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Recommended Citation

Institute of Agriculture, "Third Thursday 1-2009" (2009). *Third Thursday*.
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_thirdthursday/41

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Joe DiPietro

Facing economic realities

During the past few months, we've seen our state budget situation continue to deteriorate. We've experienced a combined cut of 5.53 percent to our FY09 budget. For our FY10 budget we have been asked to prepare plans to deal with as much as a 20 percent budget reduction.

As I wrote this column in December, the deans and I were working nonstop, meeting with department heads, directors, and others to gain input and take steps to make the necessary reductions in FY10 expenditures. We intend to keep communications open regarding the scenarios that are developed and seek your feedback. The situation is serious and requires all of us to take a close look at how we do things and to think creatively in how to be more efficient and achieve cost savings. I am interested in continuing to receive ideas that you may have about how we might be more efficient or achieve cost savings that help deal with budget reductions. I appreciate all who have done so already and please do not hesitate to send me more.

These are unusually difficult economic times for our state and nation's economy, and there may be additional reductions in state appropriations that we will have to weather. Despite all this, I continue to be committed to doing my very best to secure resources to help you do your jobs well. I remain grateful and proud of all we accomplish that advances our education, outreach, and research programs and serves the people of the state so well.

I know many of you are worried, not just for what the current economic climate means for your work life, but what it also means for your personal life. Please try not to get too discouraged. We have had trying times like this before in the nation and at the university, and we **will** pull through it. But, it will take all of us working together to assure maximum success despite the budget challenges we face.

All the best,
Joe

Attn. UTIA scientists: AgResearch resources for your work

Whether your focus is **discovery research or real-world applications**, the facilities and capabilities of **UT AgResearch's 10 Research and Education Centers exist to advance your work.**

Each Center is located in a geographically important area of the state featuring different commodities and resource opportunities. Research conducted on the Centers addresses real problems or answers real questions posed by producers, agribusinesses, agricultural professionals, and the general public.

Taken as a whole, the AgResearch's network of 10 Centers offers a richly diverse set of opportunities for Institute researchers. **These outdoor laboratories offer you the ability to scale up your work from the laboratory to translational research.**

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Rich Maxey

Excellence honored in Knoxville—*Nancy Austin, principal secretary of the Department of Food Science and Technology is the 10th annual Award of Excellence recipient among Extension non-exempt staff members of the Institute on the Knoxville campus. The award was presented by Food Science and Technology Head Mike Davidson (right) and Professor Bill Morris. The honor, which includes a \$500 award, was made possible through funds contributed to the Extension Non-Exempt Staff Development Fund. Contributions are made by non-exempt employees and others through payroll deductions or one-time contributions.*

What's news

- » UT Knoxville has named **Donald Hodges**, professor of forestry, wildlife and fisheries, as one of three new **Cox Professors**. Each professorship lasts three years and includes a stipend of \$25,500 to be used at the recipients' discretion.
- » **“Stocker Solutions for Challenging Times”** is the theme for the **2009 Mid-South Stocker Conference** scheduled for **Feb. 24-25** at the Lake Barkley Resort Park Lodge near Cadiz, Ken. Sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service of the Universities of Kentucky and Tennessee and each state's Cattlemen Association, in partnership with Bayer Animal Health and BEEF magazine, the conference aims to assist cattle producers with an interest in stocker production. Details at <http://tinyurl.com/67evps>.
- » CASNR students **Jessica Jarrell**, Ag Economics, and **Jason Head**, BESS, are among eight winners in a Syngenta-sponsored essay on the future of the Delta cotton industry.



Chick, chick, hurray!—*Charlie Goan shows he's still a spring chicken at his retirement party. He retired in December, capping a 37-year career with the Institute as dean of Extension and distinguished poultry specialist.*

Looking ahead at both challenges and opportunities



Greg Hirshoren

Jim Thompson

*by Jim Thompson
Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine*

Great colleges are made of great people, and I believe the UT College of Veterinary Medicine has great people. As the new year unfolds, I look forward to working side-by-side with faculty, staff, and students who are passionate about veterinary medicine and agriculture. I am excited about accomplishing our objectives of delivering strong research,

education, patient care and service to society. My personal goal is to work to ensure the people of Tennessee understand, appreciate, and support the college in its responsibilities to protect the health of animals, people, and the environment.

Since the college opened in 1974, we've graduated nearly 1,800 veterinarians and have treated over one million animals, and over the past six years more than 97 percent of UT CVM students have passed the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination prior to graduation.

The CVM provides advanced medical care to veterinary patients and delivers an exemplary educational program for veterinary students. Yet the teaching, research, and large animal hospital facilities are in need of upgrades to sustain this level of excellence.

The large animal hospital has not received major renovation or building infrastructure repair since the hospital opened its doors 30 years ago. This hospital serves crucial herd health needs of the state and has exceptionally strong programs in medicine and surgery, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, bovine hoof care, and metabolic diseases, but the facility must be upgraded. This is a critical issue that can and must be fixed. We have worked through a facility needs assessment and have determined a \$20.9 million investment is needed to make the necessary upgrades to ensure our educational program remains strong.

