

January 2015

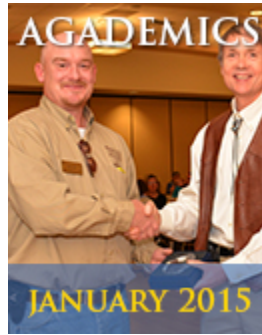


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UW Range Club earns regional competition honors

By Bernadette Van der Vliet | January 2015



Undergraduate Range Management Exam team members back, from left, Julia Workman, assistant coach, Shelby Baumgartner, Shay Horton, Eric Ramerth, Ethan Overton, Nolan Hicks, Derek Scasta, coach. Front, Amanda Lee, Andee Leininger, Jessica Windh, Kelsey Welten, BJ Bender, Tevyn Baldwin.

University of Wyoming's Range Club brought home honors last month during the Wyoming Section of the Society for Range Management (SRM) meeting and regional competition in Evanston in November

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources students competed against those from Utah State University, Southern Utah University and Colorado State University. UW will compete in February at the International SRM meeting in Sacramento, California.

Range ecology and watershed management (REWM) student BJ Bender, Lake Forest, California, won extemporaneous speaking. Fellow range student Amanda Lee, Flower Mount, Texas, and agroecology student Andee Leininger, La Junta, Colorado, earned third and fourth, respectively. The students are coached by extension range specialist and club co-adviser Rachel Mealar.

Bender, Kelsey Welter, Aurora, Colorado, and Jessica Windh, Reedley, California, won the Range Cup poster competition. The team was mentored by ecosystem science and management (ESM) professor Pete Stahl.

Undergraduate Range Management Exam (URME) winners include REWM students Eric Ramerth, Big Lake, Minnesota, second, Kelsey Welter, Aurora Colorado, third, and Shelby Baumgartner, Clearmont, fourth.

URME contestants are coached by rangeland extension specialist Derek Scasta and plant sciences

department graduate student Julia Workman.

Agricultural business and range ecology major Tevyn Baldwin, Mitchell, Nebraska, earned third place in plant identification. Dan Rodgers, ESM associate professor, coaches the students.

Baldwin and UW alumni Marji Patz of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Powell became the number-one Pro-Am team. A professional is randomly paired with a competing student, each taking the plant ID exam and the URME.

College's faculty, staff members receive honors

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University of Wyoming Extension specialists **Karen Panter** and **Cole Ehmke** received Outstanding Educator Awards during the college's annual employee recognition program December 17.

Both received \$2,500. Panter, a member of the Department of Plant Sciences, is the horticulture specialist, and Ehmke, in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, is the agriculture entrepreneurship and personal financial management specialist.

An anonymous donor established the award to recognize classroom and extension educators in the college. Nominations are peer-reviewed by a committee comprised of a dean's office representative, an academic department head, and a previous award recipient.

Derek Scasta, an assistant professor in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management (ESM) and extension range specialist, was also nominated.

Students present two awards through the Office of Academic and Student Programs, with each recipient receiving \$500. Veterinary sciences Professor **Donal O'Toole** received the Lawrence Meeboer Agricultural Classroom Teaching Award. He was nominated by rangeland ecology and watershed management student Catherin-Jane Angwin, who graduated this December. Other nominees were Associate Professor **Thijs Kelleners**, and extension range specialist and **Scasta**, both in ESM.

Molecular biology Associate Professor **Pamela Langer** received the Outstanding Adviser Award. She was nominated by Bill Trebelcock, a senior molecular biology student.

Other nominees were **Donna Brown**, associate dean and director of the Office of Academic and Student Programs; Assistant Professor **Brian Mealor**, Department of Plant Sciences; Associate Professor **Warrie Means**, interim head of the Department of Animal Science; Associate Professor **Mark Stayton**, head of the Department of Molecular Biology; and **Rachel Watson**, senior lecturer, and assistant lecturer **John Willford**, both in molecular biology.

Outstanding Employee Award

Dean Frank Galey presented two Dean's Outstanding Employee Awards. Recipients were **Tracy Bennett**, senior accounting associate in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, and **Casey Seals**, greenhouse operations manager at the Laramie Research and Extension Center. Each received \$500.

Also nominated were **Mindy Braman**, senior accounting associate in the Agriculture Administration Business Office; **Denise Manore**, veterinary sciences office associate; **Cathy Shuster**, UW Extension office associate; and **Kelly Wiseman**, staff assistant in the Office of Academic and Student Programs.

No slides are available in this gallery

All openings filled at Ranch Horse Team's fundraising clinic

By Bernadette Van der Vliet | January 2015



All openings at the ranch horse clinic in November quickly sold out, notes Jenny Ingwerson, extension equine specialist.

