



Joe DiPietro

From Vice President DiPietro

On January 26, I gave an Institute update to the House Agriculture Committee in Nashville. I'd like to share a summary of the report with you because it addresses issues and achievements of our operations in Knoxville and throughout the state.

College of Veterinary Medicine: Resolution of Limited Accreditation Status

During an AVMA COE accreditation visit in 2001, shortcomings were identified concerning hospital facilities in the college. Facility conditions in the Large Animal Hospital threatened accreditation status. Planning efforts to address these issues began in 2003 and are ongoing.

Governor Bredesen and the state legislature have been supportive of our need to resolve the issues. A needs analysis was completed and an estimated \$20.9M

expense was defined to resolve the facility deficiencies. The Governor has authorized **UT Interim President Jan Simek** to use \$10.0M of previously allocated UT Governor Chair's funds toward resolving the deficiencies; this money is not a loan and will not be repaid. The college has likewise dedicated \$2.0M of America Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) stimulus funds and \$0.5M of private gift monies to resolve the deficiencies. We are currently about \$8.4M short of our \$20.9M need. President Jan Simek has indicated UT will provide an internal interest-free loan up to \$5.8M and the college has Tennessee State School Bond Authority approval to borrow the remaining monies.

Ag Research: Dairy Research and Education Center – Lewisburg

The Jersey herd will remain at Lewisburg. The research focus will narrow to issues related to production, nutrition, and reproductive physiology (embryo work). We will market the genetics much more aggressively. We are working with the **Jersey Association** on planned matings to increase the number of Jersey heifers available for sale. We will also be developing Jersey bulls for sale. Discussions with other land grant institutions are underway to look at regionalization of facility use.

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New faces in Extension, page 3.



Bob Longmire

A chance to witness the launch of the world's first cellulosic ethanol production facility drew a crowd of several hundred people out on January 29 to Vonore. Among the crowd on the cold wintery day were elected officials, representatives of UTIA, UT, and Genera Energy, as well as executives from DuPont Danisco Cellulosic Ethanol LLC and its parent companies DuPont and Danisco.

The 74,000-square-foot demonstration plant located in Vonore's Niles Ferry Industrial Park has the capacity to convert switchgrass or corncobs into 250,000 gallons of ethanol annually. A number of Institute and Genera Energy researchers and extension personnel are working on the UT Biofuels Initiative to solve problems associated with feedstock production, processing, and logistics associated with the biorefinery's operation.

*Many of the UTLA scientists involved also met Jan. 29 & 29 with some 40 colleagues from across the region for an update on bioenergy science advances. **The mini conference was sponsored by the UT AgResearch Southeastern Sun Grant Center and included a "sneak peek" tour of the biorefinery the day before the ribbon cutting ceremony.** – Patricia McDaniels*

Research and Economic Development Leader Returns to Institute

A former head of the Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science has returned to the Institute after serving as associate dean of Engineering, interim dean of Engineering, interim vice president for Research, and president/CEO of the UT Research Foundation.

Now based in the Institute, **Fred Tompkins**, distinguished professor of Biosystems Engineering, will serve in a teaching role for CASNR. He also carries a 15 percent appointment in AgResearch. The balance of his time will be devoted to activities as associate vice president for Research and Economic Development, a title he continues to hold with the UT System.

"I anticipate teaching a class in the fall focused on company start-ups, entrepreneurship, and technology innovation. Faculty, staff, and students in the Institute conduct terrific research. We want to explore opportunities for commercializing the products of that research."

In the arena of research and economic development, Tompkins will continue to work closely with UT Executive Vice President David Millhorn. Among other projects, Tompkins is leading UT's efforts to implement the Tennessee Electronic Research Administration (TERA) system, which will bring efficiencies and other benefits to aid researchers in their work.

TERA is comprised of a series of integrated modules covering pre- and post-award grant management, human subjects compliance, animal research compliance, conflict of interest certification, and intellectual property management. Proposals are developed and stored from start to finish in TERA, so that the applicable Office of Research is constantly aware of the status of a proposal right from the first entry. All proposal content is maintained in electronic records for rapid web-based access and unambiguous version control.



