



Department of Botany, OSU

Bluestem

Summer 2009



Bellamy Parks Jansen — Botanical Illustrator

“*Botanical Illustration: Where Art Meets Science*” was the title of the talk given by Bellamy Parks Jansen in February of this year. The seminar was jointly sponsored by the OSU Library, Botany Department, Natural Resource Ecology and Management Department, Oklahoma Native Plant Society, and the OSU Botanical Society. A large audience gathered in the Browsing Room of the Edmon Low Library to hear Ms. Jansen speak of her love of science and art and how she combined the two for a career in botanical illustration. Many examples of her artwork, including both oil paintings and pen and ink drawings, covered display boards filling the room.

Raised in the Sand Hills of western Nebraska, Bellamy attended Chadron State College where she studied both art and biology. Blending the two disciplines, she began her career as a botanical illustrator in the Department of Agronomy at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Over her 25-year career, she has created over 2000 botanical illustrations, mostly for university publications. In 1991, she was asked to display several pieces in the Nebraska State Museum for an exhibit on the Botanical Exploration of Nebraska. In 2005, Ms. Jansen was the featured artist at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center in Chadron, Nebraska, where over 50 pieces of her best work were on display.

Bellamy’s tie to our department is through her collaborations with Dr. Ron Tyrl. She provided more than 350 illustrations for the first and second editions of the *Field Guide to Oklahoma Plants*, written by Dr. Ron Tyrl, Dr. Terrence Bidwell, Dr. Ron Masters, and Dr. Dwayne Elmore, and published by Oklahoma State University. She has also provided drawings for *Keys and Descriptions for the Vascular Flora of Oklahoma*, a taxonomic key published by Flora Oklahoma Inc. with Ron Tyrl as managing editor.

Ms. Jansen believes that her training in plant biology and taxonomy has enabled her to work successfully as a botanical illustrator. “A botanical illustrator who doesn’t have scientific training is going to struggle with the terminology and have difficulty identifying the relevant taxonomic features of each species. Being a botanical illustrator requires a balance of technical skill, knowledge, and artistic ability.”

While visiting OSU, Bellamy met with the local Cross Timbers chapter of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society. She spoke on the Sand Hills of western Nebraska, showcasing many of her plant drawings of the area.



Bellamy at ONPS meeting



Bellamy Jansen, Gayle Hiner - Ag Communications Specialist, Joe Bidwell, RonTyrl



Bellamy with Botany students



Dear OSU Botany
Friends and Alumni,

It is wonderful to be back in Oklahoma even though we thoroughly enjoyed our 13 years at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. It has been a pleasure getting to know all of the OSU Botany faculty, staff, and students. Everyone is so positive and energetic. And it is a time of exciting change within the Department with two new assistant professors completing their second year, Drs. Janette Steets and Andrew Doust. We successfully recruited Dr. Mark Fishbein from Portland State University as our new Herbarium Curator and Assistant Professor. Dr. Fishbein's research is on milkweed systematics and evolutionary ecology, and he will arrive just in time to teach the time-honored course in Field Botany this fall. Dr. Michael Palmer was named Regents Professor, which is the most prestigious rank that can be attained in recognition of scholarly accomplishments by faculty at OSU. I am sure that you will be happy to know that *OSUBS*, the *OSU Botanical Society*, remains very

active with over 35 members. *OSUBS* sponsored a photo contest this spring and had an amazing 300+ entries, which, needless to say, challenged the judges and organizers. In addition, the *Cross-Timbers Chapter* of the *Oklahoma Native Plant Society* meets monthly in the Botany Department. The Chapter's current President is our own Dr. Paul Richardson, Professor Emeritus.

My return to Oklahoma is a small reminder that this is indeed a small world. In 1995, Dr. David Francko, former OSU Botany Professor now at University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa, recruited me to Miami from OU. Returning to the great state of Oklahoma was one attraction for me, but the high level of energy of the Department and its warm welcome is what sealed the deal. I am honored to serve the OSU Botany faculty and students as the Department's first external Head, and look forward with great enthusiasm to the exciting future that we share in our pursuit of discovery and transmission of knowledge in plant biology and ecology.