The event, held as a fundraiser by the University of Wyoming Ranch Horse Team November 1-2, was at the Cliff and Martha Hansen Teaching Arena.

Jason Patrick from Whispering Willows Ranch in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, taught the ranch clinic, says Ingwerson, an assistant professor in the Department of Animal Science.

Patrick focused on producing productive ranch horses with emphasis on reined cow horses. The clinic was open to the community and UW Ranch Horse Team members.



“Club members really pulled together to help organize the clinic,” says Ingwerson. “Club members served all roles from handling cattle to participants throughout the weekend.”

Mackenzie Holmes, a freshman at UW, helped Jason Patrick teach, and beef unit manager Travis Smith and UW student Katlin Pittman helped move cattle for the clinic. Ranch Horse club president Conner James had a large role in organizing the event and was a clinic participant, notes Ingwerson.

“The Martha Hansen teaching arena was filled with smiles and laughter as everyone worked to improve their working cow horse and horsemanship skills,” she says. “The UW Ranch Horse Team would like to send out a big thank you to Jason Patrick and all of the participants who helped support the ranch horse team. Be sure to keep an eye out for upcoming clinics from the ranch horse team.”

The team is tentatively scheduled to compete in March.

Scientists in grass height and sage-grouse nest success study say facts being misrepresented

By Bernadette Van der Vliet | January 2015

Scientists whose study found a positive relationship between taller grass and sage-grouse nest success are concerned environmental groups are using findings to incorrectly label livestock producers as responsible for the birds' decline.

The study is described in "Linking conservation actions to demography; grass height explains variation in greater sage-grouse nesting survival" published earlier this month in the journal *Wildlife Biology*. The article can be read at <http://bit.ly/grassheight>.

Dave Naugle, the study's principal investigator and professor in the Wildlife Biology Program at the University of Montana, says the Center for Biological Diversity in a media release used the study to call for a uniform 7-inch stubble height requirement across sage-grouse range as a regulatory mechanism to shut down public lands grazing.

"The center's messaging is an abuse of science," says Naugle. "Twisting the facts to further an agenda only alienates partners and slows defensible policy making."

The study period was 2003-2007. The scientists found a strong correlative relationship between grass height and nest success in northeast Wyoming and southeast Montana study sites, which has helped prompt new research, says lead author Kevin Doherty of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Colorado.

"Our research has helped to spur new research projects that are experimentally designed to evaluate if grazing systems can be used as a tool to increase sage-grouse populations," he notes.

Brett Walker, author and sage-grouse research biologist, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, says the study doesn't address the role of livestock grazing as a factor in sage-grouse declines: the study was not designed to answer that question.

"The study did not say overgrazing was a problem or that livestock grazing is contributing to the declines in sage-grouse populations," he says. "Maintaining sufficient grass height within sagebrush landscapes is important for nesting sage-grouse in the Powder River Basin, but that's important to ranching operations, too, so there's a common, long-term goal."

Grazing is but one of many factors influencing grass height with others including precipitation, soils and temperature, notes Jeff Beck, co-author and associate professor, in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management at the University of Wyoming.

"For instance, an early, wet spring in 2003 resulted in the highest nest success observed in the five-year study," says Beck.

The study occurred in some of the wettest and most grass-dominated sagebrush habitats in the 165-million acre range of sage-grouse, notes Doherty.



Associate Professor Jeff Beck

He cautions against applying the findings to drier regions, including the Great Basin.

Monies awarded

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Connett, John: \$45,830 from Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) for “School Integrated Pest Management Training in Wyoming through a Science-Based Expert-to-Expert Approach.”

Cotton, Scott: \$15,882 from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for “New Ground: Demonstrating Innovative Ground Cover Recovery Practices.”

Edwards, Jeffrey: \$53,000 from WDA for “Pesticide Safety Education Program.”

Hansen, Kristiana, Ginger Paige, Roger Coupal, Melanie Purcell, Eric Peterson, Jen Lamb, Graham McGaffin, Anne MacKinnon, and Sara Brodnax: \$75,000 from USDA NRCS for “Implementing a Market-based Conservation Exchange in Wyoming.”

Hild, Ann: \$10,000 from Marathon Oil Company for “Shrub Diversity Following Russian Olive Control,” and \$4,000 from Wyoming Game and Fish for “Shrub Seedlings for Restoration of Russian Olive Removal Sites.”

Murphy, Melanie: \$4,878 from USDA Forest Service for “Region 2 Sensitive Amphibian Species: Boreal Toad eDNA Pilot Study.”