Fred Tompkins

In Memory of Aslan and For Other Beloved Pets, New ICU Realized



Jim Thompson

by Jim Thompson

Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine

When Aslan, a 10-year old golden retriever, died in 2004 from complications of splenic cancer in our veterinary hospital, the late **Mr. Lindsay Young** lost a loyal friend and companion. Mr. Young was with his beloved dog when Aslan passed away in the hospital's Intensive Care Unit. Attending clinicians, veterinary technicians, students, and community friends could palpably feel the loss. In memory of Aslan, and in tribute to Mr. Young, a longtime friend of his and generous supporter of the veterinary college

launched a challenge; the donor would match dollar-for-dollar every gift received up to \$100,000 toward the \$300,000 fund-raising goal to expand and upgrade the ICU to increase the hospital's ability to care for more beloved patients and to provide the best in high quality medical intensive care.

Mr. Young, an animal lover and extraordinary philanthropist, passed away in 2006 but the grassroots effort to renovate the ICU continued. More than \$300,000 was raised enabling the college to begin renovations in the fall of 2009. This month, I am pleased to announce the opening of The Aslan Intensive Care Unit, a spectacular tribute to the unwavering companion of a man whose kindness touched many lives throughout our community.

In our ICU, around-the-clock 24/7/365 care is provided for animals suffering from severe acute illnesses, accidents, or those recovering from complicated surgeries. As our caseload and the complexity of our caseload have expanded, our previous ICU became severely cramped and inefficient. Many times, it would be filled beyond capacity with patients as attending clinicians, licensed veterinary technicians, and students provided the intensive care needed for recovery.

Our ICU and emergency teams are now housed in a larger, modern facility that better serves current and future teaching and patient needs. Our space has more than doubled, and we have been able to design specialty care areas including a procedures room, separate feline and canine ICU wards, an emergency triage ward and an anesthesia recovery ward, each with immediate access to radiology imaging services.

All this is possible because the community that Mr. Young so willingly supported wanted to provide a tangible tribute to him and his beloved Aslan. In the process, the Aslan Intensive Care Unit will affect the lives of many companion animals in the years to come. As dean of the veterinary college, I am truly inspired by the generous response from our community. 🐾



Greg Hirschorn

New Faces in Extension



Robert Burns

Robert Burns will be Extension's new assistant dean for Agriculture, Natural Resources and Resource Development. Burns joins UT Extension with a strong background in conducting and leading Extension educational programs at Iowa State University and previously here at UTIA. His appointment will be effective July 1, 2010. Dean Cross will serve as Agriculture Program Leader until Burns arrives.



Janet Cluck

Herb Lester is retiring from UT Extension and will be on extended leave until his retirement date. Dickson County Director and FCS Agent **Janet Cluck** has agreed to serve as interim Central Region director, effective February 1, 2010. She has been with Extension almost 29 years and has a background of 21 years with 4-H before moving to the FCS program. She was promoted to County Extension Director in 1991.



Allisen Penn

Allisen Penn is the new program leader for Family and Consumer Sciences in the Central Region. She joins UT Extension with a strong background in conducting and leading Extension educational programs with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Service. Her 22 years of experience includes responsibilities at the county, district, and state levels.



Ben West

A Mississippi State University Extension leader will soon begin work in Jackson as regional director of the Western Region. **Ben West** joins UT Extension with a strong background in conducting and leading Extension educational programs. At Mississippi State University he has served as the Extension coordinator for the Department of Wildlife, and Fisheries and the national outreach coordinator for the Berryman Institute, which is a Center of Excellence at Mississippi State. His appointment will be effective April 26, 2010.

Mike Gordon has agreed to serve in an interim role on a half-time basis until June 30, 2010. This will provide time for transition of the regional director responsibilities and provide West assistance in getting to know the Western Region.

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Sutton to Continue as 4-H Leader

With an eye on budgetary concerns, the search for a new 4-H leader has been deferred for two to three years. Interim 4-H Leader **Steve Sutton** will continue during that time.

"Steve will no longer carry an interim title, and I am asking him to make decisions that lead, guide and direct our statewide youth development programs on a continuing basis," says Extension Dean Tim Cross.

"Our 4-H program is special, it reaches hundreds of thousands of youth, and it has an enormous impact on the future of our state. With your help, we will continue the great legacies of our 4-H programs and embrace new and innovative ideas, projects, and activities to achieve our mission. Thanks for all you do in serving our 4-H youth and volunteers."