Sincerely,
Linda E. Watson, Professor and Head of Botany

Flora of Oklahoma Project

In the fall of 1983, the state's taxonomists met and decided a replacement was needed for U.T. Waterfall's *Keys to the Flora of Oklahoma*, last published in 1969. Waterfall's *Keys* had been the primary reference for two decades, but many taxonomic and nomenclatural changes had been made since its publication. Therefore, these botanists created an editorial board and a non-profit corporation, Flora Oklahoma Inc., in order to create a new manual for identification of Oklahoma's flora.

In order to provide students the keys and descriptions as quickly as possible, the editorial committee published portions of its work as they were completed. Publications to date include *Key to the Vascular Plants of Oklahoma* (1994) which consisted of just a key to families; *Key and Descriptions for the Vascular Plant Families of Oklahoma* (1997); *Identification of Oklahoma Plants* (2003) which included keys to genera; and *Keys and Descriptions for the Vascular Plants of Oklahoma* (2007) which comprises keys to the genera and species. *Keys and Descriptions for the Vascular Flora of Oklahoma* (2009), adds an index of family and genus names. Currently, the editors are working on the last phase -- the descriptions for the genera and species of all the families.

Ron Tysl, OSU professor emeritus, is the coordinating editor. The other state taxonomists involved are: Susan C. Barber (OCU), Wayne J. Elisens (OU), James R. Estes (OU), Constance L. Murray (TCC), Bruce A. Smith (McLoud HS), Constance E.S. Taylor (SEOSU), Rahmona A. Thompson (ECU), Jay B. Walker (Tulsa), and Linda E. Watson (OSU). Former OSU grad Adam Ryburn (OSU) will join the project in September. Deceased members, Paul Buck (TU) and Lawrence K. Magrath (USAO), also contributed to this project. Bellamy Parks Jansen is the botanical illustrator.

<p><i>Keys and Descriptions for the Vascular Flora of Oklahoma</i>, 2009 ed. \$30 postpaid Flora Oklahoma Inc. 15100 Etowah Road East Noble OK 73068 Phone: 405-872-8361 http://www.biosurvey.ou.edu/floraok</p>	<p><i>Field Guide to Oklahoma Plants</i>, 2nd ed., 2008 \$40 postpaid Oklahoma State University Dept. of Natural Resource Ecology & Mgmt 008C Ag Hall Stillwater OK 74078-6028 405-744-5437</p>
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A Tribute to Ron Tyrle



Ron Tyrle is presented with a plaque for his 36 years of service to OSU and the Botany Department.

Yes, the rumor is true! As of June 30, 2008, Ron Tyrle is officially retired. Although Ron is now a man of leisure, he still spends a lot of time in his office. He just can't abandon all his friends at OSU!

Ron received a B.A. in Biology from Park College in Missouri and an M.S. and a Ph.D. degree in Systematic Botany from Oregon State University. He began his career as Assistant Professor of Biology at Park College before coming to OSU in 1972. At OSU, Ron rose through the ranks from Assistant Professor to Professor of Botany, as well as serving as Curator of the Herbarium.

Ron served as the biology and botany undergraduate advisor from 1980-1990 and from 1999-2004. During that time, he established a great rapport with many students, successfully guiding them through their undergraduate years. Ron advised 30 graduate students throughout his 36 years of teaching at OSU, and he also served on committees for many more students.



Ron in Field Botany lab

He taught several courses throughout his tenure at OSU. They included: Plant Biology, Plant Taxonomy, Plant Diversity, Agrostology, Cytogenetics, Phylogeny & Classification, Vascular Aquatic Plants, and Biology for Teachers. His signature course was Field Botany; many student remember the weekend field trips to the four corners of the state, plant collections, and, of course, the keying and identification tests.

Because he cared so much for his students and their learning experience, Ron won many teaching awards. Mortar Board and the Agronomy Student Association awarded him Outstanding Teacher in 1988 and 1989.

