

**Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville, Inc.  
PO Box 1061, Beltsville, MD 20704-1061**

**Dedicated to promoting the research and education programs of the  
Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, MD**

# **THE FAR-B NEWS**

*June 2008*

*Editor: Hank Becker*

## **President's Message**

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This will be my last message as President of FAR-B. Next year I will serve as Vice President, and continue on the Executive Board. I am very pleased that Vern Pursel agreed to stand for President and that he was approved enthusiastically at the May 13 Annual Meeting. With Vern's considerable experience as Treasurer, his very active participation in many FAR-B activities (science fairs, membership recruitment, outreach, and advising and promoting the creation of the BARC Alliance), and his gift for organization, he is unusually qualified to be President.

I want to also highlight that Richard Zimmerman was elected to replace Vern as Treasurer, and I will become the new Vice-President, succeeding Bill Wergin. Also at the Annual Meeting, Roger Lawson and Richard Zimmerman were elected to the Executive Board, replacing Bill Wergin, James Smith, Mort Beroza and Ralph Bram--all of whom resigned during the past year. On behalf of FAR-B members, I want to sincerely thank them for their excellent past service on the Board and dedication to FAR-B's mission, and to warmly welcome Roger and Richard.

There are two issues I want to discuss in this final report to the membership. One is the importance of FAR-B's financial reserves to its mission to promote and support BARC. The recent economic downturn appears to have had an impact on one of FAR-B's major sources of income, the Federal Combined Campaign.

It appears that this year's income will be down 20 percent compared to the

previous year. Another important source of funds for FAR-B is membership dues, and although the number of members is reasonably level, the number of members behind in paying their dues is quite large.

The importance of this loss is that it handicaps FAR-B's ability to help BARC and its scientists in such things as travel funds, support to BARC by facilitating visits by important delegations and groups who come to BARC to learn more about its program and achievements, and the contributions FAR-B makes to the purchase of major equipment.

I urge all members to please pay their dues in a timely manner, and to discuss with their colleagues the benefits of joining FAR-B--either as an Associate Member or as a Personal Member. It is worth noting that FAR-B's overhead is 2 to 3 percent, making nearly all of the dues it receives available for redirecting to BARC.

The second topic I want to touch upon is the future directions of BARC, the subject of Area Director Joe Spence's keynote talk at the Annual Meeting. The development of a 21st century BARC will require a certain amount of reinvention and redirection--some of which may be painful and difficult. But Dr. Spence made the case that unless BARC undertakes this proactive evaluation and planning, it will have little recourse but to continue to be buffeted and diminished by external forces and events.

What is FAR-B's role in this? In addition to supporting Dr. Spence and Dr. Tom Sexton, the Associate Area Director, in this undertaking this task and assisting them when called upon, FAR-B can

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provide encouragement and advice to the BARC Alliance, which is dedicated to building strong government and private sector support for BARC which could help to level the playing field for BARC in competing for the resources and research recognition its quality of science deserves.

Finally, I want to thank all those who assisted and encouraged me throughout my term as President. It was a rewarding and stimulating experience. I look forward to providing similar support and encouragement to Vern, who will lead us in these truly "challenging times."

Thanks to Jim Plaskowitz, the Beltsville Area Web Page Administrator, FAR-B Website has been updated.

Warm regards,

**K. Darwin Murrell**, *President*



### **FAR-B Poinsettias Plant Sale**

#### **Poinsettia Plant Sale and Possible Garden Day**

FAR-B organized a successful poinsettia sale in Fall 2007, selling 111 plants with profits going to the BARC scientists travel fund. FAR-B plans to hold its third poinsettia sale in late summer/early fall and hopes you will support this effort. Look for the announcements of the sale in the August special mailing.

Also we are considering sponsoring a Garden Day (visiting several gardens in the area for a small fee) in either May or June of 2009. We would very much like your feedback on this: 1) Are you in favor of FAR-B sponsoring a Garden Day as a fundraiser? 2) Would you and/or your family attend a garden day? 3) Would you be willing to help out with Garden Day? 4) Do you have any ideas for other types of fundraisers? Please get back to me,

**Freddi Hammerschlag** at:  
peachnfrog66@comcast.net

### **Area Director's Report**

I am excited to be back at BARC after being on the National Program Staff for over 6 years. I am also pleased to have been joined in the Area Office by Tom Sexton, Associate Area Director, and Lisa Baldus, Deputy Area Director. The three of us have worked together in different capacities over the years and have a thorough knowledge of BARC and have great respect for the incredible research that has been and continues to be conducted here.