Steve Sutton

The University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine



9:00 a.m. ~ 4:00 p.m.

Saturday April 24, 2010

What's News

- » **The Institute of Agriculture's Department of Food Science and Technology curriculum has been approved by the Institute of Food Technologists Higher Education Review Board.**
- » "To receive approval from the IFT Higher Education Review Board demonstrates that the Department of Food Science and Technology faculty have achieved a high level of excellence in their overall education program," said **Michael Davidson**, head of UTIA's Department of Food Science and Technology.
- » This approval by the IFT is part of a rigorous process that identifies the premier food science curricula in the nation. As a result, students working toward a bachelor of science degree in Food Science (Science Concentration) are now eligible for scholarships from the IFT.—*Doug Edlund*
- » Two Institute members have been selected to serve on a 15-member citizen panel to review Knoxville Utilities Board (KUB) practices in trimming trees that are viewed as a hazard to utility lines. Serving on the board are **Jennifer Gihring**, research associate in Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, and **David Vandergriff**, Knox County UT Extension agent.

Our Stories

In its 100 years, UT Extension agents and volunteers have truly transformed agriculture and rural life in Tennessee. A Web site that resides at <http://utextension.tennessee.edu/100years/history.htm> presents a collection of short anecdotes from Extension's labors. Please check this page throughout the year, as we expect the collection of anthologies to grow and reflect more of our history through the years.

Judd Brooks, 1916

This story is about Judd Brooks, an Extension Agent and UT graduate who began work in Madison County in 1916, as documented by James McKee, former Western Extension Director (from the UT Extension 75 year history, Proud Past...Promising Future):

"According to T.W. Hillsman, retired county agent in Madison County (1936-1965), Brooks set a standard which Agricultural Extension agents tried to emulate for many years. Brooks was a UT graduate and began work in 1916. In his early days as an agent, he organized 20 to 25 community clubs. People got to know him all over Madison County because of the programs he presented to the community clubs.

One thing Brooks was known for, according to Hillsman, was his use of his old Model T Ford car to power a movie projector. Brooks would remove the back wheel of his car and attach a belt, which would provide power to the projector. This was used to show silent movies throughout Madison County."

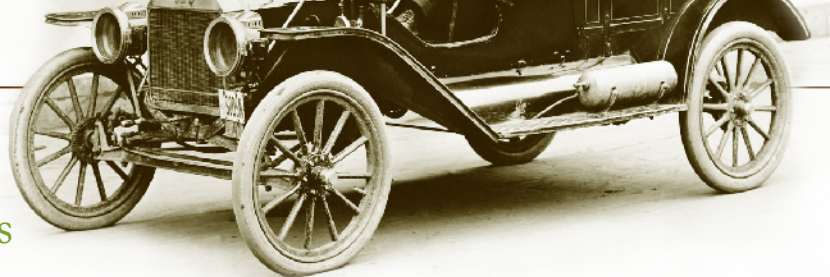
Guiding Pet Behaviors for the Better

A new faculty position has been created at the UT College of Veterinary Medicine to teach future veterinarians companion animal behavior. The college has partnered with Knoxville-based **Radio Systems Corporation**, makers of the PetSafe and Invisible Fence brands, to create the PetSafe Chair in Clinical Animal Behavior. Randy Boyd, Radio Systems Corporation's founder and CEO, is a graduate of UT. The position was created to help protect the human-companion animal bond through research to better understand companion animal behaviors that jeopardize a pet remaining in the home environment. Behavior issues are the number one reason why owners surrender animals to shelters.

Nationwide, there are fewer than 50 board-certified veterinary behaviorists, and the new faculty position puts the college

on par with an elite group. Boyd says this is an opportunity to discover practical, science-based methods for responsible pet owners to be able to create and sustain a lasting bond. Boyd says, "This will be a win for UT, a win for our community and a win for animal welfare." Boyd says there is a vacuum nationally in veterinary behavior, and the university, along with the community, will have the possibility of being the national leader in the area through this effort. "There is a terrible lack of clinical research in animal behavior and as a result of this initiative we hope to improve understanding of pets and thus improve their welfare." The college plans to interview candidates this spring and fill the position July 1.—*Claire Eldridge*

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Cont., Vice President

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources:

Enrollment has increased to 1,193 students (950 of those are undergraduates). CASNR was the only UT college to experience an increase. Particular successes in growth over five years have occurred with Food Science, Biosystems Engineering, and Environmental Science.