He won the College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award in 1989 and 2006, as well as the OSU Regents Distinguished Teaching Award in 1992 and 2003. He earned the penultimate teaching award in 2004, the Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in College & University Teaching, given by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.



Ron receives Medal for Excellence from David Boren, OK Foundation for Excellence founder.



Ron teaching at OU Biological Station

During many of his summers, Ron taught at the University of Oklahoma Biological Station at Lake Texoma. He also was director of the Oklahoma Summer Scholars Program and was a teacher in the summer academies for Native Americans and for the Oklahoma Principals' Science Scholars.



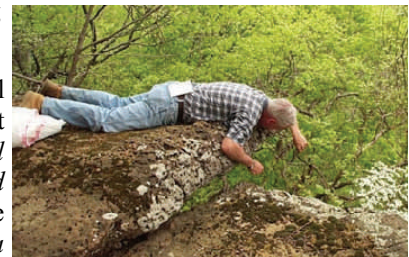
Ron at Uluru, Australia



Ron takes tea at Kew Gardens in London.

Ron really enjoyed teaching about wildflowers for the elder-hostel programs, as well as leading wildflower tours in England, Ireland, and Scotland. His sabbatical leaves were spent conducting research at the Kew Gardens in London, England and Sydney, Australia.

Ron has been, and continues to be, involved with many professional organizations, including Oklahoma Academy of Science for which he was President from 1997-1999; Southwestern Association of Naturalists, serving as Secretary from 1979-83 and Governor from 1983-84; and the Oklahoma Native Plant Society, currently serving on the board of directors, and founder of the local Cross Timbers Chapter. He has also served as Governor of the Ouachita Mountains Biological Station and the Texas Oklahoma Regional Consortium of Herbaria. For his outstanding service in Botany in Oklahoma, Ron was given the Bess Snodgrass Memorial Award in 2000 and the Anne Long Award in 2004.



Ron will go anywhere for a plant!

His scholarly works include hundreds of talks given to civic and botanical organizations, journal articles, book chapters, and several books. His most current publications are: *Dyes from American Native Plants: A Practical Guide*, 2005; *Handbook of Toxic Plants of North America*, 2006; and *Field Guide to Oklahoma Plants*, 2nd ed. 2008. Ron's retirement projects include the writing of the second edition of *The Toxic Plants of North America* (projected date 2011) and the completion of the *Flora of Oklahoma*, for which he is coordinating editor.

Ron is enjoying spending more time with his wife, children, and grandchildren. He is also an avid model train connoisseur and has a room in his new house dedicated to his life-long hobby.



Ron and Field Botany class in the 1970s



Ron with some of his former students: Bruce Smith, Susan Barber, Alicia Peltier, Audra Ligenstoffer, Kiyoshi Sasaki, Fumika Shirakura, Mary Gard, Ron Tyrl, Rose Muralla, Charris Hayes York, Brooke Bonner, Dan McGlenn, Adam Ryburn, Will Lowry, Irene McKee, Rahmona Thompson, Reonna Slagell Gossen, Kim Shannon

New Faces



Linda Watson joined our department in July 2008 as Department Head and Professor. A native of Louisiana, she received a B.S. in Biological Sciences from Louisiana State University-Shreveport. In 1989 she earned her Ph.D. in Botany in Plant Systematics from the University of Oklahoma, studying with James Estes.

She then held a position with the Natural Heritage Inventory of the Oklahoma Biological Survey for 7 years. In 1995 Linda accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Botany at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, proceeding up the ranks until becoming Department Head in 2003.

Linda's research speciality is molecular phylogenetics applied to biogeography and diversification of the Asteraceae. She teaches Plant Taxonomy at OSU, as well as the Professional Development course. Linda is involved in many professional organizations and currently serves as Treasurer for the American Society of Plant Taxonomists.



Linda is married to **Chris Wood** who is a clinical instructor for the Botany Department and the College of Arts and Sciences. He will be teaching a new course, Biological Laboratory Instrumentation, which instructs students in the use, theory, experimental design, maintenance, and troubleshooting of equipment, such as liquid handling systems, pH/ISE meters, spectrophotometers, centrifuges, thermocyclers, and DNA sequencers.