Despite the preeminence of BARC research, we face a number of internal and external challenges. ARS has been dealing with flat budgets recently and the prospect of increases in budget in the near future is not great. Our research budgets are under increasing pressure from inflation, rising energy costs, and increases in salaries. The current administration's budget priorities are biofuels and bioproducts, obesity prevention, food safety, colony collapse disorder and specialty crops and these are areas that Beltsville can play a major role. However, rather than new funds, the funding for these new initiatives will come from redirection of ongoing research. In fact, BARC has been targeted with several million dollars in cuts proposed in the next fiscal year. In addition to the budget, we will have to live with uncertainties related to the change in administration following the elections. The recent signing into law of the Farm Bill calls for major reorganizations in the Research, Education, and Economics mission area and it remains to be seen how they will affect ARS.

We have limited or no control of the external uncertainties listed above. Within BARC itself, there is no shortage of challenges. The land holdings of the Center are always going to be a target for development and other uses. The number of buildings is much greater than needed to support our program. We have over 160 building here at BARC on our

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demolition list! The cost of energy continues to be a major factor as is the maintenance of the buildings and infrastructure. In order to reduce indirect research costs, we have started the process to develop a space plan for BARC and to consolidate space wherever possible.

Despite these uncertainties and challenges, I see that we have exceptional opportunities for BARC. We have outstanding scientists and significant resources sufficient to support a solid research program; the program just needs to be more focused. In the coming year, it is my plan to develop a research vision of BARC for the next 10 years to identify research we should pursue at BARC that really is "best in class." Having this vision will guide our decisions about space consolidation, resource allocation, the development of research resources, and the hiring of scientists. One recent benefit for BARC is that the Farm Bill provides BARC with Enhanced Use Lease Authority that will allow us to partner with other entities on BARC property to have more joint research activities and the leveraging of resources.

Having returned to BARC, I have seen changes and opportunities that did not exist before I left in 2002. One of the constants, however, has been the continuing support of FAR-B. This support has been most valuable in helping to keep Beltsville at the forefront of agricultural research and is appreciated by all of the staff here at BARC.

**Joseph Spence**, *Area Director*

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### **Combined Federal Campaign**

On May 5, 2008, the Local Federal Coordinated Committee for the Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area approved FAR-B's application to participate 2008 campaign. We have a number of assets that makes our

application a winner for the past 5 years. FAR-B has no paid employees. Our overhead is less than 3 percent. Some organizations exceed 25-percent overhead and are subject to an outside audit that can be very expensive. We are an all volunteer organization which communicates primarily via e-mail. FAR-B has elected officers that meet on a monthly basis.

Our donations for the years, 2006 were \$945.99 and 2007 were \$7,268.64. The decline from 2006 to 2007 reflects the general lull in the national economy.

We are optimistic about a recent approach that involves a personal letter sent to scientists and staff at Beltsville seeking donations. Our committee consists of Jim Anderson, Vern Pursel, and me.

One of the most outstanding activities sponsored by FAR-B has been our Community Outreach program. The educational facet sponsors an excellent program in the Beltsville area. It is one of those achievements that must have played a major role in approving our 2008 application.

**Phil Kearney**, *CFC Chair*

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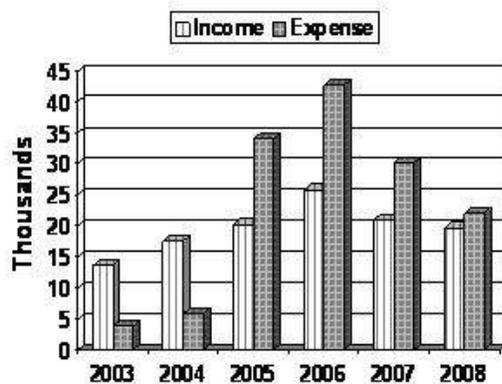
### **Financial Report**