This is a reflection of the changing face of agriculture. More STEM majors graduated in 2009 than the year before. Each year the number increases. We have a new B.S. degree in Natural Resource and Environmental Economics and new concentrations in Plant Science in Biotechnology and Bioenergy.

Extension: Animal Cruelty Investigations

From 2003 to 2008, animal cruelty complaints responded to by county agents increased from 352 cases to 1,119 cases.

A total of 3,928 cases have been investigated during that six-year period, resulting in 532 determinations of probable cause. Agents spend an average of 3.7 hours per complaint. The Tennessee Farm Bureau has expressed interest in clarifying responsibilities for animal cruelty investigations involving livestock. Concerns about agent involvement in animal cruelty investigations include: personal safety, perceived change in role from education to law enforcement, and redirection of effort from priority educational needs in their counties.

West Tennessee 4-H Center

The Buford Ellington 4-H Center was closed on July 1, 2009 due to budget reductions and deferred maintenance issues. The three remaining camps in Columbia, Crossville, and Greeneville were used to accommodate all summer 4-H campers, with many counties reasigned to new camping locations across the state.

A total of \$33 million would be needed for a site, construction of facilities, and all related equipment and furnishings to serve 400 youth. The vision is to also establish a facility that will effectively serve to host small- to modest-sized conferences for audiences in West Tennessee, particularly agribusiness groups. The study determined that strong support exists for 4-H programs and a new 4-H Center in West Tennessee, but private support of the preliminary estimated cost of \$33 million is very unlikely. A combination of private, state, and federal dollars is likely to be needed to launch this project. The next step is to appoint a team to establish specific needs of a new 4-H Center, including desired site characteristics, facilities suitable for youth and adults, and green building opportunities to include in educational programming at the Center.

Tennessee Biofuels Initiative and Genera Energy

Through the 2009 crop year, we have completed the first two years of the Switchgrass Farmer Incentive Program.

We have nearly 2,700 acres under contract, on 199 fields on 40 farms, within a 50-mile radius of Vonore. More than 12,000 tons of switchgrass were harvested in 2009. We've worked with a number of farm machinery companies to demonstrate new production, harvesting, and handling equipment. We have also conducted a pilot switchgrass seed production harvest and are working to establish a Tennessee-based seed industry.

The project has received more than \$7 million in DOE competitive grants for feedstock related programs, including: (1) \$4.9 million to demonstrate a large-scale in-field chopping demonstration and high-tonnage bulk handling system, and (2) \$2.45 million to demonstrate production of new improved varieties of switchgrass on contract farms.

We formed the Tennessee Biomass Supply Cooperative to aggregate material and transition farm production from a state-subsidized to a self-sustaining model to meet market needs and opportunities. We are working with a number of companies interested in marketing agreements for commercial-scale switchgrass supply.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to update the House Agriculture Committee. As always, please feel free to let me know if you have questions.

All the best,

Joe

Human Resources at Your Fingertips

A redesign of Human Resources at the University of Tennessee went into effect in January, and one aspect of the new structure that Institute employees will find very helpful is the availability of a new Web site, <http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/callcenter.html>.

Part of the redesign is a new toll-free hotline for information on HR issues such as benefits, policies, employment, and training opportunities. The number is 1-888-444-UTHR, and it will be answered by a member of the **UT HR Call Center staff**.

The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. eastern time or 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. central time. Each campus will continue to have a dedicated Human Resources Officer. Employees have the choice of contacting their campus or Institute HR team or the new hotline for help. **Herb Byrd**, at 865-974-7245 and in 212 Morgan Hall, is the Institute's Knoxville HR Officer. Institute units and Extension regional offices have their own HR professional available by phone or walk-in.



Each year hundreds of school children visit the UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge where they can encounter the wonders of nature firsthand. Now, through a generous gift from Ken Isham (pictured) and other life scientists with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, they can travel back in time, too, to see a tree that is approximately 300 million years old. The scientists gave the Arboretum a fossilized scale tree known as a lycopod. They discovered it in the Cumberland Mountains on one of countless hikes taken on weekends, and they displayed it in for many years at their lab to represent the continuity of the research process and the division's research community.



Richard Evans

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