Neal Van Alfen and Pam Kazmierczak.
Dallice Mills' Retirement Symposium
July 2003

Dr. Dallice I. Mills' retirement after 27 years in the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology at Oregon State University was marked in July by a Symposium held in his honor.

Speakers at the symposium entitled “Molecular Genetic Determinants of Plant-Microbe Interactions” included distinguished colleagues, collaborators and former students; Seiji Ouchi (Kinki University) and Hitoshi Kunoh (Mie University) from Japan, James Kronstad (University of British Columbia), Albert Ellingboe (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Neal Van Alfen (University of California, Davis), Frances Trail (Michigan State University), Alice Churchill (Boyce Thompson Institute), Les Szabo (USDA-ARS Cereal Disease Lab), and Kevin McCluskey (University of Kansas Medical Center). Dr. Mills also spoke of the capstones from his career.

Dr. Mills began his career as a teacher of science in Junior High and High Schools in Wisconsin and in Arizona. During this time he completed an MS at Syracuse University, and then a PhD from Michigan State University. Following a three-year post doctoral fellowship at the University of Washington, he was appointed in 1972 as Assistant Professor at the University Illinois. He arrived at Oregon State University in 1976 as Assistant Professor in the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, where he became Associate Professor in 1979 and Professor in 1985. His major research interests included isolation and characterization of Pseudomonas virulence genes, cell signaling and pathogenicity determinants in smut fungi, probe technology for detection of phytopathogenic microbes and development of a bioherbicide for control of grassy weeds. Over the years he was the recipient of many awards for his excellence in research and scholarship, including Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society, the Oregon State University F.A. Gilfillan Memorial Award for Distinguished Scholarship and the Sigma XI Research
In 1998 he obtained a patent for the detection of *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *sepedonicus*. He was major professor for 19 graduate students, and hosted in his laboratory, many postdoctoral fellows, and visiting scholars from countries including Germany, Finland, Israel, Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom. To complete the day, more than 85 family, friends and colleagues attended a celebration dinner where memories were shared, and tributes were made to Dr. Mills’ long and distinguished career in plant pathology. The Dallice I. Mills Seminar Fund has been established in the Department to honor his lifetime of achievement, and contributions now exceed $3800. Attendees at the Symposium and celebration dinner included: Dallice and Mary Mills and family, Lidia Watrud, Hitoshi Kunoh, Don Armstrong and Mary Kentula, George and Margot Pearson, George Keller, Paul Hessburg, Pete Angwin, Grace Richter, Russ Ingham, Russ and Maria Karow, Alice Churchill and John Vandenberg, Joyce Loper and Carl Baker, Ryan, Asa and Hannah Preston, Becky Russell, Frances Trail, Jack Lattin, Rosie Hopkins, Ann Willyard, Mary and Robert Powelson, Al and Ann Ellingboe, David and Carol McIntire, Charles Leach, Norm and Pat Bishop, Seiji and Naoko Ouchi, Amnon Lichter, Ralph Quatrano and Lee Anne King, Pete Dawson, Al Soeldner, Courtney Campbell, Richard and Leona Converse, Chris Mundt, Tom and Donna Allen, Les Szabo, Neal Van Aifen and Pam Kazmierczak, Kevin and Ann McCluskey, David and Machteld Mok, Alan Bakalinsky, Dianne Simpson, Phil Hamm, Jim and Carol Kronstad, Valerian Dolja, Stella and Jim Coakley, Mincher Reporter, DenisGaudet, Mike and Lynn Curiale, Fred Crowe, Caprice Rosato, Jennifer Parke, Marilyn Miller and Georges Liefermann, Pat Martinez and Cindy Ocamb, Brian Russell, Tom Wolpert and Lynda Ciuffetti, Carol Rivin and Tom Dietterich, and Al Poplawsky.

**Faculty Awards**

Congratulations to the following faculty who have won prestigious awards during 2003:

**Dr. Christopher Mundt**
Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science

**Dr. Dan Arp**
F.A. Gilfillan Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Science

**Dr. Joseph Spatafora**
Fred Home Award for Excellence in Teaching Science

**Dr. John Fowler**
Loyd Carter Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching

**Dr. Lynda Ciuffetti**
Elizabeth P. Ritchie Distinguished Professor Award

**Dr. Jeffrey K. Stone**
Fellow of the Mycological Society of America

**Dr. Richard Halse, Dr. Jay Pscheidt and Dr. Lynn Royce**
James and Mildred Oldfield/E.R. Jackman Team Award for Natural History Discovery Days (Museum Days)

**Student Awards**

**Undergraduates**

Mark Blanding – Jean Siddall Memorial Scholarship

Rebecca Huot – Jean Siddall Memorial Scholarship and URISC Award

Katherine Van Wormer – Jean Siddall Scholarship

Jeremiah Breuker – Portland Garden Club Scholarship

Marin Chiba – URISC Award

Jonathan Reed – Outstanding Senior Award, made possible by the Bill and La Rea Johnston Fund for Undergraduate Education