Since this will be my final financial report, I have prepared a graph that shows FAR-B's income and expense history during the period I served as Treasurer. From 2003 to 2006 our income increased by several thousand dollars each year, primarily due to a higher return on our investments. The graph also shows that during the past 3 years our expenditures exceeded income by a total of \$40,000. That was the result of the Board's decision to contribute \$25,000 to the Systematic Entomology Laboratory for the purchase of a computer-controlled remote microscope in 2005, funding of three research grants (\$14,000) in 2006, and

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funding of the Professional Travel Grant Program (\$20,000 each year) in 2006 and 2007. However, the FAR-B Board clearly recognized that expenses can't continue to exceed income year after year. As a consequence, the Professional Travel Grant Program has been reduced to \$10,000 in 2008, and we expect that our budget for this year will come close to being balanced if members continue to pay their dues.

### **FAR-B's Financial Trends**



**Vernon Pursel, Treasurer**

### **BARC Poster Day**

The 19th Annual BARC Poster Day was held on Wednesday, April 23, 2008, at the National Visitor Center. This is the third year that FAR-B has rented a tent to provide sufficient space so the Students from area high schools who conducted research projects under the mentorship of Beltsville Area scientists could participate along with BARC newest research scientists, visiting scientists, and post-doctoral research associates. FAR-B provided financial support to provide lunch and refreshments for all poster presenters and cash awards to the top three student posters.

**First Prize:** \$300 Presented to: Chinwe Madubata, Eleanor Roosevelt High School

**Mentor:** Brian Bowker, Food Safety Laboratory, ANRI

**Poster:** *Effect of Sarcomere Length on Efficacy of Meat Tenderization Treatments*

**Second Prize:** \$200 presented to: Renjit Thomas, Eleanor Roosevelt High School

**Mentor:** Insook Son, Environmental Microbial Safety Laboratory, ANRI

**Poster:** *Change in the DNA of Escherichia coli in Bulk Tank Milk*

**Third Prize:** \$100 presented to: Jonathan Brevard, Oxon Hill High School

**Mentor:** Milutin Djurikovic, Sustainable Agricultural Systems Laboratory, ANRI

**Poster:** *Nitrous Oxide Emissions in No-Till, Conventional Till, and Organic Farming Systems*



Awardees of the High School Division 2008 BARC Poster Day (l. to r.): Renjit Thomas, Chinwe Madubata, Vern Pursel (FAR-B Representative), and Jonathan Brevard

### **Community Outreach**

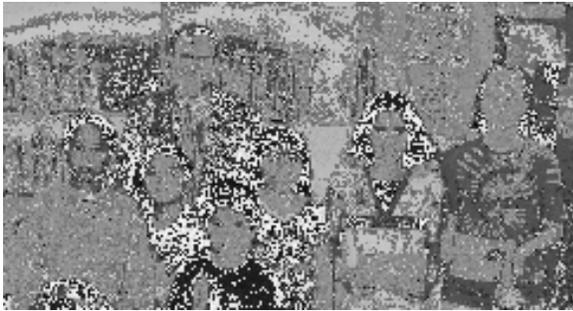
#### **- An Open Letter to FAR-B**

Beltsville Elementary School is very privileged to have the FAR-B (among their active group of community school volunteers. This group, composed of both active and retired scientists from USDA, the University of Maryland, and area agencies, spends much time planning and presenting hands-on science lessons for all of our classes in grades one through six in our gym for 3 days each April. They are able to bring their wealth of

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scientific knowledge and experience down to the level of our youngsters with their vibrant, hands-on activities. Over the years, we've had all kinds of live insects, chickens, and other living specimens play a role in these meaningful science lessons.

This year's program focused on Exploring Environmental Science with four stations: Ecology Basics, Waste Generation and Recycling, Plants Have Problems Too, and Good Insects/Bad Insects. What a way to raise awareness for our next generation of citizens!



BARC Area Director Dr. Joseph Spence visits the Beltsville Elementary School where students who were treated to FAR-B's Science Enrichment Program won first prizes for posters at the Poster Awards Ceremony. FAR-B's Science Enrichment Program at BES was awarded two silver prizes and certificates—one for FAR-B another for BARC.

This FAR-B program exemplifies Prince Georges Superintendent of Education Dr. Deasy's belief in the importance of the Community's sharing in the responsibility for successful schools. They bring science to our students from a perspective and expertise level that embellishes and supports the excellent teaching by our school's dedicated teachers. Teachers and students alike look forward to the hands-on workshop each year. Team work with the community does enrich Beltsville!

**Stephen Beegle**, *Principal Beltsville Elementary*

## **Some Progress for the Beltsville Alliance**

The National Agricultural Research Alliance-Beltsville has vastly grown its reach and impact over these past several months. Here are a few selected accomplishments of Alliance President John Peter Thompson:

**September**—Arranged an informational BARC and NAL tour for USDA Secretary and Deputy Secretary, Cong. Steny Hoyer, Sen. Ben Cardin, and key Congressional staffers

**January**—Briefed Sen. Barbara Mikulski and staffers from the offices of Cong. Hoyer and Sen. Cardin, and Sen. Mikulski, and collaborated with offices of Cong. Hoyer and Sen. Mikulski and Sen. Cardin on Congressional letter to the Secretary of Agriculture requesting a forward-looking strategic plan for BARC and NAL

**February**—Provided comment to Congress on the Office of USDA Secretary's reply to the Congressional letter regarding strategic plan and he testified before Maryland Senate in support of Joint Resolution urging the Governor to support BARC and NAL

**March**—Testified before Maryland House of Delegates in support of Joint Resolution urging the Governor to support BARC and NAL

**March**—Presented FAR-B's Testimony to Key Congressional Offices on FY 2009 Funding of BARC Research

**June**—Meet with ARS Administrator Ed Knipling in preparation for discussions with Under Secretary Buchanan to follow up on congressional letter and to discuss long-term vision for BARC and NAL

**On going**—Outreach to widen Congressional Support and generate stakeholder communications in other Districts and States of Representatives or Senators who have previously supported BARC. (Alliance Board Member and Treasurer Wendi Williams will lead this new Alliance undertaking.)

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**IN MEMORIAM**

**Dr. Jan van Schilfgaarde**

Dr. Jan van Schilfgaarde, retired ARS Area Director for the Pacific West Area, passed away March 25, 2008. Dr. van Schilfgaarde was recognized nationally and internationally for his many contributions to agricultural drainage concepts, theory, and design.

Jan was born in The Hague, Netherlands, the oldest of six children, on February 7, 1929. In 1946, after completing secondary school, he came to the US to study on a scholarship at Hope College in Holland, Mich. Following this, rather than returning to The Netherlands, he continued his study at Iowa State College at Ames, Ia. In 1951, Jan married Roberta Hansen.

From 1954 to 1964, he taught agricultural engineering at North Carolina State University at Raleigh, rapidly advancing from Assistant, to Associate, and then Full Professor. In July 1964, he joined the staff of ARS. Jan remained with ARS until his retirement in 1997, over the years holding a wide variety of leadership positions.

From 1964 to 1972, he was at Beltsville, headquarters of the Soil and Water Conservation Research Division, first as Chief Water Management Engineer, and later as Associate Director and Director. From 1972 to 1984, Jan was Director of the U.S. Salinity Laboratory at Riverside, Calif. Next, he moved to Fort Collins, Colo. where he served as Area Director of the Mountain States Area and as Associate Area Director of the Northern Plains Area. In 1991, he returned to Beltsville as Associate Deputy Administrator for Natural Resources and Systems. In 1996 he moved to the West again and completed his career at Albany, Calif. as Area Director of the Pacific West Area in November 1997.

**Lloyd C. Cochran**

Dr. Lloyd C. Cochran died Monday, Feb. 4, 2008 at the age of 101.

He was born April 5, 1906 at Frankfort, Ind., son of Bertha E. and Morris E. Cochran. Lloyd attended a country one-room grade school and graduated from Rossville, Ind., High School. He received a BSA degree from Purdue University and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in plant pathology from Michigan State University.

In 1933 he married Maud V. Tague and in 1936 moved to Riverside, Calif., where he joined the Citrus Experimental Station of the University of California. For the next 21 years. he did research on virus diseases of citrus and deciduous fruit and nut trees for the university and USDA.

In 1957 they moved to Orlando, Fla., where Lloyd became Director of Citrus Production Research for USDA. In 1959 they moved to Beltsville, Md., where Lloyd became Chief of Fruit and Tree Nut Crops Research for USDA.

Lloyd retired in 1969 and they moved to Corvallis where he joined the botany department of Oregon State University to work on rose diseases. After retirement from Oregon State University in 1973, Lloyd took several consulting jobs which included 3 years in Iran and shorter terms in Pakistan, Kenya and The Philippines.

Lloyd helped found several International Fruit Tree Research Groups, including The European Fruit Tree Virus and the International Citrus Virus Congresses. He traveled widely to meetings and fruit growing areas in many countries.

**Jack R. Coulson**

Jack Richard Coulson, 75, of Bluemont, Va. died Saturday, Jan. 13, 2007, in Blue Ridge Hospice Residential Center, Winchester, Va.

He was born Jan. 31, 1931, in Manhattan, Kas., the son of Emery Jack Coulson and Esther Marie George Coulson. Jack earned a B.A. in zoology from Iowa State

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University and a M.S. in entomology from the University of Maryland. He served as a Marine Sergeant from 1952 to 1956.

He had a distinguished career spanning nearly 40 years with ARS. Throughout his career he provided critical support to scientists who were importing exotic biological control agents to control exotic pests. His service to the field of biological pest control, in the US and many other parts of the world, was recognized by his election to president of the International Organization of Biological Control.

At the time of his retirement, he was in charge of the Biological Control Documentation Center (BCDC). The BCDC maintains the Release of Beneficial Organisms (ROBO) database, and has extensive files of correspondence, published and unpublished reports, and reprints concerning biological control research and related activities, primarily involving USDA activities, but also including many records from other involved organizations, dating back to the 1930s or before. Also, the BCDC maintains a rather extensive library of journals and books relating to biological control, Integrated Pest Management and taxonomy related to biological control activities. Scientists from the USDA and other U.S. scientific institutions, and foreign scientists and the general interested public utilize these unique resources. Thus, BCDC continues to serve all of those interested in biological control.

### **Alfred H. Baumhover**

Alfred Henry Baumhover, 85, who was known within Carrboro's Webbwood community as "Sir Alfred" because he was knighted by Queen Juliana of the Netherlands in 1955, died Feb. 21, 2007 in Carrboro, N.C.

Baumhover was born on June 12, 1921, and raised on the family farm in Carroll, Ia. At the age of 16, he assumed the responsibility of running the farm after his father suffered an accident. Baumhover

pursued his education and received his BS from Iowa State College in 1949.

Upon graduation, Baumhover went to work for USDA. He spent 2 years as the area supervisor of the USDA Grasshopper Control Division in Great Falls, Mont. In 1951, his position was abolished due to the commercial availability of insecticides for grasshoppers. Baumhover chose to join Raymond C. Bushland and work on farm pests at the Kerrville, Tx. laboratory.

Baumhover arrived when the finishing touches were being completed on Edward Fred Knipling's Sterilized Insect Technique (SIT)--an autocidal theory of total insect population management, to be tested on the screwworm -- a notorious flesh-eating parasite of warm blooded mammals. Baumhover became the lead field agent for the experimental efforts to control the screwworm. His base of operations was transferred from Texas to Florida. From there, he worked on the Sanibel Island, Fla. tests and was selected to lead the landmark Curacao, Netherlands Antilles, Experiment in 1954, which proved the efficacy of SIT. For his part in the eradication of screwworms on Curacao, Baumhover was conferred knighthood in the Order of Orange-Nassau.

After Curacao, Baumhover returned to Florida to participate in the successful screwworm eradication efforts there and across the US Southeast. By 1959, screwworms had been eradicated from that region. He then went to Texas to participate in the even more daunting anti-screwworm campaign in the US Southwest. Even though the Southwest was declared screwworm free in 1966, it was not until 1982 that eradication truly occurred. In 1964, Baumhover accepted a position with the USDA's Tobacco Insects Investigations and continued there until his retirement to Minnesota on February 4, 1984. Throughout his tenure with the Tobacco Insects Investigations, Baumhover continued to serve as a consultant for the screwworm eradication campaign.

**Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville, Inc.**

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Associate AD: Thomas Sexton  
Nat'l Visitor Center:  
Jennifer Woodward-Greene

**FIRST CLASS**

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