Chris is a native Oklahoman, hailing from Tulsa. He earned his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Botany from the University of Oklahoma and worked as a research associate until 1995. Moving to Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, Chris worked as a research associate for several years before becoming Coordinator of the Center for Bioinformatics and Functional Genomics and Instructor of Botany.

Pieter Pelser joined us in August 2008 as a postdoctoral fellow in Linda Watson's lab, having previously worked as a postdoc for her at Miami University. A native of The Netherlands, Pieter attended Leiden University where he earned his M.S. in Biology and his Ph.D. in Plant Systematics.



Pieter is married to **Julie Barcelona**, an adjunct assistant professor in our department. Julie received her B.S. and M.S. degrees in the Philippines before earning her Ph.D. in Botany from Miami University. She has been the Curator of Ferns at the Philippine National Herbarium, National Museum of the Philippines since 1989.



Pieter has just accepted a faculty position at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. Both he and Julie will be leaving Oklahoma in July to start their new life. We wish them all the best.

Mark Fishbein is joining our department this fall as Assistant Professor of Botany and Herbarium Director.



He received his B.S. in Biological Sciences from the University of Illinois and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Arizona. His career includes postdoc positions at Washington State University and the University of Idaho and assistant professorships at Mississippi State University and Portland State University.

Mark is a plant systematist and evolutionary biologist. His research is focused on the evolution of flowers and their ecological interactions with pollinators, specifically *Asclepias*, the milkweeds.

He is married to Lane Greer, an adjunct assistant professor in the OSU Dept. of Horticulture.

Faculty News

Andrew Doust received a three-year grant from the Department of Energy (DOE). He is researching the development of genomic and genetic tools for foxtail millet and the use of these tools in the improvement of biomass production for bioenergy crops.

Dave Meinke has served this past year as Chair-Elect of the Regents Professor group. This next academic year he will serve as the Chair. Congrats, Dave!

Mike Palmer led a tour of the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve last summer as part of a training course for a group of Master Naturalists. Master Naturalists, a national organization focused on creating nature ambassadors, is supported by Cooperative Extension Services in the states and is growing in Oklahoma. The training encompasses four day-long workshops covering the basic ecological habitats - aquatic, wetland, forest, and prairie ecosystems.

Mike continues to be involved with biodiversity and biofuels; he is quoted frequently in various newspaper articles. He and OU's Linda Wallace contributed to a 23-author article in an edition of Science magazine. They stress the need to consider ethanol sources other than corn and switchgrass, with Palmer's choice being hay meadows.

Ming Yang finished a year's sabbatical leave to the John Innes Centre in Norfolk, England, a premier institute of plant and microbial research, where he has been conducting research on the roles of mitotic cyclins in plant growth and development. Ming also obtained new data on a nuclear protein with which he will submit a new proposal to the National Science Foundation.

Gerald Goes to Dusseldorf

Gerald Schoenknecht spent the 2007-08 academic year on sabbatical leave at the Department of Plant Biochemistry of Heinrich Heine Universität in Dusseldorf, Germany. Gerald performed collaborative research with Professor Andreas Weber. Using their different experimental approaches, they worked together to create a system to improve the functional characterization of plant membrane transport proteins.

Gerald is back at Dusseldorf this summer finishing this research. He is developing a system to produce/express the vacuolar potassium channels from *Arabidopsis thaliana* in a cell free system, i.e. *in vitro*. When he returns to OSU, he will continue this research with new NSF grant funding.

While on sabbatical in Dusseldorf, Gerald became involved in the genomic sequencing of the thermoacidophilic red alga, *Galdieria sulphuraria*. Gerald will be presenting this work at the Gordon Conference in New Hampshire this summer. *Galdieria* can live like other algae undergoing photosynthesis, but it can also grow in darkness by degrading organic substrates like fungi. It looks as if some genes were conserved in *Galdieria* from a billion or more years ago that were lost in all other algae but still found in fungi. This is one of the most exciting research projects Gerald has been involved in, and he is enthusiastic to publish this in a top journal.