Schumaker, Brant, Gerard Andrews, Jason Gigley, William Laegreid, Myrna Miller, and William Edwards: \$64,054 from WDA for “Development and Validation of a Polymerase Chain Reaction Assay for Diagnosis of Bovine Brucellosis.”

Whipple, Glen, John Hewlett, and Kelly Crane: \$14,677 from USDA Farm Service Agency for “2014 Farm Bill Producer Education.”

Proposals Submitted

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Adamovicz, Jeffrey, and Vandana Patravale: \$18,223 to Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for “Testing Nanoparticle-based Vaccine for Brucellosis for ICT, India.”

Beck, Jeffrey: \$16,451 to Wyoming Game and Fish for “Greater Sage-Grouse Migration Behavior and Male Survival.”

Bisha, Bledar: \$45,743 to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for “Identification and Subtyping of Antimicrobial Resistant Bacteria from Wildlife and Environmental Samples Using Matrix-assisted Laser Desorption Ionization Time-of-Flight Mass Spectrometry.”

Despain, Johnathan, and Brittany Johnson: \$23,000 to Kansas State University for “4-H Military Partnership Grant.”

Dhekney, Sadanand: \$34,707 to Astec Global for “Effect of Plant Growth Stimulants on Growth and Regeneration of Sugar Beet, Rice and Tomato Cell Cultures.”

Jabbour, Randa: \$29,919 to University of California, Davis for “Predicting Variation of Biological Control in Alfalfa Hay and Seed Crops.”

Jarvis, Donald, Jason Gigley, and Qingsheng Li: \$2,259,250 to National Institutes of Health for “Impact of Fc Glycosylation Profiles on HIV-specific bNAB Functions.”

Latchininsky, Alexandre, and Larry Debrey: \$111,413 to USDA APHIS for “Wyoming CAPS Infrastructure, Wyoming CAPS Bundled Small Grain Commodity Survey, Wyoming CAPS Nematode Survey.”

Norton, Jay, Urszula Norton, Axel Garcia y Garcia, Earl Creech, and Jennifer Reeve: \$305,000 to USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture for “Compost Carryover, and Cover Crop Effects on Soil Quality, Profitability, and Cultivar Selection in Organic Dryland Wheat.”

Peck, Dannele, Myrna Miller, and Randall Jones: \$16,783 to USDA National Sheep Industry Improvement Center for “Economic Benefits and Costs of Vaccinating Domestic Sheep against Bluetongue Virus in the Intermountain West.”

Scasta, John, and Jeffrey Beck: \$117,672 to Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) for “Wild Horse Spatial Movement Patterns across the Public-Private Land Matrix, Rangeland Habitat Use, and Interactions with Wildlife and Livestock.”

Tanaka, John, and Kristie Maczko: \$10,000 to WDA for “A Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable Expert Panel/Workshop Proposal.”

Agricultural Experiment Station awards grants

By Bernadette Van der Vliet | January 2015

Six Competitive Grant awards totaling \$483,815 and five Global Perspectives grants totaling \$18,222 have been awarded by the Agricultural Experiment Station.

Global Perspectives

- * “Genomics and genetics research for beef cattle: Where’s the economics?,” Nicole Ballenger, agricultural economics, \$3,385
- * “United States-China collaborative research for exchange of cold-hardy grapevine germplasm and development of improved grape cultivars,” Sadanand Dhekney, plant sciences and Sheridan Research and Extension Center, \$3,700,
- * “Engineering remotely controlled tumor-killing bacteria (bactodrones),” Mark Gomelsky, molecular biology, \$4,000
- * Outer membrane fusion and protein biogenesis in myxobacteria, Dan Wall, molecular biology, \$4,000
- * “Building U.S.-European collaborative PVC research,” Naomi Ward, molecular biology, \$3,137

Competitive Grants

- * “Genetics and genomics research for beef cattle: Where’s the economics (for Wyoming and beyond)?,” Nicole Ballenger, agricultural economics, \$84,877
- * “NK cell memory in long-term immunity to *Toxoplasma gondii*,” Jason Gigley, molecular biology, \$90,000
- * “Priming science: Writing emergence science to engage resource navigators,” Ann Hild, ecosystem science and management, \$53,979
- * “Using next-gen sequencing to identify heirloom, historic, and novel apple cultivars in 100-year-old orchards in Wyoming and Montana as a foundation for marker-assisted breeding of cultivars specifically suited to different regions of the Rocky Mountains,” Steven L. Miller (Department of Botany), \$89,476
- * Effects of limited irrigation on herbicide efficacy and herbicide carry over,” Gustavo Sbatella, plant sciences and Powell Research and Extension Center, \$76,058
- * “Studies of parasitoid wasps associated with mountain pine beetle,” Scott Shaw, ecosystem science and management, \$89,425