Because the economic situation for the state and university is serious, we will continue to seek private funding for this project as we did successfully with facility needs for the small animal hospital.

While this is a challenge that has to be dealt with quickly, we are fortunate that we have University of Tennessee System support, as well as strong stakeholder support for this critical need. Resolving this challenge and ensuring the State of Tennessee continues to have an accredited veterinary college that meets the needs of Tennessee's animals, people, and our agricultural industries is our number one goal. 💡



Dena Wise

Wise named to Governor's Economic Council on Women

Dena Wise, a family economics expert with UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences, has been named by **Governor Phil Bredesen** to serve on the **Tennessee Economic Council on Women**. The committee will address such issues as pay equity for women, job training, domestic violence, preventive health care and increased political participation.

Wise says the issues the Council on Women will address are timely, and she is proud to serve in an advocacy role. "During tough economic times, historically, domestic violence against women has risen," she says. "The fact that women earn less than men makes them especially vulnerable to rising food and transportation costs during this economic downturn. Also, recent data indicates that unemployment is increasing at a faster rate for women than for men. These are issues that we need to work on, and now is the time to do it." 🌱

Outstanding Ag Alums—*Extension Weed Scientist Neil Rhodes and his wife Becky were named co-winners of the Outstanding Alumnus Award from the College of Agricultural Sciences at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. Becky was recognized for her work in ICI Americas/Zeneca Ag Products as a plant physiologist, market development supervisor, and senior regulatory specialist and for her current position as head of Regulatory affairs for Arysta LifeScience, North America. Neil was honored for his work as a field development representative with Rohm and Haas, his research, teaching and Extension career at UTIA and his service as Plant Sciences Department head.*



Neil and Becky Rhodes

4-H skillathon team named national champs

Tennessee's 4-H state skillathon team has won the national 4-H livestock skillathon contest. Tennessee's team, comprised of **Holly Dickens**, Smith County; **Greer Goddard** Loudon County; **Emily Upchurch**, Cumberland County; **Monica Wilmore**, Smith County; and alternates **Sarah Edwards**, Campbell County, and **Justin Lyles**, Sumner County, earned 1,603 points to beat second place North Carolina (1,572 points) and Virginia (1,558 points).

This is the first time Tennessee has captured first place, and they did so by excelling in team and individual beef cattle, sheep, swine, and meat goat identification, evaluation and management skill activities. Extension Agents **Amy Williams** and **Randall Kimes** served as coaches. 🌱



Agent Amy Williams, right, instructs the state skillathon team on wool evaluation and grading.

In memoriam: Larry Parks and John Smalling

Larry Parks of Knoxville, age 85, retired professor of Plant and Soil Sciences, died Oct. 30, 2008.

Retired Animal Science Professor **John D. Smalling** of Maryville, age 81, died Dec. 1, 2008.

Family and Consumer Science's Devereaux honored

At the annual meeting of the **National Council on Family Relations**, **Matt Devereaux**, associate professor and UT Extension Family and Consumer Sciences specialist, **was awarded the Early Career Achievement Award** for the development and evaluation of innovative child care training programs.

Devereaux was recognized for his leadership in the development of self-study programs and information for training child care teachers and child care directors on effective child care. **His program, First Steps, has educated over 70,000 childcare professionals in Tennessee in six years.** 🌱



Matt Devereaux

Campaign update: Roger McKinney

Roger “Cosmo” McKinney excelled as an athlete at UT, lettering in football and baseball, and graduated in 1973 with a degree in agricultural business. As his career unfolded in the food industry, McKinney appreciated his experience as a student at UT, as well. He readily admits that he was a “C” student, however he acknowledges the valuable role that the Ag Business Department (now **Agricultural Economics**) played in his life. **He invites more alumni and students, of all grade averages, to get involved with the Institute of Agriculture and has placed the Department of Agricultural Economics in his estate plans.**

We thank McKinney for his generosity and the reminder that while grades are important, knowledge and experience from your education are the keys to your success. To read more about McKinney, his athletic experiences at UT and his dedication to the university, visit <http://agriculture.tennessee.edu/development/>. —*Rhodes Logan* 🐾



Roger McKinney

THE CAMPAIGN  FOR TENNESSEE
A SPIRIT • A VISION • A PLAN

AgResearch Resources, *continued*

In future issues of *Third Thursday*, we will profile in depth the capabilities of each Center. Among the resources available to you are dairy and beef cattle herds, croplands and forests, ornamental plots and capacities for soil, water, and air studies and wildlife research. The Centers also offer unparalleled opportunities for research dissemination through field days and other public events.

“The Research and Education Centers are invaluable resources whose mission is to advance your scientific work,” said Research Dean **Bill Brown**. “One of our goals is to make sure that our scientists understand the opportunities and unique resources available to them at these Centers.”

John Wilkerson, interim assistant research dean, invites your ideas on how we can better utilize these resources and create a more holistic environment that takes our discovery work from the lab to application. 🐾



UTIA News is published monthly by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture
Send comments and suggestions to Margot Emery, memory@tennessee.edu
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