Mike Palmer is honored as a new Regents Professor at the OSU 2008 Fall Convocation.

A Regents Professorship recognizes a scholar of exceptional ability and accomplishment who has achieved national distinction.

Mike joins Dave Meinke, Botany's first Regents Professor, for this honor.

Student News

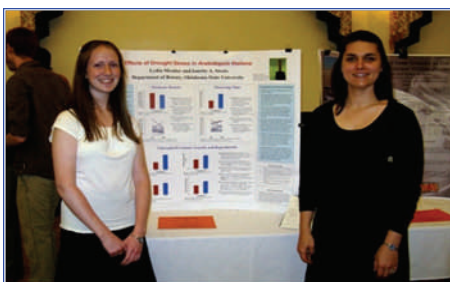
Lydia Meador, 2009 Outstanding Botany Senior

Lydia is a native of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma and graduated from Union High School. She came to OSU in the fall of 2007 and is a triple major: Botany, Microbiology, and Biochemistry. She plans to ultimately earn a doctorate and to conduct research in plant biotechnology or genetic engineering.



Lydia started her career at OSU as a Freshman Research Scholar, presenting a poster "Polymorphism in Microsatellite Loci in *Impatiens capensis* (Balsaminaceae)." In 2008-09, she was a Wentz Scholar, working with **Janette Steets** on "Cross-Generational Plasticity of Leaf Hair Production in *Arabidopsis thaliana*." For 2009-10, Lydia was selected as a Niblack Scholar, and she will study "Interactive effects of herbivory and drought stress for *Arabidopsis lyrata* resistance traits" with **Janette Steets** and graduate student, **Brooke Bonner**.

Lydia gave oral and poster presentations this past year at a national conference, OSU Research Symposium, and at the Oklahoma Academy of Science fall technical meeting where she won the Outstanding Undergraduate Poster Award - "Polymorphism in Microsatellite Loci in *Impatiens capensis* (Balsaminaceae)."



Lydia with her mentor Janette Steets at OAS meeting

She is active with the OSU Botanical Society, serving as secretary/treasurer, and with the Honors College, earning her general honors award this spring.

Matt Allen presented his research at the ESA meeting in 2008, "Compositional convergence and forest architecture in two Minnesota forests following a windstorm."

Vaskar Thapa also attended the 2008 ESA meeting and presented a poster, "The effects of a fire following a tornado on *Quercus marilandica* and *Quercus stellata* in a crosstimbers stand, Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, Oklahoma."

Students of Mike Palmer attended the 2009 AAAS-SWARM symposium and gave presentations on their research.

Matt Allen: "Fire history of the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve"

Kelly DeRennaux: "A decade of change in a 4 hectares crosstimbers forest"

Vaskar Thapa: "Influence of fire and tornado damage on dynamics of a crosstimber stand, Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, Oklahoma"

Congrats, Graduates!

2008-2009

B.S. degrees

Laura Eskridge
Alicia Nelson

Alicia Peltier
Chad Ternes

M.S. degrees

Bonner, Brooke. 2008. [advisor Bill Henley] Vegetation Composition along Salinity Gradients at the Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge, Alfalfa County, Oklahoma.

Ghatak, Kasturi. 2008. [advisor Bill Henley] Study of Slow Vacuolar Ion Channel Protein and Potassium Ion Channel Protein in *Arabidopsis thaliana* and *Vicia faba*.

Huang, Chao. 2009. [advisor Ming Yang] The Effect of the *ASK1* Gene on Meiotic Homologous Recombination.

Ph.D. degrees

Annan, J. Nana. 2008. [advisor Bill Henley] Growth Response of the Green Alga *Picochlorum oklahomensis* to Nutrient Limitation and Salinity Stress.

McGlinn, Daniel. 2009. [advisor Mike Palmer] Spatial and Temporal Scaling of Species Composition at the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, Oklahoma: Implications for Theory and Conservation.

We Say Goodbye



Colleen Sweeney, research analyst in David Meinke's lab, has left OSU to join her husband David Demezas in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, where he teaches biology at a branch campus of the University of Wisconsin. Having previously worked in the Plant Transformation Center in the College of Agriculture, Colleen came to the Botany Department in September 2001. Over the past eight years, she instructed and assisted 30 different members of the Meinke laboratory. Colleen is an expert at performing genetic crosses, characterizing mutants defective in seed development, culturing small embryos on sterile nutrient media, maintaining massive datasets, and keeping track of thousands of seed stocks. Her technical expertise, organizational skills, and steady demeanor will be sorely missed.



Rose Muralla, Colleen Sweeney, Ann Yankunas, Kay Scheets, and Paula Shryock at Hideaway Pizza

Where are the Recent Graduates?

Several of our new graduates are pursuing graduate degrees. At OSU, **Brooke Bonner** is working on a Plant Science Ph.D. with Janette Steets; **Chad Ternes** is working on an M.S. degree in Botany with Gerald Schoenknecht; **Laura Eskridge** is working on an M.S. degree in Plant & Soil Sciences; and **Chao Huang** is working on an M.S. degree in Statistics. **Kasturi Ghatak** is working towards a graduate degree at the London School of Economics.

Nana Annan went back home to Ghana and is on the faculty at the University of Education in Winneba. He teaches general biology and plant physiology to students who plan to be teachers.

Dan McGlenn has just started a postdoctoral position in the lab of Allen Hurlbert at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Dan grew up in Asheville and received his B.S. in Biology from UNC in 2004.

Welcome, New Graduate Students!

We welcome five new graduate students to our department this fall semester.

Kate Halpin, M.S. [advisor Mark Fishbein]

Robert Ingraham, Ph.D. [advisor Gerald Schoenknecht]

Johnny Lloyd, M.S. [advisor Dave Meinke]

Channing Richardson, M.S. [advisor Mike Palmer]

Chad Ternes, M.S. [advisor Gerald Schoenknecht]

The Botany Department will have 18 graduate students in total: 7 pursuing the Ph.D. degree and 11 pursuing the M.S. degree.

On a personal note ...

Andrew Doust, Assistant Professor of Botany, is now a family man! Andrew met Cristina Gonzalez, Assistant Professor of Art History, two years ago on the Oklahoma bus tour for new faculty, sponsored by the College of Arts & Sciences. They were married last year and now have a beautiful baby boy Emilio Nicolas. Congratulations!

Becky Rogers and **Michael Berg** had their second child Clara in August 2008. She joins brother Patrick who is now two years old. Both Becky and Michael worked in Dave Meinke's lab for several years before moving to the Philadelphia area.

Andrea Kirkwood, former postdoc for Bill Henley, is now an assistant professor in the Biology Department at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. She and her husband Mark were married in 2008 and are expecting their first child in September.



OSU BOTANICAL SOCIETY

A big thanks to our new faculty advisor **Janette Steets** and to this year's officers for making 2008-2009 a great success!

President, Brooke Bonner
Vice-President, Kelly DeRennaux
Secretary/Treasurer, Lydia Meador
Historian/Webmaster, Yanyi Yuan

Our group enjoyed several field trips this year to botanize and enjoy the wildflowers and plants. The first was a rainy field trip in September to the OSU Cross Country field, kindly led by Drs. Pieter Pelsler and Ron Tyrl, where we saw many beautiful and interesting fall plants, including *Agalinis* sp., *Rhus* spp., *Gaillardia aestivalis*, *Oenothera* sp., and *Marsilea* sp. In March 2009, we returned to the OSU Cross-Country field to see what was in bloom and to see spring ephemerals, such as *Nothoscordum bivalve*, *Claytonia virginica*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Ulmus* spp., and *Prunus* spp.

Some of our members attended the OAS Fall Field Meeting in September at Black Mesa State Park and the OAS Fall Technical Meeting in October at Southern Nazarene University. Congrats to the OSUBS Secretary/Treasurer, Lydia Meador, who won the Award for Best Undergraduate Poster!

New officers for 2009-2010

President, Kelly DeRennaux
Vice-President, Mike Malahy
Secretary, Alesia Hallmark
Treasurer, Brooke Bonner
Historian, Wyatt Sharber
Webmaster, Tricia Bolene



Leucojum



Passiflora



Sapindus

In February 2009, OSUBS co-sponsored botanical illustrator, Bellamy Parks Jansen. Dr. and Mrs. Ron Tyrl hosted an OSUBS chili potluck for Ms. Jansen the night prior to her public seminar at the Library, and we joined the ONPS for a potluck where Ms. Jansen spoke about blowout *Penstemon*.

In March 2009, our first Botanical Photo Contest was met with an overwhelming number of beautiful and artistic botanical photographs. Dr. Andrew Doust, Botany Assistant Professor and OSUBS member, won first place and \$50 in the contest with a stunning photo of *Passiflora* sp. Dr. Doust kindly donated his winnings back to OSUBS to promote next year's Botanical Photo Contest. Tricia Bolene, botany undergraduate and OSUBS member, won second place and \$25 with a beautiful photo of *Leucojum* sp. Wyatt Sharber, botany/zoology undergraduate and OSUBS member, won third place and \$15 with an artistic photo of *Sapindus* sp. We thank our contest judges, Ms. Cindy Palmer, and Drs. Mike Palmer, Ron Tyrl, and Linda Watson. Please visit our website to view the winning photographs: <http://www.orgs.okstate.edu/botanical>.

We once again participated in the OSU Earth Fest on Earth Day on the Library lawn. We ended our year with a picnic at Boomer Lake where we enjoyed beautiful weather, good food, botanizing, a short game of disc golf, and each other's company.

Alumni News

Joshua Brokaw (*MS 04*) has accepted a position as an assistant professor at Abilene Christian University. He just finished a Ph.D. in Botany at Washington State University. Josh is happy to be moving back to his hometown of Abilene and hopes to meet up with some of our faculty and staff during the summer field work.

Tom Cothren (*PhD 71*) is a professor and crop physiologist at Texas A&M University. He specializes in cotton and received the Outstanding Research Award in Cotton Physiology at the Belt-wide Cotton Physiology Conference in 2000.

Nelson Ehrlich (*BS 70*) is a retired faculty member of the OSU School of Education Studies, Aviation and Space Program. He still remembers a class he took under Dr. U. T. Waterfall. Nelson found a plant that Waterfall's plant key said had never been seen in Oklahoma. He got an A in that class!

Janice Green Pennington (*MS 85*) is the senior electron microscopist in the Indiana Alzheimer Disease Center at the Indiana University School of Medicine. Her husband is a scientist at Roche Diagnostics and they have two daughters, one a senior at Purdue University and the other finishing high school. Janice keeps her hand in botany through the Hamilton County Master Gardeners Association and the Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society. She is currently working on a certificate in botanical art through the Society of Botanical Artists in England. She so enjoys the two tulip trees (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) - the state tree of Indiana - that are in her back yard!

Charriss Hayes York (*MS 03*) is a botanist for the Texas Coastal Watershed Program, specifically in the Galveston Bay Area. Having previously been the leader of the Wetland Restoration Team, she now runs the stormwater pollution program as the Stormwater Projects Coordinator. Charriss finds that being a botanist in an urban setting is very rewarding.

Holly Hovis Beck (*MS 01*) spent six years in southern Utah working as a restoration coordinator at Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. She returned to Boise, Idaho last year and is currently a botanist with the Boise District of the Bureau of Land Management. Her husband Jon is a planner in the same office. They have two small boys who are avid rock hounds and lizard chasers!

Frank Hulnik (*BS 71, MS 74*) is a teacher at Drumright High School where he teaches physical science, chemistry, and zoology.

Jerad Linneman (*MS 04*) is again working for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service at their headquarters facility in Riverdale, Maryland. He works as the Veterinary Services Continuity of Operations (COOP) Manager in which he develops and maintains policies and procedures related to disaster recovery. On a personal note, Jerad plans to be married in October to a young lady from the D.C./Maryland area.

Jessica Milner (*BS 07*) worked for a year as a teacher in the San Bernadino National Forest outdoor science school before taking a position as a plant breeder and research specialist in the Extension Plant Science Department at New Mexico State University. Jessica works with green and red chiles, blue/purple corn, and pomegranates. She enjoys NMSU and really loves the desert!

David Murray (*BS 06*) finished his MS degree in Geography at Virginia Tech and is working as a GIS specialist for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry. His projects include mapping the areas of the recent wildfires and creating detailed maps of canopy cover in urban areas.

Jim Petranka (*MS 77*) is a professor in the Biology Department at the University of North Carolina in Asheville. His current research interests include restoration ecology of freshwater wetland, community organization along hydrological gradients, and the conservation biology of amphibians.

Ann Phillippi (*MS 77*) is an instructor in the Department of Biology at the University of Mississippi. She is married to Melvin Warren, a fish biologist for the USDA Forest Service Hydrology Lab in Oxford, Mississippi.

Alan Prather (*MS 90*) is an associate professor in the Department of Plant Biology and the Director and Curator of the Herbarium at Michigan State University. His research centers on plant systematics and the evolution of floral morphology and pollination systems.

Joe Rackley (*BS 82*) has moved back from New York and settled on Keystone Lake near Westport. He works as an Agricultural Field Inspector/Plant Pest Specialist for the Consumer Protection Services of the State of Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food, & Forestry.

Barbara Reed (*MS 74, PhD 77*) works as a plant physiologist for the USDA-ARS at the National Clonal Germplasm Repository in Corvallis, Oregon. Her research involves the germplasm in fruit and berry crops and has taken her to Kazakhstan in 2007 and Dresden, Germany in March 2009.

Alumni News (cont.)

She recently gave an invited lecture, "Choosing and Applying Cryopreservation Protocols to New Species or Tissues" at the first ISHS symposium on the Cryopreservation of Horticultural Species in Leuven, Belgium.

Sophonia Roe Ashcraft (*MS 98*) is moving to Clever, Missouri in August to join her husband who is an assistant professor in the School of Accountancy at Missouri State University in Springfield. Sophonia works part-time as a marketing consultant for Elton L. Roe, Architect, her family's church architecture practice, and enjoys organic gardening and caring for their four rescue dogs.

Kim Shannon (*MS Nat Sci 97*) works as an environmental scientist for Kleinfelder in Tulsa. She is also very active in the Oklahoma Native Plant Society and Color Oklahoma.

Joe Shellhammer (*PhD 91*) taught science at the Oklahoma School for Science and Math before going to Cheney High School in Kansas.

Reonna Slagell Gossen (*MS Nat Sci 97*) is a member of the science faculty at Redlands Community College in El Reno. Besides her classroom teaching, she conducts training sessions for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission's Blue Thumb program, serves as a council member of the Great Plains Resource Conservation and Development Council in Cordell, and is a key member of Oklahoma Women in Agriculture. Last year she was actively involved in producing the fifth annual statewide Women in Agriculture & Small Business Conference in Oklahoma City. Reonna has been involved in the annual statewide conference since its inception, hosting the first conference at Redlands.

Tim Springer (*MS 83*) is the research agronomist at the USDA-ARS Southern Plains Range Research Station in Woodward. His research interests are the management of improved forage grass and legume species and grass-legume interactions.

Shyam "Matthew" Thomas (*MS 06*) is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Organismal Biology at Iowa State University under the

Tutelage of Kirk Moloney, who is conducting research in spatial ecology.

Other Former Students

Hamed Eladel is busy teaching biology in Saudi Arabia and raising two teenage sons. Hamed received his Ph.D. from Benha University in Egypt after spending two years (1996-1998) conducting research in Bill Henley's lab.

Sherry Leis (*M.S. Plant and Soil Science 04*) was actively involved with OSUBS while she was at OSU. She is now a fire ecologist cooperatively with Missouri State University and the National Park Service Heartland Inventory and Monitoring Program. She is based in Springfield, Missouri, but services eight parks throughout the central grasslands region of the U.S. For more information, go to <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/htln/fire.cfm>. She is also a member of the board for the Missouri Native Plant Society.

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