John Schenk – Special Senior Recognition Award, made possible by the Bill and La Rea Johnston Fund for Undergraduate Education

**Graduates**

Anita S. Summers Graduate Student Travel Award

by Rachael Andrie

Pinching pennies is integral to the experience of being a graduate student. Thus, when it comes time to attend a professional conference, the question is raised as to how to fund such an endeavor. Fortunately, the Department of Botany and
Plant Pathology at Oregon State University provides a number of funding opportunities to graduate students for travel to professional meetings. The Anita Summers Travel Grant, in conjunction with a Botany and Plant Pathology Graduate Student Association Travel Award, made it possible for Rachael Andrie to cover attendance to the 2003 Annual Meeting of the American Phytopathological Society.

At the 2003 APS Annual Meeting held in Charlotte, North Carolina the week of August 9-13, 2003, Rachael Andrie presented a poster detailing work done under the direction of Dr. Lynda Ciuffetti, her Ph.D. thesis advisor. Research done in Dr. Ciuffetti’s lab applies the tools of molecular biology and biochemistry to questions in plant pathology. Specifically, the lab works on various aspects of tan spot of wheat, a disease interaction between the fungus *Pyrenophora tritici-repentis* and its host, wheat. Though originally she set out to present the abstract she submitted to APS in March 2003, “*Pyrenophora tritici-repentis Race 8 Identified in North America*”, by the time of the meeting she ultimately presented the poster entitled “*Pyrenophora tritici-repentis Race Identification Requires Both Phenotypic and Genotypic Characterization*”.

*P. tritici-repentis* produces multiple host specific toxins that allow it to cause disease. The specific complement of toxins produced by a particular isolate of *P. tritici-repentis* determines its race, of which there are eight (1-8). This is visualized as a unique pattern of disease symptoms on a standard set of wheat differentials. A screen of 20 isolates from Kansas on these wheat differentials revealed an isolate that had a phenotype corresponding to that of race 8. However, despite the race 8 phenotype, further confirmation revealed that the isolate did not have the genes, nor produce the toxins, of race 8 isolates! Thus, we had been misled by the phenotype revealed by the differentials. The isolate in question was not race 8. This was not the first example where we were misled by the race classification system based on differentials to think an isolate was a race it was not. Thus, through my poster, I began to alert the scientific community working on tan spot of wheat of the importance of supporting phenotypic race determinations with genotypic data. My current goal is to extend dissemination of this information by the publication of a journal article on the poster I presented. Due to this experience, a fellow scientist welcomed me into “the club”, stating that claims made in poster abstracts often do not turn out as expected and it is good scientists that admit to these changes.

With the tale of my “very important lesson learned” told, I would like to add that attendance at this meeting also helped to further my development as a research scientist and plant pathologist. Not only did I gain experience in scientific communication through my poster presentation, I was exposed to research relevant to my field, as well as general to the field of plant pathology as a whole. Additionally, I made contacts for my future.
career and initiated friendships with graduate students soon to be my cohorts in the future of plant pathology. Finally, I cannot neglect to mention that I had a lot of fun exploring Charlotte, NC with my fellow graduate students and friends! As I am nearing the completion of my Ph.D. research, this experience could not have come at a better time and I appreciate the availability of the funding opportunities that made it possible.

Kristin Skinner – EPA STAR Fellowship Award
In 2003, Kristin Skinner, a Ph.D. student in Botany and Plant Pathology, was awarded a Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Fellowship by the U.S. EPA. Kristin’s research proposal, entitled “Groundwater Remediation through Environmental Biotechnology”, was one of the 72 proposals chosen for funding out of 1400 applicants. The fellowship provides three years of full funding to pursue her dissertation research. Her research focuses on creating plant-based technologies for the remediation of MTBE and other environmental pollutants from groundwater and drinking water supplies.

Kristin came to Oregon from Illinois and graduated from OSU with a degree in Botany in the winter of 2000. She began her graduate work under the advisement of Dr. Lynda Ciuffetti that spring.
Contributions may be sent to (envelope enclosed): OSU Foundation, PO Box 1438, Corvallis, OR 97339-9905

I’m making a gift of $_______ to Botany and Plant Pathology and would like to direct it to the following:

[ ] Where need is greatest
[ ] Student support (research and travel)
[ ] Endowment for Student Group Trips
[ ] Bill and La Rea Johnston Fund for Undergraduate Education
[ ] Oregon Flora Endowment
[ ] Bonnie Templeton Endowment Fund
[ ] Larry Moore Endowment Fund
[ ] Posies and Pathogens Newsletter
[ ] Anita Summers Graduate Student Travel Fund
[ ] Botany and Plant Pathology Endowment in Honor and Memory of Alumni and Friends

Name:____________________________________________________________________________________
Address:__________________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT