Greetings from 132 Curtiss Hall. Iowa is slowly transitioning to spring. We have had two snowfalls since our first tornado of the season and we are excited about temperatures above 50. Here on campus students are walking to class in the morning in parkas and flip-flops. The Frisbees are flying in the afternoon. The stage near the Campanile has a live band with the speakers cranked up as I sit in my office hunched over the keyboard writing this newsletter. I haven’t taken my motorcycle out for a spin yet, but hopefully will soon.

I want to thank Dr. Miller for his many years of service to ISU Extension and the past year that he has provided leadership to our organization. I particularly want to thank him for his patience with me over the past 13 years that I’ve worked with and for him. He has made me a better extension professional and a better director and for that we can all be thankful. I am looking forward to working with Dr. Kress to help move ISU Extension into its next phase.

I want to thank those of you that attended professional development last week and I hope that you found it worthwhile. Soon you will receive an evaluation survey to complete. It is anonymous and will provide me and the planning committee valuable feedback. Julie is also preparing a website that will have the power point presentations and other information from the training. It also includes a link to Dr. Sapp’s ANR @ Noon presentation we discussed Tuesday afternoon. I still encourage you to watch his archived presentation and here is a link to his research paper.

Sapp makes an argument that society’s attitude have shifted from “we have an obligation to feed a hungry world” to more concern about the environment. A March 28 Gallup Poll seems to support this theory as it showed that Americans are most concerned about water quality, http://www.gallup.com/poll/146810/Water-Issues-Worry-Americans-Global-Warming-Least.aspx . This is in our wheelhouse. We help farmers increase production and efficiency AND protect natural resources. However, in this “what-have-you-done-lately” world we can relax and stay the course. Agricultural and Natural Resources Extension must continue to do both well and do a better job explaining how our work addresses society’s concern. Our contribution to public value.

Another webcast that you should watch is the March 15 Leadership Connect session on Guiding Principles for Revenue Generation (http://www.extension.iastate.edu/forstaff/). The one page list of guiding principles and worksheet are also on the forstaff website in the “forms” section. I encourage you to use these tools as you plan events and work with internal partners.

Budget Update
The budget picture in not clearly focused yet, but things are beginning to take shape. For planning purposes, ANR has been asked to cut a million dollars from our budget across campus and field
combined. That is in the 8-10% neighborhood and it based on the current discussion of a 14% cut to Smith-Lever funds at the federal level and a 0-9% cut to the state funds to ISU. These cuts, on top of previous reductions will be extremely difficult and will continue to impact our program and staff. We will be a smaller organization and we will have to re-evaluate what we do and how we do them. We have some open positions in ANR and in the short run they may help me meet my budget target. However, open positions don’t mean they were in appropriate field or location as we position our program for the future. I encourage people who are eligible for the Phase+ retirement option to do your home work and give it consideration. If you have thought about retiring or a career change this is a good time for an experienced professional in agriculture to explore their options.

In spite of the budget cut, there is a newly posted position for an Assistant Director of ANR. I encourage you to apply if you are interested, but recognize that I may freeze the position until the budget picture is clearer. After 14 months in the position I am to the point of asking for help. Given the budget pressures we need to re-evaluate how we do ANR programming. Cross-disciplinary issues are more important than ever as is the need for focused and effective teams addressing them. The Assistant Director and I will have more time to work with the teams to facilitate program planning and implementation. In addition, my goal is to spend more time meeting clients, partners and stakeholders to represent ISU Extension and our ANR programs. If you have questions about the position please contact me.

**Congratulations colleagues:**

I want to thank the eight people that submitted stories for the Communicating Success award competition. Be sure to congratulate the following colleagues for their submissions and ask them how they used their gift card at the Iowa State Book Store:

1. Larry Tranel, *Dairy Specialist Responds to Dairy Profit Concerns*
2. Joel DeJong, *Iowa Farmers and Agronomists Use Extension Information to Make Decisions*
3. Craig Chase, *Vegetable Growers Learn How to Price their Goods for a Profit*

**ANR update**

**ANR at Noon:**

The April 8 ANR @ Noon will feature Dr. Mark Edelman, Economics discussing the Microloan Program and how it can help small businesses and entrepreneurs and the role for extension.

**Staffing update**

Here is a progress report. We will be updating the point of contact maps as these people settle in.

- Specialist searches still in progress include:
  - Northeast Iowa Farm Management, unsuccessful search and readvertised.
  - Campus Soybean Specialist, unsuccessful search
  - Campus Fruit and Vegetable Specialist, Ajay Nair has accepted offer to start July 1.
  - Campus Economist working in cooperatives, interviewing in April

**Odds and ends:**

- ISU Extension has launched its new website design. ANR will begin its transformation to the new look. If you have suggestions or ideas for improving the ANR page please let me know.

**Upcoming Events**

Extension Admin Update

- The Admin team, under direction from Provost Hoffman are proceeding under Dr. Miller’s leadership to work on the budget. Dr. Kress will be kept informed, but she will arrive after the budget deadline.
- Dr. Kress has requested Weekly Updates of no more than 4-5 bullet points per program of key activities/issues from each unit or program area for the week beginning April 4. If you have announcements or issues please forward them to me.

Stay in touch.

John